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Author
Graham, Michelle D.

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Shaping Ceramic Traditions in the Pa'ipai Village of Santa Catarina

MICHELLE D. GRAHAM
Instituto de Investigaciones Culturales, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California,
PO Box #326, Calexico, CA 92232

This article presents an overview of the Pa'ipai community of Santa Catarina, Baja California, from observations made during preliminary field visits that contributed to an ongoing ceramic study. Previous ethnoarchaeological investigations were dedicated to observing the "ancestral" paddle and anvil ceramic technology, and characterizing vessels as either "traditional" or "non-traditional" based on how closely they resembled early (pre-contact) forms. More recent ceramic objects came to be viewed by anthropologists as "contemporary art" or the result of an "evolution" of an ancient tradition. My proposal reframes anthropological notions of time and space to account for observed elements of both continuity and change in current forms, and to merge past and present, local and global contexts. Semi-structured interviews with ceramists revealed the importance of memory in ascribing meaning to the forms they produce. Exploring the significance of recent objects for the first time meant reflecting on socioeconomic conditions in the village—such details were overlooked by earlier archaeologists, who were primarily interested in precontact-period societies.

All ceramic-producing Yuman ethnolinguistic groups in present-day northern Baja California and Sonora in Mexico, and in southern California and Arizona in the United States, practiced the Hohokam paddle and anvil technique except for the Yavapai people, who practiced coiling like their Pueblo, Athabascan, and Shoshonean neighbors. Rather than hand-modeling and scraping (although these were used to some extent), the paddle and anvil technique is characterized by coiling the clay and "striking the outside with a wooden paddle against a rounded stone or clay implement, the anvil, held inside the wall" (Cartwright and Douglas 1935:74). Santa Catarina, Baja California, is the only Yuman community where this practice was never entirely abandoned and where it continues into the present (Campbell 1999:119). However, for a time its future was uncertain.[1] In the early 1980s, state officials observed that production had ceased and only a few elderly women retained knowledge of the method (J. A. Estrada, personal communication 2018).[2] The current industry was made possible by subsequent revitalization efforts undertaken by a few knowledgeable community members, the Mexican government, and other sponsoring institutions or interested parties.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Yuman ceramic industry was characterized by utilitarian wares produced primarily for personal use and for occasional trade. The colonial incursion and the introduction of market capitalism eventually led to a rather substantial shift in the customary distribution of these vessels from personal use to external sale. The quotidian use of local ceramics for food storage, preparation, and consumption endured for several decades longer in Santa Catarina than in other ceramic-producing Yuman communities—until at least the 1970s (Michelsen 1971:1). In contrast, by the 1930s few women were still producing utilitarian ceramics on the U.S. side of the border. The rather precarious external market that had been developing for these objects as indigenous handicrafts was adversely affected by the economic downturn of the Great Depression. During what appears to have been a pivotal decade that might have turned them into a commodity on the neoliberal capitalist market, funding for incentive programs dried up and potential consumers found themselves without the resources to purchase nonessential goods. From that point on, increasing access to store-bought, mass-produced household ceramics, combined with external pressures to

adapt to Anglo American culture, led to this craft being discontinued sometime around the mid twentieth century (Wade 2004:91). American anthropologists then turned their attention to Baja California, where the relative poverty (with a more limited access to the cash economy) and isolation (a peripheral situation relative to central Mexico) of the indigenous peoples permitted, at least to some extent, the survival of local customs and languages.

In Cucapá, Kiliwa, and Kumiai communities in Baja California, the abandonment of ceramic production also seems to have occurred sometime prior to the 1950s, when wage labor and the purchase of food items and domestic goods had become the norm. Although Cucapá and Kiliwa potters were photographed by vocational anthropologist Edward Davis in the early twentieth century (Álvarez 1975:19, 23), by the 1950s anthropologists Thomas Hinton and Roger Owen (1957) noted that people in Arroyo León and La Huerta were no longer practicing the craft (1957:95, 98). The more gradual adoption of imported domestic goods in Santa Catarina meant that there was a slower transition there, yet by the 1980s the fate of this tradition had grown contingent upon economic incentives and the development of a more robust market for external promotion and sale (E. Cortés, personal communication 2018).[3] The craft was revitalized (not reintroduced) as a result of local and regional social, economic, and political influences, and a diverse niche market was formed involving other indigenous peoples, collectors, travelers, and entrepreneurs, who now purchase these products.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT INDUSTRY

Since the late eighteenth century, when Dominican missions were established in this region, European settlers (and later Mexicans and Americans) became the first local non-indigenous consumers of Yuman paddle and anvil ceramics. The products resulting from the development of this "historical" intercultural market have generated a polarizing debate as to the "authenticity" of the craft. Anthropologists have habitually favoured linear temporal framing in their work (Fabian 1983:2); the past was classified with reference to major colonial events. Under that scheme, the chronological framework for Santa Catarina and the surrounding area would, and often does, involve categories like the following: the pre-colonial period (prior to 1797, the date when the Dominican mission of Santa Catalina Virgen y Mártir was founded);[4] the colonial period (from 1797 to 1848, when Alta and Baja California were politically divided into separate Mexican and U.S. territories); and the current period (from 1849 to the present).[5] However, pinpointing the exact date when the introduction of ceramic forms typically associated with those historical moments occurred is not possible.

Jeffrey Olick et al. (2011:144) have cited Maurice Halbwachs as pointing out that history

> attributes to an interval of a few years changes that in reality took much longer. A new social period may conceivably have begun the day after an event that disrupted, partially destroyed, and transformed a society's structure; but only later, when the new society had already engendered new resources and pushed on to other goals, would this fact be noticed.

The biggest problem with the linear framework historically applied to anthropological research was that it implied that there was no change in production technology or forms during the long initial period that preceded the missions, followed by a sudden, irrevocable contamination by the Spanish and the birth of contemporary art due to Anglo influences. This habitual scenario, which favored the effects of Europeans and their descendants over continuous social change and the agency of local and non-local indigenous peoples, could not possibly be more ethnocentric. Local ceramic production has always been innovative in order to adjust to changing societal needs (Graham 2018; Porcayo 2016). The specific interests of each population—the Yuman peoples themselves, other indigenous groups, Spaniards, non-indigenous Mexicans, and Anglo Americans—have determined the nature of those changes. All of these ethnic groups still continue to influence the development of the industry. My preliminary research suggested that there were two problems with the way the Pa'ipai ceramic industry had been studied in the past: changes in the paddle and anvil technology and its associated traditions do not necessarily correspond with the European colonial events used to describe them, and the voice of the potters has been virtually absent from the conversation. The present study will demonstrate that colonial biases in conceptions of time and space have generated an epistemological problem, perpetuating a limited understanding of these cultural objects.

Over the past century or more, Yuman ceramics have been characterized as either traditional or non-traditional based upon how closely they resembled known precontact forms, a practice that assumed the fixity and isolation of local cultures prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Interpretations of this kind dismissed objects with elements introduced from non-Yuman cultures as inauthentic, an approach that emphasized rupture and change (Kroeber and Harner 1955:2; Panich and Wilken-Robertson 2013a:111–112; Rogers 1936:18). More recently, a counter-discourse has developed that emphasizes the persistence or continuity of this local craft despite outside influences (Panich and Wilken-Robertson 2013a:109, 112, 113; Porcayo 2016:26; Wade 2004:5). However, this view is problematic as well since it naturalizes the colonial project and its effects on local people and their customs and traditions by characterizing the current market as the evolution of an ancient tradition. Both perspectives reflect scholarly attempts to either legitimize or delegitimize contemporary culture through comparisons with the past (Graham 2018:6); these are political tools, not models for understanding social change and its effects on material culture.

Typical precontact vessel forms included bowls, canteens, jars, ollas, trays, scoops, and pipes. At least three chronologies have been proposed for these objects. Malcolm Rogers (1945) and Michael Waters (1982) suggested three time periods of similar duration and content. In contrast to Rogers, Waters' model combined canteens, jars, and ollas into a broad "jars" category, lumped trays and bowls together, and eliminated pipes (Graham 2018:5). He also thought ceramic production began 200 years earlier than Rogers had suggested; an observation later shared by Porcayo (2016).

> Rogers' time periods were: Yuman I (A.D. 900–1050), Yuman II (A.D. 1050–1500), and Yuman III (A.D. 1500–?). Waters' designations were Patayan I (A.D. 700–1000), Patayan II (A.D. 1000–1500), and Patayan III (A.D. 1500–?). Neither researcher defined an end date for the third production period nor did either incorporate "historical" or "contemporary" ceramic forms into their typologies [Graham 2018:5].

Porcayo (2016) rearranged common forms identified by Rogers, added several new ones, and introduced a fourth time period. He set the end date for the third time period at A.D. 1850, adding a fourth that extends into the present and includes the work currently being produced by ceramists in Santa Catarina. He agreed with Rogers and Waters that bowls fell within the earliest period, but considered trays within that category as well and moved scoops into the post-A.D. 1000 period. For Porcayo, semi-globular ollas appeared first, with all other jar, olla, and canteen forms being introduced later. His associated theory holds that the relative height and volume of Yuman vessels increased over time as groups became more sedentary and acquired greater skill at producing ceramics (Porcayo 2016:26). Differences between the interpretations of Porcayo and other researchers could be owing to the fact that his primary study area, El Vallecito Archaeological Zone, lies substantially to the southwest, in the Peninsular Mountains, while previous studies were focused on sites in the Colorado River Valley. These typologies are by no means inclusive of all the forms that existed; as Rogers indicated, only "common pottery forms" were selected.

According to the ceramic analysis conducted by Lee Panich (2009), colonial changes to the Mission Santa Catalina assemblage were minimal. Panich emphasized continuity and persistence in the paddle and anvil technology and its associated traditions, despite colonial interference. The ceramics produced there—compared to that made at other mission sites in the Californias, where elaborations and specific vessel forms may have been mandated by the colonists, or a variety of indigenous techniques from different regions were reflected in the assemblages—closely resembled known precontact forms. He attributed this continuity to two factors: ceramics had been produced in the area long before the arrival of the missionaries, and colonial control was less complete there than in other regions (2009:183). In another paper (2010), Panich concluded that due to the relative isolation of the mission and a limited European presence, "native inhabitants likely retained many aspects of their precontact hunting and gathering practices and social relationships." The only notable changes he attributed to Spanish influence were the presence of plates, loop handle fragments, and a higher than expected incidence of direct rather than rounded or recurved rims (Panich 2010:216–217, 225–226). All other forms represented at the mission site corresponded to known precontact vessels found in this or other Yuman regions.

This suggests that some typical forms such as trays, bowls, and semi-globular or semi-spherical ollas remained constant from ca. A.D. 700 on, while others were introduced

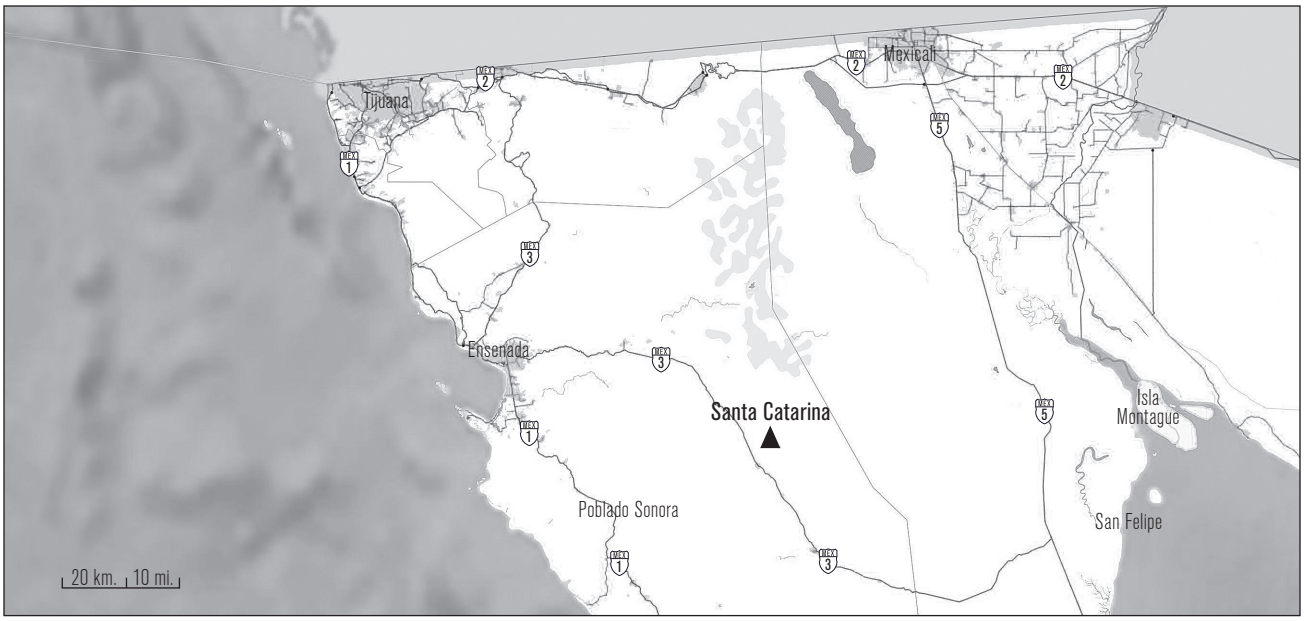

Figure 1. Location of Santa Catarina, Baja California (after http://gaia.inegi.org.mx).

throughout history to meet changing societal needs. In recent years, the change in the customary distribution of these goods has led to a proliferation of new associated traditions (forms and functions) and the resignification of old ones.[6] Lee Panich and Michael Wilken-Robertson (2013b:75, 87, 88) have acknowledged the changes that have been brought about by this shift in distribution. However, the current market did not evolve as they and others have suggested—it developed and expanded as the result of substantial initiatives over the course of several decades. Current ceramics cannot be considered traditional or non-traditional, ancestral or contemporary, based upon their shape alone—the histories of these objects, as related by their creators, have revealed a more complex process at work. Sometimes the meaning or significance of a current form was said to be derived from an episodic (firsthand) memory from the potter's lifetime, while another had been acquired from other sources. Many local beliefs and practices surrounding ceramic production had lost their relevance and were anecdotal in nature, while others had been recently introduced. Through semi-structured interviews and a review of the existing literature, current forms were categorized by comparing the testimony of the ceramists with the documented past. These results showed what the potters themselves considered to be traditional, and reflected a blending of past and present elements from local, regional, and global contexts.

CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN SANTA CATARINA

Initiating Fieldwork

There are two possible routes to Santa Catarina from the city of Mexicali—west to La Rumorosa and Tecate, then southwest through wine country to Ensenada and then back inland up the western slope of the Peninsular Ranges; or south toward San Felipe, then west through the desert and up the eastern slope toward Ensenada (Fig. 1). Having tried both, I decided the latter involved fewer curves and less traffic, with steel guardrails in all the right places. The trip covers 251 km. (156 mi.) and takes roughly two hours and forty minutes. During the first year of fieldwork in 2017, the highway was riddled with potholes; conditions had substantially improved by year two. There were, however, scraps of old rubber tire littering the pavement and scattered along the roadside and shrines decorating the natural landscape, often associated with skid marks trailing off the outer shoulder around sharp bends. Traveling alone and somewhat apprehensively from the outset, such things were more unsettling than usual.

Regional Safety

The most dangerous stretch of road was the climb from Valle de la Trinidad to Héroes de la Independencia. At one spot, a sign read *Peligro* (Danger)—what kind of danger (potholes, treacherous curves, oncoming traffic, slow

moving trailers or farm equipment, crossing animals, random debris, a flat tire, overheated engine, corrupt soldiers, and/or *narcos*…) a driver could only imagine. Years ago, I had an unpleasant experience at a military checkpoint in San Luis Rio Colorado when a soldier tried to plant a bullet casing in the trunk of a stopped vehicle. Enough similar stories are still circulating to justify a profound dislike of being interrogated at the junction of highways 5 and 3, and especially reporting one's destination.

During my preliminary field visits, locals expressed concern over increased criminal activity in their village, particularly break-ins by *foraneos* (outsiders).[7] The doors and windows of many homes were fixed with metal security bars, and we were advised to lock our vehicles. One couple said that they remembered a time when locking doors was unnecessary; now they even insert sticks along the base of window frames when they go out to prevent them from being opened from the outside. Some community members have become involved in the drug trafficking problem present in this region and in all of Mexico, as evidenced by the assassination of 18 members of three different families in Ensenada in 1998 (Dillon 1998). The row of gravesites in the cemetery, with different sizes holding men, women, children, and infants, is a horrific reminder of that day. In December 2017, the owner of the hotel in Valle de la Trinidad, where I had been planning to stay while conducting fieldwork, was kidnapped along with an unspecified number of his guests (Heras 2018). The risk of physical danger and violence while traveling to and from Santa Catarina, as well as while living there, seemed to be a constant reality.

Figure 2. Paved access road leading off Highway 3 to Santa Catarina from Héroes de la Independencia, looking northwest. C.A.R.II.R.M. stands for Centro de Adiestramiento Regional Segunda Región Militar, referring to a military proving ground located alongside Santa Catarina.

Community Services and Infrastructure

From the town of Héroes de la Independencia, nestled in the hills at an altitude of approximately 1,183 m. above sea level, a paved road led north the remaining eight miles to Santa Catarina (Fig. 2). The economic vulnerability of the community was immediately apparent. In contrast to the bustling ceramic-producing centers in southern Mexico such as Santa María Atzompa in Oaxaca, this locale appeared to be an underpopulated village without a single store or business in sight. Rugged, unpaved roads wound through the irregular landscape, with homes randomly spaced at different elevations throughout. The houses were small and built of cement block, adobe, and occasionally a conglomeration of scrap metal, wood, or other repurposed materials. Plants belonging to the California Coastal Sage and Chaparral ecosystem dotted the natural landscape; intentional gardens surrounded the front patios of the potters' homes, and two women indicated that their families had planted some of the trees as well.

The easiest of all the ceramists' houses to reach was that of Daria Mariscal Aguiar. Unlike the others, her driveway led west off the paved access road (Fig. 3). Her family compound held three homes: one for each of her sons and another for herself, where she lived with her partner, Ubaldo. A fourth building at the front of the property held a museum built by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) that displayed artifacts Daria had found over the years during hikes through

Figure 3. Museo Kuahl sign at the entrance to Daria Mariscal Aguiar's property.

the mountains (Fig. 4). These included a few large, nearly intact ollas, metates (mortars), manos (pestles), projectile points, and stone arrow-shaft straighteners, among other items. Her ceramic workshop sat approximately 40 m. northwest of her residence (Fig. 5), and immediately behind her house lay the outdoor kitchen, where she said she still preferred to cook even though her new home had a woodstove as well (Figs. 6, 7).[8] The use of massive, stationary granitic boulders to form walls and support the roof of this structure, and even provide

Figure 4. Museo Kuahl on Daria Mariscal Aguiar's property.

Figure 6. Granitic boulder countertop inside Daria Mariscal Aguiar's kitchen.

Figure 5. Daria Mariscal Aguiar's workshop (photo courtesy of Everardo Garduño).

Figure 7. Granitic boulder supporting Daria Mariscal Aguiar's kitchen, as seen from the inside.

Figure 8. Granitic boulder supporting the roof of Gloria Regino Arballo's garage (photo courtesy of Everardo Garduño).

Figure 9. Partially excavated adobe ruins of Misión Santa Catalina Virgen y Mártir (1797 to 1840), (after Panich 2009:171).

the countertop, turned out to be a local architectural practice observed again at Gloria Regino Arballo's home (Fig. 8). (An archaeology student visiting that day rightly noted that many people also use granite countertops in cities.) Generally, people's living spaces and their uses of it were characterized by an interweaving of old and new structural and cultural elements.

The adobe ruins of Misión Santa Catarina Virgen y Mártir, the oldest evidence of the Spanish colonial presence, lay upon a hilltop in the northwest portion of the village (Fig. 9). The mission site was not immediately visible; in contrast, the more recent Catholic church of Iglesia Católica Indígena de Santa Catarina was the tallest structure in the community and sat slightly downhill, facing the paved access road (Fig. 10). That building had also fallen into disuse and disrepair. Another abandoned

Figure 10. Iglesia Católica Indígena de Santa Catarina.

Figure 11. Casa de Oración La Luz del Mundo, abandoned church converted into Tirsa Flores Castro's workshop and store).

church, Casa de Oración la Luz del Mundo (House of Prayer the Light of the World), situated beside Tirsa Flores Castro's property, was repurposed as her ceramic workshop and store in 2016 (Fig. 11). She explained that although the church had been active while her mother was alive, it was used very little because the congregation preferred to meet in her mother's home. Once she passed away, the missionaries simply left.[9] The fourth church, Templo Luz Verdadera (True Light Temple), was an evangelical variety and the only one operational in the village (Fig. 12). The sheer number of churches in this small community suggests that the Christian presence there has been continuous.

Many of the houses, including Daria's, were painted white on top and reddish-orange on the bottom, and were constructed through the sponsorship of various governmental agencies (Figs. 13, 14).[10] They all had a *tinaco* (water tank) on the roof, suggesting that there was

Figure 12. Evangelical Temple Luz Verdadera, the only church currently operating in the village.

Figure 13. Two of the houses donated to selected community members by various governmental agencies.

no central water supply in the village, or its source was unreliable (subsequent interviews revealed the latter to be the case). While visiting Daria in May 2017, her husband took the pickup truck into town to fill a large water tank and then used an electric pump to transfer it from the truck to the roof. Tirsa's family, on the other hand, had the community's only fresh well in their yard and used that local source for everything from bathing to cooking. On a hot summer day, children filled a large, blue plastic barrel and took turns bathing and cooling off while we sat in the shade of the earthen front porch. Neighbors, who were later revealed to be Tirsa's children and grandchildren, periodically stopped by with buckets to fill and take back to their own homes free of charge.[11] Two liters of bottled water meant to last the entire weekend had nearly run out by morning on account of the hot weather and having to cook lunch with part of it.

Figure 14. Federal agencies sponsoring the public housing initiative in Santa Catarina.

The house visible to the right in Figure 13 had a television antenna on the roof, indicating an availability of cable and possibly internet services. Electrical wires lined the street, confirming the presence of electricity as well. Further investigation showed that residents in Santa Catarina had gained access to radio in the late 1970s, television in 2008, and internet services more recently, in 2014 (Martínez 2016:101). The government plan for the housing project had originally been based on an urban design, with small plots in a controlled area with houses all lined up in rows. The community rejected that proposal, insisting that the homes be spaced out randomly at different elevations in the customary way, with hilltops and boulders providing desired privacy. The government complied despite the higher construction and utility costs involved (E. Garduño, personal communication 2017). Another culturally sensitive element of the design was the inclusion of woodstoves—the locally preferred cooking and heating source—rather than gas or electric appliances. Those who were questioned about the government's criteria for deciding who should receive the homes replied that they were unaware of the selection criteria. The process was evidently slow—some homes had been delivered but were not yet hooked up to the power grid.[12]

The only cellular phone company serving Santa Catarina in 2018 was Movistar. One woman expressed frustration at constantly receiving telemarking calls from Telcel representatives despite having explained to them repeatedly that their company did not service her neighbourhood. Other notable community features included a bilingual elementary school,[13] a cemetery, a health clinic, and a meeting center alongside the

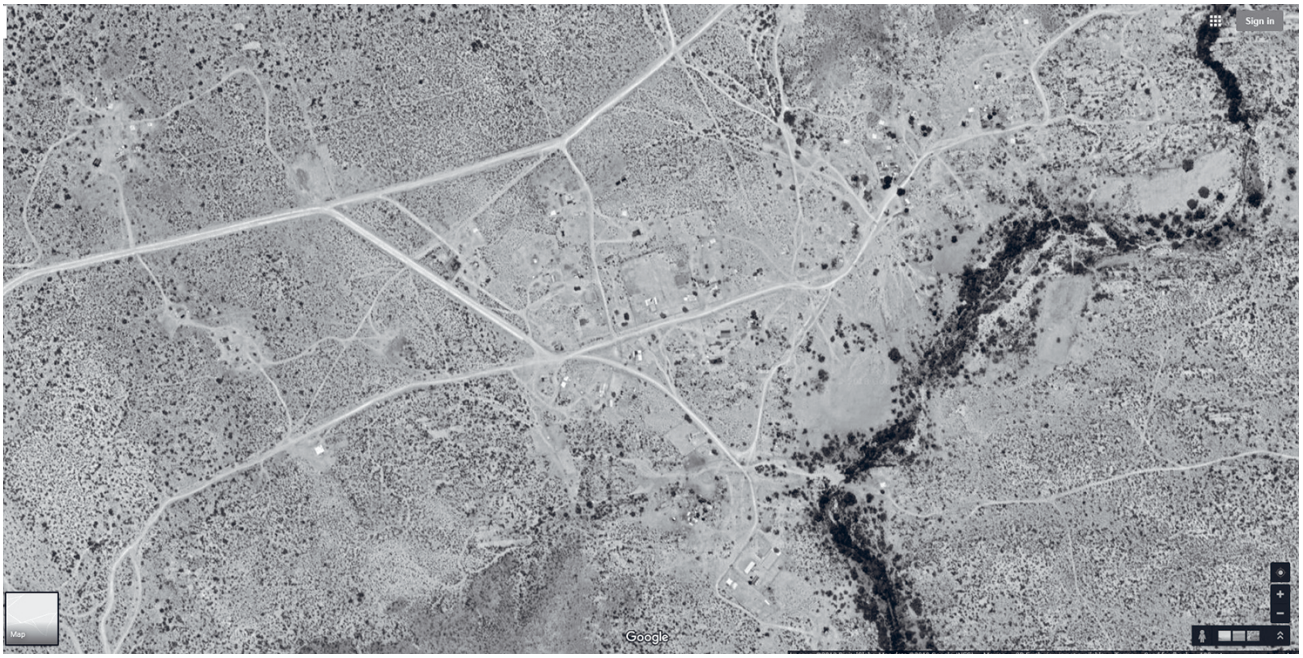

Figure 15. Aerial view of Santa Catarina, Baja California (after Google Maps 2018).

abandoned Catholic church with a small wooden sign reading "Salon de asanbleas [sic] Wamuch Ram Nuach." On April 30, 2017, a meeting was held at the center to conclude a visit from a busload of other Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) students who had been providing health workshops to locals over the weekend. The financial needs of residents were clearly being partly met through participation in the handicraft market, as some people had set up tables to display and sell their wares. Nina Alejandra Martínez (2016:109) noted in her ethnographic report that Santa Catarina's warm season was associated with abundance, paid labor, and outdoor socialization, while during the cold months there was less work (resulting in less income) and people tended to stay inside by the warm stove, watch television, and visit church. Tirsa later corroborated that information in one of our interviews, reporting that winter was the time when she suffered the most economic hardship.[14]

The People

Santa Catarina was granted federal recognition as Pa'ipai territory on May 9, 1972. At the time of the 2010 census, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) recorded only 113 people living in the community. Out-migration since the 1940s is attributed to the search for employment, marriages, and access to healthcare (Martínez 2016:60, 98). Roughly 56 individuals, mainly over the age of 35, reported knowing the Pa'ipai or Ko'al languages, though only a fraction of the residents spoke them daily, injecting Spanish words where none existed in their language. When the first elementary school opened in 1930, children were forced to learn and use Spanish instead of their maternal language, and they have since been taught the same federally-mandated curriculum as other students across Mexico (Martínez 2016:56, 99, 100). Additional reasons that are given for increased Spanish usage and the adoption of hegemonic Mexican culture at home include the incorporation of non-indigenous members into families and the use of electronic entertainment (Martínez 2016: 57, 101). Spanish is now the primary language spoken. Figure 15 shows an aerial view of the community and its structures.

Daria explained that she is of both Ko'al and Pa'ipai descent and that is why she named the museum she cares for "Museo Kuahl."[15] Although Santa Catarina is widely understood to be a Pa'ipai community and the majority of its members identify as such, some other families also reported Ko'al ancestry.[16] As of October 24, 2018, Instituto de Cultural de Baja California (ICBC) stated on its website that both ethnic groups belong to the Yuman-Cochimi linguistic family, and that the Ko'al people had been present in the area of Santa Catarina for perhaps

Figure 16. Daria Mariscal Aguiar's ceramic shop, located at the rear of Museo Kuahl.

Figure 17. Gloria Regino Arballo's ceramic shop, located at the rear of her home.

Figure 18. Tirsa Flores Castro's shop in the abandoned church beside her home.

Figure 19. Teresa Castro Albañez's craft collection, set up on a table outside her daughter Telma's home on April 30, 2017, when students from Mexicali were visiting the village (photo courtesy of Everardo Garduño).

2,000 years, while the Pa'ipai people arrived some 600 years ago. Therefore, it may have been the Ko'al group who introduced ceramics to this area around A.D. 700.[17]

The term Patayan has sometimes been applied to the Yuman paddle and anvil ceramic tradition, particularly by archaeologists studying early cultural materials in the southwestern U.S. (Waters 1982). Patayan is an English derivative of the word "Pataya," which means "old people" in the Pai languages. Anthropologists believe the Pataya peoples to be the ancestors of living Pa'ipai people and their kin in Arizona—the Yavapai, Walapai, and Havasupai. The Pataya were not necessarily as closely related to descendants of the Ko'al, who are more closely linked to the Kumeyaay people (Garduño 2016:14). Since using the term Yuman to describe this multi-ethnic community would be an over-generalization, the officially recognized majority term, Pa'ipai, is used here in connection with individual histories.

It quickly became evident to me that the artisans in Santa Catarina were accustomed to receiving visitors interested in purchasing their goods. At each home, I was directed toward a display of items for sale that included ceramics, basketry, cordage, and jewelry, some of which was woven and some of which was made with seeds or plastic beads. Although the objects varied, the same general materials were used. Figures 16 through 19 show the ceramic collections for sale that day. Teresa Castro Albañez was substantially older than the other

three women interviewed and produced ceramics only occasionally, while the others practiced the craft on a full-time basis. Martínez also observed (2016:13) that perhaps only three or four women, at most, were involved in producing ceramics from six to ten hours per day. Those women were actively commercializing their work, and they became principle interviewees due to the variety of forms available for study on a year-round basis.

At Rogelia Cañedo Albañez's house, I asked a young woman for directions to Gloria's house. When ceramics were mentioned, she motioned towards her display of basketry. There was a makeshift shop with wooden tables set up in the front room of the house—although this may have been a permanent feature, it seemed to have been arranged temporarily for the busload of students visiting that weekend. I purchased one small basket with a lid without having intended to, and quickly realized that everyone was eager to sell crafts in exchange for information.

The following day, that observation was reinforced when one ceramist's daughter insisted that I buy something in exchange for the information provided during the interview. American anthropologist Roger Owen, "Rogelio," used to visit this artist regularly because "he was her friend." She gave him artifacts she had found in the mountains, but he never paid for any of them.[18] My role was thus predetermined to some extent by interactions with previous visitors, and I was therefore perceived as a customer or representative of an institution that could provide some other kind of economic support. During a visit with archaeologists from INAH, grievances were aired about damaged or leaking structures, a broken door, and other pressing maintenance concerns. One family also indicated that the roof of their government-issued house was leaking despite its recent construction—rainwater had permeated the unsealed cement roof, leaving notable water stains on the ceiling. They reported that they needed a water heater because the house had come with kitchen and bathroom sinks, a toilet, and a woodstove for the kitchen, but no boiler. That visit in early May was during an unexpected cold spell, and the water coming out of the taps was ice cold. An electric bucket heater was being used to prepare water for each bath.

Anthropologists have been rightly criticized for their longstanding practice of receiving information and goods from indigenous communities without offering monetary compensation or somehow contributing to improvements in the lives of those they study. Ramón Grosfoguel (2016:133) referred to this practice as cultural extraction, the mining of ideas to be appropriated by western academics and converted into symbolic capital—visitors have benefitted from the extraction of ideas, technologies, and objects while leaving the communities in misery. In recent decades, some anthropologists have responded to that problem by paying participants for their time, organizing workshops to stimulate the production of local goods, becoming customers themselves, and helping to develop or expand the market for external sale.[19] The only criticism to be made of this involvement in Santa Catarina is that these individuals have not been explicit about their role in "adapting" the paddle and anvil tradition to the current market.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CURRENT FORMS

The potters' financial dependence on occasional sales and support from governmental and non-governmental organizations became central to my research, since ceramic production in Santa Catarina is inherently linked to the poverty of its producers and the intermittent external demand for their under-priced work.[20] The relative geographic isolation and the physical and economic vulnerability of the people have made the current ceramic industry both possible and necessary. Paradoxically, participation in the industry perpetuates their situation of poverty. In the village, elements of continuity and change were visible in everything from the landscape to the infrastructure, architecture, and even such quotidian practices as cooking and bathing. This interplay of past and present was also found to characterize the ceramic production process (clay procurement, preparation, and firing) and was reflected in the histories of resulting forms.

The artists consider some forms to be traditional while others are not. Every piece has a story to tell, and it is not necessary for historians and archaeologists to agree as to their "authenticity." Continuity and change are inherently linked and dialectical rather than binary opposites. As Olick et al. (2011:146) have noted, social groups "change and segment continually. Even though we stay, the group itself actually becomes, by the slow or

Figure 20. An example of a common precontact form. Olla made by Gloria Regino Arballo.

rapid replacement of its members, another group having only a few traditions in common with its original ones." Gilberto Giménez has also observed that

> ethnic groups can—and often do—change fundamental aspects of their culture while at the same time maintaining their boundaries, in other words, without losing their identity. For example, an ethnic group can adopt culture traits from other groups, such as language and religion, and continue perceiving themselves (and being perceived by others) as distinct from them. As a result, the preservation of boundaries between ethnic groups does not depend upon the immutability of their cultures [Giménez 2009:17].

Temporal and spatial analyses of current ceramic objects have demonstrated how past and present, the local and global, are blended in these potters' work. The resulting traditions, whether derived from individual or collective memories, or sources old or new, local, glocal, or global, were usually associated with stories that revealed how Pa'ipai identity is being articulated in the present and represented in clay.[21] Some examples of these items and how they have been interpreted are provided in the following figures. To date, six categories have been recognized: common precontact forms (Fig. 20) such as bowls, canteens, jars, and ollas (no trays were present in the ceramists' collections; reinterpretations of precontact forms like pipes, effigy scoops, anthropomorphic figurines, and ollas with slits for transporting hot coals (Fig. 21); representations of cultural objects not originally made from clay such as the *bule* (rattle), arrow-shaft straightener, cradle, and honey container (Fig. 22); forms associated with non-local indigenous cultures like the double-necked and bilobed vessels, turtle sage-burners,

Figure 21. A reinterpretation of a known precontact ceramic form. Anthropomorphic figurine made by Tirsa Flores Castro.

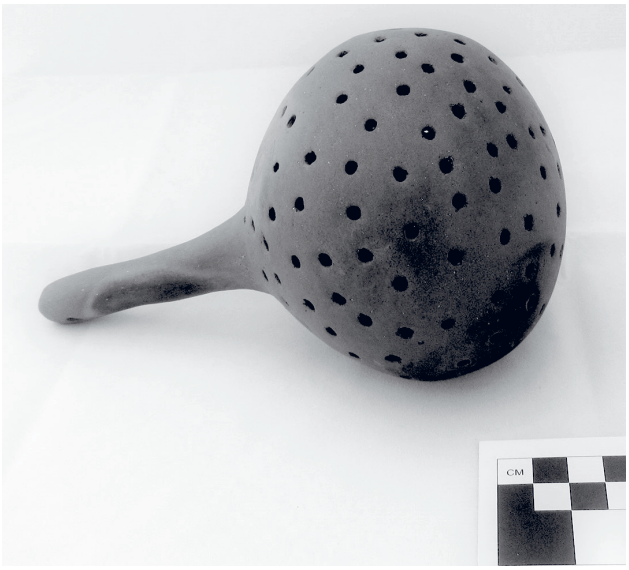

Figure 22. A representation of a cultural form not originally made from clay. *Bule*/rattle created by Daria Mariscal Aguiar.

Figure 23. Example of a ceramic form associated with other, non-local indigenous cultures. A "wedding vase" with a double neck made by Teresa Castro Albañez. This multi-spouted form originated among the Anasazi (Van Camp 1979:57).

Figure 24. Example of an object inspired by a European form. Plate made by Gloria Regino Arballo. An entire set was commissioned by a restaurant owner who never returned to purchase it.

Figure 25. An example of a form representing an element of the local landscape. Fat coyote created by Daria Mariscal Aguiar. Daria noted that coyotes regularly invade her property and steal her small chickens, which is why she keeps them in a cage in her outside kitchen.

and beads (Fig. 23); vessels derived from European forms such as mugs, cups, and plates (Fig. 24); and forms representing elements of the local environment (Fig. 25) such as coyotes, *correcaminos* (roadrunners), *gallinas* (hens), *cochinitas* (little pigs), and *hongos montés* (wild mushrooms).

The meanings these objects now hold for their makers and users are not temporally or geographically bounded: they reflect a complex local, national, and global history. More than just contemporary art, they serve as tangible evidence of a lost way of life, and are the result of interethnic negotiations across more than two centuries of inequitable coexistence. To some degree, the relationship between Pa'ipai potters, visitors, sponsors, and investors has become mutually beneficial over the years.[22] Participation in the current industry marginally meets the financial needs of the producers, provides the ethnic group and the nation with identifying symbols necessary for gaining or maintaining legitimacy, and stimulates the continued practicing of an ancient local craft. The latter goal is of interest to both the community and to anthropologists, yet the potters do not benefit from a reliable income while the promoters and consumers typically do.

CONCLUSIONS

Historically, anthropologists have perhaps been guilty of focusing their research on topics they valued while failing to address issues of concern to the community, such as safety, infrastructure, and the wider economy. People in Santa Catarina consistently steered our conversations toward problems in their current living conditions. Johannes Fabian (1983) has pointed out that special attention should be given to making anthropological research relevant to those being studied. He observed that "when much or most of anthropology is considered tangential (beside the point, irrelevant) by those who have been its objects, this points to a severe breakdown of 'collective reflexivity'" (Fabian 1983:92). Future anthropological research in Santa Catarina should always seek sustainable ways to improve the local economy and develop strategies for increasing the profitability of the craft industry. According to the residents, the quality of life in the village is deteriorating despite the burgeoning market for Yuman handicrafts in general.

Eurocentric constructs of time and space that perpetuate notions of "evolution" and "contemporary art" in the study of Pa'ipai ceramics should be discarded to allow space for the potters to determine for themselves what constitutes tradition and to find strategies for selling their work at a fair market price. Solutions can be found by changing anthropological discourse about indigenous handicrafts in this and other regions, in places where community members and their products have historically been treated as vestiges of the past—objects of study and subjects of the state—rather than as disadvantaged collaborators; as craftsmen who—I was saddened to realize—presently refer to the visitors that profit from their work more than they do as *amigos* (friends).

NOTES

[1]The women interviewed during this study indicated that although their mothers and/or grandmothers had produced ceramics and taught them to do so as children, they spent several years without practicing the craft and took it up again later in life.

[2]José Armando Estrada participated in indigenous cultural revitalization efforts sponsored by Dirección de Asuntos Culturales del Gobierno del Estado in the 1980s under the direction of historian David Zárate; he currently works for Instituto de Cultura de Baja California.

[3]Edna Cortés studied under David Zárate and stated in our interview that he provided funding to participants in the revitalization program entitled *Chawiwa* ("one who teaches" in Kumiai) undertaken by Dirección de Asuntos Culturales. She is now a professor at Universidad Autónoma de Baja California.

[4]The original spelling of this mission, Santa Catalina, was still in vernacular use in Mexicali in 2018.

[5]The terms post-colonial and contemporary were both avoided in favor of current, since it can be argued that the colonial period continues into the present, and contemporary is considered an epistemologically problematic euphemism for "modern."

[6]The women who were interviewed stated that their grandmothers had produced ceramics for personal use, while their mothers did not. By inference, the shift in production from quotidian use to external sale apparently began around the 1950s.

[7]Interviews conducted in Santa Catarina on April 29 and May 6, 2017.

[8]Interview conducted in Santa Catarina on May 6, 2017.

[9]Interview conducted in Santa Catarina on April 30, 2017.

[10]Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario Territorial y Urbano; Fideicomiso Fondo Nacional de Habitaciones Populares; Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas; SinHambre Cruzada Nacional.

[11]Tirsa also described how members of the village collected *tunas* (prickly pears) from her *nopal* cactus free of charge since it tended to produce more than they could eat. At the time of our interviews, workers from other towns, including Mexicali, were collecting *palmilla* trunks (soap plant, *Yucca elata*) with villagers for commercial sale; they stayed in a vacant house on Tirsa's property rent-free.

[12]Interviews conducted in Santa Catarina on September 8 and 9, 2018.

[13]Officially, this is a bilingual school; however, the teacher at the time of my research reportedly did not speak or teach Pa'ipai or any other indigenous language. Locals indicated that the school suffered from low enrollment (interviews in Santa Catarina on May 6, 2017). Upon graduation from sixth grade, middle school is/was only available by distance education through television broadcast, or in a different town.

[14]Interview conducted in Santa Catarina on September 8, 2018.

[15]Pa'ipai and Ko'al have several spellings; however, those suggested by linguistic anthropologist Mauricio Mixco (1997) have been adopted here.

[16]Interviews conducted in Santa Catarina on April 29 and 30, 2017. Teresa and her daughter are reported to be fluent in Ko'al.

[17]The earliest date accepted by archaeologists for the introduction of ceramics into this region is currently A.D. 700 (Porcayo 2016; Waters 1982).

[18]Interview conducted in Santa Catarina on April 30, 2018.

[19]During the fieldwork, participants were paid 500 pesos (roughly $27 USD) for overnight visits, and ceramics were regularly purchased.

[20]The average piece sells for between 100 and 250 pesos, roughly $5 or $10 USD at the current market rate. The larger or more intricate the vessel, the higher the price, but one person interviewed stated that the ceramists in Santa Catarina generally do not know how to price their work (interview conducted on April 30, 2017). Daria produced a large olla with fire clouds forming the shape of two birds; when asked the price of the vessel, she was unable or unwilling to decide.

[21]This conclusion was reached in collaboration with Doctor Christian Alonso Fernández Huerta during a doctoral seminar. See Roland Robertson (1995) for more information on the concept of glocalization.

[22]Sponsors are the governmental and non-governmental organizations that fund the handicraft industry without personal monetary gain; investors are individuals who profit through the resale of work they purchase.

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