AN ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF PEÑA BLANCA,
A KUMEYAY COMMUNITY IN BAJA CALIFORNIA NORTE

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in Baja California Norte

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

An Ethnoarchaeological Examination of Peña Blanca, A Kumeyaay Community in Baja California Norte
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The analysis of spatial organization across archaeological landscapes is important in reconstructing comprehensive histories of various people’s involvement with the land over time. In this ethnoarchaeological case study, the Kumeyaay community of Peña Blanca, located in northern Baja California, was used to evaluate changes within archaeological features and indigenous lifeways within the past century. The archaeological survey revealed adobe foundations, structural remains, linear rock alignments, trails, agricultural fields, and bedrock milling areas. Ethnographic interpretation for many of these features enabled intra-site comparison between more recent features associated with the consultant and other features that represent an older occupation. When plotted on a site map, cluster patterning of features revealed a landscape segregated both spatially and temporally into distinct periods of social involvement with the land. The recognition of these divisions contributes to a better understanding of how the Kumeyaay negotiated the rapid changes during the historic period. As more work is undertaken in Baja California and even at Peña Blanca itself, there will be opportunities to compare the results of this research with other similar communities throughout the region.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The rapid disintegration of indigenous communities following European contact in California resulted in the loss of much of the traditional native culture, especially in Southern Alta California and Baja California where Spanish contact first occurred. The missionization and forced acculturation which began during the late eighteenth century introduced new political and religious organizations that greatly affected the southern California and northern Baja California Indians. A mission system was established under the Spanish occupation which led to indigenous people becoming a labor force for the Mexican ranchos. The exploitation of Indian groups as sources for labor continued with America’s political control of California. Eventually Native Americans emerged into the economic opportunities of their changed environment losing much of their social, political, and ritual knowledge in the process.

In the past century, population growth and political pressure in southern California and northern Baja California has resulted in even more rapid changes within indigenous communities. The historical experience of native groups undergoing influences wrought by industrialization, modernization, and globalization has not been well documented due to their marginalization. Communities in Baja California provide a unique opportunity to study how the Kumeyaay of Southern California and Northern Baja California navigated these changing times. Many of the children living during that time are now elders who hold vital information on the historical processes and their effects on indigenous lifeways. With their own children having grown up more assimilated to contemporary Mexican culture and influenced by American culture, these elders hold the last vestiges of knowledge about many aspects of their culture and the now abandoned archaeological sites that exist across the cultural landscape.

Evidence of the historical experiences of the Kumeyaay of Peña Blanca in northern Baja California is contained within the patterns of archaeological material and sites that are scattered throughout the valley floor. These features were documented, and interviews were
conducted with the matriarch of the Kumeyaay family still living in this community focusing on her interpretation of this material and her family’s history. The ethnographic data obtained will be compared to the way in which the sites are currently being interpreted by local archaeologists to allow us to see what differences may exist between the interpretations. Ultimately, information gleaned from this study can be compared to similar Kumeyaay settlements located on both sides of the US/Mexico border, broadening and recording the history of these largely isolated communities.

Changes in property law in Mexico have weakened indigenous claims of ownership to their traditional land. Peña Blanca is a familial community whose matriarch, Josephina Lopez Meza, wishes to strengthen her family’s claim to ownership of this land. By mapping the archaeological features on this property and through interviews concerning the relationship of these sites, this study records the historical occupation of Peña Blanca and provides documentation in verifying ownership of the property for the Meza family.

The Lopez Meza family has a house within the valley of Peña Blanca, though these days, it is Josephina’s sons who maintain the home and the horses and livestock that the family raises. Like many other Native Americans who live in the backcountry of Baja California, Josephina Lopez Meza also has a house in Valle las Palmas, off of Highway 3, the main thoroughfare that runs north and south through this area.

Peña Blanca is one of many indigenous communities in this area of Baja California that are associated with the Kumeyaay Indians. The history of the Kumeyaay in this region is marked by changes in the archaeological record that are discussed in the next chapter, but historical ethnographies reveal numerous names existing in both Mexican and American literature for this group located within southern California and northern Baja California (Almstedt 1982; Cline 1979, 1984; Gifford 1931; Luomala 1976, 1978; Spiers 1923; Waterman 1910). Early ethnographers employed the term Diegueño when referring to the Yuman-speaking population inhabiting portions of southern Alta California and northern Baja California during the late prehistoric and early historic eras. The term results from the coerced affiliation of a large part of this cultural group with the Mission San Diego de Alcalá established in 1769. Throughout the twentieth century various anthropologists, using generalized ethnographically documented territories and geographical variations, employed various terminologies when discussing and subdividing these people into culture groups. The
use of this inconsistent terminology is complicated by the fact that while the Diegueño recognized their collective similarity in speech and custom as opposed to surrounding societies, they had no all-inclusive name they recognized for themselves as a single people. Presently, the term "Kumeyaay" (English) or “Kumiai” (Spanish) are used to refer to the groups that existed within the vicinity of the project area.
CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND


PALEOINDIAN PERIOD

The earliest well documented prehistoric sites in southern California and northern Baja California are identified as belonging to the Paleoindian period, which has locally been termed the San Dieguito complex or tradition (Moratto 1984, Warren 1966, Warren et al., 1998). The Paleoindian period is thought to have occurred between 10,000 years ago, or earlier, and 8,000 years ago in this region. The San Dieguito tradition seems to mark an intermediate position between the Clovis pattern and the later archaic cultures of southern California (Warren et al., 1998). Although varying from the well-defined fluted projectile point complexes associated with the Big Game Hunting Tradition found in the Great Plains and American Southwest 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, the San Dieguito complex, though later, is still seen as having a similar generalized hunting economy focused on highly ranked resources such as large mammals. Additionally, the culture was marked by relatively high mobility, possibly related to following and procuring large game. Technology is characterized by typologically distinct flaked lithic tools such as scrapers, choppers, crescents, engraving tools, leaf-shaped bifaces (knives), and large projectile points, as well as
evidence associated with this period has been found around inland dry lakes (Antevs 1937,
1952, Campbell 1949, Campbell et al., 1937, Rogers 1939), on old terrace deposits of the
California desert (Hunt 1960, Wallace 1958), and also near the coast where it was first
documented and is best represented at the Harris Site in San Diego County, California

**Archaic Period**

Native Americans during the Archaic period had a more generalized economy that
focused on broader subsistence strategies. In many parts of North America, this included
horticulture and agriculture, but in southern California and northern Baja California,
economies remained largely based on the collection of wild resources (Willey and Phillips
1958).

The Early Archaic period is differentiated from the earlier Paleoindian period by a
shift to a more generalized economy and an increased focus on the use of seed processing
technology. The use of a broader range of resources resulted in more dispersed
semi-sedentary settlements usually located along the terraces of lagoons and streambeds
(Crabtree et al., 1963, Harding 1951, Kaldenberg 1982, Rogers 1939, 1945, Smith and
Moriarty 1985, Warren et al., 1998). These sites date between approximately 8,000 and 2,000
years before present (B.P.) and are marked by an increased use of groundstone artifacts and
atlatl points, along with a mixed core-based tool assemblage, suggesting adaptations to a
more diversified set of plant and animal resources (Warren et al., 1998). The lithic
technology of this period includes variations of the Pinto and Elko series projectile points,
along with large crude percussion bifaces and flaked cobble tools. Archaic archaeological
assemblages also yield manos and portable metates, stone and shell beads, and occasionally,
steatite and asphaltum (Warren et al., 1998). The end of the Archaic period is marked by
environmental change, resulting in the silting of the lagoons and a subsequent decline in
coastal resources leading to a greater reliance on land-based subsistence strategies (Moratto
PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Around 2,000 years ago, at the beginning of the Late Prehistoric Period, it has been hypothesized that Yuman-speaking people from the eastern Colorado River region began migrating into southern California and northern Baja California (Luomala 1978). Archaeological sites dating to this period are prevalent in southern California and have been associated with increased population densities (McDonald and Eighmey 1998). The Prehistoric Period is further defined by technological innovations and a greater diversity of material culture, including smaller projectile points related to the use of the bow and arrow, the replacement of flexed inhumations with cremations, the introduction of ceramics and better methods of food storage, and the use of the mortar and pestle associated with increased reliance on acorns as a food staple (McDonald and Eighmey 1998, True 1966). Inland, annually occupied, semi-sedentary villages were established along major watercourses, and montane areas were seasonally occupied for the exploitation of resources such as seeds, acorns, and piñon nuts, resulting in permanent milling features on bedrock outcrops (Cline 1984, McDonald and Eighmey 1998). During this time period, mortars, often associated with the processing of acorns, increased in frequency relative to slicks and basins usually associated with seed grinding. This period is known archaeologically in the southern part of San Diego County as the Yuman (Rogers 1945) or the Cuyamaca Complex (True 1970). In the northern part of San Diego County, this period is known as the San Luis Rey Complex (Meighan 1954, True et al., 1974).

The Kumeyaay who inhabited the southern region of San Diego County, western and central Imperial County, and northern Baja California are the direct descendants of these early Yuman hunter-gatherers (Almstedt 1982, Gifford 1931, Luomala 1976, 1978, Shipek 1978, Spier 1923). Kumeyaay territory encompassed a large and diverse environment, which included seasonal occupation of the coastal, foothill, mountain, and desert resource zones. Their language is a dialect of the Yuman language, which is related to the larger Hokan super family (Luomala 1978).

There was considerable variability in the level of social organization and settlement patterning among the Kumeyaay. They were organized by patrilineal, exogamous groups that claimed prescribed territories, but did not own the resources except for some minor plants and eagle aeries (Luomala 1976, Spier 1923:299). Some lineages occupied procurement
ranges that required considerable residential mobility, utilizing the various ecological zones throughout the region (Hicks 1963). According to Spier (1923), many Eastern Kumeyaay occupied various territories seasonally, spending the period of time from spring through autumn in larger residential bases in the upland procurement ranges, while wintering in mixed residential bases along the eastern foothills on the edge of the Colorado Desert. This variability in settlement mobility and organization reflects the great range of environments exploited within Kumeyaay territories.

Acorns were the single most important food source used by the Kumeyaay. Their villages were usually located near water (Luomala 1978, McDonald and Eighmey 1998), which was necessary for leaching acorn meal and survival in the region’s hot dry climate. Other storable resources, such as mesquite, agave, and piñon nuts, were equally valuable to groups inhabiting desert areas, at least during certain seasons (Hicks 1963, McDonald and Eighmey 1998, Shackley 1984). Seeds from grasses, manzanita, sage, sunflowers, lemonadeberry, chia, and other plants were also used along with various wild greens and fruits (Luomala 1978, Spier 1923), and there is some ethnographic evidence that suggests horticulture practice, in the planting of seeds and maintenance of wild resources (Shipek 1991). Small game such as rabbits, squirrels, hares, and woodrats dominate faunal assemblages from archaeological sites, though larger game such as deer and bighorn sheep were also hunted, along with birds, lizards, and some snakes (Cline 1984, Luomala 1976, 1978). Marine resources were utilized along the coast, though not as intensely as during the prior Archaic period (Luomala 1976).

The material culture included ceramic cooking and storage vessels, baskets, flaked lithic and ground stone tools, arrow shaft straighteners, and ornaments of stone, bone, and shell. Hunting implements included the bow and arrow, curved throwing sticks, nets and snares. Nets, as well as shell and bone fishhooks, were used for fishing. Lithic materials, including quartz and metavolcanics, were commonly available throughout much of the Kumeyaay territory. Other lithic resources, such as obsidian, chert, chalcedony, and steatite, occur in more localized areas and were acquired through direct procurement or exchange. Projectile points, including the Cottonwood Series points and Desert Side-notched points, were commonly produced.
During the prehistoric era, Kumeyaay settlements were only occupied during the winter months, while summer months were spent collecting food (Curtis 1926, Luomala 1978). These semi-permanent settlements were generally located along major water courses in areas of blending ecological zones so that a variety of plant communities would have been available (Carrico 1987). In general, each settlement was fairly autonomous, coming together for various festivals. Kumeyaay settlements were traditionally patrilineal (Luomala 1976, Spier 1923), though more recent ethnographies of adjacent Yuman territory reveal settlements that are composed of a number of smaller family units, often including both paternal and maternal kinsman (Bee 1963). Historical pressures, brought on by Anglo expansion, disrupted the seasonal migration of the Kumeyaay and changed aspects of village life, possibly resulting in the amalgamation of various settlements and families.

Houses were arranged in the village without apparent pattern, though references concerning house proximity vary. Shipek (1987) states that homesteads were dispersed along drainages and valleys surrounding small springs, while others have stated that families built their homes in close proximity to each other (Cline 1984, Spier 1923). Traditionally, the houses in primary villages were domed, conical structures composed of a pole framework that was covered with thatched earth and grass (Hohenthal 2001, Waterman 1910). In 1923, Spier described a traditional Kumeyaay house as a simple gable structure with two forked posts that supported an upper ridge pole. The two supporting posts were laid at an angle against the ridge pole with the post bases sunk into holes approximately 30 cm deep. The structure was then covered using a base layer of brush laid horizontally on the rafters with dry grass, mashed into a stringy mass, placed on top of the brush (Spier 1923). Branches of brush were also placed along the sides of the house and covered with damp dirt to create the side walls (Spier 1923). Support poles were added to the rear and front of the house and covered with brush branches and grass, except the door, which according to Spier (1923), measured 1.25 by 0.5 meters (m) and always faced east. The entrance was normally left open during the warmer months, but a tule mat served as a hinged door during colder periods.

Inside the house, the floors were excavated so that they were slightly sunken, and most had central hearths (Cline 1984, Luomala 1978), though Spier (1923) refers to the fire being close to the door, allowing smoke to escape the enclosure. The sleeping arrangement within the house was around the fire. The men, who lived within the home, slept closest to
the fire with their wives beside them (Spier 1923). Any children slept at their head and feet, though babies often slept between the couple. Guests would have slept at the rear of the fire (Spier 1923).

Rectangular houses were constructed beginning in the late 1700’s and are often associated with mountain settlements (Cline 1979). These houses had stone foundations with a framework of forked poles and crossbeams covered with thatch (Cline 1984, Gifford 1931, Luomala 1978). Hohenthal (2001) describes these modern houses as rectangular with a framework of cottonwood or willow posts to make vertical walls that were then covered with thatch. Gifford (1931) notes that the Kamia, a band of Kumeyaay living in the Imperial Valley, had previously used a thatch and sand mixture for the walls and roof, but that this had recently been replaced with mud. In this area, the main posts and roof timbers were cottonwood with smaller willow branches used for support. Arrowweed was placed on top of this with the sand or mud mixture serving as the final covering (Gifford 1931). The door was placed along the east wall and was approximately 30 inches thick (Gifford 1931), though Hohenthal (2001) notes that many such structures had more than one entrance with no particular alignment. In winter, the fire was inside the house, usually in the center, and in the summer, it was placed outdoors. The head of the house, along with his wife, slept closest to the door, with the remainder of the family sleeping around the fire, except the elderly who were often placed in their own private dwelling nearby (Gifford 1931). Interestingly, Gifford (1931:20) notes that blankets, mortars, pestles, and metates were stored within the house, while pottery was kept outside, although Hohenthal (2001) refers to most items being stored within the dwellings by the late 1940s.

Village-owned communal structures included ceremonial enclosures and sometimes sweathouses. Waterman (1910) refers to several ceremonial structures or areas, including a circular dance ground with adjacent ramadas or small structures, the ‘kwusitcnyawa’ for storing ceremonial objects, and the ‘keruk’ house associated with the image burning ceremony.

Sweathouses appear to be of minor importance for the Kumeyaay (Luomala 1978), although Gifford (1931) refers to two descriptions of sweathouses by his informants, Beans and Narpai. Narpai believed that only one person owned the sweathouse, though others were allowed its use. According to Narpai, only men were allowed into the sweathouse, usually
when sore, weak, or sick, though Beans refers to its rare use by sick women (Gifford 1931), and Hohenthal (2001) states that it was used by both sexes separately. Gifford lists Beans as describing the sweathouses as “conical, built of willow poles with center post, arrowweed and earth…about 6 feet high, 4 feet above ground, 2 below, for the floor was excavated to that depth” (Gifford 1931:21). Beans describes the door as on the east side and closed using arrowweed. Hohenthal (2001) refers to sweathouses as “domed structures of grass and brush with a single low entrance; though no door” (Hohenthal 2001:194). The fire was built in a small depression within the center of the structure, which could hold four men (Gifford 1931). After sweating, the sick bathed and usually after several treatments, were healed.

Smaller structures included granaries and ramadas. Granaries were large storage baskets, generally located along flat bedrock surfaces and were often associated with bedrock milling features (Kyle 1988). Gifford (1931:40) describes a granary located at the home of one of his informants as being made of willow and arrowweed stems that still contained the leaves. The granary was raised off the ground, approximately 2 feet, and covered with thorny mesquite branches to inhibit disturbance from animals. Hohenthal (2001) refers to granaries as “dome- or beehive-shaped, placed on four vertical posts five to six feet above the ground” (Hohenthal 2001:195), though he mentions that they were no longer used to a great extent during his survey in the late 1940s. Ramadas were sunshades usually constructed over bedrock milling features or near houses (Kyle 1988). Ramadas were built separately from dwellings, but were often directly adjacent to the houses (Hohenthal 2001). The hottest part of the days was spent underneath the ramadas, and often cooking took place within the ramada instead of in the house itself (Hohenthal 2001).

With a person’s belongings, including their home, usually burned upon their death, the variability in structure type is usually recognized archaeologically by the size, shape, and structure of the foundations that remain. The traditional domed ramadas are represented by a cleared circle ringed with a rock foundation and no construction material present. More modern structures consist of rectangular rock foundations, usually larger than the ramadas. The way in which these buildings were constructed is usually recognized by the remains of construction material either on the rocks, as in melted sun-dried clay bricks (adobe), or in the vicinity, such as wood pieces or metal. For all types of structures, the distribution of artifacts
within and directly surrounding the structure, as well as its size, is used to determine the purpose for which a structure was intended.

Kumeyaay culture and society remained relatively stable with no significant disruptions until the advent of missionization and displacement by Hispanic populations during the eighteenth century. The effects of missionization, along with the introduction of European diseases, greatly reduced the native populations of Alta and Baja California. By the early 1820s, California was under Mexican rule, and the establishment of ranchos under the Mexican land grant program further disrupted the way of life of the native inhabitants. After California came under American control, the steady influx of settlers into the outlying portions of San Diego County increased the pressure on the native population, pushing many of the Kumeyaay further into Mexico.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH SETTING

As the United States was trying to acclimate the Kumeyaay to their contemporary culture, many of the Kumeyaay in Mexico continued to utilize more traditional lifeways, often trading goods for various necessities at local trading posts or general stores. Population pressure and border regulations forced many Native peoples to reorganize their communities as a response to limitations placed on their traditional migrations and lifeways.

The area surrounding Tecate, Mexico shared this fate, resulting in many indigenous peoples founding permanent communities or rancherias organized around familial relationships. Even though many of these communities may have been occupied for centuries, often their Kumeyaay names have been lost, but the historic names of these rancherias include Nejí, Cañon de Manteca, Los Coches, Álamo, Calabasas, Villareal de San José (also known as San José Tecate), Jamatay, and Peña Blanca, among others. These communities share familial and affinal ties that form a larger community network covering the entire Tijuana River Watershed and beyond.

The focus of the current study is the settlement of Peña Blanca, which is located in the northern region of the state of the Baja California within the Tijuana River Watershed (see Figure 1), south of Tecate and east of Valle las Palmas between El Potrerito and Granjas Mortera, just south of Cañada La Ramadita. The community of Peña Blanca is on the north side of the Cerro de Peña Blanca, a prominent white rock feature on the southern ridge line from which the community derives its name.

ETHNOGRAPHIC

Peña Blanca is located in the northern region of the state of the Baja California on an inland plateau between Neji Valley and Valle las Palmas, just south of Cañon de Manteca. Little documentation is available regarding this site. In 1948-1949, William Hohenthal visited this area recording the Kumeyaay place name of Peña Blanca to be ‘Ui’hapal or hapal meaning elderberry rock and elderberry, respectively (Hohenthal 2001).
According to Hohenthal, in the summer of 1948, Benito Meza had two hectares at Peña Blanca with about ten steers and two acres of crops. The Peña Blanca establishment had belonged to Meza’s deceased mother, Petracuña Osuna who was married to Meza’s father, Antonio of the Miškwiš clan. In 1948, her house was abandoned, as she had died around Christmas the year before (Hohenthal 2001).

In 2007, Kara Johnson worked with another Kumeyaay community near Tecate to help create an indigenous museum. She worked closely with the family of Julia Meza Thing, who is the daughter of Benito Meza. During her research for the museum, Johnson (2007:93-99) created a genealogy of Julia Meza Thing’s family who lived within the community San José Tecate, as well as collecting photographs, some of which included pictures of Petracuña.
Osuna and the home of Benito Meza at Peña Blanca. Julia recalled that her father, Benito Meza, would travel between San José Tecate and Peña Blanca every week. By the 1950s, the family was no longer making regular trips to Peña Blanca, though relatives, including Julia’s father, were still being buried there (Johnson 2007:29, 98).

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

Several archaeological studies have been conducted in northern Baja California concerning the Kumeyaay. One cursory study (Gamble et al., 2006) falls within the interior region that includes Peña Blanca, but the majority of research has focused on the margins of the territory traditionally occupied by the Kumeyaay along the coast of the Pacific Ocean or the Sea of Cortez and in the Sierra Juarez Mountains.

The study that brushes upon the current project area (Gamble et al., 2006) documented the relationship of indigenous communities within the Tijuana River Watershed focusing on the traditional management of natural resources. In total, the study identified 24 archaeological sites that included varying degrees of lithics, pottery, bedrock milling, modified bone and shell, rock art, and historic structures (Gamble et al., 2006). At Peña Blanca, two dwellings were identified along with bedrock milling, pottery, flakes, and other artifacts, as well as noting the probability for additional abandoned features within the area (Gamble et al., 2006).

Several archaeological investigations have occurred along the Pacific coast. May and Ike (1981) constructed a research design for the Coronado Islands, off the coast of Rosarito Beach, comparing occupation on the islands with that on the mainland. Treganza (1947) analyzed lithic material from Rosarito Beach and Punta Banda, while Williams (1973) looked at several rock art sites surrounding Rosarito.

On the opposite coastline surrounding the Sea of Cortez, Douglas (1981) and Schneck and Gifford (1952) examined shell middens near San Felipe. Further inland along the various canyons of the Sierra Juarez Mountains, numerous studies have identified archaeological sites consisting of bedrock milling features, lithic scatters, and ceramic scatters, many of which were located in the immediate vicinity of rock art (Alvarez 1967, Cuadro Gutiérrez 2005, Fontaine 1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, Fontaine and Prosser 1965, Mattuissi Gutiérrez 2005, Oviedo García 2005). Other studies in this area have focused specifically on rock art.

Even with the varied types of archaeological investigation mentioned, none deal specifically with historical indigenous occupation and regional site distribution, but rather focus mainly on rock art and site types, with several addressing various locations of lithic materials in Northern Baja.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is threefold and includes the creation of a site map, the recording of archaeological sites associated with the consultant, and the delineation of activity areas across the landscape. The creation of a distribution map showing Peña Blanca with all archaeological features marked will help document historic native occupation, strengthening the family’s claims of ownership to this land. The intense documentation of features of which the consultant has first-hand knowledge will be compared to other features within the community to interpret their function. The distribution of artifact counts across the site will be used to identify activity areas, helping to understand how the space around and between sites was utilized.

An interdisciplinary approach combining archaeology and ethnology (ethnoarchaeology) with geography, specifically Geographical Information Systems (GIS), was used to achieve the specific research goals. The benefits of an interdisciplinary approach to data acquisition allows for multiple lines of evidence, both archaeological and ethnographic, to support interpretation and historical context of features on the landscape. The inherent nature of geography, looking at the dispersal of attributes across the landscape, makes it well-suited to document the cultural resources.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Ethnoarchaeology has been defined in many different ways throughout the history of the subdiscipline (see David and Kramer 2001:6-14). Gould (1980:x) used the term “living archaeology” to emphasize the active elements inherent in linking behavior and material culture to living, contemporary populations. Others use(d) the term “anthropological archaeology” (Gibbon 1984, Kus 2000, Thomas 1974), as in *The Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*. For many of these authors, ethnoarchaeology represents a broad framework by which to compare ethnographic and archaeological patterning. In their 2001 publication on ethnoarchaeology, David and Kramer sought to create a definition that corresponded with the
variable usages of the term in past publications, defining ethnoarchaeology as “research that includes an ethnographic component and is carried out with the analogical needs of the archaeologist in mind” (David and Kramer 2001:11-12). Whatever definition is used, all of the researchers agree that a broad application of ethnoarchaeology combines archaeological and ethnographic approaches.

An ethnoarchaeological approach allows for the combination of the strengths of both archaeology and ethnography to better interpret the research results to include indigenous knowledge and their understanding of archaeological sites, as well as incorporating the unknown historical occupation of the land. This research seeks to utilize ethnoarchaeology, within the context of spatial archaeology, to help define aspects of place and space.

Spatial archaeology is simply “the range of archaeological pursuits that focus on the study of the spatial aspects of the archaeological record” (Ashmore 2002). The very nature of archaeological data recovery and analysis is the context in which the archaeological sample occurs. Context associated with archaeological sites examines the spatial relationship (i.e., position, arrangement, and/or orientation) of both artifacts and sites at a range of scales. These two relationships dominate spatial archaeological research in the form of site distribution and artifact distribution (Hodder and Orton 1976).

The identification of spatial trends in archaeology seeks to identify three types of patterns: random, regular, or clustered (Peregrine 2001). When looking at settlement patterns, spatial analysis defines site distribution over a geographically defined area by collecting and comparing variables such as local environment, site size, and artifact distribution (Hodder and Orton 1976). These variables are then used to define the type of site or if the research area represents a site.

Problems associated with site distribution occur in the variations of interpretation and definition of sites by archaeologists, even to the extent of whether a site is permanent or temporary. Chronological imprecision may also affect site distribution, such as problems identifying different occupation periods over time. Archaeological sites are also distorted through erosion, destruction, and varying levels of fieldwork intensity. These possible inconsistencies represent the main restrictions associated with the analysis of relationships between sites (Hodder and Orton 1976).
Intra-site analysis focuses on the vertical and horizontal artifact distribution within a defined site. This type of analysis assumes that materials are randomly deposited on a site in the absence of human influence or behavior. If a deviation from a random pattern occurs, human interference is assumed to be the cause (Peregrine 2001). Concentrations of artifacts are associated with specific activities relative to the nature of the site, and often, these activities are assumed to be both sex specific and mono-functional (Kent 1984). Artifact distribution is similarly affected by erosion, destruction, and fieldwork intensity. In both site and artifact distribution, the absence of a distribution may be difficult to interpret. Often, this does not mean that the artifact or site does not occur in these areas, just that they have yet to be found at that location (Hodder and Orton 1976).

More recent research concerning spatial archaeology has focused on space and place within archaeological landscapes. The landscape approach uses the geographical concept of cultural landscape, loosely defined as the interaction between nature and humans over a geographic area (Sauer 1925). Modern landscape research is multidisciplinary, but within archaeology, it generally refers to the “backdrop against which archaeological remains are plotted” (Ashmore and Knapp 1999:1). Prominent notions of landscape archaeology emphasize the socio-symbolic relationship of nature and people that exists through the perceptions, experiences, and contextualization of a culture (Ashmore and Knapp 1999). In short, “the landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them” (Ingold 1993).

Landscape archaeology has traditionally focused on settlement patterning but has expanded to include a more comprehensive distribution of human interaction between and amid sites and loci. Whereas landscape was once viewed as a passive background (what the people did to the land) or a determining factor in a culture (how it aided or constrained humans), it is now viewed as an active entity with varying degrees of influential complexity (Ashmore and Knapp 1999). The landscape has become a social phenomenon given significance by the individuals who are constructing and interpreting the world around them and by doing so, give it meaning.

There are two approaches to landscape archaeology: “(a) delimiting an arbitrary space and then focusing on what is inside that space or (b) focusing on one specific object and describing, progressively, its relations with other objects” (Zedoño 2000:106). For the
purpose of this thesis, the first approach is the most viable as the research area is determined by the property boundary of the community. Each place, or feature, within the community will represent a discrete locus of human behavior or event, defined by Zedoño (2000) as a landmark and by Kent (1984, 1990) as activity areas. Landmarks are “locational markers that indicate places where interactions and activities occurred and may include stationary and physically unmodified features of the natural landscape, such as rock formations, tree stands, and waterhole or features of human manufacture, such as buildings, trails, burials mounds, and petroglyphs” (Zedoño 2000:106). Kent (1984) defines activity areas as loci where a particular event has occurred. These landmarks and activity areas represent a life history formed from multiple experiences lived at a particular place, and the combination of these experiences and places represents a landscape. The landscape becomes the spatial, historical, and social dimensions of the relationship between man and nature.

The spatial and temporal relationship inherent in landscape archaeology can be effectively managed using a geographic information system (GIS). The location of artifacts, sites, ecological associations, landforms, and water occur on a geographic landscape. These geographical aspects can be incorporated into the GIS computer program to create a map comprised of data layers or themes that link the geometric and non-geometric attributes associated with the various geographical features. The informational aspect of the GIS links each theme to descriptive data in an attribute table. The system of GIS is the hardware and software associated with the computer program (Longley et al., 2001).

GIS allows for the creation of descriptive maps where items, in this case, archaeological features, can be displayed against a background of related contextual geographic information (Lock and Harris 1992). This distribution map may be composed of vector or raster based systems that handle spatial referencing in different ways. Vector based GIS uses topological structures consisting of points, lines, and/or polygons to represent spatial phenomena, while raster based GIS is represented by a matrix of grid cells. These data sets are shown on a map which is then linked to associated attribute data. A map-based approach displays the information as a site plan for intra-site analysis or in the form of a distributional map at the regional level (Lock and Harris 1992). The analysis of these maps involves “comparing, correlating, and commenting on the distributions of features by looking
at their overall patterning along or in conjunction with other ‘background’ contextual information” (Lock and Harris 1992:83).

Within archaeology, GIS has been used to establish predictive models for site locations and to build regional and site databases for the management of archaeological resources. Predictive site modeling examines known archaeological sites for statistical associations with various environmental conditions then uses the correlation to predict where other resources may be located (Kvamme 1995). The inherent nature of GIS to store and visualize large amounts of data allows for the creation of regional and site databases for cultural resource management.

The ability of GIS to perform complex analysis is what makes this program unique. GIS can manage the large data sets associated with archaeology, specifically spatial distribution, allowing for complex analyses and modeling, but GIS cannot supply cultural interpretation (Kvamme 1989).

The specific cultural meaning given to landmarks and landscapes cannot be completely inferred from archaeology and geology alone, but the combination of archaeological spatial analysis with ethnography allows for the recovery of information concerning ways of life that may no longer exist (Pelto and Pelto 1970). Ethnography is concerned with human behavior and the ways in which people construct and assign meaning to their world. At the basis of anthropology is the concept of culture as a combination of behavior, beliefs, interactions, organization, and productions that are not random, but form a complex whole that has meaning (Angrosino 2002). Culture is highly variable and locally specific, enabling comparative analysis of people of the world and their cultures to find patterns. As such, culture requires objective collection and analysis of these components to understand how they function.

Ethnographic methods are used to answer questions about human communities and their institutions. There are varying data collections available to ethnographers, but ethnographic studies are generally marked by seven characteristics (LeCompte and Schensul 1999):

1. Occurring in a natural setting,
2. Including face-to-face interaction,
3. Reflecting the participant’s perspectives or behaviors,
4. Helping to build local cultural theories,
5. Incorporating multiple data sources,
6. Framing behavior and belief within a sociopolitical context
7. Using culture to interpret research results.

Interviewing and observation are the fundamental ethnographic data collection techniques, but all techniques attempt to gather information that contributes to a description of a people and their way of life.

Modernization and globalization has caused a shift in anthropological perspective to include broadening impacts that have the potential to influence culture. Changing social, territorial, and cultural productions have altered group identity in the twentieth century leading Arjun Appadurai (1991) to coin the phrase ‘ethnoscapes.’ In a world of transnational contact between people and cultures, migration helps to reconstruct history leading to many culture groups redefining their identity. People are no longer spatially bound or culturally homogenous. An ethnoscapes becomes “the landscape of persons who make up the shifting world” (Appadurai 1991:192).

The Kumeyaay in Mexico have managed to create their own ethnoscapes. They retain much of their traditional lifeways, but their culture and identity has been greatly influenced by the nearby United States/Mexico border where two more dominant cultures collide. Historically, the Kumeyaay traveled throughout this region from the coast, through the mountains, and into the desert. They were also able to cross the border freely. Expansion of American settlements along the coast and into the backcountry combined with the tightening of border regulations began to limit traditional movement into the United States to the north, (Shipek 1991). In Mexico, the Kumeyaay still continued to utilize their traditional lifeways, but began incorporating manufactured goods and textiles into their daily lives, while in the United States the Kumeyaay were often being forcefully acculturated into mainstream American society. Both groups of Kumeyaay recognize each other as being familial related, though to the north they speak English and to the south, Spanish. The ability of these Native Americans to navigate the various cultures with which they have had contact and maintain aspects of their group identity makes them excellent candidates to study the non-native cultural impacts that have affected their identity.
METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the native perspective, I focused on the community of Peña Blanca and the life history of Josephina Lopez Mesa. I was first introduced to Josephina and Peña Blanca while assisting Dr. Lynn Gamble of San Diego State University and Michael Wilken-Robertson from the Native Cultures Institute of Baja California on a research project concerning cultural ecology and indigenous landscapes located within the Tijuana River Watershed (Gamble et al. 2006). Josephina explained to me the problems facing the community and expressed her interest in documenting the historical occupation of Peña Blanca. With her permission, anthropological fieldwork for my thesis project began in December 2006 and was conducted over a period of eleven months, ending in October 2007. All fieldwork took place at the community of Peña Blanca located in northern Baja California, south of Tecate and east of Valle las Palmas.

The community of Peña Blanca encompasses a large valley and surrounding steep hillsides. Due to the vast area and time constraints, the archaeological survey focused on living areas along the creek that were familiar to the consultant. The project area was intensively surveyed in 10 to 15 meter (m) transect intervals. For the purposes of this research, the entire community was classified as a site, and archaeological features were recorded in the order identified, beginning with PB (Peña Blanca)-1. Ethnographic interviews were then conducted at the location of each feature.

Ethnographically pertinent archaeological features were further documented by laying a measured tape through the center along a north/south line and recording the elements comprising the features from this baseline. A site grid was established according to true north in 5 by 5 meters across these features with an arbitrary datum assigned to 100N/100E. The grids consisted of thirty-six squares measuring 5 by 5 meters. Each square within the grid was assigned a number beginning with the southwest corner as one, and artifact counts were taken within each square. Artifact categories included both traditional and historic classifications. Traditional artifacts included debitage (both flakes and angular waste), cores, flaked stone tools, pottery, and groundstone; while historic included glass, ceramic, and metal.

This research is limited to using GIS to create descriptive distributional maps showing the location of archaeological features within the project area. A site map was
obtained by taking Global Positioning System (GPS) points at the center of all features. These points were imported into the GIS base map which was constructed using San Diego State University, Department of Geography, Community GIS Data Clearinghouse library for the Tijuana River Watershed. The base map was constructed using vector line data showing rivers and creeks that compose the watershed along with raster elevation model that was hill-shaded to show relief. A satellite image depicting the site from above and the site grid were georeferenced into the map using the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system. Artifact counts were incorporated into GIS using the Make XY Event Layer listed under Layers and Table Views in Data Management Tools. The appropriate artifact class was given a field value under grid layer properties, the symbology tab. The quantities were then separated into varying class values associated with graduated colors to see if any patterning could be observed.

The ethnographic component focused on a key informant’s life history, dealing specifically with the occupation of the community of Peña Blanca. The key consultant was Mrs. Josephina Lopez Meza, the matriarch of the familial community (see Figure 2). She currently lives in Valle las Palmas, but still maintains a house at Peña Blanca that was built by her father. During fieldwork, I, along with a translator, would pick her up and drive her to Peña Blanca, spending approximately 4-6 hours walking through the community discussing the archaeological remains and any memories Josephina had of the place or the people who lived there. Josephina received a daily compensation during each visit, as they lasted the entire day, though her knowledge concerning this community and its inhabitants was invaluable.

The life history methodology was utilized to recover information about cultural practices that no longer exist or have been modified, as is the case of the many salvage ethnographies of Native American culture, such as those performed by Kroeber and his students at the University of California, Berkeley (Pelto and Pelto 1970). The archaeological features were used as elicitation tools to structure the interview process. Open-ended questions were used to gain information about the history of the community and the archeological sites within the community, as well as the consultant’s personal history and cultural knowledge.
Figure 2. Key consultant, Josephina Lopez Meza in front of her house at Peña Blanca.
The nature of the data focuses on the location, construction, and organization of house structures, as well as the consultant’s personal experiences and memories of people and events that occurred there. The information was facilitated by asking a series of open-ended questions with a set of probes (see Table 1). Open-ended question responses may be varied and probes are utilized to gain additional information.

**Table 1. Open-Ended Questions Used in Interviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
<th>There were varying house styles utilized by the Kumeyaay including brush houses, adobe houses, and the more modern cinder block and stucco homes. Where do houses or other living spaces occur within Pena Blanca? (Probes: who lived there, what types of house were they, when were the various house types occupied, how long were they occupied, how often were new homes reconstructed, what type of upkeep was required for the various homes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer:</td>
<td>For each house location identified, how were they arranged internally and how was the area directly outside the home utilized? (Probes: where the home divided into rooms or activity areas, where did people sleep, where did they prepare food, what about storage, where was the fire located, did the fire rotate indoor versus outdoor with changing weather conditions, where was trash disposal in relationship to each house)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer:</td>
<td>For homes that were present during your life, what is your fondest memory associated with that place or the person that lived there? (Probes: how old were you during this event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer:</td>
<td>What other areas did people use when in their homes? (Probes: gathering areas, communal buildings, sweathouses, farming or livestock)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The incorporation of ethnographic data expands the knowledge concerning general archaeological sites and their surface associations. Josephina Lopez Meza’s knowledge of Peña Blanca relates to the greater Kumeyaay experience in Northern Baja California and serves as a representation of other Kumeyaay experiences in Southern California.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The entire valley of Peña Blanca exhibits varying degrees of occupation, but during preliminary research, the consultant, Josephina Lopez Meza, identified two areas on either side of the creek that represented living areas of which she had first-hand knowledge. This area corresponded to the portion of the creek bed which contains water on a year round basis and was the area upon which research was focused.

ARCHAEOLOGY

The initial phase of the project consisted of an archaeological survey of the site area. This served to identify archaeological features using standard survey methods. Once identified, the consultant was interviewed concerning her knowledge of sites and to determine if any sites were missed. The archaeological survey revealed a total of thirty features (see Figure 3). The focus of the survey was on the various types of rock alignments, as they still retain much of their integrity. Though cultural debris is present throughout the site, artifact concentrations were only noted in relation to nearby features. The active use of this area for pastoral grazing and agricultural discing appears to have disturbed the surface of the site resulting in a relatively uniform dispersal of artifacts with limited clustering.

PB-1

This feature is the foundation to an adobe structure. It is located on a small knoll, southeast of the dirt road and stream. The footings of the foundation are composed of local granitic rock and melted adobe is still present on many of the footings. At the eastern corners, adobe bricks are still distinguishable. The structure would have been rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 5 meters N/S by 15 meters E/W, with the structure aligned in a NE/SW direction (see Figure 4). The remains of an interior partition suggests that the structure was divided into two rooms. The location of doorways are clearly recognizable
between the rooms and leading from the structure. A circular rock foundation directly adjacent to the adobe foundation along the eastern wall, suggests another room enclosure, though this rock foundation shows no evidence of adobe or a doorway connecting it directly to the adobe structure (see Figure 5). This exterior room may represent an enclosed patio or outdoor gathering area. Within the remains of the structure and directly surrounding the foundations are various pieces of sheet metal, a coiled mattress spring, and several pieces of glass and ceramic. The integrity of the foundations is good, though the adobe is continuing to erode off the rocks. Surface evidence within the structure and along its exterior is disturbed from pastoral grazing as evidenced by animal excrement found within the feature boundaries. Modern recreational activity and vandalism has also compromised the surface integrity of the site, probably due to the close proximity of the foundation to a prominent dirt road that connects the valley of Peña Blanca to Santa Verónica.
Figure 4. PB-1 adobe foundation.

PB-2

Feature PB-2 is a large, rectangular rock foundation located on the northwest slope of a small knoll, east of the creek. The feature is located approximately 30 meters east of a north/south trending dirt road that transects along the western side of the knoll. The rock foundation is composed of local granite measuring approximately 10.5 m NE/SW by 7 m NW/SE, and the absence of adobe suggests a ramada type structure (see Figure 6). A can scatter consisting of mostly sanitary cans is present among the rocks at the northern corner (see Figure 7) along with several pieces of purple and clear glass. The presence of purple glass may indicate that this area was being used prior to World War I. The purple coloring of the glass comes from adding manganese dioxide to decolorize otherwise blue or green glass.
The manganese used in this process was acquired from Germany prior to World War I and was abandoned at the beginning of the war due to the German blockades. Decades of exposure to ultraviolet radiation can cause a reaction in the manganese that imparts a purple or pinkish tone to the glass (Sutton and Arkush 2002). A ceramic scatter of white vitreous ceramics with an orange striped pattern along the rim is located in the center portion of the rocks comprising the northeastern alignment of the foundation. At the southern corner, a pecked boulder comprises part of the rock alignment (see Figure 8), and along the eastern margin of the structure, a pane glass scatter is present.
This feature is a rock foundation, generally circular in shape, with a sunken floor (see Figure 9). The rock foundation is located along the western side of a small knoll on the east side of the creek. The feature is approximately five meters east of a dirt road that bisects the knoll. The rock is locally available granite and no melted adobe is present, suggesting a foundation to a ramada type structure. The north and east walls appear to represent a circular
structure while the south and west walls appear more linear (see Figure 9). The foundation measures approximately five meters N/S by five meters E/W, and could have been either circular or square in structure. The close proximity of the feature to the road may have resulted in recreational vehicles disturbing the alignment of the rocks, making the exact shape of the foundation indiscernible.

PB-4

PB-4 represents a linear rock alignment that runs along the northeastern slope of a small knoll on the east side of the creek (see Figure 10). The rock alignment may represent a wall or fence-like structure, but no artifacts are associated with the feature to suggest its purpose.

PB-5

This feature is a sunken pit with several pieces of burned lumber nearby. It is located along the northeast margin of a small knoll overlooking the creek to the west (see Figure 11). The close proximity of this pit to PB-1 through PB-4 suggests that this pit was probably associated with the structures on the nearby knoll.
PB-6

PB-6 is an agricultural field located northeast of the small knoll that overlooks the creek to the west. Furrows are still present within the field (see Figure 12), though no evidence of the crop growth remains. The rectangular adobe foundation, PB-1, is located just south of the agricultural field on the knoll, and the field is probably associated with the agricultural pursuits of the residents of that structure.
Figure 10. PB-4 linear rock alignment.

Figure 11. PB-5 sunken pit.
PB-7

PB-7 represents a rock alignment located along the southeastern slopes of a small ridgeline on the north side of the creek. The rocks appear to be local granite found in abundance along the ridge. The rocks have been aligned in a semi-circular arrangement, appearing to represent the southern wall (see Figure 13). No adobe is present on top of the rocks, though there is evidence of melted adobe along the base and margins of the rocks. A rock wall extends to the east of the structure, possible connecting it to PB-8.

PB-8

This feature is a circular rock alignment (see Figure 14) located just west of a similar alignment, PB-7, approximately 10 meters to the northeast. A linear rock feature runs between the two structures, suggesting that they may have been connected (see Figure 15). The rocks are local granite found along the ridgeline and arranged in a rectangular pattern stacked approximately a meter high. There is no adobe present on the rocks, though what appears to be melted adobe can be found between and along the base of the rocks.
Figure 13. PB-7 adobe foundation.

Figure 14. PB-8 adobe foundation.
PB-9

PB-9 is a rock alignment along the southern side of PB-7 and PB-8. The remains of a barbed wire fence runs along the alignment, indicating that the rock alignment may represent an early attempt to construct a fenced enclosure (see Figure 16). Bedrock milling is located within this alignment (see Figure 16) and may be associated with the nearby structures at PB-7 and PB-8.

PB-10

This feature is a north/south trending rock alignment located along the southeastern slope of the ridgeline on the northwest side of the creek. The alignment is located along a flat terraced area approximately 20 meters north of a similar alignment, PB-9 (see Figure 17). This linear alignment, as well, may represent a structure or fenced enclosure.
PB-11

PB-11 is a rectangular rock foundation located on the southeastern slopes of the ridge on the northwest side of the creek, just west of PB-7 and PB-8. The foundation is composed of locally available granitic material, and melted adobe is still present along the northern and eastern walls (see Figure 18). A doorway is distinguishable at the southeast corner. No partition walls are visible on the surface, suggesting that the structure would have been one room.

PB-12

Feature PB-12 is a linear rock alignment (see Figure 19) located on the southwestern slopes of the ridge on the northwest side of the creek, just east of PB-10. The feature is composed of small granitic rocks that are aligned in a northerly direction leading from a larger boulder with bedrock milling. Tizon Brown Ware ceramics are located among the rocks and scattered nearby. A small white seed bead was also located near the base of the large boulder.
Figure 17. Top: overview of PB-10. Bottom: PB-9 in foreground with PB-10 in background.
Figure 18. PB-11 adobe foundation.

Figure 19. PB-12 linear rock alignment.
PB-13

This feature may represent the foundation to another structure. It is located on the southeastern slope of the ridge on the northwest side of the creek. The rock alignment is among some larger boulders that may have been part of the north and east walls. Smaller rocks are arranged in a circular pattern between and among the larger boulders (see Figure 20) to create a foundation. These smaller rocks are stacked along the western and southern boundary where the larger rocks do not occur.

PB-14

PB-14 is a northeast/southwest trending trail on the northwest side of the creek (see Figure 21). The trail veers off of the main trail (PB-16) that runs parallel to the north side of the creek and reconnects along the margin of either agricultural field, located both to the north and south in the northern portion of the project area. The trail leads away from the creek into the rocky area where Features PB-7 through PB-13 are located.
Feature PB-15 represents a rock alignment located on the southeastern slope of the ridge on the northwest side of the creek. The small granitic rocks have been stacked between two larger boulders (see Figure 22) in a north/south trending alignment dividing a flat agricultural area from the rocky area containing sites PB-17, PB-19, and PB-22. The linear nature of the alignment and its locations suggests that this rock feature may have served as a wall or fence.
Figure 22. PB-15 linear rock alignment.

**PB-16**

This feature represents the main trail that runs along the northern side of the creek (see Figure 23). It parallels the creek throughout the project area, extending past the agricultural fields to outside of the research area. Purple glass fragments are present in the trail. The purple coloring of the glass comes from adding manganese dioxide to decolorize otherwise blue or green glass. Decades of exposure to ultraviolet radiation can cause a reaction in the manganese that imparts a purple or pinkish tone to the glass (Sutton and Arkush 2002). This process was abandoned at the beginning of World War I due to German blockades, and may suggest that the trail was in use during the early 1920’s.

**PB-17**

PB-17 is an adobe foundation (see Figure 24) located at the southeast corner of the southern agricultural field on the northwest side of the creek. The small granite footings are of local material and melted adobe can still be seen along the eastern wall.
Figure 23. PB-16 main trail.

Figure 24. PB-17 adobe foundation.
PB-18

Feature PB-18 represents a rock alignment located between two large boulders (see Figure 25). The feature is located along the eastern margin of the southern agricultural field on the northwest side of the creek. The linear nature of the alignment and close proximity of the field suggests a fence or wall divide to separate the agricultural field from the adjacent habitation area.

![Figure 25. PB-18 linear rock alignment.](image)

PB-19

This feature is a rock foundation located at the southeast corner of the southern agricultural field on the northwest side of the creek. The rectangular shape of the foundation (see Figure 26) resembles other adobe features within the project area, though no melted adobe is present on the rocks. The northeast wall has a milling slick on one of the smaller boulders (see Figure 27), and a Tizon Brownware ceramic scatter is located at the eastern corner. Even with the lack of adobe, the rectangular structure of the foundation and the presence of brown ceramic sherds may indicate that the site is older than other similar foundations that still exhibit evidence of adobe material.
PB-20

Feature PB-20 represents a small rock circle located amid larger boulders on a terrace of a ridge just northwest of the creek. The rocks are small, locally available granite arranged in a small circle (see Figure 28). Some of the rocks appear to have been dislodged from the original alignment, although the shape of a small cleared rock circle is still visible among the
rocks. The density of bedrock milling on the adjacent boulders and the size and shape of the rock alignment suggests a granary base. The rocks would have served as a small platform to support a woven basket for storage.

**PB-21**

PB-21 is an area adjacent to the creek, approximately 25 meters northwest of the creek, where there is a large concentration of boulders with bedrock milling feature (see Figure 29). This feature may extend to the opposite side of the creek where several additional boulders with milling area present. There are no features nearby and this may be a communal area where women gathered when processing acorns or seeds.

**PB-22**

Feature PB-22 may be a stacked rock feature (see Figure 30) located along the northern banks of the creek. No cultural material was present, but the feature may be associated with the foundation, PB-19, located approximately 25 meters to the west.
This feature is a rock enclosure at the southeast corner of the northern agricultural field on the northwest side of the creek. The enclosure is composed of natural and placed granitic rocks in an oak shaded area (see Figure 31).
PB-24

PB-24 represents a rock circle feature at the southeastern corner of the northern agricultural field on the northwest side of the creek. The rocks within the circle appear to be weathered with signs of erosion and decomposition present on the granite (see Figure 32). The alignment may be natural or it could represent an older structure whose base has been exposed to the elements for longer periods of time.

PB-25

This feature is a small rock foundation adjacent to an oak tree (see Figure 33) located on the west side of the road and the east side of the creek. Milling features are present on the surrounding boulders and rocks (see Figure 34).

PB-26

PB-26 is a small rock enclosure located between the road and the creek in the southern portion of the project area. The larger naturally occurring rocks comprise the west
Figure 32. PB-24 rock circle.

Figure 33. PB-25 rock foundation.
wall with smaller granitic rocks forming the north, south, and east walls (see Figure 35). Sheet metal is present within the alignment suggesting a more modern, corrugated metal type structure.

PB-27
PB-27 is a more recent rectangular foundation located between the road and the creek along the southern boundary of the project area. The granitic rock footings are visible covered with a daub/adobe mortar (see Figure 36). Red bricks surround the foundation and may represent the remains of the structure walls or base. Modern debris surrounds the feature, including a metal drum, plywood, carpeting, and modern trash. The intact foundation and modern debris implies a more recent occupation for this structure than the surrounding features.

PB-28
The feature is a rock foundation adjacent to the road on the north side. The rock is local granite and a concrete base for a doorway is present (see Figure 37). The use of concrete to create the entranceway to the structure suggests a more modern construction than PB-1 through PB-3 that are located on the other side of the dirt road.
Figure 35. PB-26 rock enclosure.

Figure 36. Modern adobe foundation.
Figure 37. PB-28 rock foundation with concrete step.

**PB-29**

PB-29 is a poorly defined rock foundation located on the north side of the road opposite PB-1 through PB-6 (see Figure 38). The material is locally available granite. The poor integrity of the alignment suggests an older feature that has been disturbed by nearby vehicular traffic or this may be an incipient, more recent foundation that was not completed.

**PB-30**

PB-30 is an adobe foundation located to the eastern portion of the project area. A slight depression ringed with melted adobe is present, and no rock foundation is visible on the surface (see Figure 39). A pit is located to the south of the house and may represent a well or other feature associated with the structure.
ETHNOGRAPHY

During the months of December 2006 through October 2007, Josephina Lopez Meza was interviewed concerning her knowledge of Peña Blanca. Ms. Lopez Meza was born on July 4, 1941 at San José Tecate, what Hohenthal (2001) calls Villareal de San José, which is located off of Highway 2 (libre) leading from Tecate to La Rumorosa. At that time, her grandfather, Benito Meza, had land at both San José Tecate and Peña Blanca. Ms. Lopez Meza spent much of her youth at Peña Blanca with her grandfather, Benito Meza, and her grandmother, Eulalia Thing. According to Mrs. Lopez Meza, the community of Peña Blanca encompasses 1,800 hectares that are owned by her and her family, which consists of
approximately 300 people, a number which includes her ancestors. Currently, Mrs. Lopez Meza and her immediate family, consisting of her 14 children, 38 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren, have a home approximately 700 meters east of the project area along the same watershed. During the interviews, the focus was on the area surrounding the creek where she had previously identified as the older settlement area. Each archaeological feature identified during the survey was visited and questions were asked to illicit any information that Ms. Lopez Meza had concerning feature type and occupation history. Several of the site features dated to before her time, so she did not have any information concerning these. The
results of the interviews and the features of which Ms. Lopez Meza was familiar are
summarized below.

**PB-1**

Mrs. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this feature as the foundation of her
grandparents’ house. She still remembers her grandparents, Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing.
Josephina’s grandfather, Benito Meza, was born at Peña Blanca and died in the 1970s,
reportedly at the age of 108 at San José Tecate, though he is buried at Peña Blanca. Until her
grandfather died, they would perform “el cabo de un año” (Spanish term) or “*kuri kuri*”
(Kumeyaay term). This is a Kumeyaay ceremony that is held about a year after the person
dies. This wake for the person lasts until midnight; at which time, a celebration is thrown
signifying the end of the mourning period. According to Josephina, this ceremony is not held
very often anymore, though the ceremony was held for her grandfather after his death, and
last performed in September 2007 at Peña Blanca for María de Jesús Meza Thing,
Josephina’s aunt.

Her grandmother, Eulalia Thing, used to make large clay ollas to store items like
seeds, acorns, corn, and beans. The ollas were stored inside the house away from the sun. Ms.
Lopez Meza used to help her grandmother make Juncus baskets and clay ollas. She referred
to herself as a “niña curiosa” or nosy child, always wanting to know what everyone was
doing, but she reflects that it was good for her because now, she knows how to do those
things.

When she was younger, Josephina would accompany her grandparents to Tecate in
their “foringa” or old ford. Her grandfather would go the cantinas, and she and her
grandmother would walk to the “otro lado” or the United States to go to the store that her
great-grandfather owned. This was her grandmother’s father and where his store used to be in
Tecate, California; there is now a street named after him called Thing Road.

Her grandmother often paid for items with gold. She remembers the little scale where
they would weigh the gold and receive money. As a child, Mrs. Lopez Meza would pick up
shiny rocks and tell her grandmother that they should go to the store because she had gold.
Her grandmother would laugh and tell her that those rocks were no good.
After they were done shopping, her grandmother would try to get her grandfather to leave the cantinas. Often, he refused to leave, and when her grandmother was tired of this, she would send for Josephina. She remembers walking through the swinging doors and her grandfather would see her and say that he needed to pay because his ‘güero’ was here to take him home. ‘Güero,’ meaning white boy, was her grandfather’s nickname for her. Josephina was unsure of why her grandfather called her this, but she assumes it was her blonde hair and light complexion that she had as a child. As for why he used the masculine term, she could only say that her grandfather always treated her like a man.

Referring to the house where her grandparents lived, Ms. Lopez Meza said, “Yo quiero este lugar, mas que en donde esta mi casa. Yo quiero mas aqui porque aqui nací, me crié. Cuando yo estaba chiquita, yo me acuerdo de esta casa; esta casa vino a caer como en el setenta y tantos.” This translates as, “I love this place, more than where my house is now. I love it here because I was born here and raised here. When I was a little girl, I remember this house. It fell into disrepair in the 1970s.” When the nearby ejido started several years ago, the new coloniá, Indú, stole the corrugated metal in order to claim that there was no other settlement on this land. Unfortunately, Ms. Lopez Meza did not have the means to protect the house, though she would like to rebuild the home here one day. She tells her sons that if she should die before she has a chance to rebuild, they need to rebuild the house, to preserve it.

The house was made of adobe with a corrugated metal roof. It had two rooms that were connected by an interior doorway and adjacent to the adobe was a ramada style kitchen/patio of which only a semi-circular rock alignment remains. There were several doors and windows to the house with various pieces of furniture arranged throughout the home (see Figure 40). The adjacent patio area was used as a kitchen and living area during the hottest months of the year.

The trash from the house would be located far enough away from the structure, so as not to draw animals. A pit was dug into the ground, and trash was placed into it. Once it was full, her grandmother would cover the pit back up and make another one elsewhere.

Her grandmother had built a separate kitchen near where the ejido was settled. As with most homes here, milling features were located near to the kitchen. They would grind acorns and coffee in the ‘morteros.’ The acorns would be washed in a cloth until it was no longer “amargo” or bitter. The acorn meal was then stored in the ollas. For beans and wheat,
a horse would walk round and round, working a grinding apparatus that would separate the beans and wheat from their stalks.

Friends and family often see her grandfather’s spirit still at Peña Blanca. Near to Mrs. Lopez Meza’s current home, west of the project area, there is a small knoll where a sweatlodge is constructed. During sweats, her grandfather often appears to people. He has told them that he is always with Josephina and tries to help her as she fights for this land. One time, Marina, the daughter of Mrs. Lopez Meza, was inside the sweatlodge, and she began speaking Kumeyaay to her father. She had never been fluent in their language like both of her parents, only knowing a few words of greeting and farewell. While in the sweatlodge, she conversed fluently in Kumeyaay with a spirit who told her to take care of his
güero. When Marina left the sweatlodge, she asked her mother, “Who is güero?” Her daughter did not know that Josephina was called this by her grandfather.

**PB-2**

Ms. Josephina Lopez Meza recalled this foundation as being a ceremonial building. It was only built when needed, so it was not a permanent structure. When built, it was a ramada type structure. Its primary use was for the mourning ceremony held one year after a person’s death. In Kumeyaay, the ceremony is called ‘takai kina’ (spelling from Hohenthal 2001:261). After someone passes, their possessions are burned, including their house. That is the reason that there are no houses still standing in this part of Peña Blanca; those people died and their homes were destroyed. When asked about burning images of the dead, Ms. Lopez Meza said that it was not their custom here to do so.

**PB-3**

This structure was a permanent ramada type structure. Ms. Lopez Meza recalled that the frame, roof, and walls were made of vertical branches, usually white willow. As a child, she remembers using this building to relax, especially when it was hot outside. During the summer months, her grandfather would cook here, using dirt to make an oven or kiln, placing a pipe in it, to draw off the smoke.

**PB-4**

Josephina identified this rock alignment as the foundation of a gate and fence that surrounded the small knoll occupied by her grandparents, on which features PB-1, PB-2, and PB-3 are located. The rocks represent the location of a gate, though the fence, which was made of different types of ‘rama’ or branches, extended beyond the gate, around the knoll encompassing features PB-1, PB-2, and PB-3. No surface evidence exists for the fence, which served as a barrier to keep the livestock and other animals away from the houses.

**PB-5**

This pit represents the remains of an outhouse associated with PB-1, Josephina’s grandparents’ house. Josephina recalled that it was made of wood with the pit underneath, but that the bathroom burned in a fire around 1972.
Josephina recalled that this field was actively used by her grandfather for agriculture, growing mainly “trigo” or wheat.

These were adobe houses that were more or less connected. Ms. Josephina Meza said that her grandfather’s mother, Petracuña Osuna, and her aunt, María de Jesús Meza Thing (Tia Chuy), lived here. Everyone called her great-grandmother ‘Nana Petra’ because she used to be a midwife. Ms. Lopez Meza still remembers her even though she died in the late 1940’s. She recalls a story about her great-grandmother being a shaman or ‘kusiai’ (spelling from Hohenthal 2001:256). One time, Petracuña went to Tecate to cure a woman and when she returned she told Josephina’s step-father, Toribio, that the woman had been a witch. This witch was stronger than Petracuña, and she had really messed her up.

Ms. Lopez Meza said that this foundation was an enclosed patio where chickens were kept. A fence made of various branches was constructed above the rocks to keep the chickens in the yard and other animals out.

Ms. Lopez Meza said that this was a small warehouse where they used to store empty clay pots. The clay came from nearby, as it is available all over the place here. All you have to do is remove the topsoil and clay is buried underneath. This was her grandmother’s favorite spot to make ollas, though she made them in any spot with shade. Prior to being fired, the ollas were stored in this structure to keep them away from the sun. After the vessels were completed, they were fired in a hole in the ground with manure. She remembers this because she used to do it with her grandmother, making little ollas beside her. She said that back in the day, the people were very “celosos” or secretive of the things that they did here. If others had seen the pots, they would crack, and if the pots were exposed to sunlight, the things inside would not be preserved very well. Nowadays, she teaches the children how to make them, but laughs that they cook them in the microwave, as now the Indians are more modern.
PB-11

Ms. Lopez Meza did not know who had lived here, as they had died prior to her being born. She said her Aunt Chuy was supposed to come and tell her more about the people who lived here, but she passed away before she had the chance. There used to be more adobe on the rocks when Ms. Lopez Meza was younger, but the adobe disintegrated with the rain over the years. She used to ask her grandmother who lived there. Her grandmother would respond that it was some of their relatives, and to quit being a nosy child asking so many questions.

From her childhood, she remembers more people being here, but many had gone by the time her great-grandmother had passed away in the late 1940s. From her childhood at Peña Blanca, Ms. Lopez Meza recalls at least nine structures. In 1950, around the age of 8, she was sent to Tecate to go to school and spend much of her time at a rancho near Tecate called “Panteón Viejo.”

PB-20

This site was destroyed by Josephina Lopez Meza’s time, and she doesn’t remember anything ever being here. She said it may have been a granary, but as they were not extensively used during her lifetime, she could not be sure.

PB-24

Ms. Josephina Lopez Meza referred to this as a small animal shed. Her grandparents used to keep the calves here, and this is where they would milk the cows. The field directly adjacent to the foundation was planted with barley. Primarily, this was for the cows, though she did mention that on rare occasions, they sold barley to the Tecate Brewery.

PB-25

This was a small wood structure with a corrugated tin roof. Josephina Lopez Meza used to sleep here as a child, especially when the weather was cold. As far as she knows, there was never another purpose to this building, other than sleeping. Presumably, the trees and large rocks would have blocked the wind. Behind this structure was where her grandmother would grind food and wash clothes.
PB-26

This was a small structure made of corrugated metal that served as the bathroom for this portion of Peña Blanca where Josephina slept as a child (PB-25).

PB-27

This is the ejido called Indú. According to the Mexicans that settled here a few years ago, the government gave them permission to do so. They took material left from the other structures to make their home. It was made of wood, adobe, and bricks. They left shortly after they settled here saying that they couldn’t deal with the Indians.

Many people settle illegally on land here in Mexico, hoping to take advantage of Mexican laws, which (under certain circumstances) allow squatters the right to obtain title to land they have made productive. Over by Mrs. Lopez Meza’s house, there is a concrete foundation that still has the walls, but no roof. It was supposed to be a school, but the government never finished it, and all the children left. During the ejido times a few years ago, a man illegally sold that land to a religious group. They worshipped there for awhile, and then, just left. Later, when Ms. Lopez Meza was in Ensenada, she ran into Brother Tomás from the church at Peña Blanca. He told her that an Indian had thrown them off the land, and he proceeded to describe her grandfather. Interestingly, her grandfather, Benito Meza, had been dead for over twenty years, and Josephina assumes that it must have been her grandfather’s spirit protecting his land at Peña Blanca.

Another time, her Aunt Julia and cousin Thelma came to Peña Blanca to pick firewood. It was starting to get dark, so they decided to leave, but their car wouldn’t start. They saw a light on in the ejido house and were tempted to go inside, but as those people were not family, they decided against it. Julia came down to Josephina’s house and spoke with her sons. She told them that they had almost stopped by the “casa de ejidatorio” or the ejido house because there was a light on inside. Her sons told them that this was unlikely as no one lived there anymore. Aunt Julia insisted that she saw the light, so Josephina’s sons went with Julia to help her with the car. They took her to the house and opened the door to prove that there was no light and no one there, but Aunt Julia still insists to this day that there was a light inside.
PB-29
Josephina’s grandfather, Benito Meza, had wanted to build a structure here to serve as both a church and school for the community at Peña Blanca. Her grandfather was collaborating with a woman from Tecate on the project, but she fell ill and the building was never constructed.

PB-30
Ms. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this feature as the adobe foundation of her Uncle Ernesto’s home. He passed away in the 1940s, prior to Josephina being born, and it was her mother who told her that he lived here.

SITE GRIDS
To assess if there was any spatial patterning of artifacts visible on the surface, two site grids were established. The grids consisted of thirty-six squares measuring 5 by 5 meters. Each square within the grid was assigned a number beginning with the southwest corner as one, and artifact counts were taken within each square. Artifact categories included both traditional and historic classifications. Traditional artifacts included debitage, core(s), flaked stone tools, pottery, and groundstone while historic artifacts included glass, ceramic, and metal.

The site grids were placed surrounding features with the most ethnographic data. Grid A encompassed Mrs. Lopez Meza’s grandparents house and included features PB-1 (adobe structure), PB-2 (ceremonial rock foundation), and PB-3 (kitchen/rest area; see Figure 41). Grid B encompassed her great-grandmother’s and aunt’s house (PB-7 and PB-8) and the chicken coop (PB-9) on the north side of the creek (see Figure 42).

Grid A
Grid A is located on the top of a small knoll, just southeast of main dirt road that bisects this portion of the site. The knoll contains features PB-1 through PB-4 and overlooks the oak trees surrounding the creek to the northwest and southwest, and an agricultural field (PB-6) to the north.
Figure 41. Site Grid A overview.
The distribution of lithic material, i.e., debitage, flaked stone tools, and cores, appears to be random (see Figures-43, 44, and 45). The greatest concentration of debitage (n=25) was along the northern boundary of the site (see Figure 43), as was the singular flaked stone tool (see Figure 44). Two core fragments were located along the west side of PB-3 in square 3A (see Figure 45), though no debitage was found within this square, and only two pieces are found in adjacent squares.

One piece of groundstone, a metate fragment, was found in square 28A (see Figure 46). This object was located along the periphery of the grid and was not found near the kitchen or adobe as would be expected. This might represent a secondary deposition or some type of disturbance at the site, though as a singular artifact, it tells us little about artifact distribution across the site.
Figure 43. Site Grid A debitage.
Figure 44. Site Grid A flaked stone tools.
Figure 45. Site Grid A cores.
Figure 46. Site Grid A groundstone.
Interestingly, only two pieces of pottery were located within Grid A, one sherd each in squares 21A and 36A (see Figure 47). In comparison, 275 pieces of ceramic were distributed across the grid (see Figure 48). Concentrations of glass (n=1,951) and metal (n=330) were also high within Grid A (see Figures-49 and 50).

Even though no patterns are clearly distinguishable within the distribution of artifacts across the surface, the difference in the classification of traditional and historic artifacts is apparent. Only thirty-one artifacts observed on the surface of Grid A would be categorized as traditional, most of which were debitage (n=25). In comparison, 2,556 artifacts were classified as historic, dominated by an abundance of glass, metal, and ceramics.

**Grid B**

Grid B is located on the north side of the creek on the south facing slope. The eastern portion of the grid slopes rather sharply down to the adjacent agricultural field, while the entire grid has a southerly slope with feature locations being relatively flat.

Concentrations of debitage (n=75) and cores (n=6) are greatest in the northwest quarter of the grid, along the western margin of Feature PB-7 (see Figures-51 and 52). An exposed quartz vein is just north of the grid, and this may represent an exploitation of naturally available material close to its source. The concentration of lithics lessens as the landscape slopes to the south, though a smaller concentration is present in the southwest corner of the grid where the single flaked stone tool can be found (see Figure 53).

Pottery is greatest in square 24A (see Figure 54), where an apparent pot drop composed of at least twenty-eight sherds is present within the crevices of a large boulder. Other pottery is found primarily west of Features PB-7 and PB-8 in the flatter portions of the grid adjacent to the living areas and the associated milling feature near PB-9.

Glass (n=26) and metal (n=3) was also concentrated along the western side of the grid (see Figure 55 and 56), though in much smaller quantities than artifacts deemed traditional.

Even though specific activities were not distinguishable based upon surface artifact distribution, the data does support two distinct occupations that Josephina Lopez Meza identified as her grandparents, Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing (Site Grid A) and her great-grandmother, Petracuña Osuna (Site Grid B). The density of historic artifacts (n=2,556) and the scarcity of traditional artifacts (n=30) within Site Grid A supports a more recent
Figure 47. Site Grid A pottery.
Figure 48. Site Grid A ceramic.
Figure 49. Site Grid A glass.
Figure 50. Site Grid A metal.
Figure 51. Site Grid B debitage.
Figure 52. Site Grid B cores.
Figure 53. Site Grid B flaked stone tools.
Figure 54. Site Grid B pottery.
Figure 55. Site Grid B glass.
Figure 56. Site Grid B metal.
occupation while the meager historic artifacts (n=29) and greater propensity for traditional artifacts (n=124) in Site Grid B suggests an older occupation. With the identity of the occupants known for these two site areas, the distribution of artifacts suggests a possible economic shift to utilizing more modern material goods during Benito Meza’s life, while his mother’s generation was still utilizing more traditional goods.
CHAPTER 6

FEATURE TYPE DISCUSSION

The survey identified thirty archaeological features within the project area, including seven adobe foundations (PB-1, PB-7, PB-8, PB-11, PB-17, PB-19, and PB-30), the remains of thirteen structures (PB-2, PB-3, PB-5, PB-9, PB-10, PB-13, PB-23, PB-24, PB-25, PB-26, PB-27, PB-28, and PB-29), four rock alignments (PB-4, PB-12, PB-15, and PB-18), two trails (PB-14 and PB-16), an agricultural field (PB-6), a possible granary (PB-20), a large bedrock milling area (PB-21), and an unknown stacked rock feature (PB-22; see Table 2). Mrs. Josephina Lopez Meza provided ethnographic information for sixteen of these features, which enabled comparisons between features with ethnographic interpretation and similar features that have none.

ADOBE FOUNDATIONS

Adobe was introduced during Spanish colonization of the Californias with adobe structures dating to the late 1700s. Adobe remains, including foundations and walls are found from this period in Kumeyaay territory at the San Diego Royal Presidio, the Old Town Settlement in San Diego, the San Diego (Mission San Diego de Alcalá) Mission, the Mission El Descanso (Misión San Miguel la Nueva) near Rosarito, Misión de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Norte in Guadalupe Valley, and Misión San Miguel Arcángel de la Frontera and Misión Santo Tomás de Aquino in the Ensenada area. With the limited availability of wood for construction outside of the towns and cities, adobe became common throughout the backcountry in Southern California and northern Baja California by the late 1800s.

Within the project area, seven adobe foundations (PB-1, PB-7, PB-8, PB-11, PB-17, PB-19, and PB-30) were recorded. Feature PB-1 was archaeologically identified as a granitic rock foundation with melted adobe. Partitions evident within the foundation delineate a rectangular structure comprised of two rooms with an adjacent exterior enclosure. The archaeological interpretation is that of a two room adobe structure with an adjacent ramada, similar to those recorded by Hohenthal (2001:183) during his survey of native
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communities in Baja California during the mid-20th century. Site Grid A revealed a large amount of historic artifacts and relatively few traditional artifacts, which combined with the adobe construction, suggests a historic occupation, probably within the last century.

Ethnographic interviews with Josephina Lopez Meza confirmed the archaeological interpretation of a two room adobe with an adjacent ramada, and she provided the names of the house’s occupants, her grandparents, Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing. Furthermore, she detailed a sketch of the home providing the location of doors and windows, and the arrangement of furniture and other items within the home (see Figure 40). No dates were available for when the home would have originally been constructed, but Josephina states that her grandfather died in the 1970s living to be over 100 years old, which combined with historical accounts from the surrounding region suggest that the home would have been constructed during the late 1800s to the early 1900s.

Features PB-7 and PB-8 were archaeologically identified as two single room rock foundations with melted adobe along the base of the rocks. A linear rock alignment extends between the two features, possibly serving as a connecting walkway. Mrs. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this home as belonging to her grandfather’s mother, Petracaña Osuna, and her aunt, María de Jesús Meza Thing (Tia Chuy). Other than a story remembering her great-grandmother, Mrs. Lopez Meza did not give much ethnographic information concerning these features. Hohenthal (2001:100-101,183) does mention the adobe of Petracaña Osuna and the adjacent home as being unoccupied in 1948, after her death in 1947, but by 1949, it was occupied by other family members, including the eldest daughter of Benito Meza, Jesús Vega Leon, possibly the name given for Josephina’s Aunt Chuy. Other than mentioning seeing grass mats for sleeping at Peña Blanca (Hohenthal 2001:189-192), neither William D. Hohenthal or Josephina Lopez Meza expanded upon the arrangements of items within this home.

With these structures representing the previous generation, that prior to Benito Meza, the assumption is that they are older. The differences between PB-7/PB-8 and PB-1 allow for the interpretation of changes over a single generation that probably reflects the continued exposure of the Kumeyaay to the more dominant Mexican culture. The size of adobe structures become larger, expanding from a single room dwelling to two rooms. Agriculture was probably playing a greater role in subsistence at this time, though Josephina did remark
upon the continued use of native plants. The effects of modernization is further evident from the difference in artifact types between Site Grid A (PB-1) and Site Grid B (PB-7/PB-8) with the older occupation dominated by traditional artifacts and the more recent occupation, by historic artifacts.

The remaining adobe features (PB-30, PB-11, PB-17, and PB-19) have little or no ethnographic information available, but these can be compared to the previous two adobes, allowing for occupation dates to be observed. PB-30 is a slight depression ringed by melted adobe with no rock foundation visible on the surface. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this as the remains of her Uncle Ernesto’s home. He passed away prior to her being born, so she did not know anything about the structure or its arrangement. PB-11 was already degrading when Josephina was a child, but her grandmother said it was the home of someone in her family prior to Josephina being born. No ethnographic information was available for PB-17 and PB-19, as this portion of the site area was not inhabited during Josephina’s lifetime. Features PB-30, PB-11, PB-17, and PB-19 are the foundations of one-room adobe structures, similar to PB-7 and PB-8. Ethnographic information from PB-30 and PB-11 suggests that these two features are contemporary to PB-7 and PB-8 with features PB-17 and PB-19 possibly representing an even older occupation.

Out of the seven adobe foundations recorded within the project area, five had ethnographic data available identifying them as homes. The two remaining adobe foundations lacking ethnographic data are assumed to also represent homes that are either contemporary to PB-7/PB-8 (great-grandmother’s house was occupied throughout the early 1900’s, if not longer) or possibly even older.

**Other Structure Remains**

The prehistoric period associated with the Kumeyaay remarks upon the ramada construction associated with their settlements, which included both homes and communal structures and gathering areas. Using native plants and materials, the Kumeyaay constructed dome-shaped homes made of various types of branches, sometimes lined with waddle and daub or mud with communal structures often being larger, though of similar construction.

Within the project area, many of the non-adobe structures represent ramadas or brush structures. These are identified as rock alignments lacking any type of construction debris or
melted adobe indicating a ramada type construction, composed of natural building materials that are biodegradable, leaving no trace upon the landscape.

Feature PB-2 is a large rectangular rock foundation surrounding by glass, ceramics, and sanitary cans. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this as a ceremonial building that was constructed out of various branches or a ramada styled building. Its primary purpose was for the mourning ceremony held a year after someone died. The building was destroyed after each ceremony and rebuilt as it was needed.

Feature PB-3 is a circular rock alignment that Josephina Lopez Meza identified as a permanent ramada structure made of white willow. This building was often used during the hotter months as a kitchen or a place to relax in the shade.

The rock alignment of PB-9 represents a chicken coop. This enclosure was constructed out of various plant branches to keep other animals away from the chickens. Hohenthal (2001:186-187) refers to a similarly constructed henhouse at Álamo, stating that it was a “temporary structure…constructed from Carrizo and tanglefoot grass, lashed with willow bark.”

Feature PB-10 is a rock alignment on a terrace that Josephina Lopez Meza said was a warehouse to store pottery. She did not identify the type of construction, but she did reference the building as being used by her grandmother, Eulalia Thing. Similar buildings associated with that same occupation period are her grandparent’s adobe home (PB-1), the kitchen (PB-3), and the ceremonial building (PB-2). With most of these auxiliary buildings being ramadas, feature PB-10 is assumed to also be of a similar ramada style construction.

Feature PB-13 is a rock alignment arranged in a circular pattern. Josephina Lopez Meza did not know anything about this structure, stating that it was before her time. The enclosed nature of the feature suggests a foundation similar to PB-3, and PB-13 may represent a similar ramada type structure.

Features PB-23 and PB-24 are rock enclosures. They are located near the creek under the oak trees. Josephina Lopez Meza referred to PB-24 as a small animal shed, used for milking and to secure the calves. It was located adjacent to an agricultural field were she said barley was grown to feed the animals. With PB-23 of similar construction and location, it may have served as a foundation to a ramada building or it may have served as another animal enclosure, similar to PB-24.
Structures composed out of material like wood and tin are present in limited numbers. These more modern foundations are often indicated by the remnants of milled wood or sheet metal present surrounding these features, and they tend to be smaller buildings directly associated with homes.

Feature PB-5 is a pit located nearby that represents the location of a small wooden building that served as a bathroom for the living area associated with Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing. Feature PB-25 is a small rock foundation that supported a wooden structure with a tin roof. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this as a building where she slept when she was a child. The milling located behind this feature was where her grandmother, Eulalia Thing, ground food and washed clothes. Feature PB-26 is a small rock enclosure with sheet metal lying nearby. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this as a corrugated metal building that served as another bathroom.

Feature PB-27 is a modern foundation as evidenced by the large amount of modern debris surrounding this feature. Josephina Lopez Meza identified this as the location of a non-indigenous structure associated with the ejido settlement of Indú. Feature PB-28 is a rock foundation with a concrete base representing the entrance. Feature PB-29 is a poorly defined rock alignment that was the beginning of a foundation for a building that was suppose to serve as a school and church for the community at Peña Blanca.

Previous ethnographic accounts from the historic period reveal a variety of structures including homes, ceremonial buildings, and auxiliary buildings (Hohenthal 2001). Ramada homes were not common during Hohenthal’s research during the late 1940s in northern Baja California, and he refers to ramadas primarily as “built in connection with dwelling houses but not often joined to them” (Hohenthal 2001:193).

Comparisons within the project area indicate that the largest ramada structure was that erected for the mourning ceremony as such ceremonies were attended by a large number of people. Other ramadas at Peña Blanca were smaller and served as storage warehouses, cooking areas, bathroom facilities, and animal enclosures. The smaller structures composed out of modern material like metal and wood were used for intimate spaces, like an extra sleeping area or bathroom. Similar to the adobe homes, these modern materials may have provided more privacy than the ramada construction, and they seem to indicate a lifestyle in
transition, still utilizing traditional construction for auxiliary buildings, but incorporating stronger materials for more private, intimate spaces.

**Rock Alignments**

There are numerous rock features within the research area that represent fences and/or other types of enclosures. These are separated from structure foundations by their linear alignment which infers that these features lacked a roof.

Feature PB-4 is a linear rock alignment that Josephina Lopez Meza identified as a gate and fence surrounding the small knoll where her grandparents lived, represented by features PB-1, PB-2, and PB-3 are located. This barrier was made of stacked rocks and plant branches, and it served to keep animals and livestock away from the house.

Features PB-12, PB-15, and PB-18 are linear rock alignments. No ethnographic information was available concerning these features, but the linear nature and locality of PB-15 and PB-18 indicates a similar function, possibly as a barrier separating living areas from animals or part of enclosure to isolate livestock. PB-12 is located within a rocky area with no archaeological indications of agriculture nearby, so it is not possible to infer its purpose.

The use of agricultural and animal husbandry in these often remote portions of Baja California necessitates the need to confine plants and animals from wild predators. Hohenthal (2001:125-132) refers to few barns and/or stables used for this purpose, with most animals running free, though smaller animals were often corralled and most livestock was corralled at night. Commonly, agricultural fields were fenced with barbed wire and posts of juniper and willow (Hohenthal 2001:117). These ethnographic references from the mid-20th century help to confirm the interpretation of unknown linear alignments within the project area.

**Trails**

Two trail features were recorded on the northern side of the creek. PB-16 represents the main trail that parallels the northwestern side of the creek extending outside of the research area both to the west and northeast. PB-14 is a side trail that veers from the main trail at the agricultural fields located on either side of the project area. This trail leads into the rocky area where features PB-7 through PB-13 are located.
OTHER ISOLATED FEATURES

The four remaining features represent singular occurrences of their feature type within the research area. Feature PB-6 is a furrow within an agricultural field where wheat was grown. Feature PB-20 is a small rock circle that may represent the foundation of a granary, though this could not be confirmed by Josephina Lopez Meza as it was before her time. Feature PB-21 is a large milling area composed of several boulders with numerous milling elements. Feature PB-22 is an unknown stacked rock feature.

SUMMARY

Some trends did emerge when comparing features with ethnographic data to those that only had an archaeological interpretation. All of the adobe foundations with ethnographic data represented homes, while the foundations of other types of structures served a more auxiliary purpose. Adobe appears to have been the preferred construction material for the houses during this historic period, and the remaining adobe foundations without ethnographic information are assumed to represent earlier homes of similar construction.

Other structures within the project area consisted of rock foundations with construction that varied from wood and/or metal buildings to ramadas. The more modern materials of wood and corrugated metal are associated with more recently constructed structures, though similar to the adobe foundations, they represent buildings utilized for more intimate purposes. These include the wooden building where Josephina Lopez Meza slept as a child and the outhouses. The wood and metal construction may have provided more safety and privacy than the ramadas, made of various types of branches. These wood and metal structures appear to have been smaller than many of their contemporary ramada structures and may reflect issues of cost and difficulty in acquiring non-native materials.

With heavier materials, such as adobe, wood, and metal preferred for intimate buildings requiring privacy, such as homes and bathrooms, the ramada buildings seem to be the preferred construction for the majority of auxiliary buildings. In many cases, they serve as extensions of living areas, for purposes such as ceremonial/religious pursuits, separate kitchens, storage facilities, and shaded areas for resting. Ramada styled constructions also served as agricultural enclosures, such as the animal shed for calves and the chicken coop.
The importance of locally available material, such as brush and branches, for construction is even evident in the fences and gates that served as barriers, often separating the living areas from pastoral and agriculture areas.

With the variety of buildings and construction materials evident within the project area, Peña Blanca offers a unique opportunity to look at an indigenous community in transition. The use of adobe by Anglos for homes is well-documented throughout the ethnohistoric and historic periods of both Spanish and American occupation of the Californias, while literature from the same time period on Kumeyaay settlements remarks on the prevalence of brush huts or ramadas. The ethnographic data from Peña Blanca reveals a community using both types of constructions for distinctly different purposes, adobe for homes and ramadas for most other auxiliary buildings. This community in Baja California was able to incorporate aspects of modern construction while still utilizing native materials for structures well into the 20th century. In addition, the furnishings of the home and agrarian pursuits show an incorporation of Mexican culture, though the importance of traditional beliefs and practices is evident in the ceremonial building and the gathering of native plants for consumption.
CHAPTER 7

THE LANDSCAPE

The historic indigenous features, which exclude the modern features of PB-27 (ejido) and PB-28 (feature with a concrete entrance), were mapped using GIS to determine if there were any patterns in their distribution (see Figure 57). Five clusters of features were identified and labeled as Areas A through E (see Figure 58) with four features falling outside of these clusters.

**Figure 57. Overview of indigenous features.**

**AREA A**

Area A is composed of five features, PB-1 through PB-5 (see Figure 59). All of these features are associated with Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing. Feature PB-1 was their home, and PB-3 served as an outdoor kitchen and a place to rest in the shade. Feature PB-2 was a
temporary ramada built as needed for ceremonies, though Josephina Lopez Meza associated it primarily with the mourning ceremonies held a year after a person’s death. Feature PB-4 was the fence that surrounded the previous features, and beyond this fence, was PB-5, the bathroom. All of these features are directly adjacent to PB-6, an agricultural wheat field.

The consultant, Josephina Lopez Meza, remembered many aspects of native life occurring here from the 1940s through the 1970s. Her grandparents, Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing, lived here and worked this land, raising crops and livestock. The agricultural subsistence is evidenced by the wheat field, PB-6, and the fence, PB-4, that served as a barrier between the living areas and the agricultural/pastoral areas.

The agriculture was supplemented by native plants that grow wild throughout the area, especially acorns located along the nearby watershed. Near to the ejido remains close to Area B was another ramada that Eulalia Thing used as a kitchen. There were milling features located nearby, and Josephina Lopez Meza said that it was common for each living area and/or kitchen area to have its own milling features associated with it (Gamble et al., 2006).
The importance of native beliefs and religion is evident by the ceremonial structure, PB-2 and the close proximity of the Cerro de Peña Blanca, a distinct landmark on the landscape. This hill overlooking the entire research area is the basis for the name of the community, Peña Blanca. This prominent landmark is recognized by Josephina Lopez Meza as a sacred place, a symbol of her ancestry, and like her grandfather before her, she makes the trek to the top of the hill every year. She associates this local physiographic feature as the source of this community’s sociocultural identity.

This group of features represents a distinct occupation period by Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing. It was a life in transition, balancing traditional indigenous beliefs and way of life with modern agricultural practices. The gathering of plants and the making of pottery is remembered by Josephina Lopez Meza, but at this time, they were also using manufactured
items like ceramics and glassware. Features PB-1 through PB-5 in Area A represent a unique look at the historic period of indigenous life in Baja California.

**Area B**

Area B is composed of two features, PB-25 and PB-26 (see Figure 59). Feature PB-25 was a wooden structure with a corrugated tin roof where Josephina Lopez Meza used to sleep as a child when she stayed with her grandparents, Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing. Feature PB-26 served as the bathroom during those visits. The nearby milling marks the location of the milling used by Eulalia Thing, and it is presumed that the additional kitchen area would have been located near to these features.

These two features represent an expansion of the occupation of Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing to an area closer to the creek and oak trees, and, along with the proposed building to serve as a church and school (PB-29), can really be considered an extension of Area A. Area B is labeled as a second area due to the division of these two areas by the road, which represents a disturbance within this portion of the site. The shade and close proximity of the creek makes this a desirable spot for sleeping and working, as compared to the more open exposure of the knoll that makes up Area A. This may reflect the seasonal occupation within the site area, utilizing Area A during the hotter months, and Area B, during the winter.

**Area C**

Area C is composed of ten features, PB-7 through PB-15 and PB-20 (see Figure 60). Features PB-7 and PB-8 are adobe structures belonging to Benito Meza’s mother, Petracuña Osuna. Feature PB-9 was a chicken coop used by Benito Meza, and PB-10 was a ramada used for storing pottery. Features PB-7 and PB-8 represent an earlier occupation, that of the previous generation, than those features within Area A and Area B. This is supported by Site Grid B showing the lack of historical artifacts relative to the numerous prehistoric artifacts located on the surface. Features PB-9 and PB-10 are associated with the occupation of Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing whose primary residence was in Area A. The location of these sites within Area C may represent that they were originally used for similar purposes by the previous generation associated with Petracuña Osuna, and the following generations, which included her son Benito Meza, continued using them.
Features PB-11 through PB-15 and PB-20 have no ethnographic data available, and Josephina Lopez Meza identified these features as being before her time. These older features include structural foundations (PB-11 and PB-13), linear rock alignments, possibly representing fences (PB-12 and PB-15), a trail (PB-14), and a possible granary (PB-20). If a granary was present, this would suggest an older occupation, as Hohenthal noted in his fieldwork in Baja California during 1948 and 1949 that, “granaries are uncommon, since most foods to be stored are kept in the house or ramada” (Hohenthal 2001:195). The western portion of Area C represents a contemporary or even older occupation than the eastern portion associated with Petracuña Osuna, possibly from a time when the valley contained more water and a greater population density as remembered by Josephina from her youth.
Area D

Area D is composed of two features, PB-23 and PB-24, located adjacent to the creek and an agricultural field (see Figure 61). Feature PB-24 is rock enclosure that represents the foundation of a small animal shed. No ethnographic information is known for PB-23, a rock enclosure that is adjacent to PB-24 and the agricultural field that Josephina Lopez Meza identified as where barley was grown to feed the livestock. Feature PB-23 may have served as another agricultural enclosure or corral that predates PB-24. The relative isolation of these two features from living areas indicates a more periphery location for agricultural buildings.

Figure 61. Area D.

The expansion to the north side of the creek by Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing may be the result of previous settlement within Area C. As this area represents an earlier occupation of the site by Benito Meza’s mother, Petracuña Osuna, this area may have already
been in use as an agricultural area, and Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing continued using the flat area near to the creek for similar purposes.

**Area E**

Area E is composed of five features, PB-16 through PB-19 and PB-22 (see Figure 62). These features include adobe foundations (PB-17 and PB-19), a linear rock alignment (PB-18) similar to other fences in the project area, an unknown stacked rock feature (PB-22), and the main trail (PB-16) paralleling the north side of the creek. No ethnographic information was available for any of the features within this area.

![Figure 62. Area E.](image)

These features may represent an older occupation of the valley that predates or is associated with the occupants of Area C. In Area C, the features seem to consecutively get
older as one moves to the west. With Area E being slightly to the west and south of Area C, this pattern may hold with these features being older, from a time when population density was greater in the valley below Peña Blanca.

**Features Outside Designated Areas**

Four features fall outside of Areas A through E. Feature PB-6 is the agricultural field associated with the occupation of Benito Meza and Eulalia Thing at Area A. Feature PB-29 is the location of the school and church that Benito Meza hoped to build. The location of this feature across from the residential section of Area A may represent an extension of Area A and Area B, or it may have served as a neutral portion of the community that would have allowed Benito Meza to maintain the structure while allowing other people within the valley to use the communal building for both faith and education.

The large bedrock milling station at PB-21 is centrally located amid all the feature clusters and may represent a communal area where people from Area C and E gathered while working, grinding acorns or washing clothes. The milling is located directly adjacent to the portion of the creek where water can be found at anytime during the year. From her childhood, Josephina Lopez Meza remembers there being more water at this location and a greater density of people, though she says shortly after she was born the water level dropped and many people left.

Feature PB-30 are the remains of an isolated adobe and a well located to the east of Area A. The adobe was the home of Josephina Lopez Meza’s Uncle Ernesto. He passed away in the 1940’s, and Josephina did not know very much about this section of the valley. The area to the east of the agricultural field, PB-6, was not extensively explored, and there may be more features in this portion of the site.

**Summary**

The entire valley of Peña Blanca represents a cultural landscape dominated by the unique mountain that overlooks the valley. The Cerro de Peña Blanca represents a local physiographic landmark that serves as a distinct source of symbology linked to ancestral beliefs. Benito Meza made the trip to its peak every year, and today, his granddaughter,
Josephina Lopez Meza, does the same. In all likelihood, this trip was made by many people throughout the occupation of this valley. As such, this prominent landmark created, and still creates, a sense of social identity and cohesion that connects the residents of the valley to each other and their past.

The features within the project area make up a real, but very limited portion of this landscape. They are the archaeological remains representing homes, living areas, subsistence, and material culture. The features with known ethnographic information represent a cultural perspective relative to the consultant’s knowledge of its occupation around the mid 20th century. During this time, the effects of modernization are evident in the form of metal, glass, and ceramics scattered across sections of the site. The features without ethnographic information have less historic debris and are assumed to be older, representing to a lesser degree the influence of modern Mexican culture. Even within this small research area, the landscape is unstable, moving along a cultural continuum with varying amounts of impact from non-native cultures. The landscape of Peña Blanca brings together the occupation of the valley over several generations, revealing a unique opportunity to study native transition during the historic period.

Many of the features are grouped together representing spatial and temporal differentiation between related groups of features. These clusters may represent the occupation of one immediate family, like Area A and Area B, or contemporary occupation by several generations, possibly Area C. Some features, like the home, may represent personal areas, while agricultural buildings and communal areas would have been shared by all members of the community. The areas on the locational map that appear empty, those areas between features, served numerous purposes, as places of transversal with people moving between areas and features, gathering to process food, and children running and playing.

Beyond the features is the social involvement of the people with the land. This extends beyond the archaeology to encompass aspects of family, kin, community, gender, and age. It is the members of the community of Peña Blanca, both living and dead, that link the features into a landscape that encompasses not just geographical space, but a changing way of life that spanned generations.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

The features within the project area reflect the evolvement of culture traits from the prehistoric period into the modern era. The prehistoric archaeological record is marked by residential mobility utilizing various ecological zones, while the current project area is characterized by a more permanent settlement with limited mobility that ranged from the backcountry to the nearby towns for work and trade. At Peña Blanca, the ethnography and archaeology revealed a community undergoing an economic shift; one of still utilizing traditional lifeways while incorporating aspects of modernization in the forms of employment, agricultural pursuits, and material goods.

With previous references to Kumeyaay settlement patterns as dispersed along drainages and valleys surrounding springs (Shipek 1987) and families building in close proximity to each other (Cline 1984, Spier 1923), the community of Peña Blanca is one that reflects both. Neither of the previous references give a precise measurement for dispersal or proximity, so that distance in this case is relative. The landscape analysis reveals clusters of areas that may represent contemporaneous occupation, possibly by one generation at a time. If this is the case, the majority of the homes within the project area would have been within the visible range of each other reflecting a relative proximity to each other, while still separated enough to allow for privacy. Likely, there are other features in existence outside of the project area, and these would express a further dispersal of features along the drainage. The reasons for this may be different occupation periods or more distant familial relations than those within the current alignment.

The evidence for continued occupation of this valley by the Kumeyaay is supported by the ethnoarchaeology, spatial analysis, and landscape analysis. The ethnography identified two subsequent generations that of Benito Meza and his mother, Petracuña Osuna. The archaeology revealed other features for which Josephina Lopez Meza had no knowledge, indicating an even older occupation. The spatial analysis, while not identifying any activity areas, did differentiate the site based upon artifact density. The area occupied by Petracuña
Osuna on the north side of the creek contained more traditional artifacts indicating an older occupation, while the area to the south occupied by Benito Meza had more historic artifacts indicative of more recent occupation. The intra-site analysis focusing on the horizontal distribution of features across the landscape showed clusters of features surrounding the watershed that, when combined with the ethnoarchaeological interpretations, represents distinct occupation periods, probably over several generations. The landscape analysis revealed feature clustering that appears to be contemporaneous, with the area occupied by Benito Meza and Petracuña Osuna clearly distinguished on the site map, along with another cluster that appears to be an older occupation.

Regardless of when the site was occupied, each feature represents a discrete locus of human behavior that would reflect the activities that occurred at each location. Some trends did emerge in the type of features present within the project area. Sturdier building material, such as adobe and modern materials, were preferred for intimate purposes. Adobes represented houses, with auxiliary buildings with a ramada construction were associated with food preparation, storage, or agricultural practices. Buildings that were extensions of living areas, such as those for cooking and resting, were located in close proximity to the homes, while agricultural buildings were more removed.

The examination of the cultural landscape revealed the settlement patterns of a historic Kumeyaay community in Baja California during the last century. Analysis of the maps showed clustered features that represent different occupations at different times. Beyond the features, the site space can be further divided by the location of water, rocks, trails, and agricultural fields. The creek within the project area bisects the site, effectively into two areas, one that reflects a more ethnohistoric component to the north and the other, more historic, to the south. To the north of the creek is a ridgeline composed of numerous rock outcroppings that reflects a greater population density, aforementioned ethnohistoric. Within this area, there is a large bedrock milling station with numerous bedrock milling elements located directly adjacent to the creek. On the opposite side, to the south, are other boulders with milling elements. This area encompasses both sides of the creek and may have served as a communal area that connected the various generations that may have been associated with each feature cluster. Furthermore, the entire site area is bond by open agricultural fields located along the margins of the project alignment.
The maps created during this research documents the historic occupation of this land by indigenous people over several hundred years. Ethnographic interpretation yields four generations of occupations of Peña Blanca beginning with Petracuña Osuna, while archaeological data supports an even earlier, intense occupation of this valley by preceding generations who are no longer alive and whose memories have faded with the passing of time. With the issues of land tenure confronting Josephina Lopez Meza and her family, it is the hope that this research will help with their efforts to gain recognition and a clear title of ownership to this land.

Each individual who lived in this valley had their own place within the community and their own connection to the land, leading them to apply their unique understanding and interpretation to this landscape while sharing a common heritage and beliefs with their neighbors. Unfortunately, with so many occupants of the valley having passed away, Josephina Lopez Meza was the only consultant available at this time. Other consultants may be available throughout other indigenous communities in the area, in the form of family and friends who may have periodically lived or visited this valley. Within Peña Blanca, there are opportunities for further research. Only a small portion of the valley was surveyed, and the consultant, Josephina Lopez Meza, believes that there are even older areas of occupation located outside of the current project area spanning a large portion of the entire valley floor. In the future as more work is undertaken in Baja California, comparisons can be made between Peña Blanca and other indigenous contemporary communities allowing for further comparisons between these settlements and other archaeological settlements, including abandoned sites, throughout the entire region.
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

An Ethnoarchaeological Examination of Peña Blanca, A Kumeyaay Community in Baja California Norte
by
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Master of Arts in Anthropology
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The analysis of spatial organization across archaeological landscapes is important in reconstructing comprehensive histories of various people’s involvement with the land over time. In this ethnoarchaeological case study, the Kumeyaay community of Peña Blanca, located in northern Baja California, was used to evaluate changes within archaeological features and indigenous lifeways within the past century. The archaeological survey revealed adobe foundations, structural remains, linear rock alignments, trails, agricultural fields, and bedrock milling areas. Ethnographic interpretation for many of these features enabled intra-site comparison between more recent features associated with the consultant and other features that represent an older occupation. When plotted on a site map, cluster patterning of features revealed a landscape segregated both spatially and temporally into distinct periods of social involvement with the land. The recognition of these divisions contributes to a better understanding of how the Kumeyaay negotiated the rapid changes during the historic period. As more work is undertaken in Baja California and even at Peña Blanca itself, there will be opportunities to compare the results of this research with other similar communities throughout the region.