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WILLIAM C. STURTEVANT
General Editor

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ROBERT F. HEIZER
Volume Editor

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Tataviam

CHESTER KING AND THOMAS C. BLACKBURN

Language

On the basis of a short word list collected in 1917 by John P. Harrington of the Smithsonian Institution, Bright (1975a) has concluded that the Tataviam (təˈtävēyəm) language may be "the remnant, influenced by Takic, of a language family otherwise unknown in Southern California," or, more likely, that it is Takic (but not, apparently, Serran or Cupan). The second hypothesis receives support from ancillary comments made by some of Harrington's Kitanemuk informants as well as from ethnohistoric and archeological data. In 1776 Francisco Garcés followed the usage of his Mohave guides and referred to all the people living along the Mohave River, in the San Gabriel and San Fernando valleys, along the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River, and in the Elizabeth Lake region—thus the Tataviam and their Takic neighbors—as the Beñeme. The Kawaiisu called the Kitanemuk, the Vanyume, the Tataviam, and presumably the Serrano and Gabrielino *pitaḍi* 'southerners' (Zigmond 1938); the Chemehuevi name Pitanteme(we) 'Vanyume' (Carobeth Laird, personal communication 1975) may have had a similar range of application. Garcés (1965) and Fages (1937) both considered the Tataviam similar to their southern Takic neighbors in dress, political organization, and language. Archeological evidence, such as the types of artifacts used in social interaction and the internal organization of cemeteries and villages, also indicates that the Tataviam resembled neighboring Takic groups. Archeological data suggest that the Tataviam began to differentiate from other southern California Takic speakers around 1000 B.C. It is at this time that cremation as a mortuary practice begins to predominate in those areas occupied ethnographically by Takic-speaking peoples. By historic times the Tataviam language was so distinct that one of Harrington's Kitanemuk informants expressed the opinion that it was as foreign to him as English and certainly less easily understood than the San Fernando Valley dialect of Gabrielino.

Territory and Environment

The Tataviam lived primarily on the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River drainage east of Piru Creek, although their territory extended over the Sawmill Mountains to the north to include at least the southwestern fringes of the Antelope Valley (fig. 1). The major portion of the Antelope Valley itself was probably held by Kitanemuk and Vanyume speakers. The Tataviam were bounded on the west by various Chumashan groups: to the northwest, at Castac Lake, lived the Castac Chumash; to the west, on Sespe Creek, were the *seḳspe* Chumash; and to the southwest, at *kamulus* (a village recorded at San Fernando Mission under its Chumash name), lived a mixed Chumash-Tataviam population. The Tataviam were bounded on the south by various Gabrielino-speaking groups.

Most of the Tataviam region lies between 1,500 and 3,000 feet above sea level, with a minimum elevation of about 600 feet on the Santa Clara River near Piru and a maximum elevation of 6,503 feet at Gleason Mountain. The core of this area, and indeed of the Tataviam territory itself, is comprised of the south-facing slopes of the Liebre and Sawmill mountains. In southern California generally, the degree of exposure to sunlight present on a slope and the corresponding rate of evapotranspiration are important determinants of various types of vegetation. The nature of the slope-exposure in the Tataviam region is such that the Tataviam themselves probably relied more heavily on yucca as a major staple than did neighboring groups. However, the plant and

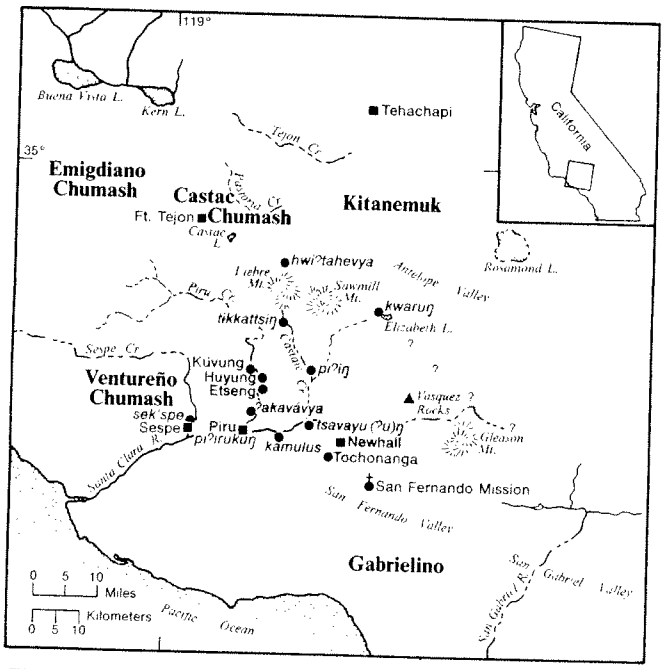

Fig. 1. Tribal territory and villages.

animal associations in the territory of the Tataviam were otherwise generally similar to those exploited by neighboring Takic speakers.

External Relations

Little is known about the social and political interaction that occurred between the Tataviam and other groups, although the presence of north-south enmity and east-west amity relationships similar to those found throughout southern California in protohistoric times seems likely. In 1776, for example, Garcés asked the chief of the Cuabajay (apparently the Castac Chumash) with whom he was staying to cease waging war against the people living on the upper Santa Clara River. Archeological data indicate that the Tataviam participated in economic transactions similar to those engaged in by both adjacent Takic groups and Yokuts groups farther north. During the postmission period, the few surviving Tataviam often intermarried with the Kitanemuk, with whom they seem to have interacted most intensively at that time. They also participated in and attended Chumash fiestas and ceremonies on occasion. Future analyses of mission record data will undoubtedly clarify and perhaps modify what little information is available on Tataviam external relations and internal organization.

Settlement Pattern

Until the mission registers are thoroughly analyzed, it will not be possible to make a definitive list of all Tataviam villages inhabited in early historic times nor to estimate population size with any degree of accuracy. Known Tataviam village names (given in their Kitanemuk forms) and their locations are as follows:

tsavayu(ʔu)ŋ, San Francisquito (probably equivalent to Chumash *takuyamaʔm*).

piʔirukuŋ, Piru (called piˑδúkʰùŋ in Tataviam).

piʔiŋ, near Castaic reservoir.

ʔakavávya, probably the site of the main village in the area prior to founding of historic Piru (called *kaštu* in Ventureño Chumash and *El Temescal* in Spanish).

Etseng, on Piru Creek, above *ʔakavávya* (Kroeber 1915a:774); probably the same as the Zegueyne of the mission records.

Huyung, on Piru Creek, above Etseng (Kroeber 1915a:774); probably the same as the Juyubit of the mission records (for which other spellings are in Merriam 1968:97).

Tochonanga, near Newhall, mentioned in mission records (e.g., in Merriam 1968:101).

kwaruŋ, perhaps the Tataviam name for Elizabeth Lake, whose occupants apparently were called *mimiyam* by the Kitanemuk. The village of Quariniga mentioned in a Spanish diary of about 1808 (Cook 1960:256) may be the same place.

During the Mexican period, the Tataviam also lived at Küvung above Huyung (Kroeber 1915a:774), at La Liebre ranch or *hwiʔtahevya,* and at *tíkkattsiŋ* (which may be a Tataviam name) on upper Castaic Creek. They also evidently lived with Chumash at Pastoria Creek during the American period.

On the basis of archeological and ethnohistoric information, Tataviam villages appear to have varied in size from large centers with perhaps 200 people to small settlements containing 10-15 people. The two or three large villages were maximally dispersed in relationship to one another; very small villages were adjacent to these larger villages, while intermediate-size villages of 20 to 60 people were dispersed in between the major centers. At the time of historic contact the total Tataviam population was probably less than 1,000, even if the Elizabeth Lake area is included in the estimates.

Culture

Archeological data indicate that foodstuffs were obtained and prepared in much the same way as neighboring groups. The primary vegetable foods in order of importance were the buds of *Yucca whipplei* (which were baked in earth ovens), acorns, sage seeds, juniper berries, and berries of islay (*Prunus ilicifolia*). Small mammals, deer, and perhaps antelope comprised the major animal foods.

There are no data on Tataviam social organization that might serve to differentiate them from Kitanemuk or Gabrielino. However, some interesting information that tends to suggest major similarities among Tataviam, Chumash, and Gabrielino ritual organization was recovered from Bowers's Cave between Newhall and Piru (Elsasser and Heizer 1963). This site contained ritual paraphernalia identical to that described ethnographically by Ventureño Chumash as being used by secret-society members (*ʔantap*) in the performance of ceremonies. Like their southern neighbors, the Tataviam also apparently held their annual mourning ceremony in the late summer or early fall and used open circular structures at the site. The Gaspar de Portolá expedition of 1769 recorded the presence of a number of people associated with a brush enclosure when they passed through the area in August (Palóu 1926). Pictographs in Tataviam territory also have strong similarities to those found in adjacent areas.

History

By 1810, virtually all the Tataviam had been baptized at San Fernando Mission. By the time secularization occurred in 1834, the descendants of most of the missionized Tataviam had married members of other groups, either at the mission or in the Tejon region. By 1916 the last speaker of the Tataviam language was dead, and any real opportunity for collecting firsthand information on this obscure group had vanished forever.

Synonymy

While the term the Tataviam applied to themselves is unknown, their Kitanemuk neighbors called them *táta·viam,* related to their words *ta·viy·ik* 'sunny hillside' and *ata·vihukwa?* 'he is sunning himself'. The upper Santa Clara River drains an area in which south-facing slopes are a dominant characteristic of the terrain. Thus *táta·viam* might be roughly translated as 'people facing the sun' or 'people of the south-facing slope'. The Vanyume name for them may have been the same, for Kroeber (1907b:140) recorded the term Tatavi-yam from a Vanyume woman long resident among the Mohaves as the equivalent for the Mohave name Gwalinyuokos-machi 'tule sleepers' who lived in tule houses on a large lake. These people Kroeber (1907b:136) suggested were "no doubt the Yokuts on Kern, Buena Vista, and possibly Tulare lakes." The Mohave word was recorded by Pamela Munro (personal communication 1975) as *kʷalʲəʔinʲolʲkʷəsmač* 'they sleep in the high tules', applied to the "Tehachapi Indians." Tehachapi is just north of the Kitanemuk area. However, given the near-identity of the Vanyume equivalent to the Kitanemuk term for the Tataviam, this may in fact have been the Mohave name for the same group. The San Fernando Valley Gabrielino called the Tataviam *turumkavet.*

When Kroeber (1915a) first recognized this group as a distinct entity, he applied what he said was their name in the neighboring (Ventureño) Chumash: Ataplili'ish. This term was recorded by Harrington as *ʔaṫaplili·ʔiš,* a name for the Gabrielino (Bright 1975a). Kroeber (1925:556, 621) later reported that Ataplili'ish was the Ventureño Chumash name for the Gabrielino and perhaps other Takic groups. Probably because he now believed his earlier name to have too broad an application, Kroeber (1925:577, 614) then called the Tataviam by what he reported to be the specific Ventureño Chumash name for them, Alliklik. Harrington (1915, 1917, 1935:84) recorded *ʔaḷḷiḳliḳini* in Ynezeño Chumash as equivalent to Kawelmani Yokuts *ʔeʔewiẏič* and Spanish *Pujadores,* all three meaning 'grunters, stammerers' and being synonyms for Tataviam.

A vocabulary of "Alliklik Chumash" was recorded by Merriam without a date or location; Beeler and Klar (1974) have identified this as Ventureño Chumash with borrowings from Kitanemuk and suggested that it represents the speech of at least the northernmost extension of the region Kroeber (1925:pls. 1, 48) labeled Alliklik. To avoid further confusion it seems preferable to apply the name Castac Chumash to this region, about which almost nothing else is known. Merriam (Beeler and Klar 1974) used the name "Kas-tak (Chumash)," Harrington recorded *kaštik* as a village name in Ventureño Chumash (Bright 1975a), and Spanish sources referred to the group as Cuabajai (Beeler and Klar 1974) and Castequeños. The coastal Ventureño Chumash name for the dialect of the Castac region was *ʔaɬkuʔli,* and for the inhabitants, *ʔiʔaɬkuʔli* (Harrington 1915).

Sources

Ethnographic notes collected by Harrington (1913, 1916a, 1917) from his Kitanemuk, Chumash, Gabrielino, and San Bernardino Mountains Serrano informants regarding the Tataviam are the basic source for this chapter.

The San Fernando Mission registers remain one of the most important sources of data yet to be investigated in regard to village size, distribution, and intermarriage patterns. The early observations of Garcés and the members of the Portolá expedition provide further important information on the Tataviam. Other data are probably present in archival materials.

Archeological data for much of the area were systematically gathered by Richard Van Valkenberg in the early 1930s; his notes are on file at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. Important data were also obtained during salvage excavations at Castaic reservoir from January 1970 to June 1971. Under the auspices of the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, data from archeological research carried out in the Vasquez Rocks area have been synthesized with the results of previous work done on the upper Santa Clara River (King, Smith, and King 1974).