

Fernandeño: Regional Terms

“Fernandeño” (or “Fernandifño”) is a Spanish regional term representing the people of four diverse territories enslaved during the Mission San Fernando period. J.P. Harrington archives Fernandeño Takic terms, one of the many languages spoken among the Indians of Mission San Fernando, for the four related, yet culturally diverse, territories prior to the Mission period. Using *Pasekivitam*, the people of the villages of San Fernando, the Mission, and the basin of the valley, as a central point of reference would position *Tatavitam* as the people of the region north of *Pasekivitam*, *Simivitam* as the western people inhabiting Simi Valley in territories south of *Tatavitam*, and the *Vanyume* as the most eastern groups encompassing Antelope Valley and the Mojave River. The *Tatavitam*, *Pasekivitam*, and *Vanyume* maintained slightly distinct Takic languages, while the people of Simi Valley and coastal areas were members of the Chumashan language. There are several alternative names that represent ethnic (tribal) perspectives for the words recorded by both the Spanish priests and Harrington, but the general rule stands with four important Takic suffixes: *-vit*, *-pet*, *-bit*, or *-bet* refer to one person or lineage, *-am* is plural and can convert one person (*-vit*) to multiple people (*-vitam*), and *-nga* is a locative reference, meaning it referred to a place. Although the Spanish padres who recorded this information in Mission records used the suffixes interchangeably, the lineage designation is more in keeping with the emphasis on consanguinity. In other words, kinship or lineage relations were predominant in political and social relations. The anthropologist Albert Kroeber reported that California Indians were organized into lineal kinship groups characterized as independent tribelets.. Individuals could not marry into their own tribelet, since all members of a tribelet were considered blood relatives. There were many independent tribelets, who held territory, and shared language, ceremonies, and political alliances among the several language groups in the San Fernando Mission area, and who became part of the mission population after 1797. Language types and marital patterns did not determine political or national organization among the pre-mission Fernandeños. They exercised power over territory, self-government, a judicial system, and upheld a network of social, economic and political ties to other lineages over an extensive area. The members of tribelets could marry within their linguistic group, but not within their tribelet. A Tataviam could marry a person who also spoke Tataviam, but could not marry a person within their tribelet-lineage. The lineages or tribelets remain as major form of social and political organization through the Mission period, and are the primary form of family and community organization among the present-day descendants of the Fernandeños.

Fernandeño and Gabrieleño: The Difference

Although the Fernandeño and Gabrieleño are linguistically related, they represent two

geographical areas that shall not be confused, or interchanged, with one another. *Sivavitam*, the people of Los Angeles Basin, were known (by the Fernandefios) as the Gabrieleños during the Mission period. The people of Mission San Gabriel, Gabrieleños, referred to the Fernandefios as *Pavasikwar*, which exemplifies the separate native identities associated with the two post-Mission era names. Additionally, the Fernandefios referred to the Gabrieleños inhabiting areas further east of the Los Angeles Basin as *Komivitam*, or the people in the eastern portion of San Gabriel Valley, which further established a line between the two mission-associated regional terminologies.

Serrano Overview

The distinct community of the present-day Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (Band)(Fig. 1) originated in the lineages, villages and cultures of the pre-Mission period¹. Mission San Fernando was established on September 8, 1797 at the village of *Achoicominga* and, for years following, gathered converts from the tribelets in the geographically surrounding area, ranging from present day Santa Catalina Island and Malibu in the west, Cahuenga and Encino in the south, Tujunga in the east, the Tataviam in the northwest Santa Clarita area, and the present-day Tejon Ranch in the north. Of the several regional language groups, two are categorized as Serrano speaking groups, or people of the mountains: *Tatavitam* and *Vanyume* (and not listed above, the *Kitanemuk*, who traditionally lived in the northern San Gabriel Mountains, the Tehachapi Mountains, and the western edge of the Antelope Valley area).

Ortega and Garcia links to Chaguayabit (San Franciscquito Rancheria) and Tochonabit (Stevenson Ranch)

The entire Fernandefio region (areas from which Indians were recruited to Mission San Fernando) formed a network of intermarriages that produced the basis for cooperative economic and social exchanges. Tribelets were composed of one lineage. These lineages-tribelets are important to distinguish from physical locations, since the actual villages were abandoned when the Indians were taken to Mission San Fernando. Consequently, it is more correct to say, for instance, *Chaguayabit*, rather than *Chaguayanga*. The first designates the people of *Chaguay* and is a common patrilineal descent group, while *Chaguayanga* designates a location, the territory of the *Chaguayabit*. Each lineage-tribelet group, from which citizens of the Band descend, was economically, socially, and

¹ Champagne, Duane. "Office of Federal Acknowledgment Bureau of Indian Affairs U.S. Department of Interior: Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians Federal Petition." 2009. Criteria 87.3

politically autonomous. Information about pre-Mission Indian relations comes directly from Mission San Fernando's records. When Indians were baptized, the padres followed the Spanish practice of writing out the place of origin for the person baptized. The first generation of baptized individuals fortunately had a village name attached to their baptism record. Consequently, it is possible to trace the village, or more precisely the lineage, from where most of the citizens of the Band descend, or where their progenitors were living at the time of baptism.

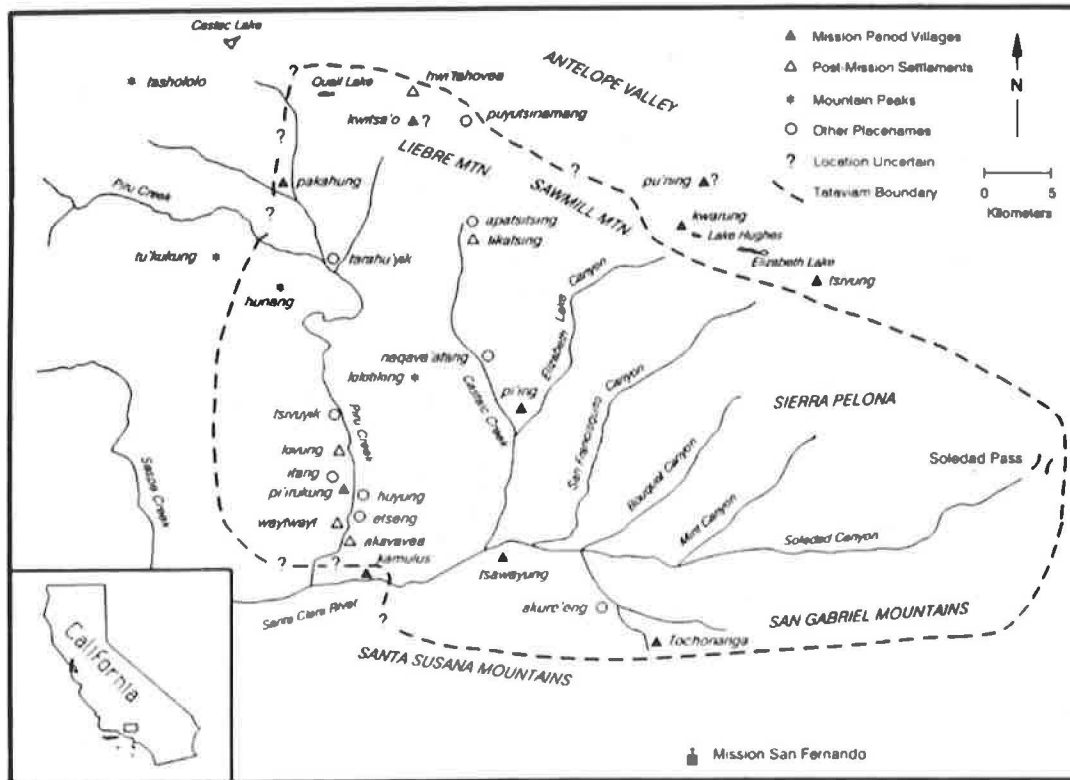


Fig. 2: Map of Tatavitam territory with known settlement locations. Map courtesy of Johnson and Earle (1990)

Mixed marriages among lineages and across linguistic lines were typical of the region before the establishment of Mission San Fernando. Specifically, the Garcia and Ortega families, which link to progenitors of the Band, can be traced to the former villages in the general area of this Project. Both the Garcia and Ortegases have blood line progenitors traceable to the tribelet of Chaguayabit. Maria Rita Alipas, a progenitor of the Ortega lineage, traces patrilineally to *Chaguayabit*, the lineage located at *Chaguayanga*. This well-documented tribelet's last known site was located at Mission San Franciscquito near the confluence of Castaic and Santa Clarita Rivers in the present-day city of Santa Clarita, California. Maria's father Francisco Papabubaba's lineage traces back to the Tatavitam tribelet of *Chaguayabit*, located near present-day Magic Mountain in Santa

Clarita, CA.² Papabubaba is responsible for bringing the *Chaguayabit* heritage to the network of relations of *Siutcabit*, the tribeletvillage located at present-day Encino, and was one of the three petitioners on the 1845 Rancho Encino land grant. King identifies *Tochonanga* as the “most important source of migrants at Reyes’ rancho,” which was the chosen site for Mission San Fernando³. According to traditional reckoning, Papabubaba was a direct descendant and member of *Chaguayabit*. However, according to American style bilateral descent reckoning, he was also a descendant of his mother’s lineage *Tochonabit*. King and Blackburn identify *Tsavayun* as the Tataviam village located at San Francisquito Rancheria, also known as Newhall⁴. It is suggested that *Tsavayun*, or *Tsawayun*, is an alternate spelling for *Chaguayanga*. A Kitanemuk informant recalled that “most clearly *Tsavayun* [belonged to the] Pujadores”⁵. According to King and Blackburn, “pujadores” could have been the Spanish translation of the Ventureño Chumashan name for Tatavitam, called Alliklik, which meant grunTERS⁶. Nevertheless, the informant used *pujadores* interchangeably with the Tatavitam, and designated the area of Santa Clarita to the Tatavitam linguistic group. Furthermore, Leandra Culeta, a progenitor for the Garcia family, had strong ties to the Tatavitam lineage *Chaguayabit* through her grandfather Cornelio, who lived at *Chaguayanga* until 1803, when he and his wife joined Mission San Fernando. Leandra’s patrilineal ties to *Chaguayabit* suggest that she was a blood relative to the Ortega progenitor Maria Rita Alipas⁷. Thus, the Garcias and Ortegas have common bloodlines through *Chaguayabit*.

²Pronounced *Totsónánga* in Fernandefío. Harrington, John Peabody 1917 J. P. Harrington's Field Notes: Fernandefío, Reel #106. J. P. Harrington Database Project. 106:039:2:2-4. See Fig. 3

³King, Chester. “Overview of Overview of the History of American Indians in the Santa Monica Mountains: Draft 10-2011. 32.

⁴ King, Chester, and Thomas C. Blackburn. “Tataviam.” *Handbook of North American Indians* 8 (1978): 535-537. 536. See Fig. 3.

⁵ Box 548, *Southern California/Basin, Papers of John Peabody Harrington, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution*. 98:094:a:5:1

⁶ King and Blackburn 1978: 537

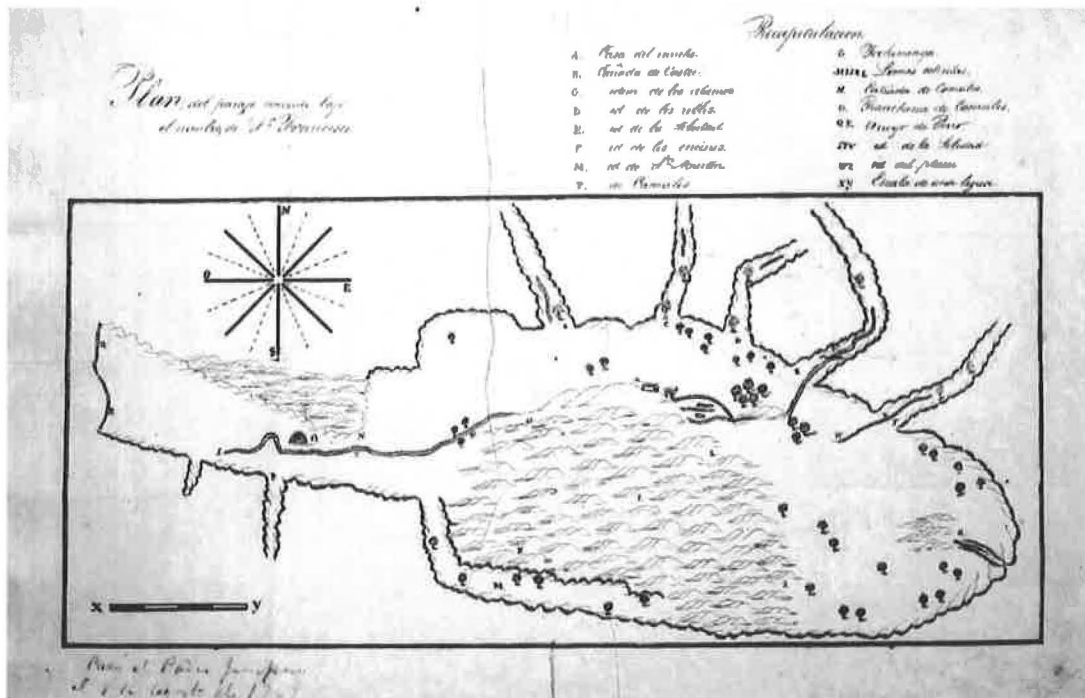


Fig 3: 1843 land-grant *diseño* (map) for Rancho San Francisco with information on village locations in the upper Santa Clara River Valley. The letter “G” indicates the site of Tochonanga. Map courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino and Johnson and Earle (1990)

The members of the Tatavitam lineages located at *Chaguayanga* and *Tochonanga*, including the ancestors of the Ortega and Garcia families, were baptized soon after Mission San Fernando’s establishment. By 1810, most people in the Tatavitam lineages were baptized and removed to Mission San Fernando. Although these villages are defined on the map (Fig. 3), they cannot be confined to single locations. The presence of mixed marriages and trade in the Fernandefío region would have created an intense network of relations that crossed the constricted boundaries illustrated on the map. The whole region surrounding the Mission San Fernando was a multi-cultural, multi-national network of politically independent tribelets that occupied the region for thousands of years. The potential for not yet disturbed cultural deposits remains extremely likely in a highly active, ancestrally sensitive, and Tribally present region.



Fernandeño Tatabiam Band of Mission Indians Historical Tribal Territory



Tribal boundary depicted is based on registered tribal citizens' ancestral villages. Due to kinship networks and social exchange, this hard boundary does not include all of the abundant locations associated with Tatabiam cultural resources and ancestry. Therefore, the overlap yellow boundary accommodates the natural mobility of ancestral and contemporary Tatabiam people, which are also known to be well associated with the tribe and sensitive cultural resources.

All projects breaking soil within the tribal boundary are subject to Tatabiam jurisdiction, whereas any projects occurring within the yellow boundary may be subject to further analysis by other surrounding Tribal Governments.

Figure 1: Band's Ancestral Territory