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A Possible Shaman's Cache from CA-Riv-102, Hemet, California

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IT is common to find the scattered fragmentary remains of ceremonial objects in archaeological sites, but it is uncommon to find complete specimens or specimens in a context, such as in a cache, that reflect the cultural significance the objects once held. It is the occurrence of this phenomenon that makes the ritual objects discussed here unique. During excavation of a 10 cm. level of a 1 X 2-m.-test unit at a site near Hemet, California, a nearly complete stone pipe, unbaked clay figurine, and a quartz rock crystal were found (Fig. 1). Ethnographic data suggest that this inventory of associated artifacts implies the possible remains of a shaman's kit or a sacred clan bundle. The artifacts are all in complete or nearly complete condition. This allows for a much greater meaning to be extracted concerning the way in which the objects were perceived in the cultural framework, and thus grouped and deposited.

The materials under discussion were recovered in December, 1977, during test excavation of a portion of a prehistoric village site (CA-Riv-102) in Hemet, Riverside County, California. The excavation was conducted by the Archaeological Research Unit, University of California, Riverside, under the direction of James Swenson.

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The site is located in the foothills of the northeastern portion of the Santa Rosa Hills at an interface between the former Valley Grassland Plant Community of the San Jacinto Valley to the northeast and Coastal Sage Scrub on the slopes to the south. Small isolated Chaparral communities are found within a distance of 2 km., and two local springs support riparian flora and fauna. The site was first recorded by Hal Eberhart in 1951. He described it as one of the seven village sites belonging to the late prehistoric Cahuilla village complex of *Pahsitnah* which was inhabited into the middle of the eighteenth century (Oxendine and Pink 1978). Time sensitive artifacts recovered from the site indicate occupation from 1200 B.C. to A.D. 1000.

The first section of this paper deals with the physical description and ethnographic significance of the objects recovered. The second section is a discussion of alternate interpretations of the association using ethnographic and archaeological data.

THE ARTIFACTS

Stone Pipe

Four fragments of a pipe bowl were found in Unit 2 at a depth of 20-30 cm. and when pieced together they constituted a nearly complete specimen (Fig. 2). The pipe, made of vesicular basalt, is ovoid in form, truncated at

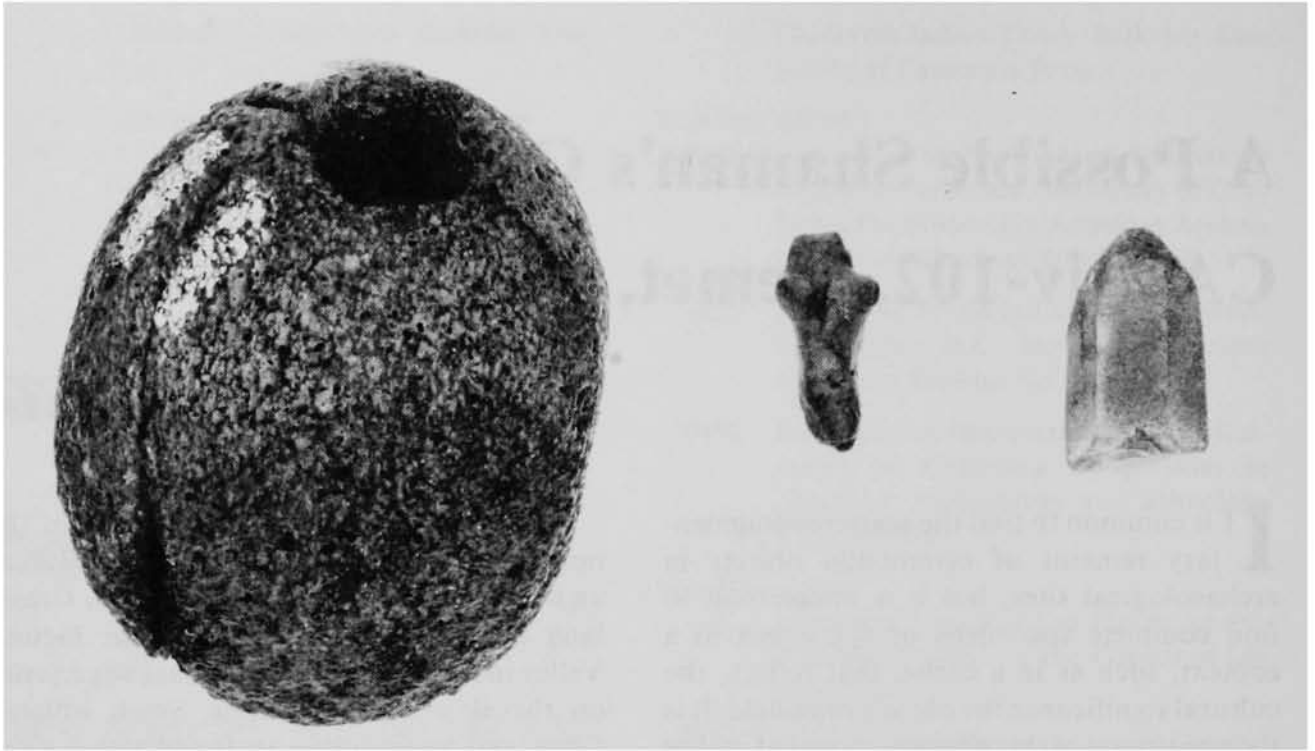


Fig. 1. Three objects found in association with one another at CA-Riv-102. Left: stone pipe; center: clay figurine; right: quartz crystal.

the rim, and rounded at the drawhole where possibly a hollow bone or stick was inserted; however, no asphaltum or other adhesive is present on the pipe. The bowl is biconically drilled and the interior is cone-shaped with flat interior sloping walls that converge into the roughly ground neck between the bowl and drawhole. The rim opening is 3.3 cm. in diameter, the neck is 0.9 cm. in diameter, and the drawhole is 1.8 cm. in diameter.

The ritual significance of the stone pipe, and associated tobacco smoking, is indicated by its mention in the Cahuilla, Luiseño, and Cupeño creation myths. The mythology of each group discusses the birth of the two creators, *Temaiyauit* and *Mukat*. They quarrel over their respective ages which in each case is settled by a tobacco pipe incident (Strong 1929:327; DuBois 1908:129).

In the Desert Cahuilla creation myth as recorded by Hooper, the stone pipe, its care,

and its origin are discussed in relationship to the sacred matting *misvut*:

During the first *fiesta*, the Isil people wanted more *misvut*. When they went to get it, the water bubbled and made a queer noise. It was talking to them, but they could not understand it at first. Soon they understood that *Misvut* was asking them what they wanted. They told him they wanted the big stone, *sharvōvōshal*, which was to pound things on, more *misvut*, and a pipe made of rock. The *misvut* was always kept rolled up and had a stone pipe in it. Net had given a feast in order to get this pipe, for *Mukat* had told them that this was necessary. The pipe is used only at *fiestas* and can be obtained only after the Net has given a feast [Hooper 1920:327].

In the Pass Cahuilla creation myth as told by Alejo Potencio, reference is made to drawing the pipes from the hearts of the creators, a

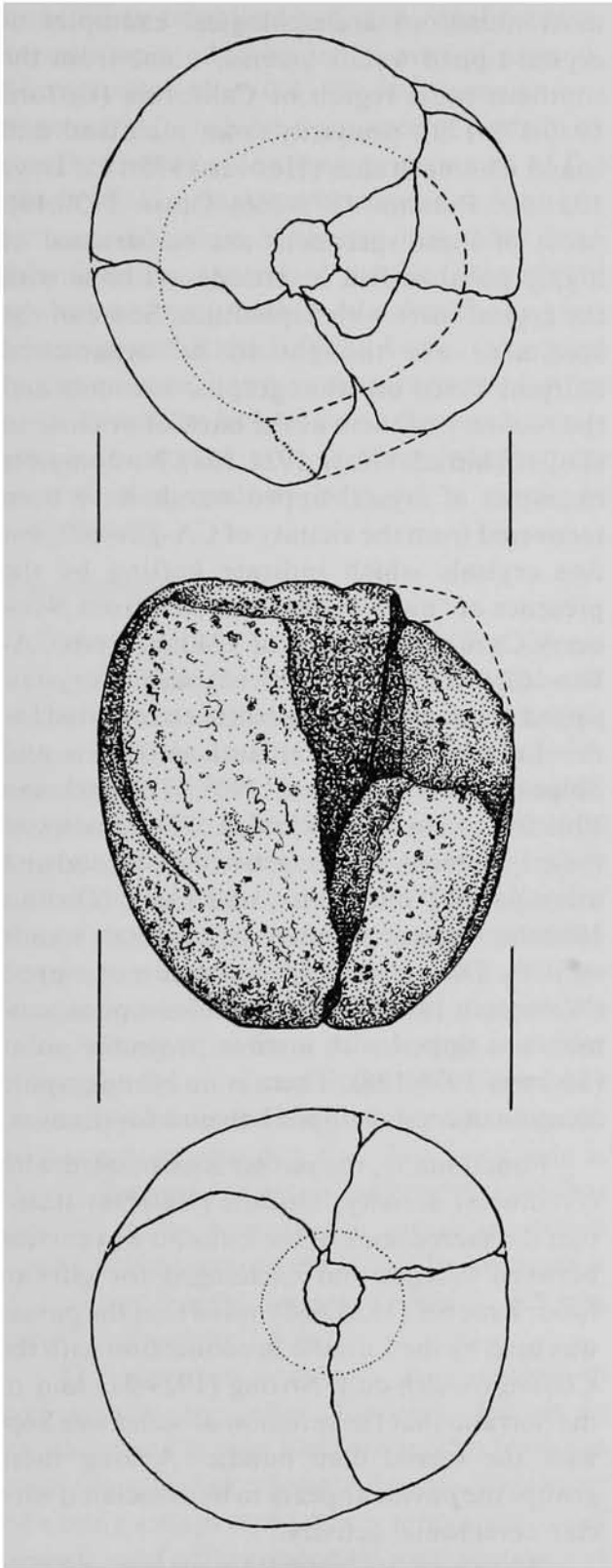


Fig. 2. Reconstructed vesicular basalt stone pipe. Actual size.

description of the pipe, and manufacture of the drawhole:

Temaiyuit said, "What can we do to eat our smoke and blow-aaah! away the dark?" Mukat answered, "Why do you say you are older than I am? Take the pipe from your heart, out of your mouth." So Mukat took from his heart the white pipe.

Temaiyuit asked Mukat, "What will we smoke in it?" Mukat answered, "Why do you say you are older than I am? We can draw from our hearts tobacco. Then we can eat and smoke it in our pipe." He drew black tobacco from his heart, and Temaiyuit drew white tobacco from his heart. Their pipes were solid, and Temaiyuit asked Mukat, "How can we open up our pipes to eat and smoke tobacco?" Mukat answered, "Why do you say you are older than I, if you do not know that with our whiskers we can bore a hole through which to smoke?" Then the hole was too big and the tobacco would not stay, but from their hearts they drew out white and black materials and made it smaller [Strong 1929:131-132].

In the Cupeño creation myth (Strong 1929:269), reference is made to the use of the stone pipe by the creator *Mukat*. He puts people to sleep by blowing tobacco smoke from his pipe. Also a pipe is illustrated in the girl's initiation ground painting (Strong 1929:256).

Kroeber (1925:653) reported that Luiseño shamans used ancient stone pipes while others used pipes made of pottery. The passages which have been preserved from the Luiseño creation myth by DuBois (1908:129) make reference to use of the stone tobacco pipe by the first two created beings. The stone pipe was present at the *Toloache* drinking ritual during the boy's initiation ceremony (DuBois 1908:77-78) and presumably during other ceremonies as well. The myth told by the Luiseño of their origin to Henshaw (1972:94) mentions the use of the pipe as a weapon. There was a tubular pipe from heaven and one from earth.

Quartz Crystal

The quartz crystal found in association with the stone pipe and clay figurine is more than twice the size of the other 13 crystal fragments found at the site and which are thought to be residual in the soil and probably originate from a geologic formation approximately 100 m. upslope (south) of the site. The specimen is 2.5 cm. in length, 1.4 cm. in width, 1.2 cm. thick, and weighs 5.9 g. It is broken on one end and has been flaked to produce a nearly flat surface. The naturally pointed tip has been dulled and slightly blunted by abrasion.

Rock crystals can be either quartz or tourmaline and not all crystals are "alive." Some quartz crystals are nothing more than ordinary white rocks. Levi (1978:46) stated that the longest crystal that occurs in the center of the matrix is termed the "chief," and is hexagonal and finger-length or less in size.

The cultural significance of crystals lies in the magical powers attributed to them. They were believed to be capable of benevolent or evil powers, to have a will of their own, and require "attention" lest they become dissatisfied with their holder and disappear. Crystals are most often found in the possession of a shaman who, with the aid of a charmstone, has the paranormal powers to influence worldly and spiritual realms. Among the Chumash and Tübatulabal, crystals were included in the weather shaman's outfit and used to bring rain (Voegelin 1939:64; Fenenga and Riddell 1978). The charmstones were usually avoided as being unpredictable and dangerous to laypersons who were not educated in their proper handling, and they were considered dangerous to others when in the hands of an evil shaman. Levi (1978:45) reported that some elderly Yuman informants were reluctant to talk about crystals for fear that misfortune would come to them.

A separate mention of the use of rock crystals is as tips in ceremonial wands. The

most numerous archaeological examples of crystal-tipped wands '*paviut*,' come from the southern coast region of California (Gifford 1940:172-173), primarily from mainland and island Chumash sites (Hoover 1975:105; Heye 1921:60; Putnam 1879:266; Olson 1930:19). Most of these specimens are constructed of highly polished fish or artiodactyl bone with the crystal inset with asphaltum. Some of the specimens are thought to be ornamental hairpins based on ethnographic accounts and the recovery of them at the back of or close to skulls in burials (Heye 1921:161). No complete examples of crystal-tipped wands have been recovered from the vicinity of CA-Riv-102, but two crystals which indicate hafting by the presence of "pitch" were recovered from Newberry Cave at a distance of 124 km. from CA-Riv-102 (Smith *et al.* 1957:13). Use of crystal-tipped ceremonial wands has been reported for the Luiseño by several authors (Bean and Shippek 1978:13; DuBois 1908:98; Sparkman 1908:211; Kroeber 1925:665). The handles of these specimens were constructed of wood and often painted red, white, and black (DuBois 1908:98). Some wooden ceremonial wands used by Diegueño shamans were not tipped (Waterman 1910:299), while at least one specimen was tipped with a stone projectile point (Thomas 1976:128). There is no ethnographic mention of crystal-tipped hairpins for the area.

Functionally, the *paviut* is associated with ceremonial activity. DuBois (1908:98) stated that the sacred stick of the Luiseño was carried between villages and exchanged for gifts of food. Kroeber (1925:665) noted that the *paviut* was used by the Luiseño in connection with the *Chiningchinich* cult. Strong (1929:21) said of the Serrano that the ceremonial wand was kept with the sacred clan bundle. Among these groups the *paviut* appears to be associated with clan ceremonial activity.

When used by shamans for magical, medicinal, or other purposes, rock crystals were apparently held in the hand without modifica-

tion. When employed in a clan ritual context, crystals were often hafted as part of a wand. The specimen from CA-Riv-102 shows no evidence of hafting by the presence of asphaltum or other mastic. However, preparation of the base by flaking may have occurred to facilitate hafting. Abrasion of the tip may have been intentional, as practiced by the Tübatulabal against a steatite slab in weather shamanism (Fenenga and Riddell 1978). Use of the crystal in this manner, however, is unrecorded for the area. Given the lack of secondary evidence, it cannot be stated with certainty whether the crystal was used as part of a wand or individually.

Clay Figurine

The unbaked clay figurine (Fig. 3) recovered in association with the stone pipe and quartz crystal, although apparently complete, is unusual in its small size when compared with other clay figurines from central and southern California. The specimen is made of unbaked gray clay which contains fine-grained, slightly micaceous sand. It is tubular in shape, has one round tapered end, and a tapered, squared end that curves forward forming a lip that is flat across the top edge. The midsection is the broadest portion from which two modelled cones rise 0.2 cm. from either side of the body extending forward. One protuberance appears to have been abraded flat. The back side is nearly flat and exhibits a longitudinal slit that extends from beneath the broadest section nearly to the tapered terminus. The specimen is 2.2 cm. in length, 1.1 cm. in width, 0.5 cm. thick, and weighs 1.1 g.

The specimen compares most closely in appearance to other figurines found in southern and central California. This form has been identified as a female figurine consisting of a body, two protuberances representative of breasts, and a flat-topped lip representative of a head. The longitudinal slit is comparable to those representing female genitalia on other

examples. It is placed on the back side of the body, however, which suggests that the resemblance is accidental. Some of the scars on the torso may have resulted from a remodelling of the terminus. Whether the slit and other scars on the body are representative of specific body features and/or body decoration, or are merely irregularities in the finish of the specimen, is uncertain. It appears that the lower portion

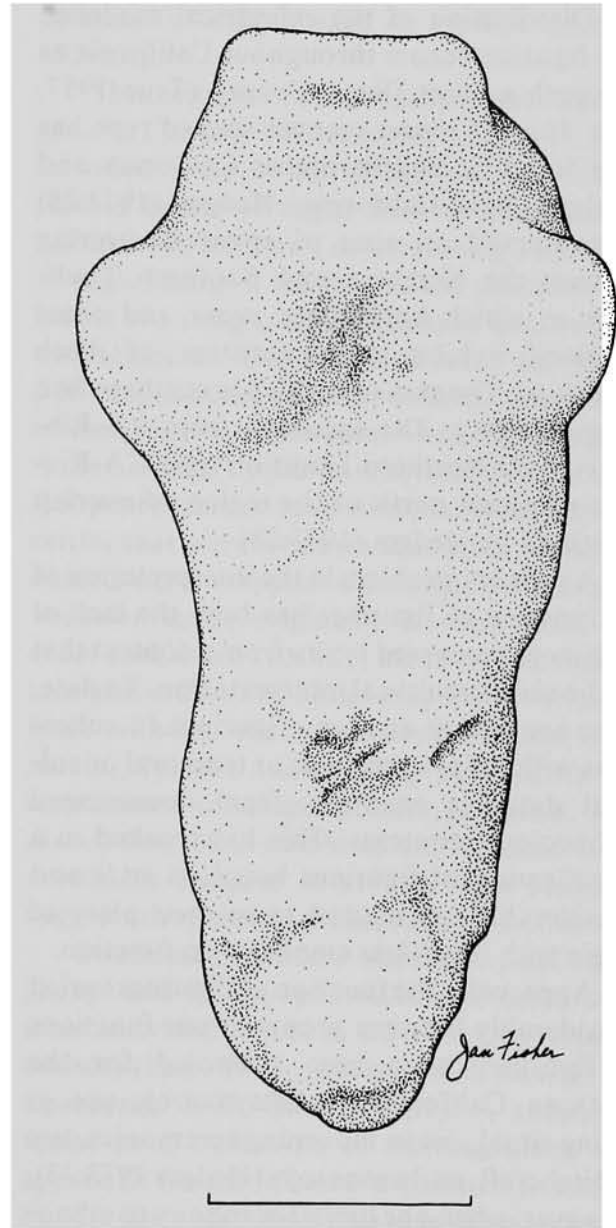


Fig. 3. Front view of unbaked clay figurine from CA-Riv-102. Scale is 0.5 cm. long.

broke off and was reattached when the clay was wet with an incomplete joining of the two sections.

Two general figurine types occur in California: the flat tennis racquet-shaped type and the cylindrical modelled type. These forms are believed to have originated from two distinct traditions in the Southwest. The first is derived from the Southern Tradition and the latter from the Northern Tradition of Hedges (1973:6). Distribution of the cylindrical modelled type figurine occurs throughout California as far south as San Diego County (True 1957:292). The flat tennis racquet-shaped type has been found in southernmost California and northern Baja California. Hedges (1973:28) has observed an area of apparent overlap between the Northern and Southern Traditions in which both types occur and some figurines exhibit characteristics of both traditions. The area of overlap is northern San Diego County. The specimen from CA-Riv-102 is of the Northern Tradition type. CA-Riv-102 is located north of the region of overlap identified by Hedges (1973:28).

A primary problem in the interpretation of the function of figurines has been the lack of specimens recovered *in situ* from a context that can be used in cultural interpretation. To date, there are nearly as many figurines in collections without provenience, or temporal or cultural data, as examples from documented archaeological contexts. This has resulted in a classification of figurines based on style and considerable speculation as to their place of origin with much less emphasis on function.

Apparently the function of figurines varied considerably between groups. Four functions of figurines have been proposed for the southern California Hakataya area: use in curing ritual, use in mourning ceremonies, use in witchcraft, and use as toys (Hedges 1973:33). However, when one limits the inquiry to ethnographic and archaeological data from Cismon-tane Southern California, specifically the

Luisseño, Digueño, Serrano, and Cahuilla territories, there is evidence for the use of figurines as grave goods and as witchcraft objects.

The evidence from southern California which Hedges (1973:34) has interpreted to associate figurines with death comes from an archaeological example reported by Campbell (1932:111) of a figurine found with a surfacial cremation in Serrano territory near Twenty-nine Palms. Based on Campbell's (1932:110) description of the specimen, it resembles figurines of the Southern Tradition, unlike the example found at CA-Riv-102. While ethnographic data from outside the region support the use of figurines in association with mourning activities (Hedges 1973:34), in southern California the phenomenon of figurines in association with cremations does not. Figurines in a burial context indicate their use as grave goods. If the burial was a child, the figurine may have been a toy doll. There is no evidence to suggest that the mourning images discussed by DuBois (1905:626) were placed in the grave.

A review of Luiseño oral history indicates that most informants have denied recognizing the figurines; however, two informants stated that they were hexing objects used by witches or shamans (True 1957:296). Roberts recorded a similar use for the Digueño of San Pasqual:

These *quis-see-i* [shamans] of the different tribes were very powerful because the spirits helped them; they could kill even men and women with their thoughts. They sometimes made little clay images of those they wished to make die. They would trample on these images with their feet, thinking thoughts of hate and death toward them, and presently the persons for whom the images stood would sicken and die [Roberts 1917:33].

Given this explanation of figurine magic for death, it is unlikely that we would find a figurine in a burial context if witchcraft were

the cause of death. Mourners would not include the object of death nor would the witch divulge the object for fear of retaliation. Based on this account, we would expect to find figurines near the site of a shaman's hexing activity area.

There are data on the use of figurines and "images" made of non-clay materials such as cloth, wood, shells, and sticks (Strong 1929: *passim*; Sparkman 1908:227; Hudson 1979:359 nt. 4; DuBois 1908: *passim*; True 1955) which were used as hexing and mourning objects. The function of clay and non-clay images overlap in some cases and the latter are usually associated with mourning ceremonies among the Cismontane Southern California groups. A Luiseño informant stated that at one time all figurines used by witches and shamans were made of clay, but in post-contact time cloth was substituted (True 1955). A separate study is warranted to determine the historic and functional relationship between the two. However, it appears that hexing objects made of other materials elsewhere were made of clay among the groups studied during the period represented by the cache.

The occurrence of a figurine in association with ceremonial and power objects may imply that the specimen possessed similar properties. The function of figurines obviously varied between groups. Among the groups discussed there is evidence for their use as witching objects and grave goods.

INTERPRETATION OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC AND ARCHAEOLOGIC DATA

An ethnographic overview regarding southern California ritual objects has been presented. Based on this information, it is possible to predict the type of archaeological remains one would expect to find from ritual activities at a given site.

The importance of the sacred clan bundle concept in southern California has been de-

scribed by numerous authors (Benedict 1924; Hooper 1920; Kroeber 1908, 1925; Strong 1929). The bundle is regarded as the symbolic center of the clan among the Cupeño, Serrano, Luiseño, and Desert, Mountain, and Pass Cahuilla, and is often referred to as "the center" or "the heart of the big house" (Strong 1929:61). Although some groups reported no possession of a bundle, all groups which had a religious leader and formed an independent ceremonial unit owned a bundle (Strong 1929:61).

The contents of clan bundles varied among groups (Strong 1929: *passim*) and may have included some or all of these items: sacred feather bands of eagle, flicker, woodpecker, horned owl, barn owl, or burrowing owl; skirts of eagle feathers; the skin of the shoulder and breast of an eagle; and headbands of crow and owl feathers. Also included were the stone pipe, eagle-bone whistles, bullroarers, strings of shell money, ceremonial wands, ceremonial rattles, crystal-tipped wands, head plumes, and sharpened sticks tipped with plumes and snake rattles that were worn on the head. All of the objects were wrapped in a ceremonial matting 'maswut' made originally of tules from the coast and, more recently, made of fine mountain grass. Of these items only the stone pipe, bone whistles, shells, turtle shell rattle fragments, crystals, and possibly bullroarers are constructed of nonperishable materials. The association of a combination of these nonperishable remains in archaeological contexts suggests the possible presence of a clan bundle.

Shamanism among southern California groups and the paraphernalia associated with their activities has been discussed by several authors (Heye 1927; Hooper 1920; Levi 1978; Sparkman 1908; Strong 1929). A shaman's tools, as a collection of objects, does not approach the significance attributed to a clan bundle since his role in regard to the clan is less important. The shaman's kit is of personal importance because it is symbolic of his power

over the community in which he lives and operates. Bean (1975:29) stated that power could be tapped or brought into the sphere of human activities by object possession.

The paraphernalia associated with a shaman's activities consist of various objects and may include some or all of these items: a bunch of feathers, stone pipe, a stick with rattlesnake rattles, a ceremonial staff or wand, scratching stick, sucking tubes, quartz or tourmaline crystals, human or animal bone "especially predators," and "small images of the people they wished to kill" (Bean 1975:30; Sparkman 1908:216; Strong 1929:35). A shaman might use something belonging to a person's body such as some hair, the paring of a nail, or some blood of a person he was hexing or curing (Bean 1975:30; Sparkman 1908:215). Some shamans made remedies from plant and animal sources (Bean 1975:30; Sparkman 1908:216; Strong 1929:64). These latter items would not be expected to survive in an archaeological deposit. Of these items only the stone pipe, sucking tubes, quartz or tourmaline crystals, complete human or animal bones, and possibly "small images" are constructed of nonperishable materials. The association of a combination of these objects would imply the presence of a shaman's kit in archaeological contexts.

One such association has been recorded by Heye (1927:315) who described a cache consisting of 21 steatite sucking tubes and a crescentic steatite slab from San Diego County.

An ethnographic association of this type reported by Fenenga and Riddell (1978) consisted of an abraded quartz crystal and associated steatite slab, two projectile points, and several other objects wrapped in a cloth bundle. The assemblage had functioned as a Tübatulabal weather shaman's kit.

Some of the artifacts recovered from excavation of the village identified as *Temeku* by McCown (1955) included 64 quartz and tourmaline crystals and portions of pottery

figurines and pipes. It is unknown whether any of these specimens were originally cached together or found in association with one another.

Unfortunately, the paraphernalia used in sacred clan and shamanistic ritual have items in common. Since the stone pipe and quartz crystal are used in both cases, neither can be used to differentiate between the remains of a clan bundle or shaman's kit. Figurines are not specifically mentioned; however, "small images" used by shamans for hexing are, although the composition of these objects is not described.

Interpretation of the objects from CA-Riv-102 as the remains of a clan bundle rests upon the presence of a stone pipe and the quartz crystal since both items have been discussed as primary items in clan bundles (Strong 1929: *passim*; Sparkman 1908:211). There is no specific record of figurines being kept in or with sacred bundles, although there is reference to their use as power objects (True 1957; Roberts 1917). The reason for storage of a figurine with the clan ceremonial regalia is not known, but its presence suggests that the figurine may have had a ceremonial function unrecorded by ethnographers and therefore could reasonably be expected to occur with the clan bundle. Nevertheless, there is no archaeological or ethnographic evidence to support this.

Following the inference that the materials may be the remains of a clan bundle, some observations about the site can be made. Assuming that the bundle was not merely brought to the site and left, but was actually used there, its presence implies that the village had a resident *net* and was the location of periodic ceremonial activities. Since there has been only limited mention of the other village loci which constitute the village complex of *Pahsitnah* (Oxendine and Pink 1978), the relationship of these sites to one another cannot be discussed in detail. The possible presence of a

clan bundle at CA-Riv-102 suggests that the ceremonial organization of the other sites may have been similar and that they may have had a clan bundle and resident *net* as well. Minimally, the presence of a clan bundle would suggest that the breakdown of clan organization at CA-Riv-102 was unexpected and occurred quickly. Either the bundle was never retrieved from its hiding place to be passed on to the appropriate party, or it was cached for safekeeping and buried when no elder remained to receive it. Deterioration of clan organization at the site could have occurred while the clan bundle was still intact. There are too many uncontrolled variables, however, for these data to provide anything more than a local comparison. If the specimens are the remains of a clan bundle, the most significant contribution is the indication that in this area figurines functioned as part of the clan regalia.

An alternate interpretation of the archaeological evidence might be that it is the remains of a shaman's bundle. A shaman's personal bundle, not involved in clan ceremonialism, would reasonably contain a rock crystal for use during hexing and/or curing ritual, and a stone pipe for ritual smoking during ceremonies. Although the use of figurines by shamans as hexing objects among the Luiseño is documented, storage in a shaman's kit is never directly mentioned.

Given the lack of a thorough understanding of figurine use, the use of it as an interpretive tool is problematic. If the function of the figurine is limited exclusively to witchcraft, the materials found would most likely represent the remains of a shaman's kit. It appears unlikely that a hexing object would be kept with the sacred items of the clan, since it might have a negative effect on the clan members or the execution of first rite ceremonies. Identification of an object (the figurine) as being solely evil is somewhat in conflict with the conceptual properties normally attributed to objects. Power objects were not believed to be

inherently benevolent or evil but rather the intention of the shaman determined the outcome of magical activities (Bean 1975:26; Levi 1978:42). It is possible that the figurine, like crystals, was multi-functional and had a role in both clan and shamanistic ceremonial activity. In this case, its presence cannot be used to differentiate between the archaeological remains of a sacred clan bundle and a shaman's kit. However, the ethnographic data for local groups definitely support the latter interpretation.

If the materials found at CA-Riv-102 are the remains of a shaman's bundle, this would suggest that imitative magic (hexing or witchcraft ritual), through crystal and figurine magic, and smoking were practiced at the site. The lack of sucking tubes might suggest that the possessor of the bundle was involved in witching rather than curing activities. The possession of a kit of power objects suggests that a shaman of considerable power, as attested to by his equipment, may have lived and practiced at the site. It also suggests a degree of role specialization since the functions and offices of shaman and priest or *net* are ordinarily considered to be exclusive (Weiss 1973:40-42).

Ultimately, the presence of a figurine with the other ritual items strengthens the proposition of their function as hexing or power objects. Whereas such an association has previously been recorded for the Luiseño it has not been recorded for the Cahuilla.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the combination of objects and their ethnographically documented uses, the objects described above were identified as the possible remains of a shaman's kit. This identification rests principally on the presence of a figurine. Few other archaeological examples of shaman's kits or clan bundles exist from southern California. It is doubtful that associations of this sort are truly so rare but more likely that

the remains are fragmentary and dispersed, thus less obvious than the example described by Heye (1927). It is the dispersed "associations" that go unrecognized during excavation and analysis. Thus, it is necessary to realize the contextual relationship of items which are expected to be found from bundles. Furthermore, in areas where bundles are found belonging to both shamans and clan leaders, it is important to identify these associations and differentiate between the two in an attempt to interpret the separateness as well as the overlap of these social roles.

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NOTE

1. Until recently the area where excavation occurred and the bedrock metates downslope (north) were recorded as a discrete archaeological site (CA-Riv-119). A new site number (CA-Riv-102) includes two previously recorded scatters of cultural debris to the west (CA-Riv-102 and 123) plus CA-Riv-119 which all lie between the golf course southwest of Santa Fe Street and the Ramona Bowl. Due to this change, the text of this report refers to the area excavated as "the site" when actually it is only the eastern portion of the site as it has been currently redefined.

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