

Chumash Indians

By: Morgan Derby



Environment

- o The Chumash Indians lived in Central California
 - From Estro Bay in the north to Malibu Canyon in the south.
 - Also from Carizzo Plain in the east to Santa Barbara Channel Island in the west.
- o Climate
 - Cool climate in Chumash area until about 6,500-5,000 years ago when the climate rose dramatically.



History

- ✓ Around 13,000 years ago Chumash people lived in small groups, collecting shellfish and harvesting wild seeds. The climate then was cool and moist.
- ✓ The climate of the Santa Barbara region became warmer and drier around 6,500 years ago, and human population appears to have declined significantly.
- ✓ About 5,000 years ago the Chumash people started speaking a "Proto-Chumash" language that had become established in Santa Barbara. It was called Hokan.
- ✓ New inventions, including shell hooks and barbed harpoons, enabled the Chumash to catch a wider variety of fishes. About 2,000 BP the tomol, or plank canoe was invented. For hunting and defense, the bow and arrow replaced the atlatl and dart about 1,500 BP.
- ✓ Use of shell bead money, produced mostly on the Northern Channel Islands, indicates increased importance of trade between communities to buffer local shortfalls of wild food resources. Missionization of the Chumash.

Religion

- ❑ Religious people in a tribe
 - ~ Medicine man
 - ~ Priest
 - ~ Shamans



- ❑ The shamans and the priests made the art out of the tribe.

Government

- In the Chumash government there were chieftains. This type of government is called a Chiefdom.
- When a chieftain died the son or daughter would then inherit the position.
- Population of Chumash tribe
 - 18,000 people

Chieftain ->



Economy

- The Chumash people were hunters and gatherers.
- They hunted wild game, fished and collected seeds and acorns.



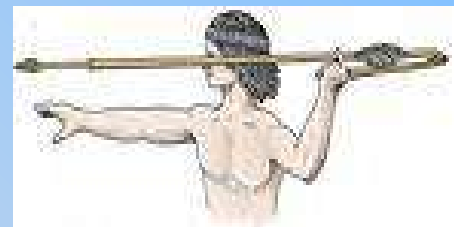
War

➤ Weapons

- + spear-thrower
- + atlatl
- + bow and arrow
- + fishnet

➤ Why were wars started?

- + When the Europeans came they trespassed onto Chumash hunting-gathering-fishing area. The Chumash people were angered so they started a war against the Europeans.



Technology

✓ Tools

- needles
- fishhooks
- sandpaper



✓ Hokaṇ

- language of Chumash people.

Trade

- Trade
 - > Chumash people traded wild food resources
 - > traded with other people in the region
 - > used tomol, or seagoing plank canoe to trade.



Language

❖ **Writing**

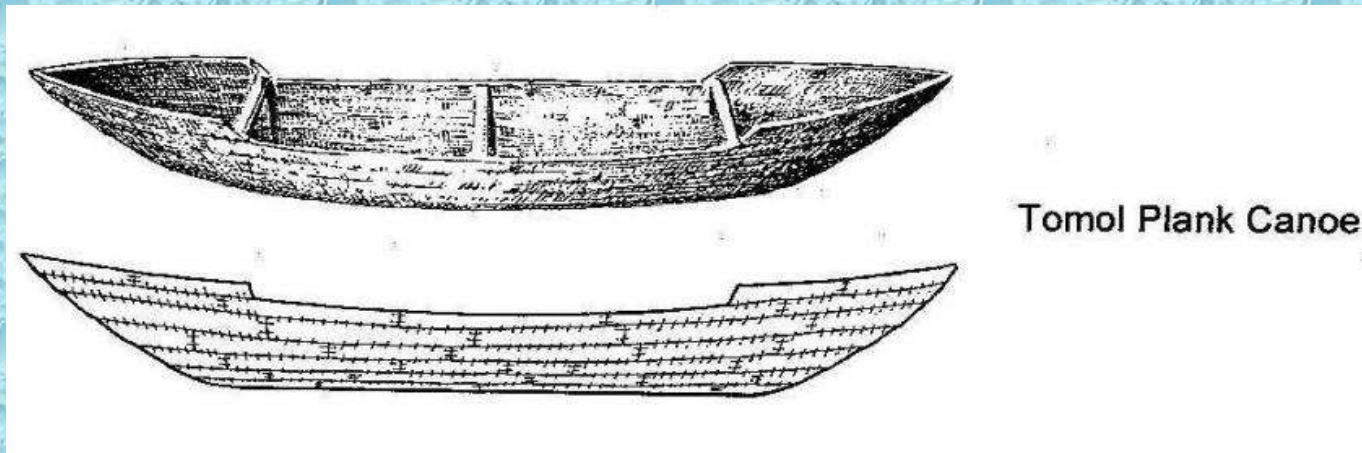
- At circa 5,000 years ago Chumash people started speaking a “Pronto-Chumash” language called Hokan.
- **Examples**
 - ÷ Xshap this means rattlesnake
 - ÷ Axtayuxash this means wild cherry seeds.



Transportation

≥ Tomol

- ◆ Seagoing plank canoe
- ◆ A typical tomol held 3 people
- ◆ It was made out of driftwood or redwood and yop. Yop is a melted mixture of pine pitch and hardened asphalt.



Shelter



Shelter

- ❑ Made of willow poles, bulrush, and cattails.
- ❑ The Chumash shelters were built by the coast for fishing purposes.
- ❑ They were also built permanent because of the plentiful resources near the ocean.
- ❑ One house can hold up to 50 people.



Food

😊 Animals

→ fish, shellfish, whales, seals, sea otters, sharks, sea birds, albacore, tuna, sardines, deer, wild game, grizzly & black bear, mountain lion, fox, coyote, badger, quail, pigeons, and doves.

😊 Plants

→ acorns and seeds



Arts

♠ Types of art

- cave paintings
- made by shamans and priests

♠ Materials used

- minerals
- water
- animal fat
- plant juice



Gender Roles

♂ Men

- ♂ chieftains
- ♂ shamans
- ♂ priests
- ♂ medicine men

♀ Women

- ♀ chieftains
- ♀ priests
- ♀ medicine women



Clothing

▼ Men

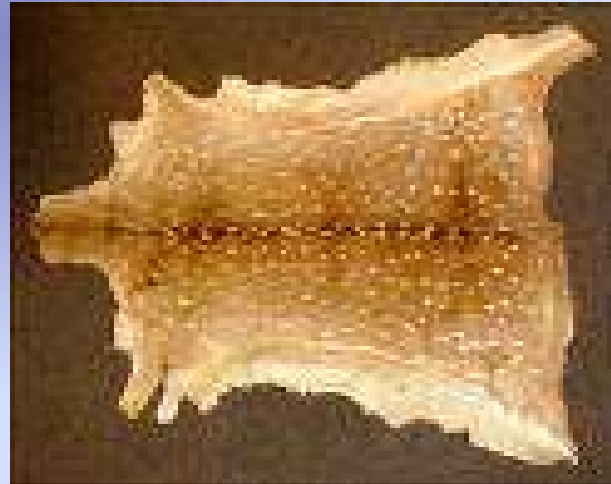
- nothing
- occasionally a belt to hold tools

▼ Women

- skirt

▼ Materials used

- deer skin
- or
- plant fiber



Bibliography

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Web site-

www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/culture/northamerica/chumashindians.html

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