

THE
EVOLUTION OF
THE TONGVA
TRIBAL NAME

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY BY

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REPORT FROM THE HISTORICAL CONSULTANT AND RESEARCHER

October 11, 2018

Mr. Andy Salas

Chairman of the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians, Kizh Nation

As requested, this is an independent study and report on the evolution of the “Tongva” name with an accompanying timeline of when the “Tongva” name was first introduced as a tribal name to public and private entities. The report was performed and completed over a 5-month period with over 1,000 pages of results and supporting documentation included in the final analysis.

The results of this study and survey have identified the following conclusive statements based on known factual evidence and support as identified in 161 various sources of information dating from 1774 to 2018. All evidence is documented in the full detailed report of the study and survey and has been distributed to the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians, Kizh Nation tribal leadership. The following conclusive statements are noted below:

- The “Tongva” tribal name is more than likely not the ancestral, cultural and historical name of the Gabrielinos;
- A timeline of the evolution of the “Tongva” term indicates the term was initiated by C. Hart Merriam between 1903 and 1935 as a language and linguistic stock. For nearly 90 years, the “Tongva” term was silent until it was re-introduced as a ‘chosen’ and self-proclaimed tribal name;
- Evidence indicates the “Tongva” name was publicly announced in 1992 after being ‘chosen’ as the tribal name of the Gabrielino Band of Mission Indians based in San Gabriel, California;
- The name was introduced by the former Gabrielino Chairman with the Gabrielino Acting Chief accepting the name as the new tribal name of the Gabrielino Band of Mission Indians. Both refused to respond to the interview segment of this study;
- The genealogical records and birth certificates of both the former Gabrielino Chairman and Gabrielino Acting Chief indicate neither have California Indian heritage lineage;
- In 1994, the Gabrielinos were recognized by the State of California as the aboriginal tribe of the Los Angeles Basin after the original resolution was modified to remove the “Tongva” term from the resolution’s verbiage after support for the “Tongva” tribal name was unable to be confirmed and validated;

- Further, evidence indicates the “Tongva” name was ‘chosen’ to accelerate legislative action to obtain Federal and State recognition for a “Tongva” reservation allowing the development of a casino with gaming operations;
- And finally, a widespread strategy was implemented to educate the public on the new ‘chosen’ and self-proclaimed name of “Tongva” as the ancestral, cultural and historical name of the Gabrielinos. Today, the “Tongva” name has been incorrectly associated with the Gabrielino name in order to be recognized as the aboriginal tribe of the Los Angeles Basin.

In addition to the results of the study and survey, five observations were identified, based on the examination and research of related documents, interviews and supporting evidence. The observations are listed below:

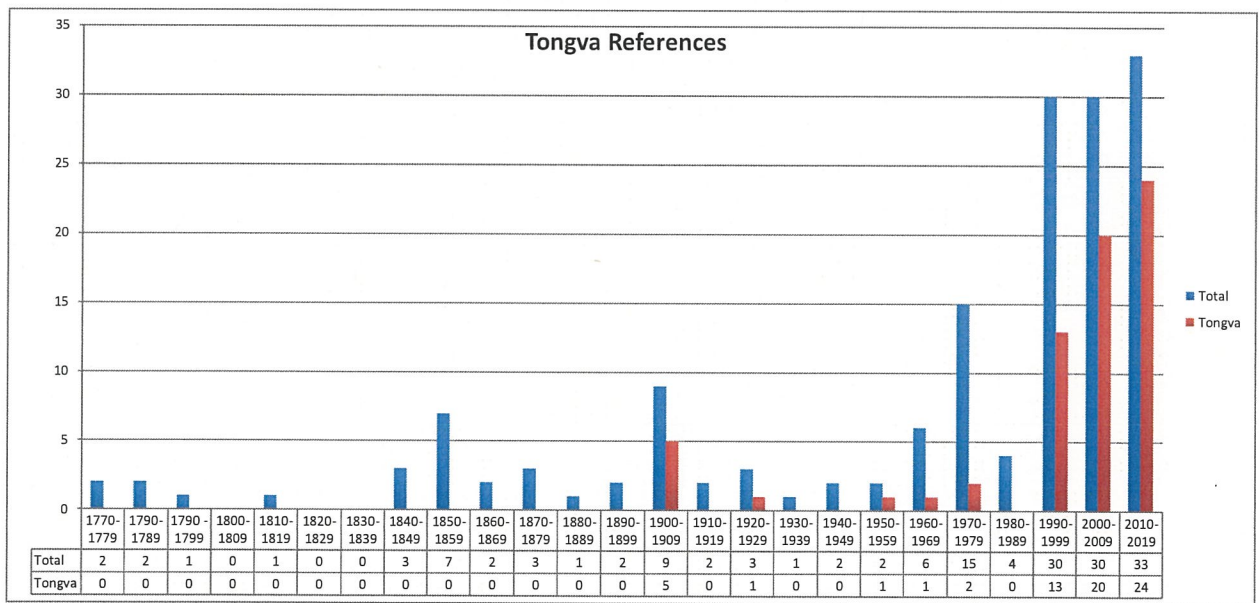
- 1) **Observation 1:** The “Tongva” Tribal Nation and its associated “Tongva” tribes are **not** formally recognized by the State of California or the United States Federal Government.
- 2) **Observation 2:** There is negligible historical, cultural and ethnological evidential support for the tribal name of “Tongva” as the ancestral name of the Gabrielinos.
- 3) **Observation 3:** The “Tongva” tribal term was established circa 1992 for political purposes rather than based on an ancestral and historical tribal reference or Native American Indian tribal name.
- 4) **Observation 4:** The “Tongva” tribal term has been incorrectly associated with the Gabrielino name, a California state-recognized Native American Indian Tribe, resulting in misleading and misrepresentation to the Native American community, American public, and California private, academic and government entities.
- 5) **Observation 5:** A general lack of knowledge on the etymology of the tribal name of “Tongva” exists in Southern California Native American Indian communities, academic institutions and historical archival establishments.

Summary:

This study and survey have provided evidence that the “Tongva” name was ‘chosen’ as a self-identified and self-proclaimed tribal name in 1992. A timeline of the evolution of the “Tongva” name indicates its origins as a language and linguistic stock was initiated as early as 1903 but its use went silent for nearly 90 years afterwards. There is negligible evidence that the “Tongva’ name is the ancestral, cultural and historical name of the Gabrielinos as claimed by “Tongva” tribal leaders and members. Furthermore, “Tongva” tribal leaders, archaeologists, historians, authors and educators have shown negligible support or evidence for the use of “Tongva” as the ancestral tribal name of the Gabrielinos and the information which exists and has been provided does not authenticate their claims.

A simple series of question called 'the five W's and how' are used for information gathering and problem-solving research assignments. The five W's are Who, What, Why, When and Where. How is included with the five W's for this study and the answers to each of the questions pertaining to this study are listed below for the purposes of summarizing the conclusions of this study:

- **Who changed the Gabrielino name to Tongva?**
 - The former Gabrielino Chairperson and Gabrielino Acting Chief.
- **What was changed?**
 - The “chosen” name of Tongva, the “people of the earth”, was questionably introduced as the ancestral name of the Gabrielinos.
- **Why was the name changed?**
 - To obtain recognition as a Federal and State recognized tribe in order to acquire reservation lands and eventually build a casino for gaming operations.
- **When was the name first changed?**
 - In 1992. **Table 5.2 – “Tongva” Sources by the Decade** identifies the number of Southern California Indian references and “Tongva” references since 1770 with a steep increase starting the decade of the 1990’s.
 - **Table 5.2 – “Tongva” Sources by the Decade.**



- **Where was the name changed?**

- In 1992, at a Gabrielino Tribal Council meeting. In addition, the ancestral Gabrielino springs was renamed Tongva Springs, and its associated foundation was named 'Tongva Springs Foundation'.
- **How was the name changed?**
 - Gabrielino tribal groups changed their tribal name to Gabrielino-Tongva, thereby inaccurately linking a name established in 1771 (Gabrielino) to a name created in 1992 (Tongva). As part of a documented plan, the first step was to 'educate' the public on the new "Tongva" name. Over time, the "Tongva" name became synonymous with the Gabrielino name and the public had been persuaded by two non-Gabrielinos and two non-California Indians.

In conclusion, the validated origins of the "Tongva" tribal name are 1992 as supported by facts and evidence and there is negligible support for the term as the ancestral, cultural and historical name of the Gabrielinos. In addition, the individuals who were instrumental in introducing the name of "Tongva" are non-Gabrielinos and non-California Indians with no heritage lineage to the Mission San Gabriel as supported by genealogical and birth records. Evidence indicates the "Tongva" name was 'chosen' self-proclaimed rather than identified by factual evidence as the 'true' ancestral name of the Gabrielinos. The motives for adopting the name of "Tongva" were for political purposes in an attempt to obtain Federal and State recognition with the goal of gaining Indian reservation land, building a casino and establishing a gaming operation enterprise. Their motives as non-Gabrielinos and non-California Indians are based on fictional reasoning rather than factual basis.

Joe Castillo

Joe Castillo - Historical Consultant and Researcher

About the Historical Consultant and Researcher:

Joe Castillo is a historical author, columnist and researcher with a professional background in audit and research. He is a graduate of California State University, Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Systems Research. He has over 20 years of experience in performing operational and technical audits, examining evidence and documenting results. This study and survey were conducted over a five-month period with all results documented and validated.