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Mission Registers as Anthropological Questionnaires: Understanding Limitations of the Data

JOHN R. JOHNSON

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of studies in recent years have been devoted to interpreting data contained in the various ecclesiastical registers kept by early Franciscan missionaries in California. These mission registers contain valuable information regarding California Indian history, settlement geography, demography, family structure, marriage patterns, and relations with the Spanish colonial system.¹ These data are important because they supplement and test statements about California Indian lifeways occurring in other historical documents and in the records gathered by early ethnographers. A great advantage to the ethno-historic information contained in the mission registers is that it covers a sizeable sample of the native population, thereby allowing analysis on a regional scale.

Although an excellent opportunity is provided to obtain significant anthropological information, the use of mission register data is not entirely straightforward. The registers may contain any number of clerical errors, difficult handwriting, faded ink, missing pages, inconsistent renderings of Indian names, and cross-cultural misinterpretations. Because of the increasing use of mission registers for reconstructing California Indian culture, it is appropriate to review some common sources of error so that

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other researchers may be aware of potential problems which are involved in using this type of material.² Examples are drawn from the author's mission register studies of the Chumash Indians primarily using data from Missions Santa Bárbara, La Purísima, and Santa Inés.

THE MISSION REGISTERS

Five principal registers were kept to administer the Indian neophyte population under the missionaries' charge (see Table 1.1). The *libro de bautismos* (baptismal register) (Figure 1.1) was the book in which the names of all *neofitos* (neophytes), Indians baptized into the Catholic faith, were initially entered. Each person was given a sequential number in the register and a new Christian name. The following information was usually recorded: the date of baptism, the place of baptism, the person's approximate age, the *ranchería* (village) of origin (usually birthplace), the person's Indian name, kin relationships to other Indians (usually to someone who had already been baptized), and the sponsors or godparents. Added to this basic data might be other information, including physical infirmities, place of residence (if different from birthplace), and political status in native society.

The *libro de casamientos* (marriage register) (Figure 1.2) recorded all marriages taking place at the mission. These consisted of two different types of marriages: (1) a solemnizing of marriages previously existing before the couple joined the mission congregation and (2) marriages formed after a couple met at the mission. The first type of marriage provided significant information on social interrelationships among native villages and important data for genealogical reconstruction. Besides the date of marriage and the type of marriage being performed, the marriage entries often repeated categories of information contained in the baptismal register, always including the Spanish names of the couple, sometimes their Indian names, baptismal numbers, villages of origin, and kinship relationships to other neophytes. Witnesses to the marriage were also listed. Sometimes the marriage entries provided additional data for a particular individual beyond that reported in the baptismal register. Sometimes, too, the marriage data contradicted information given in the baptismal register, e.g., village of origin.

The *libro de entierros* (burial register) listed all deaths which took place among baptized Indians. The information recorded included the person's name, the date and place of burial, and whether last rites were administered. Frequently, relatives of the deceased would be named, village of origin listed, and cross-reference to the baptismal number included. Less often, place of death, and persons reporting the death to the missionary were also given. The data associated with a burial entry occasionally added new details different from or missing altogether in other registers regarding a person's kin relationships and village of origin.

The *padrón* was another important means employed by the missionaries to keep track of the hundreds of Indian neophytes associated with the mission. An excellent description of the contents of the *padrón* used by missionaries at Santa Bárbara appears in a report authored by Fr. Estevan Tapis in 1800:

[In the *padrón*] we note all the neophytes from the day they were baptized with the details of their Christian names and pagan names if they have such, the names of their parents, of their Christian relatives who live at the mission, the *rancherías* whence they came, the date of their baptism, their age at baptism, and the number of the entry of their baptism in the register. When someone dies, after entering the fact of his burial in the corresponding register, that person's name is scratched out in the *padrón*. If the deceased was married the surviving consort is placed among the names of the widows or widowers.³

Thus, the *padrón* served as an up-to-date census of the entire mission population. It was constantly amended and augmented as new baptisms, marriages, and burials took place.

The *libro de confirmaciones* listed all the neophytes confirmed into the church. Although villages of origin and family relationships sometimes were included for persons listed in this register, it was not of much use for the purpose of studying most Chumash family relationships. After 1794, there was no missionary in California who had the ecclesiastical authority to give confirmations, which resulted in a gap of about 40 years before these registers began to be used again. This was after the Mission Period had come to a close. Thus, it was only in the beginning

Table 1.1 Principal Registers for Five Missions Established in Chumash Territory^a

	MSLO	MBV	MSBb	MLP	MSI
Baptismal Registers					
Dates of Use and Entry Numbers	1) 1772-1821 [1-2549] 2) 1821-1869 [2550-3954]	1) 1782-1808 [1-2648] 2) 1809-1873 [1-2294] 3) 1873-1922 [1-3077]	1786-1858 [1-4777]	1) 1787-1834 [1-3287] 2) 1834-1850 [3288-3357]	1804-1886 [1-2367]
Marriage Registers					
Dates of Use and Entry Numbers	1772-1902 [1-2197]	1782-1893 [1-1546]	1787-1857 [1-1427]	1788-1851 [1-1098]	1804-1904 [1-741]
Burial Registers					
Dates of Use and Entry Numbers	1) 1772-1838 [1-2441] 2) 1838-1884 [2442-5500]	1) 1782-1823 [1-2687] 2) 1824-1912 [1-2788]	1787-1841 [1-3997]	1) 1789-1831 [1-2549B] 2) 1832-1851 [2550B-2996]	1805-1917 [1-2250]

Padrones

Dates of Use	1) 1833-1835	1) ?-1825 (frag.)	1815-1833	1) 1799-1804	1) 1805-1810
	2) 1835-1839	2) 1825-1840		2) 1804-1806	2) 1814-1825
	3) 1840-1841			3) 1814-1818	3) 1825-1837
				4) 1816-1817	4) 1837-1840
				5) 1820-1821	5) 1856
				6) 1822-1824	
				7) 1826-1827	
				8) 1836-1845	

Confirmations

Dates of Use and Entry Numbers	1778-1794, 1804-1906 [1-2664]	1833-1911 [1-1812]	1790-1794, 1831-1857 [1-3157]	1790-1974, 1844 [1-712]	1834-1897 [1-522]
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^a MSLO = San Luis Obispo, MBV = San Buenaventura, MSB = Santa Bárbara, MLP = La Purísima, MSI = Santa Inés. Not all mission register entries were for Indians. After mission secularization in 1834, there was increasing use of the registers for recording the burgeoning *gente de razón* population.

^b At Santa Bárbara, separate registers were kept for the Indians at the mission and the *gente de razón* associated with the presidio. When the Santa Bárbara mission registers were filled in the 1840s and 1850s, Indian entries were then added to the presidio books. Because the presidio and later parish registers for Santa Bárbara have been listed elsewhere [Noel R. Barton, "Genealogical Research in the Records of the California Spanish Missions," *Genealogical Journal*, 4(1): 13-33 (1975)], they have not been included here.

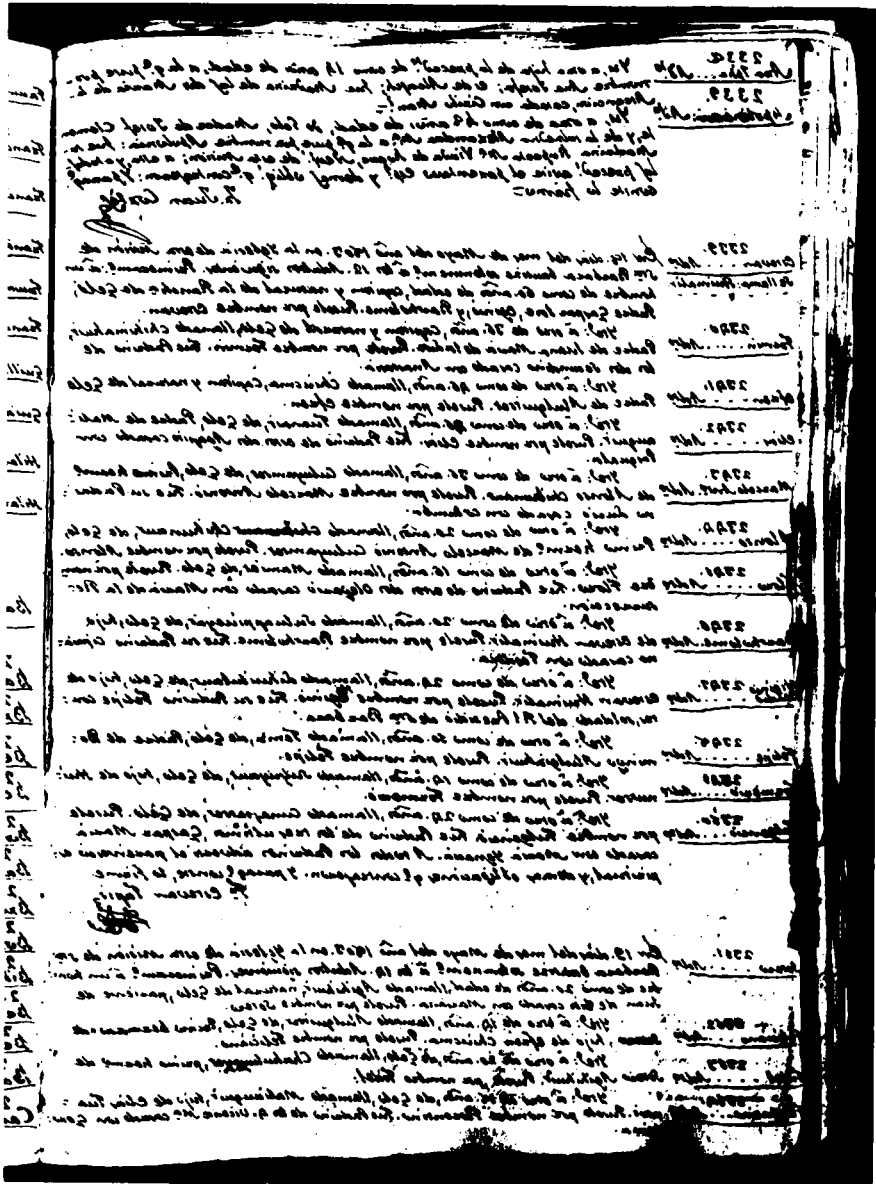


FIGURE 1.1 Page from the baptismal register of Mission Santa Bárbara. On May 18, 1803, twelve men were baptized from Gelo/helo'/, the Chumash village on Mescalitan Island in the Goleta estuary. The first three of these men (Entry Numbers 2339–2341) were identified as *capitanes* (chiefs), indicating their political status in native society.

ambo solteras, y neof. de dicha Misión, de que fueron varones Juan de
Dio casado con María del Cañon, y Blas Ignacio casado con Ma:
ría Ignacia, neof. de la misma Misión. Inmediamente los bendije, y
vale según el Ritual Romano. Y paraq. conste, lo firme

P. Estevan Tapia,

Año de 1797.

[Signature]

243.
Pedro Regalado
con
Placida Ma.

En 17. días del mes de Enero del año 1797. en la Iglesia de esta
Misión de Sta. Bárbara, habiendo bautizado solemnem. a Placi:
da María, natural de la Ranchía de Salajuaj, y Madre de Antoni:
no, Damian, y Carolina, neof. de esta Misión, renovo ante mi el
consentim. matrimonial que en su gentilidad renia dado a Pedro
Regalado Chapiyu, natural de la misma Ranchía, y Padre de los re:
mensionados, y no hallando impedim. alguno canonico en caso in
facie ecclesie por palabra de presente q. se dieron. De que fueron
testes Luis Uicelo de Bárbara Antonia, y Cipriano Sicranon:
es, solteros, neofitos de esta Misión. Y paraq. conste, lo firme

P. Estevan Tapia,

[Signature]

2.
Fe
lit

FIGURE 1.2 An entry from the marriage register of Mission Santa Bárbara. This couple was renewing their vows in a Catholic ceremony, having been married for many years before coming to the mission. Both husband and wife were natives of the village of Salajuaj /shalawax/, also known as Montecito. The entry names three of their children who had previously joined the mission community.

years of the missions established along the Santa Barbara Channel, when the neophyte populations were still quite small, that the confirmation registers were used by the missionaries.⁴

Ideally mission register information may be used to reconstruct the entire life history for each individual who was baptized, including genealogical relationships to other Indians, but it should be borne in mind that a number of factors impinge on the accuracy and completeness of mission register data. In order to assess the reliability and representativeness of this type of information for reconstructing social relationships, a review of the kinds of errors and biases which could affect data analysis and interpretation is needed here.

The most frequent errors encountered in using mission register data are those introduced originally through omissions, misunderstandings, and outright clerical mistakes by the missionaries. Although Franciscan devotedness to detail and accuracy was usually quite remarkable, there nevertheless were considerable differences in experience and thoroughness among individual missionaries. Some, for example Fr. José Señán of Mission San Buenaventura, served for many years at one location and became very proficient in the Chumash language spoken there.⁵ As a result, the records of these more experienced missionaries are demonstrably more complete and reliable because of their greater familiarity and rapport with the neophytes in their congregation. Some, too, like Fr. Estevan Tapis of Santa Bárbara, were sticklers when it came to accuracy of recorded information and devoted considerable effort to tracking down and correcting mistakes contained in the registers. If only all of the missionaries had held to the same standards of care and precision exhibited by Señán and Tapis!

MISSING ENTRIES AND LOGICAL INCONSISTENCIES

As examples of how missionary errors may affect the process of data collection, I will focus on several problems encountered in my research. This section covers the twin bugaboos of failure to enter the baptism, marriage, or burial of a person in the appropriate register, resulting in no record, and the opposite problem of mistakenly identifying two different people with a particular baptismal entry, so that there are too many records for that person.

In the process of cross-referencing marriages and burials to baptismal entries, one occasionally comes across people who cannot be found in the baptismal register. The situation of a missing baptismal entry sometimes may be explained by the fact that the person was baptized at another mission and later visited or transferred to a second mission where he or she married or died. The missionaries were usually careful to note in their register entries if a person had originally been a neophyte at another mission, but if they failed to make such a comment, there may be no real clue as to where the person originated.

Another cause of the failure to identify a person's name with a baptismal entry is that names sometimes were confused or changed from the time of baptism. Warren and Hodge have noted the common occurrence of transposition of names from one record to the next,⁶ e.g., María Feliciana may become "Feliciana María." They also point out propensities towards name shortening, e.g., Francisco Antonio may become either "Francisco" or "Antonio" in later entries, and in adding "María" or "José" as a second name to people originally baptized with a single name, e.g., Theresa may be written later as "Theresa María." Such problems are usually not insurmountable, especially if a person's native name is provided or if his or her relatives are mentioned. But if these latter categories of information are absent, it may not be possible to distinguish among possible choices, especially for people with simple common names, like "Juan" or "María."

A more difficult situation occurs when a person's name becomes completely different than that which he or she was given at baptism. This type of error most often arose from the difficulties that the Chumash encountered in pronouncing Spanish names containing phonemes not found in their native language. The most frequent substitutions of Chumash sounds for Spanish consonants involved /p/ for the Spanish /b/ and /f/, /t/ for /d/, and /l/ or /n/ for /r/. Examples of name changes in the registers include Bernardo/Fernando (four instances),⁷ Rodrigo/Odorico (two instances), Aquilino/Quirino (two instances), Lorenza/Prudencia/Florencia (two instances), Alexandro/Ricardo/Leandro, Eladio/Arabio/Hilario, Placido/Blas, Felicissimo/Precisimo, Bernardina/Florentina, Rosalia/Nazaria, Sergia/Celia, Rogeria/Euqueria, Damasia/Tomasa, Agripina/Delfina, etc. More than 50 cases of name changes were documented in the course of my

research, resulting from missionary difficulties in understanding Chumash pronunciation. Most of these cases involved Chumash who transferred between missions and/or missionaries who were newly appointed and had not yet gained sufficient familiarity with the neophytes under their charge.

In addition to transfers and name changes as causes for failing to find the baptismal entries for people mentioned in the marriage or burial registers, there is also the problem of simple omission of baptisms. I have been able to document apparent instances of this phenomenon primarily in later mission records, most particularly in post-secularization times (from the 1830s onward). During this period, at many missions the resident ministers were reduced to a single individual or even to one individual covering two missions (e.g., Santa Inés and La Purísima were both served by Fr. José Joaquín Jimeno). Under such conditions, the missionaries were not always aware of births (and deaths) in every Indian family, which resulted in persons appearing in later marriage and burial records for whom no baptismal entry could be found.

Missing baptismal entries are actually quite a rare occurrence compared to failure to enter records of death. For the years prior to 1822,⁸ I was unable to match burial entries with baptismal entries for 8.4 percent of Chumash baptisms at Mission Santa Bárbara, 4.0 percent at Mission La Purísima, and 9.6 percent at Mission Santa Inés. Some of the causes for missing burial entries have been mentioned previously, including deaths at a mission different than where a neophyte had been baptized, name changes resulting in a failure to match a death with a baptism, and inadvertent omissions by a missionary. Missing burial entries also sometimes resulted from provisional baptisms in their native villages of Indians who were too ill or elderly to come to the missions and who subsequently died without the missionary being informed. Other causes of missing entries derived from fugitivism during the Mission Period, especially to the *Tulares* in the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Also, in some instances a person would be buried for whom an identity was not known by the officiating missionary. In such cases the name of the deceased would be left out entirely, with the notation only indicating whether the person was a man, woman, boy, or girl.

Missing burial entries became much more frequent for persons born late in the Mission Period and in post-secularization times. For the twenty year period from 1823 to 1852, 27.7 percent of per-

sons baptized at Mission Santa Bárbara, 37.8 percent from La Purísima, and 31.8 percent from Santa Inés could not be matched with burial entries. These much larger percentages, compared to earlier times, reflect emigration from the mission communities where individuals had been baptized, the loosening of the political, religious, and economic ties that bound the neophytes to the missions, and a noticeable decline in thoroughness and accuracy of record-keeping by the missionaries.

Besides problems of omission, name changes, and miscopying, another source of error resulted from the missionaries misidentifying a person with the wrong baptismal entry. This type of missionary error produced inconsistencies in the records, e.g., an individual married several years after being reported deceased, someone married contemporaneously to two different people (definitely not allowed at the missions), or a person buried twice! Twenty-six cases of "twice buried" persons were encountered at Mission La Purísima, and twelve more were discovered in the Santa Bárbara records. These cases apparently represent persons who were misidentified when they were buried and constitute a further explanation of missing burial entries for many baptized Indians. Thomas Workman Temple, a well known genealogist, who compiled data on early California families, has made the following observation which succinctly describes this situation, encountered while he transcribed entries from Mission San Fernando's burial register:

This same Micaelina of entry #1219 had already been buried by Fr. Joaquin Pasqual Nuez on December 16, 1812—entry #982—*Micaelina adulta bautizada en la partida 1219*—so that Muñoz' Micaelina of 1814 must have been another *Yndia neofita* of the same name!! I find this happening during the mission period—neophytes of the same name buried at different times, assigned to the same baptismal entries! Also, there [were] times when a neophyte's baptismal entry could not be found by the *padres* on the day their burial entry was entered into this Book of *Difuntos*; often before the General *Padrón* of the mission neophytes was set up or completed.⁹

The 1815 *padrón* of Mission Santa Bárbara authored by Fr. Ramón Olbés, who had only served at that mission less than a year, contains further examples of mistaken identities. Instances of

duplicate identification occur for three different pairs of women: two identified as #1953 María Bernarda from *Saspili*, two identified as #2146 Chrispina María from *Miquigui*, and two identified as #2168 Paladia María from *Miquigui*. Tentative solutions to the first two cases of mistaken identity have been worked out, but the third has not been resolved. The first case apparently resulted from a girl from *Saspili* (Goleta), originally baptized as "Bernardina," later being confused with a girl of about the same age from the same village named "María Bernarda." The second case apparently resulted from two girls of about the same age from *Miquigui* (Dos Pueblos) being baptized on the same day, named "Chrispina María" and "Caridad María." The names of the two girls were switched in later records and finally corrected in one case but not the other, resulting in both being identified as "Chrispina María."¹⁰

CROSS-CULTURAL CONFUSION

Having reviewed some of the common errors which resulted in not being able to match baptismal entries with marriage and burial records, I next consider the kinds of recording problems which arose from cultural and linguistic differences between the Spanish missionaries and their Chumash converts. Awareness of cross-cultural misunderstandings and linguistic difficulties is extremely important because of the effect these had on the accuracy of information recorded in the mission registers and our ability to be able to use these data for reconstructing native Chumash social relationships. The linguistic problem of name transformation has already been discussed in the previous section. Five other cross-cultural problems will be addressed here: (1) inconsistent orthography in recording personal names and village names, (2) Chumash taboos on providing personal names, (3) missionary difficulties in understanding Chumash kin classification, (4) misunderstandings and inconsistencies regarding village of origin, and (5) the effect of Spanish patrilineal bias on certain categories of recorded information.

Because the missionaries themselves came from different cultural and educational backgrounds and because they had different abilities in accurately hearing and recording the unfamiliar sounds used in the Chumash language, there was a wide variation in the orthography used to record various native personal

and village names. For example, no /š/ [sh] sound occurs in Spanish, so for Chumash words containing this consonant (which were many), a variety of means were used to represent it, including *s*, *ss*, *š*, *sh*, *x*, and *ch*. Also, the /w/ sound was rendered as *gu*, *hu*, *uu*, and *u*. Thus, a Chumash village name like *wishap* might appear as *Uchapa*, *Guisap*, *Huisapa*, or *Huixap*. The inability to recognize variant names for the same village and the opposite problem of failure to distinguish between similar names for different villages (e.g., *Geliec* and *Gelo* for *heliyik* and *helo'*) has been a recurrent source of error in studies using the mission records. To correct this problem, lists may be kept of variant spellings for each village name, and problematic cases should be cross-checked using the marriage registers, burial registers, *padrones*, and genealogical relationships.

Among many California Indians (and in fact among many societies worldwide), there existed a taboo regarding the revelation of one's personal name to strangers because of a belief that the name, as an expression of one's identity, can be used for magical purposes in causing personal harm.¹¹ This pattern seems to have been present among the Chumash¹² and may help to explain why women's native names are mostly omitted in the registers of Missions Santa Bárbara, La Purísima, and Santa Inés. Only at Mission San Buenaventura did Fr. José Señán consistently record the Chumash personal names for women. Even when women's names are sometimes given at Santa Bárbara, an analysis of many of these indicates that they were not personal names at all but the Chumash words meaning 'woman' or 'old woman.' Also, a few of the rarely recorded women's "names" turn out actually to be men's names and in some cases apparently refer to the woman's father or husband. An alternative explanation for the failure to record women's names is offered below.

A second problem associated with naming taboos resulted from the well-documented Chumash practice of avoiding the mention of a deceased relative.¹³ This taboo almost certainly affected the amount and quality of genealogical information recorded for certain people. If a person was baptized whose relatives were already deceased, then the names of the latter were unlikely to be mentioned in his or her baptismal entry, even though the deceased kin may have been baptized themselves. This factor lessens our ability to reconstruct relationships which existed among baptized neophytes.

Another cross-cultural problem arose from the difficulties which the missionaries had in understanding the logic behind Chumash kin classification. The Chumash use of bifurcate merging terminology for cousins, nieces, and nephews undoubtedly led to confusion and incorrect information being entered into the registers pertaining to family relationships.¹⁴ Examples of this kinship confusion were found regarding mixups between brothers and cousins and between aunts and mothers. These identified examples were cases caught by the missionaries themselves, correcting the nature of the relationship in later records. In other cases, the mistakes were undoubtedly never noticed; for example, among the Chumash there were several instances of two different women recorded as the mother of a particular individual.¹⁵

One of the ways the missionaries avoided the problems of identifying the precise genealogical connection between individuals was to make liberal use of the term *pariente* 'relative' in recording relationships. Information in other registers indicates that the meaning of the term *pariente* referred to a wide variety of consanguineal and affinal relatives, including half-siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, and step-kin. Thus, although use of the term *pariente* indicates that some form of kinship connection existed between two persons, this information is of limited use in reconstructing genealogical diagrams and in examining the structural nature of kin relations among families and villages.

Another form of cross-cultural confusion was introduced by the missionaries in recording the native village from which a particular individual came. The usual phrasing for indicating village of origin involved statements like "*natural de la ranchería de . . .*" or "*hijo de padres gentiles de la ranchería de . . .*" Sometimes the person might be stated to be simply "*de la ranchería de . . .*" In the first two cases, it seems clear that the person's natal village was being recorded, while in the latter instance the meaning was not as evident, and in some cases apparently indicated only that the person had been a resident of a particular village with no implication that it had also been his place of birth. The confusion regarding village of birth versus village of residence resulted in a person being identified with more than one *ranchería* in various records, and it could not always be easily determined which was the actual natal village. For example, at Mission Santa Bárbara Roque *Seguelauta* was at first stated to be from *Alcas* in his

baptismal entry (MSB Bap. 114), but was identified as being from *Saspili* in his second marriage record (MSB Mar. 187), and then later was stated to be from *Geliec* at the time of his third marriage (MSB Mar. 273) and in his burial entry (MSB Bur. 835). Roque's genealogical connections might indicate that the latter village was his true birthplace, because his mother, sister, and brother all were stated to be from *Geliec* in their baptismal entries; however, his sister was later listed from *Alcas* in her marriage and burial records.

Obviously important information regarding intervillage social interaction is being masked by the conflicting records pertaining to which village a person originated. Although in many cases it was not possible to discern the particular causes behind such conflicting information, a pattern of regular variation was identified in the Purísima mission registers. One of the first missionaries stationed at Purísima was Fr. José de Arroíta. He was the author of most of the early entries in the baptismal register and repeatedly used the following format for recording village of origin: "hijo de ... [father's Chumash name] gentil de ... [village name]." The problem is that this phrasing is ambiguous. The village of birth for the person actually being baptized is unclear, because the father's birthplace might be indicated instead of the village where the family was actually residing.

An example of how Arroíta's phrasing has added an element of confusion is illustrated in the following extracts from three of his baptismal entries:

- 1) MLP Bap. 378: María Pelagia, baptized in *Estait*, daughter of *Temamace*, gentile of *Texa*,
- 2) MLP Bap. 233: Silverio, son of *Tememapse*, gentile of *Lompoc*,
- 3) MLP Bap. 824: Ramon *Tememagse*, baptized in *Tejá*, native of *Lompoc*, father of María Pelagia and Silberio.

In coding these baptisms, I initially assigned María Pelagia to *Estait* and Silverio to *Lompoc*. The 1799 *padrón* gives *Tejaj* as the village of origin for both. It also lists their father, Ramon *Tememagse*, from *Lompoc* and their mother, Marciana, from *Tejaj* (MLP Bap. 839). The information from the *padrón* clarifies the situation for this family, indicating that they were residing matrilocally at *Tejaj*. Instead of recording their birthplace, Arroíta's entries for the two children actually seem to have been recording the father's origin, once recorded as *Tejaj* (his residence) and once recorded as

Lompoc (his birthplace). The assumption on Arroíta's part may have been that the children's origin was the same as the father's, to whom he had perhaps addressed his original questions in taking notes before making the entries in the baptismal register. Or possibly something was lost in the translation between the Chumash interpreter and the Spanish missionary. At any rate, whenever the Purísima *padrón* provides conflicting information regarding a person's origin compared to the baptismal entry, it frequently turns out to have been one of Arroíta's baptisms in which he had recorded the father's birthplace rather than that of the individual he was baptizing.

Fr. Arroíta's tendency to emphasize the village of origin of the father in his baptismal entries brings us to another problem in cross-cultural interpretation: the patrilineal biases of the Spanish missionaries. The European emphasis on the father as head of the family and patrilineal surname inheritance apparently colored their perception of Chumash society and certainly affected methods of record-keeping. An alternative explanation (instead of native taboos on use of personal names) for why Chumash women's names were omitted in most of the mission register entries at Santa Bárbara, La Purísima, and Santa Inés may stem from the European custom of passing one's father's name along to the children. In fact, the missionaries at times transferred this pattern to some of their neophytes, passing along the father's native name to his children as a surname, even though this was not the original Chumash practice.

Elsewhere I have demonstrated that Central Chumash society tended to be based on a matrilocal residence pattern,¹⁶ but this emphasis was far from evident in the organization of *padrones* at Mission Santa Inés and at Mission La Purísima. Although most mission *padrones* were organized by alphabetizing families by the husband's name, the first *padrón* of Mission Santa Inés and the third and fourth *padrones* of Purísima carry the "father as head of the family" concept even further by grouping the families by the husband's village of origin, even when an examination of other data indicates that the family actually had been residing matrilocally before coming to the missions. An unwitting investigator might conclude incorrectly that the *padrón* arrangement reflected original social organization.

As the examples given above indicate, the principal means of compensating for cross-cultural biases and misinterpretations is to check as many different register entries as exist for each in-

dividual in order to identify errors and to resolve problematic cases. Although all possible kin relationships among baptized individuals will never be known, the large genealogical sample obtained from the mission registers results in an extensive body of information that permits recurrent social patterns to be identified.

COMPARABILITY BETWEEN MISSIONS

The problem of differences in thoroughness and experience among the missionaries has been mentioned previously. By and large, the missions established in Chumash territory were staffed by men of exceptional abilities, as is indicated by the fact that three missionary presidents were drawn from their number.¹⁷ It is also fortunate that for the years in which most of the Chumash conversions occurred, there were missionaries recording data in the various registers who had served a number of years among the Chumash and who were consistent and fairly thorough in the categories of information written down. These were Fathers Estevan Tapis and Juan Cortés at Santa Bárbara, Fr. Gregorio Fernández at Purísima, and Fr. Antonio Calzada at Purísima and Santa Inés. In earlier years and in later years, the records were not so complete and accurate as might be desired.

In the earliest years of the missions, missionaries were getting acquainted with the Chumash language and culture and also had a smaller mission population to administer. Baptismal entries for the first years at Santa Bárbara and Purísima frequently lack any mention of other Indians who were relatives, sometimes because no relatives had been previously baptized and partly because the congregations were small enough for the missionaries to know all of the neophytes and how they were related to one another without extensive record-keeping.

Another problem is that after a person became married, his or her consanguineal relations to other neophytes were rarely mentioned. Instead, the person would be referenced in later entries by the connection to their spouse or former spouse, e.g., "María Liberata, widow of Antonio." Thus, for people who joined the missions early on and were soon married, there may be little indication whether they may have had a brother, sister, or cousin among other neophytes, unless entries of their newly baptized or unmarried kin referred to such a relationship.

The presence of detailed *padrones* at Missions Santa Inés and

La Purísima to a certain extent mitigates the problems caused by lesser amounts of data recorded in baptismal entries. In the *padrones* of these two missions, not only are children all listed with their parents, but also the parents of each husband and wife are referenced when known. Such a *padrón* also existed at Mission Santa Bárbara, as is evidenced by Fr. Tapis's reference to it, cited earlier. Regrettably, it has since been destroyed or lost, and the only *padrón* preserved at the latter mission is for a much later period, after more than 2000 neophytes were already deceased. Also, it omits the data regarding parents of each husband and wife, which proved to be so useful in utilizing the Purísima and Santa Inés *padrones*. The absence of an early *padrón* at Santa Bárbara is probably reflected in the smaller number of exogamous marriages reconstructed from genealogical charts for villages in that mission's jurisdiction.¹⁸

After the tenure of the most active missionaries, the record-keeping quality declined at all the missions until about the middle of the second decade of the nineteenth century. This is most noticeable at Santa Bárbara and Santa Inés, where the missionaries who succeeded Tapis, Cortés, and Calzada were poorer scribes and/or served for shorter periods. Fortunately, by 1814 and 1815 each of the three missions in central Chumash territory had an excellent *padrón* drawn up,¹⁹ which ensured that there would be a fairly high degree of accuracy in identifying people for much of the remainder of the Mission Period. However, the period of conversion of most of the mainland Chumash population had already been accomplished by the time these later *padrones* were prepared, and many deaths had already taken a substantial portion of the mission communities, rendering these registers somewhat less useful for purposes of genealogical reconstruction.

DIACHRONIC VARIABILITY IN SOCIAL LIFEWAYS

Having enumerated some of the factors affecting comparability of records among missions and among earlier and later periods of conversion of the Chumash population, there remains one major topic to be discussed: the effects of the European contact on the social system which we are attempting to study using mission register data. The period of time between the first

and last baptisms of Chumash from the Santa Barbara County area spanned the 40 years between 1782 and 1822. During this time, villages were abandoned, there was a major population decline, and the native population aggregated at mission communities. The old political, social, religious, and economic fabric of Chumash society was forever altered. We may suspect that such major changes were not without their effect on patterns of kin relationships and marriage among the Chumash, but there is some reason to believe that they may not have been as devastating to social interaction in native society as might be supposed. First, only those persons who had entered a married state prior to coming to the missions may be considered, omitting marriages joining persons who met each other at the mission communities.²⁰ Second, although persons were baptized from villages within the Santa Barbara region over a 40-year span, this fact is somewhat misleading because the vast majority of the population was converted within a much narrower range of time, less than 20 years,²¹ thus limiting the time for accruing major impacts on marriage patterns. Third, the greatest demographic impacts on the adult population seem to have occurred after they became concentrated in large communities associated with the missions.²² Finally, because the majority of the population remaining in most villages were baptized in a comparatively sudden episode beginning in 1803,²³ there was actually little opportunity for the major changes in marriage and residence patterns that might have occurred had there been a more gradual assimilation into the mission system.

Although a diachronic situation may be treated as a synchronic view of California Indian society, this approach seems both reasonable and necessary because of the way that missionization proceeded and the manner in which the records were kept. The sample which is contained in the mission registers may reflect certain errors in omission, interpretation, and comparability, but it is nevertheless very fortunate that such records were kept at all and preserved so well to the present time. There are few non-Western societies in the world for which such a complete written record exists, a record that reports faithfully much of the information commonly sought by anthropologists. The methods of recording were not perfect, but they are the best we can hope to have, and they have resulted in the preservation of a sizable sample that may be profitably analyzed, correcting when possible for known sources of error.

NOTES

1. It is beyond the scope of this article to provide a complete list of studies using mission register data for anthropological purposes, but a few examples may be cited. Such early researchers as Alexander Taylor, Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, C. Hart Merriam, and John P. Harrington all utilized mission registers to recover information on village names, but it was not until the late 1960s that more detailed analyses were conducted. Investigations by Alan K. Brown [*The Aboriginal Population of the Santa Barbara Channel, Reports of the University of California Archaeological Survey* 69 (Berkeley, 1967) and "Indians of San Mateo County," *Journal of the San Mateo County Historical Association* 17(4) (1974)], Sherburne F. Cook [The Esselen: Territory, Villages and Population," *Monterey Archaeology Society Quarterly* 3(2):1-11 (1974)], and James A. Bennyhoff [*Ethnogeography of the Plains Miwok*, Center for Archaeological Research at Davis Publication No. 5, 1977] concentrated on the determination of relative village population sizes and on reconstructing settlement geography.

Cook [*The Conflict between the California Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976)], Cook and Woodrow Borah [*Essays in Population History: Mexico and California* 3 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979)], Robert H. Jackson ["Disease and Demographic Patterns at Santa Cruz Mission, Alta California," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 5:33-57 (1983), and "Gentile Recruitment and Population Movements in the San Francisco Bay Area Missions," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 6:225-239 (1984)], and John R. Johnson ["The Chumash and the Missions," in *Columbian Consequences*, vol. 1, "Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands West," D. H. Thomas, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, in press)] have examined demographic trends based on mission register data. The underlying determinants of mission migration patterns have been the focus of other studies: Gary B. Coombs, "Migration and Adaptation: Indian Missionization in California," Ph.D. Dissertation (Los Angeles: University of California, 1975) and "Opportunities, Information Networks and the Migration-Distance Relationship," *Social Networks* 1: 257-276 (1979); Coombs and Fred Plog, "The Conversion of the Chumash Indians: An Ecological Interpretation," *Human Ecology* 5(4):309-328 (1977).

The most recent work with mission registers has centered on reconstructing genealogies in order to answer questions about native social organization and intervillage marriage patterns: Claude N. Warren, "The Many Wives of Pedro Yanonali," *Journal of California Anthropology* 4:242-248 (1977); Warren and Donna J. Hodge, "Apolonio, the Canoe Builder, and the Use of Mission Records," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* 2:298-304 (1980); Stephen Horne, "The Inland Chumash: Ethnography, Ethnohistory, and Archeology," Ph.D. Dissertation (Santa Barbara: University of California, 1981); Robert O. Gibson, "Ethnogeography of the Salinan People: A Systems Approach," M.A. Thesis (Hayward: California State University, Hayward, 1983) and "Ethnogeography of the Northern Salinans," in *Excavations at Mission San Antonio, 1976-1978*, R. L. Hoover and J. G. Costello, eds., 152-172, *Institute of Archaeology Monograph* 26 (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985); John R. Johnson, "An Ethnohistoric Study of the Island Chumash," M.A. Thesis

(Santa Barbara: University of California, 1982) and "Chumash Social Organization: An Ethnohistoric Perspective," Ph.D. Dissertation (Santa Barbara: University of California, 1988); Chester King, "Ethnohistoric Background," in *Archaeological Investigations on the San Antonio Terrace, Vandenberg Air Force Base, California*, Appendix I [Report submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District] (Chambers Consultants and Planners, 1984); Randall T. Milliken, "The Spatial Organization of Human Population on Central California's San Francisco Peninsula at the Spanish Arrival," M.A. Thesis (Rohnert Park: Sonoma State University, 1983); Florence C. Shipek, "San Diego Mission Register Analysis: Kumeyaay Socio-Political Organization," Paper presented at the Southwestern Anthropological Association Meeting, Sacramento, Calif., 1982; and Charles M. Slaymaker, "A Model for the Study of Coast Miwok Ethnogeography," Ph.D. Dissertation (Davis: University of California, 1982).

2. Other pertinent discussions of problems encountered using mission register data have been presented by Cook and Borah, *Essays in Population History*, *op. cit.*, 185-192; and Claude N. Warren and Donna J. Hodge, "Genealogical Reconstruction: Basic Methodology," Paper presented at the Southwestern Anthropological Association Meeting, Sacramento, California, 1982.

3. Maynard Geiger, *History of Mission Santa Barbara*, vol. 1, "The Spanish and Mexican Periods (1786-1846)." Unpublished manuscript (Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, n.d.).

4. For Mission San Luis Obispo, which was founded much earlier than the other missions in Chumash territory, the confirmation register has proven more of a boon. Using the confirmation register of Mission San Luis Obispo, King has been able to determine villages of origin and kin relationships for many Indians whose baptismal entries originally lacked this information. See Chester D. King, "Index to Villages Listed in Baptismal and Confirmation Registers of San Luis Obispo Mission," Unpublished Manuscript, Department of Anthropology (Santa Barbara: University of California, 1982).

5. Madison S. Beeler, *The Ventureño Confesionario of José Señán, O.F.M., University of California Publications in Linguistics 47:2-3* (1967).

6. Warren and Hodge, "Genealogical Reconstruction."

7. One of the cases involving a name change from Bernardo to "Fernando" was that of the best known of J. P. Harrington's Chumash consultants, Fernando Librado. Fernando was born at Mission San Buenaventura in 1839 and baptized as "Bernardo," the son of Mamerto and Juana Alfonsa (SBv Bap. 2/1336). However, in his first confirmation (SBv Conf. 163), he appears as "Fernando, the son of Roberto and Juana Alfonsa." (Also note Mamerto's name change to "Roberto.") In all subsequent records, Fernando was known by his confirmed name, rather than his baptismal name, and it seems that he never knew that he had once been christened "Bernardo." See Travis Hudson, *Breath of the Sun: Life in Early California as Told by a Chumash Indian, Fernando Librado, to John P. Harrington* (Banning: Malki Museum Press, 1979): x; John R. Johnson, "The Trail to Fernando," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology 4:132-138* (1982).

8. 1822 was the last year in which a Chumash born in a native village was baptized at any of the three missions located in central Chumash territory, ending the period of conversions in the Santa Barbara region.

9. Thomas W. Temple, [Extracts from Mission San Fernando registers] *The Thomas Workman Temple Collection* (Mission San Fernando: Chancery Archives of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, n.d.): 8.

10. The real Crispina María, mistakenly identified as "Rita María" (*sic!* for *Caridad María*), transferred with her parents to Mission Santa Inés. In the 1804 Santa Inés *padrón*, the name "Rita María" was crossed out and corrected to "Crispina." At Santa Bárbara, the real Caridad kept the identity "Crispina," because the mixup was never noticed or corrected.

11. Richard N. Applegate, "Introduction," in *The Mantram Handbook* by E. Easwaran (Berkeley: Nilgiri Press, 1977), 15-18.

12. *Idem*, "Chumash Narrative Folklore as Sociolinguistic Data," *Journal of California Anthropology* 2(2):195 (1975).

13. John P. Harrington, *Cultural Element Distributions: XIX, Central California Coast, Anthropological Records*, 7(1) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942): 38, and Maynard Geiger and Clement W. Meighan, *As the Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by the Franciscan Missionaries, 1813-1815* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, 1976): 113.

14. Johnson, "Chumash Social Organization," Chap. 7.

15. Another probable example of the confusion stemming from missionary misinterpretations of Chumash kin categories was found among individuals baptized from the village of *Tequeps*. A total of twelve individuals were linked together by one or another of them being called an *hermano* (or *hermana*) to another in the group. This included persons ranging from six years to fifty-five years old with four different mothers and three different fathers identified for different members of the group. This situation may partly be explained by persons who were half-siblings to one another, but almost certainly is also the result of confusion between sibling and cousin classification.

16. Johnson, "Chumash Social Organization," Chap. 6.

17. These were Fr. Estevan Tapis of Mission Santa Bárbara, who served as president of the California missions from 1801 to 1812; Fr. José Señán of Mission San Buenaventura, who was twice chosen as president, serving from 1812 to 1815 and from 1819 to 1823; and Fr. Mariano Payeras of Mission La Purísima, who was president between 1815 and 1818. The latter also served as commissary prefect between 1819 and 1823, which was the highest office among the California Franciscans. See Maynard Geiger, *Franciscan Missionaries in Hispanic California, 1769-1848* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1969).

18. Johnson, "Chumash Social Organization," Chap. 9.

19. Fr. Mariano Payeras authored the 1814 *padrón* of Mission La Purísima, Fr. Estevan Tapis authored the second *padrón* of Mission Santa Inés in the same year, and in 1815, Fr. Ramón Olbés prepared the only *padrón* of Mission Santa Bárbara still extant.

20. Warren, "The Many Wives of Pedro Yanonali," 242-243.

21. Johnson, "The Chumash and the Missions."

22. *Idem*, "Chumash Social Organization," Chapters 4 and 5.

23. *Ibid.*