

NEGOTIATING THE MASTER NARRATIVE: MUSEUMS
AND THE INDIAN/CALIFORNIO COMMUNITY OF
CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST

by

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In California, third and fourth grade social science curriculum standards mandate an introduction to Native American life and the impacts of Spanish, Mexican, and “American” colonization on the state’s indigenous people. Teachers in the state use museums to supplement this education. Natural history and anthropology museums offer programs for teaching third graders about native pre-contact life, while Missions and regional history museums are charged with telling the story of settlement for the state’s fourth graders. Clearly, this fact suggests the centrality of museums and Missions to education in the state.

Since only one small tribe on the central coast has federal recognition, non-tribal museums are the only public voice about Indian life. These sites however, rarely address

hardships experienced by native people, contributions over the past 150 years, the struggles for sovereignty in their homelands, and a variety of other issues faced by *living* Indian people. Instead, these sites often portray essentialized homogenous notions of Indianness which inadvertently contribute to the invisibility of coastal Native peoples. This dissertation analyzes visual museum representations in central coast museums and Missions and the perspectives of local Native American community members about how their lives and cultures are portrayed in those museums.

Using methods of critical discourse analysis, the dissertation seeks to locate discontinuities between the stories museums tell versus the stories Indian people tell. It addresses these ruptures through a detailed analysis of alternative narratives and then offers suggestions to museum professionals, both in California and elsewhere, for incorporating a stronger native voice in interpretive efforts.

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DEDICATION

To my loving husband Virgil, my daughter Allukoy, and my wise elders Jeanne “Owl” Harrison, John Ruiz, and Roberta Reyes Cordero. Me’schumawesh.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Aren’t you gonna wear some kind of Indian outfit...I mean, don’t you have a buckskin skirt or something?”

Background

My first day as interim director of the Chumash Interpretive Center, I was greeted with this unexpected set of questions from one of my new bosses, a member of the Chumash Indian Corporation board of directors. Kirby "Truehawk" Trew was his name and he was indeed dressed in his Indian “outfit” of faux buckskin pants, and a raccoon skin hat, complete with a fake ponytail attachment. As a Chumash woman with a master’s degree in anthropology, a certificate in museum studies, and a fair knowledge of the history of my people, I did not expect I needed a costume for the job. Though I managed to maintain my composure for three months before being fired for non-compliance, my hope and reason for taking the position was that I would be able to re-

involve disenfranchised Chumash community members in what had been a facility founded for Chumash people. My efforts proved futile, however. The Chumash community had too long been alienated from the place by these white men playing Indian.

The "Echota Cherokee Deer Clan West" was the chiefdom of Bob "Nighthawk" Vann, Chairman of the Chumash Indian Corporation. "Nighthawk" was savvy in his recruitment of volunteer staff to help him run the Interpretive Center which included a 426 acre ancient oak canyon park. He would enroll in his "tribe" anyone who claimed Cherokee heritage, or thought they might have an Indian ancestor in their past, or past life. Membership was complete with an official card and newsletter, and inclusion in all Tribal operations which occurred here at the Chumash Center. I was told I should be grateful, because after all "the Chumash couldn't handle this place, so us Cherokees stepped in for 'em." Where the Chumash had all "gone" will be discussed in greater detail later.

I begin with this example of cultural appropriation and misrepresentation for two reasons. First, it was actually this experience in 2002-2003 that was the impetus for my decision to examine Indian representation and public education. And second, because it points to an issue Indian people face daily, that a romantic Indian past is preferred to the real one. While volumes have been written over the last three decades about the enduring myths, symbols, and representations of the "noble savage" and "heathen" Indians, it seems many mainstream museums exist uninformed by this scholarship and continue to perpetuate public misunderstanding and stereotypes of Native life (see Kaplan 1994, Karp and Levine, et al. 1991, Karp, Kreamer, and Levine, et al. 1992).

Museums in California supplement curriculum standards for the third and fourth grades which mandate an introduction to Indian life and cultures prior to, and the impacts of, colonization by Spain, Mexico and the United States. In fact, many museum programs designed for third and fourth grade classes to supplement the fulfillment of those standards, provide museums and Missions much needed funding through entrance fees paid by public and private schools. While policy makers apparently recognized the importance of early education about the *history* of local indigenous populations, the portrayal of those people into the present is not expressed in the language of the curriculum standards (see Appendix A). One result of this oversight is an absence of discussions about modern Indian people, both in the classroom as well as in the museum. In fact, my research reveals that in museums along the Central Coast of California, representations of living Indians or the lived experiences of those people are almost completely absent. In addition, the realities of past generations of Indian people, the struggles to survive in their homelands, are glossed over. Brutal truths are spared in place of a romanticized pre-contact life in most venues. The historic reality for Indian people included enslavement, destruction of language and culture, disenfranchisement from Native homelands, to name only a few impacts of colonization, but those stories in addition to more recent experiences including activism and revitalization of language, are rarely reflected in the stories crafted by museums. This absence leads to a public memory about native life that is radically different than the lived experiences of the local Indian community. This dissertation aims to point out these disparities and some of their lasting implications.

This research suggests three key concepts. The first is that a skewed and

homogeneous version of local Indian history is being told in California Coast museums and that a deeper, more human story is denied. The second, that current ethnic identity discourses can be traced and analyzed using the visual representations of California history found in museums. The third concept is that living communities of Indian people are affected by the public representations of their histories and cultures which define their collective identity for public consumption (Kaplan 1994; Kavanaugh 1996).

The project is based on a series of interviews and observations over a three year period within Central Coast Indian/mixed heritage communities and the museums situated in those communities. It presents examples of the dominant messages observable in exhibits (which are the foundational forms of pedagogy in the museum—see Hein 1998, Hein and Alexander 1998; Hooper-Greenhill 1994, 1995) as well as insight into the perspectives of the docents and staff charged with interpreting them for the public. The study then explores alternative narratives that are more closely tied to the lived experiences of Indian people. Ultimately this dissertation will reveal the discontinuity between the dominant discourse of Indianness crafted from non-Indian historical and anthropological sources and the alternative histories and experiences of the people who live within those identities.

A note on language referring to native people: I use the terms Native and Indian interchangeably, as well as occasionally the terms aboriginal and indigenous. I usually refer to the communities on the Central Coast as Indian when their tribal name is not known or I am making a generalization that refers to all Central Coast Native peoples. I also often include the mixed heritage identifier when discussing this community of people to include all those impacted by these representations, but who do not identify as

American Indian. Largely, I am assuming intermarriage among the groups of local Indian and *Californio* for the descendant population that identify as Indian, as well as those who identify as Chican@, Latin@, Mexican@, and members of the descendant community that identify today as White. Realizing the complexities of these ethnic identifiers and their complicated historical origins, to be inclusive I usually refer here to an Indian/mixed heritage community at the risk of creating friction among members of the community who do not acknowledge certain aspects of their histories. An interesting point to note is the way, in California and elsewhere a drop of “Mexican” or “Hispanic” blood, erases indigeneity. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994) might call this maintenance of an erroneous, racially charged, and pervasive system a “racial project” because of the way the ideas of race are constructed in the museum and how they “continue to shape identities and institutions in significant ways (xvi).” I argue that unexamined notions of race permeate museum representations, especially those of the early settler population, and that these definitions have impacted the way the Indian community members view themselves.

Building upon this, the dissertation attempts to orient itself in the discourse and practices that account for today’s dominant forms of sociocultural and economic production of Indian identity. I identify one way this production of Indian identity or “Indianness” manifests within consultation relationships that occur between museums and individuals for exhibits and programs. To address inequities in museum representations, that historically excluded indigenous voices altogether, some professionals have instituted consultation plans that include native community members. Though meritorious in their motivation, many museum professionals believe that it is

possible to achieve the “voice of the people” by consulting with a few individuals. These liaisons generally consist of one or two “informant” relationships, tokenizing Indian people in the style of early anthropologists (Trask 1991). The matter is further complicated in that these people are encouraged by these roles, to portray essentialized notions of Indianness. These superficial associations often take the place of sustained development and maintenance of relationships with local tribes and groups, among them admittedly mixed-heritage individuals.

Development and Critique of the Dominant Narrative

Edward Bruner’s work offers insight into dominant narrative structures I witnessed in coast museums. In his 1986 *Ethnography as Narrative*, Bruner argued that implicit narrative structures inform the work of all anthropologists in the field. It follows that these same structures inform the public narratives, a direct extension of the work of anthropologists and historians. Bruner asserted that narratives about Native American culture change followed a certain pattern in the 1930s and 1940s. During this period, Bruner said that change is characterized by these themes: the present as disorganization, the past as glorious, and the future as assimilation. He went on to say that a decade after World War II, the narrative changed dramatically to its present form which is structured as follows: the past as exploitation, the present as resistance, and the future as ethnic resurgence. He noted that “equally striking is that there is little continuity between the two dominant stories: one story simply became discredited and the new narrative took over (Bruner 1986:139).” My fieldwork in Central Coast museums reveals close parallels with these themes, though I noted a delay of two to three decades among some

museums to establish the second, “new” narrative, and some have *never* shifted from the pre World War II narrative.

The decades following World War I, which I discuss in Chapter IV, are characterized by a rejection of modernity and increased interest in local history throughout the US and the romanticization of simpler halcyon days was exemplified in California by several booster organizations committed to memorializing an imagined Indian and Spanish history of their state. It is during this period after World War I and before World War II that most of California’s 21 Missions were restored and developed into public history sites. Many regional history and science museums were also built during this time. My research has shown that public history narratives at Missions and museums are dependent upon the dominant discourse of the period in which they were designed. This seems to be true in spite of the fact that they do not reflect the actual experiences of local Indian and Californio people—the people whose stories they tell.

In instances where museums have updated exhibits within the past thirty years, I observed that the narrative generally follows Bruner’s second dominant theme of past exploitation, present resistance, and future resurgence, characterized by “code” words such as “exploitation, oppression, colonialism, resistance, liberation, independence, nationalism, tribalism, identity, tradition, and ethnicity (Bruner 1986, 139-140),” though this second theme is relatively rare in comparison with the first. In most cases, the earlier, pre-World War II narratives dominate. In Chapters V and VI, I examine current visual representations first in Missions and then in regional and natural history venues, and critically analyze these themes through the materials and texts which illustrate them. Though anthropologists and perhaps scholars of history recognized the trend in the

discourse on Indians, most museums and public history venues have not. Public history venues instead, continue to perpetuate these two outmoded narratives. My research shows that among tribes able to craft their own narratives the trajectory is more akin to past as hardship and loss, present as revitalization and resurgence and the future as healed and restored. Discussions of these more tribally based and current narratives will be discussed further in chapter VII. Bruner also suggests, echoing scholars such as Edward Said (1979) and Arturo Escobar (1995), that the dominant narratives of particular historical eras serve as guiding paradigms or metaphors and are taken for granted. Even though there are sure to be multiple conflicting and competing stories they will be generally discounted and not given equal weight within or in addition to, the dominant discourse. Most importantly, Bruner says these discourses inform policy, yet rarely reflect actual anthropological field work or Indian life experience and are almost always totally unexamined (Bruner 1989, 18). I would add that in areas where Indians are chiefly invisible, unacknowledged and marginalized, this is most assuredly the case.

A confluence of significant events paved the way for Bruner and others to reevaluate their role in shaping memory about people of color in the 1970s. By the 1980s many had turned a critical eye toward their productions of cultural understandings, acknowledging for the first time the privilege that gender and race had afforded them as researchers (see Clifford 1988 for example). This observation, made by Edward Bruner (1986, 143), "...our anthropological productions are really just stories about their stories", was part of that critical trend. Following in this tack, museum studies scholars asserted that expressions about the experiences of "others" in public history venues were consistently based on historic texts suggesting that the experiences demonstrated in

museum narratives were those of white men of privilege rather than the experiences of communities of color (Bennett 1995). The museum curator has been charged with ascertaining the “Indian” experience from anthropological texts, fragments of early 19th century Native testimonies as interpreted by those non-Native men. Still today, as scholars suggested thirty years ago, museum professionals are expected to speak for diverse communities of people—sometimes several generations of them—without actually seeing or speaking to them.

Critical to museum studies and public memory research, native scholarship added a necessary dimension to the dialogue. One of the first critics of anthropological scholarship was Vine Deloria’s (1969) seminal *Custer Died for your Sins*. Deloria’s work led the way, not only for anthropology’s re-evaluation but also for native critiques of academia in general, addressing the inequities in research and writing on/about native people (see Mihesuah 1998, 2000; Smith 1999; Mihesuah and Cavendar-Wilson 2004). Today, the dialogue extends beyond critique and into practical solutions to rectify past “sins”, as scholars offer indigenous perspectives and alternatives to mainstream research models and methodologies (see Alfred 2004; Atalay 2006; Echo-Hawk and Echo-Hawk 2004; Ferguson and Anyon, et al 1996; Riding-In 2000; Watkins 2000). These efforts have been supported by non-native allies as well, and today such scholars would not dream of initiating projects on or about native people without close collaboration with them (see Biolsi and Zimmerman 1997; Swidler and Dongoske et al 1997; Thomas 2000; Zimmerman 1995; Zimmerman and Vitelli 2003).

More specifically for this project are native critiques of museum representations by scholars such as Shari Huhndorf (2001), whose critical analyses of native

representations in the media and museum exhibitions examines a seeming preoccupation of the American public with escaping modernity and “going native,” a “performance (which) blurs the relations between the colonizers and the colonized,” that has become a ritual of national identity (Huhndorf 2001, 201-202). And Nancy Mithlo, who asks in “Red Man’s Burden” why the post-repatriation era museum field expects Indian people to help them rectify the “sins” of the past despite obstacles to achieving Native *voice* or perspectives in most museums (Mithlo 2003). Amy Lonetree’s (2006) work addresses some of the difficulties of constructing an American Indian *collective* voice at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). Her work has demonstrated that even with a curatorial staff comprised of American Indians and an agenda that underscores Native interests, a *unified* voice is impossible to achieve. Lonetree’s most recent volume, co-edited with Amanda Cobb also “complicates the content of the discourse by combining the voices of scholars and (museum) practitioners” (Lonetree and Cobb 2008, xvi), a divide that has too long impeded progress in the application of museum theory on the ground and reveals the complexity of collaborative processes.

In a recent conversation I had with Dr. Rayna Green, curator at the National Museum of American History, we discussed the problematic result of the NMAI taking possession of all Native materials which had previously been on display at Natural History and American History. The inadvertent impact of establishing an American Indian Museum has been removing Indians from “history” on the national mall. A visitor to nation’s capital today can only learn about the nation’s indigenous people at the Indian museum (NMAI) and some critics have asserted that Native American representations at the NMAI lack historical context and emphasize living communities without delving into

painful pasts. Sonya Atalay (2008, 274), for example states that many exhibits are vague and ahistorical, essentially letting the US government off the hook rather than addressing the “country’s foundation on acts of extreme terror, biological warfare and genocide.” While statements of “we are still here” have become mainstream, and many museums such as the NMAI underscore stories of cultural revitalization, without a clear understanding of the nightmare of colonization endured by indigenous peoples, one cannot truly appreciate the power of resistance and resurgence (in Lonetree and Cobb 2008, 272). In the few Central California Coast museums where native Californian survival is portrayed, like these critiques, it is done so without the context of suffering and despair which preceded survival. In addition to avoidance of hard-truths, Myla Carpio (2008) states, “The absence or deliberate exclusion of the ‘other’s’ history works to construct or reify the master narrative as does the utilization of a historical ‘presence’ or inclusion that only benefits the dominant narrative” (Carpio in Lonetree and Cobb 2008:291). Carpio’s work informs my critique of the Mission museums as sites of remembrance that reaffirm narratives of dominance. These authors together argue that the framing of the NMAI as a “museological reconciliation” is problematic especially because it potentially conflates and negates broader forms of ongoing political domination. In mainstream museums that tell an Indian story, the subject position is reaffirmed again and again.

I situate this study of Indian and Californio museum representations on California’s Central Coast within this growing critical dialogue concerning racial and ethnic representations, especially those of Native Americans, suggesting that not only are notions of culture areas and distinct bounded ethnic groups problematic but that anything

short of true community collaboration yields oversimplified narratives of history and culture which further impact the lives of Native people.

This dissertation builds upon notions such as those expressed by scholars such as Gyatri Spivak (1996) and Jose Saldivar (1997), who discuss the unworkable assumptions about culture(s) as self-contained, bounded, homogenous and unchanging. I add that these assumptions of culture as static are then made public “knowledge” and codified as social truths when they are expressed through the art and materials of those cultures for the purpose of tourism, education, and info-tainment (Hooper-Greenhill 1992). But as Spivak suggests, I seek not to merely expose error, but to look into how these truths have been produced and follow this with the exposure of new, sub-altern truths, which can then be used in the crafting of a Native discourse, one that runs parallel or, in the most hopeful scenario, replaces the dominant one.

Organization of the Dissertation

I begin with the history of the indigenous population of the Central Coast prior to contact and through the modern era. This chapter is organized much like the public narratives in that it follows the same chronology used to organize space in museums and Missions, highlighting periods of occupation: Pre-contact, Spanish Mission, Rancho/Mexican, and American. The pre-contact past is essentially an ethnographic snapshot, which describes not who Central Coast native groups were, but rather *what they were doing* upon encountering the visitors/invaders who would leave a written record. This snapshot is complemented by hypotheses drawn by archaeologists through investigations of the material remnants left behind. I then briefly illustrate the origins

held as truths by the native people themselves. After discussing adaptive strategies of native people to cope with changing political regimes over time and the costs to lives and cultural knowledge that occurred with each of those changes, I end with a look at where contemporary Central Coast native groups stand in relationship to the United States in terms of federal acknowledgement, land and resource access, and identity as sovereign nations.

Chapter III chronicles the people known in the public narratives as *Californio*. This chapter examines the origins of the people recruited by agents of Spain from the area known today as northern Mexico to occupy and “tame” Alta California’s native workforce for the crown. It attempts to tell a human story about people (men women and children) who are commonly seen only as “Spanish” soldiers and later as wealthy, landowning, exploiters of local Indians, almost always portrayed as *men*, in spite of the census and other data which indicates most soldiers had wives and all early *pobladores* were sent as families. Though often classified as Spaniards, the early settlers, the people who eventually intermarried with the indigenous population on the coast were predominantly Indian and mestizo people from northern Mexico, primarily Cochimi, Mayo and Yaqui Indians, Africans, and very few Europeans. Ironically, unlike depictions of white settlers to California these people are rarely portrayed in museums as families who struggled to survive in a new land. This chapter addresses the landless, relocated, *campesinos* or peasants and their struggles under changing political tides.

In Chapter IV, I examine the roles and origins of museums in the United States and then more specifically the establishment of museums as a means to promote a fantasy Spanish heritage for tourism, development, and settlement in California. Here I introduce

the main types of museums I visited for this study which include archaeological/anthropological museums, science/natural history museums, regional and local history museums, and Mission museums. I also discuss briefly the California Indian Heritage Center, which will presumably include the history of the Central Coast in its state Indian history at the Sacramento site.

Chapter V addresses representation at Mission museums specifically. After a discussion of data collection methods, I outline the model used for critically examining this set of representations borrowed from Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small's 2002 analysis of plantation museums, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*. For their study, Eichstedt and Small examined 120 southern plantation museums and identified four of the most common strategies employed to erase horrific realities experienced by the enslaved, while glorifying and honoring Anglo plantation owners, the *enslavers*. This narrative of whiteness is defined by Eichstedt and Small to manifest in four rhetorical strategies: 1) symbolic annihilation, 2) trivialization and deflection, 3) segregated knowledge, and 4) relative incorporation. I found this model incredibly germane for my study of the Franciscan Missions, sites of *Indian* slavery from the late 1700s through 1833. My data show that in the 19 Missions with museums, (four of which are at least partially operated by the state of California and the other 15 by their local diocese) the first three of the four rhetorical strategies discussed in the Eichstedt and Small study are present. In these museums, as in the plantation museums, the painful and lasting impacts of slavery, conversion, and displacement for Indian people is overshadowed by the glorification of the enslavers (in this case Anglo priests) as benevolent teachers. I also found that the predominant Mission

story ends in 1833 with the secularization of the Missions and leaves the visitor to assume that the Indian population either assimilated or disappeared at that point. The chapter ends with recommendations for extending the Mission story into the present for a more accurate portrayal of the impacts of Spanish colonization experienced by descendants of Mission Indians.

Chapter VI, after a short discussion of methods, examines the “declension¹” narrative found in Central Coast history and science museums. This chapter is divided by museum genre: 1) archaeology museums, 2) natural history and science, and 3) regional and local history museums. The modes of representation and rhetorical strategies employed at each venue as well as photographs are used to illustrate these themes.

Chapter VII explores perceptions of local Native community members, people who descend from both of the historic communities discussed in the first two chapters. After a short discussion about participant selection and data collection methods, I outline the prevailing views of how histories are currently told in museums and Missions. I then explore themes native community members expressed as being central to the contemporary Indian experience on the Central Coast, narratives not currently seen in mainstream museums. These include the struggles to maintain community cohesion through waves of disenfranchisement, manifestations of historic trauma, external and internal identity battles exacerbated by anthropologists, and ongoing attempts for federal recognition (see Miller 2004). This chapter also discusses what Renya Ramirez refers to as “hubs of empowerment” which include activism especially in terms of preservation of

¹ Declension as discussed in Purdue (1998, 7-10) in which decline and change is over-emphasized, rendering change prior to European contact invisible

cemeteries and sacred sites and new trends in revitalization of language and culture. In Ramirez's example, urban Indians find meaning and connection through various events and gatherings, perhaps not viewed by outsiders as "traditional," still they provide cohesion for communities without a land-base. On the Central Coast, these include canoe gatherings and activist demonstrations.

The concluding chapter sums up the themes observed in coastal California representations of history and ethnicity and questions whether this is the reality for California Native people or more akin to essentialized product of anthropological fantasy and commoditized spectacle. Does the public narrative of the people of the Central Coast address the cultural hybridity and internal diversity in their communities and do these stories ever ask, what does it mean to be Indian in California, or America? Ultimately, my research demonstrates that while coastal California peoples and cultures are routinely represented, they are rarely represented in a way that I find respectful to the people whose stories are told, and in most cases perpetuate stereotypes and commonly held misconceptions. I conclude with a list of recommendations for Mission and museum professionals on the Central Coast. These I hope will offer guidance for consultation practices and for incorporating compelling, contemporary stories of living Native peoples.

Theoretical Position

Santa Barbara County, for generations spanning millennia, has been the home of my mother's family. I am a descendant of the people historically identified as coastal mainland Chumash and Californio and an active member (albeit currently in absentia) of

this community in Santa Barbara. This connection allows me an intimate familiarity with, and knowledge of, how Indian views of life relate to the portrayal of their lives. I have also seen over my lifetime how the public idea of what is and what is not “Indian” has impacted us. So although this project is based on observations over a three year period, it has been informed and sits within the context of forty years of experience. It should be said at the start, however, that this experience is the basis for my narrative strategy and I do not at any time assert that it is the truth for all Native people, nor for the entire Indian/Californio community of the California Coast.

Throughout this project I have tried to adhere to the principles of indigenous methodologies introduced in the groundbreaking work of Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) that requires I consider my community at each step of the research, addressing benefits to them and implications for the study. For this reason I have continued to discuss my ideas with several elders and a handful of indigenous scholars about the project, soliciting feedback whenever possible. A respected elder in the Chumash/Californio community sits on my committee and may prove to be my most critical member.

Initially, I did not intend to cover the Californio history in this study. My aim was to examine Native *Californian* representations and how they impact the “Indian” community. Over the last two years as my own genealogical work deepened, it revealed equally strong ties to Mexico as Santa Barbara. Interviews with local Indian community members, too, revealed a level of ethnic mixing of which I had been unaware. I recognized the need to address all ethnic representations, not only the local Indian ones, and that the Californio story is also our story. In fact, due to this new information I

realized how misrepresentative the museum portrayals actually are, artificially defining as distinct populations what today comprise the Native community. I also became painfully aware that as a community, we have also been caught in this web of discourse and have ourselves at times, bought into the static representations museums perpetuate, resulting in alienation among extended family members.

Ultimately this dissertation examines processes of erasure of critical aspects of history through scholarly definitions of ethnic and cultural identity, assertions which have manifested in museum exhibits—static and uncomplicated—that privilege narratives of whiteness. It then explores some of the real world impacts such as historic trauma that majoritarian definitions have had on the lives of Indian people and discusses the impacts and importance of museums as a validating source of identity--sites which produce as well as preserve public memory for and about local people.

CHAPTER II
 DEFINING THE “INDIAN”: THE HISTORIC NARRATIVE OF
 NATIVE CALIFORNIA

“Shoo-mash” he says
 And when he says it
 I think of ancient sea-lion hunts
 And salt spray windswept across my face
 They tell him his people are dead
 “Terminated”
 It’s official.
 U.S. rubber stamped official
 Chumash: Terminated
 A people who died
 They say
 A case for the anthropologists
 --excerpt from “*Chumash Man*” Georgiana Valoyce-Sanchez, Chumash

In an attempt to set the stage for the following chapters which address contemporary representations of California coast Indian people, I have outlined a history as defined by the outmoded anthropology and history texts at the foundation of the public narratives. I have organized the chapter much like the public history venues currently do, and discuss in each segment the problems associated with those particular versions of

history. Though I discuss federal and state laws that impacted hundreds of Native groups, and global empire building that impacted vast numbers of indigenous people, I've tried to maintain a focus on the impacts these larger themes have had on Central Coast Indian communities.

As I paint a portrait of pre-contact Indian life in California's coastal plain, I am reminded of a quote by Alfred Kroeber, who suggested the best we can ever do is offer up a few scraps and tidbits from written accounts in our attempts to tell an ancient, diverse and unknowable history. "The vast bulk of even the significant happenings in the lives of uncivilized tribes are irrecoverable. For the past century our knowledge is slight; previous to that there is complete obscurity (Kroeber 1925, 6)" And though Kroeber is considered the original expert on California Indian cultures, his opinion highly valued, and his work forming the foundation of knowledge about California Indians, his followers often overlook the humility that even he, the father of California anthropology, expressed about what he felt was possible to accurately tell.

Pre-history: Constructions of Archaeology and Linguistics

Along the central mainland coast of California, the indigenous population has most often been described as hunter/gatherer/fisher peoples who comprised mostly sedentary societies reliant on an abundance of the marine and terrestrial resources available (see early scholarship such as Kroeber, Merriam, and Powers and contemporary works by Arnold, Erlandson, Johnson, Kennett, Lightfoot, Rick, and Vellanoweth). The Chumash and Tongva also occupied the Northern and Southern Channel Islands, respectively. All of these groups had extensive trade networks that included coast and

inland groups, facilitated in some areas by shell bead currency (Arnold 2001; Vellanoweth 2001). Most archaeologists agree upon a *migration* to the area prior to 13, 000 years before present (YBP) when sea levels were low enough for people to cross a land bridge from Siberia. Great Flood stories in oral tradition among many coastal California Tribes, suggest their shared experience with rising sea levels at the end of the Pleistocene (about 10,000 YBP) (Blackburn 1975; Fisher 1965; Gifford and Block 1930; Judson 1994; Sarris 1994; Yamane 1995). According to linguists, the predominant languages spoken were from the north to south Penutian, Hokan, and Uto-Aztecan stocks (see figure 1).

The area of concern for this study is the aboriginal territory of the Ohlone, Esselen, Salinan, and Chumash with slight inclusion of the southern groups, Tongva (Gabrieleno on map), Juaneno, Luiseno/Achemem, and Kumeyaay (Ipai and Tipai on map). These names are the terms that are most widely used among the practitioners of these cultures as well as contemporary scholars of them. The area constitutes the geographic region of the coastal plain approximately 50 to 100 miles wide and from San Francisco Bay south to the border of Mexico (though traditional Kumeyaay territory extended to below Ensenada), about 500 miles in length.



Figure 1: California Indians Root Languages (Courtesy Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley).

The most northern region of the study area is the aboriginal territory of the Ohlone, Penutian language speakers who occupied the areas in and around the Monterey and San Francisco Bays. The term Ohlone is the name of a village near the modern day Santa Cruz, and though some descendants of the area have adopted the term to refer to the wider community of same-language speakers, many others prefer their village or tribelet name such as the Amah Mutsun, Muwekma, and Rumsien, according to various

Ohlone descendants (Bacon, Naeem, and Yamane 1982). For decades this greater group was called by anthropologists and the federal government the Costanoans from the Spanish “Costanos” or coast dwellers. Some researchers have hypothesized that the Ohlone people, characterized as hunter/gatherers, adapted to and managed their resources so well that many sites were occupied continuously for thousands of years (Milliken 1996). Archaeologists claim that littoral and riparian environments were the most productive and densely populated areas, while upland and redwood areas were less productive and therefore less popular (Bean 1994; Breschini 1972). As throughout California the acorn was a staple of their diet, but so were a wide variety of floral and faunal resources. Also, like other Native Californians, Ohlone managed their environment and improved it for their use by burning grass and brush lands annually to improve forage for deer and rabbits, keeping the land open and safer from predators and neighbors, and improving productivity of the many resources used (Kroeber 1925; Margolin 1978).

A little further south the Esselen, Salinan, and the Chumash also relied on hunting, gathering, and fishing to harvest a wide variety of animals and plants from terrestrial and marine environments “stacked” between the mountains and the open sea. Along with abundant oak groves, chaparral, and riparian communities, large estuaries, a mosaic of sandy and rocky shorelines, and extensive kelp beds provided a wide variety of resources. The diversity and productivity of resources available along the mainland coast, when combined with sophisticated maritime technologies and extensive commerce and craft specialization, allowed aggregations of as many as 600 to 1000 peoples to live in some coastal towns (Johnson 1989; Walker and Hudson 1993). Intensive trade between

groups living on the islands, the coastal mainland, and interior valleys was facilitated by the use of shell bead money, large plank canoes or *tomols*, and extensive trail systems (Arnold 2001). For these groups, the close juxtaposition of a variety of marine and terrestrial habitats, intensive upwelling in coastal waters, and intentional burning of the landscape, made their environment one of the most resource abundant places on the planet (Blackburn and Anderson 1993). This natural diversity and productivity supported coastal Indians and their cultures, allowing life to remain relatively stable for millennia. Archaeological data indicate that these people and their ancestors lived and thrived along the California Coast for at least 11,000 years (Dartt-Newton and Erlandson 2006). Similar to the Ohlone, the word Chumash is not how the people of the area spoke of themselves prior to contact with Europeans. It is a term derived from the Ventureño word *mi'chumash* which means islander or shell bead makers recorded by linguists in the 19th century. Ventureño is one of six dialects of Chumashan (Kaufman 1988), a language spoken in the Santa Barbara Channel region (Klar, Langdon and Silver, eds. 1980).

While it seems intuitive to discuss central and southern coast groups as a unit, given the similarities of resources, climate, and even cultural adaptation to the environment, the area between the modern day San Francisco and San Diego—for all intents and purposes, the South-Central Coast—is not generally discussed as a unit, but rather as the Central and Southern culture areas, each of which also include the coast mountain range and the Central and Southern, respectively, inland valley Tribes.

Culture Areas and other Anthropological Notions

The idea of “culture areas” was initially developed as an organizational response to the notion of designing educational museum displays, and remains deeply problematic. North America was initially divided into 18 environmental zones by geographer Otis Mason in the late 19th century. This was followed by ethnographer Clark Wissler’s maps in *The American Indian* published in 1917 that divided areas by food and material culture. Culture areas were seen to reflect clusters of behavior that often reflected similar adaptive strategies. This is important because it came to define people by trait lists and ecological niches. This practice of grouping also led to the assumption that if traits could be directly observed in the ethnographic present, then they could also be observed archaeologically, hence volumes of archaeological, ethnographic, and history texts are organized in this way. It is also important to note that the number and placement of culture areas varied depending upon authors and their particular theoretical interests (Pyburn 2004).

That said, Kroeber divided the state into six culture areas within which (he claimed) residents shared common traits such as housing, dress, routine activities and economic pursuits. These regions are the Northwest, Northeast, Central, Great Basin, Southern, and Colorado River (see Figure 2). I argue that not only is the culture area *concept* problematic, but that these groupings are actually quite misleading. Pre-contact Southern coast peoples had far more in common with Central Coast peoples than they did with inland groups. When you add the impacts of colonization on the people of the coast



Figure 2: Culture Area Map (from Kroeber 1925).

region, again there are far more similarities between coastal groups than those experienced by groups east of the coast range, 100 miles to the interior. I do not however advocate for a new grouping or set of culture areas, only to draw attention to unexamined uses and abuses of the culture areas and culture area concept as defined.

Nineteenth century theories of territory and place imposed by early

anthropologists and historians operate as the foundations for all subsequent research and literature and are badly in need of redress. Though current adaptations of history and indigenous concepts of space recognize the limits of notions such as the “culture area” theory (Deloria 1997; Miller 2004; Smith 1999), Kroeber’s maps and theories are still the most widely used in museums, the web, and popular literature about California’s indigenous people. These oversimplifications, however erroneous continue to define California cultures and ethnicity in the popular as well as scholarly realm.

Few detailed descriptions of the social and political organization of these groups were documented during the first wave of colonization, the Spanish Period. The attitude among these first European colonizers was to obliterate the existing cultures in favor of their own (Dartt-Newton and Erlandson 2006; Margolin 1978). Hence the ethno-historic record for the Spanish period is limited to baptismal, birth and death records and observations of Indian (often reticent) adaptation to Mission life. Several generations (and two more colonial governments) were to pass before anthropologists like John Harrington began to unveil the aboriginal past through ethnographic investigations. Though travel journals of Europeans such as La Perouse, commander of a 1786 French expedition of the California coast, and others who visited California in addition to letters of correspondence between Spain and its colonial agents, exist as sources, the most substantial documentary source for the Spanish period are the Mission records. Many scholars have used these sources to make assertions about life on the Central Coast *prior* to contact (see Bancroft 1882, 1888; Bean 1994; Cook 1956, 1960, 1976a, 1976b; Hackel 2003, 2005; Johnson 1988, 1989, 1995; Kroeber 1925; Kroeber and de Paula 1908; Merriam 1955; Powers 1877; Rawls 1984). Some of these suggest that when

central and southern Coast Indians were first contacted by Europeans, the basic units of society were independent towns and villages governed loosely by hereditary chiefs. Sometimes a particularly effective chief (male or female) would have authority over several towns, but s/he was by no means all-powerful. While the basis for leadership may partly have been determined by birth, it was more dependent on personality, the ability to control certain economic activities, and success in creation of alliances with other chiefs (Johnson 1996; Kroeber 1925; Powers 1976). An example of assumptions made from the Mission data is exemplified in the work of anthropologist John Johnson who used the Mission records to study Chumash marriage and family patterns. He has hypothesized a regional view of how Chumash economic and political relations were reinforced through intermarriage. His work suggests that the Chumash were exogenous, matrilineal and predominantly monogamous. The exception, he states, appears to be that chiefs, who could take more than one spouse, would remain in their home village (Johnson 1988, 1995). While this may have been true of Mission era Chumash marriage patterns, it should not be assumed this pattern reflects pre-contact life or marriage patterns through time. It should also always be noted that in addition to these snapshots of an ethnographic present, the Mission records are an inherently flawed data set with limits based on language barriers and worldview, among others. While these shortcomings are common knowledge among researchers of the materials the limits are not always expressed in secondary literature.

In the past decades it has also become common practice to piece together archaeological data using sources such as early explorer's accounts, Mission records, and 19th and early 20th century ethnographic materials, to portray pre-European aboriginal

life. In a few cases these are supplemented with handed down memories of living Indian people. The Central Coast region is teeming with archaeologists and their cultural anthropologist counterparts, who analyze material culture and mine ethnographic field-notes from the various California archival collections in this ethno-archaeological endeavor (see Arnold 1987, 2001, Erlandson and Colton 1991, Erlandson and Glassow 1997, Erlandson and Jones, et al 2002, Erlandson, Rick and Vellanoweth 2001). These studies are the foundational narratives which inform most scholarly and museological discussions of indigeneity in Central Coast California.

Native Perspectives on Origins

All indigenous groups have oral traditions that explain their beginnings in a certain place. California's indigenous origin stories are as diverse as the landscape and its people. For my purposes, I offer three stories from the Central Coast as a sampling of this diversity, two Chumash and one Ohlone. One version of the Limuw Chumash creation story that has only recently (in the past 30 years) emerged or resurfaced. Aptly called the "Beginning of the Chumash" this story is now widely accepted by teachers and schoolchildren since its publication in 2002. In this story, told to Monique Sonoquie by the late elder, Semu Huaute, the Chumash of the Channel Islands of California began when the female offspring of Dolphin and Creator mated with the male offspring of Shark and Creator. In this way, the island of Santa Cruz or *Limuw* was populated by the people known as the *Mi'chumash*, or the island people (Sonoquie 2003). This story has been widely accepted in classrooms (though not as universally among Chumash community members) because the very popular "Rainbow Bridge" story dovetails so

nicely with it. In this story, the island has become overcrowded, and *Hutash* (the Chumash earth deity) seeking a solution, builds a rainbow bridge for the people to travel to the mainland (Georgianna Sanchez, oral presentation 2008; Wood 1995).

Another published story of Chumash beginnings has been the dominant narrative about origins for some time, and the one most commonly told in school programs. This story told by *Kitsepawit* or Fernando Librado, a Santa Cruz (*Limuw*) Chumash and recorded in the early 1900's by anthropologist John Harrington. In Librado's telling of "The Making of Man", the Great Flood, which killed all of the "Old People" or *Mol'moloquiwash*, left only woodpecker alive on the earth. *Snilemun* (the Coyote of the Sky), Sun, Moon, Morning Star, and *Slo'w* (the great eagle) were discussing how they were going to make people to repopulate the earth. Several of them argued about who man would resemble and who among them had the finest hands to pattern the human hand after. As they argued, lizard looked on. *Snilemun* won the argument, but before he could imprint the special rock with his own hand, lizard jumped down and left his handprint instead. Thus, the hands of humans resemble the hands of the lizard (Blackburn 1975). This is the only story that had been published discussing origins until 2002, when the Huaute story was retold. There is yet to be a hypothesis as to why the stories are so vastly different, but it is possible that the origin story told by Huaute may have been a pre-flood story and the Librado (*Kitsepawit*) a post-flood, or *re-creation* story.

Kitsepawit and his words have attained a certain authority in narratives of Chumash life. In the era that he lived he was not seen as a hero or an authority, but merely a person willing to share cultural information with anthropologist John Peabody Harrington. In fact, contemporary accounts recall *Kitsepawit* as an unpopular man, saying

that he was shunned by family and friends for his willingness to share traditional history with an outsider (personal communication Chumash elder Jeanne Harrison 2001). Yet, Librado's stories, as well as stories told by other informants such as Maria Solares, Maria Ygnacio, and Juan Justo and their descriptions of Chumash life in the early 19th century have become in many cases, the foundations of knowledge about pre-contact Native life in spite of the fact that they themselves were descendants of at least three generations of Mission Indians. Informants such as these mentioned worked with Harrington throughout California, not only among the Chumash. Librado's stories and other materials collected by Harrington have indeed become the fodder for most of the educational materials and museum narratives in the area. They have also been a primary source for revitalization efforts for some aspects of Chumash culture. For this reason, many modern Chumash people feel indebted to Fernando Librado and others for allowing them a window into post-Mission Chumash life and the preservation of these bits of history, yet recognize the shortcomings to this body of data (see Johnson 1989 for example) such as those discussed in critiques of anthropology (Clifford 1988, Deloria 1969, and others). Some of these issues include cultural or familial biases among informants, the manner in which recordings were collected, problems with translation between languages (and indeed there were three languages to be negotiated in Harrington's work), some information being withheld or purposely skewed by the informants, and the list goes on. In many cases however, some have accepted Harrington's notes, rather uncritically, as a window into Native history and cultures.

An example of the way that early anthropological writings can be over-interpreted lies in one of the most widely used sources of oral history among museum practitioners in

the Chumash region. Compiled by Thomas Blackburn, *December's Child* is a volume of over one hundred stories including Kitsepawit's "Making of Man." In this volume of Harrington's collected stories Blackburn conjectures that origin stories are scarce among the Chumash because the past and the passing of time, therefore origins, was unimportant to them (Blackburn 1975, 31). He does admit, however, that the collection mined for "Decembers Child" is limited solely to stories told to Harrington by a handful of post-Mission era informants that may or may not have known the pre-contact beliefs about human origins, but does not outline for the reader the many other limits to his data set. Another story in the same volume, "The Myth of Ciq'niq's" tells a story of "the boy who came from the clouds" (a knower of all things), and his encounter with the devil. Ciq'niq's tells the devil if he is interested in knowing about the people, he must look to their *place* of origin.

Here we are going to begin
 Where you come from
 Look to the south
 We are seeing the island of Santa Rosa
 We begin
 And see the island of Santa Rosa
 There is where it began
 Always it will continue

Librado, himself was a descendant of Santa Cruz Island and the other Chumash informants were descendants of various mainland villages. It could be suggested that these informants of Harrington's did not know the origin stories because they themselves were not from Santa Rosa Island. Most anthropologists recognize that ownership (by a family or clan) of certain songs and stories is common among Native groups worldwide. It is possible then, that John Harrington did not talk to enough people or to the right

people to ascertain stories of origin. For Blackburn to assume that the Chumash did not care about their past or their origins based on this sparse and biased data set is an example of the sort of stretches of the imagination that often go unexamined when used by people that are not warned to approach such material critically, people such as elementary school teachers, or in many cases exhibits designers.

Further north, the most popular story of origins is retold by Linda Yamane, a Rumsien Ohlone storyteller, in the book *How People Were Made*. Yamane also mined the Harrington materials in an archive held at University of California, San Jose for cultural information. One of the Harrington informants in Ohlone territory was her maternal great grandmother. An arduous task making sense of Harrington's notes and translating the notes from Spanish, she tells the origin story of the Rumsien in this way.

After the Great Flood, Eagle and Crow were trying to decide how to repopulate the earth. They knew that people couldn't be made of sticks or rocks and that people should be made of clay from the earth. They were soon joined by Hummingbird who mentioned that her uncles, the Badgers might know of a place where they could find some of this clay-like earth. They did indeed, and brought it in great quantity to Eagle. Eagle began to form the men and women and deer and all other creatures that they wanted to fill up the earth. Then he found little white rocks for the eyes. In a few days the creatures came to life and everyone was pleased (Yamane 1995).

Yamane, unlike others does not hypothesize what the hidden meanings and cultural nuances might be to the story. She merely retells the story of her family, passed down to her through the hand of John Harrington.

In stark contrast to these stories is the origin story of the western academic imaginary. Though the evidence is sparse, this is the story that has been handed down through many generations of historians and anthropologists. In this origin story, between

20 and 15 thousand years ago all of the indigenous inhabitants of North America migrated across a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska. According to these theories, during the last ice age when the sea levels were low, people crossed over the bridge in search for big game. Variations on this particular theme are deeply rooted and pervasive in all of the social sciences. The more recent assertions include coastal migrations along the pacific seaboard (Erlandson and Jones, et al. 2002) and the very recent and somewhat controversial idea that migrations to California also occurred among Pacific island peoples (Jones and Klar, et al. 2007). Resonating in the western academic perspective is the idea that aboriginal North Americans are not in fact aboriginal, but early migrators. Origin beliefs of the people however, almost invariably assert local aboriginality. For instance, in a recent L.A. Times article on repatriation, Lalo Franco, Tachi Yokut Tribal member asserts there is no need for science to study their ancestors' bones to prove that their people originally walked across a land bridge from Asia. The Tachi Yokut know from their Tribal creation story where they come from—the San Joaquin Valley. "They dismiss our stories and say that what we believe are myths, but for us they are the truths of how we came about," he said. "If they want to know who we are, they can ask us." (http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jan/13).

For native people origin stories, like so many other aspects of indigeneity have been relegated to discussions of folklore. An assertion of native identity often includes faith in the creation of a people in their homeland. My point is not to validate one over another, merely to assert that these are histories that serve to define many of these people. Just as each nation has its version of their role in world history, the Chumash, Ohlone, and Yokuts have certain ideas about their beginnings—theories that deserve to be

incorporated into scholarly discussions of aboriginality—and inevitably in the museum setting, as well.

Historians and the Settlement of California

A visit to the northern coast may have been the first documented landing on California soil. Chinese records speak of the explorer Hui Shan, who in 458 A.D. sailed the Pacific and may have reached the coast of California, as he noted tall trees with a red wood. However, the name *California* was first penned by Garcia Ordonez de Montalvo in his novel, *Las Sergas de Esplandian*. Published in Spain in 1510, Ordonez de Mantalvo's book, an extremely popular piece of literature at the time of the conquest of Mexico in 1519, introduced the mysterious island of California. The island, ruled by Queen Califia was described as a terrestrial paradise, east of the Asian mainland, peopled only by black Amazon women. In his work, the author drew upon long-standing European beliefs in such an island and the notion of Califa/ornia that had come to connote insularity coupled with riches (Ojeda 1991).

Visits to the Southern and Central Coast of California were first reported by the Spanish in 1542. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a Spanish military man, native of Spain and resident of Guatemala, traveled to northern New Spain that year in search of the wealth of a mythical place the natives of Guatemala called *Ciguatan*. One hundred and three days into the journey, Cabrillo's ships entered San Diego Bay (Paddison 1999). After claiming the land for Spain and naming it San Miguel (the name to be changed by Vizcaino in 1602 to El Puerto de Saint Diego), the expedition continued north to Monterey Bay. Interestingly, the expedition failed to sight San Francisco Bay, which

remained undiscovered by Westerners until 1769. Discouraged by foul weather, Cabrillo decided to winter in the Channel Islands. There, Cabrillo reportedly shattered a limb during a skirmish with Chumash natives. Some historians assert that he died and was buried on San Miguel Island or *Tuqan*, the northernmost of the Channel Islands.

Cabrillo's contemporaries considered the expedition a failure, though his reports dispelled myths and misconceptions about the coast and allowed his contemporaries to proceed with the expansion of the Spanish Empire (Hackel 2005).

Francis Drake in 1579 claimed the land at Monterey California for England, but few took notice of the declaration. His expedition was the only British, in a number of Spanish claims. Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602 sailing up the Southern California coast, named the village of *Syuxhtun* and the area sheltered by the islands "Santa Barbara", in honor of a 3rd century martyr. Santa Catalina Island, San Nicholas Island, and Monterey Bay (and countless other locations throughout California) are similarly named for the Saints corresponding to the day on which they are sighted. And while these men and others are credited as the first visitors, it was not until 1769 that actual Spanish settlement is documented. The era between these points in time is referred to by many scholars, as the "Proto-historic" period, an era in California's history that may have seen incredibly high mortality rates (Erlandson and Bartoy 1995; Preston 2002). Some estimate a decline of 80% (from 100,000 to 20,000) of the population due to the diseases introduced by those early visitors (Walker 1993; Walker and Lambert et al. 1994)¹.

The early accounts, both of the initial encounters and the first settlements,

¹ Declension as discussed in Purdue (1998, 7-10) in which decline and change is over-emphasized, rendering change prior to European contact invisible

describe Native peoples in terms of Eurocentric notions of hedonistic barbarism, which ultimately justifies exploitation (Rawls 1984). It's important to acknowledge that these descriptions form the base of foundational knowledge of coastal Indian groups and are often viewed as a "window" into the past (see Diary of Miguel Costano for example).

Spanish Period 1769-1821

On May 14, 1769, a group of sick, exhausted, half-starved, and dehydrated Indian field hands, whose gaunt faces and skeleton-like bodies evinced their ordeal, drove teams of oxen and mules and wagons into the southwestern coastal area of California. They mark the beginning of the farm-worker story. With them was a rag-tag collection of soldiers, "sappers" (trail breakers), muleteers, and Missionaries. They had come from the northernmost Spanish Missions on the Mexican peninsula of Baja (Lower) California. (Teggart 1911 in Street 2004).

Mission San Diego de Alcalá was ceremonially established by the erection of a cross and celebration of Mass on a hillside overlooking the ocean. The party attempted to attract the attention of Kumeyaay families by hanging bells in trees and putting out token gifts.

The local Kumeyaay of the San Diego region probably reacted to this arrival in a multitude of ways. Some may have been inclined to help them, some to avoid them, perhaps others to kill them before they posed a threat. Perceptions of native peoples to early settlement are visible through the physical manifestations of correspondences which discuss revolts and other resistances, as well as Mission baptism registers which in some

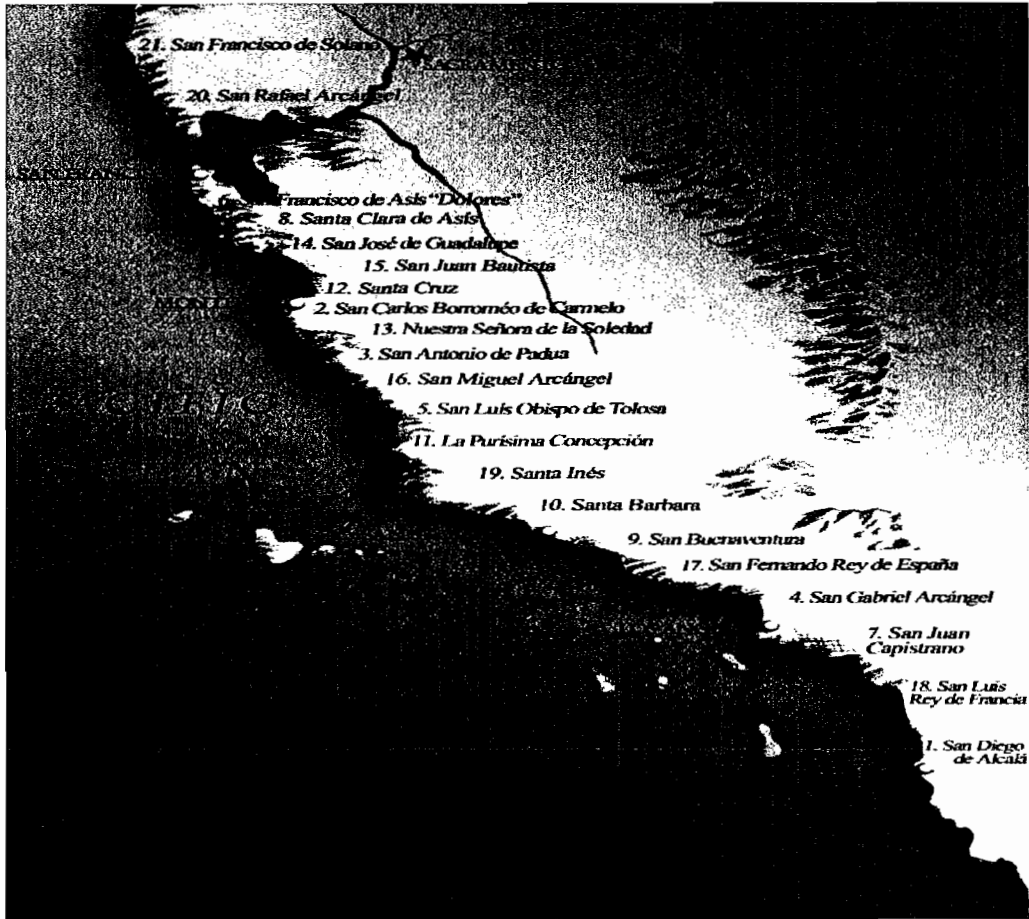


Figure 3: Founding the Spanish Missions (Courtesy Library of Congress).

cases are interpreted as evidence of acquiescence. Evidently, the Indians remained unimpressed, however, because they attacked the settlement within its first month. Later, the Mission itself was moved across and up the valley to a location more central to the Indian village, but the Presidio remained on the commanding hillside. Relations with local Indians remained poor. Not a single Indian was baptized during the Mission's first year; and only sixty were baptized when the new Mission church was constructed in 1774. In the following year, the church was burned to the ground in an attack by local Kumeyaay that also led to the death of Father Luis Jayme (Street 2004).

Much like the establishment of the Mission at San Diego, the mode of Spanish settlement followed the same essential lines in each location. A cross was erected; Mass was celebrated; and attempts were made to contact the local Indians. As labor and resources were organized, permanent buildings were constructed. These always included a Mission complex, including a church, residences, and work areas and in some cases also included a military fort or *presidio*. Eventually, these were joined by a small civil complex, or colony (Bancroft 1888). Indians were “invited” to create a village next to the Mission complex, though unmarried Indian women and children were usually forced to live inside the Mission in chaste seclusion (Bouvier 2001; Lightfoot 2005), an element of Mission life that I discuss in greater detail later in this chapter.

San Diego Alcala in 1769 was followed by San Carlos Borromeo del Rio Carmelo (Carmel) in Monterey in 1770 (see map figure 3), by 1823 there were 21 Missions, all about a day’s ride from each other. The northern reaches which included San Francisco de Asis (Dolores), as well as later Rafael and Sonoma, San Jose, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Juan Bautista, Carmel, and Soledad converted and enslaved mostly the Ohlone (or Costanoan), Coast Miwok, and Yokuts peoples. The northernmost Missions including Dolores, Sonoma, and Rafael also baptized several Pomo, Wappo, and Patwin peoples of the northern regions (Forbes 1969; Heizer 1974). While the central area of San Antonio and San Miguel concentrated on Salinan and Esselen, with a few Ohlone from the north, they later actively recruited inland Yokuts. From San Luis Obispo to San Buenaventura the labor force of Mission converts was primarily Chumash (later referred to as Obispeños, Purisimeños, Ynezeños, Barbareños, Ventureños after their respective Missions), with a sprinkling of inland Yokuts and Tongva peoples from the south (Farris

and Johnson 1999). The southern Missions of San Fernando and San Gabriel were populated with Tongva (called Gabrieleño) peoples, and south of the Pueblo of Los Angeles were Missions San Juan Capistrano, San Luis Rey as well as San Diego, who converted the Kumeyaay, Acjachmem, and Serrano peoples (respectively Juaneños, Luiseños, and Diegueños). The names for each respective Mission were given to all Native converts removing actual tribal affiliation and Indian identity in the written record. Hence, descendants of Mission Santa Barbara that were Yokuts, for example, would be considered “Barbareño,” a term used today to denote Santa Barbara Mission *Chumash*.

Though perhaps initially attracted to the Missions due to an interest in domesticated animals, modern tools, and curiosity about the newcomers and their God, the coast Native people could *consider* joining Mission life many times, but could only make the actual decision to do so once.

The waters of baptism were, in the eyes of the ones administering it, taking away not only something called sin, but freedom as well. After baptism, the monks felt that they had an obligation and responsibility not to the body of the Indian, but to the Indian’s soul (La Perouse, Yamane and Margolin 1989, 30).

Upon accepting baptism, native people inadvertently surrendered to the lash and the confinement of the Mission walls. Franciscan Missionaries believed that they were responsible to save the Indian converts from their sinning nature and bring them—willingly or unwillingly—to God. In the early years Mission converts were allowed to return to their villages twice per month, as this was seen as a form of recruitment for “gentiles” still unbaptized. Later, however, returning

home even for a day was forbidden and escape was severely punished (Sandos 2004).

Life in the Spanish Missions

The impacts of disease as a result of incorporating Central Coast peoples into Mission life, was devastating. The descriptions of this period in Indian history are painful and horrific, and some of the saddest material written. “The Missions of California...,” writes author Malcolm Margolin, “were places of defeat and death—not only physical death, but spiritual and cultural death as well (La Perouse, Yamane, and Margolin 1989, 34).” Margolin transcribed La Perouse, a French seaman’s diary, which chronicled his visit California’s Monterey peninsula, leaving a detailed description of Mission life. La Perouse writes: “I have never seen one laugh (p33).” Margolin states in the introduction that the severing of the Indian people’s relationship to the land was not a byproduct of Missionary activity, but a primary goal. He quotes Padre Lasuen, “transforming a savage race such as these into a society that is human...can be accomplished only by denaturalizing them (La Perouse, Yamane, and Margolin 1989).” Other sources discuss Spanish enslavement of indigenous populations and the stripping of basic human dignities (Fogel 1988; Jackson and Castillo 1995; Seed 2001), various forms of punishment and the devastating spread of “Old World” diseases (Cook 1976a and 1976b; Costo and Costo, et al 1987; Hackel 2005; Heizer and Almquist 1971; Lake 2006; Millikin 1996; Sandos 2004; Walker 1993, Walker and Lambert, et al. 1994). From La Perouse;

Corporal punishment is inflicted on the Indians of both sexes who neglect the exercises of piety, and many sins which in Europe are left to Divine

justice, are here punished by irons and stocks (Intro by Margolin 1989, from *Voyage de La Perouse 1786*)

For girls over eight and unmarried women the move to the Mission meant being separated from their kin, for seclusion in *monjerios* or women's dormitories. These separate quarters were established within each Mission complex to discourage extramarital sex. Though much of the Missionary correspondence with Spain claims that this policy was enforced to protect the young women from lustful soldiers, contemporary scholarship suggests that it was more likely the distaste for extramarital sex and what was deemed "promiscuity", "licentiousness", "low morality," and "shameless and excessive incontinence" among unmarried women, by Missionaries (Cook 1976, 104). Prior to contact with Europeans, most of the coastal groups believed in sexual freedom after certain puberty rites were celebrated (Kroeber 1925; Powers 1877). These conflicting worldviews proved deadly for young women in Mission period California. Because of the poor conditions in the dorms, their lack of ventilation and dampness, the mortality rates among young women and girls exceeded others by 10-1 (Bouvier 2001; Costo and Costo 1987; Sandos 2004).

Though population demographics vary, the most commonly cited reference for California Indians before and after contact is Sherburne Cook (1956, 1960, 1976a, 1976b). Prior to Cook's analysis was a 1905 report, compiled by C. Hart Merriam that was based primarily on Mission records. The Merriam work suggested a pre-contact population of California at 260,000. Kroeber's 1925 *Handbook of the Indians of California* reduced Merriam's number to 125,000. And Cook's 1943 reevaluation of the same data used by Kroeber adjusted that number to 133,500. In 1976, however, Cook

incorporated regions not previously considered in the data to come to a number around 350,000. For the Ohlone, Cook suggested that perhaps only about one-third were recorded as baptized and the baptized number for Ohlone and peoples between Dolores to San Antonio was over 40,000. The Cook volume also sheds light on the recruitment strategies of the Missions. Over time as disease took its toll and Mission fathers worked people literally to death, it became necessary to recruit from inland valleys. San Juan Bautista for example, lists only *local* Ohlone Indians in its baptismal records up until 1805, a total of 1,414. From 1805 to 1813 there are no baptisms of gentiles recorded at all and when the records show baptisms beginning again in 1813, the people baptized are Yokuts Indians (predominantly referred to as Tulares or Tulareños for people of the Tulare Valley) from the interior valleys and remains true for the entire period spanning 1813 through 1834--a total of 2,663. This pattern is also evident in records from Santa Clara beginning in 1808, Santa Cruz in 1809, and San Carlos in 1804 (Cook 1976a).

Although the Cook volume does not suggest additional pressures other than an absence of local gentiles to convert, research of my own discussed possible reasons for this increase (see Dartt-Newton and Erlandson 2006) including grazing by Mission livestock and the suppression of native burning leading to significant resource depletion and unavailability of traditional staple foods such as acorns. In addition, because of the startling mortality rates in the disease-ridden Missions, nearly continuous recruitment of Indian labor was necessary to facilitate Mission ranching and agricultural work (Castillo 1989). In January of 1803, the Viceroy of New Spain decreed that converted Indians could no longer live in or return to their native villages and must move permanently to the Missions (Sandos 1991, 69). This official edict provided the legal justification for the

heavy recruitment of Indian people to the Missions after 1803. The increase is evidenced in the Chumash region with an increase from approximately 200 individuals baptized in 1802 to roughly 1200 people in 1803. Some scholars suggest that natural environmental and climate fluctuations as the primary contributors to increased baptisms (Michaelson and Johnson 2002), other evidence suggests otherwise (see Dartt-Newton and Erlandson 2006).

In his book, *The Chumash*, Robert Gibson (1991, 76) also attributed the marked increase in Chumash movement to the Missions in 1802-3 not to climatic variability, but to the consequences of Spanish colonialism:

The most probable explanation for this unlikely situation was that disease, land loss, and starvation in the Indians' villages and towns left them with no choice but to enter the Mission system. By this time, most of the Indians' traditional leadership was disrupted, as were their craft guilds, religious institutions, and family relationships.

Like Gibson (1991, 76), J. R. Johnson (1988), and Costello (1990), I believe the flow of Indian people into the Missions was due not so much to natural resource instability, but to resource depletion by Spanish cattle, active colonial recruitment and coercion, new and frightening diseases, and fear of metaphysical consequences. One can only speculate on the use of psychological and religious manipulation that occurred to accomplish this replenishment of labor, a campaign Coombs and Plog (1977, 309) reduced to an "effort on the part of the fathers (through baptisms) to balance population and food supply." In all cases the Mission project nearly destroyed not only ancient languages and cultural knowledge for coastal peoples, but the very heart of communities throughout much of California. Over the course of Spanish occupation and the Mission period, from 1769 to

1820 it is estimated that 50,000 to 70,000 people were removed from their villages either by choice or coercion, converted to Catholicism, and enslaved (Cook 1976a, 1976b).

The historic record skews the intensity of Mission experience for Indian people. In many cases the only informants that anthropologists spoke to during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were ex-Mission Indians. These were not the first or even second generation of Indian people who had been stolen from their villages and exploited by the Mission system but rather third generation Mission Indians who knew no other life. In many cases the people interviewed were Christian converts sympathetic to the priests and their attempts to “help” them. Other scholars have interpreted the journals of the priests themselves and this scholarly work now serves as the foundation for subsequent work. Sherburne Cook is one of these scholars and his work through the 1960s and 1970s is cited in practically all material on California Indians. The unfortunate result of these earlier sources is the perpetuation of unexamined racism and biases. I have included an example here by listing first Indian responses to the question, “why did you escape the Mission?” which appear on page 70 of Cook’s popular *Conflict Between the Indians of California and White Civilization* (1976a).

1. He had been flogged for leaving without permission
3. The same reason and he was hungry
7. He was frightened to see his friends always flogged
11. His wife and son had died
13. He wanted to go back to his country
26. His little niece died of hunger

Following a list of thirty such responses, Cook (1976, 71), concluded, “Much of the

above cited Indian testimony will obviously be heavily discounted. Several of the accusations are absurd, and many of the reasons advanced are trivial and irrational. Yet they ring true to the primitive psychology of the Indian.”

Attitudes of early scholars are often overtly expressed in the foundational texts (see Bancroft 1888; Kroeber 1904, 1908, 1925; Powers 1877; Merriam 1904; Heizer and Whipple 1951). But because they are some of the most voluminous and detailed compilations of ethnographic research, they are often cited without attention to their implications.

Interpretations aside, it is overwhelmingly clear based on *all* data including the testimonies of living descendants (Costo and Costo et al 1987) that the Mission period marks a time in history when coastal Indians were under assault by a colonial juggernaut. The reign of terror included armed soldiers, Franciscan priests who saw unconverted Indians as godless savages, Old World diseases, territorial dispossession and disenfranchisement, and the exponential growth of cattle herds on Native lands. As Alta California was inexorably drawn into a global colonial economy, these impacts disrupted the traditional economic and social fabric of Native societies to such an extent that many people had little choice but to move to the Missions. The responses of individual Indian people varied tremendously, and while some moved to the Missions, others found work on ranchos or in pueblos. Some adopted Christianity, intermarried with the foreigners, and accepted the dictates of a new social and economic order. Some fled to the islands or the interior trying to escape the yoke of colonial oppression. Still others actively resisted the Spanish in armed rebellion and were hanged as evidenced in the Chumash uprising of 1824 (Sandos 1985). And as disruptive and horrifying as it had been for Tribal

communities, at the close of this period, Mission Indians who were born and lived out their lives within the regimen and certain predictability of Mission life, knew no other means of survival. The landscapes that provided resources for millennia were now severely altered and much of the knowledge to obtain those resources forgotten. Ex-Mission Indians would be strangers in their own lands. For many, secularization and an end to the Missions meant instability and uncertainty rather than liberation (McWilliams 1946).

Mexican Period 1821-1848

The Missions of California, like the Missions on all Spanish colonial frontiers, were intended to be temporary institutions. When the work of Christianization and acculturation was finished, the Missionaries were to be replaced by secular leaders and the Mission lands distributed among the former neophytes. This process was known as secularization. While secularization of the Missions was one of the first orders of business for the Mexican government, the Mission Indians were not immediately impacted by the changing regime (Geary 1934). Following the establishment of Mexican independence in 1821, demands for the secularization of the Missions intensified. The constitution of the Republic of Mexico endorsed the equality of all Mexicans regardless of race. Mexican nationals concluded that the Missions--which denied basic liberties to the Indians--were unconstitutional (Deverell 2004; Sanchez 1993). According to the 1834 secularization proclamation of Governor José Figueroa, half the property of the California Missions was to be distributed to the former Mission Indians. Unfortunately

most Indians did not receive any of the Mission lands; those who did rarely kept them for long (Geary 1934).

Between 1834 and 1836 each of the 21 California Missions was secularized. Governor Figueroa, who died in the midst of the secularization process, appointed administrators to supervise the disposal of Mission properties. The administrators sold off the cattle, grain, and lands that rightly should have gone to the former Mission Indians. The vast bulk of the Mission properties ended up in the hands of a few prominent Californio (California-born people of Mexican descent, i.e. children of settlers and soldiers) families, over 700 land grants between 1834 and 1846. Many of the Mission Indians also ended up with these few wealthy Californio families, as ranch hands and domestic laborers (Heizer and Almquist 1971). It is estimated that following secularization about 4,000 Indians were employed by the large ranchos (McWilliams 1969). It also believed that a large population of Indian people, extended family of Indian wives of Californio men also lived on these tracts of land. Although this era is often depicted as akin to European feudal society with wealthy Californio men at the top of the feudal tree and Indian serfs at the bottom, recent historical analyses suggests that this imagery may be part of a larger Anglo American justification story (Kropp 2006; Lake 2006; Seed 2001).

During this period multi-ethnic communities have their origins. Communities forged of Chumash and Californios in Santa Barbara and Ventura County (Menchaca 1995), early Mexican settlers and Gabrieleno descendants formed the heart of Los Angeles (Rios-Bustamonte 1985), and further south ethnic merging among Juanenos and “Hispanos” was the norm (Haas 1995). And while much research still needs to be done

on the “Rancho Period,” to extract the reality and humanity from the romanticized images in museums of sprawling haciendas, fiestas, and “Spanish” life, with Indians relegated to the background of serfdom. A deeper discussion of this period is detailed in the following chapter.

Anglo-American Invasion, Statehood and Beyond

Seen by newcomers as an obstacle to settlement and resource exploitation, Indian people throughout California were under new assaults that would reduce their numbers even beyond the toll of introduced diseases, slaughter, starvation and despair 150 years earlier (see Heizer 1978, 1979, 1993). While Spanish and Mexican governments sought to incorporate Indians into civilian life and to utilize their labors, Anglo manifest destiny and the occupation of California by the United States on July 7, 1846 began a new world for California’s Indian people. Native American ownership of the vast majority of California lands was an impediment to the economic benefits that individuals, the state, and corporate interests sought to obtain from the lands (Heizer 1978; Hurtado 1988).

On September 28, 1850 the U.S. Congress passed an act authorizing the appointment of Indian agents in California, followed by a measure on September 30 appropriating \$25,000 to enable the president to make treaties with tribes. Congress hoped that removal similar to what had occurred east of the Mississippi would eliminate Native Americans, leaving Anglo newcomers to claim their California homelands. During the period that followed (1850-52), the President of the United States authorized a series of treaty negotiations (Costo and Costo et al. 1990). This set of negotiations was unique in that the treaties offered far less in “benefits” to tribes than any that had been

historically offered in previous treaties ratified by the United States and tribal nations (Phillips 1997). So few benefits were offered for the relinquishment of millions of acres of California tribes' most valuable lands to the United States that it was commented upon and justified in a report to the United States Senate in 1852 (Gates 1979). A primary focus of treaty negotiations was to assure access to gold exports from California, as excerpts from the 1852 report to the Senate on the treaty negotiations illustrate:

During the Indian war of last spring, whole mining districts were abandoned, and, although unacquainted with the statistics of the State, I will venture the remark that the exports of gold were less by millions during that period than during the months immediately succeeding. If this was the result of a war with a very few Tribes, what may be considered as the effects of a war with the entire Indian population of California?
EDWARD F. BEAL, Superintendent Indian Affairs for California.
Washington City, D.C., May 11, 1852 (Oklahoma State University Archives, website).

The California State Legislature opposed the 18 treaties negotiated with California Indians during 1851-1852 and the treaties were never ratified. They were, in fact buried until 1905 (Heizer 1994). Native people who agreed to relocate and give up rights to lands and resources were never compensated or provided with promised lands (see Figure 5)

Congress decided that instead of honoring treaties negotiated with California tribes, "hostile" Indians would be controlled through the use of state legislation and court systems which encouraged extermination, slavery, and outright dispossession. The California state government launched an arsenal of laws at Indian people during this same period. Tribes in direct contact with miners in the northern reaches of the state experienced the most direct abuses as local, state, and federal governments supported, and essentially encouraged, the genocide of California Indians. City governments paid



Figure 4: Treaty Reserved Lands (Courtesy Tachi Yokuts Website).

bounties on heads or scalps of Indians. Volunteer militias received reimbursement from the state treasury for their expenses incurred during Indian extermination excursions, and the federal government would often reimburse the state for claims against the treasury by militias (Hurtado 1988). In 1850, the Act for the Government and Protection of Indians facilitated moving California Indians from their traditional lands, indenturing them to whites, and punishing “vagrant” Indians by hiring them out to the highest bidder at public auctions if they were unable to provide sufficient bond or bail for themselves (Trafzer and Hyer 1999). Pursuant to the Act, county level courts with no state or federal oversight determined the fate of Indian adults and children in cases of indentured servitude as well as in deciding punishment for “vagrancy”. Under this same Act,

California governors ordered local sheriffs to organize militias to conduct “expeditions” against Indians.

Under the indenture law, in 1856, Thomas J. Henley, the superintendent of California Indian Affairs, claimed evidence of hundreds of Indians being stolen from their homes by militia groups and sold into servitude. These militias were at the forefront of government sanctioned murder of Indians in California. Typically attacking at night, the militias would murder the men and kidnap women and children. William Kibbe, the leader of a volunteer company in the Humboldt area, claimed his men had killed over 200 Indians to open up land for immigration. When Indians retaliated they were promptly visited by government-sanctioned and funded punitive expeditions (Bancroft 1888).

In the north, removal to reservations or wholesale extermination was the popular mode of eliminating the Indian “problem” (Rawls 1984, 171-180). In the southern half of the state servitude took a different form. With the breakup of the great landed estates after 1848, thousands of Indian “peons” were forced into the “free labor” market introduced by the Americans (McWilliams 1946, 39-48). Exploitation rather than extermination was the trend in the south where Anglo ranches and vineyards required cheap labor.

After American conquest, as these great numbers of Indian people began to leave the villages on the large ranchos they crowded into the towns of Southern California. All the principal towns had an Indian village known as the pueblito or little town.

In 1852 there were 4,000 "whites" in Los Angeles and 3,700 "domesticated Indians." The Indians were crowded into a pueblito located near Aliso and First Streets which was later moved east of the Los Angeles River. This new village became so notorious that, after the arrival of American soldiers in 1847, it was destroyed by order of the military (McWilliams 1946, 44).

A Tongva descendant describes this village of Yangna, as a multi-ethnic barrio near the

river. It had been a socio-political center for pre-contact Tongva life and had maintained its importance into the period of Anglo invasion. Yangna was a village or *pueblo* that made the “whites” nervous, because all people of color were welcome there, so nervous, in fact that the military burned it down, leaving hundreds of people homeless once more (personal communication, Cindi Alvitre 8/07).

Mission Indians had some preparation for the free market system, but Indian people who had escaped or avoided Mission life had none. Under a free labor system, Indian people were hopelessly handicapped. Unable to speak English, most unfamiliar with a market economy and its accompanying regularized labor, they were unprepared to cope with this system, and “sank lower in the social hierarchy of the times.” (McWilliams 1946, 45)

In the years from 1846 to 1870, Indians and landless Californios/Mexicans were widely “employed” in southern California as domestics, as farm laborers, and for most of the unskilled jobs. When gold-mining operations were launched in the San Gabriel Mountains in 1855, the local annals mention that the work was performed by "gangs of Indians." With the vineyards becoming profitable after 1849, Indian labor was extensively used throughout Southern California. Persons employing Indians as domestics were required, by ordinance, to keep them on the premises. Carey McWilliams citing newspaper and early settler accounts states that Indians declared vagrants upon the petition of white person, could then be arrested and indentured (for several years) to the petitioner. “Those who could not show papers from the alcalde of the pueblo were to be treated as horse thieves and enemies (McWilliams 1946, 46-48).”

Recent scholarship suggests that the reluctance to move Indian people from Los

Angeles and Santa Barbara to the Sebastian Indian Reserve at Tejon was due to the fact that they were needed for cheap labor for the vineyards and were friendly toward whites, describing them as, “not much to be dreaded (Valdez-Singleton 2004, 53).” Archival material mined by Heather Valdez-Singleton, indicates the Tongva/Gabrieleño people of Los Angeles were neglected by federal Indian agents for land and services provided in other areas because the Native people appeared assimilated and usefully exploitable. Recent work on Ohlone recognition also suggests neglect by Indian agents sent to assess the needs of Indians on the coast (Lavery 2003). Ultimately, Indians would not receive land, services, or additional aid if they were viewed as providing cheap or free, amiable labor to the Anglo population (Shipek 1988).

Recruitment of Chinese to California and other cities on the west coast during the 1850s to work the mines and railroads, and later for the fishing industry in the 1860s and 1870s, displaced Indians and Californios/Mexicans from the towns to the outlying communities. When Ludwig Louis Salvador visited Los Angeles in 1876, he reported that most of the Indians were to be found living "like gypsies in brush huts," on outskirts of such settlements as Riverside and San Bernardino, working throughout the region as common laborers (McWilliams 1939, 1946).

During this period groups of landless Indians, Californios, and newly arrived Mexicans also called “Sonorans,” shared the marginal spaces of outcast people. In the census of 1860, San Bernardino reported 3,028 Indians, in 1870 none; San Diego had 3,067 in 1860, and only 28 in 1870. In 1920 2,171 Indians were enrolled in the Mission Indian Agency of Southern California—the remnants of 130,000 or more Indians who inhabited the Southern region in 1769 (Costo and Costo 1995). These numbers may

indicate also, the shifting identities as well as a blurring of ethnic boundaries among Californios, “Sonorans”, and the local Indian people since many by this point were “mestizos” and could “pass” as higher racial status Californios (Haas 1995; Menchaca 1993, 1995, 2001; Valdez-Singleton 2004). Valdez-Singleton (2004, 52) stated explicitly that for the reasons outlined above, “Gabrielenos in Los Angeles adopted the strategy of hiding their [local Indian] identity and claiming to be Mexican.”

Land Tenure, Sovereignty, and Tribal Recognition

By 1856 there were four permanent reservations and two temporary reserves established in California. Except for Fort Tejon, which was inland from the coast, these were farther north than the area I focus on in my study. There were no reservations established in the coast region. Although sites of cultural and familial cohesion and some protection, reservations operated much like plantations under military supervision (Phillips 2004). Only two years after the establishment of the six reserves, a report from an agent sent to California to assess the success of the reservations stated that the farms were a “lamentable failure” (Ellison 1974, 64, from Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1854). Although no attempt was made to abolish the reservations, appropriations for the relocation and subsistence of Indians was reduced from \$300,000 to \$50,000 and the amount allotted for the expenses of superintendents from \$50,000 to \$7,500 the following year, basically phasing them out. That same year, the commissioner of Indian Affairs proposed a new scheme: divide the state into two regions with a superintendent in each to “lead and direct the Indians in their labors...reservations should be provided for the dispossessed Indians of the valleys (Ellison 1974, 66).” With

insufficient funding to provide adequately for Indian residents, the plantation/reservation sites diminished and promised services for displaced Indians stopped.

To chronicle how federal land tenure laws impacted the tribes and how the processes required for recognizing such groups as sovereign nations occurred on the Central Coast, I have chosen the same groups whose origins began this chapter, the Ohlone and the Chumash. The era from 1870 to 1950 is a virtual black hole for many tribes documentarily and the precise era necessary to document continuity—a significant criterion in the federal recognition process of the Office of Federal Acknowledgement (OFA) within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Groups from both regions have had government-to-government relationships with the U.S. at various points in history, but most are currently denied status as Indian people.

The Ohlone

The aboriginal inhabitants of the north Central Coast which includes the modern San Francisco, Monterey, and Santa Cruz counties have no groups that are federally recognized. Several groups have submitted petitions to begin the process, but to date none of these have been granted federal recognition. One case illustrates a common theme for coast tribes, that of the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation (OCEN). This group has well documented ties to a rancheria community that was once acknowledged by the federal government as an Ohlone tribal group and yet their application for federal acknowledgement was denied (Lavery 2003). The OCEN has over 450 members, 90% having ties to the tribal community called the “Monterey Band,” in federal documents from 1905-6, 1909, and 1923. This group held together over time through their residency

on nine land grant ranchos located throughout Monterey, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties, either made to the Indians themselves or to Californio husbands of Ohlone-Esselen women. Anthropologist Lafayette Dorrington was sent by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1927 to determine the number of bands under his jurisdiction as well as the number of “roaming bands not yet provided with land, and for whom land should be purchased” (Lavery 2003, 64). Dorrington reported that it was impossible to accurately assess these needs because he lacked census data to make determinations, but that based on what he saw there were only three (Salinan) homeless families located in south Monterey County and there was no need to purchase lands for homeless Indians of this region. His replacement later stated that Dorrington’s service to the bureau reflected “crass indifference and gross negligence” (Lavery 2003, 66). The result of Dorrington’s report was the administrative termination of the government’s relationship with the “Monterey Band.” Around the same time the tribe was declared extinct by Alfred Kroeber (1925, 544), who stated that the Esselen were, “the first to become entirely extinct, and in consequence are as good as unknown.” And of the Costanoan, “...extinct as far as all practical purposes are concerned...they are mixed tribal ancestry and live almost lost among other Indians or obscure Mexicans” (Kroeber 1925, 464).

As stated at the opening of this chapter, Kroeber and others who followed him were often predisposed to believe that post-contact cultures were somehow contaminated. This preoccupation with an ethnographic present situated just before the arrival of Europeans is evident in early 20th century accounts of Indian groups.

A longing for that which progress has destroyed that simultaneously masks the current and historical power relations between the colonizer and the colonized, Kroeber’s essentialistic, bounded, and static conception of

culture in this regard allowed him to deem extinct what he elsewhere referred to as “bastard” or “contaminated” cultures, those indigenous peoples who did not display sufficient amounts of pure, “primitive”, pre-contact culture (Lavery 2003, 67).

The cultural relatives of the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen, the Amah Mutsun and the Muwekma Ohlone are also in various stages of the federal acknowledgement process—petitions #111 and 120, respectively. The bitter irony is that these descendants of people who were for decades subject to assimilationist policy (see Tolley 2006), are now required by that same government to prove they are culturally unique.

The Chumash

Among the *coastal* Chumash the experience of the Cieniguitas Indian Ranch community illustrates the way erasure occurred through the period of 1870 to 1950. It is a tragic story, which according to newspaper reports, ended in 1876 when “citizens” of Santa Barbara upon learning of the death of special Indian agent, Thomas Hope, formed a mob that attacked the 55 men and 62 women living at Cieneguitas Ranch, a village known as *Kaswa’a* or the place of the little swamp. The Chumash were forced to flee and the mob then burned their tule homes so they would not return (Foss 2003).

How this band of Chumash came to reside at *Kaswa’a* is not entirely clear, but the San Francisco Xavier chapel was ordered to be built in 1803, by the priest at Mission Santa Barbara, and it was perhaps occupied by people to care for distant herds. It is possible that some of the Chumash who had been living at the Santa Barbara Mission and farming nearby lands were apportioned this area by the church. In the mid 1850s as bands

of Anglo squatters moved in to the area they violently kicked hundreds of Chumash people off of their ancestral lands, making them refugees in their homeland, some traveled east to the Tejon (Sebastian) Military Reserve, some fled toward Mexico, and apparently others sought refuge at Cieneguitas. It came to be the second largest village where traditional Chumash and Catholic beliefs were practiced, and in 1856 the village numbered 800 families (Shaaf 1981, 47 from Rogers 1924).

Thomas Hope, a local stockman and landholder had been appointed as the special Indian agent for *Kaswa'a*, called *Cieneguitas* by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in October 1854 after the site was visited by superintendant Thomas Henley. It may have benefited Hope to serve as Indian agent as it would have given him access to a labor force to tend his huge herds of sheep. Though appointed to protect the property rights and personal safety of the Cieneguitas Chumash, Hope was brought up on charges seven times in four years for assaulting Indian people within his jurisdiction. He was never punished for the violations by the US government, and continued his role as Indian agent until his death in 1876 (Foss 2003).

Several of the Cieneguitas Chumash in good faith, had their lands “held in trust” by Thomas Hope, possibly with the intention of saving their lands from Anglo land-grabbers, unaware that Hope himself would steal the land from them. In August of 1865 the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of California granted title of more than half of the lands known as Cieneguitas to Thomas Hope under the new title of “Hope Ranch.” The remaining postage stamp of a village site was donated by the owner of the adjacent property to the “Sisters of Charity”, who at that point were responsible for ministering to the souls of the Cieneguitas Chumash. Rather than preserving the lands for

the benefit of the few remaining Chumash, Sister Driscoll sold the parcel to Thomas Hope for \$750.00 (Schaaf 1981, 54). In 1867 the entire area known as the ex-Mission lands in Santa Barbara were sold for \$1 to \$2 an acre. Within five years Hope had acquired almost 320 acres of the land around Cieneguitas, and in June 1870 President Grant signed a patent to Thomas Hope for 3,281 acres. The Chumash from that point to present would be refused rights to their coastal homeland.

They moved to other areas locally and were said to meet in private. Most of them suppressed their Chumash identity publically, taking the more acceptable role of a person of Mexican descent, while their cultural traditions were preserved within a small circle of related people (Schaff 1981, 63).

Today with an approximate population of 2,200 and a median price for a home at \$2,610,000, “Hope Ranch” is one of the “wealthiest areas in California” (Wikipedia.com).

The coast Chumash who fled inland before and during this period to live among Yokuts and others were documented at Fort Tejon, the Sebastian Indian Reserve (Phillips 2004). Though little research has been done to chronicle the stories of these people, their descendants are today among the Kern County Chumash Council, a federally unrecognized tribe and also among the Tule River Yokuts community.

The only band of the Chumash to maintain federally recognized tribal homelands today, are those in Santa Ynez. A similar attempt by the church to provide lands to the Santa Ynez area Chumash then living at that Mission appears to have been made. Several thousand acres comprising what is known as the College Rancho was set aside for these people. These lands covered much of the Santa Ynez Valley, including parts of the well-known tourist destination of Solvang Danish Village, and areas where horse farms and

vineyards are now located. With little formal education and no financial resources, the Chumash, like many of the families with Mexican and Spanish land grants, lost their claim to these lands.

In 1901, the Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians was recognized as a tribe and allotted 99 acres of land along a dry and dusty gulch. At the time, five families had moved onto this property after having been moved off of the Santa Ynez Mission grounds. When the College Rancho lands were sold, some government intervention seems to have occurred to set this small area aside in perpetuity for the tribe, under the authority of the federal government (SYBMI website). The Chumash, believed by many to have been one of the most populous Indian groups in North America (Thornton 1987), now has one tiny federally-recognized band today. Their reservation is situated inland about 30 miles from the coast in the Santa Ynez Valley and has a current membership of 153 members. Their tribal enrollment has remained closed for over 50 years. There are an estimated 5000 Chumash descendants who are federally unrecognized. Surrendering identities as Indians to survive the gold rush years and ensuing legal persecution, most have had no choice but to move to the cities.

Between the years of 1910 and 1920 the Mission Indian Federation was formed of descendants of southern California's Missions, many of whom were urban people by this time. Coordinated efforts by this activist minded group influenced Congress to legislate the California Indian Jurisdictional Act which authorized the secretary of the interior to create a roll of California Indians for the purpose of payment from a judgment fund (Haas 1995). From 1928 to 1933 several agents traveled throughout California enrolling Indians who could prove ancestry from a California Indian living in the state in 1852. This

document is known today as the California Judgment Roll of 1928 and is used as a base roll for many California Indian groups and individuals. This roll reveals hundreds of Indians from groups that Kroeber and others deemed extinct.

While many tribes and rancherias in the northern regions of California were terminated during the 1950s, coastal tribes were not among these as they never had sovereign status as tribes. Resources seem to be the greatest motivator for Public Law 280 which was part of a matrix of termination related acts, aimed at dissolving the federal government's trust relationship with sovereign northern California tribes (Phillips 2004). Inland valley groups possessed little that the government wanted and coastal groups never received federal recognition and therefore were never granted treaty rights to live in their homelands or to maintain cohesive governing communities and so these rights could not be removed. The *coastal region* from San Francisco to Mexico has no federally recognized tribes (Figure 5) therefore termination and laws affecting tribes with government-to-government relationships and lands held in trust by the federal government have had little impact on these groups.

Conclusions

A January 15, 2008 article in the Los Angeles Times reported that representatives of dozens of tribes demonstrated on the UC Berkeley campus to protest the Phoebe Hearst Museum's reorganization and what they consider a lack of respect shown to the tribes. "Why are the ancestors here? Why aren't they coming home?" Ron Alec, a Haslett Basin spiritual leader, asked as he stood on the steps of Sproul Hall and addressed hundreds of supporters. "We come from many tribes to be here, but in our heart we have



Figure 5: Federally Recognized Tribes of California (Courtesy Bancroft Library).

the same sorrow. We want to take our ancestors home (LA Times, January 13 2008).”

The article discusses California as having been populated by hundreds of tribes upon European arrival and, “the 1849 gold rush triggered a wholesale slaughter that reduced the native population from 300,000 to 20,000 in about 50 years.”

Many tribes had so few survivors that they have been unable to win federal recognition. Some Native Americans complain that scientists view their ancestors as “research materials.” The university acknowledges that one researcher was recently allowed to take a small Ohlone bone and destroy it in a test to analyze the individual’s diet. The

Ohlone, once numerous in the Bay Area, are not eligible to receive remains because their tribe is not federally recognized (www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-bones13jan).

Because they lack of federal recognition, tribes on the California Coast cannot legally claim and rebury skeletal remains held in museums and scientific collections. Though no single definition of “Indian” exists socially, administratively, legislatively, or judicially, people who themselves and whose communities identify as Indian, are daily denied the rights promised to Indian people, such as the right to bury their dead.

The Bureau of the Census counts anyone an Indian who declares herself to be an Indian. In 1990 the Census figures showed there were 1,959,234 American Indians and Alaska Natives living in the United States. In contrast, most Bureau of Indian Affairs services require that a person be a member of a federally recognized tribe (Pevar 2002). The number of members of federally recognized American Indians, in contrast to the almost 2 million reported in census 2000, is around 1,200,000, meaning 800,000 people who identify as American Indian, are *not* Indian in the eyes of the U.S. government. This number does not include the millions of indigenous North Americans that are considered “Mexican” (Forbes 1992; Perlmann and Waters 2002).

Federal recognition is highly valued by Indian people, not due to the popular belief that “Indians all want casinos and to be exempt from paying taxes (interview Lompoc Museum docent January 2007)”, but because the status as sovereign nations represents rights to Indian identity, such as to claim and rebury skeletal materials held in museums, to services guaranteed under treaties that were exchanged for access to native lands and resources, and to a land-base in their tribal homeland that might enable cultural continuity. Indian gaming has proven a legal and profitable avenue of economic

development for federally recognized tribes beginning in 1987 with *Cabazon v. State of California*. This important Supreme Court ruling acknowledges tribal rights to self-regulation on reservation lands. In California, the Indian gaming industry has grown to massive proportions and has had vast economic benefits for tribes, enabling them to develop infrastructure on their reservations, housing for members, health and wellness centers, museums, and tribal universities.

On the Central Coast, however, along the swath of the Pacific plain where Franciscan Missions sought to obliterate Indian life, federal recognition is limited to the 153 members of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. In this “Indian free-zone,” federal recognition, services for the elderly and infirm, casinos and casino revenue are an impossible dream for tribes who struggle to pay for a space to hold tribal meetings. Here, where non-federally recognized Indian people are the majority, due to the complex web of colonial policy that Indian people have been forced to negotiate, groups and individuals struggle to assert their Indian identity and no simple definition is sufficient. In fact, because the Indians of the California Coast underwent such drastic colonial disenfranchisement, the BIA’s Office of Federal Acknowledgement should be pressured to develop a different set of criteria for the recognition of California’s Mission Indians.

California’s coastal peoples endured prolonged and sustained brutality and forceful assimilation policy under three different regimes. People seen by three successive governments as Godless savages, were victims of brutal colonial agents. Devastating disease epidemics, atrocities endured by coastal Indian communities, Mission enslavement and state-sponsored genocide are glossed over or blatantly denied in museums in favor of palatable infotainment. Within this denial of history is the

suspension of healing for Indian people and communities as well as the admission of guilt by the state and federal governments.

CHAPTER III

CASTE, CLASS, AND CALIFORNIO IDENTITY

Few of the great cities of the land have had such humble founders as Los Angeles. Of the eleven *pobladores* who built their huts of poles and tule thatch around the plaza *vieja* ... not one could read or write. Not one could boast of an unmixed ancestry... the conquering race that possesses the land they colonized has forgotten them. No street or landmark in the city bears the name of any one of them (J. M. Guinn, 1901, 3).

Unmistakable in museums on the Central Coast and indeed among most representations of California history, landholding Spanish *Californios* are seen as the only southern or “Mexican” presence during the colonial period and beyond, rendering indigenous and mixed heritage southerners invisible. In fact, within most of these representations, soldiers and settlers are depicted as “Spaniards.” Such museum narratives initiate foundational (mis)understandings about the Indian and mestizo peoples of Alta and Baja California and their experiences under Spanish and Mexican rule. For instance, exhibits in the 19 California Mission museums and a wide assortment of history and natural history venues consistently depict—with varying degrees of accuracy—local Indian culture on the Central Coast as well as ways that those cultures were impacted by the arrival of colonizing agents of Spain, Padre Serra and his host of “Spanish” soldiers on horseback. Usually portrayed as gallant, well dressed, white men, Serra’s soldiers

were more likely gaunt, haggard, brown men (primarily of Indian and African parentage), travelling on foot, and almost always accompanied by wives and children (Mason 1998).

This chapter focuses on the rarely depicted Indian and mestizo people of the Sinaloa and Sonora regions of Mexico who comprised the soldiers, skilled farmers, masons, trades people and their families who accompanied Junípero Serra to Alta California. It was these indigenous mestizos, often classified as “Spaniards” with origins in lower (Baja) California whose energies and dreams of a better life were harnessed by the Spanish crown. Spain’s goal was to utilize this impoverished, and newly colonized population to Christianize the upper California native population, to expand their empire and secure the west coast of North America for the Crown. The Hispanicized Indians¹, it was hoped, would teach foreign agricultural practices, adobe manufacture, and animal husbandry to local natives (Ortiz 1980).

The absence of more meaningful and authentic portrayals of the settler population in the museum narratives may be due in part to misinterpretations of census and other historic documentation that describe “Californio” identity. Written initially by lawyers, bankers and other prominent men who came to California after the gold rush, the first composite description of Spanish-Mexican California reflects the political and socio-racial ideology that justified both the war with Mexico and the subsequent socio-political marginalization of Mexican-Americans. Too often, museum practitioners have not critically analyzed the secondary literature they have used in the development of exhibits and programs. Understandably, these people consider early California historians such as

¹ Meaning the people colonized a generation or two prior that had adopted Catholicism and other aspects of European/Spanish culture, language and worldview, few also had Spanish bloodlines.

Bancroft and Kroeber to be the experts on such material. Most of these sources are considered outdated by recent scholars, however, which offer alternative epistemologies such as those employed in feminist or post-colonial historiographies. Deconstructing gendered, racist, and classist representations of the colonial era is necessary to accurately address the social, political and economic factors inherent in identity formation on the California frontier.

In this chapter I examine a few of the most enduring misconceptions, as well as new views of the same problematic interpretations, and finally trace identity changes and caste-jumping among the early settlers from Indio, to Mestizo, and sometimes to Español as they appear in the historic record through census data, registers, and church records. Though this apparent fluidity was in many cases a necessary means for survival, and always an avenue of social mobility, I believe identity negotiations that appear in the historic record as shifting ethnic identities may be little more than *documentary* assertions of caste status rather than shifts in culture, ethnicity, or community.

Admittedly, though I am still often relying on the secondary history and ethno-history scholarship to craft my narrative, I will attempt to deconstruct notions of Californios as valiant men, “obedient to command, without wives or families to protect” (Margolin 1989, 31) and of a class that was characterized by an “uneven moral quality” (Fogel 1988, 55) to explore the hidden histories of these “other” Californians using recent sources more critically aware of early biases.

Historic Background of Alta California Settler Population

During the century following the Spanish conquest of the Aztec capital of

Tenochtitlan in 1521, Spanish settlers spread from central Mexico as far north as what is now the American Southwestern. Drawn especially by major strikes of silver and gold in the modern state of Chihuahua, miners were joined by missionaries, ranchers, farmers, and merchants in efforts to establish firm Spanish control over the northern frontier. At the time of European contact, northern Mexico was populated by a number of distinct Indian groups speaking a variety of mutually unintelligible languages (see Figure 6).

Nomadic, hunting-gathering bands lived in northeastern states while in central and northwestern Mexico, sedentary societies supplemented their agriculture with extensive collecting of wild resources. Northern societies were egalitarian and locally autonomous (Radding 1997). Investigating the diversity of pre-contact northern Mexico in terms of nations, factions, ethnic groups or simply tribal group names is a relatively new endeavor and tposes some problems here. Only very recent studies have begun to investigate the reorganization and redefinition of a pre-contact indigenous diversity (Sheridan in Teja 2005). Current scholarship locates primarily the Cochimi, Hoka language speakers on the Baja Penninsula and the Mayo and Yaqui, Uto-Aztecan speakers in the region of coastal Sonora at the time of Spanish arrival.

At the time of contact, there were no native conquest states in this region (such as the Aztec and Inca farther south) and, while local groups probably formed alliances during times of conflict, no political organization existed that encompassed more than a few small bands or contiguous villages (Crumrine 1977, Spicer 1962).

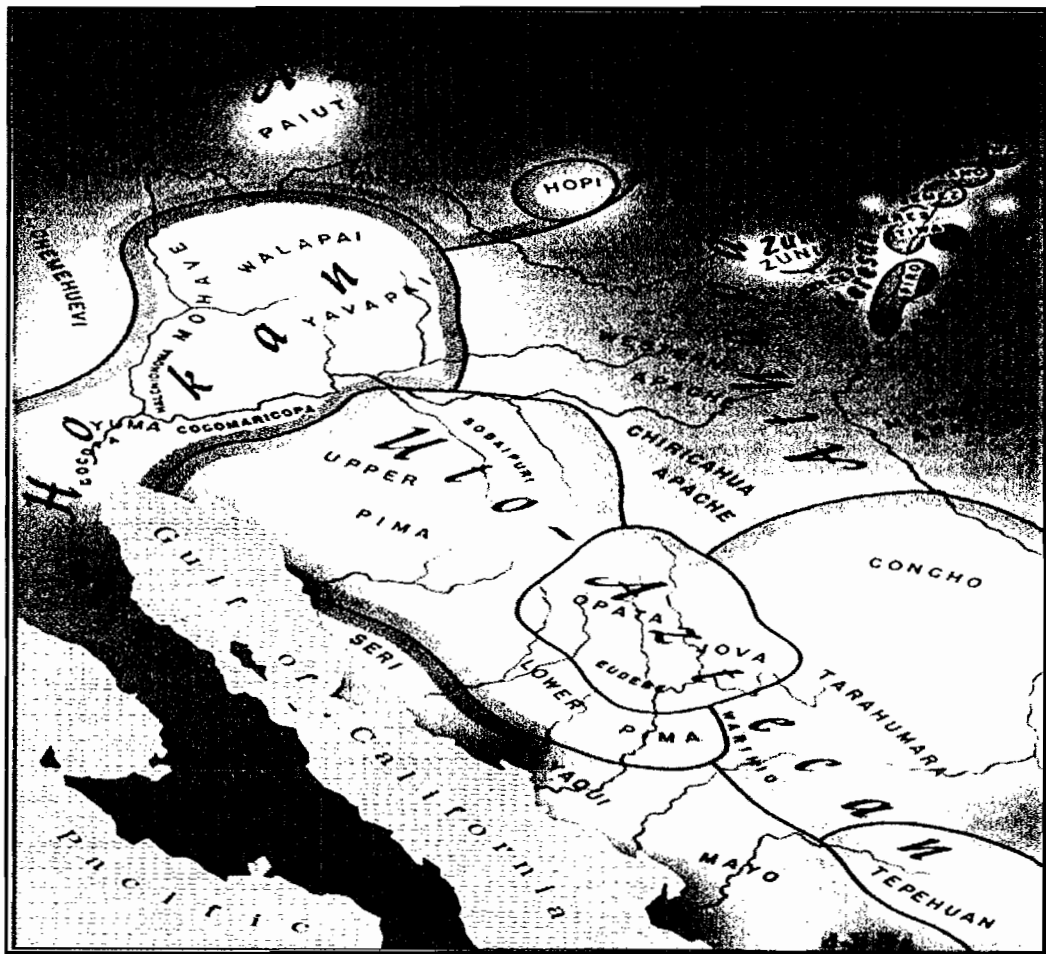


Figure 6: Indigenous Groups of Northwest Mexico circa 1600 (Spicer 1962).

According to the work of Gonzales and others, Franciscan and Jesuit Missionaries first arrived in northern Mexico in the second half of the 16th century, but did not begin to create a network of permanent Missions until the early decades of the 17th century. Indian revolts throughout the second half of the 17th century disrupted their efforts, but by the early 18th century the Mission system covered most of northern Mexico. In 1767, King Charles III of Spain expelled the Jesuits from all of his New World empire and

assigned Franciscan Missionaries and diocesan priests to divide the responsibility for their Missions in northern Mexico (Gonzales 1999).

The introduction of Christian values imposed by the Mission system was combined with the widely employed policy of *reducción*, which transformed existing Indian villages by means of persuasion or coercion into consolidated colonially controlled villages that would then be susceptible to taxation, surveillance and labor recruitment. One of the motivations for establishing *reducciones* was so that Spanish military men could easily recruit indigenous warriors to serve as military auxiliaries in the “relentless warfare” with nomadic Indians (Radding 2005).

Identity and Erasure of Indigeneity in New Spain

The expansion of the Spanish colonial system and particularly the Catholic Mission and *reducción* system in the region brought about important changes in local Indian identity. When the Spanish arrived in northern Mexico, they brought with them a scheme of ethnic classification derived ultimately from Iberian and European concepts of ethnicity, modified during the previous century on the basis of their experience in other parts of the New World (Saunt 2005).

The literal meaning of the term caste, based on the Latin *castus* or race, was a system that identified classes of people by their specific racial or ethnic heritage. Each caste had its own set of privileges or restrictions (see Figure 7).

Recent work by scholars such as Ned Blackhawk (2006) and James Brooks (2002, 2006) has shown that many factors shaped identities and enabled social mobility for non-elites. These included the need to fill occupational niches and gender ratios, as well as the

power of clergymen to imbue a higher caste upon a baby at christening—for the right price. The historic record suggests that racial categories were based more on perception and access to official record keeping than on actual parentage or racial genetics.

Caste designations first used by the Portuguese to describe inherited class status in their own European society were defined in the New World by racialized identities, coded by skin color and collective stereotypes. All of the public and private interactions of these socially constructed races were governed by values, organizational structures, and mechanisms of enforcement (both formal and informal) that systematically elevated one racial identity over all others (Cuello 2005, 201). This hierarchy justified brutal behavior toward people of color based on the devaluing of their phenotype. Within the “*sistema*” or “*sociedad de castas*,” race was a complicated social construct, which included the ascribed inherited religious status was known as *pureza de sangre* or purity of blood that was a standard used in Spain to distinguish those of Moorish or Jewish descent from Catholic whites.

<i>Caste</i>	<i>Origin or Meaning</i>	<i>Ethnic Make-up</i>
Espanola/ Peninsulare	European born	Two white, Spanish parents born in Spain or Portugal (i.e. from the Iberian Peninsula).
Criolo	Spaniard born in colonies	Two white, Spanish parents
Castizo	From word caste or casta	Offspring of one white, Spanish parent and one Mestizo parent
Mestizo	Literally person of mixed heritage	Offspring of one white, Spanish parent and one Indian parent
Morisco	From Spanish Moro, "Moor"	Offspring of one Mulatto parent and one white, Spanish parent
Mulatto	From "mule": a reference to the interbreeding of horses and donkeys	Offspring of one white, Spanish parent and one African/Black parent
Albino	Total or partial absence of pigmentation	Offspring of one Morisco parent and one white, Spanish parent
Ahi te estas	Mexican localism "stay where you are"	Offspring of one Coyote parent and one Mulatto parent
Coyote	Nahuatl: Coyotl, "coyote"	Offspring of one Mestizo parent and one Indian parent
Lobo	Latin lupus, "wolf"	Offspring of: Black/African and Indian, Mulatto and Indian, Mestizo and Mulatto or several others
Zambo	Latin strambus: "Bowlegged"	Offspring of one Black or Mulatto parent and one Indian parent
Indio	Indigenous person of the Americas	Both parents of indigenous heritage

Figure 7: *Las Castas Mexicanas* (from Katzew 1989).

When discussing the indigenous peoples of the New World, Cuello stated, "Colonizers created the race of Indios which homogenized thousands of native groups into one racialized identity by attributing inferior genetic, moral and cultural characteristics to them" (Cuello 2005, 202).

While elites worked to strengthen the system of unequal citizenship through the requirement of *pureza de sangre* and their control over all social positions of importance, non-elites negotiated their identities and roles in the social order.

Caste categories, theoretically infinite in number, were also subdivided and some people so classified were also categorized collectively as "*gente de razón*," a category that literally means "people of reason." The opposite was literally people without reason or *gente sin razon* a category for Indians who were viewed by the European as childlike in nature and not able to be fully responsible. These designations provided a contrast between the "civilized" people and the Native "barbarians" who resisted colonial control. The term was later used to distinguish European-born Spaniards from all non-Spaniards, especially those people of mixed genetic heritage who were able to speak the Spanish language and could potentially "pass" as Spanish and gain entrée to political spheres.

Colonial documents reveal that many Spaniards carefully distinguished themselves from the ethnically mixed "*gente de razón*," whom they tended to consider of inferior status. In 1754, Spanish officials and Catholic Missionaries in the province of Sinaloa, located in northwestern Mexico, debated the wisdom of requiring local Indians to pay tribute to the King of Spain while exempting certain non-Indian settlers from such payments. A Jesuit Missionary, whose opinion but not his name is preserved in the historical record, argued against the measure, indicating that the Indians would simply change their identity, "... with great ease they will come to resemble Mulattos and Mestizos in their dress, letting their hair grow and exchanging their capes for cloaks, and with this transformation they call themselves people of reason and are exempted from paying tribute (Merrill 1997, 1)." In remote outposts of New Spain such as Alta California, the designation of *gente de razón* primarily distinguished settlers from local indigenes and imbued all *gente de razón*—Mexican Indian, Mestizo or otherwise—with equal social and political status as Spanish whites.

Voluntary and involuntary assimilation played a significant role in the erasure of specific Indian group identification in addition to imposed caste designations. One of the most notable features of the history of identity formation in colonial northern Mexico is the decline in the number of distinct Indian groups noted in the documentary record between the 17th and 18th centuries. Historians of the area claim that in many cases, especially among nomadic Indian societies, entire groups disappeared because the majority of their members died in epidemics or conflicts with the “Spanish”, the survivors joining other Indian groups or assimilating into the emerging Mestizo population (Spicer 1962). Throughout the New World, Indian groups negotiated identities within other groups for strength and protection against newcomers, for example in Anglo colonies in the eastern United States (Thornton 1998) or among Spaniards in the southwest (Brooks 2006).

Continued processes of racial mixture reconfigured populations in terms of demographic, economic and social realities (Frank 2005, 83). Though it is common in the literature for the people of Mexico, indeed the *indigenous* (Cochimi, Mayo, Yaqui and others), people to be referred to as simply mestizo (see Frye 1996 for example), this term roots Indian people in a violent colonial past, assuming widespread assimilation that may or may not have occurred in their particular region. It then defines them in terms of a moment in time rather than in terms of their indigeneity, a past that pre-dates European conquest by many thousands of years (Aldama 2001).

Recruitment and Settlement in Alta California

The farm labor story begins with the founding of the Spanish Missions by Franciscans in 1769, when 180 Cochimi Indians were

brought north from Baja California for the "Sacred Expedition," the first Braceros to migrate from south to north to work in agriculture. Mission farms soon enlisted local Indians as well, often using go-betweens, the first labor contractors. Indians were the farm workers until the discovery of gold brought miners to the state, and agriculture expanded to feed the growing population (Street 2004).

By late in the 18th century, three world powers, Spain, England, and Russia, sought domination of the Pacific Coast of North America. King Charles III, eager to establish a Spanish presence in the north, hired an ambitious colonial administrator named Gálvez to conceive and order what came to be called the "Sacred Expedition," an expedition to extend Spanish settlement northward to Alta California. The specific goals of the expedition were to found Missions and presidios at the bays of San Diego and Monterey. The expedition included three ships and two land parties, all under the command of Captain Gaspar de Portolá. In the expedition were soldiers (a few Spaniard, but many Christianized Indians from northern Mexico), various Indian and Mestizo artisans, and a contingent of Franciscan Missionaries headed by Junípero Serra who had served as a Missionary in New Spain, founding Missions in the Sierra Gorda and had assumed the presidency of the former Jesuit Missions in Baja California. He founded nine Missions in Alta California between 1769 and 1784, the first of which was at San Diego.

The trek northward proved to be difficult for everyone, and recruitment for the journey was arduous. Many of those on board the ships suffered from scurvy and malnutrition. The overland parties passed through deserts and other difficult terrain. Only about half of those who started out survived the journey. The inland party led by Rivera y Moncada was attacked by Yuma Indians, after apparently grazing their huge herd of livestock on Yuman crops. This led to the Yuma controlling the route through the

remainder of the Spanish period, forcing subsequent expeditions to travel by sea.

Ultimately, however, the expedition to Alta California was a success and its survivors founded the first Spanish Mission settlements at San Diego and Monterey (Street 2004). The majority of the people who arrived in these first expeditions, were Indians from northern Mexico, an area that had only recently been colonized by Spain. From archival documents of the Loreto Presidio in Baja Mexico, it appears these people were mostly Cochimi and Mayo Indians some of whom were of mixed Native American and African heritage and originated from Sinaloa (colonized in the 1530s) and Sonora (colonized in the 1620s). The enlistment records identify them as Indio, neophyte (newly converted), or Mestizo (Gonzales 1999).

Records at Mission San Gabriel document settlers, soldiers and their families receiving confirmation by the Catholic Church upon arrival in Los Angeles. Confirmation to Catholicism is described as literally the moment when one's identity is changed. Generally, confirmation is an occasion when young people give their approval as adults, for their parents' decision to baptize them as infants. These settler families "received the Holy Spirit" and became "soldiers of Christ" according to Catholic doctrine. In this case, however, their identities not only changed in the realm of the spirit, but also as citizens of New Spain. Settlers were, in almost every case, given new caste designations upon arrival and confirmation (see Figure 8).

600. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Concepcion niña hija de Justo Hernandez y de
 Juana de la Cruz de Ceballos. Fue su Madrina Juana Ch^{ra}
 de la Cruz de Ceballos.

601. A Ch^{ra} Maxima Ch^{ra} de la Trinidad par^{ta} hermana de la
 anterior. Fue su Madrina la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de la Cruz de Ceballos.

602. A Ch^{ra} Isabel Cath^{ra} casada con Teodoro Ruiz Saldado ori-
 gino de la Cruz. Fue su Madra^{da} Ch^{ra} Juliana Quijada.

603. A Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor casada con J^{ph} Ch^{ra} Gil Sarmas
 negro Sold^{ado} de los Ch^{ra} de los Ch^{ra}. Fue su Madra^{da} Juana Ch^{ra} de la Cruz de Ceballos.

604. A Ch^{ra} Yopacia niña hija de Ch^{ra} Dolores de Santa India de So-
 tomayor. Fue su Madra^{da} Ch^{ra} Concepcion Montiel.

605. A Ch^{ra} Francisca Ch^{ra} hija de Juan J^{ph} Sob^{re} Sold^{ado} y Ch^{ra}
 Nicolasa Ballan de Sotomayor. Fue su Madra^{da} Catharina Quintana.

606. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Concepcion niña hija de Luis Quintana y
 Ch^{ra} de la Cruz de Ceballos. Fue su Madra^{da} Ch^{ra} Antonia Victoria de
 la Cruz de Ceballos.

607. A Luisa Ch^{ra} Par^{ta} hija de Roque Cota Sold^{ado} de Cuenca y de
 Juana Ch^{ra} de la Cruz de Ceballos. Fue su Madra^{da} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

608. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Concepcion par^{ta} hermana de la anterior. Fue
 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

609. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Cruz de Ceballos. Hermana de las anteriores. Fue
 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

610. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Cruz de Ceballos. Hermana de las anteriores. Fue
 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

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 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

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 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

619. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Cruz de Ceballos. Hermana de las anteriores. Fue
 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

620. A Ch^{ra} Juana de la Cruz de Ceballos. Hermana de las anteriores. Fue
 su Madra^{da} la d^{ca} Juana Ch^{ra} de Sotomayor.

Figure 8: Confirmation Records from Mission San Gabriel for 1781 settlers (Courtesy Los Pobladores Archive).

Newly arrived and newly baptized Indian and Mestizo people literally jumped castes in most cases to achieve the new status of *gente de razón* upon confirmation. This upward social mobility may have been an important enticement for recruitment since the move to Alta California would have meant leaving family and all things familiar behind indefinitely.

Though *neophytes* or newly baptized Christian Indians were certainly not social equals of the *gente de razón*, there seems to have been little distinction between Indios, Mestizos, Mulattos, or coyotes (Mason 1998), and less of a distinction between “Espanoles” and others in the frontier outpost of California (Newson 1985). Local neophyte Indians were considered minors, and were not considered able to think for themselves to any great degree. But Mexican Indians among the colonial settlers of California were considered *gente*, for Indians who spoke Spanish dressed and behaved as did other non-Indian inhabitants were able to consider themselves as such especially if they had moved outside the linguistic and cultural areas they had been affiliated with as “Indians” prior to recruitment (Gonzales 1999).

Yaquis, Mayos, Pimas and Cochimi from Baja California were considered to be *gente*, provided they were to follow the guidelines set for *gente*. Interestingly Miguel Blanco a San Ignacio Indian, was a soldier; some Indians had come to assist in the founding of the Missions in 1772 and had merged with the neophyte population of Alta California (Mason 1998, 61-62).

Identities in Alta California

The California frontier—largely free of imperial bureaucracy and pure-blooded elites—was a place where *castas* (people of mixed ancestry) could move up the racial hierarchy.

Over time, many Spanish families in California erased their African and indigenous ancestry by declaring themselves *gente de razón* (people of reason). Affluent “Spanish” families could even purchase certificates of their blood purity from Spain (Paddison 1999).

Never as racially stratified as other parts of Spanish America, colonial California developed a social hierarchy based on wealth rather than race or ethnicity. Land-owning “Espanoles” and Missionaries were at the top, working-class *gente corriente* in the middle, and Christianized Native Californians at the bottom, with non-Christian Natives a constant outside presence, but not considered part of society (Monroy 1990).

During this period the Mission records suggest that most neophytes (local Christianized Indians) were kept separate from secular activities and not allowed to work in the pueblos. This decision of the church was a source of tension between the Spanish military and the padres and continued to be a source of hostility until secularization (Castaneda 1990b; Rios-Bustamonte 1985).

The Missions, sites of disease and death, had a difficult time keeping their labor force alive and well enough to perform the duties they required. Among the baptized local Indians working the Mission fields, over two-thirds died during the years between 1769 and 1790 so recruitment of local Indians and laborers from Mexico was constant (Castillo 1989; Costo and Costo 1995; Silliman 2004). In 1773 Serra drew up a request for additional farmhands to be sent from northern Mexico. Serra also believed successful agricultural endeavors would attract the local Indians who he could then put to work, and asked that the *campesinos* (farmers) be recruited of their own free will rather than forced to come to Alta California as some others before. It was too difficult to control an unwilling labor force with the sparse military support available. He requested that these farm workers be sent with their families, that they might set the example of good family

life and attract Indians to the Missions (Mason 1998).

Of the first to be marched north in response to Serra's request was a group of ten Cochimi families and twelve unmarried Cochimi boys in June of 1773 (Street 2004). After leaving one family in San Diego, the others arrived in San Gabriel in October leaving six of the families and six of the boys. These people were put in charge of seventy-three local baptized Tongva (Gabrieleño) Indians and ordered to teach the native converts agriculture and domestic arts. The group of Cochimi and Tongva immediately began digging irrigation ditches, erecting brush dams, and planting corn, wheat and beans. The remaining expedition arrived in Monterey the following month. Groups such as this one discussed in Street were expensive and difficult to transport north, but they were viewed as a necessary component to settlement. Spaniards saw their Mexican Indian workforce as serving as liaisons with local natives, not only teaching them all of the necessary skills for a "civilized" life in service to Spain, but posing as examples of compliant, converted Indians. Imperial policy sought to Hispanicize the Indians as full Spanish subjects so that they could be the mainstay of the empire's frontier line of defense against other expansionary powers such as the English and Russians (Bolton 1968).

While most historic accounts discuss the assimilation of American Indians into Spanish culture, there are also a growing number of discussions of cross-cultural diffusion. *Campesinas* (women farmers/peasants) and *presidarias* (soldiers wives), discussed in Casteneda's (1990) work, utilized Indian medicinal plants and curatives. "The Indians knew the medicines and the foods of the region, so naturally my people learned from them...Mostly, I guess they just had to (Casteneda 1990b, 211)." Brooks

(2002) discussed knowledge sharing as the “interpenetration of cultures” when day-to-day survival required cross-cultural negotiation. Brooks (2002) suggests that the prolonged intensive interaction between *pobladores* and Indian societies required some mutually intelligible symbols through which cultural values, interests, and needs could be defined (Brooks 2002, 39).

In many cases the *campesinos* and the local Indians worked together, but historical accounts discuss the relationships between them as difficult due to language barriers (Jackson and Castillo 1995, Rios-Bustamonte 1985) and are often characterized by tension (Monroy 1990). There are also several discussions of the fear of attack at all Mission and pueblo settlements by local *gentile* or un-baptized Indians (Hackel 2005). An example of this tension is the well-documented 1785 Toypurina Revolt, wherein a young Tongva woman orchestrated an elaborate revolt against Mission San Gabriel. The revolt was thwarted by a loyal convert and never occurred. Toypurina was later exiled to Monterey away from her community and familiar environment where she would be less of a threat (Hackel 2003). Yet, some accounts also state that separated from their loved ones and subjected to miserable living conditions many of the *campesinos* and their families abandoned the settlements and tried to return to the south or fled to live among unbaptized local Indian groups (Phillips 2004).

For *campesinos* and soldiers that stayed and labored in service to Spain, the promise of land was partially fulfilled in 1787 with a formal transfer of land to some of the *pobladores* (settlers) and soldiers who fulfilled their terms of enlistment contract. Twenty-seven of these concessions were made during the Spanish period (Mason 1989). The catch was that those land allotments were for the purpose of grazing or farming only,

and tribute was still required to be paid to Spain. The lands allotted under Spain were not owned by the *campesinos*, merely borrowed and though they could be inherited the title remained with the Crown, much like Indian trust lands in the United States today (Robertson 2005).

The Pueblo Los Angeles near San Gabriel was the first local municipal government established in 1788. At that time the pueblo at Los Angeles was the largest settlement of *campesinos* in Alta California, a population of 650 *gente de razon* was recorded. During the period of 1769-1820 residents of northern Mexico were transported north to settle four presidios, two pueblos, and 12 Missions. By the end of the Spanish regime in 1821, the population of *campesinos* or *Californios* as they had become to call themselves, numbered about 1300 (Mason 1998, 17-44). Recruited mostly as families there were also 21 young orphans sent north to work as servants for presidio families and two groups of *reos-pobladores* (convict-colonists) in the years 1798 and 1799 when recruitment of colonist families became too difficult for Viceregal authorities (Bancroft 1888).

Another tactic to foster settlement of the northern frontier was the policy of *unidad domestica* (policy of domestic union). Under *unidad domestica* unmarried soldiers were encouraged to marry Indian women to establish alliances with Indian groups. Antonia Castaneda's (1990) work examines the correspondence between Priests and the Viceroy of New Spain to reveal aspects of frontier California life, especially among women. In *Presidarias and Pobladoras* she discusses Spain's use of intermarriage between soldiers and neophyte woman in efforts to create such alliances.

Low numbers of baptisms and a seeming distrust of the Native population were

generally explained (by priests) as a response to misdeeds and barbaric behavior of settlers and soldiers, those who were not under the control of the priests. In letter after letter appealing for money, the padres blamed soldiers for the failure of the Mission project. In addition to blaming the soldier/settlers for the lack of converts, an ultra-conservative worldview could also account for complaints of liaisons among soldiers and unconverted Indians (Hinton and Weigland 1987).

An isolated and little valued colonial possession of Spain, Alta California grew used to imperial neglect. Aside from a few priests and military men, few knew of the political strife in Mexico or Spain except that it had an impact on supply ships and overland access to Mexico.

The Mexican Wars of Independence began in 1810 when priest Miguel de Hidalgo published his famous outcry against the tyranny of Spain. Hidalgo, later tried by the Holy Office of the Inquisition, was found guilty of treason and executed by firing squad. These events set in motion the revolution that would lead to the independence of Mexico. Eleven years later, in 1821, the Treaty of Cordoba was signed by representatives of Spain and Mexico in agreement with the "*Plan de Iguala*." The plan included the widely accepted guarantees of religion (Roman Catholic), independence, and union which were to form the foundation of a constitutional monarchy, patterned after European monarchies of the time (Cutter and Engstrand 1996). Though Spain later declared the treaty void and tried unsuccessfully to re-conquer Mexico, an independent Mexico was born. By 1823 the Mexican Congress had disavowed the plan and the Treaty of Cordoba and in April of that year a constitutional convention was called that led to the 1824 constitution (Langum 1987). The Federal Constitution of the United Mexican States

guaranteed complete racial and political equality. Not only were Indians entitled to own property and enjoy full freedom as other citizens, they were allowed to vote and even to hold office. The policies of the Mexican constitution led to new policy for its distant territory of Alta California as well (Kicza 2000; Newson 1985).

As colonial rule ended, contested processes of nation-building began. Elites and popular groups struggled and at times fought to determine who would control the state and participate in national, regional, and local politics (Acuna 1996). By far the most troubling problem lawmakers faced in Alta California during those early years of independence was the secularization of the Missions, or more importantly who would profit from their lands and herds (Nunis, Garrigues, and Ward 1992; Nunis 2004). There was a rising criticism of the Missions for their amassed wealth and their treatment of the Indians, though these may have been the same privileges coveted by the anticlerical republicans (Chan and Olin 1997; Ochoa 2004). Padres argued that the Indians were not ready for secularization and Mexican lawmakers rebutted that the Missions had failed to accomplish this task in over a half-century and it was obviously an inherently defective system (McWilliams 1946).

Pre-secularization social hierarchies included colonial and governmental administrators, military officers, and Mission priests that formed the elite class; soldiers, ex-soldiers, civilian colonists, and their families made up the middle class; and the local Indians neophytes occupied the bottom of the social class hierarchy (Camarillo 1996; Sanchez 1995). After secularization, the top group was joined by a few merchants and Anglo businessmen who assimilated into Californio society to gain social and economic status. This upper echelon was minute in comparison to the larger sector of the

population located far below, who in the literature are often characterized as simply “Mestizo,” and are basically the community of ex-soldiers and colonists who had been granted small tracts of land for their service to the provincial government, and their local Indian relatives and neighbors (Cowan 1956). The social and political hierarchy based on systems of racial classification that had dominated southern New Spain, had yielded somewhat to categories of wealth and status in Alta California. Among the Californio/Mestizo population during the periods of Spanish and Mexican rule, social class was more permeable, with race and skin color less an identifier of status than wealth than it would come to be under Anglo-American rule (Nieto-Philips 2004).

During and after the Mission period the most substantial economic activity was cattle raising and the chief commercial market that of hides and tallow for export. The Californios hoped that secularization would move the center of production from the Missions to the pastoral economy of the local ranchos, and indeed secularization made the lands and herds available to settlers and therefore the fruits of that economy into the hands of the new landlords (McWilliams 1946). Alta California still enjoying its own brand of independence during the years following Mexican Independence, began to pay its loyal settler community members with large tracts of land, mostly the Mission lands. Only about thirty (Rios-Bustamante 1985) had received the promised land-grants under Spain, and Mexican independence marked a freedom from that control. During the Mexican period between 500 (Mason 1998) and 800 (Hackel 2003) land grants were awarded, mostly to those who had served under Spanish and provincial governments and had gone without pay, for years in some cases. Under the liberal Mexican colonization provisions of 1824 and 1828, the maximum legal limit was 11 square leagues or 50

thousand acres (76 square miles) per grant. It should be noted however that these vast land grants were not considered overly generous given that a dozen acres of grassland might be needed to pasture a single cow through the long, dry summers. “Mexican Land Grants” as they later became known, were given with a certain informality using hand-drawn maps measured without the aid of surveying equipment. This would later contribute to maddening confusion in efforts to verify land titles for American courts (Langum 1987).

With the new constitution came a series of laws beginning in 1824. The first was a congressional declaration that all Californians must sign an oath of allegiance to Mexico. Spanish priests flatly refused to sign and soldiers and settlers were reluctant. These early immigrants were disconnected in most cases from Mexico and in some cases were second and third generation Californians used to governing themselves. The new era produced an ambivalence toward Mexico and things Mexican, and the beginning of widespread use of the term “*Californio*” as a signifier of longtime residence in the northern region and a term used to declare difference from newly arriving Mexican nationals in terms of social and political orientation (Trevino 1989). Some of this ambivalence and desire to stand apart from new immigrants may have been due in part to a campaign imposed by the Mexican government to send its convicts from Sinaloa and Sonora (approximately 400 between 1825 and 1830) north to reinforce military forces.

They usually arrived in a state of wretchedness exceeded only by that of the Indians...” this state of affairs was disturbing to the more genteel settlers. Second generation Californians, although often themselves children of cholos (scoundrels), nevertheless treated the newcomers dismally (Pitt 1966 p).

In many cases this period of political upheaval must have signaled a weakness in local

authority to Mission Indians and presented them with an opportunity to change their worsening situation. In 1824 hundreds of Indian people fled to inland territories during and after the La Purisima Revolt, an armed rebellion of Indians at three Santa Barbara area Missions (Costo and Costo 1987; Sandos 1991).

Another break from Spanish influence was the 1827 Mexican Congress decree that all Spaniards under the age of 60 would be expelled. This law might explain the higher numbers of people who identify as “Mexican” in the censuses that followed. Not surprisingly, disproportionate numbers of *Espanoles*, in earlier census records (despite the fact that few Spaniards had arrived from Europe or elsewhere), gave way to larger numbers of “Mexicans” as a primary ethnic identifier (Mason 1998).

It was also during the Mexican period that a *compadrazgo* system of godparent relationships is first recorded in California. Practiced throughout Latin America, *compadrazgo* is a system of god-parenting that establishes kinship ties across racial and class boundaries and goes beyond religious significance. It is defined as a formalized web of mutual rights and obligations of monumental importance throughout Mexico and elsewhere, both in urban centers and rural communities, cutting across and permeating virtually all socio-economic strata (Hinton and Weigland 1981). One chooses who will be his or her lifetime *compadres*, the cornerstone of *compadrazgo*. In California these relationships were usually characterized by financial sponsorship by the upper class *padrino* or *madrina* and the repayment was loyalty and respect from the working class *pobladores* which included ex-Mission Indians (Montejano 1999). The *compadrazgo* system fostered community cohesiveness during the period before annexation that is noted by several scholars as playing a crucial role in the preservation of community ties

and “Mexican” culture after Anglo invasion (Brooks 2002; Voss 2005; Weber 1988, 1990).

Scholarship of this period that dates before the 1970s tends to view the Mexican period with the same contempt as the early Anglo settlers, making reference to the passing Spanish occupation as the “Golden age,” a mourning at the loss of a medieval clerical society considered a “high” period of civilization in contrast with the “decline” of California, which began with the arrival of the first Mexican Governor, Jose Maria Echeandia and his “proclamation of emancipation” in 1826. In *Decline of the Californios*, Leonard Pitt (1966) discussed the fall of Californio leadership as an obvious fate, defining their goals and naive methods of government as “tragicomic” (cited in Rawls and Bean 1993, 53). Recent work in contrast, recognizes the strengths of the Mexican period, especially in terms of its informal, familial, community-based system that served the economic and social needs of the isolated, agrarian society (Deverell 2004; Nieto-Philips 2004).

Often characterized in terms of feudal life and Californios at the crest of this system, the early settler population was not entirely the *haciendados* or land-owning upper class. Estimates suggest that only 20-40 families occupied upper strata of the social hierarchy (Deverell 2004). The other, less affluent families are virtually invisible in the historic record, though they were the bulk of the Mexican period population.

Anglo-American Invasion: Legislating Minority Status

After Mexico gained independence from Spain at the end of its war of independence in 1821, weakened and virtually bankrupt from the war, the new

government found it difficult to govern northern territories thousands of miles from its capitol in Mexico City. Never a strong provincial government, Mexico lost Alta California to the United States during the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848, which ended with the signing the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (Osio 1996).

At the time of the treaty, approximately 80,000 Mexicans lived in the ceded territory, which comprised about 4 percent of Mexico's population. Only a few people chose to remain Mexican citizens compared to the many that became United States citizens. Most of the 80,000 residents continued to live in California and the Southwest, believing in the guarantee that their property and civil rights would be protected. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was largely dictated by the US to the government of Mexico. The treaty provided for the cession of about 1.36 million km (525,000 square miles) of Mexican lands to the United States in exchange for 15 million dollars and the ensured safety of pre-existing property rights of Mexican citizens in the transferred territories. The latter of which the United States in a significant number of cases failed to honor (McWilliams 1946; Osio 1996). By the end of the 19th century, most Mexicans had lost their land, either through force or fraud (Langum 1987; Pitt 1966; Sanchez 1995).

After the Mexican-American War, California was admitted into the union but was denied major benefits that other states enjoyed, including the failure to extend a federal land system to California and to survey the lands before settlers swarmed in. The people who arrived in California brought with them the idea that they could enter public lands, make improvements, develop a farm and eventually acquire ownership free or at a modest price. Land seekers in California, denied the free grants that settlers in

Washington and Oregon received, found it difficult to believe that 500 individuals (Californios) would be permitted to monopolize close to twenty million acres without improving or “utilizing” them (Umbeck 1981). Pressure to free up lands for settlement motivated American lawmakers to find a quick solution to dealing with thousands of land claims, some of which were fraudulent. They soon adopted a policy that would put the burden of authorizing or rejecting land claims in the hands of the district courts (McWilliams 1969; Robinson 1981).

The Federal Land Claim Act of 1851 appointed a three member commission chosen by the president. While historians claim it was intended to secure fair treatment of Mexicans’ land claims, the bill did the opposite. Since either side could appeal a court decision, the process of protecting one’s land became very expensive. In essence, only the wealthy ranchers could afford the lengthy legal process. Many of the people with legitimate claims to land went bankrupt under the tremendous legal costs. Often, the land fell into the hands of the claimants’ lawyers who acquired the land as payment for their fees. Mexicans’ hopes of equality under the California Land Claims Act were quashed. Moreover, landowners became the victims of Anglo-American squatters who would take their lands piece by piece through violent means. In addition, regions with the largest Mexican American populations were taxed more than any other regions in the state (Robinson 1981).

During the spring and summer of 1849 vigilante groups expelled “Mexicans”—though many were long-time residents of California—from the northern mines. The new white immigrant hoards lynched and gunned down hundreds of Sonorans and Californios who also sought to mine in the northern region. The first California Assembly meeting in

1849 and 1850 asked congress to bar all foreigners from the mines, including the Californios, who were naturalized citizens (Holliday 1981). The Foreign Miners' Tax of 1850, a \$20 monthly fee for the right to mine, was applied not only to foreign immigrants but also to “Mexicans” born in California. A rapid influx of Anglo-Americans rendered Mexican Americans politically powerless. The Spanish-speaking population fell from 15 percent in 1850 to four percent in 1870. Californios, Mexicans (newly arrived from Sonora) and Indians in California were quickly reduced to second-class citizenship based on race (Gonzalez 2005).

California's Indenture Act of 1850 established a form of legal slavery for Indians. The state anti-vagrancy act of 1855, popularly known as the Greaser Law, restricted the movement of Californians of Mexican descent. Called “blatantly anti-Mexican” (Wollenburg 1970), another 1855 statute that negated the constitutional requirement that laws be translated into Spanish, making it difficult for even long-time Californians to protect themselves in any legal sense (Bender 2003).

The Californios suffered a massive loss of land during these years. The legislature placed the heaviest tax burden on land, which put great financial pressure on Californio ranchers. To worsen matters for ranching families, torrential flooding during the winter of 1862 was followed by a two-year drought that killed thousands of cattle in southern California, pushing many Californio ranchers deeply in debt. When Anglo-American bankers and merchants foreclosed on the property, many ranchers were reduced to subsistence farming and service jobs for the Anglos that had appropriated their lands (McWilliams 1939).

By 1870 the prosperous rancho economy had been supplanted with one based on

American capital and Californios returned to the (perhaps unfamiliar) socioeconomic status of their grandfathers. A clear denial of brown heritage, whether local Indian or ‘Mexican’ settler, can be seen in the testimonials of Californio and Californio descendants, gathered in the late 19th century by Bancroft and his employees (Genini and Hitchman 1985). Eulalia Perez, a Californio born at the Presidio in Loreto Mexico who worked at Mission San Gabriel until her death, was interviewed by Thomas Savage in 1877. She stated that her parents were “both white people through and through” (Beebe and Senkewicz 2006, 99). Also determined to be identified as white was Juana Machado, who like Perez insisted that her parents were pure white, though her ties to Luis Quintero and Maria Petra Rubio means she was of African and Mayo Indian heritage (Los Pobladores archives). Others in Rosaura Sanchez’s (1995) collection of testimonies attempt to assert an identity that set them apart from the oppressed.

The Helen Hunt Jackson and Abbott Kinney Report of 1883 (published in 1950) chronicled little distinction between “local” Indians and Californios as people displaced by white settlers. Lands they say, “...in many instances have been in continuous occupation and cultivation by their ancestors for over 100 years (Jackson and Kinney 1950, 4).” In their view poor, landless, people of mixed origins were again displaced, this time by newcomers from the East. From their 1883 report:

the responsibility for this wrong rests, perhaps, equally divided between the US government, which permitted lands thus occupied by peaceful agricultural communities to be put “in market” and the white men who were not restrained either by humanity or by a sense of justice from filing homestead claims on lands which had been fenced, irrigated, tilled and lived on by Indians for many generations (Jackson and Kinney 1950, 4).

From 1870 to 1890, legislated discrimination based on racial and ethnic qualifiers was the

norm and, in case after case, the privilege of lighter skin color won in battles over land and resources (Bender 2003). In fact, legislators until the progressive era treated Indians and Mexicans largely the same. The progressive era, which spans 1890-1920, marks a change in how American Indians were viewed by “Americans” and how they were treated legislatively. Interestingly, in 1924, the same point that federal legislation acknowledged American Indians as citizens and granted them the right to vote, the U.S. began denying Mexicans access to the U.S. with the establishment of the Mexican Border patrol (Werne 2007). Thus began a new era in distinguishing Native peoples of the north from those with origins in the south—regardless of their cultural affiliation and familial ties (see Figure 9).



Figure 9: Californio/Mexican Family “Visiting Gabrieleño Relatives” (Rios-Buastamonte 1989).

The U.S.-Mexico border to that point had been crossed at will in both directions by members of numerous border-straddling tribes such as the Apache, Kumeyaay, and Yaqui, as well as extended kin of the early settler Californio families. Further research is needed to substantiate this claim, but this may be the point that Indian/mixed heritage communities in California began to choose to identify with their local Native roots and deny their “Mexican” ones. While some groups continued to celebrate Mexican identity in Anglo-sponsored “fiestas”, others began to deny their ties to people on the other side of the political border. Ironically, though much of the roots to the place called Mexico are Indian ones, racism against “Mexicans” has become a very common trend among “American” Indians.

Anti-Mexican sentiment is pervasive in southern California today. My interviews and experience in a mixed heritage (Indian/Mexican) community suggest that this internalized racism may be due, at least in part, to a fear that one’s Indianness will be questioned if they acknowledge Mexican ancestry and identify as Chicano, Californio, or Mestizo. In many cases, when asked, respondents claimed they were Native American and Spaniard, and sometimes Basque, as a way to deny their southern roots. I have explored this to some extent in chapter six, as the issues relate to sovereignty, identity gate-keeping, and revitalization on the Central Coast of California, but only briefly.

Identity in mixed heritage, Indian communities is an enormous and contentious issue. Scholars such as Eva Marie Garrouette (2001, 2003), Bonita Lawrence (2004), and Claudio Saunt (2005) are grappling with such issues and I have only touched upon them here. Often denied humanity in public representations early “Mexican” settlers are

portrayed as faceless agents of Spain and as a people without history prior to their arrival in Alta California. So denied or forgotten are the links to Mexico, that even many descendants of those early settlers are unaware of their ties to the southern regions of North America.

Conclusions

Through the early history of Alta California we can observe how the trend to deny indigeneity was motivated by colonial law and the Sistema de Castas in New Spain. The tendency persisted through the Mexican Period as the early settlers tried to assert privilege (especially over newly-arriving Mexican nationals) based on their service and loyalty in the settling of California. The distinctions between local Indians and *campesinos* or working class Californios became undetectable in many cases. After annexation by the United States, Californians felt an even greater pressure to be anything but Indian/Mexican and strategies of caste identification and ethnic passing that had worked under the two prior regimes were ineffective under Anglo-American policy. In Anglo California privilege was based much more on *race* than on social class, ethnicity, community, or culture and, with the exception of a very few, Californios were perceived as simply *brown*.

In other areas indigenous people drawn into webs of globalization and empire building were able to maintain their identities as Indian, their ties to their communities and the use of their Native languages, etc. while serving as agents or employees of colonial governments other than Spain (Kicza 2003). These people utilized the advantage of newly acquired skills and language to exercise covert forms of resistance while

maintaining ties to their homelands and communities (Mancall and Merrell 2000). In contrast to areas more heavily populated in New Spain, such as Oaxaca and Chiapas where Native peoples maintained a stronghold of culture and resisted absorption into the dominant culture of the state, Californios, were relocated a thousand miles north of their homelands and families, and when discarded by Spain and later also by Mexico, they were without ties to the places, languages and cultures of their ancestors. Later, because “Mexicans” in America have always had their history told by Anglo elites, they are considered—from the period of colonization onward—as “merely” Mexican. In other areas individual Aleuts, Hawaiians, Pawnees, and others were considered Indian scouts, traders, employees and, whether or not citizens of the colonizing body, they were able to maintain distinction as indigenous (Thomas 1991). The early settlers to Alta California, sometimes under painful conditions, surrendered their tribal identities, at least in print, for promises of a better life.

Laws that excluded all non-white Californians from access to land and resources dissolved most economic and social stratification that had existed between local Indians and Californios. Today, mixed heritage descendant communities with indigenous ties to the west coast of North America remain inextricably bound together in their struggle to remain in the homelands of their ancestors, now the site of some of the most expensive real estate in the United States. These mixed heritage people, with a very complicated past, now comprise the Native American community of the Central Coast of California.

Through my own genealogical research over the past four years, I have discovered more ties to Mexico and these *Californios*, than I expected. My family has always identified as Chumash, as Native American. In fact, discussions about Mexican

heritage made two of my close relatives somewhat uncomfortable, and each insisted that “we are California Indian, *period*.” As I uncovered this history, however, I began to understand how much of this Californio or Mexican story has been denied, even among the descendant community. One ancestor, Luis Quintero, had an especially interesting story. This man, the son of an African slave father and a Mayo Indian mother was among the first settlers, his family among the first 44 *pobladores*. He and his wife Maria Petra and their eight children did not come north because they were promised a small tract of land to farm and supplies to work it. Three of Luis and Maria Petra’s daughters were married to soldiers, all within their last 48 hours at Loreto. The Quinteros were the last to enlist in this expedition, and it is assumed by scholars that their decision to relocate was perhaps to stay close to their young, newly-married girls (Vo and Schmal 2008). My 6th generation, great grandmother, Maria Juana Josefa, was 18 when she she married soldier Jose Rosalino Fernandez. The 44 settlers and their military escort left Alamos, for Alta California on February 2, 1781 arriving at the San Gabriel Mission on August 18, 1781, after a journey of six-and-a-half months and 960 miles (Robinson 1981).

The records indicate that the Quintero family moved to Ventura to help establish the Mission San Buenaventura in 1782 and later to Santa Barbara where their daughters lived and were married to soldiers of the presidio. It is known that Luis Quintero lived the remaining twenty-eight years of his life as a respectable member of the budding Santa Barbara community, serving as the *maestro sastre* (master tailor) for the soldiers at the presidio. Maria Petra died in 1802 and Luis in 1810 (Northrop 1993).

This story exemplifies my own ties to the settler population. Descendants of these and other Californios that lived humbly and intermarried with the local Indians make up a

good portion of the community that today identify as California Indian, Chumash, Ohlone, and Salinan. This is certainly true of my family, yet in my family too, these stories were forgotten or denied. For many people who identify as American Indian in southern and central California, these stories were intentionally or unintentionally forgotten when Native identities began to be asserted. Some of the pressures to do so are discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

SCRIPTING A FANTASY HISTORY: THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS IN SHAPING
MEMORY

The history of visual representations of the “other” is long and well documented. Museums for centuries have controlled the gaze of the public, conveying a colonial message that has inadvertently furthered the oppression of indigenous groups (see Ames 1992; Arnold, Davies, and Ditchfield 1998; Bennett 1995; Stocking 1985). Volumes have been written too about how these public depictions serve to define memory for the average person (see Connerton 1989; Eber and Neal 200; Irwin-Zarecka 1994; Trouillot 1995). Today, though messages are typically more subtle, the control of education still generally remains in the hands of the dominant class/ethnic group. In fact, discursive frameworks can be observed and “decoded” in any ethnographic museum about the society doing the representing. Holdovers from Pitt Rivers classificatory system of displaying artifacts in an “evolutionary” way to highlight the “rise of civilization” through the increased complexity in objects, for example, were designed to help Victorians understand the process of social evolution and to place their society at its pinnacle. Similar schemes can still be seen in many mainstream American facilities. In this way museums continue to define the world for us (Crane 2000; Hooper-Greenhill

1992).

The modern museum traces its roots to the enlightenment period. Scholars have cited three technologies of power in maps, census, and museums as particularly influential on the modern period (Hallam and Street 2000). The map has been used as a metaphor for the museum as a system of ordering and classifying that shares many of the cultural and epistemological functions of geographical maps.

Through the apparently neutral process and technical process of mapping, specific world pictures are constructed and that constructed picture is understood as reality...unfamiliar territory was both made familiar and claimed through the giving of names that place the land within a known schemata (Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 17).

The museum, says Bennett (1995), is designed to turn its visitor into a “virtual witness” to history which essentially requires a map to navigate its terrain. Bennett says that methods of detective fiction are employed by museums to reconstruct “the crime” on the basis of remnants and that narratives told in history venues are basically governed by the art of this backward construction. This process is essentially a “...machinery of detective fiction, which is constantly backward glancing as it infers causes from their effects and makes visible the crime and its perpetrators from the traces he or she left behind, all the while moving the reader (visitor) forward in time and space” (Bennett 199, 178). The narrative assigns the visitor a place and identity as a progressive, evolved, subject in the ongoing advancement of humankind, which in its nature, instantiates the ideology of progress. Museums historically and still today, construct meaning about and for “others” and do so in very predictable ways. Dominant identity (MacDonald and Fyfe 1996) and racial (Littler and Naidoo 2005) discourses are imbedded in such progress-oriented museum representations.

Museums on California's Central Coast construct historic narratives that depict local Native communities through the use of materials that belonged to them and documents such as historic photographs and drawings. In so doing, these facilities codify certain stories as "truths". One such truth, for example, is the portrayal of ethnic and cultural isolation between groups of Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, and "Americans". In fact, almost all history venues on the Central Coast employ a progress narrative charting these racialized regimes of occupation through time, ending with the pinnacle of progress, the Anglo-American. Contrary to this accepted "vacuum packed" formula, my research within the Central Coast Indian community has revealed a much more complex and interesting story.

According to Arturo Escobar, "setting the world as a static picture" dates back to the World Expositions. These venues allowed the modern (European) person to experience life as if they were set apart from the physical world. The expositions "enframed external reality in order to make sense of it, using European categories, and what emerged was a regime of objectivism (Escobar 1995, 7)." This strategy eliminates the presence of the Euro-observer as well as universalizes and homogenizes representations of the past in an ahistorical fashion. The strategy also puts subject peoples on display as a form of surveillance. This colonial discourse apparatus reached its pinnacle through the years 1945-1955 and these "imaginative geographies" or the social production of space implicit on these terms is bound within the production of differences, subjectivities, and social orders (Said 1979).

Like many others caught in a system of othering (MacCannell 1976; Norkunas 1993), some individuals have begun to shape their cultural identities according to what

they believe is expected of them. This phenomenon can be observed among Native people of the Central Coast where histories have been constructed and codified within realms outside of their control. This issue is compounded by museum stereotyping, where certain representations that have become dominant shape indelibly the ways in which reality is imagined and acted upon, where a certain order of discourse produces permissible modes of being and thinking while disqualifying and even making others impossible (Foucault 1979, 3-13).

Building upon these themes, visual culture theory examines the relationships between what is made visible, for and by whom it is created, and how seeing, knowing and power are interrelated. Its premise is that cultural symbols have the power to shape cultural identities at both individual and social levels; to mobilize emotions, perceptions and values; to influence the way we feel and think (Falk and Dierking 1992, 2000). Visual culture as a set of signifying practices plays an important role in constructing society through the images it creates, managing social possibilities through the stories it tells of social achievement. Museums are deeply involved in constructing knowledge in this way. Through the use of objects of art and material culture they define people and narrate their histories for public consumption (Hooper-Greenhill 2000).

Many museum scholars recognize that the history that has become the knowledge or ideology of nationhood is simply what has been selected, preserved and popularized in popular memory rather than any universal truth (Norkunas 1993). In many instances the research and community work needed to address such vagaries and inaccuracies has not occurred. Many California museums provide a cogent example of the disconnection between scholarship and practice, including a deeply imbedded attachment to nostalgia

and a fantasy Spanish heritage.

History of Museums in California

Southern California's golden age offered a comforting past for Anglos, but Anglos did not inherit this past; they produced it. Regional history contained no tranquil memory. The romantic version of history may have not been completely fabricated, but it still required interpretive work that smoothed out conquest, genocide, and war, as well as race, class, and religious conflict (Kropp 2006, 5).

By the late 1880s thousands of Anglo settlers were arriving in California on pilgrimages to discover the romance of a place Helen Hunt Jackson's novel *Ramona* had instilled in them (DeLyser 2005). The novel, Jackson had hoped, would bring attention to the abysmal conditions suffered by southern California Indians which she discussed in detail for that purpose. Instead the book conjured images of an "Old West" that attracted thousands seeking refuge from modernity. Certain that Jackson's romantic story was based in reality, tourists flocked to sites they imagined were the home of Ramona's youth, the place of her marriage to Indian husband Alessandro and even where the heroine Ramona was buried. Some Indian women in the area were designated as the "real" Ramona and hounded for photos and autographs, as women such as Cahuilla Tribal member Ramona Lubo (see Figure 10) was until her death in 1933 (DeLyser 2005).

Between the end of World War I and the Progressive Era¹ a hunger for

¹ The Progressive Era is defined as a period of reform which lasted from the 1890s to the 1930s. Responding to the vast changes brought about by industrialization, Progressives advocated a wide range of economic, political, social, and moral reforms. Initially the movement was successful at local level, and then it progressed to state and gradually national. Both the reformers and their opponents were predominantly members of the middle class.



Figure 10: Cahuilla Tribal Member, Ramona Lubo (DeLyser 2005).

nostalgia—a pre-modern and simpler time—generated a movement to officially recognize historical sites as boosters worked to promote this romantic Spanish past. The campaign began in Los Angeles in 1895 with the formation of the Landmarks Club under the leadership of Charles Lummis. The Landmarks Club was dedicated to the preservation of historical sites throughout California, starting with the Spanish Missions. This group further sought to place in appropriate places memorial tablets commemorative of historic places and events (Forbes 1925). The Natural Resources director delegated the California State Chamber of Commerce to administer the program and the chamber formed a committee to evaluate potential sites. The committee included some of the most prestigious (wealthy Anglo) historians of the time. The first 20 landmarks were officially

designated on June 1, 1932. The emphasis was on well-known places and events in California history, especially Missions, early settlements, battles, and the gold rush. By the end of the program's first year, a total of 78 historical landmarks had been registered. Many early markers were placed through the efforts of such groups as the Native Sons of the Golden West, Native Daughters of the Golden West, and Daughters of the American Revolution. These and other historically motivated organizations carried on a marking program until 1948 (Starr 1985).

Much work has been done to chronicle and de-mythologize this romanticized Spanish past, beginning with the early work of Carey McWilliams (1943, 1946), who critically examined trends in tourism and growth in southern California and the dishonest mythmaking employed to attract people to the region. Phoebe Kropp's *California Vieja* discusses the lure of El Camino Real the "royal road" that linked California's 21 Missions (separated by a day's ride, according to myth) which was fervently promoted by the tourist industry and early land development corporations through the 1950s. Sites along El Camino Real, in addition to the Missions were mythological places of Ramona lore and included Olvera Street, the heart of the first city or *pueblo* of California, Los Angeles. The construction of ideas that rooted this place in an exotic, European past, made southern and central California one of the most popular tourist and later, settlement destinations in the U.S. In California as elsewhere, "misrepresentations help keep us ignorant as a people, less able to understand what really happened in the past, and less able to apply our understanding to issues facing the United States today" (Loewen 1999, 19).

Mission as Museum

This booster era during the early decades of the 20th century saw many of the Franciscan Missions restored as “historical” tourist sites. They stand now as pastiches of 19th-century Missions with adjoining shops selling postcards and gifts. The few reconstructed rooms with staged effects of Mission life, open to public view are cordoned off, a Mission spectacle in the form of congealed space that one can examine from a distance. Unreconstructed or concealed are the forbidden places, like the *monjerios* where the neophyte women were locked up at night. Elizabeth Kryder-Reid (2003, 37) encourages us to “see behind and beyond the simulacrum,” to see the ways the discursive constructions are echoed in the Mission museum.

Of the 21 Missions all but one, Mission San Rafael, has a museum or exhibit space devoted to the telling of Mission history. All the Missions have been restored to some extent. Some have been rebuilt or replicated almost entirely and others remain in desperate need of foundational and architectural restoration due to years of decay. Most Missions and their gardens were restored between the late 1920s through the early 1950s, some as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps program². More than half were restored and renovated between 1920 and 1935—not coincidentally between the end of WWI and the Progressive Era.

Anyone who has completed the 4th grade in a California school knows that the most memorable cultural icon of the state is the California Missions. Whether they made

² The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a work relief program for young men from unemployed families, established on March 21, 1933, by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt. As part of Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, it was designed to combat unemployment during the Great Depression.

a model of one of the Missions with sugar cubes for a class assignment or visited one of the Franciscan foundations and completed a “Mission fact sheet” they are familiar with the life of Junípero Serra and the Spanish influence on Alta California. In fact, images of these Missions were a primary factor in attracting large numbers of Americans to California between 1890 and 1940 (Toomey 2001). They gave rise to their own modern architectural traditions in numerous railway stations, public buildings, and private homes and in 1920 the City of Santa Barbara began to require that new development follow the Spanish model (DeLyser 2005; McWilliams 1946; Rios-Bustamonte 1985).

Mission museums tell the history of colonization from the perspective of the Catholic Church or parishioner in seventeen of the twenty venues. Proud of the heritage of the Church and somewhat blinded to its complicity in genocide, in most Mission museums (all those still owned and operated by the local diocese) staff and docents perpetuate the benevolent and beneficial nature of the Spanish Mission project (see Williams and Davis 2004a, 2004b). At the four sites owned and operated (at least partially) by the California State Parks system (La Purisima and Sonoma are State Parks, Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista are partially operated by California State Parks), interpretations are primarily derived from scholarly historical literature and a more accurate and balanced portrayal of colonization is presented. While interpretation varies depending on the controlling entity, the sites remain deeply problematic for many reasons discussed in the following chapter.

Science and History Venues

In Bennett’s discussion of the origins of different museum genres, he says natural

history and anthropology museums meet on the common ground that is “man” (Bennett 1995). The former, Bennett says, deals with humans and their relations to animals and the latter of humans and their relations to other humans. Anthropological and natural history museums typically focus on the “science” of a “pre-contact” past using archaeological materials and dioramas to tell their stories. Local and regional history venues rely more on written archival and ethnohistoric documents to flesh out their narratives.

Epistemologies for science and history venues, while less controversial than those of the inextricably religious influences seen in the Mission museums, clearly have had their own forms of social and political influence. These influences and even motivations behind certain perspectives are less transparent. For instance, one transparent strategy in natural history or science museums is to alienate people (other than pre-contact Native Americans) from nature. Similarly, the tendency in history venues is to employ a rhetorical strategy of disassociating soldier/settlers from their families and communities, as well as their ethnic origins. In only a few cases are Native American and African origins of this population discussed and never are they portrayed as families with ties to elsewhere.

Regional and local history venues, specifically, highlight “American” settlement in a variety of ways. Since many exhibits at these venues are collections driven and collections are donated from wealthy local people, the narrative at these facilities follows an obvious pattern. Furniture, art, and household items illustrate the daily life of the White settler family. If discussed at all, Mexicans and Indians are relegated to the background of the story, and depicted as servants without individual agency and family lives of their own. Messages of national pride and the privileging of a fatalistic narrative

which culminates in the subjugation of Indians and Mexicans, for instance, are abundant in regional history venues. Constructions of these authoritative versions of history confine people within them, predisposing them to a future based on these artificial pasts--historic truths which define who are the Indians and Mexicans, their origins, and their apparently minimal roles in the building of California.

State Indian Museum: Alternative Narrative?

An alternative to these dominant narratives has been envisioned for the State Indian Museum. Founded in 1941, one of the most active booster organizations, the Native Daughters of the Golden West (NDGW) established a California Indian Museum to house the State's enormous collection of California Indian artifacts and to tell the history of California's "noble indigenes" (State Indian Museum Plan, 1941). It is unclear what occurred next, but efforts began only twenty years later to expand the small venue which sits literally in the shadow of Sutter's Fort, a site of early settlement, notorious for Indian labor exploitation.

To assess the needs for a modern facility, in 1960 the Department of Parks and Recreation conducted a study to address requirements for housing the collection and interpreting the Indian past. Early in the 1970s the Department of Parks recruited an Indian woman to lead these efforts, a Hupa woman named Vivian Hailstone. Her vision was to create a facility that would tell the story, for the first time, from a Native perspective. Efforts led by her, but under the auspices of the State Parks Department were successful and she and a group of determined Indian people were able to raise 6 million dollars for the project.

With this start-up money in mind, the Department of Parks and Recreation created an Indian Task Force to make recommendations for the development of the new facility. In 1977 the task force decided on a site and drafted an architectural plan for the proposed museum. The progress from this point appears in the record to have been arduously slow. Little progress, in fact, is recorded between the choosing of the site in 1977, and the consideration of four other sites that occurred in 1984. There was another gap until 1991 when a report was commissioned by the Department of Parks and Recreation to determine the wants and needs of California's Native people. The report was drawn from a brainstorming meeting held in Sacramento, as well as several meetings around the state (see Appendix B), and written comments accumulated through questionnaire data (see Appendix C). All these data were analyzed and included in the State Indian Museum Study document. The 1991 report established the initial plan for the California Indian Museum (CIM) system which would (hypothetically) consist of one central museum and several regional museums (see Appendix D). The survey concluded:

...a new California State Indian Museum should be created within the Resources Agency for the purpose of acquiring, recording, preserving, protecting, studying, developing, interpreting, and exhibiting information of outstanding importance on the history, cultural heritage, and contemporary lifestyles of California Indians (SB 2063, chapter 290).

The study also concluded that California Indian people should be included in every aspect of the development of the California Indian Museum plan, and in 1992 a feasibility study was conducted, along with another involving 11 public meetings and the broad mailing of a questionnaire. The 1992 study determined (yet again) that the existing State Indian Museum at Sutter's Fort was far too small to interpret the diversity that

exists among California Indian peoples and could not contain the tens of thousands of artifacts held in the collection.

What occurred next created a great deal of lasting mistrust among the California Indian community about the direction of their efforts to establish a new Indian museum. It seems the money earmarked for the State Indian Museum was put into a general cultural interpretation fund. This fund is also used for maintenance costs incurred by cultural interpretation sites including operational costs and repairs. Work at the State Railroad Museum was prioritized ahead of planning efforts for the Indian museum. One California Indian and National Parks employee summarized these events as follows:

California State Parks should have earmarked the funds for the State Indian Museum and instead put it into a general museum fund. Then, without consulting the California Indian community transferred that money to the railroad museum, hoping that some bond money or something would come through to replace it. (National Parks employee and member of the California Indian community, 2/2007)

A State Parks representative said that “it is common to hear people say that the Railroad Museum stole the Indian Museum money, but it’s much more complicated than that (interview 1/2007).” Although bureaucratic decisions are always complicated, especially to outsiders, what the Indian community experienced was a major blow to their dream of interpreting their own cultures.

State Parks and a new Indian Task Force went to the legislature in 2003, and won another 6 million dollars to resume planning for the State Indian Museum with the passage of SB 2063. The proposed museum known today as the California Indian Heritage Center (CIHC) has determined a site for the facility in west Sacramento. Hopes are high once again for the possibilities that exist for telling a California Indian history

from a Native perspective. At this facility, the public will learn about the diversity of cultures that exist in California, pre- and post-contact, with an emphasis on revitalization and resurgence but not avoiding the devastation and loss that occurred during three waves of colonial oppression. The facility has plans for an extensive archive and library to aid tribes with language restoration, contemporary art galleries to showcase new Native artists, ceremonial spaces and dance areas for gatherings. The planners are hopeful that the venue will be a place where the scholarly and Native communities can come together and share knowledge about the vast collections held there. It is seen by some as a panacea for the interpretation of California Indian life and cultures.

For others, however, there are concerns. The central location is seen by some as catering to tourism and business rather than the Indian community. Many people feel that their stories should be told regionally, as the 1991 study revealed was the desire of the Indian people, and that regional museums could serve communities more effectively than a distant museum/repository/library/archive that is out of reach for most Tribal members. And some fear that, like the National Museum of the American Indian, a state Indian museum in Sacramento may be nothing more than a public face at the capital, as a symbol of the “paternalistic relationship between the State and its Indians (interview Native community member 2/2007).”

A splinter group formed after the Railroad Museum fiasco creating the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center (CIMCC). This facility in Santa Rosa serves more as headquarters for the dissemination of information on California Indian people and the headquarters for the Indian Justice Center, than it does as a public museum, such as the CIHC envisions. A staff member at the (CIMCC) stated:

We see ourselves not as a resource based facility, but a museum without walls. In fact the word museum doesn't encompass all that we can and will do. Our perspective is the California Indian history needs to be told from a Native perspective in order to be truthful...and in order for the public to have a real understanding of the impacts that colonization has had on our communities. Unless you hear it from the individuals themselves, you'll never truly understand the emotions and feelings of the people who experienced it. Though the State may be attempting to do this, they are doing it from a top down way through a bureaucracy. Also, our focus is on the collective issues, we don't think it's our job to try to interpret Luiseno or Pomo culture, but what we as California Indians experienced together. In that way we see ourselves as a catalyst for tribes to develop their own institutions (interview 8/2007).

The vision of the CIMCC is more closely related to the goals stated in the 1991 report.

These goals, especially in terms of a localized telling of tribal histories are at the heart of the larger community's needs in an Indian museum. The CIMCC sees itself more as an advocate for tribes in this process. And while this organization appears more closely tied to the needs of the Indian community, the funds have gone to State Parks. And, as with any fledgling organization, money continues to be an issue for the development of the CIMCC.

In response to the regional plan, the CIHC in Sacramento has a vision to pattern itself after the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). One of the many services the NMAI provides is aid to tribes desiring to establish their own local museum facilities. Teams of NMAI staff travel to reservations and lead symposia for planning and development. They help tribes with materials (on loan) and skills to start their own tribal museums. State Parks envisions itself in such a role. Some members of the community fear, however that the job of developing its massive presence in Sacramento will leave little time and resources for helping communities on a regional level and that the regional plan will be forgotten in the shadow of the big Indian Museum.

Some say there is not room for both the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center, an Indian run organization, and the California Indian Heritage Center, operated by California State Parks because funds available for such projects are limited and they would continue to compete against one another for financial resources. Perhaps neither of these groups will ever address the regional museum goal—but somebody must. The 1991 study, which included hundreds of Indian voices, as well as my 18 interviews with California Indian people reaffirm this need, again and again. Especially in areas that do not have federally-recognized tribes and lack the potential for a tribal museum, people want a venue to tell their stories.

Conclusions

Though the critiques discussed in the introduction to this chapter led to wider involvement of Native people in the telling of their stories through tribal museums (see Gulliford 2000) and the National Museum of the American Indian, mainstream museums continue to contribute to the invisibility of contemporary Indians in several ways including depicting Indians primarily in the past (Simpson 2001).

While most museums conduct research to determine how best to serve their various “publics” (see for example Barker 1999; Chadwick and Stannett 1995; Edson 1997), the overall trend in California is to ignore an Indian public. Both in their visual representations of history as well in their mission statements, institutions continue to overlook this component of the population—which inadvertently disregards the fact that significant percentage of their constituency is living Indian people. In the four county region of my study, there are 40,000 people who identify as American Indian and another

70,000 that identify as American Indian/Mexican American. Many Californians, it seems, prefer that Indians and Mexicans remain sequestered in a romantic past, far from their modern reality rather than accept that they are the family next door. The next two chapters examine some of those most common representation problems.

CHAPTER V
NOSTALGIA AS EPISTEMOLOGY:
MISSION MUSEUM REPRESENTATIONS

“Nostalgia is a unique way of knowing that valorizes certain positive aspects of the past, endowing them with importance as truths (Levin 2007, 93).” In the realm of nostalgia building, worldviews and events that do not fit are ignored in favor of narratives that privilege the past and gesture at a happier, halcyon time. In this way nostalgia functions as a theory of knowledge and structures the way that knowledge will be imparted in the museum setting. California Missions are icons for this type of nostalgia. Aided by Helen Hunt Jackson’s popular 1884 novel, *Ramona*, where “grateful Indians, happy as peasants in an Italian opera, knelt dutifully before the Franciscans to receive the baptism of a superior culture,” Missions became sites for the “Spanish Fantasy Heritage” discussed in the work of Carey McWilliams (1939, 1946). Southern California and its Missions “provided national landmarks of the highest appeal” (Kropp 2006, 49). Ironically, these sites that attract thousands of tourists every year are the sites of death and cultural devastation endured by Native Californians. The first of many destructive

blows to the fabric of Indian life and cultures in California was the Spanish Mission project. It was so destructive perhaps, due to Spain's plan to obliterate Indian lifeways to effectively harness a labor force in service to the Crown. Today, 19 of the 21 Spanish Missions tell the story of California Indian life, cultures, and the colonization of Alta California. Providing the foundation of Native and colonial history for California's fourth graders, Mission museums are central to education in the state.

Racialized regimes of representation erase or radically minimize slavery and abuses of Native people, framing them as the faceless workforce necessary to the inevitable progress of European civilization. This "social forgetting" contributes to a the contemporary dilemma of non-federal recognition where state and federal governments ignore the rights of descendant, mixed heritage communities of this region, the people who live daily within the cultural production of memory and identity constructed in part by Mission museums.

As I discussed in Chapter I, the historic erasure of Indians in this region has led to the neglect of Indian communities in regard to sovereignty and the retention of land rights. As I outlined in the previous two chapters, the relegation of Indians and others to obscure margins of public history, denies descendant communities a presence on the landscape, both theoretical and literal.

Methods

I collected and analyzed video and audio recordings, made personal observations, and took approximately 1400 digital photographs at 32 museum sites (Appendix E). I carefully documented for each museum the positioning of exhibits within

buildings, the context of exhibits and the exhibit spaces themselves. All the material on exhibit and materials meant to complement them such as maps and brochures are regarded here as visual media. I also collected logistical data upon my initial visits to each museum, using a checklist to be sure I was looking at the same aspects of exhibits at each site. This checklist included space allocated for exhibits and how much of that space was allotted to telling the Indian story, the Californio story, and so on (see Appendix F)

My analysis of the visual representations occurred in two phases. I first created a system to evaluate museum messages from the mountain of data I had collected. For this stage of the research I studied photographs taken over a three year period at 32 Missions and museums. Using iView software to sort and code digital photographs of exhibits I had amassed, I was able to view each facility while I reviewed my notes from my visit there. I also coded the photographs based on four criteria, the genre of the museum, the layout of exhibit space, primary mode(s) of representation, and dominant rhetorical strategies observed.

Though I conducted interviews with staff and docents and observations at five Franciscan Missions on the Central Coast, I visited and photographed all 19 operating Missions in Alta California. At Mission Carmel, I interviewed the director and four docents, “shadowed” four fourth grade tours and conducted observations of visitors over 20 hours. At Mission San Luis Obispo I observed visitors and docents over 20 hours. At Mission Santa Barbara I interviewed the director, observed docents and visitors over 20 hours. At Mission Ventura I interviewed the director and three docents, “shadowed” three docent tours, and observed docents and visitors over 20 hours. At Mission La Purisima I interviewed the director and park interpreter, “shadowed” docent tour, observed living

history day, and conducted participant observation over 20 hours. Of the 21 original Mission sites, one has no museum (Mission San Rafael) and one has been closed due to earthquake damage (Mission San Miguel). Two of the remaining 19 are owned and operated by the California State Parks system (Mission La Purisima and Mission Sonoma), and the other 17 are owned and operated, at least partially by the local Catholic diocese of the area, and have active churches with parishioners and attending priests¹. Narratives differ greatly based on proprietorship and though I recognize this throughout my analysis, I initially treated all sites with the same methods.

Today, the 15 sites that are completely owned and operated by the local diocese clearly promote the perspective of the Catholic Church. The two Mission sites owned and operated by the California State Parks Department offer a more realistic view, but promote a pro-state, pro-progress narrative. At the other two Missions shared between the Parks system and the local diocese an influence of the progress narrative can be detected in these venues, but the Church is still the dominant messenger. None of these 19 sites currently provide a Native view of the Mission system and its impacts on Indian people, though Mission Carmel and Mission La Purisima are working toward this end through collaborative efforts with local Indian people.

While references to the Missions as sites of slavery have been disputed by some due to the idea that Missionaries had no sense of ownership of Indian people (Sandos 2004, 178), I argue that “one who is abjectly subservient to a specified person(s) (American Heritage 1994)” is indeed a slave, and the punishment and treatment of Indian

¹ Mission Santa Cruz and Mission San Juan Bautista are owned and operated jointly by the State of California and the local diocese.

people at Franciscan Missions should be called nothing else. Eichstedt and Small (2002) observed in their 2002 *Representations of Slavery*, these Anglo men who prospered as slave-holders at the cost of human life and freedom are known in plantation museum narratives as “planters”, “politicians”, and “great leaders”. These scholars wanted to call attention to how the frame shifts when they are referred to as *master-enslavers*. Taking the lead from Eichstedt and Small, I have replaced all references to the Mission founders in this chapter, words such as Padre, father, and founder, to *enslaver*. In addition, “to counter a long tradition of erasing basic humanity of enslaved people by naming them only in terms of a status that was imposed upon them” (Eichstedt and Small 2002, 5), in all cases where Indian people are referred to as neophyte, Christianized Indians, Indians, laborers, or workers, I have replaced these with the words *enslaved people*. Never referred to by name in the Mission museum narratives, Indian women, men, and children are depicted only in terms of the service they provided as captives of the Mission project.

Eichstedt and Small’s work also provides a model for analyzing rhetorical strategies. They examined interpretation at 122 plantation museum sites in the southern United States, reflecting on the noticeable absence in plantation museums of discussions of the system of slavery. Also missing in these narratives, they detected, were the histories of those who had been enslaved. My research at California’s Missions revealed the same two voids in the Mission story, meaning that public history in California is avoiding the truths of its ethnic, economic, and frankly genocidal beginnings as a colonial land. Sites of disease, brutality, and captivity, Mission narratives convey pastoral, serene, and glorified stories of docile Indians learning new skills under the tutelage of benevolent priests. “When even the minimal signs of memory work are missing, when graves are left

invisible and unmarked, for example, or stories remain untold, these are strong indications indeed of a past confined to oblivion “(Irwin-Zarecka 1994, 13-14). Taking the lead from Eichstedt and Small, I have defined four rhetorical strategies designed to aid in the social forgetting of a place founded upon the same type of fantasy heritage as the building of the south. These strategies, which I will discuss in detail are Symbolic Annihilation and Erasure, Segregated Knowledge, Trivialization and Deflection, and Relative Incorporation (see Appendix G for rhetorical strategies “at a glance”).

I performed in depth research at the six Mission sites on the Central Coast within Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. I took from 10-30 photographs at each facility including images of the grounds, exhibit spaces, central gardens, any signage, and gift shops when allowed². I also videotaped a living history event at La Purisima and audio-recorded docent tours at Carmel, La Purisima, and Ventura Missions.

Modes of Exhibition: The “Erasure” and “Progress” Narratives

A brief overview of two modes of exhibition encountered in Mission museums will be followed by a more in depth look at the rhetorical strategies mentioned above. Exhibit spaces followed one of two general themes or modes. The first mode of exhibition is to divide the space into rooms for the purpose of capturing the romance of a certain point in history. This “erasure” narrative relegates all other periods (as well as people)—past and future—to obscurity. Many of the Mission tours lead the visitor

² I was asked not to photograph merchandise in the gift shop at Mission Carmel and Mission San Buenaventura.

through a series of spaces reconfigured to resemble rooms in a historic Mission complex. In this sequence is a room called La Sala (the salon used for entertaining), La Cocina (where the food was prepared by the enslaved for the enslavers and their guests), and the sparsely decorated enslaver's quarters. All of these spaces are designed to appear as they would have during the height of the Mission era. The tours lead visitors through corridors past roped off or gated rooms displaying cultural materials in context. The last room in this tour is either the church, which is a symbolic gesture in itself, or another well-lit space, exhibiting elaborately embroidered vestments, shimmering golden crosses, and paintings of the architect of the Mission project, the glorified enslaver, Junípero Serra. In contrast, rooms with Indian artifacts are generally dimly lit, small, and often colder rooms at opposite end of the Mission complex. Sometimes representations of enslaved Indians are in another building altogether. In contrast to the living spaces that would have potentially been occupied by White enslavers, items belonging to Native people, such as cooking and food preparation implements are exhibited on the floor in dark and unattended rooms. These materials almost always lack any kind of cultural context. This mode of exhibition suggests disuse of the items and sends a subtle message to the visitor that these people will not be returning. At all 19 active Mission museums, regardless of the mode of exhibition used, I found stone mortars and pestles on the floor or on dusty shelves. Enslaved Indian materials are un-labeled and un-attributed, whereas Spanish items are accompanied by explanatory text about the use of the item, to whom it belonged, and the period in history it may have been used. Wealth items of the priest-enslaver inhabitants of the Mission are often sealed for protection in well-lighted cases



Figure 11: “Religious Service” Exhibit, Mission Santa Barbara (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

and at eye level, a form of exhibition that privileges those materials over others (see Figure 11).

The second mode follows a “progress” narrative. This is the mode of representation used in the State Park venues and a handful of others. The difference in these two styles of representation seems to stem from involvement of history or anthropology faculty from local colleges and universities in the interpretive efforts at Missions. Several of the Missions have attracted such local historians to lead interpretive, both exhibits and educational program development. Progress narratives are popular at sites where they are involved. These tours begin with a room(s) dedicated to pre-contact

Indian life. In these venues a romantic, often colorful, version of pre-contact Indian life precedes the discussion of the arrival of Europeans and clashing of cultures. This “Indian room” is generally filled with baskets, shell bead necklaces, a model of a traditional Indian dwelling or diorama, and usually a discussion of food procurement strategies illustrated with bow and arrow, fishing gear, or acorns with their attending mano and metate (see Figure 12).

This space discusses life as it was prior to invasion by Europeans. It is always followed by a space dedicated to the Church filled with religious artifacts, a discussion of adobe building manufacture and the success of the Mission project, and finally to tributes



Figure 12: Indian Room, Mission San Luis Obispo (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

to wealthy Anglo families that lived in the area after secularization. The progress narrative is quite common in venues other than Missions as well. And while it might be seen by museum goers an improvement over stacked, dirty artifacts without interpretation, this style of representation freezes native people in a static pre-contact state, so admired by outmoded anthropology, cinematic, and museum representations alike.

At each Mission, Junípero Serra, the master enslaver is depicted in drawings, paintings, and sculpture. All 21 Missions have a life-sized (though only about 4'6") bronze Serra at the entrance, but few have depictions of enslaved Indian people. The backbone of the Mission complex, enslaved Indian people of various bands and tribes are generally referred to as "Mission Indians" or "neophytes" and always as a group (though rarely by tribal affiliation) not as individual people with human concerns or sophisticated political and cultural understandings. Similar to the narratives of ante-bellum South, the slave in California Mission history is rarely viewed as a human being.

Rhetorical Strategy 1: Symbolic Annihilation and Erasure of Indians

By far, the majority of Mission museums regardless of the mode of representation chosen, employ symbolic annihilation and erasure as a primary rhetorical strategy. This strategy is characterized first by (a) *perfunctory inclusion* of information on Indian life and exploitation as enslaved persons, which includes the i) *lack of context* for understanding the experience as enslaved Mission Indians, man, woman, or child, as well as the ii) *construction of romance* attributed to the period through a focus on *architecture* and *furniture*. The romance attributed to an ethnographic snapshot in time and an

emphasis on *native housing and objects* is an added strategy of perfunctory inclusion in Mission museums. Also characteristic of the annihilation and erasure strategy is the use of (b) *euphemisms* and (c) *passive voice*. Both of these allow speakers (curators, exhibit designers, staff, and docents) to avoid identifying injustice or laying blame. Additionally, (d) *universalizing* and (e) *ahistorical statements* are used to erase privilege while reducing enslaved persons to stereotypical roles and identities. And finally, the symbolic annihilation and erasure strategy emphasizes (f) *narratives of Whiteness*, which portray European enslavers as moral, democratic, loved, self-sacrificing, and devoted to the ultimate well-being of the enslaved. As in the Eichstedt and Small model these multiple devices all work to erase or marginalize any serious consideration of the institution or experience of slavery.

Perfunctory Inclusion

There are few places in Mission tours that discuss enslaved Indian people as central to the Mission project. All wealth and success attributed to the Missions or the Mission period was a direct result of the sweat, tears, toil, loss, and hardship of Indian people but this remains unspoken. At their height, the 21 Missions in Alta California had an estimated annual production of 2 million dollars. This income was generated through ownership of 400,000 head of cattle, 60,000 horses, 300,000 sheep, goats and swine, crops of wheat, maize, and beans, as well as vineyards at some (Perez 1982—UC Berkeley Library Website). The Missions were producers of wine, brandy, soap, leather, hides, wool, oil, cotton, hemp, linen, tobacco, and salt. Like the relative wealth of the plantations in their heyday, the Missions owed all of their wealth to the enslaved men,

women, and children that produced these materials for sale and trade by Missionaries. The only non-Indians working at the Missions were a handful of soldiers, and one Missionary. There is rarely context for understanding the experiences of the enslaved, what their lives might have been like aside from the mention of tasks they performed and the numbers of people performing each task. In addition, the enslaved are always depicted as healthy, well-built males rather than depicting them as historic accounts do, more like concentration camp victims rather than workers in a utopian world of compromise and congeniality (see Figure 13).

At Mission San Fernando, for example, a series of crude illustrations depict



Figure 13: Painting at Mission San Fernando (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

Native people in the performance of such tasks. Headlines include “Fathers Teaching Indians to Make Adobe” and “Fathers Teaching Indians to Plow and Plant.” These images depict enslavers as benevolent teachers, imparting important knowledge for survival onto grateful Indian converts. Plowing and planting, the headline suggests, is something Indian people knew nothing about. Ironically, the native people of the south Central Coast had been planting and harvesting for thousands of years prior to contact with Europeans.

At Mission San Juan Capistrano, a similar set of images can be observed in a very confined walkway, whose exit has been gated. In this strangely confined space, a miniature diorama depicts bare-chested, young Indian men making bricks, ‘trading,’ and in one called The ‘First Baptism,’ two Native men hold a swaddled infant out toward the priest. From the headline, we are to infer that these *men* are having *their* (?) child baptized, but there is no woman present, nor are there any additional family members (see Figure 14). The title would suggest a serious Catholic ritual is occurring, but the image conveys that baptism, childbirth, family, ceremony, and rites of passage among the enslaved have no more importance than the making of a brick. Again, the lack of context oversimplifies the experience of Indian people, reducing them to a shirtless workforce born to manufacture adobe buildings and aqueducts. Here we witness too the erasure of women as having a significant role, at least that of child bearing and rearing, which stands in stark contrast to many early colonial accounts which discuss mothers and

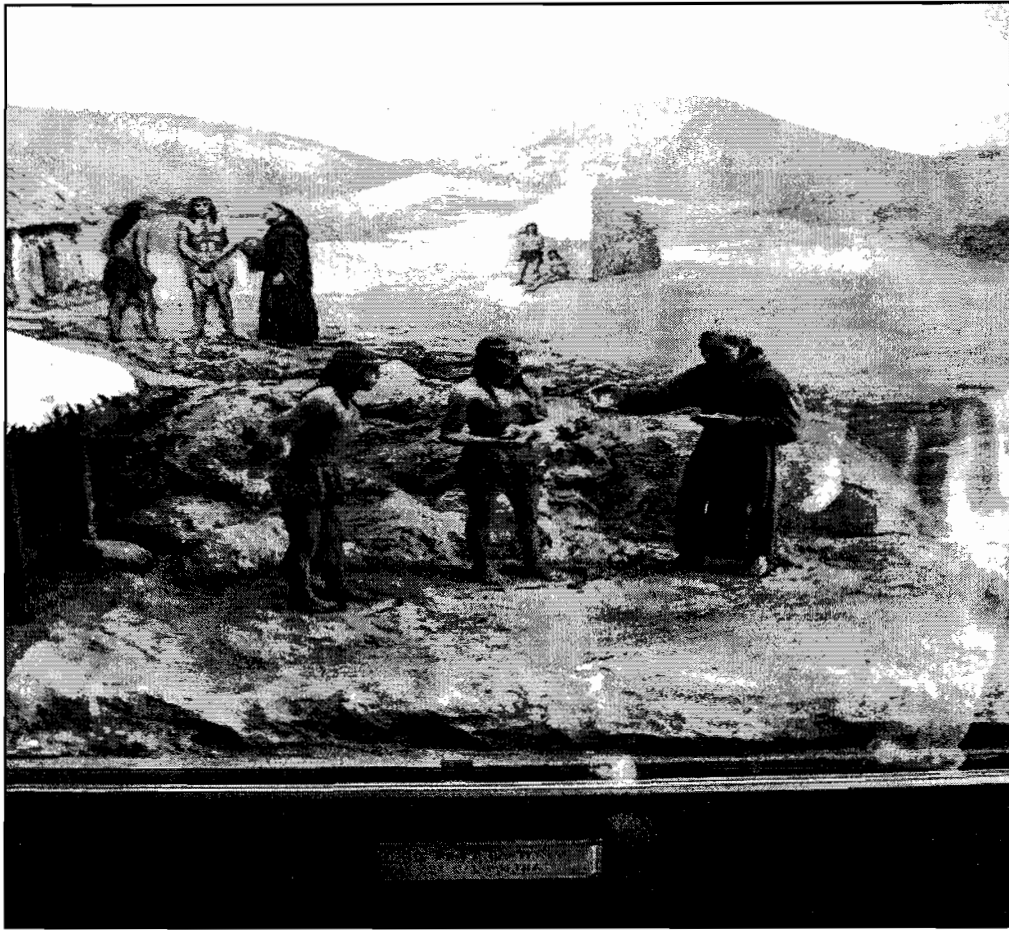


Figure 14: “The First Baptism”—Mission San Juan Capistrano
(Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

godmothers at these rituals and often state the women as the first to come forth, bringing their children to be baptized (personal communication, Lynn Stephen 8/08). Another way that perfunctory inclusion for symbolic annihilation occurs is through the emphasis on architecture, furniture and other objects which frame a certain romance of the Mission period. References to architecture, adobe making, and building manufacture dominate exhibits, audio tours, docent manuals, brochures, and even websites and school programs. In fact, the emphasis on Mission architecture has been extended into the public schools.

For decades now, fourth-graders have been expected to construct sugar cube Missions, usually one that resembles the Mission in their particular school district. At each Mission, there are models, cardboard cut-outs, or tiny adobe replicas constructed by local fourth-graders. These are usually complete with tiny artificial trees and foliage. Never, however, are there enslaved Indian people depicted in these models. The handsome buildings of white adobe and red tile roofs which have come to characterize southern California are shown as empty, vacant spaces, failing to recognize the builders.

Also common among references to architecture are the narratives of restoration. All Mission museums have a space dedicated to the history and processes of restoration

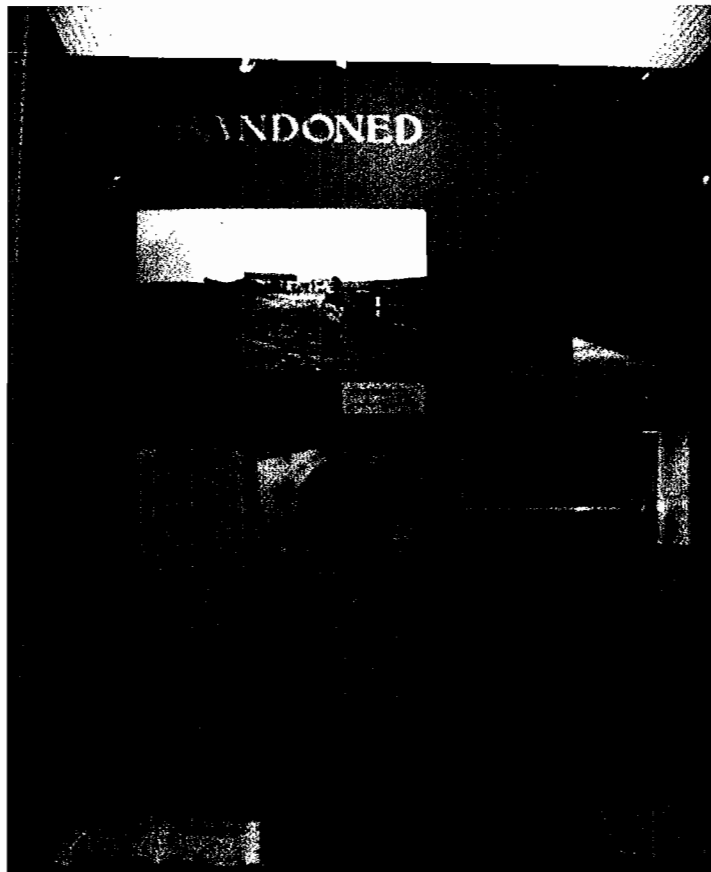


Figure 15: “Abandoned” Restoration exhibit, Mission San Diego Alcalá (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

undergone by Mission structures from abandoned sites of disrepair back to their “former glory”. Many have black and white images of before and after restoration and *all* memorialize the wealthy Anglos responsible for saving them (see Figure 15).

Probably the most subtle narrative in the museum, but most profound to a Native visitor is the sense of isolation. Each Mission is surrounded by people-less, pristine landscapes (see Figure 16). For example, center courtyard areas which were used for labor such as tallow processing and hide scraping, for example are today filled with



Figure 16: Garden Space, Mission Santa Barbara (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

flower gardens and fountains. This artifice of serenity, peacefulness, and beauty creates an environment that contradicts in fundamental ways the historical use of the space for producing profit-making products (Kryder-Reed 2003). In fact these central spaces were used as what Foucault (1979) referred to as panopticons, spaces where the enslaved could be seen at all times during their daily activities and have their behavior scrutinized by the authorities. The empty and pristine landscapes forget (and help the visitor to forget) and even deny any traditional relationships with the land held for thousands of years by Native occupants, and erase the domination aspect of utilizing the Indian population as a slave-labor force.

The false façade covering every Mission provides another metaphor for the erasure of Indian and Mexican narratives in favor of those that privilege whites. Adobe bricks are continually covered over by plaster to preserve the real adobe and present a more polished exterior. In some places, the adobe is completely gone and there is a false façade in its place. The original adobe when it shows through is very *brown* and has been covered over by layers and layers of whitened plaster.

Euphemisms and Passive Voice

At Mission San Fernando, black and white photographs of people dressed as Mission Indians demonstrate the making of adobe bricks. Each image has a headline reading “molding bricks”, “removing the mold”, “drying bricks”, “building walls.” However, the emphasis in every case is on the making of buildings rather than on the fact that those walls would later be used to imprison these men from their coastal homeland and incarcerate their young wives, daughters, and sisters in a way that was barbaric and

inhumane.

“The number of Indians who lived in the Mission community increased gradually over the years...they also lived in Valle de San Jose to the east herding cattle, and by San Leandro Creek tending the grain fields.” This caption at Mission San Jose suggests, first, that the population of the “Mission community” grew of its own volition and ignores information about the 1803 Viceroy’s edict in which he advocated “active recruitment” by whatever means necessary as Mission populations declined. If the Mission community *grew* it was due to forced relocations, devastation to traditional food resources and sources of fresh water by Mission livestock, and a rupture in traditional socio-political lifeways caused by introduced diseases, crops, and religious beliefs, to name a few (Dartt-Newton and Erlandson 2006). The wording “herding cattle and tending grain fields” suggests individual agency in these endeavors, as if the local Indians *chose* to live near *their* livestock and crops, to tend them more efficiently.

On a tour I shadowed at Mission Carmel our docent discussed in great detail the Moorish style architecture of the church tower, explaining with excitement the design and “special” use of the window above the door in the tower. He explained that the window was designed to reflect a beam of sunlight which would illuminate, brilliantly the golden cross on the altar of the church. This would happen only once a year, on the day of the summer solstice. The docent’s language conjured powerful images for us, as he spoke of the influence this sight must have had on newly Christian or unconverted Indians. He did not explain however how this type of trickery was frequently used to try to manipulate unconverted Indians into believing Catholics could harness supernatural powers. In this case, priests thought they could manipulate Indians to think they could harness the power

of the sun, or that the Christian God was somehow more powerful than their own. The truth is that Native Californians and indigenous people throughout the world employed naturally made or hand built solstice “windows” for this very purpose. But again, the experience of the Indian people is barely mentioned and when it is, it is framed within discussions of priests as benevolent and pure intentioned.

Universalizing and Ahistorical

Lack of individual agency or personal identity is another common theme. Common in Mission cemeteries are elaborate tombs and grave markers for Spanish clergy and military, even wealthy Californio families are glorified in death at these sites. Unmarked, are the markers for graves of thousands of Indian men, women and children.

The exception can be seen at Mission Sonoma, one of the two Missions owned and operated by the California State Parks, where a memorial was erected in tribute to the Native people enslaved there. An asterisk next to the name of all children is a profound reminder of the tragedy of the Mission period. Unfortunately, however, the exhibits inside do not reflect the commitment to the truth that the monument suggests.

Much more common in the other 18 locations are small and simple signs reading something like “Many Neophytes are interred at this Location.” (Mission Soledad) or “In memory of the Christian Indians and Spaniards who were interred in this cemetery between the years 1771-1833” (Mission Carmel).

At Mission Carmel an Indian graveyard has been reconstructed in a European manner with graves side by side and wooden crosses. Each artificial “grave” is adorned with abalone shells. At first sight, it appears the Mission is attempting to honor the Indian

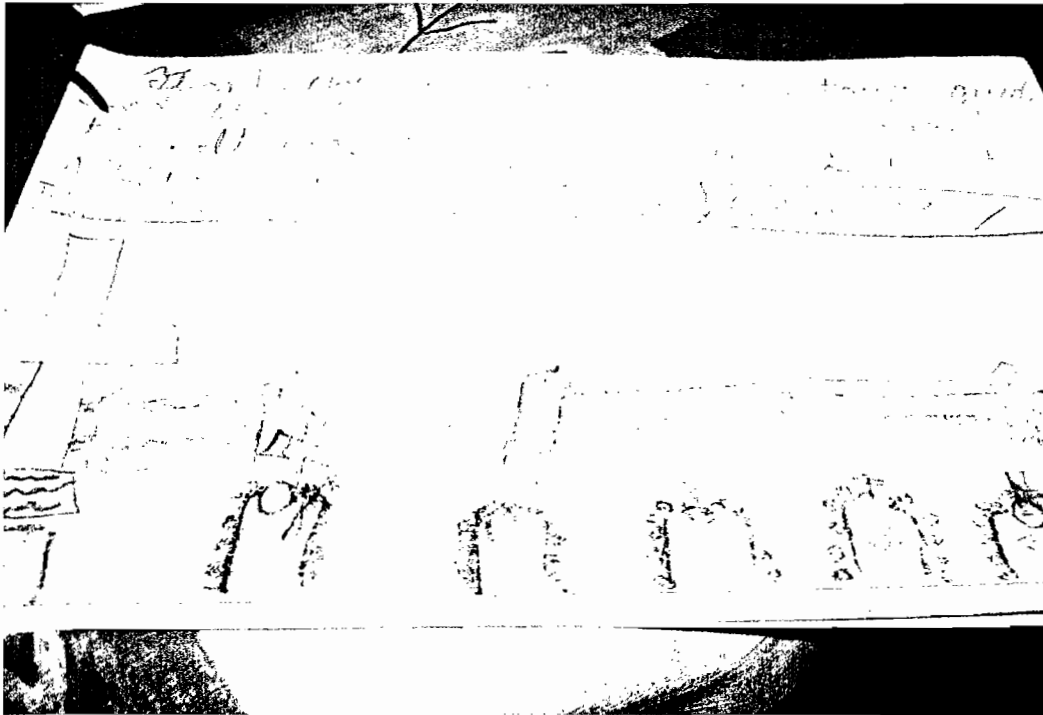


Figure 17: Fourth Grader “Thank You” Note, Mission Carmel (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton)

dead. What goes unsaid, however, is the very false impression that Indians were shown the same respect in death as the Spanish priests and military. If buried at all, they were relegated to mass graves or, as evidenced by archaeological excavations in the 1980s at Mission Santa Barbara, incorporation into the mortar was a common way to ‘dispose’ of the bones of dead Indians. At Carmel, this faux cemetery is the favorite and most memorable spot for visiting schoolchildren (see Figure 17). Ironically, the (however falsified) attention paid to Indian life in this space is to their *inevitable death*.

Two individuals at Mission Santa Barbara offer an exception to the nameless. These individuals, are (again, rather ironically) used strategically as icons of a lost

people. The individuals depicted at Mission Santa Barbara are Tomas Yngacio de Aquino, “The Last Canalino” and Juana Maria the *Lone* Woman of San Nicholas Island—suggesting these were, like Ishi—the *last* of their tribe. The sad story of Juana Maria is that she jumped overboard from the ship sent to gather the last of the Island Tongva for Missionization because her baby had been left behind in the shuffle. She survived there, *in her homeland* for 18 years, though her child did not. She was “rescued” and taken to the home of her captor, a local businessman, where she spent the last seven weeks of her life on display as the lone, primitive woman, until she succumbed to dysentery. Echoing the ‘disappearing Indian’ myth is Jan Timbrook of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, who says of Juana Maria, “...her story embodies the demise of native peoples and traditions following Spanish and American colonization (SBMNH Website).



Figure 18: Timeline, Mission San Jose (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

Timelines are a common theme in Mission museums as well as Mission websites. Locating oneself on a continuum of time seems to be a desirable exercise; at least museum curators believe so. Unfortunately the timeline and continuum never extend to the present so if Native peoples are shown on such a timeline they are never shown to live into the present. Usually the timeline shows the date of the founding of the Mission, when it closed, and when it was restored. At Mission San Jose, the timeline (or *time itself*) begins with European arrival, Columbus, Cortez, and Cabrillo in North America. After the Mission's founding in 1797, the timeline moves through the proscribed eras of "Mission", "Rancho", and "American". The timeline ends with the rededication. Indians on this timeline exist only prior to 1492 when "Columbus arrives in

America” (see Figure 18).

Narratives of Whiteness

The Missions in California were the result of a blending of religious desires and political aims. Franciscan Friars were eager to found Missions among peaceful Indians (Mission Santa Barbara).

This statement suggests that conversion of pagan souls was a primary aim of the Spanish Crown equal to that of empire building. Though the Mission narratives promote this angle, history suggests otherwise. The harnessing and taming of a labor force that would provide wealth to the Crown was Spain’s primary goal and though religious leaders may have disputed this fact, the church was a means to this end.

Another quote at Mission Santa Barbara states, “The Missionaries’ task was to Christianize and Civilize the Indians. By law Missionaries were defenders of the Indians.” This caption suggests that Indians needed the Missionaries for a variety of things including protection. What it does not say is who might protect the Indians from these men, who, according to Jackson and Castillo “imposed a rigid system of coerced and disciplined labor, enforced by the use of corporal punishment and other forms of control” (Jackson and Castillo 1995, 76).

While valorizing Missionaries is a common theme, many of their shortcomings are overlooked. The reality that “Old World” diseases to which Indians had no immunity from were the greatest cause of death in the Missions is often asserted without mention to the fact that many Missionaries passively ignored disease epidemics due to the general belief that it was God’s will. Fatalistic acceptance of the inevitability of disease and God’s role in sending the contagion was commonplace in Mission period California

(Jackson and Castillo 1995). These “protectors” also ignored that fact that “civilizing” the Indians for almost a century in Baja California led to identical patterns of disease death and devastation.

Mission La Purisima has a building that they call *el monjerio* or woman’s dorm, but no context is provided to understand what these dorms meant to the people. There is no explanation of why girls and young woman were separated from their families due to the conservative sexual beliefs on the part of their enslavers. There is no reference to the pain, fear, and loneliness that was the experience of many seven or eight year old girls. The mortality rates for girls and young woman exceeded others by ten to one because of damp, overcrowded conditions in the dorms. Rarely would a little girl locked in a *monjerio* ever again know the comfort of her mother’s arms. The public is spared this harsh reality. Female staff at La Purisima while discussing the inclusion of the *monjerio* story in the museum, said that they are interested in the struggles of women during the Mission era, but that incorporation of it into the storyline is not likely.

Even though we have a *monjerio* here, and that’s brought up and I know there’s some books that talk about how life was for women in that period, when you’re dealing with kids, you’re kind of at the “G” level....The main district interpreter wants to put it on displays (the *monjerio* story), but we just think that the Chumash people would get very upset (La Purisima staff 2/2007).

Many Chumash people are indeed upset, but their anger rests in the fact that this and other hard truths are *not* told.

A drawing at Mission San Antonio makes reference to the women’s dorms (Figure 19) but provides explanation for why it is included with these materials. It assumes that girls were busily tending to these tasks “in their leisure time” while

incarcerated.

Aside from this reference and the building called “*el monjerio*” at La Purisima, discussion of this very painful reality that impacted the lives of every enslaved Indian person—man, woman, and child—is ignored at 19 Mission museums.

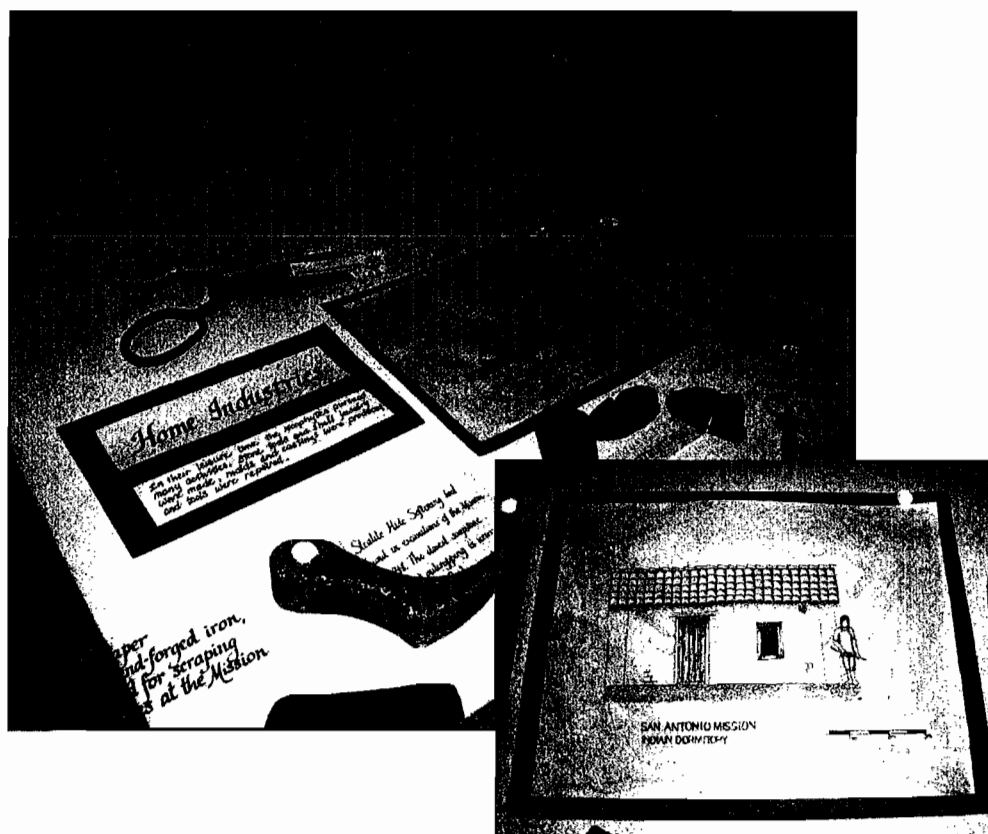


Figure 19: “Home Industries” Exhibit—inset “Indian Dormitory” Mission San Antonio (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton)

Another narrative of whiteness unavoidable in the Mission tours is the construction of ethnicity. The overarching theme is Spain and ties to a White/European past suggesting to visitors that as a Spanish endeavor, the Missions were built, guarded, and operated by Spaniards. Ironically a very small number of the Mission population was actually Spanish—usually only the priest. As I discussed in earlier chapters, the ethnic origins of Spain’s colonizing force, the soldiers, were predominantly Mexican Indian and mestizo. This history, that acknowledges a very early brown population in California and stories of early migrations, might actually foster a sense of belonging among the huge mestizo community in southern and central California, but is ignored and an opportunity lost. In only a few cases do the Mission narratives discuss ethnicity, and when they do, they inevitably frame elites as White, Europeans, and soldiers and settlers as “Mexicans”. As Mexico did not exist prior to 1821, and at the time was merely southern New Spain, it is erroneous and misleading to call the colonizing body Mexican. It is even more misleading, however, to frame them as Spaniards which creates the illusion that they were European or White. The census of 1790 suggests that soldiers, farmers, and their families brought to establish nearby pueblos were primarily Cochimi and Mayo Indians and mixed heritage people of Indian and African parentage (Mason 1998).

A sign that greets visitors to Mission San Gabriel, “Saludos Amigos” is a cogent example of assumptions about privilege, race, and ethnicity in Mission museums (Figure 20). “We witness here the beginning of a new civilization wherein Christianity was introduced to a pagan sphere some 190 years ago....For nearly two centuries this garden of peace has been a haven for the weary travelers, adventurous pioneers, and builders of the magical desert.” This first paragraph suggests “pagan” Indians welcomed the “new”

civilization to replace their uncivilized lifeways and that it was “introduced” rather than forced upon them. Next, it states that the space was a “garden of peace” which is blatantly untrue. Such central spaces were important work areas but they were also used for public demonstrations of punishment, such as flogging/whipping to make examples of escaped or incorrigible enslaved Indians (Sandos 1999). It continues, with racialized notions of the “Daring Redskin, the Blithe Spirited Mexican, the Valiant Spanish Soldier, and the Venturesome Americano.” According to this description, while all others are considered bold, ambitious, and brave, the Mexican is known by his freedom from

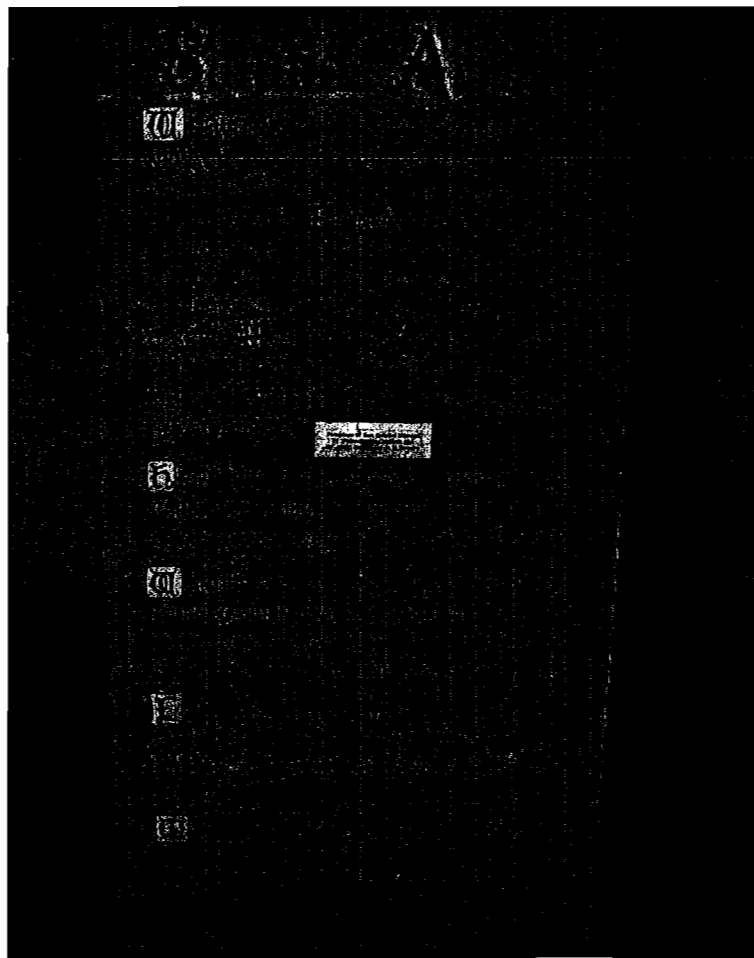


Figure 20: “Saludos Amigos” Sign, Mission San Gabriel
(Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

worries and responsibilities. Freedom from responsibility denotes laziness, a prevalent characteristic of the Mexican stereotype. The Indian, the only one referred to also by skin color is characterized as bold, but here boldness is combined with the color red, a signifier of danger, a common Indian stereotype. The Spaniard and the American are simply valiant and venturesome. And last, you are invited to witness “what God has wrought under the enchanting California sun,” suggesting that the Christian God himself built this site of enslavement.

Also common in the narrative of whiteness is the way that Native objects are used, not to represent a story about Indian people, but about the people who collected and then donated them. In some cases, such as baskets on display at several Missions, text placards indicate they are made by local Indian people, or perhaps descendants of enslaved Mission Indians, but this is the only information about the artist available to the visitor. Generally, the only attribution for baskets and other materials is the donor. Sometimes the materials used in the basket are described, but rarely is there even a date given, except perhaps the date of *donation* to the Mission. This ambiguity leaves the visitor to assume they were woven during the Mission period. A valuable opportunity to extend the Indian story beyond the Mission period is missed again. Also missed is the opportunity to explore life in the Missions by addressing such questions as, how were the women able to collect, process, and take the time to weave such baskets during such upheaval of their traditional lifeways and gathering places? Or, for example, were they made for sale, for use, or for trade to woman in the nearby pueblo for items not available at the Mission?

In most cases, the baskets are from other areas and the only attribution is given to

the wealthy Anglo collector/donor. A photo of him or her is generally located with the baskets and the weavers themselves are invisible. We know nothing about them, their struggles to find weaving materials in an altered landscape or the difficulty of maintaining traditional knowledge during such a tumultuous time. Stories of survival do not exist here, only the unspoken stories that large collections from an era of “salvage” ethnology convey—loss, exploitation, and desperation. Visitors leave with the idea that Anglo heroes and heroines, have saved the baskets, restored the Missions, and left us the lasting nostalgia of the Mission era.

Rhetorical and *Political* Strategy 2: Trivialization and Deflection

A strategy characterized by depictions of slavery as a benevolent institution and the symbolism of happy or grateful slaves is defined by Eichstedt and Small as trivialization and deflection. In this definition, “loyal” converts are privileged in contrast with more radical, independent or untrustworthy slaves. Portrayals affirm the good owner narrative, and privilege discussions of amiable relationships between the two groups who were both, after all, victims of progress and those nasty “Americans.”

Though Native people are rarely portrayed as individuals, the heroine Pasquala of Mission Santa Ynez, is an exception. Her name is remembered and her story told, because of her loyalty to the Mission. The young Indian girl, Pasquala (so the story goes), thwarted the Chumash uprising of 1824. Her saga is depicted in the Mission museum on a large painted storyboard (see Figure 21). As a dutiful and loyal enslaved Indian, Pasquala

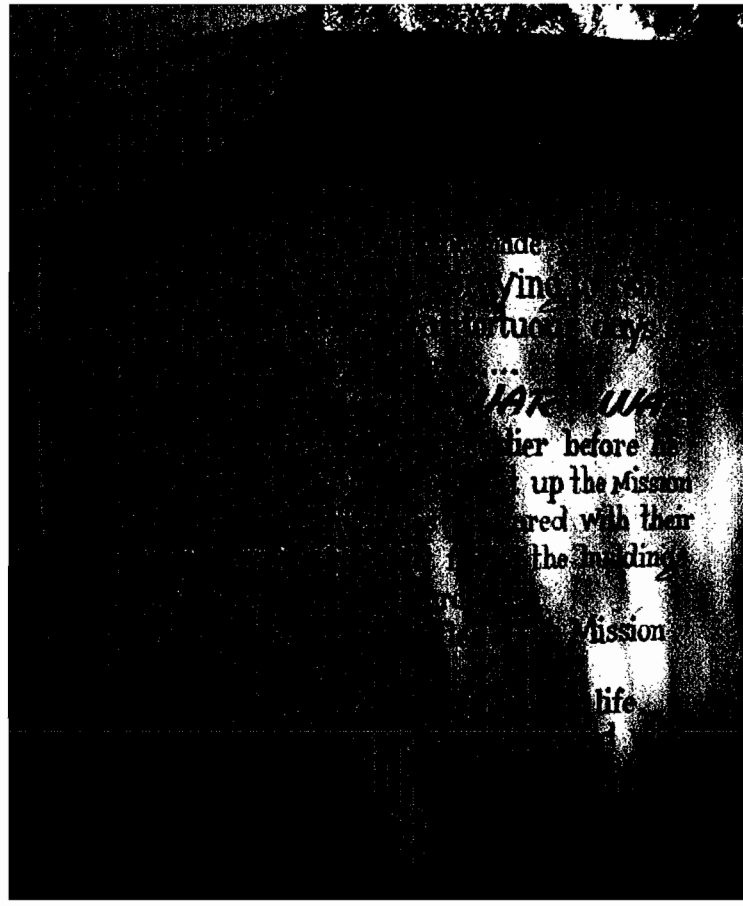


Figure 21: “Pasquala’s Story,” Mission Santa Ynez
(Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

informed Padre Francisco that several enslaved Indians, led by her uncle the leader of the Tulareños, were planning to rebel against Church authority. She is depicted here as the savior of the Mission, made even more heroic in death.

A *political* strategy that resembles the rhetorical strategy of trivialization and deflection, is the demonstration of loyalty, by living descendants, to the dominant narrative. In efforts to provide a sense of authenticity in the museum, some facilities have begun to work with a handful of people of Native descent to tell the “Indian story.” “The

tourist seeks to see life as it really was, to get in touch with the natives, to enter the intimate space of the other in order to have an experience of real life, an authentic experience.” (Norkunas 1993, 2). By working with a few compliant, descendant Native people who agree with the Church’s view of the Mission and its impacts, Mission staff are able to effectively trivialize the experience of the enslaved by asserting that progress and Catholicism have been long-term *positive* results.

Rhetorical Strategy 3: Segregated Knowledge

The rhetorical strategy of segregated knowledge is characterized by the separation of stories about the enslaved from the mainstream Mission narrative. In some cases the Indian story is told in a different room or space in the Mission complex rather than incorporating it into the main narrative. Some Mission museums employ the progress narrative depicting Indians at the start of the tour only, such as Mission San Luis Obispo and Mission San Juan Capistrano. The opposite of this can be seen at Mission San Antonio where the visitor is led back in time and the Indian room is at the end of a long dark hallway. Others have relegated the Indian story to other buildings, such as Mission Carmel or other floors such as Mission Santa Clara where the Indian museum is located in the basement.

At Mission La Purisima the Chumash village is set apart from the rest of the Mission complex in a way that suggests freedom or detachment spatially and temporally. Especially notable is that during the Mission’s “Living History” days, Anglo docents dressed as enslaved Mission Indians lead children in games at the picnic benches located in the Chumash Village which is separate from the rest of the Mission complex (#13 on

Figure 22) out near the “pig pen” but not quite as far as “the road beyond”.

Children leave the space with the sense that Indian people were free to live in their

nearby village, playing games and living traditional lives, which is far from the reality.

Little interpretation about Chumash life for children occurs during these events, which is

another missed opportunity. Visiting children scurry from “station” to “station” to play

games, make soap, and bake tortillas. Even on non-living history days in scheduled

“station tours” where the groups are smaller and more accessible the extent of knowledge

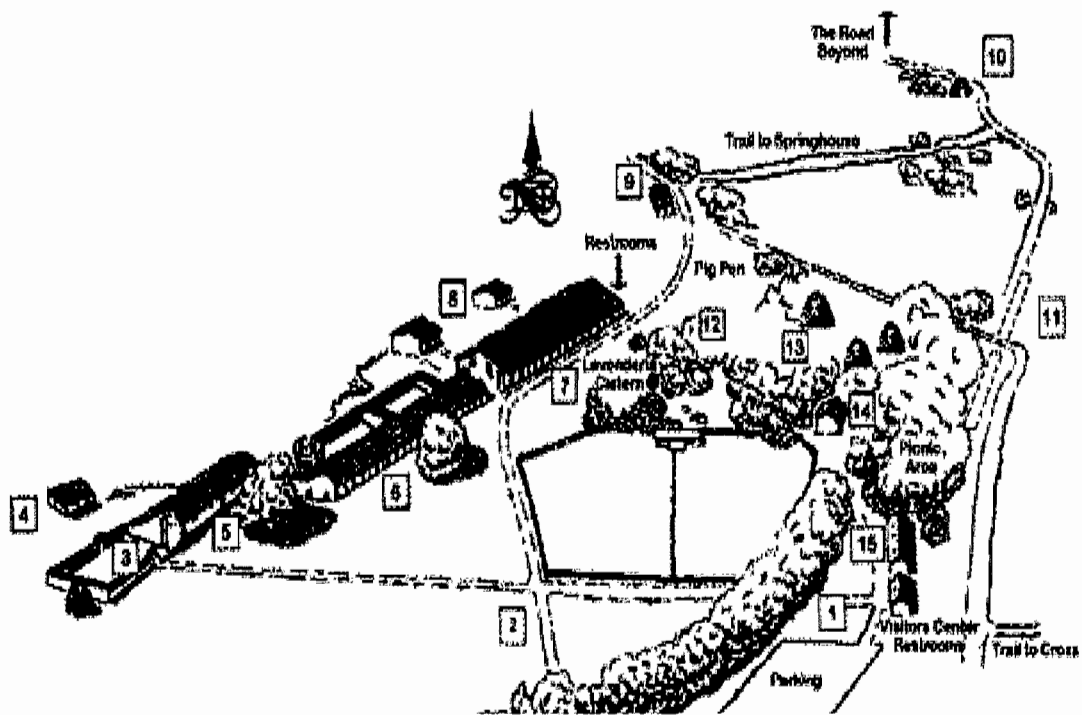


Figure 22: Grounds at La Purisima State Historical Park (Courtesy La Purisima Mission Website).

transferred is completely up to the docent working that day and their particular knowledge base. Since no textual information accompanies the exhibits, it becomes the docent's sole responsibility to educate the public. In most cases these are retired, white people with no ties to the Mission except that many of them are Catholic.

Another example of segregated knowledge is Mission Sonoma, the other California State Parks site, where inside the Mission museum interpretation is sparse and in dire need of redress. However, in 1990 the Mission Indian Memorial Fund was established to honor the contributions of the people who died during the construction and tenure of the Mission properties, an estimated 80,000 throughout California and over 4,000 at Sonoma. The unveiling of the memorial was a historic event as evidenced in this quote,

On March 23, 1999 The Mission Indian Memorial Fund together with the Sonoma Mission California State Park, the Catholic Diocese of Santa Rosa, and the City of Sonoma hosted an event to unveil the Sonoma Mission Indian Memorial. This was a historic event in California, an unprecedented example of commemorating the native people who built the Mission. The names of those memorialized were gathered from Mission records and carved into granite so that they could be acknowledged for their sacrifices by current and future generations of native and non-native people (Mission Indian Memorial Fund website).

The memorial is located outside the Mission grounds on the street. The incorporation of the Indian experience at Mission Sonoma is reduced to honoring only their death and relegating the memorial of their death to outside the Mission complex. While decisions for this monument may have been made by Native descendants for their own reasons, much work is needed at the interior of the Mission to make it a place worthy of such a memorial.

Rhetorical Strategy 4: Relative Incorporation or Complicating the Narrative

Relative Incorporation is defined by a move away from erasure and trivialization as the primary organizational strategies. I found no Mission site that fell neatly into this category, but there are a few that are sincerely striving for a competing narrative. One of the sites governed by the California State Parks Department is making great strides in efforts to incorporate native voices in interpretation, through the development of a relationship with local Indian people. The La Purisima Mission staff has been meeting regularly with the local federally recognized band of the Chumash, whose reservation is three miles up the road. Efforts at La Purisima, began when in 2003 park interpretive staff met with members of the Santa Ynez Chumash. These efforts culminated in 2007 with the establishment of a new exhibit space in the “visitor’s center” located adjacent to the parking lot at La Purisima. Though the new materials illustrate pre-contact Chumash life, as well as a continuum through the present day—something we have yet to see in any of the other Missions or museums on the Central Coast—the exhibit is located in an area adjacent to the Mission complex. It remains to be seen if visitors will follow the prescribed route and begin their tour at the Visitors Center, and therefore get the Chumash story. This current plan, too, neglects the majority of the interpretive space at the Mission. The Mission grounds, which include over 200 acres of buildings, livestock corrals, and the small Chumash village, will remain without textual interpretation (at least for the time being). This is problematic, as I outlined in my discussion of regional history venues. Where text is absent, visitors touring on their own are expected to have arrived with background knowledge or have stopped at the visitor’s center. The only Mission site that is clearly working with (more than one) Indian people and whose efforts have been

fruitful enough be the only Mission to be considered as using the relative incorporation strategy, La Purisima exhibits could still be seen as promoting the segregated knowledge rhetorical strategy. Also problematic is the fact that this mode of close consultation is not expressed in California State Parks policy. This project was spearheaded by conscientious La Purisima staff who, to their credit, insisted on close collaboration. The current California Parks policy does not mandate consultation or collaboration in the design and implementation of new interpretive exhibits and programming.

A discussion of Indian people's survival into the present is found in only one other Mission. Through the advocacy of the Mission director, a long time friend of the local Indian community, Mission Santa Barbara has a small contemporary exhibit space with photos and local contemporary Chumash art. Though certainly a move in the right direction, the story of loss is still glossed over in favor of a simplified statement of, "we are still here." This type of oversimplification and marginalization further deflects the responsibility of the Catholic Church in the sustained loss that has occurred over several generations *since* the Mission era itself. Still, making the living local Indian community visible is at the heart of these efforts and the director should be applauded for being the first to take the risk of including the living Indian story. In addition, she also took the controversial risk of including non-federally recognized Chumash. Few Missions, even those with larger budgets have been willing to go this far.

Another site that may warrant *future* inclusion in the relative incorporation category is the Carmel Mission. Current interpretation is more problematic at this Mission than any other of the 19. Here five Indian items are sequestered in a room that highlights a period of restoration to Mission buildings. "The Indians" in this exhibit are

represented only in terms of these five items and a historic drawing of an “Ohlone Woman.” Progressive new leadership at Carmel Mission may change this. The new director has raised funds for a new Ohlone exhibit and planning has begun for its implementation. There are potential shortcomings to the new plan that may replicate some of the problems seen in other Missions, however, especially in terms of the mode of representation. Though the new plan includes moving Ohlone exhibits into the main Mission building from the rarely visited “Harry Downey” building, the idea is to have it *begin* the Mission tour in the fashion of the “progress narrative.” An Ohlone curator has been hired to design and build the exhibit with assistance from local college students. The Indian curator is a devout Catholic, having had a religious upbringing, and currently holds a paid position within the Church. The exhibit was initially going to be planned and executed by another Ohlone curator, a woman with extensive cultural knowledge and a respected member of the community. The decision was made to hire the other gentleman after she had begun her research and initial planning, when she was told she, “was not needed after all.” The politics of this choice points to some of the issues inherent in creating authenticity in the museum as well as to the *political* strategy of trivialization and deflection. It will remain to be seen if Carmel shifts their rhetorical strategy with the new exhibit, from “annihilation” to “incorporation.”

In most Missions the exit is located at the gift shop. The final room of the tour, which has been Disney-fied to the point that it can be sold as a complete “experience” to tourists, is the museum store. The commoditization of Mission memorabilia is astonishing, yet the average number of books about local Indian history at each of the Mission bookstores is two, with the emphasis on children’s story books based on oral traditions, or coloring books about happy Mission life for Indians. Some of the Mission bookstores had no texts about local Indian people, but had coloring books about Plains or Northwest Coast tribes. All gift-shops offer dream-catchers, arrowhead replicas, turquoise jewelry, and a variety of other “Indian” kitsch available for purchase (see Figure 23). Eichstedt and Small (2007, 139) suggest that this is the ultimate exercise in consumption, “Whites are thus urged not only to reduce [Indians] to these stereotypes but to consume these images and present them in their homes.”

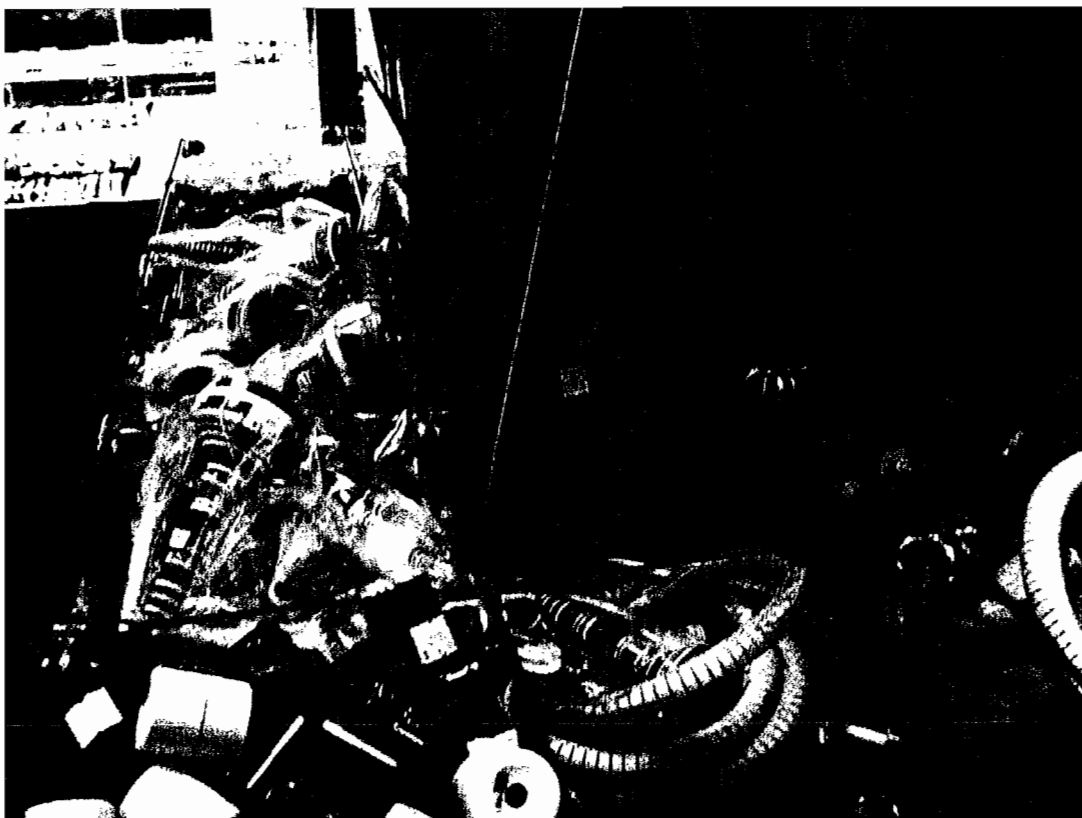


Figure 23: Indian Kitsch, Mission San Juan Capistrano (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

Conclusions

Though the major themes in recent Mission scholarship have addressed such issues as population decline, Spain's military and economic motive, the disruption of indigenous cultures and loss of language, severity of punishment, resistance, escape, *monjerios*, and the lasting legacy experienced by the Indian communities who survived them, these themes are absent from Mission museum narratives. What is present and unavoidable is loss, but without the acknowledgement of complicity in this loss. In Nancy Mithlo's 2005 *American Indian Quarterly* article, "Red Man's Burden," she asks if it is possible to express the hard truths of oppression and exploitation of Native peoples

without indicting a perceived Western majority. Should Museums avoid the hard truths because they make people feel bad?

Mission narratives deflect responsibility in a variety of ways. Some by avoiding the Indian story altogether, some by presenting a glorified version of a pre-contact Indian past followed by a narrative of progress as beneficial, some deflect blame by trivializing Native people into saleable trinkets, and one Mission exorcises its complicity in a monument to the Indian dead. Regardless of these attempts, Missions fail to recognize—or demonstrate that they recognize—their role in cultural devastation. Rhetorical strategies employed in the Mission museums are predominantly symbolic annihilation at the erasure of slavery, trivialization and deflection of responsibility, and, if told at all, the segregation of the stories of Indian people from the main, white-centered narrative. Only one Mission offers a counter narrative, but this is problematic due to the manner in which it ignores the hard truths of Mission enslavement for Indian people, depicting descendents as happy, enduring, survivors. This strategy avoids complicity by leaving a gap in the history. The narrative literally jumps from secularization and the liberation of Native people, to restoration of the Missions in the 1940s and 1950s, with no mention of Native people whatsoever, to the present day where photos of happy weavers at a local gathering deliver the message “we are still here”.

The one overarching theme (aside from this last example) among these sites is extinction, though none take responsibility for their role in obliteration. They commonly depict a peaceful pre-contact life replaced in favor of civilization and progress, leaving the poor Indian to die out or assimilate into the mainstream. Some might be tempted to address the declension model with a counter story of resurgence and revitalization, such

as the small exhibit at Santa Barbara. But these well meaning people should be wary not to gloss over the hard truths of colonization. Like critiques aimed at the National Museum of the American Indian, many people feel the complex nature of colonization, with all its suffering, sadness, and cruelty, and the ensuing 160 years of US rule, overshadows truths with a revitalization story, one that is more palatable because it has a happy ending (Lonetree 2006; Lonetree and Cobb, et al. 2008). Ultimately, can a visitor truly appreciate what revitalization means without the whole gruesome reality of the past two centuries?

Scholar Julie Cordero-Lamb suggests that the shirking of responsibility by the Catholic Church is due to their embarrassment and guilt for maintaining lands promised to Indians under Spain, Mexico and the US (personal communication 8/2007). Land grants patented between 1858 and 1874 total over 1051 acres promised to Mission Indians (Robinson 1981). This prime real estate is either still owned or has been sold for profit by the Catholic Church. Landless tribes seeking federal recognition and sovereignty in many cases because they were unable to stay together as communities in their homelands might have been cohesive groups today had Mission lands been distributed, or redistributed by the Bishop in the manner they were initially intended to be. A group must be identified as an American Indian entity on a continuous basis since 1900 according to criteria of the Office of Federal Acknowledgement. Forced assimilation through the loss and appropriation of Mission lands has precluded community cohesion. Though three governments had agreed that Mission lands be maintained for use by Indian people, today no ex-Mission lands are owned by descendants of Mission Indians.

The Mission's complicity in genocide cannot be ignored. But, like the Auschwitz Museum in Poland, whose work with descendant communities helps to address the pain in an attempt to move forward, an acknowledgement of wrongs imposed by the Church and the Spanish Crown might begin the process of healing. Instead, because Missions try as hard as they do to avoid complicity, they aggravate rather than heal the wounds of many descendants. The survival of Indian families beyond the horrifying Mission period and subsequent waves of oppression and violence are incredible testimonies to resilience and resistance. By avoiding the hard truths, current Mission and museum narratives also throw away opportunities to tell exciting and potentially empowering histories. Chapter VII discusses some of the lived experiences of these people and reveals what they would say if given the opportunity to tell their story.

CHAPTER VI

LOSS AND THE POPULAR IMAGINARY: HISTORY AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

A master narrative is an agreed upon history that is foundational to all other discourses and, “intended to enable mastery of the messy and complicated real world” (Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 24). In chapters II and III, I chronicled the complicated history of Indian life and cultures on the Central Coast as well as the messy impacts of colonization by Spain, Mexico, and the United States. Chapter IV acquainted the reader with the origins, influences, and the role of museums in telling these histories and chapter V with the dominant rhetorical strategies used in Mission museums. Now, I shift the focus to current representations in *history* and *science* venues and discuss the modern trends in these museums to tell Indian and Californio histories and the modes they use to illustrate them for public consumption.

This chapter is based on my analysis of exhibits in Central Coast museums. Since my broader methods were discussed in the previous chapter, I explain how methods differed slightly for these genres, then discuss the theoretical lens through which I

developed my analysis. I then discuss the modes of representation and dominant “take-home” messages from each of the three types of public history venues: 1) archaeology/anthropology museums; 2) natural history and science museums; and 3) local and regional history museums. I focus on visual representations, though programmatic representations are also important. It should be noted, however, that the exhibits I discuss here are central not only to the visual stories being told, but are foundational for docent trainings, visitor tour scripts, and public school teaching materials. Since most education programs are developed from the foundation of exhibits, I have begun with exhibits, but more work should be done to address education programs at these venues.

There are many manifestations of the theme, but the one overarching trend inescapable in Central Coast museums, is the “loss” or “declension” narrative. In this narrative, Indians are a vanishing (if not completely vanished) race, mere fragments of their once vibrant cultures. These cultures, now products of the museum, are a rare and exotic commodity. The concept of decline and loss is the current overarching theme in California museums, and remains the trend nationally as well. Loss narratives or participation in a “loss” discourse manifests in a variety of ways. Loss of life and population decline is exemplified for instance by discussions of disease and war. Loss of culture is most commonly portrayed through discussions of assimilation, forced and otherwise. Loss of spiritual and cosmological knowledge and practice is demonstrated through portrayals of religious conversion and acquiescence to Mission life. But the loss of land and basic human dignities are glossed over through discussions of “colonization” or “settlement”. Museums exhibiting these various forms of the declension model are skilled

in diminishing—or completely avoiding—complicity in loss. The techniques for diverting responsibility vary according to genre. Some museums choose to avoid the Indian and settlement story altogether, telling only the “natural” history of the region that somehow does not include the local people who inhabited the area for over 13,000 years. For my purposes, I consider such cases as examples of complete erasure. Next, museums such as archaeological or pre-history venues choose to portray Indian life only as it was prior to contact with, and “contamination” by, Europeans. In this version of the declension story, contact with outsiders inadvertently destroyed Indian people and cultures. In this genre, Indians disappear in the archaeological record after a certain point in time and are replaced by others. This assumption is not overtly stated, however, because these venues do not delve into “history”. Which brings us to our last version of the loss narrative, that of “progress” and the assumed, inevitable and positive outcomes of colonization. This strategy is typical of the four state-run Mission museums, but is also common in regional history museums. In this version, Indians are either assimilated into a beneficial modern world or die. This story quite often has a hero in the form of an anthropologist or benefactor/donor who saves the fragments of beautiful but apparently inferior cultures.

Embedded in the declension narratives in these three genres are the rhetorical strategies used to deliver them. These strategies follow trends much like the model used in the Missions chapter, these are: erasure, trivialization, segregated knowledge, and relative incorporation. Though not always mutually exclusive, these first three rhetorical strategies employed to deliver the declension narrative are visible in every museum on the Central Coast. These strategies enable visitors to avoid complicity in the process of

Indian “decline” in a variety of ways.

Despite census data which suggest population resurgence, numerous culture and language programs in central and southern California (despite overwhelming obstacles), and Native activism, in preserving cemeteries and sacred sites> These cases can be seen as forms of advancement, progress, and resurgence, yet these stories are unseen in the region’s museums. While I certainly would not suggest that loss is not a significant component of California Indian history, I argue that decline and loss are not the *end* of the story. In fact, in areas where tribal groups maintain a presence on the landscape, are able to operate their own museums or cultural centers, the theme of loss is countered with one of resurgence and cultural continuity (Coody-Cooper 2007; Erikson, Ward and Wachendorf 2002; Hendry 2005; Tapsell 1998). I also assert that several economic interests are deeply invested in the perpetuation of a declension narrative (Ames 1992; Asma 2001; Barringer and Flynn 1998; Jacobitti 2000), or a discourse of loss, however unrepresentative it might be.

While interpretation by the visitor plays an important role in what “take home” messages they actually receive, recent scholarship asserts that the bulk of the responsibility for what is learned lies with the museum curators, staff, and docents. “Reading” is a process of decoding an image, however, whether the “image” be in context or isolated (Ball and Smith 1992). While this may seem straightforward, the ability to correctly read some kinds of images (such as religious art) can take years of socialization. Sociological research suggests that people may read the same image in divergent ways, depending on their identity, their life experiences, and the subjective positions they adopt (Emmison 2000). It follows that when socialization has occurred in

southern California, it has been within the built environment that reflects a glorified Spanish and Mexican colonial history. The socialization a child receives prior to their first museum or Mission visit, if they have been raised in California, is one that has saturated their memory with images of Mission style architecture and de-politicized celebrations of the colonial history of California such as Fiesta Days and Cinco de Mayo. These events, that commemorate colonial takeovers, foreign occupation of Native lands, and the disruption to ancient lifeways for thousands of people are annually reenacted and glorified in southern California, similar in the north to commemorations of the “Gold Rush” days. Such celebrations erase important and painful historical memory in place of gallantry, spectacle, and consumerism. Fiesta Days, such as those held in Santa Barbara, include parades of Spanish soldiers on horseback, Mexican mariachi bands, and the typical “Mexican” cuisine served throughout the town. These events—known to all residents of California—predispose visitors to expectations and whet the appetite for a public history experience that is exotic, glorified, self-fulfilling, and fantasy.

Methods

Driven by their own codes and conventions, each of the museum sites I visited fell into one of the following genres or categories: archaeological/anthropological museums (3); natural history/science museums (4); regional history museums (6); and Mission museums (19) which I already addressed. Layout of exhibit space is essentially the foundation of the story and within this category I could also determine rhetorical strategies. Layout includes how the story is told, how and if the story flows from one period to the next or from one context to the next, as well as the privileging of certain

materials (objects and images) over others. For this reason I created a point value for each type of the six most common layouts with the highest point value attributed to the exhibits that discussed complexity, acknowledged shortcomings to the data and materials used to tell the story, and those that brought Indian communities into the present day.

To determine the dominant narratives I analyzed all visual media using three methods. First, I examined aesthetics such as the use of space, color, and lighting to create certain moods in these interpretive spaces. David Dean (1994), in his discussion of movement theory suggests that there are clearly viewable preferences of museum goers. I found these guides illuminating as I analyzed the visual media, discovering that Native materials and exhibits themselves were frequently located in smaller spaces with less lighting, themes which I will discuss in more detail. Second, I analyzed the use of objects to narrate the stories told as well as the photos, drawings, and paintings used to illustrate them. Object narratives occur when objects are recontextualized in a sequence or to create stories that index or refer to the master narrative. The objects then authenticate the approved version of the past and reinforce that story with attending verbal interpretation such as labels. Third, I examined the textual material on site such as signs and placards in the form of headlines and subtexts. I also examined printed brochures and other materials available at each location.

To critically analyze content and locate dominant narratives expressed within the visual media, I used interviews with local Native community members, and Native community questionnaires on museums (see Appendix H), as well as current discussions in mainstream museum studies scholarship and post colonial critiques. There were very clear dominant narratives that emerged from the data using these sources. For each set of

the three genres I have investigated dominant overarching themes using methods of discourse analysis (Escobar 1995; Foucault 1978; Fairclough 2003; Gee 2005; Wodak and Meyer, et al. 2001) and used established visual analysis techniques (Ball and Smith 1992; Emmison 2000).

Critical Discourse Analysis

Typically museum representations of the Native world have been constructed and then seen through the lens of the western world. This is certainly true of the central California Coast, a place that lacks a true tribal museum. In this sense Native worlds are created as the “other.” There are habitual ways of talking about this other and portraying it so that it fits into the visitor’s imagination. In California the history has been framed using periods of colonial power, hence “Spanish”, “Mexican”, and “Anglo” or “American” periods. These periods are defined by governmental maneuvering that often occurred somewhere other than on this landscape. And though the players in the local drama were certainly influenced by their administrators in Spain, Mexico and Washington D.C., these were merely people engaged in survival and human struggles. Still, this public narrative is informed primarily by the documents of those colonial governments and evidence of this can be seen everywhere within the museums. The language used within the museums and Missions is almost exclusively English. In some cases within the Missions a reference will be made in Spanish, but the language of the early empire has been replaced to accommodate the Anglo-American visitor. There is only one case where Indigenous language is used as part of the interpretation, and this is ‘Voices of the *Past*’ (my emphasis) at the Pacific House in Monterey. Who gets to speak

and who does not conveys a subtle message to the visitor. What does this automatically tell the listener about the relationships portrayed? Why, visitors should ask themselves, is someone other than the Indian telling the Indian story?

I used a common heuristic utilized by discourse analysts to define the themes in California coast museums and Missions. The heuristic assumes some basic principles about discourse such as the fact that it is shaped by the possibilities as well as the limits of language, its participants, and by prior and future discourses. With that in mind I have examined the medium of narrative at each site, how this particular medium limits what messages can be delivered, and how they might convey authority (e.g. historic photograph). I have also asked of each venue, what is the purpose of this institution and what is its purpose for telling this particular story to the public? I then explored the rhetorical strategies most commonly employed at each of the three genres of museums on the Central Coast. I have organized the chapter along a historic continuum, addressing archaeological museums which represent the earliest period of occupation followed by natural history and science museums, which represent Native people through contact with others, and conclude with history museums, those that deal with life on the coast after colonization.

A Vanished People: Archaeological/Anthropological Museums

Lompoc Museum

The Lompoc museum is a small venue in a small town with an enormous Chumash collection donated in the 1970s by a local teacher and town hero, Clarence ‘Pops’ Ruth. Though spoken of highly by museum staff and docents, Ruth had a

reputation among archaeologists as a notorious looter or grave robber (personal communication with California archaeologists Jon Erlandson, Torrey Rick, Larry Spanne, Rene Vellanoweth and 1998). In fact, a Native archaeologist told me in a 2006 interview, “If you go to Lompoc, those are all grave goods!” Due to the poor documentation accompanying the collection, staff at the Lompoc Museum say they do not know for sure if there are human remains in the collection, the director states, “as far as I know, unless I haven’t seen them yet, I mean, there are no skulls in the museum, clearly” (Lompoc museum interview 2/2007). Because the Lompoc Museum is a private institution they did not have to conduct a NAGPRA inventory (Pevar 2002, 332). It appears, however, from the presence of thousands of shell beads, steatite bowls and amulets, and other such “wealth” items commonly found in Chumash burials (Kroeber 1925; Harrington 1942; Erlandson and Glassow 1997; Walker 1993), that this collection may indeed be graveyard plunder (see Figure 24).

With this enormous pre-contact collection, the Lompoc Museum tells a pre-contact story. Their director is herself an archaeologist, an expert in pre-contact Chumash life, and the docents are knowledgeable about the daily lives of the Chumash prior to contact with Europeans. Hunting, fishing, tule dwellings, tomols, acorn harvesting, are all part of the story at the Lompoc Museum. However, the story of the coming of the Whites and the Mission system is fourth grade material and left to La Purisima Mission up the road to tell. The Chumash story ends in 1787 with the founding of Mission La Purisima at the Lompoc Museum. With a small budget that allows for only two half-time employees, the museum is painfully dependent upon their volunteer docents. Retired teachers and local business people, they clearly have a great deal of pride for their town

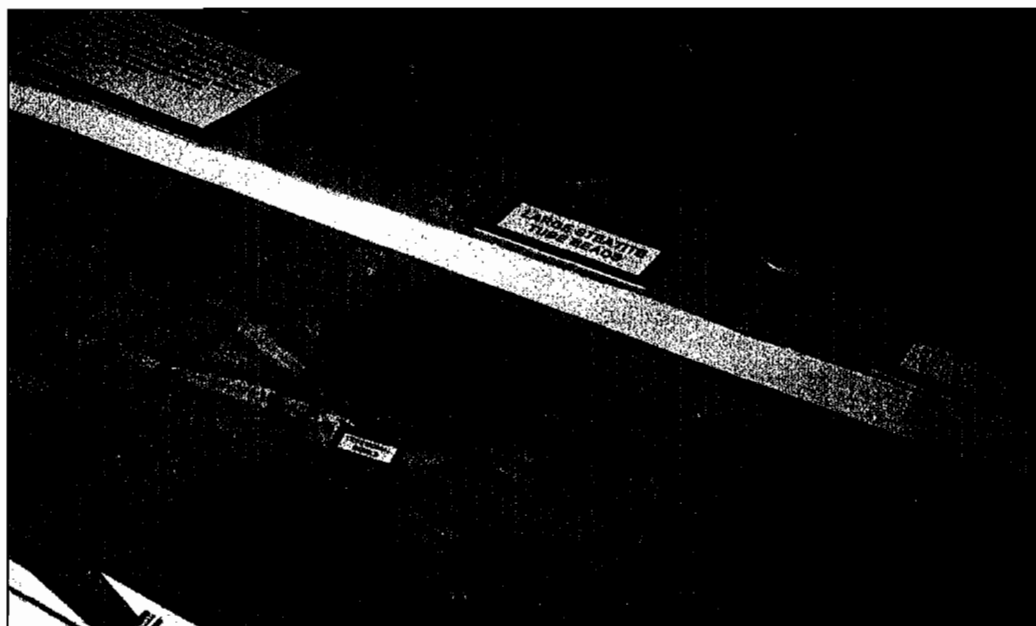


Figure 24: Steatite Artifacts, Lompoc Museum (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

and the local history. Knowledge of the local Chumash people since contact is not their strong suit, however, and cultural sensitivity is a problem. One docent, an elderly woman who claims Native American ancestry uses the *singular* when speaking about the Chumash people, as if discussing the last of his tribe. In school group presentations and in my interview with her, she consistently spoke of the Chumash man, or the Chumash father. An example of her worldview is apparent here in her response to the question of whether she thought that it was the museum's responsibility to teach about living Indian people. She responded by saying,

No, I think it's better that they leave it alone, sometimes it makes them look bad....I mean all they [the local Indian people] want is to buy land and make it part of their reservation and not pay taxes on it, and I'm against that. We docents asked them a question at the powwow and they turned on us like viscous animals (2/2007).

While such blatant ignorance and insensitivity are rare, I encountered many misunderstandings and cultural blind-spots in my interviews with Lompoc docents. To their credit, however, in a conversation I had with Museum Director, Lisa Renken just weeks after my visit, she told me that she and her docents had assembled a small contemporary Chumash exhibit. She said it was only temporary until they can have some discussions with the local (Santa Ynez Chumash) tribe, and begin work on a better one. She said that they felt after talking with me, that they needed to extend the Chumash story to include living people (personal communication 5/2007).

Albinger Archaeological Museum

The Albinger Archaeological Museum, in Ventura was also established as a result of a large archaeological donation. In this case it was the excavated materials from a multi-component archaeological site adjacent to the museum. During a development project, the team encountered a vast collection of materials spanning several decades and “periods of occupation”. It was decided that the public could benefit from the telling of the story from an archaeological perspective.

Artifacts revealing 3,500 years of five different cultures have been found on the site of this archeological museum. Evidence of an early Indian culture dating from 1600 B.C. and the later Chumash Indians from 1500 onwards, are exhibited along with objects dating from the founding of the Mission through the early 1900's. The original Mission foundation and an earth oven are in the dig area outside (Ventura County Museum website).

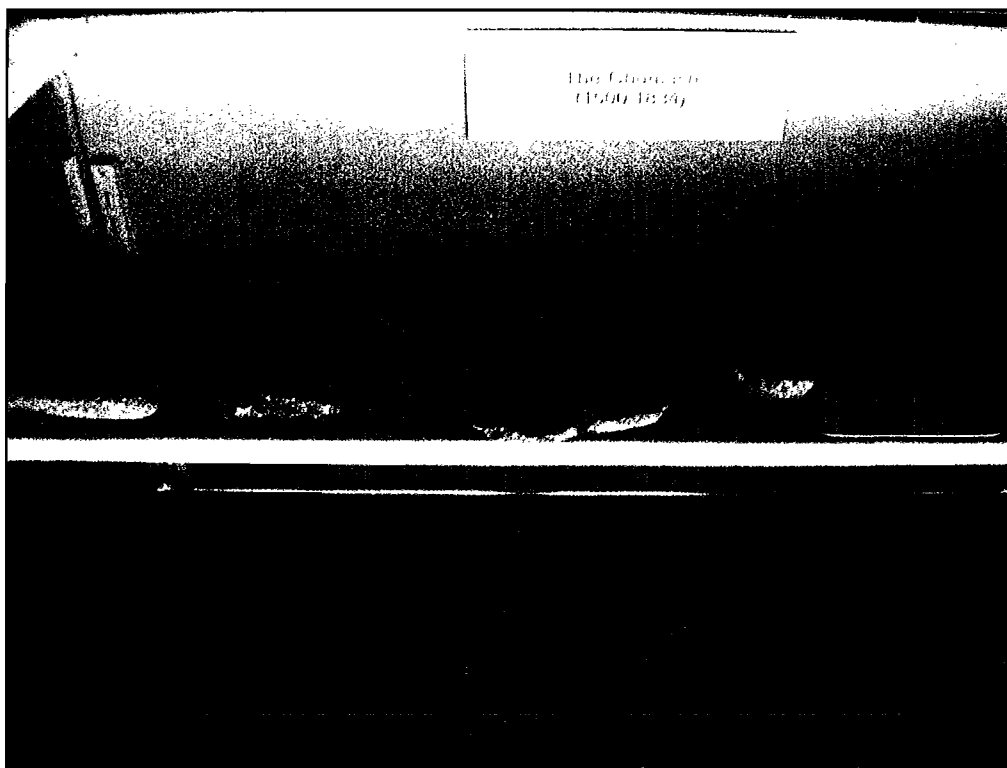


Figure 25: “The Chumash 1500-1834”, Albinger Archaeological Museum (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

Especially problematic at the Albinger is the constant reference to ethnic “eras” of occupation as static periods in time. This rhetorical strategy abandons people other than Anglo-Americans in the past. Though common in these venues to leave the Chumash in 1769, which the Albinger also does, interestingly the “Chumash period” *begins* only 500 years ago according to the interpretation (Figure 25). Though the museum’s director, staff and docents believed this to be true, none knew exactly who had determined that “fact” or if it were true. According to the last twenty to thirty years of scholarship on the Chumash, no group has been determined to have occupied the region, which includes Ventura, prior

to the Chumash and their occupation is now placed at 13,000 YBP (Erlandson and Jones 2002). Even the “Canalino,” an archaeological culture defined in the 1920s that is considered synonymous with the Chumash is considered to have begun between 3,000 and 4,000 years ago (see Erlandson and Rick 2002). The eras that follow the “pre-Chumash” and “Chumash” eras are of course, the “Spanish”, “Mexican” and “American”. These periods are defined by the materials excavated from each of the levels of occupation. No accompanying text explains that though these were periods defined by the government that ruled over California during those years, that the local people’s lives may or may not have been dramatically affected by them, or that the people known as Chumash and Mexican still occupied the area in subsequent eras or thrive today.

Docent interpretations at the Albinger varied greatly, as in most history venues, and the level of knowledge available depends primarily on which docent is assigned to which group. Exhibits here, thankfully, do not always form the basis of the tour, as they are badly outdated, inaccurate, and culturally insensitive. The Albinger is generally part of a three-museum tour which includes the Ventura Mission and the Ventura County Museum. Because of the “package” nature of this tour, the Albinger staff and docents feel that visitors will ascertain a comprehensive understanding of local history given that the Mission covers 1769-1824 and the County Museum interprets from 1824 forward. Though an interesting strategy, my observations revealed that most visitors who came on their own to one venue did *not* attend another of the three. Fourth graders brought by their schools, did however attend all three venues, but I observed them as inattentive and antsy by the last museum. Eight out of ten children I asked, “Based on what you learned here, are there living Indian people in the area today?” replied, “no”.

Oakbrook Regional Park, Chumash Interpretive Center

Founded in 1990, the Chumash Interpretive Center was not developed around a collection of artifacts, but rather as a result of development. For this venue, located in an ancient oak grove in one of the most affluent areas in central California, I have vastly more background information because of my own history there mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation. The money for the building, I was told, and a long term lease with the County of Ventura was acquired by a group of Chumash people in the late 1980's when a canal project in Port Hueneme, about twenty-seven miles west of Oakbrook uncovered several burials. The project led by the County of Ventura, would divert floodwaters and potential mudslides away from Highway 101. When the burials were encountered, the initial team of Native American monitors forced the project to halt and began a law-suit against the County for neglecting to conduct the proper testing, potentially avoiding disruption to their ancestors. This Native group also insisted on a new plan, one that would leave the burials intact, but cost the County untold thousands to develop. The group of Chumash monitors tried to compile a case, but soon ran out of money and the case was dismissed for lack of evidence. The County of Ventura quickly hired another group to conduct monitoring and proceed with the initial plan. The second monitoring group decided it was appropriate to relocate the ancestral remains to a location agreed upon by both parties. This site was the Oakbrook Regional Park. At this point negotiations began between the monitoring team and the County that eventually led to the planning and establishment of the existing cultural center.

The second monitoring group, later called the Ish Panish Band of Chumash, after

having a small but tasteful and efficient museum built, worked with a local non-Indian craftsman to develop a collection of replicas of Chumash clothing, household items, games, hunting and fishing equipment etc. Masterfully skilled at reproducing the pre-contact Chumash material culture, this man equipped the Interpretive Center with everything they needed to tell a pre-contact story of Chumash life. In addition, the Ish Panish developed a loan relationship with the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, borrowing a Ventureno (Ventura area Chumash) basket, as well as some ground and chipped-stone artifacts. To accompany these items were murals of various pre-contact activities that were designed to look like local living Chumash people (personal communication, Roberta Reyes Cordero 2008). All went well in the beginning, but squabbles between extended family over time led to several people leaving their positions on the board and boycotting museum events. Within a year local, wealthy, non-Indian businessmen had filled all but one of the slots on the board of directors.

For years, the center was utilized by local schools for years to tell the pre-contact history of the Chumash, and when operated by the Chumash people presumably the modern Chumash story as well. Between 1996 and 2005, the interpretive center became a site for the Echota Cherokee Deer Clan West “Tribal” Headquarters, however, run by charismatic leader Bob “Nighthawk” Vann. The site became a magnet for local, misguided, New Agers to learn Nighthawk’s “ancient” wisdom, participate in sweat-lodge and Indian naming ceremonies, drumming circles, and aura readings. During this period the Chumash Interpretive Center continued to host three to four schools each week (approximately 400-500 children) presumably to learn about the Chumash. The volunteer base and programs (if not exhibits), however, revolved not around Chumash life and

culture, but stereotypes and New Age mysticism.

When speaking about the exhibits, I speak in past tense because in 2006, the craftsman who designed the replica collection, after a falling out with “Nighthawk,” reclaimed his items and left the exhibits bare. Today, there are few visual exhibits at Oakbrook and volunteers are scrambling to find contemporary Chumash artisans to design materials for the cases. There are currently two Chumash people on the board and the Echotas have left. A sparsely attended powwow in May 2008 is testimony to the struggles that the facility continues to face. Local lore suggests that failure of the museum was predestined because of the manner in which the site was acquired, fragmenting the community and disrupting the ancestors (personal communication with Chumash community members). Still, regardless of who is running the Center, busloads of third grade children arrive there daily, for their first glimpse and “hands- on” experience of “Chumash” life and culture.

In anthropological and archaeological museums, even this one that was supposed to represent the local Indian people, the tendency is often to focus on a pre-contact and “untainted” culture. While this form of representation is seen as scientific, sensible, and even worthwhile by many, critics argue that static portrayals that typify these museums lead to misconceptions about “others” especially in terms of alienating the past from living communities (Coody-Cooper 2007; Erikson, Ward and Wachendorf 2002). In addition, highlighting only the ethnographic present, or a snapshot in time perpetuates an ahistorical view of Native life (Hendry 2006; Lonetree 2006; Stocking 1995). While the field of anthropology has reinvented itself in the past three decades, its new approach has been slow to permeate anthropology museums and the result is that venues that portray

anthropological knowledge do not represent current anthropological trends.

The dominant rhetorical strategy and mode of representation of the declension narrative in anthropological/archaeological venues is the loss of life. The take-home message is clearly that the Indians are gone in these venues, privileging bygone days (and peoples) in the minds of California's third graders. When asked where the Indians have gone, it can be assumed that based on this type of oversimplification of the Indian narrative, the Indian "left" when the White man came. Binary oppositions of colonizer vs. colonized are common in venues employing this rhetorical strategy. The subject position of the viewer as colonizer is downplayed and impacts on Indian populations are described as unfortunate, but unavoidable. These venues rarely acknowledge or assume an Indian or descendant population as one of their publics, which they clearly are in Ventura County. Californio/Indian enclaves are common in Ventura County, in barrios such as El Rio, Oxnard, Santa Paula (Menchaca 2001), Fillmore, and the west-side of the city of Ventura (Census 2000 Website).

One with Nature: Science and Natural History Museums

Science and natural history venues also tell the story of California Indians and reflect a dominant paradigm of a different (perhaps more covert) shade. Science venues as a genre tend to consider local Indians in relation to the flora and fauna, but leave off when the "real humans" arrive on the scene, somewhere in the late 18th century. Four sites I visited in the Central Coast region fall into this category. They are distinct from regional and anthropological venues because of their emphasis on adaptation to the environment, though again there are aspects that overlap each category. These sites are

located in the northern three counties of my study.

Pacific Grove Natural History Museum

I began my journey in the north, with a site located in Monterey County a place that boasts the most mild climate and lush coastlines in North America. Pacific Grove, a tiny town in Monterey County next to well known Carmel-by-the-Sea, is characterized by its small town feel and beach community. The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History is located in the heart of Ohlone territory. What is not well known is the fact that it has acted as the Central Coast repository for Native American materials for over 150 years. In fact, no visitor to this venue would imagine that this facility houses one of the most extensive collections of Ohlone materials anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, of the vast collection there are only two Ohlone baskets on exhibit, and all other materials are from other areas in California and the Southwest.

The “Native American” room lies in stark contrast to the rest of the facility. The updated, colorful, and dynamic science and natural history exhibits engage and excite young visitors. They travel from all over the county and beyond to learn about the Monarch butterfly’s journey here and to observe them in the nearby Eucalyptus grove.

The Indian space however is barely noticed. Quiet and dimly lit, the space allocated to the Indians is a lonely place. The Pacific Grove Museum offers the quintessential Native American exhibit found in post-modern critiques of representation (see Ames 1992; Haraway 1985; Stocking 1985 and others). Surprised and amazed that this kind of exhibit still exists in the 21st century, I spent several hours watching

disengaged visitors stroll through, spending an average of 2 minutes in the room and most looking at only one or two of the exhibit cases in the space.

The Native American room has nine large cases exhibiting California Indian basketry. Small text cards accompanying intricately woven Yurok, Karok, and Klamath (tribes located 300 miles north of Monterey) baskets identify the name of the collector, the tribal group of the basket's origin, the weaving style employed and plant materials used. One panel mentions the resourcefulness of "Indians" to find and utilize all plants

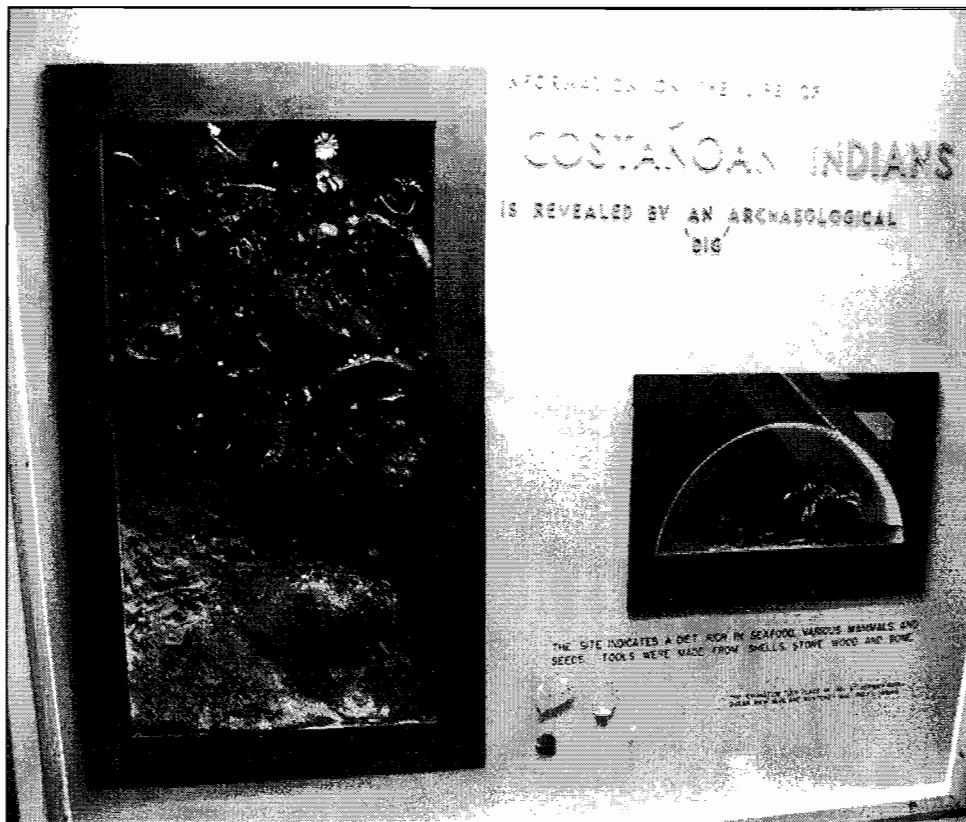


Figure 26: "Costanoan Indians, Archaeological Dig" Exhibit, Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

and animals available to them. Photos found in some of the basketry cases are black and white enlargements of ethnographic images obtained from the John P. Harrington collection at UC Berkeley. These Curtis-esque images are used primarily to give an Indian context to the baskets but have no relevance to the objects themselves. They depict, for example a group of Pomo elders in one and another a family of California Indians huddled in a doorway. Both of these photographs date to the early 20th century. All of these basketry exhibits lack any cultural context, information about the weavers, historical background of the tribe, or any reference to the living people carrying on those weaving traditions today. One exhibit case describes the process of an archaeology “dig” and how scientists know what they know about the “Costanoan” (more currently known as Ohlone) people (see Figure 26).

Linda Yamane, founding member of the California Indian Basketweavers Association and an Ohlone descendant, says of the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History,

Though they have a beautiful collection of our materials, their exhibits are really pathetic. They don't tell the history of our people at all, and throw away the opportunity to do so (Yamane interview 1/2007).

Morro Bay Museum of Natural History

In one of the three venues that fall into this category, the choice not to include a story about, or materials of Native Americans was made when they remodeled the facility in the late 1990s. However, this site does have a Native American school program and materials available for teachers on the local Chumash and Salinan Indians. The emphasis

of these materials and the school program is the Native people's resourcefulness and knowledge of the natural environment. The program covers a great deal of material on resources used, housing, dress, and games played by children. It does not mention, however, adaptations to the changing environment after European settlement or the devastation and loss that occurred during this period, nor does it mention impacts on the surviving descendant communities. The school program leaves off with this quote; "...with the coming of the Spanish Missions, Indian life was changed in many ways" (MBNHM docent handbook).

Upon arrival at the Morro Bay Natural History Museum, the visitor is greeted by



Figure 27: "One with Nature" Statue, Morro Bay Museum of Natural History (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

a bronze Native American man dressed in the stereotypical loin cloth (see figure 27). He apparently there to exemplify the harmony in which Indian people presumably lived with nature. Because this is the only representation of him and his “people” are not portrayed inside the museum, however, it is implied that he was *once* a part of this landscape but no longer important enough to warrant mention.

Pismo Beach Nature Center

South from Morro Bay on Highway 101 at the Pismo Beach Nature Center, a team of committed volunteer docents teach approximately 200 children per week about Chumash culture in a site perfectly designed for interpretation. The center is located at the edge of an estuary still abundant with indigenous plants used for medicines, weaving, and nourishment by local Indian groups. The plants not found growing in their natural habitat have been cultivated by the docent staff in the facility’s “Chumash Garden.” The main themes of this facility are how the Chumash people lived and thrived on the Central Coast. The history of where the people are now, however, is missing. When asked the question, “where are the Chumash today?” by local schoolchildren, the docents reply “on the little reservation in Santa Ynez Valley.” This is true, of course, but only partly true. It is common when speaking to docents on the Central Coast about coast Indians, that they mention the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. The reference to the federally recognized band does not include, however, the other 5,000 other people who identify as Chumash. Reference to reservation-based communities oversimplifies the diversity of the modern era and ignores the enormous urban Indian population. In addition, it also generates conversation about casinos and the controversy around gaming—also not an

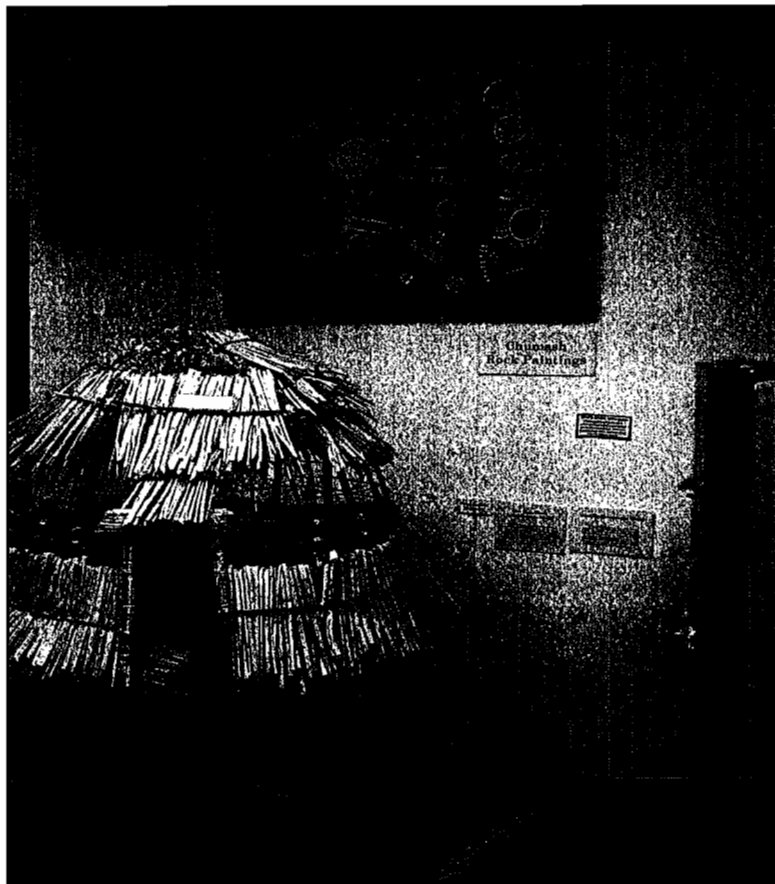


Figure 28: Chumash Exhibit, Pismo Beach Nature Center (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

experience of non-recognized tribal people who make up the vast majority of the Indian population on the Central Coast.

The “exhibit” space is limited to a corner of the pre-fabricated building (see Figure 28). The facility itself is modest, as it functions primarily as a campground office for the Pismo Beach State Park. The unpaid docent staff has made good use of the area they do have, filling it with baskets, animal skins, and other interactives that they say the children love. Well versed in pre-contact Chumash culture, the Pismo Nature Center offers about 100 tours per year and the visitor center hosts campers year round.

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History located just a half mile from the Santa Barbara Mission is seen by many as the site for “expert knowledge” on Chumash history. However, the “Chumash Hall”, scarcely updated since the 1950s, is dimly lit and smells of moth balls. This museum boasts the greatest collection of Chumash baskets, as well as a policy of inclusion, yet all Chumash community members I interviewed had something negative to say about this site. Many mentioned the Chumash Hall as a “dead

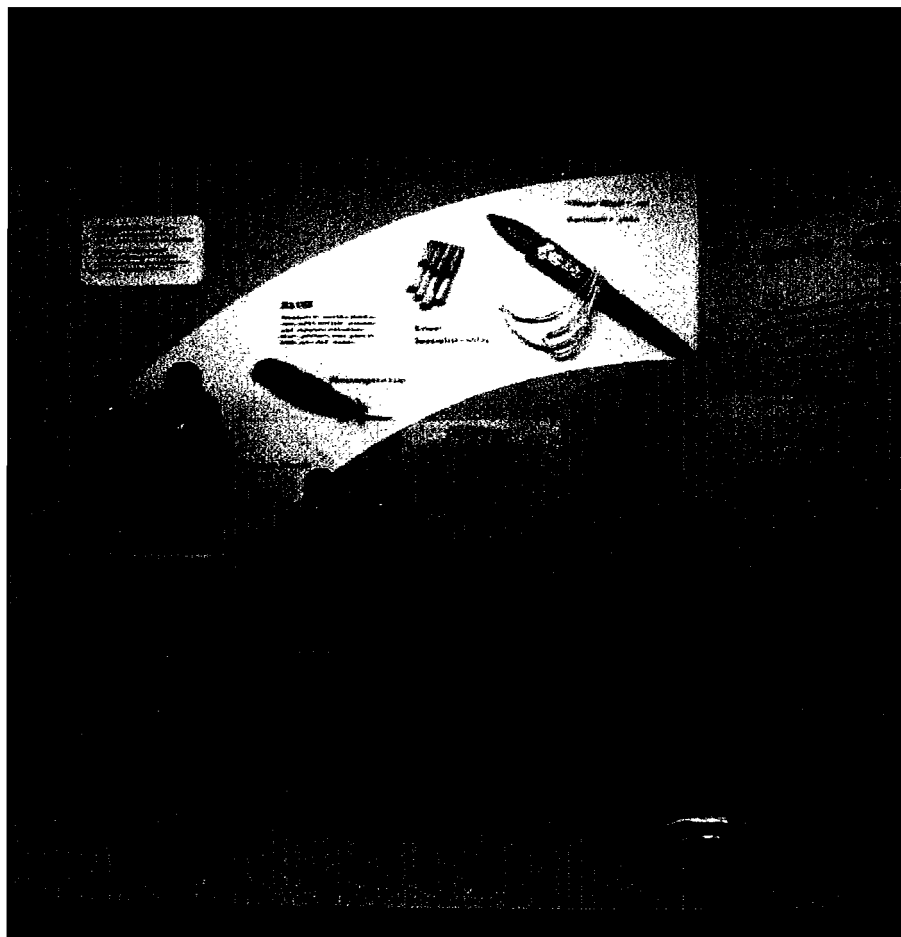


Figure 29: “Chumash Society” Exhibit, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

exhibit”, “eerily dark and cold”, and as “representing Indians in the past.” Others felt that explanations of Chumash social structure over-emphasize class stratification and accumulation of wealth, both of which are not part of their understanding of traditional Chumash life (see Figure 29). Still another said that the Chumash Hall is more of a testament to the life of John Peabody Harrington, an Anglo anthropologist, than it is to Chumash people.

The museum is located in a heavy tourist area and enjoys a visitor base of approximately 100,000 people per year. Utilized by the public schools, it offers programs on topics such as butterflies, dinosaurs, local flora and fauna, and the Chumash. In a typical 1950’s fashion, the museum utilizes the diorama as its primary mode of representation, and while the last case contains a text panel “Links from past to present” the *present* is represented by black and white photos taken in the early 1900s.

In the auditorium is a plank canoe built in the 1970s by Chumash community members, men who reconstituted the modern-day Brotherhood of the Tomol. Using the John Harrington notes and with funding from the museum, these Chumash men built and paddled as their ancestors had 130 years earlier. The celebration of Chumash life and culture that surrounded this event felt monumental to many and empowered Chumash people and inspired them to begin re-learning their ancestral language and gathering regularly as a community once again (personal communication with tomol group members). Because the museum had commissioned the tomol to be built, museum officials later asserted ownership and asked that it be held and exhibited there as a symbol of cultural revitalization and partnership between the community and the museum. To the dismay of the builders/paddlers and the community, the Helek was

bolted to the wall, making it a permanent museum piece, punching holes in its hull and essentially killing it (see Figure 30). The sign beneath the Helek reads;

The *HELEK*: replica of a Chumash *tomol*, or plank canoe, 1976

Fernando Librado Kitsepawit, a Chumash Indian, shared his knowledge of plank canoes with anthropologist John P. Harrington during interviews from 1912 to 1915. More than 60 years later, Museum Curator Travis Hudson found, translated, edited and organized the 3,200 pages of notes by Harrington on *tomol* construction and use.

Wanting to create a functional, seagoing replica based on Fernando Librado's knowledge, Hudson worked with master boat-builder Harry Davis and Peter Howorth to develop a set of plans. With a team of Museum friends, they built this canoe in as authentic a way as possible and tested it at sea. Named the *Helek* ("Falcon" in the Chumash language), this canoe was the first *tomol* seen in Santa Barbara Channel waters since the 1850s.

The *Helek* was commissioned as a Bicentennial project and was financed by community contributions. It took part in a 200th anniversary re-enactment of the Juan Bautista de Anza expedition arrival in Santa Barbara. After several other voyages, including a partial circumnavigation of the Santa Barbara Channel, the *Helek* was retired from sea duty and placed on exhibit.



Figure 30: Helek *Tomol* Exhibit, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

No mention is made of the Brotherhood who helped build the tomol and navigated it through the channel, nor to the purpose it served rejuvenating the spirit of Chumash culture. Requests have been made to bring the Helek down for community events as well as to reword the signage to honor the men—now elders in the community—for their work and care in the building of the canoe. These requests have been ignored. In addition to what is viewed as blatant disrespect by the Native community, the museum throws away the opportunity to bring the Chumash story into the present day for the purpose of public education. Discussions of revitalization efforts that could potentially empower local Indian people could also educate the public about the work that living people are doing today to keep their culture alive.

The overarching theme in science and natural history venues is marginalization within broader discussions of science and nature. The rhetorical strategy for the “loss” or declension narrative is displayed through segregated knowledge and marginalization or ghettoization of the Indian story in favor of more dynamic “living” exhibits found in science. In all these museums the time visitors spent in spaces *other* than the Indian rooms/exhibits was about five to one. Loss is demonstrated not only by the museum exhibits (or lack of), whose interest and emphasis is clearly in science and “natural” phenomena, but by visitors who have literally lost interest.

The four museums discussed above represent Indian people in a past, primitive, and “natural” state, predominantly occurring in dark, unappealing spaces. For these venues to bring Indian life to the fore in their narratives would require tackling issues of colonization, land tenure, sovereignty, and racism which began with the arrival of Europeans. These complexities are perhaps viewed as “unnatural” and therefore left to other venues to tackle. When asked the question, “is it the responsibility of history and natural history museums to tell the story of living Indians?” the education director at Pacific Grove told me he felt that the Indians in this area were always battling amongst each other and that he felt it would be politically dangerous to try to represent them. In fact, he said, it is why they have never given very much thought to updating the exhibits. “It’s too political” (Kettleman interview 1/2007).

Clearly, when funds are available at the Pacific Grove and Santa Barbara Museums, exhibits and programs that deal with eco-science and other “natural” phenomena take priority over efforts to reflect current trends in museum studies and history scholarship. It also seems clear that these two institutions see little importance in

consulting and creating viable partnerships with descendant Native communities. Holders of huge Native collections, educators of Native life and culture for thousands of third and fourth grade students, these facilities operate with outmoded, even archaic museum policies and practices.

Hooray for Progress: Local and Regional History Museums

Local and regional history venues tend to be informed by historians, most of whom *historically* have been white men, interested in political movements but not necessarily individual or working class agency. These museums also tend to use their collections as the basis of their exhibits and programming, which are frequently materials donated by the local, wealthy, and well known (Levin 2007).

I visited and photographed six museums of this type and conducted interviews and more extensive research at three. These sites are well dispersed throughout the four county area and these six are representative of the genre within the region.

Pacific House Historical Museum

Located at the start of the “Path of History,” the Pacific House launches us into mythical story of progression from primitivism to civilization. Adjacent to the Maritime Museum in Custom House Plaza, in historic Monterey California the Pacific House is part of the “package” that is sold to tourists (Norkunas 1989). It is presently the only site that offers a general history of the area and was intended to tell the synthesized ethnic

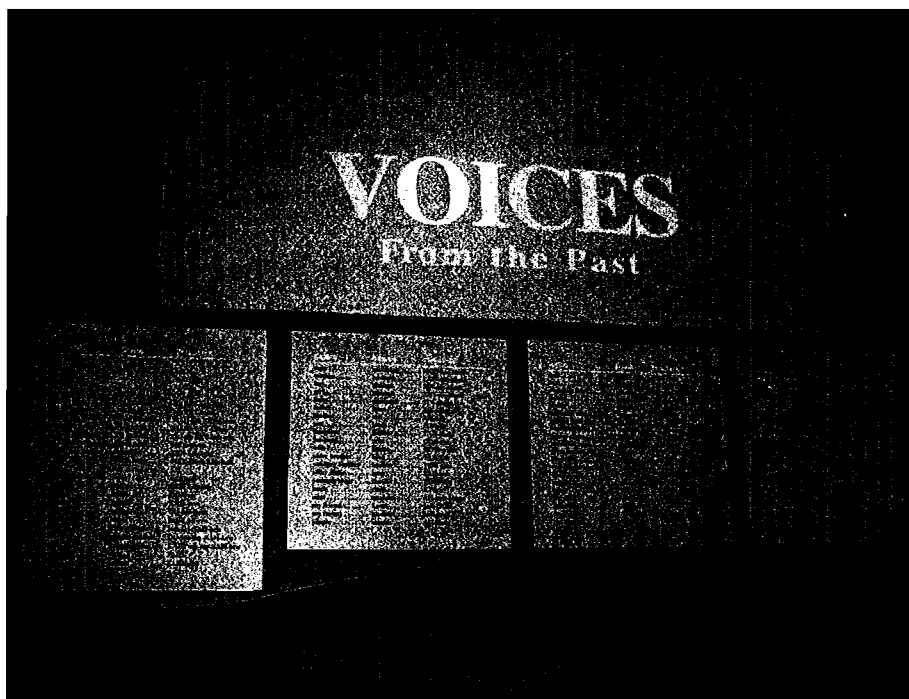


Figure 31: “Voices From the Past” Exhibit, Pacific House History Museum (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

history of Monterey. It aptly begins with the Native American history. Martha Norkunas analyzed interpretation in the highly visited Monterey area in her 1989 book, *The Politics of Public Memory*. Norkunas’ analysis demonstrates my point about era sequence which frame earlier ethnic periods on a continuum of progress. She stated, “The Pacific House brings us physically through stages of evolution as we move forward through the primitive period of Native Americans, into the more advanced period introduced by the Europeans” (Norkunas 1989, 36).

Though recently updated by one Ohlone community member, with an interactive Ohlone language recording, the storyline of the exhibit follows the predictable trajectory disjointing the Native people from the rest of history, and leaving them as “voices of the

past” (see Figure 31), but not present or future. Depictions of Native people occupy only the first section of the exhibit space with a discussion of local flora and fauna and ways that the local people gathered and used those materials. The Indian discussion, illustrated by an image of an *Aleut* skin boat in Monterey Bay (?), quickly transitions from the “Stone Age to the Iron Age” (headline) into the Spanish Mission period “A Worldwide Empire” after the headline “Death and the Indians” and the “Making of a Spaniard.” After this there is no mention of Native people, potentially because they were disadvantaged by the “Masters of Warfare!” The headlines from that point forward are “Pioneering in Monterey,” “Manifest Destiny”, “This Country, We Must Have it, Others Must Not”, “Taking California”, “Seizing the Day”, and finally, “the Great Seal of California!” The progress narrative so popular in regional history museums, here at the Pacific House sequesters Indians and Mexicans to the inevitable fate of inferior peoples. Norkunas (1989) adds that there is no sense of the conflict inherent in Spanish colonization, and that the bludgeoning that Indians endured is framed merely as a time when California was “discovered.” The new beginning is used as a way to justify what occurred next.

The lack of any reference to Native people’s later involvement with “Mexicans” or “Americans” or attention paid to contemporary Indian issues erases a Native American presence on the landscape. Norkunas (1989, 37) stated, “A complex intellectual and artifactual history has been flattened and at times suppressed, in the interest of a simplified generalized image.” Still, the Pacific House hosts local schools throughout the school year (September through June), providing an Ohlone history program twice a month.

Paso Robles Pioneer Museum

Greeted at the door by a four foot tall, wooden Indian figure, such as the type commonly seen in front of cigar stores, (Figure 32) visitors to the Paso Robles Pioneer Museum are met with an icon of a bygone era. Next to the wooden Indian, is a wide array of assorted Mission replicas, plastic Indian dolls, actual chipped and ground stone



Figure 32: Cigar Store Indian, Paso Robles Pioneer Museum (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

artifacts, and miniature dioramas of local Chumash life. These materials literally fill the room at the entry of the space. Charged with supplemental education for San Luis Obispo's third grade classes—and the *only* history venue in the county to tell a pre-Mission story of the local Chumash Indians—this site resembles the cabinet of curiosity representations, deconstructed for the past thirty years by public historians and anthropologists. While none of the exhibits at the Paso Robles Pioneer Museum are well developed, the Indian exhibit is especially haphazard in its display technique. Ancient Chumash materials are exhibited on the floor while plastic Katsina replicas, made in China, are sealed in glass cases. None of the materials on exhibit have descriptive text. Following the predictable progress narrative, the space orients the visitor in the past with the Native American exhibit. This entry area is also used as the bookstore. Next, through the walkway is the Vaquero or cowboy exhibit. This space gestures at Indians and Mexicans, who were the region's first cowboys, but depicts only Anglo horsemen in photos.

The remainder of the enormous exhibit space of the Pioneer Museum is dedicated to the local Anglo-American ranching community and various forms of technology used by ranches and farms in the area. From telephones to tractors the space is virtually filled to capacity with an odd assortment of things.

Ventura County Museum of History and Art

With a layout echoing the progress narrative, the Ventura County Museum of History and Art uses colorful imagery and a combination of artifacts and replicas to illustrate the beginning of time in the area, the Chumash pre-contact era. With watercolor

backdrops of people-less landscapes and materials hermetically sealed in plexi-glass boxes, one must call upon her own imagination to see the Chumash *people* here (Figure 33). Docents are eager, however to talk about “the people who *once* lived in Ventura County” (docent interview 2/2006).

Also colorful is the representation of the Mission Period, for which, the museum uses golden chalices and brightly colored vestments to illustrate the wealth of the Crown. In stark contrast to these, the Rancho Period is rendered using historic documents and black and white drawings, making this point in history rather bleak and uninteresting. Though Indian people are mentioned once during the Rancho Period, naturally as servants to wealthy Californios, they are not mentioned again. Mexicans, though mentioned once after the Rancho Period are likewise not mentioned again during the “American” period. Cities in Ventura County, it should be noted, such as Oxnard, El Rio, and Port Hueneme, have populations that are over 50% Mexican-American. Here, we find the one divergence from the predictable “ethnic era” mode of representation:

The Californio lifestyle became famous in travelers tales for its fiestas and hospitality. The image of such luxury is in part nostalgic fiction created by Anglo writers who romanticized Rancho days and conveniently forgot the swindles that cost the Californios their landholdings (VCMHA Rancho Exhibit).

As with many of the venues I have discussed, docents play a major role in the take home message. The Chumash exhibit, for instance, has materials and images but very little text. Without a docent, a visitor is going to learn very little about the Chumash people, past or present. The Rancho Period on the other hand has a great deal of text that probably will not be read, due to the fact that museum visitors rarely spend time to read the fine print textual matter, and because overall the exhibit fails to keep our attention. In these cases, docents determine the message. Because of this, I asked to see the script or materials used to conduct the tours. I was told that the docents at Ventura deliver five different outreach programs: Chumash Technology, Chumash Foods, Rancho Life, 100 years of history, and a week-long Chumash youth program in the summer. They were

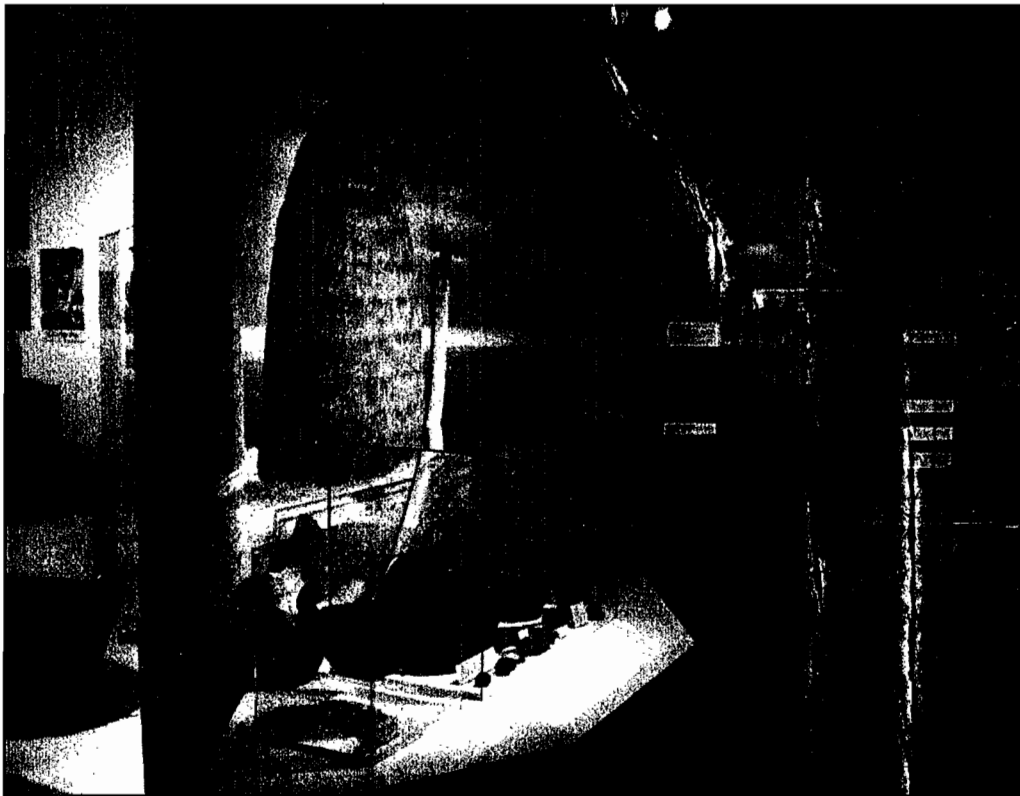


Figure 33: Chumash Exhibit, Ventura County Museum of History and Art (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

unwilling to share the current script with me, however, saying that they were in the process of re-writing a new script and were embarrassed by its current content. Though materials of this type are generally available for schools and teachers to review, knowing that I might discuss the content of the script in this dissertation precluded me from obtaining one.

Stagecoach Inn Museum

Greeted at the door by a woman in a Victorian era costume, I was quickly oriented to the history of the historic house. Much like a House Museum, the main floor of the Stagecoach Museum is decorated with mid 19th century furniture and black and white photographs of all of the house's Anglo residents through time. My hostess prattled on about the relocation of the house during the building of Highway 101 until I interrupted and told her I was especially interested in the "ethnic" history of the area. She excused herself and directed me downstairs to the "Chumash Room." With an impressive collection of materials accumulated over time from local Anglo collectors and pot hunters, the Stagecoach Museum is a favorite among third-grade teachers. The Chumash program generally occurs in a basement room lined with glass cases exhibiting a combination of artifacts and replicas. Docents dressed as colonial-pioneers tell the story of the pre-contact Chumash to approximately 1000 children per week during the American Indian "season" which generally occurs from March to June.

In addition to the indoor Chumash program, the Stagecoach has an Indian village complete with two tule houses, a grinding stone, and a game area, where programs are also held. Adjacent to the "village" are models of other types of housing that followed the



Figure 34: Chumash Exhibit, Stagecoach Historic Museum
(Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

Indian period, a Mexican adobe and an early Anglo pioneer house. In regional history/progress fashion, the Stagecoach Museum leaves Indians and Mexicans in a mythologized pre-Anglo past, without mention to the role of the White “American” in the oppression of those people and the cultures seemingly so revered here.

Conclusions

Competing with dinosaurs, sharks, butterflies and spiders, the history and cultures of Native peoples are marginalized and underfunded. Native American history in natural

history and science museums continue to be problematic because of the tendency to hold people in a static pre-contact and “natural” past. Many have chosen, as Morro Bay has, to avoid human history entirely and focus on the less controversial and less complicated areas of amphibians and mollusks. In fact, curators at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) in Washington, D.C. have also made this choice. Because, in recent years most of the Native American materials have been removed to the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), the Natural History museum is phasing out all discussions of *people* within its exhibits, leaving visitors with the sense the people are distinct from or exist outside from the natural environment. In a time of environmental crisis this thinking—and the visual perpetuation of it—could be disastrous.

Like natural history venues, anthropology museums tend to focus on an ethnographic present, privileging a primitive representation of cultures that are viewed as exotic and exciting, but ignore people who have adapted to changing political and social pressures. Unlike recent scholarship in Native American Studies and cultural anthropology, which underscore living communities, anthropology museums conversely treat modern Indian cultures as “contaminated,” somehow unworthy as anthropological subjects.

Because exhibits stem from collections, regional history venues focus on local heroes, power holders, and early Anglo families in the community, others are not heard from and take home messages are unbalanced and univocal. Because daily lives are highlighted through the use of household materials, Anglo families are depicted as passive community members, not as agents of social production and change. The patrons of many of these institutions are the descendants of these wealthy local families, indeed

the donors of many of the museum collections and contributors to ongoing fundraising efforts. For this reason many museum boards are reluctant to represent what are thought to be unkind depictions of those in the dominant ethnic group. Groups and individuals other than the elite class/ethnic group are robbed of their historical presence and treated as people without a history. Their past—when represented at all—is depicted as uncomplicated. Gaps in history are also problematic because they attribute all contributions to the Anglo population, leaving “Mexicans” and Indians to appear as non-contributors.

Authoritative narratives (whether scholarly publications or trendy tourist sites) absorb contestation and reconstruct reality into a hegemonic framework of fantasy Spanish colonial pasts and Mexican hacienda days. Gramsci (1999) asserts that we must come to terms with the ideological snares set by these dominant cultural agencies, sites which in an attempt to ensure that all arguments are conceived within previously established frameworks, render counterarguments ineffective. In addition, they affirm the very structures that ensure the subordination of particular classes or groups.

Post-colonial critiques of museums have encouraged change in many mainstream museums and many facilities now seek to record and validate forgotten groups, such as women and minorities. In those museums, attempts are made to emphasize the process of constructing the exhibit revealing biases and calling the viewers attention to them. For the museum field, this is a time when greater attention is being paid to political context and issues of colonization and concerted efforts at cultural relativism can be observed in many museums in the form of bi/multilingual texts, alternative voice/first person quotes and recorded songs and stories. In addition, it has become commonplace for museums to

collaborate with communities on exhibitions which offer the perspectives and experiences of living people. But alas, the majority of museums on California's Central Coast still use stereotypical images such as cigar store Indians and arrowheads to tell the Native American story.

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES

The dominant narratives discussed in the last two chapters rely upon static representations that in their very nature deny other narratives that derive from the lived experiences of Indian people, and underscore those derived from ideas and images in outmoded anthropological or historical texts. Today the Native communities of the Central Coast resemble so little the representations made of them that Native people hardly recognize themselves there. This disconnection contributes to continued marginalization as well as to experiences of sustained historic trauma.

Land-based tribal communities where associations and attitudes are reinforced daily affirming Indian identity, differ from this urban setting where individuals must seek association with extended kin and virtually *create* their Indian community. These efforts are complicated by current museum practices. Though in many cases museum practitioners feel they are providing a service to the public at large and even to Indian people, my research has shown that in many instances their efforts are misguided. My

goal is not to shame museum professionals on the Central Coast, because many are indeed generous and well meaning people, but rather to reveal some of the discontinuities between the stories they tell and the stories the Native community tells. My hope is that this chapter will provide some insight into how Native people, as well as the general public, can be better served by the facilities that tell *their* stories in *their* communities.

In this chapter I examine Indian perceptions of current museum representations and how these are viewed as having long-term impacts on the Native community. Some of these impacts include manifestations of historic trauma and alienation by outsiders that result from a skewed public memory. Next I explore the missing narratives. Renya Ramirez (2007, 3) describes the idea of “hub” as “a cultural, social, and political concept (that) ultimately has the power to strengthen Native identity and provide a sense of belonging, as well as increasing the political power of Native peoples”. A Native hub, says Ramirez, demonstrates how landless Native Americans maintain a sense of their tribal connection to their homelands (though currently urban spaces), through cultural circuits and maintenance of social networks and shared activity with other Native Americans in the city and on reservations. Such hubs, my research shows, serve as sources of healing and are foundational to the alternative narrative. Unfortunately, because the dominant narrative is so entrenched in static representations of the past that privilege notions of loss, exoticizing what are perceived as remnants of a disappearing heritage, the alternative narrative that emphasizes modern Indian people, disrupts the dominant, deeply embedded discourse. In many cases, the new perspective is thrown out as irrelevant or radical. Interviews revealed several cases where those who refused to comply with the dominant narrative were dismissed from advisory boards or committees

because they challenged the authority of museum professionals, or in some cases simply because of association with people whom certain museum professionals deemed non-Indian, i.e., “Mexicans.”

Expanding on this idea, I also include histories and shared memories that serve the same purpose as other “hubs”. For the Central Coast Indian community these include the ethnic mosaic of the contemporary Indian community, struggles for federal recognition, preservation activism in the 1970s and 1980s, and community wide cultural revitalization efforts beginning in the 1990s. These are the lived experiences of Indian people. The last two are hubs of empowerment for Native people on the Central Coast and have proven vital for these urban communities. They are central to the Indian story on the Central Coast.

Methods

With some knowledge of factionalism on the Central Coast, I set out to be as inclusive as possible through the use of a questionnaire. My hope was to avoid any identity politics that might lead to a biased data set. However, I learned immediately that these identity issues were unavoidable. The problem of identity is due in part to the lack of federal acknowledgement in the area as well as to the fact that loosely affiliated groups of people who identify as Indian have resurfaced everywhere. Many of the groups dispute others’ Indian identity. Some groups or bands are comprised of members of well documented Mission Indians, while others rely on family ties through extended kinship networks to determine who is eligible for membership. Some groups are a mixture of both. There are many who think they are the only “real” group. I have interviewed and

received questionnaires from a cross section of these groups.

My connections in Ohlone territory were limited, but one informant suggested I inquire at a local social service agency. The Monterey County TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) office American Indian Program staff supplied a list of chairs and co-chairs of all the local tribes. Although there were some whose identity was contested by others, I contacted them all and set up interviews with any who were willing and available.

With the Chumash community, I planned to interview two or three people from each of the main groups: the federally recognized band which is the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (SYBCI); the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation (CBCN), a non-federally recognized group of approximately 1700 descendents from throughout the Central Coast; and the Barbareño Chumash Council (BCC), who are also a non-federally recognized group with members from Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

In addition to representation from these large groups, I attempted to consult with several rather high-profile individuals who currently work closely with museums, many of whom do not belong to an organized tribal group. These individuals are some of the most visible educators in the Chumash region and consequently have been recruited to serve on the California Indian Advisory Council for the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. I contacted the museum's Curator of Anthropology, John Johnson, to request permission to conduct research at the museum as well as to present my research to his advisory board. My reception at the November 10, 2006, meeting was positive and many of the council members commented favorably on the nature of my project. Only one member commented that she feared I would "take (my) research findings back to the Coastal

Band!” I responded that because it is a scholarly study, I would naturally expect to share my findings with the Coastal Band, the Santa Ynez Band, and any other group or individual that expressed an interest in my research.

After listening and responding to comments and questions, I excused myself. The following day at a museum event-- “California Indian Days,”-- I was approached by Johnson and asked to come to his office to talk about the response of the committee to my research plan. He sat across his desk from me and explained that although his committee felt my project had merit, they had some problems with it. Their first concern, he told me, was that “they’re not comfortable with you identifying as Chumash and the fact that you have not been forthcoming about your Spanish ancestry.” Second, “they are concerned that your questionnaire may reach people with contested identities and they’d like for you to interview them (members of the advisory council), solely, as your sample of the Chumash community. We’ll be sending you a letter to this effect,” he said, “and when and if you alter your study to accommodate the wishes of the advisory council, you can conduct research here.”

I received a letter two months later from the director of the museum telling me that I would need to change my project in these significant ways if the advisory council was going to grant me permission to conduct my research. On the advice of my dissertation committee members, I chose another Santa Barbara area museum rather than change my project in such significant (and unnecessary) ways. The advisory council members, I was told by John Johnson, would only speak to me if I were to attend another meeting at the museum. I contacted one advisory council member to ask his personal view of this paternalistic process and he deferred me to the next advisory council meeting

as well. My exclusion from conducting research at this institution was based on the fact that I am affiliated with a tribe that John Johnson has determined not “authentically” Chumash, claiming that “characterization of yourself as ‘Chumash’, rather than admitting your California Spanish ancestry, is a further attempt to erode public understanding regarding who are the actual descendants of the historical Chumash communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties today (appendix I).” I will expand upon this situation at greater length in my discussion on identity gate-keeping, but mention it here due to its impact on my sampling strategy.

I conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with Native people. These included eight Chumash people, five Ohlone/Esselen people, one Gabrieleño/Tongva person, and one coastal Pomo person. I interviewed three Indian people who live on the Central Coast and work in the museum field, but are from tribes historically residing outside the Central Coast region. In addition, I interviewed staff and docents at two facilities in each of the four counties on the Central Coast, but data from those interviews is used here only in terms of illustrating Native perceptions. In addition to interviewing from a cross section of communities, I also placed questionnaires at area social service agencies such as Candelaria American Indian Council and the Santa Barbara area American Indian Health and Services office. I received only eleven completed questionnaires. The interviews and questionnaires were transcribed by student workers, and then coded using Grounded Theory and methods outlined in Charmaz (2006). The codes, as outlined by Charmaz, developed over time. The dominant themes that emerged among interviews and questionnaires on perceptions of current museum representations were divided along lines of race, representation, education, and identity, but none were mutually exclusive.

Subcategories of race, for example, included identity and museum representations. The codes therefore, presented themselves more as a braid or *trenza*, a term used by Mary Davalos (2001) for the switching back and forth between theoretical concepts that cannot be separated. Still, the coding process helped me determine the overarching themes both in terms of museum perceptions and alternative narratives that enabled me to develop this chapter.

The three Native people I interviewed from outside the area work or volunteer for the organizations involved in representing an overall California Indian history. Their testimonies can be seen primarily in Chapter III within the discussion of the California Indian Heritage Center, California Indian Museum and Cultural Center, and Tribal Museums, but some of their comments are also included here. Members of the Ohlone community represent all of the main groups in that area as well as one individual who does not represent a group, per se, but is a researcher, educator, and active member of that community. Another Ohlone respondent does not represent a group, but is the sole member of the Ohlone Tribe, Inc. This person is included because of his interesting, albeit controversial, position as an employee of a Mission museum.

Among the Chumash community, six of my respondents are members of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, but I also interviewed one member of the Barbareño Chumash Council and one member of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. It should be noted that the people who comprise the committee at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History are not members of the federally-recognized tribe (except for one) and, therefore, have no more status as “authentic” than what they receive from outsiders. This issue of identity gate-keeping in contemporary Native communities

is among the alternative narratives that I discuss later in this chapter. First, I will discuss how the people I interviewed perceive the portrayals of their lives and cultures in Central Coast museums and Missions.

Community Perceptions of Current Museum Representations and Practices

Responses from questionnaires and interviews revealed remarkably similar perceptions of current representation of Indians in museums. These responses varied only slightly in regard to type or genre of museum. Of the 28 respondents to interviews and questionnaires, every respondent reported feelings of loss, extinction, and abandonment in a past, primitive existence. For example, ninety percent used the words “extinct” or “extinction”, seventy-five percent used the word “primitive”, and seventy percent used the word “forgotten.”

According to recent scholarship on historic trauma, First Nations scholar Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux building upon the work of Sidney Furst (1967) asserts that the way people remember their past can contribute to ongoing disease in the community. She states,

Our sense of personhood is not only shaped by our active or conscious memories, it is also shaped by our ‘conception of memory,’ which means that it is not only direct traumatic experiences that can create negative effect it is also present interpretations of past events that can continue to impact our lives (Wesley-Esquimaux 2007, 62).

On the Central Coast where most public visual representations of the past for community members are the preceding interpretations, it is easy to see how these might contribute to disease and disharmony among Central Coast peoples.

Extinct

Throughout the questionnaires and interview data, there are references such as “solemnness, stillness, and remoteness, all of which are suggestive of death,” and, “No depictions of modern, living people,” and, “We’re always depicted as extinct.” Eight-five percent of these individuals said that these depictions made them feel depressed, sad, or angry. Some said they avoid museums altogether because of the feelings that come up for them. Others seem not to be conscious of the psychological impacts that could occur as a result of constant exposure to these narratives and to those people who have been acculturated within this discourse. Tribal museums, for example, which offer alternatives to the commonly static portrayals by non-Natives, have lasting positive impacts on community members, especially in terms of suicide rates among youth (Chandler and Lalonde 1998). It seems that, where powerful and positive representations of history and culture are present, community healing and individual wellness are observably higher than in communities without such a venue. It may follow that a community which is only portrayed through the eyes of the dominant culture and often depicted as extinct, have the opposite effect.

Primitive

Seventy-five percent of respondents indicated they saw Indians consistently portrayed as primitive, for example as “caged animals, less than human” or “depicted as ugly, dirty, and poor.”

As American Indians faced daily with Western cultural forms we

internalize meanings of difference and abject Otherness, viewing ourselves in and through the constructs that defined us as racially and culturally sub-human, deficient and vile (Poupart 2003, 87).

Respondents consistently remarked on the primitive nature of representations and the lack of discussions of Native life and culture on any historic continuum. They also questioned the consistent placement of Indian life within “natural history” and all other humans within portrayals of “history”.

You go to any history museum and you see examples of people going through the phases of modernity. Here, in the Natural History Museum (SBMNH) we’re in one phase--very animalistic, with all the other animals. I’d like to see us taken from the animal museum and put into the human museum (Chumash respondent).

Other respondents were concerned that the primitive ways Indians are represented strengthen racial stereotypes and underscore differences that may or may not actually exist. In efforts to delineate earlier groups from later ones, museums place Indians at the beginning of a “whitening” continuum in California.

The primary difference between the haves and have-nots is the color of their skin and that is exactly what you see in the museum. You don’t see Indians as light colored—and many of us are light colored! Indians are as light colored as my mom—but no, you see them as very brown, very, very brown, with stringy black hair—and nude, always nude which to Americans is shameful. And always performing menial tasks that also (to Americans) are undignified (Chumash respondent).

More research needs to be done on the racialization that occurs in the museum setting and the role of these portrayals in a greater racial project. Eichstedt and Small, for example, whose rhetorical strategies I borrowed, demonstrate how discourse in plantation museums has been racialized to serve a narrative that privileges whiteness. For this study, the construction of racial difference was a relatively late observation and deserves more

attention than time allowed. It was not until I was analyzing interviews and images that I realized the pervasive nature of race in Central Coast museums. Repeatedly, once I was aware, I heard observations such as the one above about how skin-color and other physical characteristics were used to demonstrate primitiveness.

Oversimplified and Avoid Hard Truths

A young Chumash woman, herself a mother of a young girl, had this to say about the representations of her culture at various museums on the Central Coast.

They don't reveal the continuity of our people. To over-focus on one period of time is misrepresentative and depressing. It's like summarizing the entire sexuality of a woman by focusing only on a traumatic rape rather than all of the intricacies involved in her womanhood such as her coming of age, falling in love, having children, future lovers, etc. (Chumash respondent)

Rape itself is a significant part of the history of Central Coast people, a biological reality in many of their family trees. However, it is not discussed in public narratives. Also missing, as this woman suggests, are the lived experiences of women, their thoughts and feelings, and indeed their roles as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters in this historic drama. In a conversation with this particular woman, I made a comment about the rapacious nature of the soldiers and how my own ancestral connection to that history is painful. She suggested that perhaps the soldiers were not *all* raping pillagers as current scholarship (though not current public representations) suggests. Maybe there were cases where the Indian women actually fell in love with the soldiers, as depicted at Mission San Antonio. We debated the fantasy nature of that particular version of the story and agreed that there were probably more forms of relationship during those years of culture contact

and upheaval than we have imagined. We also agreed that it would be a useful dialogue to incorporate into the museum narratives, and that ignoring it is damaging for Indian/Californio women and girls.

“They do not tell hard truths of slavery in the Missions and the role they played in the loss of our language and culture.” Eighty-five percent said that “hard or painful truths” are being avoided. Such truths are a lived reality for Indian communities and, when ignored, blatantly disregard the historical Indian experiences. According to Edward Duran’s (2006) study on historic trauma as well as to Bonnie and Edward Duran’s (1995) earlier work, when the dominant discourse denies the impacts of colonization, it robs the colonized community of an opportunity for healing. As stated in Chapter V, the role of slavery in the Missions is downplayed or ignored and never referred to as slavery. One docent at Mission La Purisima stated, “slaves are bought and sold, there was never any money exchanged for Indians...these Indians came willingly.” This is a common belief among the front-line interpreters at Missions and one they perpetuate rather than discuss the hard truths about forceful and brutal recruitment tactics. Nor do they discuss the hard truth of how Mission livestock devastation to the natural environment made traditional lifeways impossible to maintain. Other hard truths are avoided as well, such as imprisonment in *monjerios*, or the loss of language and culture which has contributed to the marginalization and consequent failure to gain federal acknowledgement by Central Coast Indians today. In fact, connections between the devastating impact of the Franciscan Mission project on cultural knowledge and the denial of sovereignty and federal recognition is also ignored in the more “neutral” venues such as regional and natural history museums. More aware of this loss than ever are contemporary Native and

non-Native scholars working to piece together wax-cylinder recordings or translate John Harrington's handwritten scrawl in efforts to revitalize languages that have not been spoken in several decades. Native scholars have expressed their frustration to me on many occasions about the lack of responsibility the Catholic Church has taken either verbally or monetarily for this loss.

Poor Use of Materials

It is common among public history venues worldwide to utilize the material culture of a people to tell their stories. In most venues today, however, it is also common practice to provide textual and other visual media to illustrate and add context to the display. The common rhetorical strategy employed at Missions by using “abandoned ‘artifacts’—is suggestive of death” said one respondent.

Artifacts under glass, [represent] ownership of our culture, stolen items, family heirlooms, and we cannot properly care for them, [or] use them in ceremony (Ohlone respondent).

In addition to perpetuating ideas of extinction, the “incarceration” of materials also restricts use and care by descendant community members. In many venues worldwide, where museum staff members have cultivated relationships with local Native people, traditional materials are loaned and utilized in ceremony and educational events. In Oregon and Washington, for example, museums in possession of large ceremonial collections loan regalia to be “danced” on special occasions. For Native people, access to materials in such a way has proven essential for revitalization efforts. In contrast, haphazard display and insensitive use of materials is a painful reminder of unequal power relationships, further disempowering Native people and ensuring their continued

alienation from museum collections.

I have a love/hate relationship with museums. Mostly, I love the materials they have, our materials, but hate the politics. They're very temperamental, sometimes I get a really warm reception, sometimes we get a really negative reception (Chumash respondent).

Identity politics in the area play into access issues for descendant community members throughout the Central Coast. An interview with one Mission director lent some insight to this process. When asked if he felt local Indian people should have access to research in the archives or to look at baskets that are held at the Mission, he replied, "If they have 'credentials'." When asked what he meant by "credentials", he said "you know--like *Betty, Alice* and *Jim*....it's a small [Indian] community and they know everybody—everybody knows them." This man's definition of credentials implies identity authentication rather than a requirement of academic or professional credentials to access collections. It seems *Betty, Alice*, and *Jim* also happen to be the people who are continually consulted for input on exhibit and program content at many northern Central Coast museums. In the south it is almost exclusively *one* woman. While many museums have knowledge of or may even have established relationships with one or a handful of local Indian people, most have a rather closed door policy to others who might lack "credentials."

One person I interviewed talked about the frustration she felt about the inability to access resources held in collections. In these communities, the collections are one of the most important connections to the ancient ways of knowing and doing. They embody the knowledge that community members are hungry for. In many respects the materials are, literally, the ancestor.

We can't learn from the things there unless we have access to them. It's such a privilege issue. It's as if they [museum personnel] are saying, "I can hold this, you can't." "We choose how to display it, you don't." "We are the holder of this. If you ask nicely we might let you look at it" (Ohlone/Esselen respondent).

As examples at the Makah Museum and other tribal museums suggest, Native communities have a different relationship with cultural materials held in collections. They are, many believe, living things that embody the spirit of the person who made it, owned it, and used it prior to its removal to a climate controlled facility.

We need to be able to respect and honor the ancient things without romanticizing them too much, without othering them. The Anglo population wants to treat the environment much like they do our material culture—preserve it rather than interact sustainably with it. (Chumash respondent)

In many mainstream urban museums with Native American holdings, the enormous amount of knowledge essential to revitalization efforts--knowledge represented by museum collections such as archives, baskets, regalia, and musical instruments—is obstructed or denied to descendant communities because of ignorance of the history of the Native community among many museum staff.

Another problem discussed by respondents was that materials were often used haphazardly and “without sensitivity” to Native culture, especially when using the materials to represent their cultures with very little contextual matter. As I discussed in Chapters V and VI, artifacts can tell only a limited story but are often called upon to tell a *whole* human story. This outmoded strategy is especially disconcerting for Native visitors:

I really don't think our people have been represented at all. There were some things at San Juan Bautista [Mission], some clapper sticks and projectile points, maybe some baskets and grinding stones, but those

things don't represent us as a people. In fact I was kind of disgusted because those things the last time I was out there were displayed in a little cupboard that hadn't been cleaned in like 50 years. That's sad (Ohlone respondent).

In venues such as the National Museum of the American Indian and many tribal museums, the context of the culture is described through stories of people and their lived histories using images and text, with artifacts or cultural materials to complement those stories. In some cases, materials are displayed to highlight certain art forms, in which case the materials are accompanied by artists' names and tribal affiliations (when known), as well as contextual information about the art form, materials, and perhaps traditions and symbols inherent in the item. In contrast, in many of the museums I visited, materials such as those discussed above are displayed as "unimportant" and perceived by local Indian people to represent the "spoils of the victor" in random, unmarked piles and even on floors.

Impacts of Mis-education and Skewed Public Memory

Fear of potential impacts these museum representations might have on public or collective Native memory is of great concern to those members of the Indian community that I have spoken to. One of these impacts is the codification of oversimplified notions of Indian identity. This issue was raised by every one of my respondents as they expressed fear about how these portrayals may affect their children. "The (museum) representations confuse Indian identity rather than affirm it," one person said, "portraying Indians in some pre-contact way--what does this do to our children?" Some fear that the portrayals of Indians in a static pre-contact manner traps living Indian people within an

imagined, primitive past. Certainly, knowledge of, and prescribed uses of material culture are important in most indigenous communities, but contemporary people within these communities also accept that aspects of Western culture have, and continue to, influence them. In many cases, portrayals of Indians do not account for these influences (nor the changing, evolving nature of all cultures), which inadvertently codifies ideas of Indianness in the public memory that stem from them. Lisa Poupart (2003) discussed how constructions have come to define Native people and that Native people themselves are forced to mirror them. Rather than speaking to lived histories and experiences, they deny contemporary Indians a place in the world. “They don’t speak to our ways of identifying our culture and group identity, only to the anthropologist’s” (Chumash elder).

(Museums) construct these ideas of distinct racial or ethnic groups that don’t exist anymore, if they ever did--ideas of Spaniard, Mexican, and Indian. I mean...weren’t the folks that came up here Indians and Blacks, too? (Chumash respondent)

Racialized notions of difference reaffirm stereotypes, expected in the museum setting. Many museums in California inadvertently construct difference that compound racist attitudes about “Mexicans” rather than educating about the Mexican history of California, the diversity of Mexico, its indigenous population, and that these people are “Native Americans” too.

In addition, at the museums I visited, exhibits rarely reflect the lives of the people who are “represented”, but rather the notions of people who design and built the exhibits, or the collector who donated their materials to the museum. Therefore the voice heard in Central Coast museums is rarely that of a Native Californian. A respected elder in the Chumash community spoke to these rhetorical strategies used at the Santa Barbara

Museum of Natural History that affirm the dominant narrative and privilege the non-Indian voice above the living Indian people.

There's something about the whole thing that always disturbs me. I'm not able to put my finger on it but it always seems incomplete. And the last exhibit there as you go around clockwise is supposed to bring things up to date or current, and it ends with John Peabody Harrington. I mean, I really embrace him for all the work he did with the ancestors and all, but that exhibit seems to be more about anthropology than it is about the Chumash community. It's very distorted (Chumash respondent).

Community members also complained that in addition to the constant white voice in museums, further silencing Indian people, that the portrayals are often insensitive and even racist. A young Chumash educator was passionate about the representations of her ancestors at one Central Coast museum.

The local museum, the Natural History Museum (Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History), it's really problematic because they have stuff in there that is racist and ignorant. It presumes things about native people that just aren't true. It's a very dead exhibit. All the things in there are old and dead and even though they have that one picture of current Chumash people, the people they have don't really produce. You wouldn't know them as Chumash because they never really do anything in the community—so it's problematic.

The *one* picture this woman speaks about is a color photo of the California Advisory Committee, a six member board of Chumash people selected by the curator of anthropology, which I spoke about previously. This image is approximately 5 X 7 inches and is located at the base (near the floor) of the last exhibit case before the exit. In a room approximately 600 square feet in size, loaded with Chumash artifacts, a canoe, and life sized illustrations of historic Chumash people, the small photo is virtually invisible. The Chumash women quoted above was looking for images of contemporary people, and was dismayed to see that this token portrayal was the only representation.

The overarching perceptions of current museum representations include portrayals of Indian people as primitive or “animalistic,” in contrast to Anglos who are portrayed at the peak of civilization. These narratives privilege a story of the past and ignore modern Indian people and their stories, focusing on an artificial racial distinction between Indians and Mexicans as well as portrayals of soldiers and settlers as European, and static or “dead” exhibits that lack necessary cultural context. Until these exhibits are made current, many Indian people stated they will not go to them. The overwhelming response to the question of whether these are places that they would take their children was a resounding “no.” Museum professionals on the Central Coast cannot honestly say they are serving all publics if a large portion of the 110,000 Indian people in the four-county Central Coast region is unwilling to visit them.

Historic Trauma

Virtually non-existent in traditional tribal communities prior to European invasion (Yellowhorse-Braveheart 1998; Duran and Duran 1995; Poupart 2003; Duran 2006, and others), American Indian communities now struggle with alcoholism and chemical addiction, suicide, and other forms of violence at rates double the averages for mainstream American society according to the above scholars, who characterize these maladies as symptoms of historic trauma. Although my respondents were not asked to disclose traumatic events, the effects of historic trauma can be heard in many of their responses and are observable throughout the community.

Historic trauma in this community stems not only from oppression and marginalization as Indian people, but also from the unresolved conflict of descending

from both the local indigenous population and the colonizing population. In essence the mixed heritage nature of the “Indian” community is the embodiment of a painful and unresolved history. Although many choose to identify solely with indigenous roots, most are products of an era of ethnic mixing among members of the initial colonizing force, the “Californio” soldiers and settlers and later multi-cultural generations. This history is a conscious memory for some in that their extended family members may identify solely with Chicana@ aspect of their heritage and family histories of life on “Californio” ranchos are part of their shared memories. But for others, the *denial* of this history, for a variety of reasons that I discuss later, also denies healing.

Theresa O’Neill’s (1996) work on depression on the Flathead reservation, found that communities of blended Indian and white ancestry were conflicted to some extent and asserts, “...not only do some Indian families become fragmented with the critical bifurcation of the world into Indian and white, good and bad, but ultimately *selves* are fragmented for some as well.” She goes on to say that, “...neither formal regulations nor informal definitions capture the fragmented and negotiated reality of contemporary Flathead Indian identity” (1996:46). In her research, she found that ethnic mixture led to identity conflicts and the unresolved histories of that mixture, exacerbated by the incidence of ongoing oppressive influences on and off the reservation, contributed to depression and deep loneliness. Similarly, in California, the continued inauthentic and bifurcated portrayals of Indians and Mexicans in museums, likewise denies the actual history in favor of a simpler narrative.

In addition to the denial of ethnic mixing, dominant narratives ignore or gloss over traumatic historical truths, essentially eliminating the lived experiences of historic

suffering. Scholar Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (2007) asserts that, “It appears that the way people remember their past, and then interpret those events as individuals or groups can also contribute to continuing disease and individual and community health issues” (Wesley-Esquimaux 2007, 62). Building on the work of Herman (2000), which discussed the impacts that trauma has on the individual and community sense of self, Esquimaux suggests that trauma is an all-encompassing “legacy of hurt” that is a source of systemic disease in native populations. Duran’s (2006) work, too, building on the work of Maria Yellowhorse Brave Heart (2000, 2003) acknowledges the intergenerational nature of historic trauma. He states, “there is a process whereby unresolved trauma becomes more severe each time it is passed on to a subsequent generation” (Duran 2006:16). Other scholars of historic trauma agree that for native people healing from psychological “illness” necessitates spiritual treatment above Western bio-medical remedies (see Csordas 2000, Begay and Maryboy 2000). Duran who offers a pragmatic approach to Native community “soul healing,” states explicitly that the first intervention that must occur in the historically traumatized individual or community is awareness of the *origin* of the spiritual wound. As sites of remembrance (Irwin-Zarecka 2000; Simon et al. 2000), Mission museums commemorate fantasy histories and constructed pasts that deny historic truths. Mental, emotional, and sexual abuses were experienced by coast native people at these exact locations—the origin sites of spiritual wounds—yet native histories are suppressed there.

Because museums are sites of education for California’s third and fourth graders, Indian youth are also at risk of encountering insensitive portrayals and stereotyping which have potential psychological impacts. Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, a Native

American educator, states, “an unrealistic idea of what and who Indians are supposed to be confuses a child when he or she compares those images to his or her parents and other relatives” (Sneve 2003:299-300). The implication here is that museum sites are sources of on-going trauma, rather than sites of healing and reconciliation that they might otherwise be (Chandler and Lalonde 1998).

I do not suggest that it is the sole responsibility of museums to address past atrocities or current inequities, but to ignore these hard truths serves neither the descendant community nor the public, all of whom are desirous (and in need) of the truth. And while I also do not suggest that it is the job of the museum to address the results of historic trauma, I do think it is vital for the professional and scholarly communities to understand how and why it manifests. In my experience, two primary manifestations of historic trauma on the Central Coast are community division and internalized racism, both of which regularly create barriers to collaboration. Nonetheless, I would not recommend that a history museum tackle this topic without close work with the community. Rather, it is my goal to stress the importance of continued, deep involvement with the Native community in any and all exhibits and programs concerning them.

Mistrust and Internalized Racism

When discussing the need for community cohesion, an Ohlone man said, “See, well we can work together as a group but we as Indian people, sometimes we don’t trust or we are suspicious of each other. You know, that’s all part of the history of what happened to our Indian people.” Terry O’Neill (1996) discussed how internalized identity conflict is exacerbated by policies related to blood quantum and federal recognition and

scholarly theories that contradict in fundamental ways the manner of identifying with one's community prior to contact with Europeans. O'Neil says that policy and introduced concepts of difference undermine community efforts. Indian people interviewed were, in some cases quite open about these prejudices—based on Euro-American ideas of space, boundaries, and racism—and the fear that their territory was being invaded.

The one thing I have found – with especially California Indians, because of the great relocations, especially here in the San Francisco Bay region – because you know we have Oakland, San Francisco and San Jose, which were the big relocations. I don't know of any other group of people who are more racist than Ohlone descendants. Because not only are we fighting turfs telling the Apache and the Navajo and the Arapaho get out, then I have to tell the Esselens, "You're down there, I'm up here." So it's like, we gotta fight among ourselves. (Ohlone respondent)

The suspicion of other individuals and groups trying to steal what is rightfully theirs as Indian people, including Indian identity, is an issue notably virulent on the California coast. To make matters worse, some anthropologists fan the fires of fear among California Natives, further impeding community healing.

Identity Gate-keeping

It's my passion to be with my family and to remind us that we're cousins. And you know we can involve in any way we want to. We don't have to be limited by non-Native, non-Chumash experts, like that guy at the Santa Barbara Museum, who make their living quite handsomely on our families' backs and our history. We can empower ourselves through collaboration and cooperation with whoever we like (Chumash respondent).

As mentioned at the opening of this chapter, there are self-appointed, identity gate-keepers who see themselves as performing some needed service to the "real" Indian community. These (white male) anthropologists assert that many of our community

members are not, in fact, Indian, but “Mexican”¹. I propose that much of the recent trend among some Native people to accept this anthropological authentication, rather than insist on asserting their own histories, has been in response to a growing fear of being denied Indian identity by influential anthropologists.

For as we assume the dominant subject position, we often take upon ourselves definitions of the objectified, abject Other as (portions of) our own identities and act them out in flat, one dimensional caricatures that mirror the dominant culture’s representations. Moreover as we buy into these codes, we not only apply them to our individual selves, but also to those within our own marginalized group(s)—our loved ones and community members (Poupart 2003:88).

As this quote so eloquently suggests, fear of questioned Indian identity has led some members of the that community, those who have lost their connection to the true complexity of their histories, to seek validation from a gate-keeper by supplying him with a follicle of hair or blood for mitochondrial DNA tests. One Chumash person I interviewed stated that she has this gate-keeper’s “*seal of approval.*” When asked how she obtained this information she said,

My brother went to him and they researched. In exchange for research my brother gave him access to his DNA, a vial of blood, and we were proved to be Chumash.

On the coast of California, due to the nature of colonization outlined earlier in this dissertation, Indian community members, are mixed-heritage people of Native/African/Mexican/American descent, who identify primarily with their local Indian heritage, must seek outside sources of information to supplement what they know of their

¹ This is a particular problem where genealogies and Mission records are privileged as opposed to California Tribes outside the Mission system who lack such documents and rely more on their own histories rather than on Spanish narratives interpreted by anthropologists.

family histories. There are scholars who have spent their careers doing this type of historical research in service to Native communities and often partner with tribes for federal recognition efforts. In contrast, some anthropologists have used the good faith of a small segment of local community members, their blood, and Mission records to build their own careers, to the detriment of many in the Native community—asserting confidential information to distinguish within extended family networks, the real Indians from the “Spanish” or “Mexican” interlopers. A cogent example of this gate-keeping behavior was evidenced in the exclusion I experienced trying to conduct research at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. The determining factor was identity, outlined in the three concerns discussed in the November 11, 2007 letter from Karl Hutterer, E.D., of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (see appendix I). The first concern expressed by Mr. Hutterer was that I planned to interview museum professionals, but use only a questionnaire for Native community members. My justification for this was to avoid identity politics, and to sample with as broad a brush possible. I did (as indicated in my methods section) decide to interview community members, for the reasons specified by Mr. Hutterer—to accord Native people with the same time and consideration as museum staff and docents. The second concern outlined in the letter pointed directly at the gate-keeping issue. “As you know there are several different categories of people claiming Chumash, Salinan, Esselen, and Costanoan (Ohlone) identities, some of whom possess actual ancestry from these groups and some who do not.” In a conversation I had with John Johnson after the committee meeting, he stated that a possible solution to this “problem” would be to interview only the members of his Advisory Committee for my Chumash sample. I could ask them if they would consider this at the next meeting called

by him, at the museum.

The third concern stated that they (the Advisory Committee) “perceive [my] characterization of [myself] as Chumash, rather than admitting [my] California Spanish ancestry, as a further attempt to erode public understanding regarding who are the actual descendants of the historical Chumash communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties today.” This assertion reflects, not only a total lack of understanding of the history of the area, defining me as a *Spaniard*. This assertion also reflects a lack of knowledge of the people that comprise the Chumash/Californio community of which I and my family has always been a part. In addition, the museum blames Johnson’s Advisory Committee as the determining factor in my exclusion. The determination that I am not Chumash, but Spanish was made by Johnson, not the committee from genealogical information provided him twenty-five years ago by my maternal aunt, Jeanne Pierce-Harrison. Mr. Hutterer attributed to the committee, the assertion that I have not admitted my Spanish ancestry, when any knowledge of my genealogy is confidential information which only one person at the meeting would have, Dr. Johnson.

For years Johnson utilized the Mission records as his primary data set for building family histories. Many (including himself—see Johnson 1988) recognize the limitations to this historic record (Erlandson 1998). For this, and the gate-keeping issues outlined above, many people regard Johnson as meddlesome and a hindrance to community building efforts rather than a quality source of information. Another Chumash respondent was unhappy that his brother had gone to him for Indian identity validation.

My brother is looking for a certificate to, you know, be Chumash. So he’s doing all these DNA studies with John Johnson. I don’t support it, but he’s learning and so good for him. And maybe he will learn enough and

become an expert in his family history and he can tell John Johnson what's up--instead of having to ask him *anything*.

In rural or reservation-based communities, cultural continuity is the basis of traditionalism. In urban centers, however, because of the discontinuity caused by the multitude of impacts I have discussed, a significant amount of Native cultural knowledge has had to be re-fabricated as the alternative to assimilation into the dominant culture and way of thinking. A frequent effect of this revitalization, however, is the denial of one's true history, including the assimilative past of the ancestors. Though many have perceived this "making of Indian culture" as fakery, others assert it as mere reclamation of what was stolen many generations ago. But in all cases along the Central Coast, people who identify as "traditionalists" are in some ways re-creating their cultural identity. As I discussed in chapters I and II, for several generations people did not identify as Indian if they could help it. For survival many passed as Mexican or White, and only later have come to reclaim their Native heritage and rediscover any knowledge about their Native culture, a history, often denied for generations.

In a 1998 *Current Anthropology* article, anthropologists Brian Haley and Larry Wilcoxon deconstructed Indian traditionalism on the Central Coast in "The Making of Chumash Tradition". They asserted that a sort of "Mexican opportunism" caused a sudden increase in people identifying as Chumash Indians. They argued that "family A"—the real Chumash—are being marginalized by the stronger, more aggressive "family B"—the imposters. Later, they published "How Spaniards Became Chumash and other Tales of Ethnogenesis" (Haley and Wilcoxon 2006). This article chronicles the social mobility of the *ancestors* of family B, asserting that members of this family descend from

a long line of opportunists. Here they point to the irony that these individuals would, like their predecessors, be ethnic phonies. They make their case from identity shifts in census data. I argue that if Haley and Wilcoxon had found themselves in the circumstances described in my earlier chapters, they too would have exercised such social mobility. These scholars nonetheless assert that economic motivations led to a denial of first an Indian/Mestizo heritage, and later the denial of a Mexican/Hispanic heritage (Haley and Wilcoxon 2006).

This assertion is seriously problematic for two reasons. The first is that all anthropologists engaged in this sort of identity gate-keeping, have an economic or self-serving stake in their roles, defining themselves as the experts and their profession as having created Indian traditionalism (Haley and Wilcoxon 1995), while claiming the authority to identify Indian allies as the “real” Natives (see Erlandson et al. 1998). Second, as they define authenticity, they artificially divide the extended family networks that constitute the Native community. Today, the people who some anthropologists claim are from the “old” families and possess “ancient” knowledge, are no more *authentic* than those Johnson, Haley and Wilcoxon identify as “Neo-Chumash” they simply lack documentation of *Mission* Indian ancestry. Ironically, in the 1970s it was another anthropologist, Travis Hudson, considered by many to be the foremost anthropological authority on Chumash culture, identified members of “family B” as members of the Brotherhood of the Tomol, and partnered with them to build the *Helek*. My own genealogical research has shown that the families these white anthropologists have painstakingly divided into “separate” families A and B are in fact descendants of the same families. Over the generations in fact, Chumash families A, B and others

intermarried and genetically intermixed (Appendix J).

Consequently, it is the Native people aligned with these anthropologists (most of whom are related to others from different “camps”) who are perceived by many community members as supporting the dominant narrative as a way to assert their birthright, however alienating it may be. The end result is that museums maintain the status quo (control over representation, human remains, and sacred materials) and the “gate-keeping” anthropologists maintain their status. Some say old wounds are not allowed to heal because “there will always be people who profit from the dysfunction of the *other*” (Ohlone interview 2/2007).

These “hang around the fort Indians” are more concerned with how they are perceived by the non-Indian community than by their own people—their own families—and as long as they exist there will be people who capitalize from their isolation from the community. They will make them feel important and useful as “informants” and make them their experts, at the expense of the rest of the group.

Interestingly, the most recent DNA research by Chumash identity gate-keeper, John Johnson, shows that even those who primarily descend from “Mexican” Californios, are indeed related to the folks who descend from primarily local Indian ancestry and have for several generations comprised one community. The study is not yet published, but one of my Chumash respondents had this to say:

I hate to talk about this guy, but I went to a lecture fairly recently that John Johnson gave at the Center for Genealogy Studies about his DNA research with the Presidio soldiers that came up from Mexico. He determined that 80% of the soldiers were Indian regardless of what their caste (Español, Mestizo, Indio) had been documented as. And 40% of that 80 were indistinguishable from Chumash DNA.

We laughed at the irony that research by the man dedicated to distinguishing the real Chumash from “Mexican” interlopers would prove that most of the people comprising

these two supposedly “distinct” groups are, in fact, all related. I later saw Johnson at the American Society for Ethnohistory meetings in Eugene, Oregon, and asked him about these results. He claimed that he has since been able to prove that all of the Presidio DNA can be traced back to Mexico and linked to genealogical records. He has yet to share this data with me, nor to publish the results of his analyses.

While this research provided amusing results for us, it has far more serious implications for federal recognition efforts. The result of gate-keeping has been less community cohesiveness among extended family members. The “Mexican” or Californio land grants are lands where Indian communities lived until American squatters and others disenfranchised them. It follows that a great deal of cultural and genealogical information exists in those “Mexican” families—Family B (having significant ties to the Californio population), for instance probably has information that would be useful to Family A (also related to those Californios, if not their Indian relatives) in their struggle for federal recognition. As long as there are people working to separate this community using fear and scarcity tactics, these networks may continue to be torn apart.

Skewed Public Memory

The continuance of historic trauma is only one impact of the miseducation that occurs in Central Coast museums. In addition, museum policy as well as state and some federal policy is written and enforced by *Californians*.who have been mis-educated about the aboriginal and colonial history of their state. One of my Ohlone respondents said, “It just continues to amaze me how California history is not part of mainstream knowledge—even among Californians.” Many of us who

were educated in California more than 20 years ago learned little of the local Native history in our classrooms, let alone that there were and still are Indian people in our neighborhoods. I was introduced to East Coast Woodland peoples as they related to the Pilgrims—period. A statement by an Ohlone educator affirms my experience. “Most people don’t know there are descendants here. A lot of people don’t know there were *ever* Indians here.”

Mis-education about Native life and cultures in California, as well as the colonization history and its impacts on Indian populations, begins in the third and fourth grades. State curriculum mandates an introduction to these topics, and to varying degrees teachers meet the proscribed benchmarks for evaluation by their schools and districts. How then, are adults educated and socialized in California so clueless about Indian history and contemporary life? All but one of my respondents believe that the museums contribute to ignorance, rather than education in the state.

Although she works a full time job in a non-culturally related position, one woman spends a great deal of time re-educating the public about Ohlone culture: Some are, however poorly.

Well, public schools teach it [Native history] and it all depends on the awareness or how well-informed the teachers are, how much of that rich story is being taught to the kids. But for adults, the thing is, people are so mobile these days they may grow up here and go to school here but probably won’t be here as adults. And many of the adults who are here now, did not grow up here. So I think that in addition to classroom teaching it’s really important that our area’s ‘storytelling places,’ for lack of a better word, like museums and Missions need to be including the story of the Native people and very few are. Just a few years ago, maybe five years ago, *none* were. (Ohlone respondent)

The real-world consequence for mis-education is the lack of support contemporary

Native communities receive from new residents. "I really think how the public is educated in museums impacts how supportive they will be of Indian goals, such as preservation of sacred sites, wild places, and our cemeteries." Efforts to partner with non-Indian community members in large urban areas proves difficult when those people assume the Indians that survived history have all moved to the reservation.

Struggles for Sovereignty

Chandler and Lalonde (1998) discuss the importance of certain assertions of cultural continuity for healing historic trauma. These include self-governance and land claims, in addition to positive, self-representations of history and culture. In British Columbia, First Nations groups who are actively engaged in regaining land claims or who currently maintain some measure of self-governance have a reduced incidence of suicide among their youth. Since historically, California's Coastal Indians have been denied lands or treaty rights, and claims to land in the region over the past three decades have proven futile, it follows that the first two of these three modes of empowerment are unavailable to coast tribes. Here, deceit by Indian agents was characteristic of the relationship between lawmakers and Indians. Empty promises instilled false hope for Indian people during the 1850s when a series of 18 treaties "of friendship and peace" were negotiated with a large number of what were said to be "tribes" of California Indians by three Treaty Commissioners (George W. Barbour, Redick McKee and O. M. Wozencraft) whose appointments by President Fillmore were authorized by the U.S. Senate on July 8, 1850. The 18 treaties were negotiated, but on July 8, 1852, in executive session the Senate refused to ratify them and ordered them filed under an injunction of

secrecy that was not removed until January 18, 1905. Some speculate that congress was under pressure from wealthy corporate interests (Ellison 1922, 1925).

Scholars have recently asserted that at least one of these treaties, the Treaty of Fort Tejon, was signed by Chumash and other coastal peoples (Phillips 2004), but these unacknowledged treaties have not helped tribes in efforts for federal recognition. In fact, for all but the Santa Ynez Chumash, efforts for land and sovereignty have proven a futile and endlessly frustrating saga. The Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA), within the Bureau of Indian Affairs is charged with identifying who are the “real” Indian tribes among the many who have applied. There are roughly 562 federally recognized tribes in the United States, with a total membership of about 1.7 million. In addition, there are several hundred groups seeking recognition, a process that often takes decades to complete.

Federal recognition is important for tribes because it formally establishes a government-to-government relationship. Status as a sovereign entity preserves significant rights, including exemptions from some state and local jurisdictions. These exemptions generally apply to lands that the federal government has taken into trust for a tribe or its members. Additionally, federally recognized tribes are eligible to participate a broad array of federal assistance programs. Through these programs, tribal governments may receive funds for community services such as health clinics.

Historically, tribes have been granted recognition through treaties, by the Congress, or through administrative decisions within the executive branch. In 1978, the Bureau of Indian Affairs established a regulatory process for recognizing tribes. The current process for federal recognition, found in 25 C.F.R. 83, is a rigorous process

requiring the petitioning tribe to satisfy seven mandatory criteria, including historical and continuous American Indian identity in a distinct community. Each of the criteria demands exceptional anthropological, historical, and genealogical research and precise presentation of evidence.

Since 1978, the Secretary of the Interior has acknowledged sixteen petitioners as federal tribes, and another twenty-four petitioners have been denied acknowledgement. Of the 324 petitions received since 1978, almost 25% of them were filed by tribes in California, including 21 filed by groups on the Central Coast. The Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation submitted their petition in 1982 and are number 80 on the list, but have not yet submitted any of their materials to the OFA. Currently, 95 Indian groups that have submitted all or part of their documentation are still awaiting BIA review. It is estimated that the BIA reviews and decides upon an average of 1.3 petitions for recognition each year (reference).

Some Native people see federal recognition as a panacea, the answer to many of their social and economic problems. In fact, most of the people I interviewed belong to tribes currently engaged in some level of the recognition process. In some cases these groups have suspended all other efforts and cultural work until their application is submitted. Most have little hope for their group's actually achieving acknowledgement, however. One Ohlone tribal leader said,

Oh, we applied in 1995 but it doesn't look very promising. We're in the generation that they want documentation for everything and you know, a lot of our people didn't read or write. And culturally, well, the Mission took care of all that. If they did anything [cultural] it was done in hiding because it was against the rules of the Mission, and later because it was against the law. How are we supposed to hold on to something that for generations we weren't allowed to practice? It's crazy.

Many echoed sentiments of the role federal recognition plays (for tribes who achieve it) in bringing the descendants of the community back to the areas of historic occupation, such as Monterey for the Mutsun Ohlone. Many people have moved away due to the high cost of living in this and other coastal towns, and some Indian people believe that a reservation or trust land would enable those people to return, and those who still live locally, to stay.

We're applying [for federal recognition]. We're petition number 120. We have a lot of problems, and that goes with the territory. We have a membership of over 600. Someday, if we get recognized maybe it'll bring all of our people back together.

In this case, given the time allotted to each petition (1.3 per year) it could be the year 2100 before this group's application is reviewed. For this reason and others, some have lost hope in gaining recognition at all. Some feel that seeking a trust relationship with the federal government should not be a tribe's priority, while some expressed a lack of trust in the process and in the federal government overall, due to the history of breaking treaties and reversal of recognition status, such as experienced by the Chinook Tribe, who in 2000 were granted federal recognition by President Bill Clinton, a decision which, immediately following taking office, George W. Bush reversed. One person talked at length about the futile nature of the process for tribes with such a "disrupted" history. He said that he felt to aim for the "brass ring" of federal recognition distracted many people from other, more pressing issues. A Chumash elder stated "...too much time worrying about federal recognition and not enough time taking care of our community, *now*. It's like only thinking of the future and ignoring the present." A member of the Chumash tribe, number 80 on the list said, "To tell you the truth I don't care whether I get federally

recognized or not, because I know who I am and I know who I identify with. I can't see that the federal government is gonna give me anything I don't already have."

For tribes seeking federal acknowledgement, many museums unknowingly work against their efforts. As Indian communities fight to assert themselves as contemporary people, museum representations counter these efforts with primitive notions of Indianness and narratives of cultural extinction.

Alternative Narratives, Hubs of Empowerment

Survival and Ethnic Mixing

Statehood in 1848 marks the beginning of the so-called American era for California. In many museum narratives the only discussion of Native or Californio history beyond statehood belong to their materials—those donated by Anglo donors. For the mixed-heritage Indian community, as I discussed in chapters I and II, the period following statehood was a time of upheaval and required new forms of adaptation. A source of pride for some, of denial for others, this period was foundational for an ethnically mixed contemporary Indian community. Oddly, it is one of the core histories denied in the dominant discourse.

The years of 1870-1970 are virtually ignored in museum texts, but represent the merging of communities of people that earlier were stratified and discrete. To gloss over it is to ignore aspects of the lived experience of the Indian community and perpetuates ignorance. The stories which emerged through ethnohistory scholarship about this period are stories of abject poverty endured by the communities of Indians and Californios after losing the ranchos that had sustained many people of both groups (McWilliams 1946,

1948; Monroy 1990; Haas 1995). Interviews with descendants of those who survived those years reflect that hardship, as well. Although these stories chronicle the long and arduous struggles to maintain or regain land grants promised them under the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and about the painful remembrances of hidden ethnic identity and fear that accompanied trying to “pass” as Mexican, for some this is a story of resilience and pride. For my own family, this period is remembered through my aunt Jeanne’s recollections of my great-grandmother Felipa’s unrelenting attempts to legally regain a land grant promised to her grandfather, a Presidio soldier. Felipa, after my grandfather’s death sold everything but the small tract of land on which she lived and had even begun taking in laundry in order to survive.

Because this era has always been characterized by outsiders as being the “American” era, stories of Indian and Mexican cultural persistence are invisible and require even among community members a great deal of probing. Great-grandparents of the generation now living were encouraged to blend in, to assimilate into the mainstream, English-speaking world. Most of them did this quite effectively and the result has been a hidden past. More work in communities and in small local archives, such as the Montecito Historical Society, will be needed before I can accurately represent this period for Central Coast Indian and Californio people.

Beyond the Era of Invisibility

Renya Ramirez (2007) asserts that relocated and non-federally recognized Indian people in urban centers create Native hubs, such as associations and events that foster a sense of unity and shared Indian identity experienced by land-based or reservation

communities. Native “hubs” on the Central Coast have manifested as various forms of activism, such as sacred and archaeological site preservation, public cultural education, and involvement in a variety of cultural revitalization efforts. The central hubs in this chapter are not, in most cases, places or events as usually found in the Ramirez definition, but are sometimes ongoing *activities* that express traditional values and shared understandings. In addition to serving to validate identity for community members, they also serve in the process of recovery from historic trauma.

Cultural Heritage Management and Site Protection

For the Indian community, the decades of the 1970s and 1980s on the Central Coast were characterized by sacred site and cemetery preservation. Many of the respondents considered preservation activity to be a primary “hub” whereby participation affirmed identity as Native peoples and strengthened community ties. The occupation of Point Conception, for instance, which marked a time of renewed hope and pride for many elders in the Chumash community, was initially an effort to preserve a sacred and culturally important site from industrial development. This event and other forms of activism to protect sacred sites and cemeteries characterized a large segment of the Indian community. In all of the interviews I conducted, activism was central to discussions of identity and participation in community building.

I was 14, like 8th grade or something like that at Santa Barbara Junior High. My aunt Francis came down, she had this '64 wagon, right, she starts picking us all up and throwing us in the car. And we're like “where are we going, Aunt Francis?”....“We're going to the beach and don't try to say you're not coming!”....So we get there and she says, “get out of the car and go sit in front of those dozers, we gotta stop those people.” So I look at the dozer and look at my aunt and decide I'd rather go for the

dozer than Aunt Francis.... So we end up sitting out there for like two days... A bunch of other people showed up, too.... I mean there was no laws, nothing to protect this stuff, just bodies.... So I mean throw your body out there and hope to hell they don't run you over! (Chumash respondent)

The spirit of the contemporary Chumash community can be said to have grown out of those early days of activism and site preservation. Many laws to protect archaeological sites in place in the early 1970s such as the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) were ignored by developers because of the cost of addressing such issues. Native people on the California Coast (with the assistance of archaeologist allies) began challenging them to uphold preservation laws. Strengthened cultural resource management laws that are in place today can be traced back to those people and the unprecedented work they did, for no pay and at extreme risks to their health and livelihoods. The establishment of the Native American Heritage Commission, the State organization charged with assigning most likely descendants in California to monitor development in their respective areas, had its roots (in part) in my Aunt Jeanne and Uncle Dick's barn. They met dozens of times in that dusty barn, sipped coffee on bales of hay with leaders among the Chumash, Cahuilla, Salinan, and Tongva Indians and discussed what could be done legislatively to protect the burials of their ancestors (personal communication, Cahuilla tribal member, Willie Pink). They worked alongside archaeologist and environmentalist allies locally to strengthen city, county, and state regulations for the protection or mitigation of archaeological sites, cemeteries, and sacred spaces from rampant development. The result was a set of laws that mandated Native involvement in all phases of planning and development along the coast. And while the need grew for archaeological monitors to keep developers in check, "Indian people came

out of the woodwork” one respondent said of the era. As a loosely associated group with renewed political power, they fought to save their cultural heritage. In working together to achieve these ends the loose affiliation forged a community that continues today to operate as a unit, albeit not always harmoniously. One grown child born of this Chumash generation stated,

I was fortunate to be raised Indian and with traditional people and still been able to maintain my relationships into my old age. But also I’ve been trained by a lot of people during the activist movement so I know what to look for and humility was in the forefront. You’re not in it for yourself, you’re in it for your people and for the movement and for justice and civil rights.

It was during this period of activism that contemporary Indian encampments were created. Seen as a way to get back to traditional sensibilities, communal camps such as Red Wind and Muhu Tasin were hubs of empowerment and cultural resistance for many people. At their height, each camp supported approximately twenty families. These communities were safe harbors for sharing inherited cultural knowledge and served as foundations of activism, community restoration, and for land and resource preservation.

Community Cultural Revitalization

Today, the Native people of the Central Coast speak of their community as a vibrant and growing entity. Many speak of new associations, sometimes meeting relatives for the first time. Some are descendants of people who became involved during the activist era, while others are just recently identifying with their heritage. Still others have always known their history but lacked a community with whom to celebrate it. Some expressed excitement about being involved in cultural activities for the first time.

Among Ohlone people, weaving and other forms of cultural knowledge are at the

foundation of community building. About twenty years ago, Linda Yamane an Ohlone basketweaver began to research the traditional knowledge recoded from California Indian elders and recorded by John Peabody Harrington. As this interest grew, so did her knowledge of other aspects of Ohlone culture. Others who also sought this knowledge combined their efforts, mining archival material and piecing language, songs, and stories together. As they worked together, they discovered they were all biologically related.

Over the years, probably close to twenty, it kind of developed [the community]. Over the last twenty-ish years, I've met a lot of Ohlone people, none of which knew each other before. It's neat because we are the descendants of people in our communities who knew each other, did things together, sometimes like direct cousins. We've become community, that's the community way.

Among the Chumash, revitalization of indigenous maritime culture is the focus for many. The re-introduction of the tomol (the traditional Chumash redwood plank canoe) is at the heart of those revitalization efforts. In the 1970s the building of the *Helek* (peregrine falcon), mentioned in Chapter V, brought Chumash/Californio descendants together with sympathetic anthropologists and other interested community members. As they dug for cultural information about the tomol, they learned some of the tribal language, songs, and stories. This kind of informal coming together, sharing stories, and learning together still occurs today among coastal Chumash people with the tomol, '*Elye'wun* (swordfish) at the heart of the activities.

'Elye'wun was built in 1997 by the Chumash Maritime Association (CMA) along with various members of Chumash and other California Native groups. A Chumash nonprofit organization, the CMA was created by six Chumash people for the purpose of revitalizing Chumash indigenous maritime culture, including the building of traditional

canoes. The inspiration for this effort came from several sources, including the experience of Julie Cordero-Lamb and mother Roberta Reyes Cordero, in their witnessing the canoe nations of the Pacific Northwest when they lived in Washington State. In the early 1990s they returned to Santa Barbara to identify other Chumash people interested in building a tomol and were instrumental in organizing the community's efforts. Unaware what momentum the movement would create in cultural revitalization and community healing, Roberta, Julie, Cresensio Lopez, Marcus Lopez, Paulette Cabugos, and Alan Salazar—the CMA's founders—along with many others, joined in the building, crewing, housing, and maintenance of the canoe.

In an historic event in September 2001, *'Elye'wun* and crew paddled across the Santa Barbara Channel to Limuw (Santa Cruz Island). As they arrived on the island over 200 Chumash people greeted them in their homecoming celebration, CMA has participated in organizing such a paddle most years since, bringing together all facets of the Chumash community along with their many friends and supporters, such as employees of the National Park Service who operate the Island of Limuw, the Chumash historic homeland (Figure 35).

As *'Elye'wun* came into view near Little Scorpion a cry of celebration was heard from more than 150 Chumash families and their friends. Also witnessing the landing were Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary staff members, Vessel Operations Coordinator Matt Kelly and staff from the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum and Channel Islands National Park. The aroma of burning sage and sounds of horns made from seashell and ram's horn funneled through the cove. Children dressed in traditional Chumash clothing stood ready to greet the paddlers (NOAA website).

Probably the most profound impact that the tomol and channel crossing events have had on the Chumash people is the coming together of groups who considered themselves

distinct from others. Among these are all of the bands mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, some who have the gate-keepers' seal of approval, some who gate-keepers might call "Mexican," and even some of the "elite" California Indian Advisory Committee. Differences are set aside to honor the ancestors and celebrate a shared aboriginal past, a past that, though fraught with heartache and loss, is also a source of enormous pride.

It's amazing, the tomol. You know it's been ten years and that one tomol has brought so many people together. It continues to do that work for our community (Chumash respondent).

Although a great deal of cultural knowledge was lost due to the reasons outlined in the earlier chapters, Native Coastal Californians work with what they have.

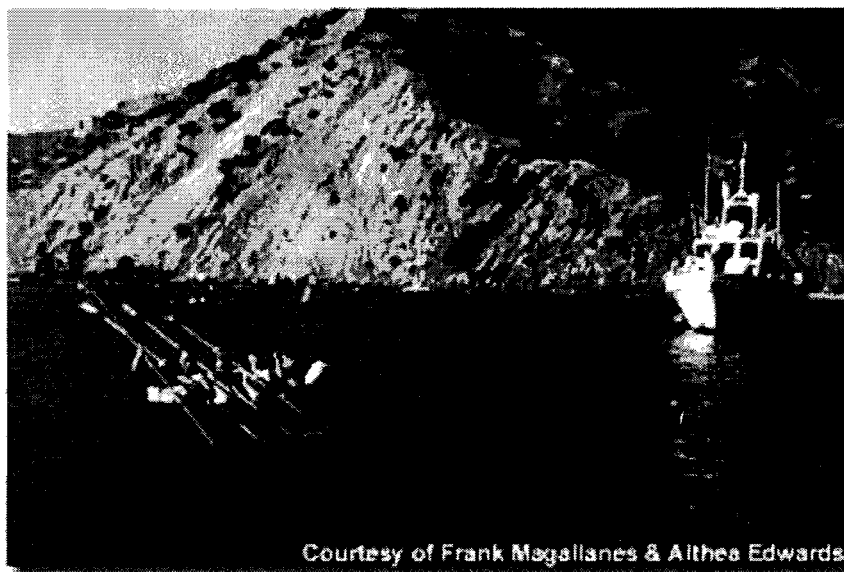


Figure 35: 'Elye'wun and Crew at Limuw 2001 (Photo courtesy of Frank Magallanes and Althea Edwards)

They often have to piece together what they have been taught with historic materials to “fill in the blank spots”.

We’re a little different ‘cause we work with what we know...we might not be doing it exactly like they did a hundred years ago. So what we’re doing may not be the exact ceremony, but what we’re doing is right. We’re doing it, and sometimes learning it, *together* (Ohlone descendant).

Guadalupe Cultural Center

A tiny community cultural center on the Central Coast subverting the dominant museum narrative, the Guadalupe Center is owned and operated by a Santa Ynez Chumash/mixed heritage man and his family. This facility tells the ancient history of the Chumash as well as the history of settlers to the area, predominantly Mexican and Filipino. Proprietor Joe Talaugon, himself a combination of these ethnicities, seeks to tell a “truthful” story, one that resonates with the people who lived it. The Guadalupe Center addresses some of the hard truths and untold stories. Although it uses the age-old diorama mode to do so, the depictions are very detailed and accurate, unlike many oversimplified and even crude dioramas I witnessed at other facilities. At Guadalupe, the visitor is exposed to some of the harsher realities of the Mission period. In this innovative use of the diorama, we see piles of goods produced by Indian laborers, as well as depictions of haggard and brutalized Indian figurines under the lash of the Padre’s whips (see Figure 36). In another small model is the portrayal of the modern dilemma of the coastal Native community in the form of development and the struggle to save sacred sites and cemeteries. This scene is complete with bulldozers, archaeologists and unearthed Indian burials. The text used to describe these scenes is explicit, exposing the harsh truths.



Figure 36: Mission Diorama, Guadalupe Cultural Center (Photo by Deana Dartt-Newton).

I was honored during my visit there to hear an ancient Chumash song sung by Talaugon's granddaughters. These two young girls had been completing their homework in one of the back rooms and were asked to come out to demonstrate their cultural knowledge by singing a song of Maria Solares recorded on one of the Harrington tapes. Solares is one of their direct ancestors. Much like other tribal cultural centers I have visited, the Guadalupe Center operates as a hub for extended family and a storytelling place for those people, though in this case it is not on a reservation. This fact makes its message that much more profound—it is an urban museum telling the history of a predominantly urban Indian community.

Conclusions

According to work among scholars of historic trauma, the first thing that must occur in the process of healing is to raise awareness of the illness that exists. To do this, they say, a community must become aware of its history and understand how it has arrived at its present state. The issues that plague coastal California Indian communities stem from generations of unresolved, historical grief, religious conflict, violence over the land, and the ongoing struggle to identify as aboriginal to homelands now urban centers. Most museum representations in the region exacerbate those wounds and deny the truths at the heart of these communities.

Essentialized portrayals contribute to flawed notions of Indianness for the public and for Native people themselves, romanticized notions that are impossible to achieve as modern people. These codified narratives relegate alternatives, such as the lived experiences of local people, to obscurity. Indian people are expected to live within this fabricated Indian identity, constantly expected to play a role that conforms to an unrealistic expectation rather than being allowed to be contemporary Indian people—rooted to place and culture, yet part of a modern world (see Cordero-Lamb 2002). Consequently, struggles to assert identity and stake claims to land and sovereignty (Strong and VanWinkle 1996) are thwarted by these representations.

In addition, a substantial underserved public, Native Californians are rarely considered even as their histories are being told daily to thousands of people by hundreds of institutions. In so doing, while ignoring or marginalizing modern descendant communities, museums also deny other publics the opportunity to share in the exciting journey of revitalization that is currently underway in these communities.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this dissertation I have argued that the Indian/mixed heritage community of California's Central Coast is poorly represented in most public history venues and that this stems from a dominant discourse that can be traced by critically observing museums and Missions in the area. I have shown that although Indian histories are routinely told and presented to the public, authentic histories—ones that stem from the lived experiences of California Indians—remain shrouded in obscurity. The dominant narratives follow predictable trajectories leaving out substantial points of even popular history and rarely allude to living Indian people or make efforts to include their voices.

In Chapter I, I introduced some of the most problematic issues in the public presentation of California Indian history. The first and most prevalent in Central Coast museums is the perpetuation of “occupation” eras to define life for Indian people. This

idea assumes no agency on the part of individuals and limits who they are to influences of the period's occupying government.

The eras themselves are marked with assumptions of their own. For example pre-contact, a term widely used by scholars and museum professionals assumes that groups encountered upon "European" arrival in the New World were static, homogeneous entities, discounting change and diffusion among indigenous groups. The staticity inherent in this designation, the ethnographic snapshot in time, retains a certain romance for museums and museum goers, of an untainted, simple, and harmonious utopia. Based on ethnographic and archaeological scholarship, many descriptions of Indian people during the late 18th century are characterized primarily in terms of subsistence strategies (e.g. hunter/gatherer), housing styles, and clothing. These drastic oversimplifications are exacerbated by the notion of culture areas used to define areas of shared cultural traits, which have codified Indian groups in the public as well as the scholarly imagination. In addition to subsistence, antiquated assumptions about social mores, gender, religion, and cosmology, for example—are also portrayed. Many of these depictions conflate at least 13 thousand years of life, culture, history, and change into a moment in time. This moment in time is the artificial starting point for many museum narratives. Moreover, this glorification of a mythical past ignores subsequent generations of people and their histories. While history, anthropology, and many museums themselves have begun admitting the difficulty of, and shortcomings to constructing the past, museums on the Central Coast boldly state as "truth" many unknowable aspects of Native life prior to European invasion.

The Spanish/Mission period is less mysterious, but nevertheless equally fanciful in its depictions. Though scholarship in the last decades tackles some of the more gruesome aspects of the Mission period, museum portrayals, especially those in the Missions themselves have avoided these aspects of the story. Indians were often abused, including severe and psychologically heinous forms of punishment, torture, upheaval of traditional life and culture, and the impacts that the Mission era had on subsequent generations of Indian people are not portrayed in any of the venues on the central California Coast (other than the Guadalupe Center). Mission museums portray a glorified, utopian, lifestyle for converted Indians grateful to the benevolent priests who taught them skills for life in a modern society. Disease, death, punishment, loss of language and culture are glossed over in attempts to maintain a romantic fantasy Spanish heritage so beneficial to tourism and development in California (Delyser 2005; Kropp 2006; McWilliams 1939, 1946).

All of the museums I visited on the Central Coast (a total of 54) portrayed versions of the “Indian” pre-contact past. In archaeological and natural history museums this is the end of Indian life. In Mission museums, Indians are present only as subjects of Spain, a nameless, faceless workforce. Only in regional museums do Indians survive beyond the Mission period, but they are never central to any story beyond the “Indian Period” of “pre-contact”. In regional museums, progress narratives glorify a pre-contact Indian past, highlight only “Mexicans” during the rancho period, and ‘Americans’ beyond statehood. If Indian people are mentioned in the modern era (such as at Missions Santa Barbara and San Antonio, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural

History) it is a mere footnote to the much larger messages.

The Californio story is equally problematic. These people in contrast to the California Indians, have *no* past. In terms of race, since they were agents of Spain they are portrayed almost exclusively as Españoles--Europeans. Scholarship as early as the mid twentieth century (McWilliams 1946, 1949) discussed the ethnic origins of the settler and soldier community of early California as Indigenous (primarily Mayo and Cochimi), African, and Mestizo (combinations of these) and occasionally a Spaniard, people recruited from depressed regions of northwest Mexico. Museum narratives rarely depict early settlers as anything other than Anglo-Europeans and the word used to describe them in almost all cases is *Spanish*.

Later in time, during the Rancho Period the same group of people is classified as *Californio* or Mexican. Another ethnic marker, the term Californio is also an indicator of class. The term came to denote hacienda “nobility” at the top of what has been called a quasi-fuedal society (Perez 2006), with Indian serfs as their peon laborers. This may have been true of perhaps 20 to 40 families that were recipients of early land grants, but the remainder were poor and landless like many Indians after the Mission system collapsed. An example of the true ethnic make-up and class of settler *gente de razon* is exemplified in the life of Luis Quintero and his wife, Maria Petra. Though he might well have been classified as a *Californio* during the rancho period, lives of working class poor people such as this are difficult to find in the historic record and invisible in museum narratives. In natural history and archaeological museums these people are non-existent (except for the Albinger which describes them as living only from 1833-

1849). In Mission museums they are painted as wealthy “Spaniards” who exploited Mission properties promised to Indians and the landless Indians whom they enlisted to tend their sprawling ranches. The wealthy exploiters are often depicted as the west-coast version of Southern plantation slaveholders. Though there may be some similarities, the system of *compadrazgo* or god-parenting relationships that created bonds between Californios and Indians created loyalties that provided working class poor Indians and Mexicans with security and wealthy landowning *hacendados* with a cheap labor force. Relationships and loyalties forged through *compadrazgo* lasted far beyond the Mexican era, after the short-lived class stratification collapsed.

The “Mexican/Rancho” period lasted less than twenty years, but usually occupies the same amount of space as the “Indian” and “Spanish” periods. Regional museums are the only venues to represent Californios beyond the Mission period. In these venues there is scant Mexican presence after 1860. The implication of these narratives is that Mexicans in America were defeated by the arrival of real “Americans” those being white, or Anglo-European settlers. The arrival of Americans generally marks the end of the other ethnic groups in museum narratives and the designation of *American* is presumably an ethnic identifier. Three previous eras are characterized in terms of racial and ethnic qualifiers. American, from the narrative is a white or Anglo community of people, who then erase brown people, their contributions, and their existence on the contemporary landscape.

Alternatives to these popular and unexamined stories exist outside of the current discourse. This means that narratives that challenge these assumptions may never be

accepted as viable alternatives. While this may be the case, some museum professionals on the Central Coast are questioning the validity of imposed boundaries of culture, time, and community and may be willing to redress them in exhibits. For these people I offer a window into the lived experience of the Indian population.

Interviews with Central Coast Native people exposed perceptions of how their histories are delivered. These were seen by the majority of respondents as conveying a message about Indian people as primitive and animalistic. These portrayals, they said, relegated Indians to a past, pre-contact state, leaving no room for adaptation and change and that they rarely (if ever) portrayed living people. These portrayals, many feared, lead to public assumptions about their extinction. Some expressed concern that California history is also skewed and when portrayed at all, they are depicted as wealthy Spaniards. This is not the history that they know. They discussed the impacts the dominant discourse has on their lives, including public expectations of essentialized Indianness. Some people complained about denial of access to Native materials held in collections for revitalization efforts. While others said that the miseducation of the public perpetuates stereotypes which promote racist attitudes in California. In all, the Native people I interviewed are dismayed at the portrayal of their cultures in Central Coast museums and Missions.

Though the critiques of museum practices have led to wider involvement of Native people in the telling of their stories (see AAM 1996) through tribal museums and the National Museum of the American Indian, mainstream museums continue to contribute to the invisibility of Indians in several ways--modes that I have spoken about

here, but also another, more subtle way. Indian communities today are de-legitimated through the tokenization of one Indian person as the “representative” consultant. A current trend is to consult with individuals with Native ancestry to design exhibits and programs—a trend which gained steam during negotiations and since the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). This 1990 law, which required agencies and institutions receiving federal money to inventory and return Native American human remains to descendent communities, inadvertently legislated the creation of relationships between tribes and museums. In one of the museums in my research area an “advisory council” appointed during initial NAGPRA compliance, is now expected to speak for their communities on other issues. This and other Native advisory committees are generally called together for museum interests, which are based in unrealistic assumptions about reconciling colonist legacies. The agenda of the museum in most cases neglects alternative paradigms of knowledge, as non-Indian staff people assert their ideas and plans to committee members, in hopes of ascertaining Native support for them. Policies of exclusion play into the current identity politics and codify definitions of identity when in exchange for their service to the museum, Indian people receive the prestige of being acknowledged (by outsiders) as representing one’s community. Some have begun to shape their cultural identities according to what they believe is expected of them. It is a participation in stereotyping that is a tacit agreement to domination. As “advisory committee” members for various non-Indian organizations they are made authorities for their communities. They are chosen for this role based on essentialist ideas and many of them appear to have

adopted the selected history as their actual history (Bird 1996).

Arturo Escobar (1995) asserts that discourses trap people within them. “Third world” people’s histories, in his description, are constructed and codified within realms outside of their control. Certain representations become dominant and shape indelibly the ways in which reality is imagined and acted upon, where a certain order of discourse produces permissible modes of being and thinking while disqualifying and even making others impossible. This reality makes efforts to consult complicated, but not at all impossible. It will require however that museum professionals remain cognizant of their expectations. I have crafted a list for these people, but *inclusion* is key to any and all discussions of representation.

Recommendations: Inclusion for a Representative Narrative

Though I will make some explicit recommendations as to the direction of exhibits and programming in the Central Coast museums, consultation with local community members should remain foremost in the minds of curators and museum staff who want to tell a more accurate story of Indian life. To do this I encourage museum practitioners to invite everyone to the table and understand that not everyone will respond. It is still vital to spread the word as widely as possible and be willing to accommodate the needs of this very under-represented public. Ethically it is the museum’s responsibility to do so. Aside from any local federally recognized band or tribe, it is also wise to contact social service organizations and American Indian Health clinics in the area. It should not be expected that people will give freely of their time.

They should be paid and when possible provided with transportation, especially elders.

Cultural competency among museum people is often an issue. There are Native consultants available to guide museum staff and docents through the process of understanding cultural differences and commonly held misconceptions. It is unwise to avoid cultural competency training for staff and docents. I experienced more cultural ignorance, racism, and insensitivity in the field than I can recount here, most often among docents. One insensitive comment could quickly destroy all networking efforts. Some museums on the Central Coast schedule meetings for their docents wherein local Natives tell their people's pre-contact history. These trainings are generally very popular, but a good number of them walk away with increased romanticization of Native people. Some docents who participated in these types of "trainings" retained racist notions that I later heard expressed to classes of third and fourth-graders. In addition to educated and sensitive interpreters which will go a long way in addressing problems that I have outlined in previous chapters, I have also listed some specific ideas to update exhibits in (all types of) museums telling an Indian story. In an effort to disrupt the dominant narrative, exhibits should:

- Always tell the story of the Indigenous people of the area. To avoid it is to participate in the "obliteration" narrative. The most destructive thing a museum can do is to avoid the Indian story because they fear it is too controversial. To do this is to erase the Aboriginal history of California in the minds of visitors—i.e. the world.

- Start at a time other than first contact and show the dynamism and diversity that existed prior to the arrival of Europeans. Linear progression is overused and many visitors are tired of it.
- Express the hard truths of each colonial regime. The Holocaust Museum is one of the most well attended museums in Washington. People are not afraid of the truth.
- Frame narratives in terms other than “eras” i.e. Spanish/Mission, Mexican/Rancho and American/Gold Rush. An alternative might be to follow a family through these periods and discuss ways that their lives were impacted by newcomers—including negative impacts.
- Include interesting and little known stories about real people from a range of ethnic groups.
- Show that all groups have survived (not just white Americans), and talk about ways that their cultures are expressed in the area today. An example might be to show how local Indian people intermarried and survived on Ranchos owned by Mexican families, and how those families adapted to and resisted assimilation, and managed to remain in their homelands even after Rancho lands were taken.
- Discuss the issues a variety of that people faced with statehood such as the foreign miner’s tax, the indenture laws of 1850 and 1860, etc.
- Discuss contemporary American Indian issues such as outlined in Chapters II and VII. These include but are certainly not limited to: 1) sovereignty—what it is and why it is important to communities, 2) an explanation of federal

recognition, what it means to Indian people, and why it has been so rare in Coastal California, 3) an examination of identity battles exacerbated by non-status, blood quantum criteria, federal and state laws that *define* Indian in limited ways, and historic trauma, 4) the Mission Indian Federation, why it was formed and how it benefited Indian people 5) urban Indian communes and activism of the 1960s and 1970s, which include interesting stories such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the occupation of Alcatraz Island, activism for the preservation of sacred sites and cemeteries, and the creation of laws to protect them such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), and other pivotal legislation for Native peoples.

- Discussion of the CA SB 2063 State Indian Museum bill and why Native Californians feel so strongly about representing themselves.
- Emphasis on living communities and the activities underway such as: 1) Revitalization of canoe culture (including paddles in the Santa Barbara Channel from the 1970s through today), 2) Revitalization of basketry, preservation and restoration of traditional plant habitats through the work of organizations such as the California Indian Basketweavers Association (CIBA), 3) Revitalization of California Native Languages in the past decade has been unprecedented. There is abundant material available such as from the Breath of Life organizers at UC

Berkeley, various California Linguists, and the Indian communities, many of whom are restoring their ancient languages with little financial support.

- Explanation of casinos and gaming in California, engaging the audience in the facts about tribal gaming, such as the little known history of its origins in traditional Native life, as well as highlighting ways gaming has benefited tribes, surrounding communities, and the state of California.

There are also myriad issues facing the Mexican and Mestizo population of California, whether they be newly arrived or among the descendants of the Californio generations. I discussed some of these in Chapters II and VI. They include authentic portrayals of Californio histories rather than romantic portrayals of haciendas, fiestas, and fictional *Ramona* –esque representations. These might offer working class stories that people (including the descendant population) can relate to. Also include the history of the US/Mexican border, and what has it meant to tribes and families straddling it. If consultation with the broader community is done well, many issues will emerge, beyond what I can suggest here. I have not offered an exhaustive list of suggestions because my goal is to get museums to collaborate and communicate with local people, not to negate the need for such efforts.

One of the questions I posed to museum staff and docents was, “Do you think it’s the job of history museums to tell the stories of contemporary groups?” Seventy-five percent responded by asking “if we don’t, who will?” In many cases, museum directors and staff apologized for the state of their exhibits, and in fact the majority of

them want to change the dominant message. They expressed two major obstacles to doing so, fear and money.

What I propose, addresses both of these issues—that museums on the Central Coast work can work as advocates for social justice, and that it need not require an enormous budget to do so. I recommend that this work begin prior to the revamping of exhibit spaces. Clearly, public programs currently stem from exhibits in all of these venues. These exhibits can still inform public programs, but using their outdated exhibits to discuss stereotypes and commonly held misconceptions. Rather than avoid such topics because their visual representations are outdated, why not incorporate them into the storyline of the racist and primitive ways people of color have been portrayed in the *past*. These changes can be done with little or no money. In addition, it could be extremely useful to staff and docents to visit tribal museums in other areas to see self-representations of Native and Californio and the social justice issues these facilities address.

Elsewhere in California, where there are federally-recognized tribes, there are also tribal museums. At Barona Cultural Center in San Diego and the Agua Caliente Museum near Palm Springs, for example, visitors can see and hear Indian history from an Indian perspective. In these types of venues, the Mission period is discussed in terms of its impacts on California Indians. Disease, malnutrition, confinement, punishment, and the devastating loss of cultural knowledge and language are underscored rather than highlighting the “useful trades” and beneficial religious training discussed in the Mission museums. Individual family histories are told, exemplifying the depth of

relationships local people continue to have with the land and each other. Items owned and borrowed from tribal members are on display to reveal cultural artistic traditions, rather than the popular anthropological museum's display of stone tools which gesture at a primitive "stone age" lifestyle. In tribal museums the visitor is likely to see color photographs of children and elders practicing ancient traditions, perhaps some with a contemporary twist. They hear audio recordings of living people speaking their Native languages. Visitors leaving a tribal museum are often filled with a sense of hope and excitement about the restoration and revitalization of Native life in North America (see for example Erikson, Ward and Wachendorf 2002). Currently, on California's Central Coast the primary narrative remains static, primitive, and echoes a sense of loss, countering the sense of hope elsewhere. Central Coast museums can alter this grim narrative with some concentrated efforts and a commitment to work as a source of community cohesion.

Future Research

Volumes more could be said about the settler/soldier population of Alta California. The upper class descendants of those who traveled are the only voices currently heard in the historic texts. Texts that highlight the rugged, resilient, and romanticized lives of upper class Californios such as Jose Amador, Pio Pico, Francisco Lugo among others, have been published widely (see Osio 1996; Amador, Asisara, and More-Torres 1995). Mostly drawn from interviews with Hubert Howe Bancroft (1882, 1888) in the late 18th and early 19th century these narratives depict attitudes of wealthy,

landed men. Recent work has addressed issues of gender which finally highlighted the experiences of *women* pobladoras and presidarias (Castaneda 1990a, 1990b). And very recent re-interpretation of transcribed interview data (Beebe and Senkewicz 2006), of 13 Californio women, who because of their positions in the upper class were interviewed by Thomas Savage (also for Bancroft), offers us a glimpse into women's views of post-statehood California. However, because interviews were highly structured and focused on political events, insights are limited to an Anglo male agenda.

Little has been written about the experience of working class Californio families in Spanish, Mexican and American "frontier" Alta California. How did these people who, bound to their choice to relocate to the desolate outpost 1000 miles north of home, adapt to life among conservative minded Catholic priests, local Indians and their fellow settlers? What are the stories of those settlers who fled to live among the local Indians, and was their own indigeneity beneficial in forging relationships with local tribes? Insights into these more common stories can be ascertained through research in small historical societies, and many on the Central Coast have yet to be mined for their rich archival resources. The Montecito Historical Society, for example has collected recordings of early (1850-1900) Mexican and Anglo residents, but these have never been transcribed. An elderly, longtime resident of Montecito has survey maps through the 1900s and hundreds of photos of Montecito families in file cabinets in her home office, due to the lack of a proper facility to house them. Research using resources such as these will lend itself to telling a more comprehensive account of the ethnic and cultural complexion of historic Central Coast neighborhoods and how working class

people adjusted to changing political tides.

Because the nature of this project was to investigate museum representations, questionnaires and interviews were structured to solicit museum perspectives and responses to public representations. It was not until more than half-way through data collection that the themes addressed in the alternative narratives chapter emerged. To more adequately investigate some of these areas, more interviews in communities will be necessary. To tell the Native and Californio stories in museums and scholarly texts, it is vital to conduct additional in-depth unstructured interviews in communities pertaining to family histories. To adequately chronicle how assertions of ethnic identity are tied to changing political pressures, we will need to examine family histories, through a series of intimate conversations. I intend to begin this process in my own family and with the use of the Montecito Historical Society holdings.

Additionally, the indigenous history of the early settlers is an area of great interest to me and very little has been written. While James Mason (1998) began the investigation of the backgrounds of settler families through his re-examination of census data, more research in archives such as the Loreto Presidio in northwest Mexico is necessary to tell a more comprehensive story of the lives of the early settlers. Loreto's churches and historical societies have valuable archival information that will allow us to unearth a more multi-dimensional history of Los Pobladores.

The role of museums policy and education programs in the development of the dominant discourse Indian life in California is another area that could be developed. Policies of exclusion and assimilation can and should be traced in efforts to change the

current requirements for federal acknowledgement for California Indians, and Mission Indians specifically. It will be necessary to build a strong case to demonstrate the unique circumstances of Mission Indians through a thorough examination of California state and federal policy impacting Indian people through time.

In addition, an investigation of the last fifty years of K-12 education on California Indian and Mexican life and cultures would lend insight into how education for California's children has laid the foundation for the widespread ignorance that currently exists.

These are but a few directions that this research can go, but ultimately the focus of *my* future research will be social justice for the Indian communities of California. As a member of this underrepresented group, this group situated on the margin of the margin, it is my goal to raise awareness about who we are and why it matters. Alienated by the cost and stress of life in the urban centers that are our homelands, many Native people have had no choice but to leave their families and settle elsewhere. Not unlike the early settler population, we have often been forced to make decisions that further distance us from the cultural values, familial bonds, and spiritual connection to our homelands due to the need for economic solvency, impossible to achieve in places like Santa Barbara and Monterey. Research to help tribes establish themselves as sovereign nations is the most vital goal because without federal recognition and land bases for Indian communities on the Central Coast, many people will continue to leave. The "extinct" coastal Indians in museum exhibits is painfully false, but without efforts to change these representations and advocating for acknowledgement of tribal identity (by

scholars and museum professionals), the Central Coast may someday indeed be an “Indian-free” zone.

APPENDIX A

CALIFORNIA: A CHANGING STATE

Students learn the story of their home state, unique in American history in terms of its vast and varied geography, its many waves of immigration beginning with pre-Columbian societies, its continuous diversity, economic energy, and rapid growth. In addition to the specific treatment of milestones in California history, students examine the state in the context of the rest of the nation, with an emphasis on the U.S. Constitution and the relationship between state and federal government.

4.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.

1. Explain and use the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine the absolute locations of places in California and on Earth.
2. Distinguish between the North and South Poles; the equator and the prime meridian; the tropics; and the hemispheres, using coordinates to plot locations.
3. Identify the state capital and describe the various regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environments (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) affect human activity.
4. Identify the locations of the Pacific Ocean, rivers, valleys, and mountain passes and explain their effects on the growth of towns.
5. Use maps, charts, and pictures to describe how communities in California vary in land use, vegetation, wildlife, climate, population density, architecture, services, and transportation.

4.2 Students describe the social, political, cultural, and economic life and interactions among people of California from the pre-Columbian societies to the Spanish mission and Mexican rancho periods.

1. Discuss the major nations of California Indians, including their geographic distribution, economic activities, legends, and religious beliefs; and describe how they depended on, adapted to, and modified the physical environment by cultivation of land and use of sea resources.

Identify the early land and sea routes to, and European settlements in, California with a focus on the exploration of the North Pacific (e.g., by Captain James Cook, Vitus Bering, Juan Cabrillo), noting especially the importance of mountains, deserts, ocean currents, and wind patterns.

2. Describe the Spanish exploration and colonization of California, including the relationships among soldiers, missionaries, and Indians (e.g., Juan Crespi, Junipero Serra, Gaspar de Portola).
3. Describe the mapping of, geographic basis of, and economic factors in the placement and function of the Spanish missions; and understand how the mission system expanded the influence of Spain and Catholicism throughout New Spain and Latin America.
4. Describe the daily lives of the people, native and nonnative, who occupied the presidios, missions, ranchos, and pueblos.
5. Discuss the role of the Franciscans in changing the economy of California from a hunter-gatherer economy to an agricultural economy.
6. Describe the effects of the Mexican War for Independence on Alta California, including its effects on the territorial boundaries of North America.
7. Discuss the period of Mexican rule in California and its attributes, including land grants, secularization of the missions, and the rise of the rancho economy.

4.3 Students explain the economic, social, and political life in California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush, and the granting of statehood.

1. Identify the locations of Mexican settlements in California and those of other settlements, including Fort Ross and Sutter's Fort.

APPENDIX B

CALIFORNIA INDIAN MUSEUM PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Public Comments

The following items are a partial list of the topics of discussion at the public meetings. We also welcome your written comments. Fill out the form below and return it by August 31st. Please be as specific as possible. The return address is printed on the back. Use other sheets as necessary.

What would you like to experience at a State Indian Museum?

What Indian events/experiences would you like to see at the museum?

What would you like the public to learn and understand at a State Indian Museum?

What area of involvement do you feel Native Americans should have in a State Indian Museum?

_____ Please send me a summary of the planning documents previously completed by the Department.

Name/Address (optional unless you are requesting the summary).

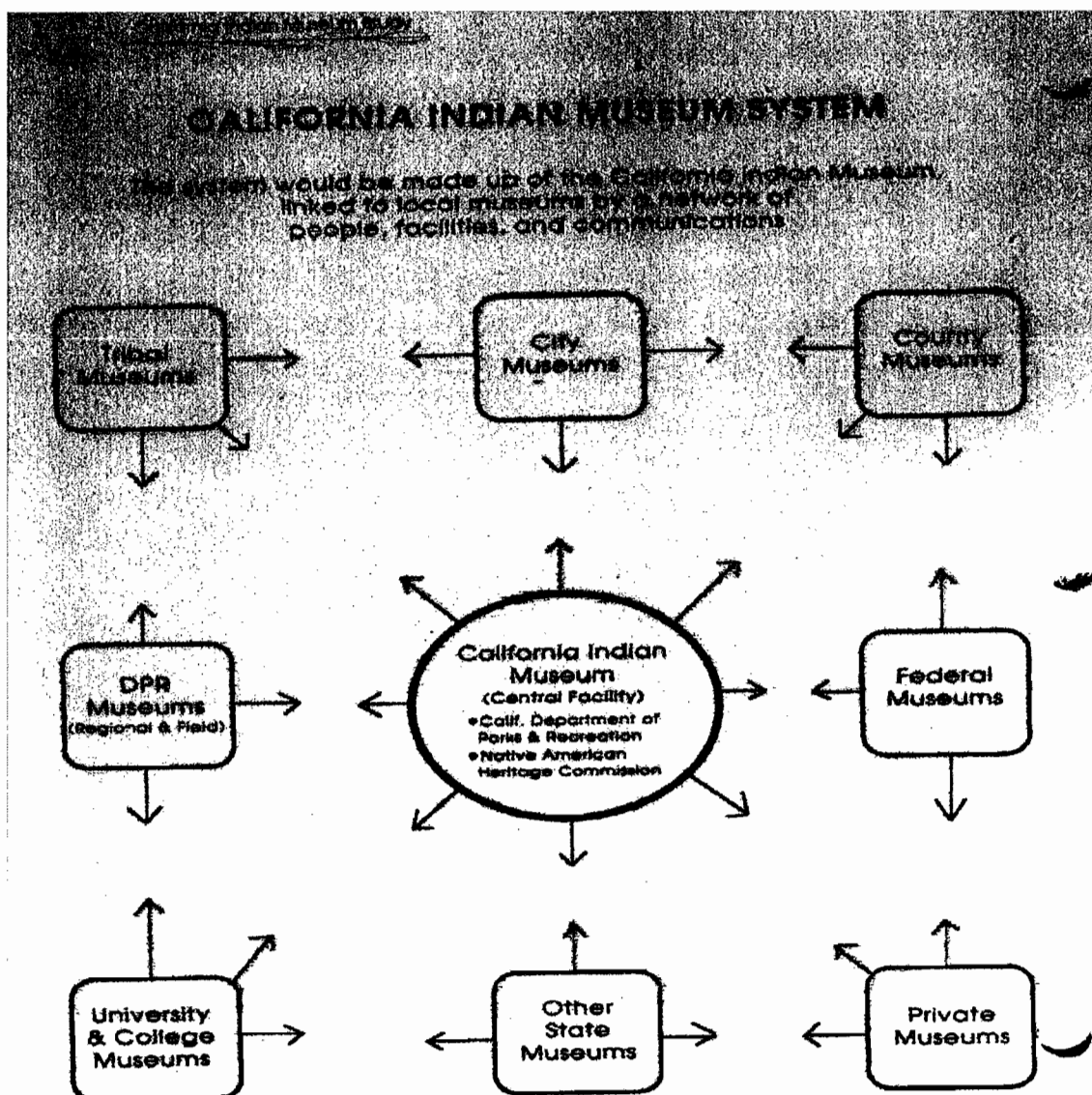
APPENDIX C

CALIFORNIA INDIAN MUSEUM MEETING LOCATIONS



APPENDIX D

CALIFORNIA INDIAN MUSEUM SYSTEM PLAN



APPENDIX E

CENTRAL COAST MUSEUM SITES

County	City	Facility Name	Indian History	California History	Host Public Schools
Monterey County					
	Carmel	Mission Carmel	X	X	X
	Monterey	Maritime Museum of Monterey	X		X
		Monterey County Youth Museum	n/a	n/a	X
		Monterey State Hist Park/	X	X	
		Colton Hall Museum			
		Monterey County Hist Soc/ Pacific House	X	X	X
		History and Art Association Museum	X		
		Agriculture and Rural Life Museum	n/a	n/a	
		Presidio Museum			
	Pacific Grove	Museum of Natural History	X		X
San Luis Obispo County					
	Arroyo Grande	Heritage House	n/a	n/a	
		Santa Manuela School	n/a	n/a	
		Paulding House	n/a	n/a	
	Cayucos	Highway 1 Museum	n/a	n/a	
	Morro Bay	Central Coast Maritime Museum Assoc	n/a	n/a	
		Museum of Natural History			
	Nippomo	Dana Adobe	n/a	n/a	
	Paso Robles	Estrella Adobe Church	n/a	n/a	

County	City	Facility Name	Indian History	California History	Host Public Schools
		Pioneer Museum	X	X	X
	San Luis Obispo	Art Center	n/a	n/a	
		Mission San Luis Obispo	X	X	X
		Children's Museum	n/a	n/a	
		County Historical Museum		X	
		Jack House	n/a	n/a	
	San Miguel	Rios-Caledonia Adobe		X	
Santa Barbara					
	Lompoc	Lompoc Museum	X		X
		Mission La Purisima	X		X
	Santa Barbara	La Casa de La Guerra Museum		X	
		Maritime Museum	X		
		Mission Santa Barbara	X		X
		Santa Barbara Presidio		X	X
		Historical Society Museum	X	X	X
		Museum of Natural History	X		X
	Santa Maria	Historical Museum	n/a	n/a	
		Natural History Museum	n/a	n/a	
	Santa Ynez	Mission Santa Ynez	X		X
Ventura					
	Camarillo	Pleasant Valley Museum and Botanical Garden	n/a	n/a	
	Filmore	Filmore Historical Museum	n/a	n/a	
		Filmore Museum of Natural History	n/a	n/a	
	Newbury Park	Stagecoach Inn Museum	X		X
	Ojai	Ojai Valley Museum	X		X
		Gallery of Historic Figures	n/a	n/a	
	Piru	Rancho Camulos		X	

County	City	Facility Name	Indian History	Californio History	Host Public Schools
	Port Hueneme	Port Hueneme Historical Museum	X		
	Santa Paula	California Oil Museum	n/a	n/a	
	Thousand Oaks	Oakbrook Regional Park-Chumash Interpretive Center	X		X
	Ventura	Los Olivas Adobe		X	
		Museum of History & Art	X	X	X
		Channel Islands Nat Park Vis Ctr	X		
		Dudley House	n/a	n/a	
		Mission San Buenaventura	X		X
		Ventura County Maritime Museum	X		
		Albinger Archaeological Museum	X	X	X

X=yes unmarked=no n/a= unable to access during research trips, by phone , or e-mail

APPENDIX F

CENTRAL COAST MUSEUM CHECKLIST

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Director _____

Facility Type _____

Architectural style _____

Target Audience _____

Facility size _____

Space Allocated for: _____

California

History _____

Indian History _____

Public Program Contact

Info: _____

Visitors annually _____

Primary funding _____

Staff size _____

Volunteer base _____

When established _____

Mission Statement

Gift Shop:

Books:

California History

Recent pubs

Cal Indian History

Cal Indian
authors:

Indian History

Indian authors:

Indian memorabilia

Historic memorabilia

APPENDIX G

MISSION MUSEUM RHETORICAL STRATEGIES AT A GLANCE

Mission	SA and E	T and D	SK	RI
San Diego de Alcala	X			
San Luis Rey de Francia	X			
San Juan Capistrano		X		
San Gabriel Archangel	O			
San Fernando Rey de Espana	O			
San Buenaventura	O			
Santa Barbara		X		
La Purisima Concepcion				X
Santa Ines	O			
San Luis Obispo de Tolosa		X		
San Miguel Archangel	n/a			
San Antonio de Padua		X	X	
Nuestra Sonora de la Soledad	O			
San Carlos de Boromeo (Carmel)	O		O	
Santa Cruz		X		
San Juan Bautista	O			
San Jose		X		
Santa Clara de Asis		X	X	
San Francisco de Asis (Dolores)		X		
San Rafael Archangel	n/a			
San Francisco Solano (Sonoma)		O		

Progress Narrative = X

Erasure/Obliteration = O

n/a = no basis for evaluation

S A and E = Symbolic Annihilation and Erasure

T and D = Trivialization and Deflection

SK = Segregated Knowledge

RI = Relative Incorporation

APPENDIX H

NATIVE COMMUNITY MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

Indian community or Tribal Affiliation (if any): _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

County: _____

Identity:

Did you grow up in southern/central Californian/a _____

Did you grow up on a reservationn/a _____

In what ways is your Indian identity affirmed or validated (language, family, events, traditional aspects of your culture, etc.)

Do you think the general public in your area knows the history of Native Americansn/a _____

Do you think that the public understanding of Native Americans and the history of California has impacts on your lifen/a

Museums:

How often in your life have you visited museums/missions that represent Native Americansn/a _____

Were you taken in the 4th or 5th grade to a museum and/or a mission to learn about Native American history, life, and culturesn/a

How would you say the museum or mission represented your life and culture as an Indian personn/a _____

How did you feel when you saw your community depicted in exhibitsn/a

What kinds of books did you read in school about Native Americansn/a _____

Did the exhibits in museums tell the same stories as you learned in school/a

Would you say that these things validated your Indian identity/a

As an adult, how do you feel about the museums/missions in your area/a

If you are a parent, are these places you take your children/a
Why/a

Do you view the museums/missions as a valuable source of knowledgen/a

If you could change anything in the way Indian people are portrayed (either in exhibits or in school programs) at the museums and missions, what would you like to see insteadn/a

APPENDIX I

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY LETTER



Santa Barbara
Museum of Natural History

Celebrating 90 years of inspiring a passion for the natural world

November 30, 2006

Ms. Dena Dartt-Newton
Department of Anthropology
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97404-1218

Dear Ms. Dartt-Newton:

Thank you for your attendance at the November 10 meeting of our California Indian Advisory Committee, which is, as you know, composed of Chumash community representatives. The Committee has been in existence for many years and advises us on all museum programs of interest to the Native American community in our area. The Committee members take a strong interest in the museum and its programs.

Let me state at the outset that Dr. John Johnson, our Curator of Anthropology, and I consider the overall intent and goal of your research project to be meritorious, and the members of our Advisory Committee agree with this assessment. However, while our Committee members and staff saw many positive aspects of your proposed research, serious concerns were raised during the discussion period following your presentation. It is my understanding that Dr. Johnson has already reported to you orally about these concerns, but I wish to reiterate and expand upon them here. The first comment from our Committee members was that your project had not allotted equivalent time for conducting interviews with Native people as would be accorded to museum staff and docents. The Committee felt that Native people deserve to be interviewed and not simply sent questionnaires. Also, Committee members were concerned that the questionnaires would likely not be reaching people who were not part of organized groups.

Secondly, our Committee felt that no information was provided about how you would be selecting those who would be interviewed (or to whom questionnaires would be sent in the Native Californian community). As you know, there are several different categories of people claiming Chumash, Salinan, Esselen, and Costanoan (Ohlone) identities, some of whom possess actual ancestry from these groups and some who do not. Some have always been part of locally identified Native communities and families, and others are quite distantly related to an identifiable California Indian ancestor but recently have decided to reassert an indigenous identity. There very likely will be differences in how these various individuals or groups respond to your questionnaires, depending upon their particular backgrounds. The selection of your sample will significantly affect your findings. The Committee felt that you need to provide further information about your sampling strategy and how you will distinguish between the different people asserting Native identities.

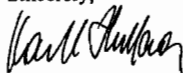
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta del Sol, Santa Barbara, California 93105
805.682.4711 • Fax 805.569.3170 • www.sbnature.org

Ty Warner Sea Center
211 Stearns Wharf, Santa Barbara, California 93101
805.962.2526 • Fax 805.962.3483 • www.sbnature.org

Thirdly, our Committee was concerned that you have not been forthcoming regarding your own identity. Members of our California Indian Advisory Committee perceive your characterization of yourself as "Chumash," rather than admitting your California Spanish ancestry, as a further attempt to erode public understanding regarding who are the actual descendants of the historical Chumash communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties today.

I concur with our California Indian Advisory Committee that permission to conduct interviews at our museum should be granted only on the condition that you submit a revised research design that satisfactorily addresses the concerns expressed in this letter. The members of the Committee wish to review the revised proposal before approval is given to proceed with the research. The revised research design should also have the approval of your doctoral Advisory Committee and of the Human Subjects Review Program of your university. Once these conditions are met, we are willing to help expedite your research.

Sincerely,



Karl Hutterer
Executive Director

cc: Aletta Biersack, PhD; Brian Klopotek, PhD; Jon M. Erlandson, PhD, Graduate Advisors
John Johnson, PhD, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Curator of Anthropology

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