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# Responses to Missionization at Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad

Sam A. Bennett  
*Claremont McKenna College*

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**CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE**  
**RESPONSES TO MISSIONIZATION AT MISSIONS SAN ANTONIO, SAN CARLOS,**  
**AND SOLEDAD**

SUBMITTED TO  
PROFESSOR NIKLAS FRYKMAN

AND

DEAN GREGORY HESS

BY

SAM BENNETT

FOR

SENIOR THESIS

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**Map of California Missions:** (Source <http://printable-maps.blogspot.com/2008/09/map-of-21-missions-of-california.html>, Accessed on 4/9/2012)

(MAP OMITTED)

## Introduction

The era of Spanish and Mexican rule in California has long been revered as the golden era of California history. Though this is true, it was not always the case. Before the late 1880's the Spanish and Mexican eras were largely overshadowed by the Gold Rush and the integration of California into the Union. However, in 1884 Helen Hunt Jackson published her novel, *Ramona*, and the Spanish past was thrust into the public eye. Before Jackson began writing *Ramona* she had been appointed a special commissioner of Indian Affairs, this post was what inspired her to undertake the writing of her final novel.<sup>1</sup>

Jackson was so moved during her experience as the special commissioner that she felt obliged to attempt to bring the plight of the Mission Indians to the public eye. She sought to reform the policy regarding the Mission Indians through this novel because it would reach a wider audience than a serious discourse.<sup>2</sup> Her attempt to write a version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for the native people of California failed. Where Jackson wanted the readers to focus on the past and present mistreatment of the Native Californians, the readers focused on the romanticization of the Spanish past. The readers of her novel were enthralled by the book, but they were not concerned with the plight of the Native Californians. Instead they were mesmerized by the romantic past which made mission-style architecture popular once again.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after *Ramona's* publication tourists began coming to California to see the missions, not to learn about the plight of the Mission Indians, but to see the locations of *Ramona*.<sup>4</sup>

Jackson's initial goals for the novel were noble. However, because she told a very

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<sup>1</sup> Denise Chaves, "Introduction," in *Ramona*, Helen Hunt Jackson (New York: The Modern Library, 2005), vii

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, viii

<sup>3</sup> Amy Turner Bushnell, "Missions and Moral Judgment," *OAH Magazine of History* 14, No. 4, The Spanish Frontier in North America (2000): 21

<sup>4</sup> For more information regarding *Ramona* related tourism see Dydia DeLyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005)

engaging love story, the plight of the Native Californians was overlooked. This created a notion that the Spanish past was something that Californians should strive to recreate. By itself this is no problem; however it led to Californians forgetting the brutal past of the Missions and focusing on the idealized past. Even today the Missions are revered in schools, as each fourth grader in California must learn about the Missions and build a model of one of the Missions. In areas where field trips are still affordable, students often take visits to the physical sites of the Missions. Though some of these Missions admit their brutal past, many are still run by the Catholic Church and focus their tours on the positive aspects of the Missions. This has created a culture around the Missions that makes it too easy to ignore the brutality that occurred at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

This paper will focus on the attempts of the Franciscans missionaries to control the peoples that they had converted, and how the converted peoples reacted to these methods of control. Specifically, the goal will be to look at why no organized, violent revolt occurred at Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad. These three missions, founded in 1771, 1770, and 1791, are the three closest missions to the Monterey presidio, the Spanish military outpost in Monterey. In analyzing revolt at these three missions, this paper will discuss how the missions' economic obligations, goals of acculturation, and use of labor affected the converted peoples. It will also attempt to identify the root causes of revolt on the missions. Finally it will analyze if these conditions were present at Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad, and whether or not these conditions led to revolt.

The discussion of Mission labor, economics, revolt and acculturation were not the focus of early scholars of the missions. In the 1970s much more attention was paid to the missions by scholars of western history. This new attention opened up the discussion of the missions to a new

breed of historians, who thought of the Missions in a different light than their Catholic predecessors. The outcome of this was a number of scholars writing about the Missions from a secular perspective. This allowed historians to view the Missions more critically. From this movement we have a more honest discussion of the history of the Missions that is no longer afraid to decry the actions of the Franciscans. This movement created a new understanding of revolt at the Missions, especially of the revolt at Mission San Diego, the uprising at Mission San Gabriel, and the Chumash revolt of 1824. As opposed to blaming any native revolt on the faults of the converted Californians, new scholars debated many different theories as to the cause of revolt on the Missions.

Daniel O. Larson, John R. Johnson and Joel C. Michaelsen discuss the possibility of Chumash revolt occurring because they only joined the Missions during tough agricultural times.<sup>5</sup> Through a vigorous statistical study of rainfall, average temperature, sea surface temperature and other environmental factors, the trio was able to demonstrate that Chumash conversion on the missions was directly correlated to the availability of food. They were able to demonstrate that not only was it applicable to use statistical analysis to study the Missions, but also that questioning the Catholic version of the revolt was acceptable and necessary. Larson, Johnson, and Michaelsen were not the only scholars working to determine alternate reasons for the Chumash revolt. James A. Sandos in two different works discusses how social structure,

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<sup>5</sup> Daniel O. Larson, John R. Johnson and Joel C. Michaelsen, "Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California: A Study of Risk Minimization Strategies," *American Anthropologist*, New Series 96, No. 2 (1994): 262-299

cultural continuity, sexual relations, native religion, and a lack of understanding of the Baptism process played a role in the 1824 revolt.<sup>6</sup>

The outburst in historical analysis of the Missions was not limited to the Chumash revolt or revolts in general. Stephen Hackel has produced two works that have changed how historians have thought about the internal and external structure of the Mission system.<sup>7</sup> In “Land, Labor and Production,” he presents the Missions as economic entities forced to aid the Spanish in their quest to develop Alta California. His work reconsiders whether the treatment of converts on the Mission was appropriate for the goal of conversion or for economic gain and agricultural production. He also discusses how the economic development of California extended the influence of “western” society. In “The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California,” he outlines the leadership structure, and what role native converts played, on the Mission system. He challenges the previously held idea that the leadership roles were a means to aid the natives, and presents them as additional means of control for the Franciscans.

These works have forced historians to reconsider how the missions and the treatment of the native population of California are studied. However, none of these works focus specifically on the Missions in the Monterey area. Missions San Carlos, San Antonio, and Soledad never had a large-scale revolt, yet scholarship on the Chumash revolt can be applied to these missions in order to rethink how the neophytes on these missions responded to missionization. Though the scholarship on these Missions is lacking in general, there are a number of works that do work to

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<sup>6</sup> James A. Sandos, “Christianization among the Chumash: An Ethnohistoric Perspective,” *American Indian Quarterly*. 15, No. 1 (1991): 65-89 and James A. Sandos “LEVANTAMIENTO! The 1824 Chumash Uprising Reconsidered.” *Southern California Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (June 1985): 109-133

<sup>7</sup>Stephen Hackel, “Land, Labor and Production,” in *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush* ed. Ramon A. Gutierrez and Richard J. Orsi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998): 111-146 and Stephen W. Hackel, “The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 54, No. 2 (1997): 347-376



question the status quo of Mission scholarship. Randall Milliken attacks the question of cultural continuity in pre-contact Monterey Bay tribes in, “The Spanish Contact & Mission Period Indians of the Santa Cruz-Monterey Bay Region.”<sup>8</sup> He discusses all of the different tribes that made up the Constanooan, Salinan, and Esselen language groups. He breaks down the previous notion that the small tribes that spoke the same language were connected in any way other than just in passing. Though he denies that there was much cultural continuity amongst the tribes before Missionization, he does not surmise as to how this may affected how they viewed the Missions or how lived once converted.

Scholarship on the Monterey area Missions is not limited to discussions of the native peoples. Paul Farnsworth in “The Economics of Acculturation: a Historical and Archaeological Study of Mission Nuestra Senora de la Soledad,” demonstrates how the economic systems of the individual missions greatly differ from that of the system as a whole.<sup>9</sup> He adds great understanding of how the different Missions were forced to differ from the plan when their circumstances did not allow for the Spanish plan to work. While he applies many of the economic and social developments discussed by other scholars the Missions he does not delve into why no violent revolt occurred at Soledad and how non-violent revolt did occur. David N. Hoover also discussed how acculturation occurred, but at Mission San Antonio. His work, “Agricultural Acculturation at Mission San Antonio,” focuses on the historical record of the types of agriculture at Mission San Antonio and the surrounding areas.<sup>10</sup> He demonstrates the connection between the shift in agriculture to European-style crops and acculturation to Spanish

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<sup>8</sup> Randall Milliken, “The Spanish Contact and Mission Period Indians,” in *A Gathering of Voices: The Native Peoples of the Central California Coast*, ed. Linda Yamane (Santa Cruz: Museum of History & Art, 2002): 25-36

<sup>9</sup> Paul Farnsworth, “The Economics of Acculturation in the California Missions: A Historical and Archaeological Study of Mission Nuestra Senora de la Soledad.” *Dissertation Abstracts International* 48, No. 6 (1987): 1484

<sup>10</sup> Robert L. Hoover, “AGRICULTURAL ACCULTURATION AT MISSION SAN ANTONIO,” *Masterkey* 54, no. 4 (September 1980): 142-145

society. Similar to Farnsworth, he elects not to discuss the relation between the shift in crop growing to violent and non-violent revolt on the Missions.

Finally, Sarah Peelo discusses the validity of Larson, Johnson, and Michaelsen's hypothesis on Mission San Antonio in "Baptism among the Salinan Neophytes of Mission San Antonio de Padua: Investigating the Ecological Hypothesis."<sup>11</sup> Peelo investigates the relationship between access to foodstuffs and conversion to Mission San Antonio. She uses the same statistical techniques that Larson, Johnson, and Michaelsen used, and she came to the opposite conclusion. She found that the relationship between climate and conversion at Mission San Antonio was statistically insignificant. The most important thing about her work was that it proved that the Missions cannot be generalized as one group, there may be commonalities, but each Mission must be studied individually. Peelo proved that ecological hypothesis was not valid at Mission San Antonio, but she did not discuss the other factors attributed to the Chumash revolt.

The scholarship on the missions in the Monterey area does discuss many of the aspects that created a sentiment of revolt for the Chumash, but they did not tie the various factors together between the Missions. Not only did they not attempt to connect the Missions of Monterey County, but they did not analyze how these factors may have created non-violent revolt or why they did not create violent revolt. This study will look to combine various discussions of treatment of the neophytes on the missions to compile a record of revolt on the missions in the Monterey area.

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<sup>11</sup> Sarah Peelo, "Baptism among the Salinan Neophytes of Mission San Antonio de Padua: Investigating the Ecological Hypothesis," *Ethnohistory*. 56, No. 4 (2009): 589-624

In order to this, this study will begin with a discussion of the methods of physical control on the missions. This will include accounts of native reaction to these methods of physical control, specifically the occurrence of desertion. Next, the study will lay out the history of organized, violent revolt throughout the Spanish empire in the American west. This will be done in order to isolate the root causes of these revolts to then apply them to Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad. The next part will be a discussion of how the converts on these missions identified themselves in the pre-contact era. The final chapter will be a discussion of how the Franciscans worked to limit and change native social structure, and how the converted peoples on these missions reacted to these methods of control.

## **Conversion by the Whip: Transforming Native Identity through Control and Violence**

In discussing the reasons that an organized, violent revolt did not occur at Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad, it is important to establish that the actions of the missionaries were altering the lives of the neophytes. Had the Spanish merely claimed the land and allowed the native populations to live on the missions and accept, or not accept, Christianity as they pleased, there might be no reason to discuss revolt. However, across all of the Missions the Spanish missionaries sought to control the native population both physically and socially as a means to convert the native population to Christianity and Spanish society.

As the Spanish moved further and further into Alta California, the number of Spanish citizens and soldiers residing in the territory did not grow tremendously. At the same time the number of Native Californians living near the presidios and missions continued to grow. Even in 1821, when the Mission system was fairly mature, the native population on the missions numbered 21,750 and there were only 3,400 soldiers in the whole state.<sup>12</sup> This disparity was much larger in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, especially if you also consider the number of unconverted Native Californians who were not living on the missions. The difference in populations made it tough for presidios and pueblos to establish themselves and become functional, because the populations were not large enough to defend themselves. Thus, in Alta California, the Spanish government relied heavily on the Missions to establish control over the area so that the pueblos and presidios could thrive. This also meant that the Missions were forced to subsidize the pueblos and presidios with their agricultural production.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Steven Hackel, "The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 54, No. 2 (1997): 347

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 347 and Amy Turner Bushnell, "Missions and Moral Judgment," *OAH Magazine of History* 14, No. 4, The Spanish Frontier in North America (2000): 21

The focus of the Missions had to be two-fold; they not only needed to focus on gaining converts, but they also had to make sure that they were producing enough foodstuffs for all of the Mission's inhabitants and those who lived at the Presidio. It was not easy for the Missions to succeed in producing enough to subsidize the Spanish military living in these presidios. Not only was the cost of military garrisons the largest cost in Alta California, but, despite the introduction of contemporary irrigation, production was almost never stable on the California Missions (See graph below).<sup>14</sup> Of the total production at a normal mission the military took anywhere from five to twenty percent, for which the Mission system received "treasury credits" as opposed to a cash payment. The amount of treasury credits that the missionaries received was based on a set price that was very beneficial for the Spanish crown.<sup>15</sup> In a letter written by Fray Marcelino Cipres, one of the Fathers at Mission San Antonio, he outlined the process by which the Missions subsidized the Presidios. According to this letter, not only were the Missionaries expected to provide Indian labor for the Presidio, but they were obliged to sell goods to the presidio at fixed prices in order to receive financing from the crown.<sup>16</sup> In Monterey County, Mission San Antonio, San Carlos and Soledad, all worked to subsidize the lives of those at the Presidio in Monterey.

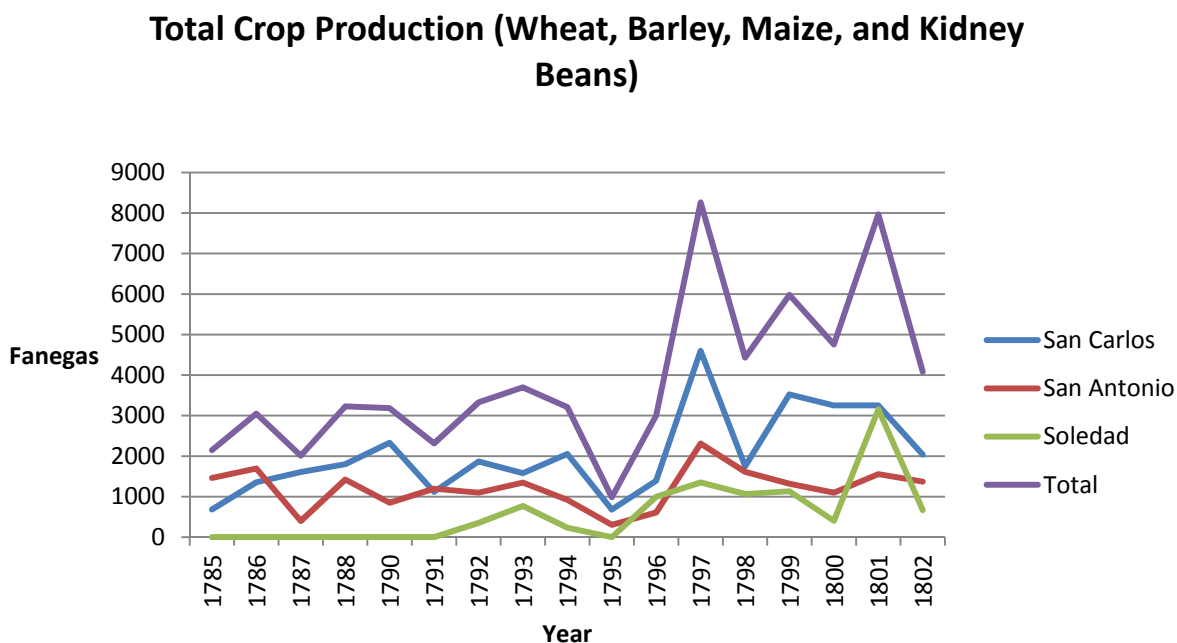
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<sup>14</sup> Edward Castillo and Robert H. Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 13 and 26

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 and 28

<sup>16</sup> Fray Marcelino Cipres to Diego de Borica, Mission San Antonio, April 4, 1799, Mission Documents, Santa Barbara Mission Archives Library, The Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library will, herein, be referred to as SBMAL. Also special thanks to the SBMAL for allowing me to access their archives

**Graph 1: Total Crop Production** (Data compiled from: Fermín Francisco Lausén, *Writings*, Vol. 1 trans. and ed. Finbar Kenneally (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1965), 394-427)



In order to make this goal a reality, the Padres had to place a large emphasis on agricultural production and the labor that made this production possible. They also had to work to combat the large swings in production year to year. As the above graphs demonstrate, the amount of total crop production varied greatly year to year on each mission, and these variations tended to happen in unison. If San Antonio faced a down year, it was likely that both Soledad and San Carlos had also experienced down years in production. Wheat, the most important crop that the Missions grew, in terms of feeding their own population and in terms of subsidizing the Monterey Presidio, experience massive swings in production, from 172 *fanegas* in 1795 to 4542 *fanegas* in 1797 and back down to 1013 *fanegas* in the following year. In order to combat these swings the missionaries were forced to keep large surpluses on hand, and in order to get these

large surpluses it was necessary to ensure that the converted neophytes worked as hard as possible.<sup>17</sup>

According to Pablo Tac, a Luiseño Indian who grew up on Mission San Luis Rey, the Spanish had multiple ways in order to ensure that the converted Native Californians pulled their weight on the fields. First each night, the *alcalde*, an elected native leader, was put in charge of ensuring that each of the inhabitants of the Mission knew what time they were expected to be ready for work the next day.<sup>18</sup> This served a dual goal for the Spanish missionaries, it was easier for them to convert the native population of California to Spanish culture if they were placed in leadership roles within that culture, and it ensured that the converts would be present when they were needed the next morning. By using the *alcaldes*, who had been elected by the mission population, the Missionaries knew that attendance would be higher than if they told the converts when the harvest was to start. These *alcaldes* had, at least to a certain extent, earned the respect of their peers, and the Franciscans utilized this position to further their own goals.

The Padres were able to effectively ensure that the neophytes would be present at the fields through their use of *alcaldes*, but they still needed to ensure that the neophytes were productive once in the field. Once again, according to Pablo Tac:

With the laborers goes a Spanish *majordomo* and other, neophyte *alcaldes*, to see how the work is done, to hurry them if they are lazy, so that they will soon finish what was ordered, and to

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<sup>17</sup> Castillo and Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 27

<sup>18</sup> Pablo Tac, *Indian Life and Customs and Mission San Luis Rey: A record of California Mission Life*, ed. and trans. Minna Hewes and Gordon Hewes (San Luis Rey, Old Mission, 1958), 19

punish the guilty or lazy one who leaves his plow and quits the field keeping on with his laziness. They work all day, but not always.<sup>19</sup>

Though the Spanish trusted the alcaldes to pass the word along about work, they did not completely trust them to enforce the rules against their fellow neophytes once in the field. For this reason the missionaries felt it necessary to send a Spanish official, who they undoubtedly felt was more trustworthy, in order to ensure that production in the field went as planned.

Pablo Tac asserts that on occasion the Native Californians were made to work for an entire day; however there are disparate thoughts on this fact. A contemporary explorer, Jean Francois de La Perouse, asserted that natives on the missions surrounding the Monterey presidio (Soledad and San Carlos) were only made to work seven hours a day, along with 2 hours of compulsory prayer.<sup>20</sup> It is important to note that Francois visited the missions alongside the Franciscan missionaries.<sup>21</sup> It is unclear whether they knew he was writing this journal or not, however it is well within the realm of possibility that they were on their best behavior while being observed by the French explorer. While the exact amount of time the neophytes spent in the fields is unknown, it was a considerable amount of time. The neophytes were not happy to do this work in the name of God, as evidenced by the need for multiple alcaldes and a majordomo to be present while they were working.

The Franciscans made sure to control the daily movement of the neophytes on the missions by forcing them to be present in the field and also by making prayer compulsory, but they also extended their physical control even further. The first way that they ensure physical control over the new converts was by forcing them to live on the missions themselves. The

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 20

<sup>20</sup> Jean Francois de La Perouse, *Life in a California Mission* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1989), 82

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 76



Franciscans in Alta California followed the blueprint that had been laid down by their predecessors in other parts of the Spanish Empire by making their initial goal to resettle the native population into compacted villages.<sup>22</sup> Forcing the native population to live in one compacted area, usually on the missions, allowed the Franciscans a number of advantages. The first advantage was that it would be much easier for them to preach Christianity to the native population if they all lived in the same village. The second advantage was it furthered their ability to control and restrict the actions of the new converts. By consolidating the villages it was much easier for the meager Spanish military forces to protect the missions from uprising. Because the native population was consolidated the missionaries usually only needed six soldiers, along with their families, to live full time at the missions.<sup>23</sup>

The Missionaries desperately wanted to attract converts, and, at times, this desire led them to unscrupulous actions. For the most part a congregation was achieved through peaceful recruitment, usually by offering access to foodstuffs or Spanish manufactured goods, however there is evidence that recruitment occurred by capture.<sup>24</sup> This job was left up to the soldiers, so the missionaries did not have direct control over the treatment of the natives when they were captured. They were willing to let this practice occur because it boosted the number of converts. The Franciscans also allowed for hurried Baptisms to take place as long the new convert was forced to live on the mission afterward.<sup>25</sup> This practice was supported by the Father of mission system, Junipero Serra, but it was likely not an effective means of conversion. The shortened period of instruction likely did not allow the new converts to understand what they

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<sup>22</sup> Stephen W. Hackel, "The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 54, No. 2 (1997): 352

<sup>23</sup> James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/claremont/docDetail.action?docID=10169944>, 10

<sup>24</sup> Russell K. Skowronek, "Sifting the Evidence: Perceptions of Life at the Ohlone (Costanoan) Missions of Alta California," *Ethnohistory* 45, No. 4 (1998)

<sup>25</sup> Sandos, *Converting California*, XIV

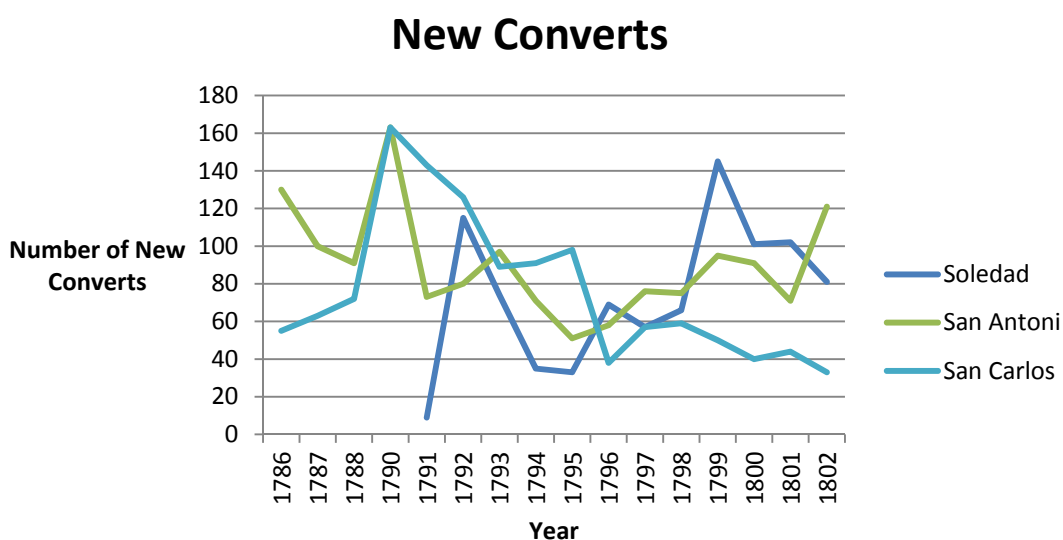
were committing to, which would be life changing. If a new convert came to the mission without his family he would never be allowed to live them again, unless they too decided to convert and join the mission. However, this practice, and the practice of capture, allowed the missionaries to effectively gain more converts and to exert more physical control over the native population of California.

These more desperate methods of conversion may be attributed to the slowing in converts experienced Missions San Antonio and San Carlos after the first years that they accepted converts. In those first years Missions San Antonio and San Carlos converted 1287 and 1197 Native Californians respectively. After these large numbers they saw a great slowdown in the number of new converts. Mission Soledad did not have a large initial conversion and struggled greatly to gain new converts. This was likely related to the fact that life expectancy for those born on the Mission was only two years, and that it had the highest death rate of all of the missions in the Monterey area.<sup>26</sup> A graph depicting the trend in conversions can be seen below:

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<sup>26</sup> Castillo and Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 55

**Graph 2: New Converts** (Data compiled from: Fermín Francisco Lausén, *Writings*, Vol. 1 trans. Ed. Finbar Kenneally (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1965), 394-427)



Once living on the missions physical control continued to be exerted through the use of housing arrangements. When Francois visited mission San Carlos he noted that there 50 huts to host the 740-person neophyte population.<sup>27</sup> It would actually be impossible for that statistic to be true, as that would require around 15 people to live in each hut, but not all of the population was allowed to live with their family units in the huts. The Spanish missionaries did not allow for unmarried men and women or widowers to live in the huts; they were forced to live in dormitories that were locked at night.<sup>28</sup> The Franciscans were able to achieve a number of goals through this practice. They were able to limit sexual contact between unmarried parties, and they were able to limit the number of people able to run away from the missions, as unmarried parties would have been the most likely to flee, and they were able to breakdown the traditional family

<sup>27</sup> Perouse, *Life in a California Mission*, 80.

<sup>28</sup> Castillo and Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 51 and Perouse, *Life in a California Mission*, 91

structure. Despite the fact that unmarried parties were forced to live in dormitories, the living situation was still undoubtedly overcrowded at Mission San Carlos when Francois visited.

Housing was not the only necessity that was not provided adequately, the Franciscans also utilized food as a means of control. As part of the Franciscans attempts to convert the native population to Christianity and Spanish culture, the Franciscans altered not only the type of food available but also how that food was acquired. The native population of the Monterey area had never participated in any type of organized agriculture, large or small scale. The Spanish missionaries introduced large scale agriculture, with irrigation and domesticated livestock, in order to cultivate a combination of wheat, barley, various beans, and maize.<sup>29</sup> The neophytes were forced to rethink how food was gathered, and they were forced to become dependent on the Spanish system of agriculture and Old World crops. In order to further the Franciscan goal of acculturation they focused on shifting the native diet also. This meant that normal rations were “Spanish” style. As Francois observed, daily breakfast at Mission San Carlos consisted of a barley “soup” that hardly seemed adequate for the amount of work the laborers were expected to do.<sup>30</sup> At times the diet for the neophytes was supplemented with native foods.<sup>31</sup> This may have been a result of the obligations to supply foodstuffs to the presidios and pueblos, but also may have been a benevolent act by the Missionaries, the record is unclear. Under the rule of the Missionaries food was used as a means of control and a way to breakdown the traditional way of life for the native population of California. And while it was used as a means of control, that did not necessarily mean it was inadequate. Though it had been previously thought that the food

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<sup>29</sup> Skowronek, “Sifting the Evidence,” 690

<sup>30</sup> Perouse, *Life in a California Mission*, 85

<sup>31</sup> Castillo and Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and the Colonization of California*, 32

provided was inadequate, as a way to explain the unusually high death rates on the Missions, it has been debated and is far from a fact at this point.<sup>32</sup>

Physical control was important to the process of conversion; however physical control could not exist if the threat of punishment did not exist. The founder of the Mission system, Junipero Serra, understood this better than anyone else, and he worked to ensure that corporal punishment would be allowed on the missions. Serra, while planning the Mission system, met with Viceroy Chevalier Antonio Maria Bacareli and gained permission from the Spanish crown to allow corporal punishment and to ensure that the Church maintained complete control over the Mission system itself.<sup>33</sup> This sentiment was not unique to Serra; His successor, Fermín Francisco Lausén thought that the neophytes desperately needed punishment and that the Franciscans were not providing adequate physical punishment.<sup>34</sup> Francois provides a detailed description of how punishment was used on the Missions in the Monterey area:

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 the stocks. And lastly to complete the similarity between this and other religious communities, it must be observed that the moment an Indian is baptized, the effect is the same as if he had pronounced a vow for life, If he escapes to reside with his relations in the independent villages, he is summoned three times to return; if he refuses, the missionaries apply to the governor, who sends soldiers to seize him in the midst of his family and conduct him to the mission, where he is condemned to receive a certain number of lashes with the whip... They have so little courage

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 45

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 27

<sup>34</sup> Sandos, *Converting California*, 89

that they never make any resistance to the three or four soldiers who so evidently violate the rights of men in their persons.<sup>35</sup>

From this description we can draw that punishment was brutal and unforgiving when the neophytes acted outside of the rules of the Mission. Francois also insists that no one was exempt from this punishment, including women, who were not punished in public but instead were taken to a private place in order to be punished.<sup>36</sup> The Spanish missionaries were not the ones to choose what punishment was appropriate, this was left up to the native *alcaldes*. The *alcaldes*, however, were acting as puppets and carrying out the wishes of the missionaries.<sup>37</sup> Punishment was an important way for the Franciscans to maintain control over the physical actions of the converted Californians.

Reactions to physical control were various, but the main focus will be on instances of converted neophytes fleeing the Mission to attempt to relive their old lives or to act with similar freedom to what they had experienced before the Spanish missionaries came to California. In certain instances, these acts of rebellion were just as much about control as the rules they were breaking. The native population was fighting to regain control over their own lives and their own decisions.

While the most likely form of rebellion to the physical control would be leaving the Mission to rejoin the life that the neophytes lived before their conversion, there were also simpler forms of rebellion also. It was the case that certain neophytes throughout the Mission system would leave, albeit secretly, to go to the nearby *presidios* and *pueblos*. Once there the neophytes

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<sup>35</sup> Perouse, *Life in a California Mission*, 82

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 89

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 88-9

would exchange either labor or sexual favors for material goods or food.<sup>38</sup> In doing this the neophytes were not moving closer towards freedom from the Spanish missionaries or from Spanish cultural influence. They were in fact inserting themselves into the capitalist system that was emerging in California. While they were not making any progress towards regaining their pre-contact lives, they were asserting their own version of freedom. By leaving the Mission and interacting directly with the population the neophytes were able to set their own terms for their labor, something that they could not do on the Mission. They were also able to receive a tangible reward for the service that they provided in some type of material good. This, once again, was something that they could not receive while they were working on the Missions, as their only reward in that realm was being welcomed into Christianity. This phenomenon demonstrates a desire for the neophytes to re-establish control over their own lives without rejecting the Spanish system entirely.

Some neophytes were not willing to reject the Spanish way of life entirely, however there were others who were more than willing to leave the Spanish lifestyle behind them. Across every Mission in California there are many instances of converts leaving the Missions in an attempt to return to their previous lifestyle. In a letter from Fray Antonio Jayme to Governor Pablo Vicente Sola, Jayme bemoaned that a small group of neophytes had fled the mission with no plans on returning. He describes a party of 78 men, women and children, who had been among the first baptized at Soledad, attempting to flee the Mission.<sup>39</sup> This was a fairly large number, however this cannot be described as an organized revolt in the way this paper describes organized. While it certainly took planning for this escape to occur, the record indicates that these people were all members of the same tribelet, and that they did not make an attempt to overthrow the Mission or

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<sup>38</sup> Sandos, *Converting California*, 164

<sup>39</sup> Antonio Jayme to Pablo Vicente Sola, Mission Soledad, Jan 13, 1816, Mission Documents, SBMAL

to involve members of other tribes. Instead, this occurrence acts as an example of a more individualized resistance to the physical control placed on the neophytes once living on the Missions.

As Francois described earlier, the Spanish were not content to let converts leave the Missions, and they did send parties of soldiers out to recover those who had attempted to leave the Missions. The policy for attempting to capture the fugitive neophytes demonstrates the rate at which these escapes were attempted. In 1782 the Governor of California had grown fed up with methods that were in place, and he decided to attempt to control the way that fugitives were returned to the Missions. He wrote that, “the repeated patrols that have sent out to importune them to come back have resulted in death among the non-Christian natives, due to poor supervision of the officers in charge.”<sup>40</sup> The fact that the Governor was making comments on the policy for returning fugitive neophytes demonstrates that it must have been a fairly common occurrence. Also, he describes the patrols as repeated, which also suggests that this was taking place with relative frequency. Between this statement, which took place early in the history of the Mission, and the occurrence at Mission Soledad, which took place thirty four years later, it is clear that individuals and small groups frequently revolted against the Mission system by attempting to flee its constraints.

The Missionaries understood that in order to convert the native population of California to both Christianity and Spanish culture physical control and physical punishment were necessary. However, they did not plan for the neophytes to reject the control that was placed upon them. The common reaction to this control was desertion, and desertion was a common

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<sup>40</sup> Gary S. Breschini and Trudy Haversat, “The Esselen Refuge Response to Spanish Intrusion,” *A Gathering of Voices The Native Peoples of the Central California Coast*, ed. Linda Yamane, (Santa Cruz: Museum of History & Art, 2002): 39



problem on the missions, including those in the Monterey area. Desertion was not the only reaction. In four instances across what is now the American Southwest the converted populations revolted in a violent manner against the control of the Spanish missionaries. The following chapter will discuss the circumstances of these revolts, and it will discuss different views on the various factors that caused these revolts. The Spanish did not want revolt to occur on the missions, yet their methods of physical control and physical punishment were severe enough to illicit a reaction. The reaction to this control and punishment was desertion in the Monterey area, yet in other areas the method of revolt was more organized and violent. In order to analyze why no organized, violent revolt occurred in Monterey it is necessary to analyze the conditions of these revolts and see if they too apply to the missions in Monterey.

## A History of Revolt

After the “discovery” of the New World by Columbus in 1492, Europe was exposed to the tremendous wealth of the Americas. This wealth was both material, consisting of gold and other natural resources, and human. The amount of unconverted people that the Europeans encountered in both North and South America presented a unique opportunity for the Catholic Church. The New World presented a large population that had never encountered Christianity, or any other Judeo-Christian faith. The Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits, along with the other religious orders, were eager to utilize this new opportunity to bring their faith to the unconverted. Thus, religious missionaries came shortly after the Spanish conquistadors to the New World.

Exploration into the New World did not focus on the American Southwest, as the vast deserts did not attract many Spanish explorers with dreams of encountering El Dorado. However even before the Spanish began creating missions in both Baja and Alta California, they began to instill religious control on the Native peoples of New Mexico. Ultimately this attempt to establish *pueblos*, Spanish enclaves where the Native New Mexicans were Christianized, lead to a massive and bloody revolt against both the Cross and the Crown.

The first Spanish exploration into New Mexico lasted from 1540 to 1542, but was largely considered a failure because the Spanish did not encounter the great material wealth that they had expected.<sup>41</sup> After this disappointment Spanish exploration and settlement of New Mexico was put on halt for almost 60 years. In 1598 Don Juan Onate lead an expedition to create a number of permanent Spanish settlements throughout the region. The goal of this expedition was not just to create political control in the area for the Crown, but also to establish some religious

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<sup>41</sup> Charlie Wilson Hackett, “The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1680,” *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 15, no. 2 (1911): 96

control over the native population.<sup>42</sup> Though the raw data from this period is meager, as the natives involved in the Pueblo Revolt burned the Spanish archives, estimates of the converted population suggests that the Spanish had converted a significant amount of the native population. The highest estimate claims 60,000, while it is more likely to be around 16,000.<sup>43</sup>

Over time the Franciscan missionaries realized that their efforts to convert the population were beginning to fail. This would become a common trend throughout all of the Spanish missions in the New World, and New Mexico presents the earliest example native resistance to Christianity. Despite their initial success, as the 17th century came to a close converts became harder to find. The main problem with converting the native population was that the Spanish did not fully understand the vastly different worldview held by the New Mexican Natives. As the Spanish colonized New Mexico they firmly believed that, “This land and its inhabitants have been since God created them the subjects of the devil... and today... all the land is filled with churches and crosses.”<sup>44</sup> While this sentiment fits in perfectly with a Christian worldview, the native population of New Mexico did not understand the concept of sin.<sup>45</sup> This created a large disconnect between the methods that Franciscans were using to preach Christianity and the means by which the Pueblo Indians understood the message.

While the Spanish were able to gain many converts at first, eventually the vastly different worldviews held by the preachers and recipients of the message created a number of problems. Eventually the Spanish government and the Franciscan Friars were no longer able to control the outbursts of native religion. It was not only the suppression of native religion that created tension, but the suppression of native culture also created a great amount of tension between the

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<sup>42</sup> John Ellis, "Idolatrous Christians, God-fearing Pagans, and the Pueblo Revolt: Reactions to Catholic Christianity Among the Pueblo Indians, 1598-1681." *Catholic Southwest* 18 (2007): 37

<sup>43</sup> Hackett, "The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1680," 97 and 100

<sup>44</sup> Ellis, "Idolatrous Christians, God-fearing Pagans, and the Pueblo Revolt," 41

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 38

two parties.<sup>46</sup> The initial reaction of the Spanish authorities, both Catholic and secular, was to increase the presence of missionaries and make the punishments more severe. They were disappointed to realize that these attempts did not increase the natives' faith in Christianity but instead created a sentiment for revolt.<sup>47</sup>

The Governor of the territory made one final attempt to stamp out the native religion in New Mexico. In 1675 he captured 47 men, who he deemed responsible for promoting the native faith. In order to use these men as an example he had three of the men killed and the other "severely punished."<sup>48</sup> This attempt to reassert power failed, as it spread the sentiment of revolt throughout the entire territory. Shortly following the incident, native leaders arranged for a revolt to occur on August 11th of 1680.<sup>49</sup> The leaders were secretive about their plans, and were able to keep the revolt a secret, until August 9th. At this point they were committed to revolt, and, in order to maintain the element of surprise they moved the revolt up by one day.<sup>50</sup> This slight shift was enough to maintain the surprise and every Pueblo, with the exception of one, joined the revolt that successfully expelled the Spanish from the Pueblos.<sup>51</sup> The goal of the revolt was not just to expel the Spanish from the Pueblo, but also to rid the territory of all of Spanish regardless of age, gender, or social status.<sup>52</sup> While this may be an exaggeration, the Pueblo revolt did result in the deaths of many Spanish citizens and the destruction of many symbols of Spanish society.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Hackett, "The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1980," 98

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 98

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-9 and Ellis, "Idolatrous Christians, God-fearing Pagans, and the Pueblo Revolt," 49

<sup>49</sup> Hackett, "The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1980," 103

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 105

<sup>51</sup> Ellis, "Idolatrous Christians, God-fearing Pagans, and the Pueblo Revolt," 49

<sup>52</sup> Hackett, "The Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico in 1980," 102

<sup>53</sup> Charlie Wilson Hackett wrote his account of the Pueblo Revolt for publication in 1911 in the *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*. His sentiments towards Native Americans in general were more than likely negative, as the Southwestern United States had just dealt with a great deal of Native resistance and raids.

In fact, the Revolt left many churches destroyed and many of the Pueblos uninhabited.<sup>54</sup> The amount of destruction caused by the revolt is indicative of how important the expulsion of the Spanish was to the Pueblo Indians. Though the Pueblo Indians had never worked together before, and in many cases were bitter enemies, the Spanish missionaries' abusive treatment drove the disparate groups to work together.<sup>55</sup>

Though the freedom that the Pueblo Indians fought for only lasted one decade, when the Spanish reasserted control and replaced the Franciscans with Dominicans, the revolt foreshadowed events that would occur later as the Mission system in California was formed. Native Californians would later react to colonization and missionization in a very similar manner as the Pueblo Indians, and, just like in New Mexico, the native population would react negatively to Spanish attempt of stripping them of their native religion and culture.

The Franciscans did not earn the praise of the crown during their time running the missions in New Mexico, yet when the Spanish decided to move into Alta California the Franciscans were charged with running the new system. The man who took on this task was Junipero Serra, a Franciscan monk from Majorca. By the time that the Spanish were colonizing California they had a wealth of experience at colonizing local tribes. With this in mind, the Spanish Crown had a plan for how the missions would be run and how long it should take to Christianize the locals. According to the Spanish crown this period should take only 10 years.<sup>56</sup> With this time-frame in mind Junipero Serra took on the first round of mission founding. Starting in San Diego in 1769 he founded five missions, San Diego de Alcalá, San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo, San Antonio de Padua, San Gabriel Arcángel, and San Luis Obispo de Tolosa.

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<sup>54</sup> T.J. Ferguson, Matthew Liebmann and Robert W. Preucel, "Pueblo Settlement, Architecture, and Social Change in the Pueblo Revolt Era, A.D. 1680 to 1696," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (2005): 49

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 49

<sup>56</sup> W. W. Robinson, *Land in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948), 28

By 1772, Serra and the Franciscans had founded five missions in Alta California. At this point the Franciscans took a short break from founding new missions, as the next mission would not be founded until 1776. By taking this break, Serra refocused himself, and the mission system, on growing the individual missions that had already been founded. With this focus both Serra and Father Luis Jayme, who presided over the Mission in San Diego, agreed to move the Mission from its original location. The move had a dual goal; to gain better access to water for large scale agriculture and to separate the Mission from the San Diego Presidio.<sup>57</sup> The Spanish usually set up a Presidio, where the military was stationed, near each mission. Unfortunately for the missionaries the move away the presidio would leave the Mission exposed to potential threats from hostile native populations.

The Franciscans in San Diego were familiar with the hostile nature of the surrounding population. In the first few years of the mission's existence conversion was a rare occurrence. At the end of 1774 the Mission had achieved only 100 converts. Yet, in the first nine months of 1775 the Mission had achieved an astonishing 400 baptisms.<sup>58</sup> All of the sudden the mission began effectively converting some of the native population and this drew the attention of the neighboring tribes. These tribes were now forced to think about how the mission and the Spanish were going to affect their society going forward. Ultimately, the native population decided to resist the intrusion of the Spanish onto their lands. On November 5, 1775 around 600 Native Americans, from various tribes in the San Diego area, attacked the Mission. They killed Father Jayme, and proceeded to burn most of the Mission down to the ground.<sup>59</sup> Because the Mission

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<sup>57</sup> Iris H. W. Engstrand, *Serra's San Diego: Father Junipero Serra and California's Beginnings*, (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1982), <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/books/ssd/ssd.htm>. Moving the Mission

<sup>58</sup> Richard L. Carrico, "Sociopolitical Aspects of the 1775 Revolt at Mission San Diego de Alcala," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (1997), <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/97summer/missionrevolt.htm>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, and Engstrand, *Serra's San Diego*, Indian Revolt

had moved away from the presidio and the confidence the missionaries had following surge in Baptisms, the missionaries were not prepared for the revolt. Though they were able to drive the natives away in the end, they were not able to prevent Father Jayme from becoming California's first Martyr. For the next two years the mission site remained uninhabited, until 1777, when Father Serra came back to personally rebuild the mission on the site of the rebellion.<sup>60</sup>

Though no participants in the revolt had been converted at the mission, it is very similar to the Pueblo revolt. Just like the Pueblo revolt, the revolt at Mission San Diego was far too complex to be explained by one reason. A combination of disparate world views and the oppression of culture played a prominent role in the revolt. Father Palou wrote of the revolt:

the enemy, (Satan) envious and resentful, no doubt because the heathen in that territory were being taken away from him, and because the missionaries, with their fervent zeal and apostolic labors, were steadily lessening his following...found a means to put a stop to these spiritual conquests.<sup>61</sup>

This was indicative of how the Spanish felt about California. They did not view their colonization as an invasion. From Palou's writings, it is clear that the Franciscans felt it was their duty to free the native population from the grasp of Satan. The Franciscans did so without considering whether the native population wanted to be saved. The Native Californians feared that if the missions were allowed to continue to exist in their world, that they would inevitably be swallowed by Spanish society.<sup>62</sup>

As the Franciscans recuperated from the revolt at San Diego, mission expansion resumed. In 1776 Serra and the Franciscans founded San Francisco de Asís, and then, in 1777 they founded Santa Clara de Asís. Serra was able to found one more mission, San Buenaventura,

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<sup>60</sup> Engstrand, *Serra's San Diego*, Indian Revolt

<sup>61</sup> Carrico, "Sociopolitical Aspects of the 1775 Revolt at Mission San Diego de Alcala."

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*

before his death in 1784. Serra was succeeded by Padre Fermín Francisco Lausén, who was able to found two more missions, Santa Barbara and La Purísima Concepción, before revolt struck the missions system again, this time at Mission San Gabriel.

Mission San Gabriel was founded in 1771 during the first batch of missions that Father Serra founded. Founded in the San Gabriel Valley, outside of what is now Los Angeles, the mission began as a group of small temporary structures. In 1775 the Spanish moved the mission five miles away to build a permanent structure. Upon settling into a permanent location the Spanish were able to greatly increase the output of the mission. From 1773 to 1785 the number of livestock raised at the mission grew from 128 to 4,945. A similar increase occurred in crop yield as the first harvest in 1773 only yielded fifty-eight bushel, while the 1785 harvest yielded totaled 4,542 bushels.<sup>63</sup> This type of expansion was common on the missions, as it often took the Franciscan's a number of years to establish a foothold in an area, but once that foothold was established an explosion in production was normal. For the most part the Spanish were introducing crops and animals that were new to the area and competed with native species. This expansion had a negative effect on the local game and landscape. Before the Spanish arrived the Gabrielinos, the native population in the San Gabriel Valley, survived mostly as hunter and gatherers, but the Spanish grazing lands and agricultural land depleted the resources for game animals making it more and more difficult for the Gabrielinos to maintain their way of life. In response to this new shortage of food many Gabrielinos sought out the mission as a means to a new, more stable, diet. Between 1780 and 1785 the population more than doubled, and it grew to a total of 1,287.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> James A. Sandos, "Toypurina's Revolt: Religious Conflict at Mission San Gabriel in 1785," *Boletín: Journal Of The California Mission Studies Association* 24, no. 2 (2007): 5

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 8



To the Spanish an increase in production was ideal, but it changed the way that the native population survived. Ultimately this discontent would lead to a failed revolt by Gabrielinos from six *rancherías* against the soldiers and priests of Mission San Gabriel.<sup>65</sup> The elaborate investigation into the revolt, done by Father Pedro Fages and others in the Franciscan leadership, revealed the plot for the revolt. The direct cause for the revolt was a religious revitalization and an attempt to prevent the Christians from controlling the fate of Gabrielinos, but, as in any revolt, the causes cannot be explained that simply. The revolt was lead by two main characters, a Neophyte living on the mission named Nicholas Jose and a shaman from a local *ranchería* named Toypurina. Nicholas Jose was frustrated with the treatment that he and the other Gabrielinos were facing on the mission, and he recruited the aid of the shaman Toypurina to unite the *rancherías* in revolt.<sup>66</sup> The goal of this revolt was not just to get rid of the mission, but to rid the entire valley of any Spanish presence. And, after Toypurina used her status as a powerful shaman to unite the chiefs, an attack was planned for the night of October 25, 1785. The attack relied on secrecy and Toypurina's ability to kill the Spanish priests by using her magic.<sup>67</sup> However, not only were the Franciscan's tipped off to the revolt, but Toypurina was also not able to kill either of the Priests by using her magic. Though the revolt failed the underlying causes speak to the general cause of revolt in the mission system.

Obviously the first cause of the revolt was the intrusion of the Spanish into the lives of the Gabrielinos. By overrunning the San Gabriel valley with their crops and livestock, they forced a fundamental shift in how the Gabrielinos acquired food. By changing the culture the Spanish forced some sort of reaction out of the local population in self-defense. This cannot

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<sup>65</sup> Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, "Revolt at Mission San Gabriel, October 25, 1785: Judicial Proceeding and Related Documents," *Boletin: Journal Of The California Mission Studies Association* 24, no. 2 (2007): 24

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 24

<sup>67</sup> Sandos, "Toypurina's Revolt," 5

explain the revolt by itself. The revolt also stemmed from the connected nature of Gabrielino culture and a religious revitalization. The nature of Gabrielino identity is most easily demonstrated through their women's coming of age ceremony. When a young woman received her menses she was "'baked' for several days in a trench that had been heated by rocks warmed in a pit." She was then drugged and the lineage of all of the local tribes was recited to her.<sup>68</sup> She was kept in this state until she understood how all of the tribes around were connected. Though there was inter-tribal warfare, the nature of this coming of age ceremony clearly demonstrates that the Gabrielinos identified as one culture.

Not only did the Gabrielinos identify as one unique culture, but they also experienced a religious revitalization leading up to the revolt against the mission. In the years before the Franciscans established the San Gabriel Mission, the native religion, Chinigchinich, was gaining strength within the local tribes.<sup>69</sup> Nicholas Jose's selection of Toyipurina to lead the revolt speaks to the importance of this religion within Gabrielino culture. As opposed to looking to secular leaders to incite the revolt, he chose a religious figure because he understood the power that Chinigchinich held within the local tribes. Once again it is clear that the converts at Mission San Gabriel, and the surrounding tribes, did not expect the Spanish to be a permanent part of their lives. When they realized that the Spanish would not simply go away, they took restoring their own culture into their own hands and revolted. Though this revolt, like the others before it, was ultimately unsuccessful, the Native Californians were not going to allow their culture to be swallowed by the Spanish without resistance.

With the resolution of the revolt at Mission San Gabriel, the missions of Alta California entered a period of unprecedented peace. There would not be another revolt until 1824, when all

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 6

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 9

of the 21 missions in Alta California had been founded. Though this peace was certainly a good thing for the Franciscans, the revolt that occurred in 1824 was by far the largest, best organized, and most far-reaching of any revolt in Alta California. The revolt took place at three missions in the Santa Barbara area, Santa Barbara, La Purísima, and Santa Inés. The Chumash uprising of 1824 has been studied the most of the mission revolts. By understanding the causes of this revolt, the root causes of revolt can be understood and applied to San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad. We can then work to understand why no large, organized revolts occurred in the Monterey Area.

In order to comprehend the scope of the revolt at Missions Santa Barbara, Santa Inez, and La Purísima it is important to discuss the actual events that took place and reconcile those events with the disparate opinions of recent scholarship. The physical revolt in the Santa Barbara area missions occurred on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1824 but this was not when the revolt was conceived. Though the Spanish missionaries wished to believe that they had total control over the population of the mission, the revolt was planned over a period of three months by the Chumash leaders at all three missions.<sup>70</sup> Despite the meticulous planning by the Chumash leaders, the revolt did go off with one hitch; the revolt was started spontaneously on the 21<sup>st</sup>, one day earlier than the plan called for.<sup>71</sup> When a neophyte from La Purísima mission went to visit some of his family members at Mission Santa Inez, he was met with hostility from the Spanish guards, and as punishment for his perceived wrongdoing he was lashed.<sup>72</sup> With knowledge of the planned revolt, the Chumash at Santa Inez reacted violently and took up arms, burning the mission complex. The revolt quickly spread to La Purísima, and shortly the Native Californians had gained their freedom. Mission Santa Barbara was the last to revolt, and the padres at the mission

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<sup>70</sup> Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, "The End of the 1824 Chumash Revolt in Alta California: Father Vicente Sarría's Account," *The Americas* 53, No. 2 (1996): 275-276

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 275-6

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 275-6

had become aware of the impending revolt. Through the clever work of the alcalde, Andres Sagimomatsee, Fray Antonio Ripoll was convinced to send the Spanish guard back away from the mission and the Chumash were able to gain control of the final mission.<sup>73</sup>

The goal of the planned revolt was not simply to expel the Spanish from the missions of Santa Barbara, but for the Chumash to be able to leave the missions and recreate their society away from Spanish control. Therefore, after Fray Ripoll encouraged the Spanish guard to leave, Andres, and the rest of the Chumash villagers, armed themselves and prepared to leave for the central hills.<sup>74</sup> As the Spanish missionaries and soldiers began to regain control of the missions that had just revolted, the Chumash were able to escape to Buena Vista Lake, about sixty miles away from the Santa Barbara missions. Though the revolt was initially successful, the Spanish missionaries and government agents were not merely going to allow the Chumash to leave the missions and restart their new life. The fact that the initial revolt was successful was a blow to the goals of the missionaries, but allowing them to completely break free of Spanish society would undermine the missionaries' efforts throughout Alta California. This revolt demonstrated that the Native Californians were able to communicate in secrecy even across large distances. Fray Ripoll and Fray Vicente Sarría were aware of this and they, along with the Spanish military, began an effort to make sure that all of the missions were re-secured and repopulated with the Chumash deserters.<sup>75</sup>

The attempts of the Spanish to convince the Chumash to return to the missions were not an easy task. The Chumash demonstrated an extreme amount of planning and military execution in order to arm themselves and revolt against the missionaries. As the revolt was not a spontaneous occurrence, the Chumash were unlikely to give up their dreams of freedom easily.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 276

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 276

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 277

Where the Chumash chose to begin their new civilization posed the first threat. According to Fray Sarría:

The neophytes then re-grouped on a small island in a large lagoon which was surrounded by dense tules along its shore. The path to the lagoon was defended by a muddy and marshy area. People on horseback could not pass through without experiencing extreme difficulty.<sup>76</sup>

Undoubtedly the Chumash leaders assumed that the Spanish would mount a military expedition in order to attempt to bring them back to the missions. That explains why they would choose a location so remote and so difficult for the Spanish soldiers to access. With the location of their settlement so difficult to access with a large force, Fray Sarría and Fray Ripoll saw an opportunity to use diplomacy in order to convince the Chumash to return to their missions. Sarría writes, “I negotiated with this Jefe and requested that he grant the Indians a general pardon, if they returned to the mission. I easily achieved my goal.”<sup>77</sup> Though the decision was ultimately up to the secular Spanish government, the efforts of both Sarría and Ripoll to ensure a peaceful encounter with the Chumash would ultimately lead to a majority of the Chumash returning to the mission.

Though the revolt itself did not last too long, less than one month, the revolt was the most complete attempt by any of the Native Californians to scorn Spanish society and re-create a native society. Because the Chumash revolted so long after the missionization process had begun, there are a myriad of different theories and reasons attributed to the sentiment of revolt. These reasons vary from ecological to religious and social reasons. While it is impossible to determine the exact cause of the revolt, a discussion of the varying theories can shed light on

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 277-8

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 278

what factors may have played a bigger role in the Chumash revolt, and ultimately what factors may have created a culture of revolt throughout the mission system.

Though there are a number of different theories that attempt to explain the factors regarding the outburst of revolt in the Chumash missions, there are two distinct schools of thought on the subject. The first school of thought comes largely from Church historians, and attempts to blame the revolt on the fallout from the military and political aspects of the colonization of Alta California.<sup>78</sup> As more non-Catholic scholars have been assessing the Mission system in more recent years, the theories regarding the revolt have shifted. These scholars have focused on the strength of Chumash identity, the misunderstanding between the Priests and the Neophytes regarding the definition of Baptism, and ecological reasons.<sup>79</sup>

The ecological thesis is a specific theory for why the Chumash converted to the missions as fast as they did. Larson, Johnson, and Michaelsen argue that Chumash agreed to conversion in order to gain access to the food surpluses that were available at the missions.<sup>80</sup> The authors focus on a study of climatic conditions and ocean temperatures in order to explain why eighty five percent of the Chumash population converted in a 17 year period starting in 1786.<sup>81</sup> The conclusion of their study, in the simplest form, was that the fifty-year, “period between 1780 and 1830 was characterized by high climatic variability several years of droughts, and significantly elevated sea surface temperatures.”<sup>82</sup> This rapid conversion, which the Franciscans must have

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 280-1 and Maynard Geiger, “Fray Antonio Ripoll’s Description of the Chumash Revolt at Santa Barbara in 1824,” *Southern California Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (1970): 345

<sup>79</sup> Daniel O. Larson, John R. Johnson and Joel C. Michaelsen, “Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California: A Study of Risk Minimization Strategies,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series 96, no. 2 (1994): 262-299 and James A. Sandos, “Christianization among the Chumash: An Ethnohistoric Perspective,” *American Indian Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1991): 65-89 and James A. Sandos “LEVANTAMIENTO! The 1824 Chumash Uprising Reconsidered.” *Southern California Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1985): 109-133

<sup>80</sup> Larson, Johnson, and Michealsen, “Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California,” 263-299

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 265

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 265

lauded as a great success, was, according to the authors, more of a survival move than an acceptance of Spanish culture. Though their ecological thesis has not been universally accepted, it does shed light on a potential reason why the revolt may have occurred.<sup>83</sup> If the Chumash conversion to Spanish society, and Catholicism, was primarily motivated by gaining access to supplies and food during periods of drought, it is very plausible that when the drought ended, or when they discovered that the food is not as plentiful as it appeared on the missions, that a revolt could occur among the Chumash people.

Though the ecological thesis is interesting, and certainly useful for understanding the reasons for the Chumash revolt, it is not necessarily applicable to the missions of Monterey County. As previously noted, Sarah Peelo conducted an in depth discussion as to whether the ecological thesis could be applied to Mission San Antonio. Through her statistical analysis, that follows the same general form as Larson, Johnson, and Michaelson's work, Peelo concluded that the ecological thesis could not be applied at Mission San Antonio with any statistical significance.<sup>84</sup> Thus, in order to understand the absence of overt revolt at Missions San Carlos, San Antonio and Soledad this work will focus more on the other factors, as Peelo has already shown that the ecological thesis, that is applicable for the Chumash, does not apply in Monterey.

Other than the ecological reasons for conversion, the other reasons given for the Chumash revolt center around the way Chumash society functioned in the pre-contact era. Whereas many tribes in California are recreations of later scholars, and did not function as one unit, the Chumash functioned similar to many tribes in the Midwest and Northeastern United States. Though each settlement had its own leaders, both political and religious, the villages

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<sup>83</sup> James A. Sandos, "Christianization among the Chumash: An Ethnohistoric Perspective," *American Indian Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (Winter, 1991): 68

<sup>84</sup> Sarah Peelo, "Baptism among the Salinan Neophytes of Mission San Antonio de Padua: Investigating the Ecological Hypothesis," *Ethnohistory* 56, no. 4 (2009): 589-624

functioned together.<sup>85</sup> As time went on the bond between the different bands of Chumash in the Santa Barbara area grew stronger. Eventually it was no longer a loose alliance between the hereditary chiefs in an area; instead the bands grew to function together. Eventually, when inter-band trading grew to become the means of economic subsistence in the Santa Barbara area certain areas began to specialize in creating, or harvesting, essential goods. In fact, shell beads, the primary form of currency for the Chumash, were almost all produced on Santa Cruz Island.<sup>86</sup>

The fact that something so essential to the native community, the only form of currency in the area, was produced on an island only accessible by canoe demonstrates the inter-connectivity of the individual bands within the Chumash.<sup>87</sup> The nature of the bands in the Santa Barbara area allowed for greater economic development and agricultural productivity, but it also created a certain respect between the villages. This respect was forged through trade, but also through inter-marriage.<sup>88</sup> This respect, which created peace between the villages, was taken very seriously; and though the respect between the villages maintained peace when the respect was adhered to, it created inter-village warfare when it was ignored.<sup>89</sup> Though inter-village warfare was a result of the connected existence of the Chumash villages, the other outcome was the existence of cultural continuity and respect between the villages that later allowed the neophytes on the mission to work together with the amount of precision that was needed in order to pull off the revolt in 1824. The continuity between the villages also assisted in the development of the sentiment of revolt, as the neophytes at each mission were from various villages. Because the

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<sup>85</sup> Larson, Johnson, and Michaelsen, "Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California," 271

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 275

<sup>87</sup> The Chumash were incredibly skilled in canoe building and in navigating the waters of the Pacific Ocean. However the trip from Santa Cruz Island still takes around two hours in a boat today.

<sup>88</sup> Larson, Johnson, Michealsen, "Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California," 275

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 286



villages were generally peaceful, and connected, the neophytes not only trusted each other but also were willing to restart their lives with each other.

While pre-contact unity between the various Chumash villages in the Santa Barbara area certainly contributed to the motivation, planning and execution of the revolt, it cannot take full responsibility for the occurrence of the revolt. The strong social culture of the Chumash peoples, and the Church's limitations of Native social interaction, contributed to the revolt sentiment on the Santa Barbara area missions. The main focus of recent scholarship, with regards to Chumash social interactions, has been focused on native sexuality. This is not an uncommon focus for the more traditional Church scholars, and the missionaries themselves, as native sexuality was something the Fathers' could not understand and that the neophytes were reluctant to give up. Chumash sexuality was not unlike that of many of the tribes in California, but was much different than the Catholic Church's idea of acceptable sexuality. For the Chumash, sexuality was a fluid concept that had few limitations; sexual relations were not limited to married couples of men and women, they were extended to include sex between unmarried parties and between two men.<sup>90</sup> The Franciscans attempt to change the structure of Chumash society disrupted the majority of their interactions, which made some response inevitable.<sup>91</sup> It is clear that because of the strength of the Chumash culture, and that their social interactions were viewed as unacceptable by the Catholic Church, that Chumash society and the Church would butt heads. The clash between neophytes and Franciscans over the actions of the neophytes was common on the missions and cannot explain the Chumash revolt by itself.

In order to further clarify the reasoning behind the Chumash revolt, it is important to consider the religion of the pre-contact Chumash and the importance of that religion in Chumash

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<sup>90</sup> James A. Sandos, "LEVANTAMIENTO! The 1824 Chumash Uprising Reconsidered." *Southern California Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1985): 110-1

<sup>91</sup> Sandos, "Christianization among the Chumash," 87

society. Similar to the other aspects of Chumash society religion played a role in every Chumash village. The second most important person in the village was the Shaman, and, in large part, the religion of Chumash people was standardized throughout the region.<sup>92</sup> At the center of the Chumash religion was their earth goddess, Chupu. Though the religion was not monotheistic, it is apparent that Chupu is the most important goddess, and the one that appears in the missions' records the most. In fact, an earlier revolt was centered on a former Shaman having a vision of Chupu decrying the practice of baptism.<sup>93</sup> Though this did not lead to full-fledged revolt, as the Shaman later retracted her statement, it was a scare for the Padres of the Chumash missions.

The Padres on these missions were aware of the power that Chumash religion and made attempts to prevent the Chumash from practicing while they were living on the missions. Padre Ripoll, the Padre at Mission Santa Barbara, sought to prevent Chumash worship from existing on the missions by placing lay people in positions that were traditionally reserved for Shamans in pre-contact society.<sup>94</sup> Despite the efforts from the Padres, the Chumash did not stop practicing their traditional religion, they just stopped practicing it in front of the Padres. In order to continue worshipping the Chumash spirits, the neophytes built various temples and hung various goods as presents to the spirits they worshipped.<sup>95</sup>

It is nearly impossible to isolate one, or even a few occurrences, that caused the Chumash revolt. However, by studying the aspects of Chumash society, both pre-contact and post missionization, we can isolate certain aspects of Chumash society that would have given them a pre-disposition to revolt. As the majority of the events during the revolt demonstrate, such as the lack of violence, the revolt was not caused by hatred towards either the Padres or the Spanish

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 70

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 73

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 79

<sup>95</sup> Sandos, "LEVANTAMIENTO! The 1824 Chumash Uprising Reconsidered," 120

soldiers; it was merely an attempt for the Chumash to leave Spanish society behind. Though most of Chumash did eventually return to the Missions that they revolted from, some of them did not. Ten years after the majority of the Chumash returned a fur-trapping party found a settlement of Chumash people living a hybrid life, part Chumash and part Spanish, in Kern County.<sup>96</sup> The Chumash revolt demonstrates the variety of factors that must be considered in order to think about revolt on the Missions.

In each of these four revolts there are a number of common themes and a number of differences. Revolt in Alta California and New Mexico cannot be entirely generalized, but it is possible to isolate key factors that lead to each of these revolts. In these revolts, the communities that revolted were able to communicate with each other and, with the exception of the Pueblo revolt, identified as either one group or as related groups. In each of these cases the native population felt as though their social interactions, religion, or social hierarchy were being changed by the missionaries. Finally, these groups felt as though revolt was necessary or the Spanish would never leave. They understood that this colonization and missionization was not temporary through the modes of physical control utilized by the Spanish. The previous chapter discussed this physical control, and its application to the missions of the Monterey area. The next two chapters will test to see if the converts on these missions were able to identify as related groups and if their culture was being restricted by the Spanish missionaries.

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<sup>96</sup> Sandos, "Christianization among the Chumash," 83

## Native Identity

The great tribes or native groups in the New World, the Aztecs, the Iroquois, the Cherokee, just to name a few, sound like one large organized group that identified as a singular tribe. However, this was not the case. Native identities, especially in the New World, are much more complicated than the early “western” explorers described them to be. A few of these large native groups, like the Aztec and the Iroquois, fit more easily into the European worldview of how a government should function. Both of these groups were a collection of various smaller groups that were allied, in the case of the Iroquois, or subjected and conquered, in the case of the Aztec. These two scenarios were easier for European inhabitants of the New World to understand, because they mimicked forms of government found in Europe. In fact, the Iroquois Confederacy was so well laid out, in terms of allowing the Confederacy to function for the greater good of all the smaller groups while allowing the individual groups to maintain semi-autonomy, that the Constitution of the United States may have been, in part, inspired by the Iroquois Confederacy.<sup>97</sup>

While there are many examples of tribes choosing to identify themselves as one larger group, there are an equal number of examples where tribes were created by the European explorers when no tribe truly existed. Often Native groups that lived near one another and spoke a similar language were mistakenly identified as associated groups. The European explorers, who could not comprehend how these groups did identify as one group, applied their European ideals to these groups. In California there were few large, highly organized, native groups. This led to the development of smaller tribes that preferred not to identify with their neighboring groups.

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<sup>97</sup> Elisabeth Tooker, “The United States Constitution and the Iroquois League,” *Ethnohistory* 35, No. 4 (1988): 305-6

It is of no surprise that the Native Californians tended to remain in smaller groups as opposed to forming larger tribes because almost all of the groups remained hunters and gatherers until the mission period. The main reason that almost no form of large-scale agriculture occurred in California, despite its relatively favorable climate, was because no Native groups, outside of the Colorado River Basin, were able to control irrigation effectively enough to grow crops.<sup>98</sup> There are a few exceptions to this trend as the Yuroks cultivated tobacco in Northern California and the Pomo practiced rudimentary slash and burn techniques, but these were very much exceptions and far from the rule.<sup>99</sup>

The main exception to this rule, the Mojave people of the Colorado Basin were able to corral the river and create a form of large scale agriculture that supported a sedentary population. This allowed the Mojave people to develop a very different culture than the majority of Native Californians. The Mojave acted as one unit in all of their actions including in offensive and defensive strategies to maintain and grow their territory.<sup>100</sup> The ability to control the flow of water and to produce crops year-round allowed the Mojave to develop much differently than their counterparts throughout California. This is not to say that other groups did not identify as related to their neighbors, like the Chumash people, whose smaller tribe groups shared a culture, religion, and spoke dialects of the same language, but the Mojave appear to be the only group that functioned as large tribes did in the rest of North and South America.

The reality for the rest of the Native population of California was that access to foodstuffs was not secure. Thus, it was much more manageable for people to live in smaller

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<sup>98</sup> S. J. Jones, "Some Regional Aspects of Native California," in *The California Indians*, ed. R.F. Heizer and M. A. Whipple (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 87

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 87

<sup>100</sup> Heizer, *Languages, Territories, and Names of California Indian Tribes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 3

groups. This was especially the case in Central California, as the coastal regions are too mountainous for farming and the inland regions, even as near as 45 miles from the shore, were too dry for agriculture to exist. As Robert F. Heizer writes, “It is thus evident that in much of central California there prevailed a type of political organization into what may be called ‘tribelets’; groups of a small size... nameless except for their tract... speaking usually a dialect identical with that of several of their neighbors, but wholly autonomous.”<sup>101</sup> Because these tribelets often did not have names, there was a need for the Spanish Missionaries to give them names, and later for scholars to give them names. The easiest way for to name the variety of Native Californians was by using their language or language group. For the most part, the names that are given to the “tribes” that exist now in California are based on the language group that these people are associated with. This is not a fair way to name the tribes because native language did not always follow logical geographical boundaries. Many small isolated areas that spoke languages of a different group than their neighbors.<sup>102</sup>

Despite the problems and difficulties in identifying the different native languages and language groups, and despite the potential shortcomings of this process, scholars have worked tirelessly to identify the different language families. Currently there are seven different language families recognized among the native groups of California, with each family containing a number of language groups. Even further there were numerous different languages of each one of these language groups. In studying Mission San Carlos, Mission San Antonio, and Mission Soledad, language groups are especially tough to discern. Mission San Carlos sits on the border of two different language groups, the Esselen and Costanoan language groups. Mission San Antonio is located in a Salinan language group territory but close enough to Chumash language

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 5

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 9

group territory for influence. Mission Soledad is located in between the Esselen, Costanoan, and Salinan language groups. Both the Salinan language group and the Esselen language group come from the Hokam language family, while the Costanoan language group comes from the Penutian language family.<sup>103</sup> The following table is a breakdown of the individual languages that belong to the Salinan, Esselen, and Costanoan language groups:

**Chart 1: Language Groups** (Data compiled from Robert F. Heizer, *Languages, Territories, and Names of California Indian Tribes*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 35-6)

Language Group	Language
Esselen	Esselen
Salinan	Antoniano
	Migueleno
	Playano
Costanoan	San Pablo
	San Francisco
	Santa Clara
	Santa Cruz
	San Juan Bautista
	Rumsen
	Soledad

As is evidenced by the table, with exception to the Esselen language group, even communicating with others in the same language group could have been difficult as the languages are different and there were a number of different dialects within that language.

The Monterey area had a variety of languages that prevented the groups from having perfect communication and did not identify as any singular group. Much like the majority of California, the Central Coast was sparsely populated. Though it is tough to determine the exact population of the area, it is estimated that the population was roughly two to four individuals per

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 35

square mile.<sup>104</sup> The small population in the region, and the lack of access to large-scale agriculture prevented the Native peoples of the Monterey Bay and surrounding areas from forming large political groups. Instead, they formed into tribelets, as a means to organize socially. The word tribelet, as invented by anthropologist A.L. Kroeber, was created to, “designate a sovereign though miniature political unit, which was land owning and maintained its frontiers against unauthorized trespass.”<sup>105</sup> The definition of a tribelet aptly describes the nature of political organization in Monterey.

The characteristics that defined native life in the Monterey area were by no means unique to the this region, but were very different than the political organization of the groups surrounding Missions San Diego, San Gabriel, and the Chumash missions. At all of these missions, the living groups were indeed small, but they were interconnected, and voluntarily identified as being members of the same larger group. In the Monterey area, tribelets were organized on the basis of small familial groups that varied in size between 150 and 300 individuals.<sup>106</sup> According to French explorer Jean Francois de La Perouse, at the time of his visit in 1786, the native population of the Monterey Bay region cultivated a small amount of maize, but relied primarily on hunting and fishing for their subsistence.<sup>107</sup> Perouse was incorrect in his description of maize cultivation, as this only occurred with the Mojave people, and he understated the importance of gathering, but his description demonstrates the lack of access to consistent foodstuffs. For this reason these groups moved around seasonally, while looking for the best area to hunt and gather. This meant that it was required of each group to have at least

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<sup>104</sup> Randall Milliken, “The Spanish Contact and Mission Period Indians,” in *A Gathering of Voices: The Native Peoples of the Central California Coast*, ed. Linda Yamane (Santa Cruz: Museum of History & Art, 2002), 25

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 26

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 25

<sup>107</sup> Jean Francois de La Perouse, *Life in a California Mission* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1989), 64



one, but sometimes three villages, along with numerous other temporary areas to live, in order to ensure that they would have enough for the group to eat.<sup>108</sup>

The existence of small living groups does not prevent inter-tribelet relations, it makes them more difficult. Historically, intermarriage has been used by various groups as a way to form political alliances. This was one of the ways that the Chumash worked to achieve a stable relationship between the small villages that allowed them to function as a cohesive political unit.<sup>109</sup> However, in the Monterey Bay region inter-marriage was not utilized in the same manner. In smaller tribelets the amount of marriage that occurred between people from different villages was as high as fifty percent, but as the population of the village grew that number fell to around ten percent.<sup>110</sup> It must be reiterated that the smaller tribelets in Monterey County were around 150 people and organized around family ties. In these smaller groups a large amount of inter-marriage was necessary to avoid incest. However, it is clear that inter-marriage was not desirable because in the larger groups, where inter-marriage was less necessary, the percent of inter-tribelet marriages is much lower.

The lack of apparent desire for intermarriage sheds some light onto the reason why there was a lack of continuity between the tribelets before the process of missionization. However, as missionization occurred, these tribes were forced to interact. At Mission San Carlos alone, 436 individuals from Rumsen, of the Costanoan language family, speaking tribelets were baptized between 1770 and 1808. At the same mission, during the same period, 235 people from Ensen speaking tribelets, a dialect of Esselen, were baptized. Not only were the individuals from the

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 26

<sup>109</sup> Daniel O. Larson, John R. Johnson and Joel C. Michaelsen, "Missionization among the Coastal Chumash of Central California: A Study of Risk Minimization Strategies," *American Anthropologist*, New Series 96, No. 2 (1994): 275

<sup>110</sup> Randall Milliken, "The Spanish Contact and Mission Period Indians," in *A Gathering of Voices: The Native Peoples of the Central California Coast*, ed. Linda Yamane (Santa Cruz: Museum of History & Art, 2002), 26

same language family likely not from the same village, or allied villages, but they were baptized alongside people who spoke a completely different language, from a completely different language family. These two groups had a difficult time adjusting to living with one another full time. According to Gary S. Breschini and Trudy Haversat, scholars focused on the Esselen and Rumsen peoples, the two groups were so hostile towards one another that it negatively impacted the production of food on the mission.<sup>111</sup> These two groups did not have favorable relations before the arrival of the Spanish, and they continued to have strenuous relations while living together on the missions, the two groups ended up being forced together by the Spanish intrusion both on and off of the mission.

The contact at the mission was inevitable, but the contact that occurred off of the mission appears to be a calculated decision made by the two groups to help to ensure their survival. When the Spanish first invaded the native land of the Rumsen and the Excelen, a band Esselen speaking natives, they were met with violence. This violence continued until around half of each group surrendered while the other half of each group fled.<sup>112</sup> As these communities were so small to begin, it would have been impossible for them to survive on their own. Whether by their inability to gather enough food or being caught by the Spanish soldiers, the destruction of their culture was inevitable. However, by combining the remnants of the two groups, the two groups would be able to survive. Given their hostility on the mission this combination would seem unlikely, yet this is what occurred. The remnants of the two groups combined and sought refuge in a small village on the Big Sur Coast called Sarhentaruc.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Gary S. Breschini and Trudy Haversat, "The Esselen Refuge Response to Spanish Intrusion," In *A Gathering of Voices The Native Peoples of the Central California Coast*, ed. Linda Yamane (Santa Cruz: Museum of History & Art, 2002), 37

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 37

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 44-5

The combination of these two groups appears to be a rare and uncharacteristic moment for the native population of the Monterey Bay area. Not only did the groups not speak the same language, but they were hostile to one another, even when they were not forced to live on the missions together. Perouse, when discussing runaways from the missions noted, “As these people are at war with their neighbors, they can never escape to a distance greater than twenty or thirty leagues.”<sup>114</sup> Though twenty to thirty leagues allows for a sixty to ninety mile range before the native population, when the population density was so low, and the tribelets constantly moved to different villages depending on the season, this range acts much smaller than it is.

A similar disturbance between various native groups took place at Mission Soledad, but to understand the importance of the source one must understand the manner in which the padres communicated during the Mission Period. At this time communication was difficult, but the Franciscans found ways to stay connected between the various locations of their Missions. This communication was an essential way for the Franciscans Padres to solve universal problems within the system and to communicate with the neighboring missions regarding more local issues. These letters, as they were not incredibly easy to send, were generally reserved for matters of importance to the function of the Mission.

With this in mind, the letter sent from Father Antonio Jayme, one of the missionaries at Soledad, to Governor Sola, the California Governor, sheds important light on Native Californian relations on the missions. Though the goal of the letter was to discuss the potential threat from 78 neophytes that had fled the mission, the Father also felt it important to inform the Governor that there had been numerous disputes between two groups of converts on the Mission.<sup>115</sup> Soledad

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<sup>114</sup> Perouse, *Life in a California Mission*, 82

<sup>115</sup> Letter from Jayme O.F.M. to Sola, Soledad, 1/13/1816, California Mission Documents, SBMAL

was on the border of three different language groups, yet Jayme noted that these groups spoke the same dialect.<sup>116</sup> Without looking too far into his specific word choice, which may be inappropriate for many reasons, these two groups spoke the same *dialect*. This means that these groups most likely were from a very close proximity and were used to communicating with each other. Under a simplistic understanding of the culture of the Native people of California they would have been from the same tribe. However, these groups were so hostile towards one another that Jayme thought it was important to inform the governor of their disputes. This demonstrates the fragile nature of inter-village communications in the Monterey area, not to mention the potential troubles in inter-language relations.

It is apparent that the nature of tribes in the Monterey Bay region, between the various languages, lack of cultural integration, and history of violence, prevented the groups from identifying as a singular unit against the Spanish. At Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad the converts came from disparate backgrounds, and they struggled to integrate once they were living on the missions. It is clear that there was limited cultural continuity across the various small communities in Central California. Cultural continuity is one of the conditions that were common in almost all of the violent revolts at the other mission sites. These conditions were not present in the Monterey area, at least to the extent as they were in other locations. However violent revolt was not the result of a formula, so we cannot rule out the possibility of violent revolt based solely on this condition. In order to determine whether or the conditions of revolt were present, factors related to social control must be investigated, and the difference between organized, violent revolt, and a more subtle individualized form of revolt must be discussed.

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<sup>116</sup> *ibid*

## **Social Change: Spanish Attempts to Upend Native Social Structure**

Revolts on the Missions were directly linked to the Spanish priests implementing forms of control on the converted populations. Previously the focus was on modes of physical control and how the neophytes reacted and revolted to these methods of control. This chapter will focus on how the Spanish missionaries worked to control the neophytes' social interactions as a means to assimilate the neophytes into Spanish society. The thought from the Franciscan missionaries was that if they could breakdown the native culture they could then effectively mold the neophytes to fit the Spanish ideal. What the missionaries were not expecting was the amount of individual revolt that they would face on the missions. The types of social control implemented on the missions can be broken into to three groups: social hierarchy, religion, and sexual interactions.

The first way that the Franciscans attempted to upend native social structure was by changing native social hierarchy on the missions. Before explaining how the missionaries went about changing the social hierarchy it is important to understand what being a chief meant and how North American societies viewed the chief. Anthropologist R. Lowie wrote that in the majority of societies in both North and South America chiefs had three necessary conditions of power: he served as a peacemaker, he was generous, and he must be a good orator.<sup>117</sup> It is much more complicated than merely fulfilling these three roles because the chief holds no real power, as in he cannot force a member of the tribe to do anything as his power resigns specifically on how he is viewed by the tribe members.<sup>118</sup> This makes serving as peacemaker much more complicated, and it makes being a good orator much more important. Because his power is

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<sup>117</sup> Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: The Leader as Servant and the Humane uses of Power Among the Indians of the Americas* (New York: Urizen Books, 1977), 29

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 30

almost non-existent, as the tribe members are well within their right to ignore him, he must serve as a peacemaker by convincing opposing parties to come to a mutual agreement. If he cannot do that he will lose the support of the tribe and no longer be the chief. The last obligation seems counter-intuitive, but the chief must be generous and give away all of the goods that he can. Greed is a trait that chiefs cannot possess, and it is necessary for chiefs to be generous.<sup>119</sup> Unlike in Spanish society, being a chief did not afford a level of job stability. They were not elected leaders, and could lose their position at any moment. This made it a constant obligation to keep the other members of the tribe happy and safe. Needless to say, the Spanish did not think that this was how a leader should act, and attempted to change the way that native leaders understood their power.

The Alcalde system was briefly discussed before, in terms of how the Spanish used the Alcaldes to promote physical control. Here the Alcalde system will be discussed as a means of upending native social hierarchy. The Alcalde system was not implemented by Franciscan leaders but instead by the Spanish government. The governor, Felipe de Neve, wrote of the Alcalde system, “with the elections and the appointment of a new Republic, the will of His Majesty will be fulfilled in this region, and under our direction, in the course of time, He will obtain in these Indians useful vassals for our religion and state.”<sup>120</sup> With this dual goal in mind, in December of 1778 Neve ordered the Franciscans to allow the neophytes on the older, more established missions to elect their own leaders.<sup>121</sup> This meant that both San Carlos and San Antonio would be allowed to elect their own leaders. Initially San Carlos was allowed two Alcaldes while San Antonio was only allowed to elect one Alcalde (at this point Soledad had not

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 31

<sup>120</sup> Steven Hackel, “The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 54, no. 2 (1997): 357

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 355

been established).<sup>122</sup> The Spanish government fully supported this system, but the Franciscan leaders, especially Serra, fought the founding of this system. In Serra's discussions with Neve and the Spanish government he was able to secure concessions that made him more comfortable with the implementation of the system. The main concession made was that the missionaries would have complete control over who was eligible for the elections.<sup>123</sup>

Beyond just controlling who was eligible, it may have been possible that the Franciscan's also controlled the outcome of the elections. While there is no direct evidence to support these claims, the way that the elections were handled suggests the possibility of impropriety. In four separate cases (one at Mission Soledad, two at San Carlos, and one at San Antonio) the letters containing the results of the elections were sent out within just a few days of the New Year, including three that were sent out on January 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>124</sup> It is certainly possible that the elections were held in late December and they took place very efficiently, but it also may be that they were falsified from the start. Each letter places a great emphasis that the elections took place in accordance with the governor's law. This seems to suggest that there was either pressure from the governor because the elections had been performed poorly in the past or that the missionaries put this in each letter to prevent anyone from suspecting improprieties. Whether the elections were in fact falsified or not, it is clear that the Franciscans were able to exert a large amount of control over the outcome of the elections.

Gaining control over who was eligible for the elections was a tremendous victory for Serra and the Franciscan missionaries. Though Neve was able to force them to utilize native

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 356

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 359

<sup>124</sup> Marcelino Cirpes and Benito Catalan to Governor Borica, Mission San Antonio, January 1, 1799, California Mission Documents, SBMAL and Juan Amoros to Maiñano Estrada, Mission San Carlos Borromeo, January 1, 1815, California Mission Documents, SBMAL and Antonio Jayme to Governor Sola, Mission Soledad, January 4, 1816, California Mission Documents, SBMAL and Vincente Francisco Sarría and Juan Amoros to Governor Sola, Mission San Carlos Borromeo, January 1, 1817, California Mission Documents, SBMAL

leaders on the missions, the missionaries were now able to make sure that the alcaldes would aid in the completion of their goals. Serra and the missionaries could now prevent any neophytes who had been revered in their communities from being eligible for the position of alcalde. Serra likely feared that if a former chief of high regard was elected to be an alcalde that he could then organize a revolt against the mission system, thus he made sure that those neophytes who were eligible were from a lower class.<sup>125</sup> In doing so, Serra upset the regular social structure in order to secure a favorable vassal for the missionaries. By upsetting the social order and allowing a neophyte from a lower class to ascend to a position of power, Serra thought that he would find these neophytes reliable as this ascension to power would not have been possible in their native society. The Spanish assumed that the elected leaders would be happy with their power and thus act trustworthy. This trust is demonstrated by the interactions between a newly elected alcalde and one of the Fathers at Mission San Carlos. After the completion of the elections the Father sent the newly elected alcalde to deliver the results of the election to the governor.<sup>126</sup> A great part of this trust come from the fact that the neophytes had converted to Christianity, and the Franciscans would have trusted them to behave as good Christians. However, the Franciscans did understand that desertion and deception were possibilities and must have also placed extra trust in the neophytes who had been elected as alcaldes.

While the Franciscans undoubtedly trusted the alcaldes, the amount of respect that they garnered within the neophyte community is tough to explain. The alcaldes were responsible for making sure that the neophytes were ready for work and mass at the correct time each day. They were also in charge of determining what, and how much, punishment was appropriate for each

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<sup>125</sup> Edward Castillo and Robert H. Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 37

<sup>126</sup> Vicente Sarría to Governor Argüello, Mission San Carlos Borromeo, January, 1824, California Mission Documents, SBMAL



transgression. These two responsibilities likely did not help them to earn the respect of the rest of the neophyte community. They were associated with the Fathers and thus associated with the distribution of food. Although chiefs were never elected in native society, their position as distributors of food would have afforded them an amount of respect since a chief must distribute the majority of his goods. Because the *alcaldes* are associated with the Franciscans, the owners of the food, the distribution of meals can be interpreted as the *alcaldes* distributing their goods to the rest of the “tribe”. The *alcaldes* also gave daily speeches to organize the mission, which demonstrated their skills as an orator. In these two ways the *alcaldes* were acting as chiefs should. Through these actions it is likely that the *alcaldes* were viewed as chiefs on the missions and respected by the neophytes.

Social control on the missions extended beyond upending traditional native social classes, the missionaries also looked to control native expression of religion. Controlling native religion is difficult subject to discuss because there was no standardized religion in the area. This means that what was considered religion was open to interpretation by the Franciscans. Once again, the different worldviews of the Spanish and the Native Californians shows itself. The Spanish came from a world where the divine was not present in all actions, where the indigenous societies in the Americas generally interpreted the supernatural in all of their daily actions. This made it very difficult for the neophytes to leave their native religion behind, because it was not a religion in the western sense, it was a way of life. That being said the Spanish still attempted to rid the neophytes of all of their previous practices whether they were necessarily religious or not.

The Spanish limitation of native religion was the only way that they were able to achieve their goal of conversion, but their methods of conversion were not intended to create a deeper understanding Christianity. This is evident in Serra’s attempt to convert the neophytes as quickly

as possible and leave the instruction to occur after conversion.<sup>127</sup> Obviously this did not allow for the new converts to come to an understanding of Christianity before baptism. This is not a problem by itself, however the Franciscans treated the baptism like a contract, and the neophytes were subject to the various types of physical control. Even further the Franciscans thought that Baptism signaled conversion, which meant that upon baptism the neophytes were expected to drop all of their previous beliefs and cultural norms.<sup>128</sup> This was not really possible, as there was certainly a disconnect between the understandings of the Franciscans and the neophytes. It would be impossible to assume that the neophytes would have been able to understand Christianity, and all its beliefs, before they were baptized. Yet, this is what was expected of them by the Franciscan missionaries.

This misunderstanding is expressed in the writings of Pablo Tac. In his description of native dances he demonstrates the differences in the two cultures' views of dancing:

Each Indian people has its dances, different from other dances... the Indians of California dance not only for a feast, but also before starting a war, for grief, because they have lost the victory, and in the memory of grandparents, aunts and uncles, parents already dead. Now that we are Christians we dance for ceremony<sup>129</sup>

Tac demonstrates that dancing was not necessarily a religious experience for the Native Californians but it was a part of culture. The Spanish, who associated dancing with Christian ceremony, assumed that dancing was a religious experience and limited its practice. This did limit dances for religious purposes, such as dancing to honor the dead, but it also limited the use of dance for social interaction. In this instance the Spanish desire to limit native religion also

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<sup>127</sup> James A. Sandos, "Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions" (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/claremont/docDetail.action?docID=10169944>, XIV

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, XV

<sup>129</sup> Pablo Tac, *Indian Life and Customs and Mission San Luis Rey: A record of California Mission Life*, ed. and trans. Minna Hewes and Gordon Hewes (San Luis Rey, Old Mission, 1958), 22

affected the way that the neophytes interacted with their fellow tribe members. While it appears unintentional it certainly aids the Spanish in their goal of breaking down all aspects of native religion and culture in order to rebuild the neophytes as Spanish Christians.

Though native religion was not standardized there were common elements, and the Spanish were able to use some of these elements to better convert the neophytes to Christianity. Pablo Tac writes of the time before the missionaries, “the god who was adored at the time was the sun and fire.”<sup>130</sup> Tac does not mean that the sun and fire were gods in the European sense. He means to say that god was in nature and nature was revered. This also means that god plays a role in every daily interaction. Nature is present everywhere, so to the Native Californians god played a role in everything that they did and was constantly present. When the neophytes were taught Christianity they still saw God in this light. As Jean Francois de La Perouse writes of religion on the missions, “This government is a true theocracy for the Indians, who believe that their superiors have immediate and continual communication with God, and that they cause him to descend every day on the altar.”<sup>131</sup> If Jean Francois was able to come to this understanding during his brief visit to Mission San Carlos, the Franciscans also must have been aware that this was happening. They would have no reason to dispel this notion, despite it being incorrect, as it adds more accountability to the neophytes’ lives as Christians. To further the amount of social control the Spanish could exert through native misunderstanding of Christianity, the Franciscans at Mission San Carlos prominently displayed a picture of hell.<sup>132</sup> This, along with the belief that God descended to the altar daily, reminded the neophytes that they would be held accountable for any actions that went against their new faith. The issue with this was that they were still learning about their new faith as they were being held accountable for going against it. As they

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 12

<sup>131</sup> Jean Francois de La Perouse, *Life in a California Mission* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1989), 97-8

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 78

did not fully understand the faith, the neophytes were subject to the views of Franciscans out of fear of their future in hell or of fear of what the Franciscans would tell God when he descended to the altar.

Finally, the Franciscans attempted to upend the traditional pattern of social interaction through the limitation of sexual encounters. One of the characteristics that the anthropologist Pierre Clastres found to be true of almost all societies in the Americas was the existence of polygamy.<sup>133</sup> This polygamy was never widespread throughout a tribe, but it was almost always exclusively reserved for the chief, or other individuals of a high social standing. So when the Spanish were converting the native populations of California they encountered a number of individuals who practiced polygamy. Polygamy was not accepted in Catholic faith so the Franciscans could not convert a polygamous family unit to Christianity. Thus, the Franciscans forced these chiefs, or other powerful men, to choose one of their wives to marry and be converted with.<sup>134</sup> Polygamy was used a way to bond different villages and forge alliances, so by banning its practice the Spanish were upsetting how the various groups in California interacted with each other.<sup>135</sup> This was a way to break down previous alliances as a way to prevent revolt, but in the Monterey area these bonds were already weak. Because these bonds were weak, banning polygamy played a much larger role in upending social structure by making the chiefs, or other powerful men, live as they were lower class citizens again. This, along with lifting the lower class people to positions of leadership, completely shifted how the neophytes interacted socially.

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<sup>133</sup> Clastres, *Society Against the State*, 32

<sup>134</sup> Quincy D. Newell, "The Indians Generally Love Their Wives and Children': Native American Marriage and Sexual Practices in Missions San Francisco, Santa Clara, and San Jose," *Catholic Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (Jan., 2005): 69

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 69

Pre-contact society in the Monterey area, and throughout California, had much less rigid restrictions on sexual interaction than the Franciscans. Current research demonstrates that many acts that were considered to be sins by the Catholics were perfectly acceptable, even common, in Central California.<sup>136</sup> The most notable of these sins was the act of homosexuality. In pre-mission society homosexuality was not viewed as a stigma or a sin. In general the Spanish missionaries were very concerned with the sexuality of the Native converts, and could not find an answer to limit their sexual promiscuity. As noted previously, unmarried peoples were placed in different dorms. This did not prove to be as successful as the missionaries imagined because in a questionnaire sent to the Fathers at all the missions regarding the largest vices among the neophytes, the most popular answers all had to do with sexual deviance.<sup>137</sup> As sexual relations were not necessarily tied to marriage in native culture, the Spanish had to pay great attention to what sexual practices were going on.

In order to convert the neophytes to Christianity and the Spanish culture it was necessary for them to force the neophytes to live as the Spanish Christians do. This also extends to the different views on divorce. The Catholic's believed that divorce was not to be allowed under any circumstances, while the Native Californians' marriages, according to Francisco Palóu, "last until there is a quarrel, when they separate. Then they marry another man or woman."<sup>138</sup> Palóu was speaking of unconverted peoples, because once on the missions divorce was again not allowed. In sexual and marital relations the Spanish worked to make sure that the neophytes were living as Catholics, no matter how that affected their social interactions.

The efforts of the Franciscans to upend way that the neophytes interacted socially were extensive, yet they were unsuccessful in eliminating the tendencies that the native population had

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 67-8

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 60

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 71

before the missionaries arrived. The neophytes converted on Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad never produced a violent, organized revolt. This did not mean that they accepted Spanish rule, there were many instances of individual revolt that demonstrated that the neophytes were unwilling to give up their pre-contact culture. The individual revolt, whether intentional or not, demonstrates the shortcoming of the Franciscans in understanding the native cultures, but more importantly, it shows the resiliency of the converted neophytes as they fought through the various punishments to maintain any part of their old lives that they could.

There is no record of the neophytes understanding that the elections for *alcaldes* were intended to upend their traditional social hierarchy. Despite not explicitly understanding the reasons that the Franciscans conducted the elections as they did, the neophytes sought to resist this form of social control. At Mission Soledad in 1824 the father, Juan Cabot, wrote the governor to complain about the officials not doing their jobs. He was complaining about all officials, native and Spanish, but mentions that he has had problems with the native elected leaders not doing their jobs.<sup>139</sup> This demonstrates that the trust that the Fathers' had placed with the native leaders may have been misjudged. By not doing their jobs to the standard of the Franciscans they are in fact revolting, at least on a small scale. As discussed, the *alcaldes* were integral in making sure that the daily functions of the missions went well. When they failed to do their jobs they are ensuring that the missions do not run efficiently. This prevents the Franciscans from effectively converting the neophytes to both Christianity and Spanish culture.

The *alcaldes* not only revolted by negatively impacting the efficiency of the missions, but they also sought to help bring more native traditions to the missions. Eight years earlier at Mission Soledad, one of the *alcaldes* attempted to bring a native ceremony to the mission. This created a large fight between Fray Jayme and the *alcalde*, simply named Antonio, because it

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<sup>139</sup> Juan Cabot to Luís Argüello, Mission Soledad, 1824, California Mission Documents, SBMAL

undermined the goal of the Franciscans.<sup>140</sup> The Franciscans assumed that by giving neophytes positions of power, that they would do the bidding of the Franciscans. However, in this instance Antonio revolts against that notion by using his position of power as a means to preserve his native culture. The fact that he felt empowered enough to suggest this to the Father upends the Spanish use of the alcalde system. The nature of the request also demonstrates an instance of revolt. The Spanish had done everything that they could to eliminate native ceremonies as they are linked with the preservation of native culture and a refusal to accept of Spanish culture. This also highlights a misunderstanding between the Fathers and the neophytes. To the neophytes this seems like a reasonable request because the ceremony is not necessarily religious, but to the Fathers, any ceremony must be considered religious. In both of these instances the alcaldes, who were supposed to favor the Franciscans, demonstrated individual revolt through a desire to upset the order of the missions and preserve native culture.

Individualized revolt was not limited to those already in positions of power, individual revolt took place throughout the missions for a variety of reasons. Attempts to preserve certain native customs continued until the missions were secularized. Revolting against Catholicism was common on the missions, and one of the best examples stems from the alcalde, Antonio, at Mission Soledad. In the same letter where Jayme described Antonio's attempt to bring a native ceremony to the mission, Jayme noted that many of the people at the Mission were not attending Mass and were ignoring doctrine.<sup>141</sup> Much of this revolt can be attributed to Antonio's revolt individually, but the fact that a good portion of the Mission's inhabitants were not attending the Christian services demonstrates a direct revolt against Christianity. Many cases of revolt against Christianity are marked by attempts to preserve native customs and practices. In this case, the

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<sup>140</sup> Antonio Jayme to Pablo Vicente Solá, January 13, 1816, California Mission Documents, SBMAL

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

neophytes were revolting directly against Christianity without any attempt to preserve their own culture. This type of revolt shows a reaction that had not been seen before in the Monterey area, and shows that Christianity may not have been as well accepted as the Franciscans thought.

At other locations throughout the Mission system there was continued revolt against Christian ideal, though in the Monterey area there is little evidence of other revolts directly against Christianity. However, the revolts that did occur prove that the Franciscans had varying degrees of success in changing the religion and culture of the neophytes. Across all missions there is evidence of certain “pagan” ideas among the converted population of the missions.<sup>142</sup> The prevalence of non-Christian ideas is the rejection of the ideals of the Franciscans, and whether the neophytes held onto to their “pagan” ideals to revolt against the Franciscans or not, they clearly did not submit to Christianity and its message. More specifically, throughout the mission period shamanism was practiced and passed down through generations at Mission San Antonio.<sup>143</sup> While Shamanism is usually associated with attempts to heal the sick, it does carry some religious connotation and surely was not approved of by the Franciscans. The fact that it was continually practiced, even once the mission was populated largely by people born on the mission, thus born into Christianity, shows a well-planned attempt to preserve native beliefs in the face of Christianity. As has been clear throughout all of the resistance to Christianity, the neophytes were unwilling to accept Christianity as the Franciscans wanted them to. They would not forget all of their previous lives and leave all of their customs at the door of the Church. While they may have ostensibly accepted Christianity, as the Fathers at San Antonio believed they did, they did not give up their native customs and beliefs to do so.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Skowronek, “Sifting the Evidence,” 683

<sup>143</sup> Castillo and Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 38

<sup>144</sup> Maynard Geiger, “Reply of Mission San Antonio to the Questionnaire of the Spanish Government in 1812 concerning the Native Culture of the California Mission Indians,” *The Americas* 10, no. 2 (1953): 220-6



Perhaps the most prevalent revolt to Spanish customs and the Franciscans wishes occurred in the neophytes sexual relations. As stated before, in response to the 1812 questionnaire sent out by the Spanish government nearly all of the missions recorded the biggest vice of the neophytes as being sexual deviancy. At Mission San Antonio the Fathers wrote, “unchastity is the prevailing vice in both sexes, and this it is that is carrying them to the grave. They know this well enough and realize it, but they lack understanding. (May God remedy the situation!).”<sup>145</sup> What is striking about this description is the Father stating that they know unchastity is their fault but that they do not understand it. While at first this may not make sense, the Father is attempting to convey that they know it is their vice because the Fathers tell the neophytes that sexual relations outside of marriage are a sin, but they do not understand it because they continue to have sexual relations outside of marriage.

This condition is epitomized in an exchange between the fathers at Mission San Antonio and two neophytes caught in a homosexual act. According to Francisco Palóu when the two men were told that their act was one of sin, one responded by stating that the other man was his wife.<sup>146</sup> This may be the ultimate form of sexual revolt, as not only are the men having sex out of wedlock, they are engaging in a homosexual act. While homosexuality was common before missionization, it was explicitly banned by the Catholic Church and by performing this act the two men were revolting against the constraints of Spanish society and Christian doctrine. The revolt is an attempt to maintain the lives that they had been living in the years before the Spanish had arrived. The most interesting part of this encounter is the defense that these two men were married. It is in this scenario that we can understand how the neophytes knew what was wrong, yet did not understand what was wrong. These two thought that if they said they were married

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 224

<sup>146</sup> Newell, “The Indians Generally Love Their Wives and Children,” 68

that their act would go unpunished because they did not understand that homosexuality, not just sex, was against the rules established by the Franciscans.

The rigorous attempts to limit the intrusion of native culture on missions were seen as necessary by the Franciscans, yet they proved to have varying degrees of success. Many neophytes lived their lives in accordance to the rules established by the Missionaries, but some chose to revolt. Their revolt was not organized, or necessarily intentional, yet their actions demonstrate a rejection of the new way of life. Each time that a neophyte acted out against the methods of social control established by the Spanish they were attempting to regain control of their lives. In doing so, the neophytes expressed their desire to live their lives as they once did, before the missionaries arrived. Though they were physically constrained to the missions and limited in their social interactions, the will of the converted Californians would not be broken. Through instances of individual revolt the native population of the Monterey area preserved, as best as they could, their traditional way of life.

## Conclusion

In the introduction the stated goal of this work was apply the conditions of the various violent revolts that occurred throughout the process of missionization to the missions in the Monterey area, specifically to San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad. The next goal was to analyze whether organized, violent revolt was a fair standard and whether individual, non-violent revolt was a better standard. It is evident that some of the conditions that were present in the organized, violent revolts were present in these three missions. One key condition was missing. In these missions there was no strong sense of community between the tribes that were converted. This played a role in preventing an organized revolt, because the tribes had no history of working together. Yet the other conditions, the methods of physical control and the methods of social control were all present.

If we consider organized, violent revolt to be inevitable, as the original assumption does, then we would expect that organized, violent revolt would have occurred. Because it did not occur, the original assumption must be re-evaluated. Based on the varied nature and frequency of the instances of individual revolt, it is clear that individual revolt is a much better standard when discussing revolt on the missions. Considering the nature of tribes in California, between the lack of a large tribe, large-scale agriculture, and the complicated web of languages, it is impossible to consider an organized revolt as inevitable. This is where the original assumption is unfair. As opposed to organized, violent revolt being the standard, it must be considered the exception. For an organized revolt to occur there are too many necessary conditions and these conditions occur too rarely in California for it to be considered the standard.

The reactions of the converts at Missions San Antonio, San Carlos, and Soledad prove that individual revolt was common throughout the mission system. Even when there was no

violent, organized reaction to the missionaries' control, many neophytes did not submit to the Franciscans rule. Every time that a neophyte broke a rule on the mission, whether by practicing Shamanism or fleeing the mission to return to their family, they were exerting control over their own lives. This is how we must think of revolt on the missions. Any attempt to continue to live their lives as though the Spanish did not own them was revolt, whether it was intentional or not. It is not necessary for a converted Californian to think their actions go against Franciscan rule for it to be considered a form of individual revolt. At times it is clear that converts did not understand what using missions resources, or even being baptized entailed. It is also clear that they did not consider many of their actions to be a form of revolt, as evidenced by the two men engaging in sexual relations at Mission San Antonio. Yet, we are afforded the benefit of viewing these occurrences in retrospect. And in retrospect these actions must be considered revolt.

At these three missions the converts struggled to overcome their own cultural differences to revolt against the missionaries in the manner that the neophytes in New Mexico, San Diego, the San Gabriel Valley, and the Santa Barbara are did. This must not be considered a submission to the quasi-tyrannical rule of the Franciscans. Submission can too easily be considered acceptance and acceptance would make it easy to forget what the Franciscans did to the native population of California. These instances of individual must serve as a reminder to future generations of how the Franciscans exploited these people in name of salvation and civilizing the "savages."

While it is impossible to correct the errors of the past, even as they wiped out entire tribelets, it is necessary that these errors are not forgotten. The indigenous people of California were pillaged for the economic gain of the Spanish empire some 200 years ago but lessons can be learned from their experience. As "western" society is continuing to expand, the lessons

learned from the process of missionization must be remembered. The subjugation of any people in the name of economic gain must be prevented, whether the people are capable of organizing a revolt or not. Individual revolt occurs in all of these instances, whether intentional or not, and must be considered. This is not to say that the expansion of a “western” system is inappropriate. It means that the negative aspects of expansion must be considered because once the damage has been done, it is often irreversible.

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