

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF NATIVE ISLANDERS FOLLOWING MISSIONIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Not much has been published regarding the fate of native islanders after their incorporation into mission communities in the early nineteenth century. The Cruzeño Chumash of the Northern Channel Islands were incorporated primarily into Missions San Buenaventura, Santa Bárbara, La Purísima, and Santa Inés. Most Island Gabrielino were baptized at Mission San Gabriel and the Los Angeles Plaza Church. Using mission registers, census records, and early ethnographic papers, the social history of native islanders and their descendants can be reconstructed, revealing those twentieth century communities and families in which island lineages survived.

Keywords: Chumash Indians, Gabrielino Indians, ethnohistory, demography, mission records, genealogy.

INTRODUCTION

What became of the native peoples of the Channel Islands following their migration to mission communities in the second decade of the nineteenth century? To answer this question adequately one must identify the original people who came to the missions from the Channel Islands, reconstruct their family relationships, follow their life histories through mission and census records, and identify them and their families using contemporary documents, ethnographic records, and oral histories. Over the past decade such ethnohistoric studies have been conducted to meet the needs of federal agencies with Channel Island stewardship responsibilities so that lineal descendants of native islanders and culturally-affiliated communities may be identified and consulted (Johnson 1988; McLendon and Johnson 1998). Such consultation is mandated by the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and management policies developed by particular federal agencies (e.g., National Park Service).

METHODS

Detailed genealogical information contained in mission records makes it possible to trace lineal descendants from particular island towns into the later decades of the nineteenth century. Information contained in the baptismal, marriage, and burial registers can all be collated and cross-referenced to assemble life history and genealogical information for each individual who entered the missions. The resulting mission register database facilitates the reconstruction of family lineages. Our collaborative study conducted for the National Park Service (NPS) regarding descendants of the Chumash islanders provides an example of how this can be accomplished (McLendon and Johnson 1999). One may first determine those individuals who were baptized from a specified native town, then look up their children, their children's children, etc. Computer-produced lists of descendant families can then be matched with census records, ethnographic notes, Bureau of Indian Affairs enrollment records, and other sources of information.

Computer-assisted genealogical analysis was undertaken for all Chumash towns formerly located within Channel Islands National Park (Figure 1). Queries to accomplish this task were developed using FoxPro (Version 2.5), so that cross-references between baptismal entries of parents and their children could be established over multiple generations and used to link descendants to their ancestral towns. The database was searched first for "Generation 0," in each town, i.e., all those individuals whose origin was entered as the particular town being considered. Their spouses were identified, if in fact they married. Then "Generation 1" was identified, e.g. the children of "Generation 0" (except for children who had been born in that same town before their parents relocated to a mission, because they had already been included in "Generation 0"). This procedure continued through each generation for those whose names had been recorded in the database. Table 1 summarizes the number of people identified in each generation descended from each Cruzeño Chumash town on the Northern Channel Islands.

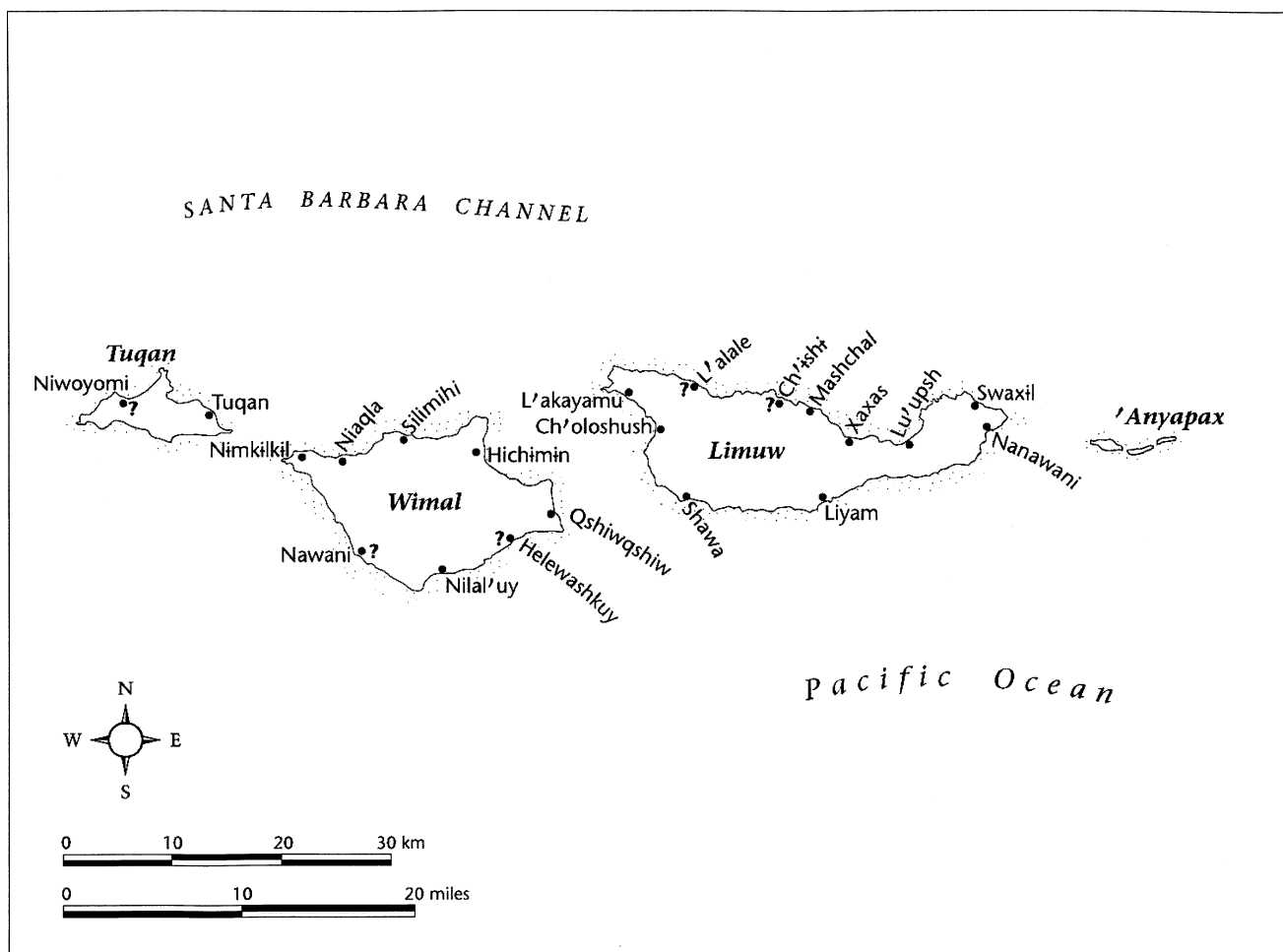


Figure 1. Cruzeño Chumash towns of the Northern Channel Islands.

ARRIVAL OF NATIVE ISLANDERS AT MAINLAND COMMUNITIES

The native peoples of California's Channel Islands were baptized at six missions and the Plaza Church of Los Angeles. In the south, those San Clemente and Santa Catalina islanders who accepted baptism became affiliated primarily with Mission San Gabriel and the Plaza Church, although a few went to Mission San Fernando (Johnson 1988). The ethnographic literature conveys an old tradition that some people from San Clemente Island became affiliated with Mission San Luis Rey (e.g., Kroeber 1907:153, 1953:622), but these individuals have not been identified in a thorough review of that mission's surviving records (Johnson et al. 1998). Most of the Cruzeño Chumash population of the Northern Channel Islands were baptized at five missions. Santa Cruz Islanders primarily went to San Buenaventura and Santa Bárbara, while the majority of Santa Rosa Island's inhabitants migrated to Santa Inés and La Purísima. Virtually all San Miguel Island natives joined Mission La Purísima (Johnson 1982).

Over a period of forty years, native Chumash towns on the Channel Islands were abandoned as people were

incorporated into mission communities (Figure 1). The demographic characteristics of the emigrating Cruzeño Chumash population may be reconstructed in highly specific detail (Table 2). In contrast, the Island Gabrielino population of the Southern Channel Islands appears to have held back from missionization to a large extent. Many of the *Pipimares* (Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islanders) emigrated first to work as laborers for the various ranchos and for the citizens of the Pueblo of Los Angeles. An apparently sizable number remained unconverted until the establishment of the Plaza Church in Los Angeles in 1825 (Johnson 1988; McCawley 1996:202-203; Phillips 1980). San Nicolas Island was too distant to be effectively proselytized until the last remaining group was removed in 1835, that is, except for the "Lone Woman" who was marooned by herself until 1853 (Heizer and Elsasser 1961).

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The effects of introduced European diseases resulted in a catastrophic population decline throughout the Mission Period. The particulars of this decline among Chumash peoples have been documented elsewhere (McLendon and

Table 1. Chumash descendants from the Northern Channel Islands.

	Converts	1st Generation Descendants		2nd Generation Descendants		3rd Generation Descendants		4th Generation	Total
		From other towns	Born at the missions	From other towns	Born at the missions	From other towns	Born at the missions		
<u>Santa Cruz Island</u>									
<i>Xavas</i>	129	19	84	---	18	---	7	---	257
<i>Mashchal</i>	69	13	39	4	17	---	18	---	160
<i>Ch i shi</i>	2	1	---	2	---	1	1	---	7
<i>L alale</i>	5	1	6	---	---	---	---	---	12
<i>L akayamu</i>	50	21	37	4	21	---	13	---	146
<i>Ch oloshush</i>	28	7	15	3	5	---	---	---	58
<i>Shawa</i>	9	8	6	1	9	---	---	---	33
<i>Liyam</i>	117	19	60	2	35	---	16	---	249
<i>Nanawani</i>	61	18	53	5	50	---	21	14	222
<i>Swaxil</i>	205	16	155	---	78	---	66	7	527
<i>Lu upsh</i>	63	15	63	---	55	---	28	4	228
<u>Santa Rosa Island</u>									
<i>Qshiwqshiw</i>	119	13	88	2	12	---	2	1	237
<i>Hichim in</i>	71	11	63	---	10	---	13	17	185
<i>Silimihi</i>	53	14	49	6	17	---	1	---	140
<i>Niaqla</i>	10	6	7	---	3	---	---	---	26
<i>Nimkilkil</i>	51	13	45	---	10	---	---	---	119
<i>Nawani</i>	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2
<i>Nilaluy</i>	48	6	35	---	7	---	---	---	96
<i>Helewashkuy</i>	37	6	19	4	13	---	2	---	81
<i>Wimal</i>	7	2	7	---	6	---	---	---	22
<u>San Miguel Island</u>									
<i>Tuqan</i>	34	7	23	---	17	---	13	---	94
<i>Niwoyomi</i>	3	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	6
Undiff. Islanders	97	16	54	6	14	1	10	---	198

Johnson 1998: Chap. 7; Walker and Johnson 1992, 1994). A high infant mortality resulted in drastically declining numbers in succeeding generations throughout the nineteenth century. Surprisingly, a table reconstructing the age at death for Chumash islanders based on mission register evidence does not reflect the high infant mortality that may be documented for infants born after their parents had joined mission communities (Table 3). Infant mortality in native island towns during the Mission Period is probably underrepresented because most children who died within a year, unlike those born at the missions, would not have been baptized soon after birth and therefore would not be reported in mission records. As Table 4 clearly shows, nearly half of all infants from the Northern Channel Islands died within their first two years at the missions, and two-thirds were deceased before five years had passed.

COMMUNITY HISTORIES

At the time of European arrival, the basic Chumash sociopolitical units consisted of towns that were largely independent from one another. Sometimes a particularly effective chief would have some form of authority over several towns, but he was by no means all-powerful. While the

basis for his leadership may partly have been determined by birth, it was more dependent on personality, the ability to control certain economic activities, and success in creation of alliances with other chiefs. Despite ethnohistoric and ethnographic evidence that the powers of Chumash chiefs were somewhat limited, there remain intriguing indications that sometimes several towns would be linked in what have been termed "federations," yet the relationship between major centers and lesser towns remains unclear.

Fernando Librado, one of our best ethnographic sources for Chumash social and political traditions, told J. P. Harrington in 1912-1913 that only the four largest towns on Santa Cruz Island had once had chiefs in residence and that one of these was recognized as paramount chief (*paqwot*) of the entire island (Hudson et al. 1977:14). Mission register research corroborates some of Librado's information: only four identified chiefs are named for Santa Cruz Island, one each for the four largest towns (Johnson 1982). Geographic analysis of the population distribution and marriage patterns of the Chumash islanders suggests that optimal location and social network centrality were important determinants of hierarchical relations among Cruzeño settlements (Johnson 1993b).

Table 2. Island Chumash age and sex distribution.

Age Group	Males	Females	Total	%
0-4	99	92	191	15.1
5-9	59	37	96	7.6
10-14	49	41	90	7.1
15-19	56	48	104	8.2
20-24	62	56	118	9.3
25-29	50	64	114	9
30-34	40	57	97	7.7
35-39	36	29	65	5.1
40-44	31	39	70	5.5
45-49	26	35	61	4.8
50-54	34	35	69	5.4
55-59	13	24	37	2.9
60-64	23	39	62	4.9
65-69	7	14	21	1.7
70-74	12	22	34	2.7
75-79	3	5	8	0.6
80-84	7	17	24	1.9
85 +	3	3	6	0.5
Unknown	2	1	3	
Total ^a	610	657	1267	100
0-19	263	218	481	38
20 +	347	439	786	62

^aDoes not include people of unknown age.

Table 3. Age at death of neophytes from the Northern Channel Islands.

Age Group	Males	Females	Total	%
0-4	27	27	54	4.8
5-9	38	28	66	5.9
10-14	15	17	32	2.8
15-19	14	32	46	4.1
20-24	24	40	64	5.7
25-29	39	51	90	8
30-34	44	62	106	9.4
35-39	50	43	93	8.2
40-44	42	42	84	7.4
45-49	44	41	85	7.5
50-54	50	40	90	8
55-59	38	44	82	7.3
60-64	27	40	67	5.9
65-69	30	24	54	4.8
70-74	19	26	45	4
75-79	14	12	26	2.3
80-84	5	19	24	2.1
85 +	9	11	20	1.8
Total	529	599	1128	100

Following relocation to the missions, islanders were subject to the authority of the missionaries and *alcaldes* (elected leaders) chosen from the neophyte (Mission Indian) community. Yet despite the loss of their traditional land base, there is evidence that traditional leadership and earlier sociopolitical units continued to be recognized throughout the Mission Period. This may be seen in the continued identification of certain individuals as *capitanes* (chiefs) in *padrones* (census registers kept at each mission) and the continued identification of people with the names of their earlier pre-mission towns in the registers of all missions. That traditional sociopolitical units continued to be of importance at the missions is further indicated by the fact that families were organized in some *padrones* according to their earlier towns. It is likely that the citizens of each pre-mission town continued to live together as a group once they came to the mission.

Following secularization of the missions, the continuing vitality of earlier sociopolitical units can be traced, despite the continuing impacts of declining population and the pressures of becoming a minority population in a dominant Euroamerican society. The elderly Chumash Indian people interviewed by Harrington in the early twentieth century had all been born and raised during the period following secularization and provided him with firsthand descriptions of communities that persisted during the remainder of the nineteenth century. A similar situation existed for a group of Gabrielino islanders (*Pipimares*) who maintained their own community in vicinity of the Pueblo of Los Angeles as late as the 1840s (Robinson 1952; Phillips 1980). Although the original land bases of the earlier sociopolitical units had been lost, one can see the re-emergence and vitality of sociopolitical groups during the post-mission period. For example, at each mission Channel Islanders lived apart, for several decades maintaining their distinctiveness as sociopolitical units apart from other Chumash communities (Johnson 1993a). Chiefs continued to be chosen to represent certain important early towns, even though those towns had long since been abandoned during early Mission times. These chiefs continued to host and attend ceremonial gatherings and to represent their ancestral communities during periodic festivals.

As intermarriage linked various Chumash families together and the encroachment of non-Indians continued to erode the land allotments given to them during mission secularization, the separate communities began to merge (Figure 2). Some of the surviving families associated with La Purísima moved to Sanja de Cota at Santa Ynez, while others moved to La Cieneguita near Santa Barbara. Saticoy, which included many families from the Santa Monica Mountains region, was eventually abandoned and its residents moved to Ventura.

Both La Cieneguita in Santa Barbara and the Sebastian Reservation at Tejon had Indian agents appointed under the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, thus extending them Federal recognition and protection during the 1850s and 1860s. However, the land at La Cieneguita was subsequently deemed

Table 4. Years of survival after baptism for Island Chumash.

Years of survival	<u>Age of converts when baptized</u>							
	0-1	2-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
0-1	24	23	23	8	13	19	29	13
2-4	7	27	14	10	33	54	50	27
5-9	6	6	8	9	37	80	66	29
10-14	2	13	7	13	34	48	24	2
15-19	3	10	10	14	29	38	17	8
20-24	3	10	6	11	13	36	12	
25-29	3	10	7	8	7	21	3	1
30-34	1	4	4	9	12	10		
35-39		1	4	1	9	3	1	
40-44	1	2			7	4		
45-49	1	1	1	1	3	3		
50+		4		1	2			1
Total	51	111	84	85	199	316	202	81
% surviving less than 2 years	47.1	20.7	27.4	9.4	6.5	6	14.4	16

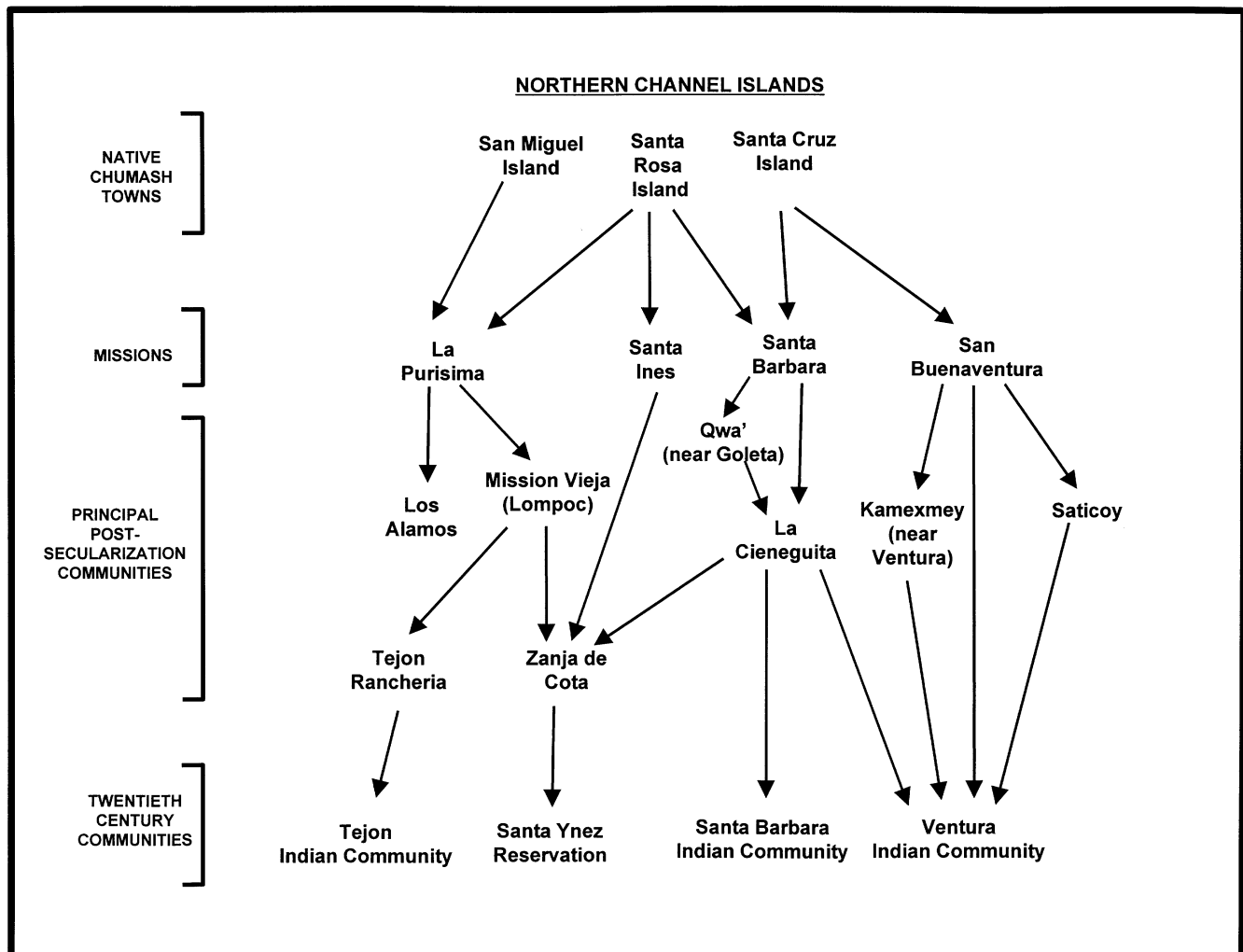


Figure 2. Cruzeño Chumash contributions to descendant communities.

private property and was gradually sold by the remaining Chumash families, mostly to the man who had been appointed their agent. At Tejon a land grant was claimed from the Mexican Period and later patented so that the reservation had to be abandoned even though Indian people continued to reside there in several native communities headed by chiefs. Despite the loss of their lands, the Indian communities at La Cieneguita and Tejon persisted. Although in the 1880s the last residents of La Cieneguita were forced to move from their homes, their sense of community remained, as is abundantly documented in oral interviews conducted by Harrington between 1912 and 1958 and in oral interviews conducted in recent years. The Tejon Indians were able to live together at the Tejon Canyon ranchería for much longer than the Chumash at La Cieneguita, largely permitted to do so by ranch owners who employed many of the men as vaqueros and laborers. Indeed the Tejon Indians' sense of community remains strong today and they are in the process of obtaining federal recognition as a tribe.

Ventura's Chumash community had great vitality throughout the nineteenth century. Some Chumash people who had been at La Cieneguita moved there, as did some from Saticoy and other post-secularization communities in the Ventura County area. Henry Henshaw visited and described this community in 1882 when he consulted with several residents during his fieldwork to collect linguistic data (Heizer 1955). Federal census records, contemporary court records, newspaper articles, and Harrington's ethnographic notes document this community's persistence during the late nineteenth century (Johnson 1994). Its continued existence in the twentieth century is verified by Johnson's interviews with people who grew up in the community. It is substantiated further by J. P. Harrington's fieldnotes from going door to door on March 12, 1913, surveying all the Chumash families of this community who were living in the same neighborhood (Harrington 1986).

It was easy for certain earlier commentators to assume that Chumash communities no longer existed because of repeated loss of their land base, but ethnohistorical research by Harrington and by us has demonstrated that people often regrouped in residential neighborhoods where the community was maintained. Intermarriage between Chumash families further strengthened community bonds. Even though people may seem to live in a more dispersed manner today, the same sense of community persists.

After detailed examination of each lineage of descendants from Cruzeño Chumash towns, our study identified nine lineages traceable beyond the mid-nineteenth century who are represented by known descendants today (Table 5). Descendants of these nine lineages are included in at least four communities survive that are direct descendants of the original Chumash sociopolitical groups that existed in the Channel Islands (Figure 2). Only one of these, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians, has been Federally-recognized. Yet our research suggests that Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Tejon also produced Indian communities

that are direct continuations of earlier groups who came from areas now under Channel Islands National Park stewardship. Since National Park Service policies require consultation with American Indians when park programs or actions affect their interests, our research will make it possible for the Park to consult these Indian communities as well as the Federally-recognized band.

With regard to the Gabrielino islanders, ethnohistoric evidence is more elusive regarding the degree to which their descendants merged and coalesced with other Indian communities that survived into the twentieth century. Certainly one Indian of Gabrielino Island descent, José Zalvidea, was living at the San Manuel Reservation as late as the 1830s and was interviewed by several ethnographers. Another, Felicitas Serrano Montaña, was living in San Bernardino, and other Island descendants were living in the San Fernando Valley as late as the early twentieth century (Johnson 1988; McCawley 1996:17-18, 202). Some San Clemente Islanders have been reported to have become affiliated with some Luiseño communities (Kroeber 1953:622). Further research is needed to document in greater detail the coalescence of Island Gabrielino families with surviving California Indian groups.

CONCLUSION

After the missions were secularized in 1833-1835, surviving islanders formed their own communities near the missions and pueblos where they had been baptized. Children of islanders intermarried with families of people from mainland towns who were already at the missions and thereby were eventually integrated into California Indian groups that have persisted as separate entities into the twentieth century. It is also true for some descendants of islanders, just as it is for some mainland Native American lineages, that repeated intermarriage with non-Indians or with native people from other parts of California through several generations has resulted in families who do not now identify themselves as California Indians, although some remain aware of and proud of that ancestry.

Mission and census records provide an important means of tracing population and genealogical histories that are greatly enhanced by the wealth of information contained in ethnographic field notes, especially those compiled by J. P. Harrington (1986). Nonetheless, nearly every lineage we traced produces unanswered questions regarding what became of particular individuals or families. Although our work has provided a substantial amount of information, at the same time it becomes a source for continuing investigations. Many descendants have been traced into the twentieth century, but these are not necessarily all of the descendants who may exist. Our lists are not exhaustive, and it is anticipated that further research will allow other descendants to be identified.

Table 5. Island Chumash descendants traced to the twentieth century.

Lineage ^a	Prominent 20th Century Descendant	Descendants Known Today
1. <i>Xaxas</i> 1	Eduardo Romero	Yes
2. <i>Xaxas</i> 2		No
3. <i>L'akayamu</i> 1		No
4. <i>L'akayamu</i> 2		No
5. <i>L'akayamu</i> 3	Juan Isidoro Pico	No
6. <i>Liyam</i> 1	Juan Isidoro Pico	No
7. <i>Liyam</i> 2	Juan ("Chocolate") Pacífico	No
8. <i>Nanawani</i> 1		No
9. <i>Nanawani</i> 2	Fernando Librado	No
10. <i>Nanawani</i> 3	Rosa Cota	Yes
11. <i>Nanawani</i> 4	Cecilio Tumamait, María Antonia Tumamait	Yes
12. <i>Swax̣i:l</i> 1	Luis Arellanes	Yes
13. <i>Swax̣i:l</i> 2	Aurelia Sánchez	Yes
14. <i>Swax̣i:l</i> 3	Juan Barrios, Tomás Barrios, Josefa Barrios Pérez	Yes
15. <i>Swax̣i:l</i> 4		No
16. <i>Lu'upsh</i> 1		No
17. <i>Qshiwqshiw</i> 1	Clara Miranda	Yes
18. <i>Qshiwqshiw</i> 2		No
19. <i>Qshiwqshiw</i> 3		No
20. <i>Hicḥiṃin</i> 1	Josefa Delfina Castiano	Yes
21. <i>Hicḥiṃin</i> 2		No
22. <i>Silimihi</i> 1	Fernando Cordero?	Yes
23. <i>Ṇiṃḳi:ḷḳi:l</i> 1		No
24. <i>Ṇiṃḳi:ḷḳi:l</i> 2		No
25. <i>Tuqan</i> 1	Emma Gutiérrez	No

^aSee McLendon and Johnson (1999) for detailed histories of these lineages.

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