

# The Creation of a *Carmeño* Identity: Marriage Practices in the Indian Village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel

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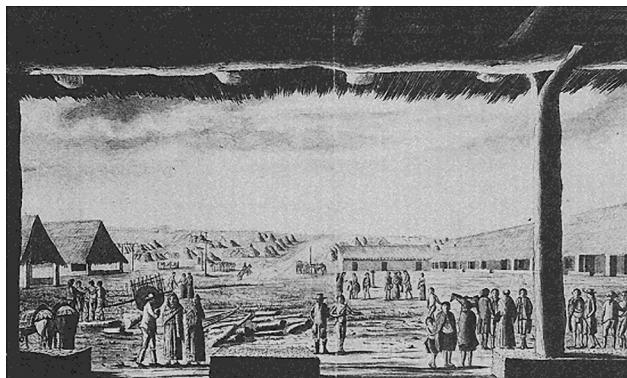
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*Indigenous peoples from diverse tribelets lived within the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. In precolonial times, California Indians formed identities tied to their tribelets. In the mission, those identities were reproduced as members of this pluralistic community formed a connection with their new place of residence. In this paper, I illustrate how marriage was one arena within which different indigenous peoples at this mission may have created a shared sense of identity. The data suggest that California Indians from different tribelets, which were generally endogamous in precolonial times, extensively intermarried in the mission. As people intermarried across tribelet social boundaries, a new community identity, that of the Carmeño, may have been created. However, there were variations in this pattern of intermarriage correlating with time, demography, tribelet, and individual circumstances. Furthermore, other documentary evidence suggests that a Carmeño identity may have been but one of many social identities situationally expressed at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel.*

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FROM MULTIPLE KIN GROUPS, tribelets (Kroeber 1932), and ethnolinguistic groups lived together in each Spanish mission community. For example, beginning in 1771, diverse Indians at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel lived together in a village just beyond the main adobe buildings (Hackel 2005:82) (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> In this paper, I argue that in these pluralistic communities, indigenous identity, once based—in a fluid way—on the tribelet community, was reproduced as an identity fluidly structured around a mission community. Because marriage practices were one arena within which tribelet identities were produced and reproduced in precolonial times, I investigated changes in those marriage practices after colonization in order to explore questions about transformation in identity within the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel.

Analysis of marriage patterns suggests that during the first years in which different local groups were incorporated into this mission community, people generally maintained precolonial marriage patterns. However, marriages to non-traditional partners, who now lived together in new mission communities, increased throughout the Mission Period (1769–1834). Over time, diverse

indigenous peoples married partners from non-traditional marriage spheres, strengthening ties to other tribal groups. This practice may have created an arena within which a new mission-centered cultural identity may have emerged among pluralistic populations of indigenous peoples, as intermarriage within the group materialized as the norm. These changes over time are significant because they illustrate that social identities are not static, but historically constructed. However, there were some people who did continue traditional endogamous marriage practices even in the later years of mission history. This particular pattern illustrates that individuals living within the mission expressed agency in identity construction, within societal constraints. In spite of tremendous changes, some individuals continued to marry within traditional marriage spheres, illustrating that time-honored social networks and social identities may still have been important to some, and the reproduction of social identity was often an individual process. While the particular marriage partners and social networks may have changed among the majority, it is important to emphasize that California native peoples continued to use marriage as a way of creating economic, social, and political networks. In other words, the change



**Figure 1. Courtyard scene from Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel with the Indian *ranchería* (village) in the background. Drawn by José Cardero in 1791 during the Malaspina expedition (courtesy of Iris Engstrand and the Museo Naval, Madrid).**

in marriage patterns in the mission community was a reproduction of indigenous sensibilities regarding marriage. Furthermore, it is important to highlight the situational aspects of identity. Many people living in the mission communities likely maintained connections to their ancestral community even though they intermarried into other tribelets, and formed new colonial identities. These different identities may have both been important and situationally expressed.

### TRIBELETS, KIN GROUPS, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

It is useful to take a diachronic perspective towards this research and compare Indian villages at the California missions to village organization prior to Spanish colonization (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995). Village communities in precolonial California were land-holding political groups, commonly termed “tribelets” (Kroeber 1932). These communities have been described as autonomous, self-governing, and independent land-owning units, whose boundaries were marked by features in the landscape (Kroeber 1962:33, 37, 49). These tribelet communities are described by Bean as having

...a central town which served as a political, ritual, and economic center, and several subordinate smaller settlements. Council meetings and legal or legislative debates were held at the principle village, and large caches of food, goods and treasures were maintained there. The settlements were variously occupied permanently or seasonally...[1974:15].

Through their pattern of “extraordinary localism” in mobility, whereby people in most tribelets did not travel more than 10 to 15 miles from their village community, California Indians marked cultural differences between people in different tribelet territories (Heizer and Elsasser 1980:203) and formed a sense of cohesion and belonging with members of their own tribelet (Kroeber 1962: 29). United by a territorial bond, people who lived in a particular tribelet formed a collective identity, or a shared sense of belonging to a particular homeland and people (Jones 1997:1).

While tribelet community was an important marker of group belonging, kinship was also important among California indigenous peoples. The Pomo elder, Tom Jimerson, informed anthropologists Burt and Ethel Aginsky (1967:18–19) of the strong identification he and his people had to their kin group. He said:

What is man? A man is nothing. Without his family he is of less importance than that bug crossing the trail, of less importance than spit or dung. At least they can be used to help poison a man. A man must be with his family to amount to anything with us. If he had nobody else to help him, the first trouble he got into he would be killed by his enemies because there would be no relatives to help him fight the poison of the other group. No woman would marry him because her family would not let her marry a man with no family.... Each person was nothing; but as a group, joined by blood, the individual knew that he would get the support of all his relatives if anything happened. He also knew that if he was a bad person the head man of his family would pay another tribe to kill him so that there would be no trouble.

In California communities where the lineage *was* the autonomous land-holding group, identity tied to place was also intimately tied to lineage and family. For example, among the Miwok there was little difference between social identity tied to community and social identity tied to lineage, as they lived in single-lineage communities (Gifford 1926). In fact, the Miwok term for lineage, *nena*, also means ancestral home; the lineage name is always a place name (1926:389).

The indigenous peoples who lived at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, however, likely lived in multilineage groups in precolonial times. Ethnographic research on other California multilineage groups, like the Cupeño, suggests that tribelet identity was distinct from lineage identity. Gifford (1926:394–395) described

the multilinear nature of two Cupeño communities, *Kupa* and *Walakal*, in southern California, and stated that *Kupa* was a political community composed of seven distinct lineages. Gifford argued that the seven lineages of *Kupa*, while all bound by territorial ties, “maintained their distinctness, each lineage having its own land upon which wild products were gathered, each having its patriarchal chief, and each keeping fresh the story of its origin” (Gifford 1926:394). This ethnographic evidence of California indigenous peoples possessing concurrent tribelet and lineage identities speaks to the multiscalar nature of social identity. California Indians who lived in multilinear tribelets likely possessed distinct identities tied to lineage and tribelet membership, possibly expressed situationally.

Not only was social identity in precolonial California multiscalar, it was fluid (Barth 1969; Bean 1974; Jones 1997; Milliken 1981). As Barth argues, “boundaries exist despite a flow of personnel across them...interaction and acceptance...are...the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built” (1969:10). People physically moved between tribelets and kin groups by marrying into neighboring groups and families. Prior to Spanish colonization, marriage was an honored institution in California that facilitated economic, social, and political alliances (Bean 1992; Gifford 1918, 1926; Johnson 1988; Kroeber 1962; Luomala 1963; Milliken 1981, 1983; Waterman and Kroeber 1965). Strict social rules governed the practice of marriage in precolonial times. For example, marriage to close kin was prohibited; marriage partners needed to be three to five generations removed, depending on their tribal affiliation (Bean 1992:319). Because of rules prohibiting marriage to close kin, people often sought marriage partners from neighboring villages within their own tribelet, or from a different tribelet that usually bordered their own (Gifford 1918, 1926; Johnson 1988; Kroeber 1962; Luomala 1963; Milliken 1981, 1983; Waterman and Kroeber 1965). For example, Waterman and Kroeber argued that “7 times out of 10, a Yurok married a woman living within perhaps 12 or 15 miles from his home” (1965:6). Among the Costanoan/Ohlone groups of the San Francisco Peninsula, Milliken has pointed out, the great majority of marriages (60–80%) occurred over distances no greater than 7.5 miles, and the maximum distance between marriage partners did not exceed 25 miles (1983:125, 130).

Cross-culturally, small tribal groups, like those of precolonial California, marry into closely neighboring communities (Adams and Kasakoff 1976; Barth 1969). This pattern is typical of what Wobst (1976) calls a “minimum equilibrium society.” Wobst (1976:50) argues that people must have access to a regional population of at least 475 people “to assure that any member, upon reaching maturity, will find a suitable mate.” Among the small tribelet communities of California, this meant that marriage partners were likely sought within a narrow radius (7.5 miles among Costanoan/Ohlone peninsula peoples) around a tribelet community, for approximately 500 people would have lived within such an area (Gifford 1926; Milliken 1983; Waterman and Kroeber 1965). Furthermore, California’s indigenous peoples likely did not search for marriage partners beyond a certain distance (25 miles in the case of Costanoan/Ohlone peninsula groups) from their highly localized tribelet communities (Gifford 1926; Milliken 1983; Waterman and Kroeber 1965). Importantly, population sizes varied among the different tribelets of precolonial California. Where population sizes were large enough, people may have found marriage partners in different villages within their own tribelet community, defining what Adams and Kasakoff (1976:144) call “80% groups,” in which 70–90% of marriages are endogamous (Milliken 1981).

Through intermarriage, distinct kin groups, villages, and tribelets were tied together “in a fabric of social and genetic relationships” (Milliken 1995:23). Communities were primarily connected patrilocally, as women usually married out into neighboring groups (Gifford 1916, 1918, 1926; Kroeber 1962; Luomala 1963; Waterman and Kroeber 1965). However, there was variability in this pattern in some groups; e.g., the Yurok, where women primarily lived in their husband’s home, although in some cases men would live with their wife’s family (Waterman and Kroeber 1965). Alternatively, some groups, like the Chumash, were primarily matrilocal, with patrilocality only practiced by chiefs (Johnson 1988). Despite variable patterns of postmarital residence, marriage between individuals from different communities established a life-long alliance with reciprocal exchanges of foodstuffs and trade goods from diverse ecological niches, and provided both groups with important military allies (Bean 1992; Johnson 1988; Milliken 1983).

Through such intermarriages between tribelet communities, many individuals likely had connections

to more than one tribelet. Depending on the particular pattern of postmarital residence, some men or women would have been born in a tribelet different from the one they lived in after marriage. Furthermore, many had relatives in tribelets other than the one in which they lived. Through generations of intermarriage, inhabitants of a certain community recognized aunts, uncles, cousins, and potential mates within a particular sphere of tribelet communities (Milliken 1983:130). Such relationships likely allowed privileges of visiting and harvesting resources across tribelet boundaries. For example, a Diegueño consultant of Katharine Luomala's boasted, "I have lots of relatives. I'm rich. I can go to fiestas all over, and it doesn't cost me a cent. I belong to *Neeix*, *Kwainiyit*, *Kwaxa*, *Saikul*, *Paipa*, *Waichen*, and more too" (1963:298). Consequently, California Indians transcended political tribelet boundaries; kinship networks integrated distinct political groups.

Family and community, lineage and tribelet, together formed the basis for cultural identity among California Indians. However, that identity was situational. Political connections to a particular tribelet may have been important in some instances involving conflict, while in others it may have been necessary to emphasize lineage identity and call upon family members one had in a different tribelet community. In this paper, it is my goal to investigate not just how the particular patterns of marriage between various tribelets changed once people moved to the mission communities, but I also want to emphasize how the indigenous foundations of marriage—and identity formation—were reproduced in the Spanish mission communities. I stress that—just as in precolonial times—indigenous peoples may have used marriage as a way to create networks between communities that they could then move between, depending upon the contexts of particular social situations. Such an establishment of new social networks and cultural identities does not necessarily imply a destruction of other kinds of social networks and identities. In earlier times, people did not lose connections to their natal groups once they married into a neighboring community, as those connections between groups were vital to the relationships created through such community ties (Luomala 1963:291–292). Instead, people living in California before Spanish colonization likely moved between identities tied to both their natal group and the place they lived with their spouse as the situation required.

A similar phenomenon may have been occurring in the Indian villages at the mission communities as people moved between ancestral connections to tribelets and new ties to the mission community.

## COLONIAL IDENTITIES

Indigenous peoples living in the California missions were called many things: e.g., *Indios*, neophytes, and *gente sin razón* ('people without reason') were all terms colonists supporting the Spanish Crown used to identify the native peoples. When asked about divisions or castes among the mission populations in the "*Preguntas y Respuestas*" (Questions and Replies), for example, the missionaries living in the California missions between 1813 and 1815 responded by differentiating soldiers and European priests from the "Indians" (Geiger and Meighan 1976:11–14). The priests at Mission San Antonio wrote:

The population of this mission is divided into three castes of peoples: (1) the two missionary fathers and the present corporal of the guard who are Europeans; (2) the soldiers of the guard with their families who are Spanish Americans; (3) full blooded Indian natives of the area of this mission [in Geiger and Meighan 1976:12].

*Indios* were characterized as a laboring, peasantry class of people, below the European missionaries and mixed-blood soldiers. When differentiating among the different castes of people living in Spanish California, from a colonist's perspective, indigenous peoples were grouped together into a homogenous whole, separated from soldiers and priests, and subject to the same laws and reduced rights of their particular social caste.

In addition to being labeled *Indios*, other historical identities were associated with indigenous peoples, such as *Juaneño* and *Luiseño*, which from a colonial perspective described "good Christians" living at particular missions. While each mission and its unique population should be considered individually, historical accounts, ethnographic data, and interpretations of the archaeological record generally suggest that not only did colonists mark Indians by their mission of residence, the indigenous peoples themselves may have also used such labels.

When referring to indigenous peoples who lived at or were from a particular mission, the Franciscan priests used names that defined them as such. For example, in

the death record of a young man named Jacinto, who was originally from the *Rumsen* village of *Socorronda*, the priest identified him as a *Carmeño* (California Missions Access Database: B-CA0240; D-CA0601).<sup>2</sup> In the baptismal record of María Juana Refugio (B-CR2634), the parents of this newborn were identified at *Migueño* (Father B-MI2688; Mother B-MI2312). These records illustrate that the priests often identified indigenous peoples by the mission at which they were baptized.

The interviews of Mission San Juan Bautista descendant Ascención Solórsano conducted during the 1920s by anthropologist J. P. Harrington also suggest that indigenous identities were constructed around mission communities. Ascención Solórsano, whose grandparents were born at Mission San Juan Bautista, stated that the ethnolinguistically diverse Indian community at Mission San Juan Bautista—Yokuts and Costanoan/Ohlone peoples of various tribelets and lineages were baptized at this mission—spoke a single indigenous language, “the Indian language of San Juan.” For example, Ascención said:

It did not seem like anything to us to hear Miguel and Barbara talk the language, that was just what both of them talked. But when other people came, then they no longer talked it, they talked Spanish, and very plain, they were not broken in speaking Spanish. So I got to hear the Indian language of San Juan all my life up to the time that my parents died, and talked sufficiently when I was a little girl [Harrington Notes, 2:058:263b:2:1–3].<sup>3</sup>

Ascención also suggested that there was a transformation of indigenous language from precolonial to colonial times. She stated:

In my time, the Indians had already abandoned all their customs, but it was fortunate that I was always with my mother and father and got to see something. The language indeed, we still retained, but surely it was richer long ago than the way my father and mother talked it, I know enough of it to suspect that [Harrington Notes, 2:058:332b:2:2–3].

Ascención also suggested that a different, singular language was spoken at the neighboring missions. Referring to the language spoken at Mission la Soledad, she said:

When my father and mother were living at Las Aromas and I was little, there came to see us old Coleta. She was a pure Indian woman of the Soledad mission, and lived in Soledad, or somewhere near there. She was rather slim than fat and already had gray hairs.

She talked the language of Soledad, which was very similar to the language of San Juan [Harrington Notes, 2:058:385a:2:1–4].

Ascención’s grandfather, Juan Miguel Solórsano (B-JB4205), was born and baptized at Mission San Juan Bautista in 1836. His father, Soloszum (B-JB0396), was from the Costanoan/Ohlone tribelet of *Ausaima*, and his mother, María (B-JB0268), was mission-born but descended from *Pagsin* and *Ensen* tribelet communities (California Missions Access Database). In 1830, Ascención’s grandmother, Barbara, was also born at Mission San Juan Bautista (B-JB3896). Barbara’s father, Chachiliter (B-JB1823), was from the Costanoan/Ohlone tribelet of *Orestac*, and her mother Sipuacsá (B-JB2766), was from the Yokuts tribelet of *Quithrathre*. That Ascención’s grandparents spoke both Spanish and “the Indian language of San Juan” speaks to their movement between two worlds, that of the colonizing communities and another of indigenous peoples. However, the point I would like to emphasize here is that Miguel and Barbara, two descendants of diverse Costanoan/Ohlone tribelet communities and a Yokuts tribelet, appear to have adopted a single native language for communication in the indigenous world at Mission San Juan Bautista. That language was likely somehow transformed from a precolonial indigenous language, but was distinct to Mission San Juan Bautista.

Historical and archaeological sources also illustrate arenas in which diverse indigenous peoples living in a particular mission created uniformity through sharing behaviors and experiences. Out of these shared daily practices, a shared social identity, tied to a particular mission, may have emerged (Bourdieu 1977). For example, Fernando Librado’s (1979:23, 25–33) account of life at Mission San Buenaventura highlights the ways various California Indian groups shared in dances, gambling, and meals in order to create important social communities within the missions. For example, Librado recalled how indigenous peoples working as masons and carpenters at Mission San Buenaventura would celebrate the completed construction of the mission church by dancing the Blackbird and Swordfish dances (1979:25). He said, “The words of the Blackbird Dance were a mixture of Santa Barbara and Ventura Chumash languages” (1979:25). Also, in describing the Coyote Song, Librado stated that the song “...had words in both

Santa Barbara and Ventura Chumash languages. *There was only one song*" (1979:31, emphasis added).

Some archaeologists, Lightfoot (2005) especially, argue that California Indians at each mission created a new colonial identity, one that expressed a shared sense of "Indianness," and that acted to make social connections between diverse but "tradition-minded neophytes" (Lightfoot 2005:96). Allen (1998:41, 97) believes that the similarity in material remains from two different neophyte dormitories at Mission Santa Cruz suggests that amalgamated groups of neophytes emerged out of pluralistic communities. She states:

Differences in the material assemblage of Ohlone and Northern Valley Yokuts are not discernable from one another in this archaeological context. Most material items recovered do not contain stylistic characteristics that would reflect a group's identity.... [R]ecovered artifacts must be viewed as representing the assemblage of an amalgamated group of Native American neophytes...[1998:41].

In addition, I have previously argued that unique technological styles with regard to local ceramic production within different missions may also suggest the creation of mission-centered social identities (Peelo [Ginn] 2009, 2011). The results of my detailed analysis of locally-made ceramics suggest that potters within mission communities shared a technological style in the construction of ceramic vessels. The technological style of ceramic production at each mission uniquely blended ceramic traditions of diverse colonial peoples and (sometimes) local indigenous container industries. For example, potters at Mission San Antonio de Padua selected the same local raw materials and fired their ceramics in open fires. I suggest that similarities in the technological style of Plainware production within mission communities illustrate how indigenous potters at each mission were participating in shared communities of ceramic practice. By participating in shared communities of practice concerning ceramic production, diverse indigenous potters were creating uniformity, and by doing so, a shared social identity, distinct to each mission community, may have emerged. My research also suggests that in addition to the creation of a shared communal identity, potters may have produced and reproduced other social identities that served to create arenas of division. For example, variability in primary forming techniques at Mission San Antonio de Padua may suggest that gender identities were created out of the

way some potters, possibly women, hand modeled vessels while others, possibly men, threw vessels on a wheel. Through ceramic production, potters at Mission San Antonio de Padua may on the one hand have fostered a sense of identification with the mission community, but on the other hand have created arenas for social distinctions within the indigenous population.

Some archaeologists argue that a mission-centered indigenous identity may have existed alongside other colonially-ascribed identities (e.g., an *Indio* identity) that were expressed contextually (Allen 1998; Lightfoot 2005; Skowronek 1998). These scholars suggest that in the mission plazas and fields, while they were under the watchful eyes of the priests and soldiers, indigenous peoples presented a colonial *Indio* identity; they acted in ways that were appropriate from a colonial perspective. They attended Catholic services, sang and prayed the Spanish songs and prayers they were taught, worked in the fields using metal tools, wore the appropriate clothing, and acted like Spanish peasants. However, archaeological evidence also suggests that in the privacy of their own homes, the pluralistic native community created a shared social identity that combined elements from their different cultures. The domestic identity was distinctly indigenous; people cooked and ate wild foods in their houses with their families, manufactured stone tools and shell beads, and danced in the Indian village (Librado 1979). These at-home practices did not go unnoticed by the padres:

The neophytes in their houses have plenty of fresh and dried meat. In addition in their homes they have quantities of acorns, *chia* and other seeds, fruits, edible plants and other nutritious plants which they do not forget and of which they are very fond. They also eat fish, mussels, ducks, wild geese, cranes, quail, hares, squirrels, rats, and other animals which exist in abundance [padres at Mission San Buenaventura; in Geiger and Meighan 1976:86].

Identity within the mission communities may have been multilayered. In the open, public spaces, indigenous peoples may have embodied the colonial identity of *Indio*. However, in the secluded, private spaces, diverse indigenous peoples may have created a separate, colonial identity that was centered on their particular mission community but that was distinctly indigenous.

Other kinds of multiscale identities may have been produced and reproduced in the mission communities.

Father Serra told a story of an occasion in 1774 when Mission San Carlos Indians and non-mission indigenous peoples of the Monterey Bay area joined together on the beaches to catch and eat schools of sardines. He wrote:

The said reaping began July 18 and had to be continued until August 12, because as soon as it began, great schools of sardines appeared near the beach, close to the mission. So the arrangement was that, until noontime we harvested wheat, and in the afternoon caught sardines. This lasted twenty days without a break.... After two weeks of fish eating, on the Sunday following, leaving the sardines in peace, they went hunting for the nests of sea birds that live in the rocks and feed on fish. They caught a lot of young birds which were, generally speaking, as big as a good-sized chicken. And so they passed Sunday camping on the Carmel beach, *divided into countless groups, each with its fire, roasting and eating what they had caught....* The harvesting of the wheat, thus interrupted by the fishing lasted twenty-five days [Tibesar 1955:145, emphasis added].

This story illustrates the reproduction of precolonial indigenous multiscalar social identities, and paints a picture of people enacting those identities through daily practice. In a time of plenty, during a sardine run, people from the mission and from various local villages, as well as individuals of both genders and from different social standings in the Monterey Bay area came together to share in the harvest, just as they would have prior to Spanish colonization. They worked together on the beach to catch and process fish and birds. While doing so, they may have made friends, and possibly even met a potential husband or wife. At one level, they may have seen themselves as a community, working toward the same goal. However, at another level, they may have viewed themselves as members of smaller-scale communities. They were also connected to villages, families, or other social groups, many of which were present in that gathering on Carmel Beach. Those connections to multiple social communities may have been enacted through the campfire ritual of roasting and eating the catch that Father Serra described. He stated that the large Indian community present subdivided into “countless groups” that gathered around individual campfires to prepare and consume their meals. Furthermore, some of those indigenous peoples did not spend their whole day on that beach. Serra stated that those associated with the mission community spent their mornings engaging in another subsistence practice,

the harvesting of wheat. By participating in that shared activity, another layer of indigenous social identity, a mission Indian identity, may have been created.

There is also evidence to suggest that local tribelet identities were recreated within the pluralistic mission communities. For example, while visiting Mission San Jose in 1806, Russian diarist George von Langsdorff observed:

The dancers assembled towards noon in the large court of the mission; they were divided into companies; some were distinguished above the rest by particular ornaments and by a particular kind of song which they sang. One of these divisions consisted of the inhabitants of the coast, the other were people from the more inland tribes... [von Langsdorff 1814:195].

Other explorers also wrote about or depicted ways in which tribal groups within missions may have used material culture or body art to indicate tribal affiliation. For example, the women of missions San Buenaventura and Santa Inés may have used beads in combination with crosses, amulets, or talisman as ethnic markings (Hudson and Blackburn 1985:297). At Mission Dolores, the diverse tattoo designs on the dancers depicted in Choris’ 1816 sketch may be possible identity markings (Fig. 2).

Hackel (1997:374) has argued that indigenous peoples, or at least those in positions of power within the missions, “continued to derive their identities from their places of origin decades after their ancestral villages were incorporated in the mission.” He believes that indigenous peoples found it important to maintain tribal identities within the mission communities because Indian officials such as governors, *alcaldes*, and translators were supposed to be drawn from the largest groups within the mission and alternate on an annual basis. In fact, when an alternation between dominant tribal groups failed to occur, local peoples complained. Hackel (1997) cites a letter to Antonio Buelna, magistrate at the Monterey Presidio, and written by Indians from Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, that discusses the lineage of Domicio, a newly appointed Indian official. The letter states that the recent officials had all been related to Domicio, and were all “one people.” The Indians ask for greater diversity among Indian officials, arguing that “it be made a condition that each direction or tribe will elect only one [official]” (Hackel 1997:374).<sup>4</sup> It may have been important for some indigenous peoples to maintain an association with their ancestral tribelets for political purposes.



**Figure 2.** Diverse tattoo designs evident on the dancers at Mission Dolores, from a sketch drawn in 1816 by Choris (courtesy of the Bancroft Library).

However, it is important to acknowledge that tribelets may have been reproduced in alternative forms in the mission communities. The following report, while written from a colonial perspective, provides some insight into the reproduction of tribelet identities at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel:

There are many Gentiles in the vicinity, although they are somewhat far away these days and their number is still unknown. This mission does not recognize any Nation within its borders or peoples that can rightfully bear that name. All the neophytes of this mission lived (as the Gentiles now do) in a large number of Rancherías usually containing a small number of people with a Captain they choose and remove at will and is a Captain little more than in name only. Nonetheless, these days, to facilitate and make more expedient the government of the mission they are considered as two Nations: the Rancherías of Eslenajan and Rumsen. These two Rancherías have a different first [native] language and both include several Rancherías which speak these languages or which are essentially the same. For this reason all the gentiles that come to be baptized, even though they might be from a different Rancherías, are placed in

one of these two [groups], according to their respective language and the mission is thus divided into two languages with very small difference (Report of this Mission of San Carlos regarding its situation as of the last day of December, 1789).<sup>5</sup>

As I will describe in detail later in this paper, people from many different tribelets lived in the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. The report just quoted suggests that the many individuals who were not from the *Rumsen* or *Eslenajan* tribelets were grouped into one of these tribelet categories anyway, in order to "facilitate and make more expedient the government of the mission." If one happened to have ancestral ties to one of these groups in the mission community, the reproduction of one's social identity may have been politically important. If, however, someone was from a tribelet not necessarily recognized by the Franciscans, connections to one's tribelet may not have had much social or political weight at the mission. Furthermore, someone might reproduce his or her tribelet identity by forming connections with one of the dominant groups at

the mission. Historical circumstances such as these may have conditioned which particular tribelet identities were reproduced at each mission.

The few historic accounts written by indigenous peoples also inform our understanding of identity construction in the mission communities. For example, in 1835 a 14-year-old neophyte from Mission San Luis Rey, Pablo Tac, wrote about mission life from his indigenous perspective. Tac described the Christian population at his mission alternately as *Indio*, *Luiseño*, and *Quech-najuichom*, the territorial community located at the site of the mission (Haas 2011). While Tac was born in the mission community in 1822, twenty-four years after it had been established, his direct ancestors had lived in the village community where the mission was built. Haas argues that the native peoples of this mission felt the need to move between the realities established by the Spanish and the group identities that were simultaneously alive within the indigenous community.

An *Indio* social identity was given to California's indigenous peoples by the Spanish colonists to distinguish them as a distinct caste, relative to other groups within the Spanish colonial system. Different indigenous peoples may have identified themselves as *Indio*, on a situational basis. They also may have identified themselves according to their mission of residence; for example, they may have identified themselves as *Carmeños* if they lived at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. Mission-centered social identities may have been important in building economic, social, and political connections between people of diverse cultural groups that were now living together in mission communities. In addition, some may have claimed precolonial tribelet identities to distinguish themselves from other indigenous peoples living in their mission community for political or other reasons. These interpretations about identity construction in the California missions are based on the amalgamation of historical and archaeological evidence from many different missions. It is important to remember that the missions were not all carbon copies of one another. Each mission had a distinct, pluralistic indigenous population and many other historical circumstances uniquely associated with it. Therefore, it is important to investigate identity construction at each mission individually, through multiple lines of evidence, taking such idiosyncrasies into account. The study of marriage patterns presented in this paper contributes

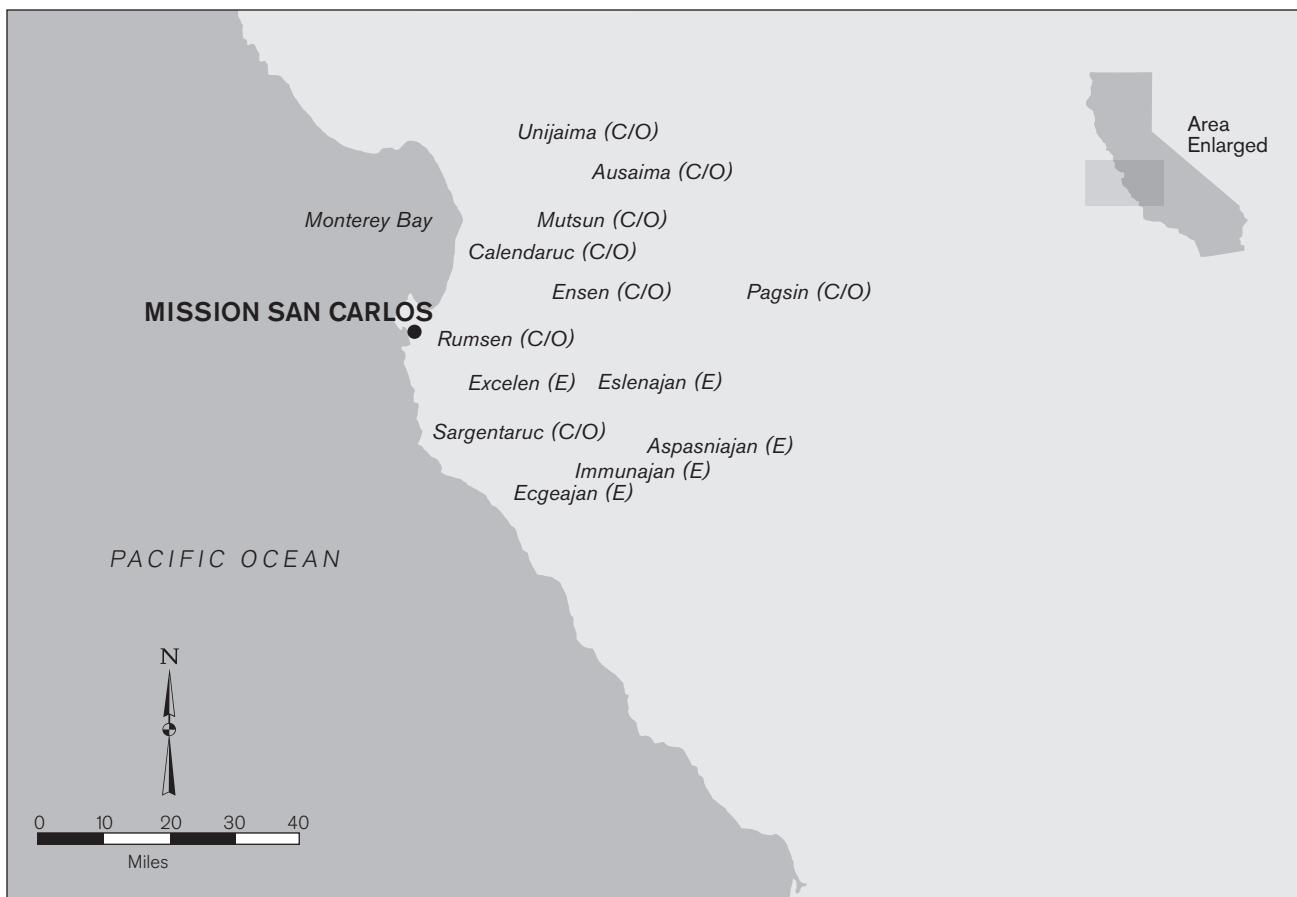
to this discussion by emphasizing how marriage may have been used to create identity, or at least an aspect of situationally expressed identity, within the mission community at San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel.

## MARRIAGE AT MISSION SAN CARLOS BORROMEO DEL RÍO CARMEL

Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, more commonly known as Mission Carmel, was founded in 1770 by Father Junipero Serra, the father president of the Spanish mission system in Alta California (Fig. 3). Located just south of Monterey, the administrative center of Spanish California and often serving as the residence of Father Serra, the history of this particular mission and its people has long interested scholars (i.e., Breschini 1972; Breschini and Haversat 1994, 2004; Broadbent 1972; Cook 1974a, 1974b; Culleton 1950; Englehardt 1934; Hackel 2005; Milliken 1981, 1987).

Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel was the home to a diverse group of California Indians from various multilineage tribelets (Milliken 1987:44) who spoke different languages and had diverse cultural practices. The majority of the population at this mission was directly from or descended from different villages of the *Rumsen* tribelet, a tribelet of the anthropologically-defined Costanoan/Ohlone ethnolinguistic group (Fig. 4; California Missions Access Database). People from other Costanoan/Ohlone tribelets were also baptized at this mission, including such groups as the *Sargentaruc*, *Ensen*, *Mutsun*, *Ausaima*, *Calendaruc*, *Pagsin*, and *Unijaima* tribelets. In addition, many others were from various villages of the *Aspaniajan*, *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Excelen*, and *Ymmunajan* tribelets of the Esselen ethnolinguistic group. The rate of movement of people from their local tribelets to the mission community was variable by tribelet and through time. Thus, the precise pluralistic composition of the mission community varied historically.

Many historical factors may have affected the rate of change in marriage patterns among indigenous peoples at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. The specific demographic composition of the mission community is the particular factor against which I will examine changes in marriage patterns for this particular paper. I present data illustrating marriage patterns at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during



**Figure 3. The approximate locations of Costanoan/Ohlone (C/O) and Esselen (E) tribelets most frequently represented in the mission registers at Mission San Carlos (adapted from Milliken et al. 2009).**

three periods of time, marked by historical changes and specific demographic profiles: (1) 1770–1779, the first decade after the establishment of Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, during which the population was composed mostly of *Rumsen* peoples from diverse villages; (2) 1780–1808, the period of time at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during which a population of individuals from diverse tribal homelands, both close to and distant from the mission, lived in the Indian village; and (3) 1809–1834, the final years of the mission prior to secularization, when indigenous peoples no longer moved to the mission from their homelands, but were born there.

#### *A Rumsen Mission, 1770–1779*

During the first decade of the mission's existence, people of the *Rumsen* tribelet made up the majority of the Indian population (Fig. 5). Between 1770 and 1779, 507 *Rumsen* peoples were baptized at this mission,

making up nearly 90% of the population for this decade. The *Rumsen* tribelet was the sociopolitical group that controlled the Monterey Peninsula at the time of Spanish colonization (Fig. 4). The people from five villages (*Achasta*, *Ichxenta*, *Tucutnut*, *Socorronda*, and *Echilat*) comprised this multivillage group, under the leadership of Captain Tathlun (B-CA0358; Milliken 1987:45; California Missions Access Database). Small numbers of people from other neighboring tribelets were also baptized at this mission between 1770 and 1779, including individuals from *Excelen*, *Ensen*, *Sargentaruc*, and *Eslenajan*.

While the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during this first decade was composed mostly of people from the *Rumsen* tribelet, there was still heterogeneity within the group. As Table 1 illustrates, the mission community was composed of people who came from the five distinct villages within *Rumsen* territory at various times and rates during this period. For example, people from the village community

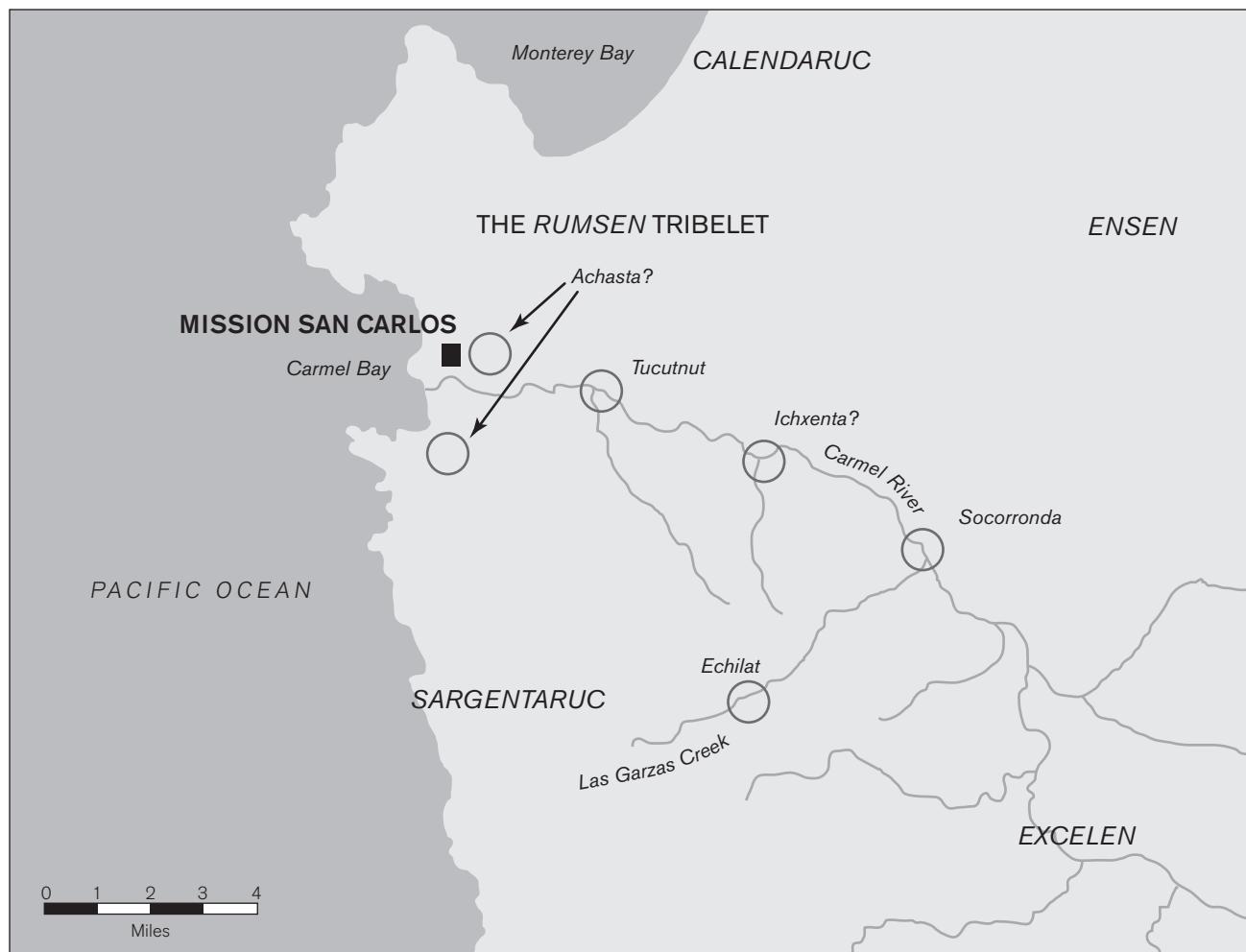


Figure 4. Map of Rumsen tribelet territory (after Milliken 1987:53).

nearest to the mission, *Achasta*, were the first to be baptized here beginning in 1770, but individuals from *Echilat*, the Rumsen village located farthest away from this mission and tucked away in the Santa Lucia Mountains, were not baptized here until about five years later. While possibly under the leadership of one captain, *Tathlun*, Rumsen people may have made the decision to join the mission with other members of their respective village community. During this early decade, the mission was a heterogeneous community of people from different Rumsen villages.

Information about particular precolonial marriage patterns among the *Rumsen*, *Excelen*, *Ensen*, *Sargentaruc* and *Eslenajan* can be extracted from the mission marriage registers, but such data have their biases and problems. Missionaries recorded a marriage as “renewed” when two indigenous people came to a mission to be baptized,

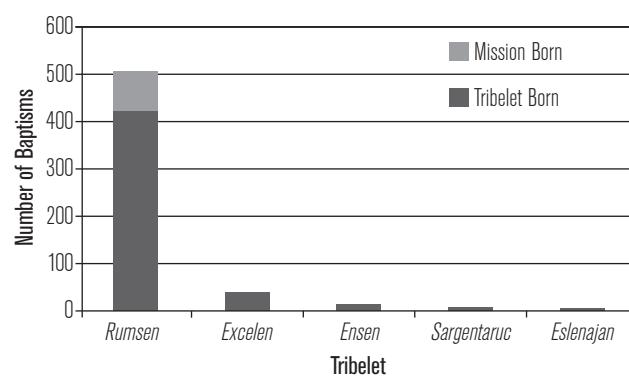


Figure 5. Number of baptisms at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel between 1770 and 1779, divided by tribelet. For mission-born individuals, ties to a particular tribelet were traced through the paternal lineage. Two individuals baptized between 1770 and 1779 were left out of this figure because of their low representation: B-CA0023, origin *Lamaca* (Salinan); and B-CA0575, origin unknown (California Missions Access Database).

Table 1

**NUMBER OF BAPTISMS FROM DIFFERENT *RUMSEN* VILLAGES AT MISSION SAN CARLOS BORROMEO DEL RÍO CARMEL  
BETWEEN 1770 AND 1779, ORGANIZED BY YEAR (CALIFORNIA MISSIONS ACCESS DATABASE).**

<i>Rumsen</i> Village Origin	1770	1771	1772	1773	1774	1775	1776	1777	1778	1779
<i>Achasta</i>	3	14	3	49	5	3	3	0	2	0
<i>Echilat</i>	0	0	0	2	25	34	4	12	8	0
<i>Ichxenta</i>	0	4	0	1	4	19	2	7	3	0
<i>Socorronda</i>	0	0	1	0	28	17	10	8	2	0
<i>Tucutnut</i>	0	1	3	77	33	16	12	4	0	0
Mission Born, <i>Achasta</i> <sup>a</sup>	0	0	0	1	3	2	6	4	4	10
Mission Born, <i>Echilat</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	4	4	7
Mission Born, <i>Ichxenta</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	3
Mission Born, <i>Socorronda</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1
Mission Born, <i>Tucutnut</i>	0	0	0	2	0	5	1	4	6	3
<i>Rumsen</i> , Village Unknown	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

<sup>a</sup>I traced the ancestral village of the mission born population through the paternal lineage.

Table 2

**RENEWED *RUMSEN* MARRIAGES AT MISSION SAN CARLOS BORROMEO DEL RÍO CARMEL INDICATING THE ORIGIN—*RUMSEN* VILLAGE OR OTHER TRIBELET—OF THE WIFE AND OF THE HUSBAND. THIS TABLE SPECIFICALLY LOOKS AT RENEWED MARRIAGES AMONG THOSE TRIBELET GROUPS BAPTIZED AT THIS MISSION BETWEEN 1770 AND 1779, I.E., *RUMSEN*, *ENSEN*, *ESLENAJAN*, *EXCELEN*, AND *SARGENTARUC* (CALIFORNIA MISSIONS ACCESS DATABASE).**

Origin of Husband	Origin of Wife								
	<i>Achasta</i> (R) <sup>a</sup>	<i>Echilat</i> (R)	<i>Ensen</i>	<i>Eslenajan</i>	<i>Exelen</i>	<i>Ichxenta</i> (R)	<i>Sargentaruc</i>	<i>Socorronda</i> (R)	<i>Tucutnut</i> (R)
<i>Achasta</i> (R)	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Echilat</i> (R)	1	17	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<i>Ensen</i>	1	0	30	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Eslenajan</i>	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
<i>Exelen</i>	0	0	1	1	20	0	0	1	0
<i>Ichxenta</i> (R)	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	1
<i>Sargentaruc</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0
<i>Socorronda</i> (R)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
<i>Tucutnut</i> (R)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	16

<sup>a</sup>All place names with an "(R)" indicate that they are villages within the *Rumsen* tribelet.

but were already married. However, the recorded place of origin of individuals in these renewed marriages does not always indicate the individual's place of birth. It may, alternatively, have been the place where they lived right before joining the mission community (see Johnson 1988; Milliken 1983). At best, we can illustrate qualitatively the tendencies of the data toward endogamy or exogamy based on the renewed marriages recorded in the mission registries.

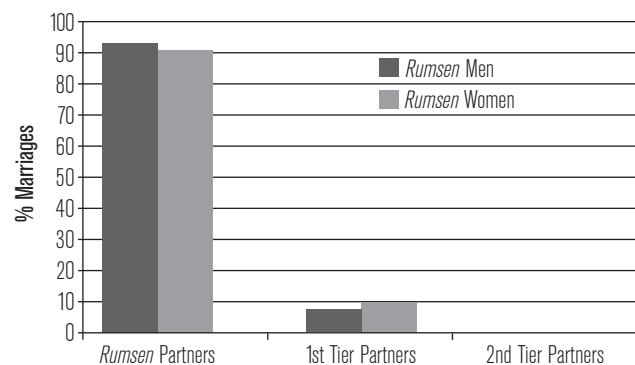
Based on the renewed marriages, it appears that the *Rumsen* were generally, but not strictly, endogamous; i.e.,

people married within the *Rumsen* tribelet (Table 2). For example, people from the *Achasta* ranchería generally had marriage partners who were listed as also being from *Achasta*, or other *Rumsen* rancherías such as *Socorronda*, *Tucutnut*, and *Echilat*. In the renewed marriages where both partners were listed as being from *Achasta*, this ranchería may not necessarily have been the place of birth for both partners, but rather the place of most recent residence. In a qualitative sense, most *Rumsen* peoples married other *Rumsen*, probably from different villages, thus practicing tribelet endogamy.

However, there were a few examples of exogamous marriage among the *Rumsen*. The renewed marriage patterns indicate that marriage occurred between a small percentage of individuals across the *Rumsen-Ensen*, *Excelen*, *Eslenajan*, and *Sargentaruc* tribal boundaries. The renewed marriage patterns, as recorded by the Franciscans, suggest that *Rumsen* peoples generally found marriage partners within their own tribelet prior to Spanish colonization while a small percentage found partners within the tribelet communities directly surrounding their own.

The *Rumsen* pattern of predominant but not exclusive endogamy seems to hold up among the other groups living at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during this first decade; i.e., the *Ensen*, *Eslenajan*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc* (Table 2). First, it must be noted that the priests at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel often failed to record the village name for individuals who were not local—i.e., not *Rumsen*. While it is possible to note intermarriages between *Rumsen* villages, the data do not allow such interpretations in the case, for example, of the *Ensen*. Nonetheless, among *Ensen* peoples, the renewed marriage data suggest that most married other *Ensen*. A small percentage of *Ensen* individuals married across tribelet boundaries, finding partners within neighboring groups such as the *Rumsen*, *Sargentaruc*, and *Excelen* communities. Similarly, *Excelen* peoples generally married other *Excelen* peoples, probably from different village communities (as noted above for the *Rumsen*), but a small minority married across tribal boundaries (in this case, *Ensen*, *Eslenajan*, and *Rumsen*). The few documented inter-tribelet intermarriages suggest that interaction between *Rumsen* peoples and their immediate neighbors was not a practice initiated by missionization.

While the people from the different tribelets in and surrounding the Monterey Bay region had a history of interaction, they had never before lived together in a single ranchería, located in a Spanish mission community. This new living situation may have created an opportunity for an increase in the rate of marriage across precolonial tribelet boundaries, thus strengthening bonds between communities and families. Alternatively, this new proximity may have created an arena in which people chose to more strictly reproduce precolonial tribelet identities and reduce movement and fluidity



**Figure 6. Marriage partners among *Rumsen* men and *Rumsen* women between 1770 and 1779.** First-tier groups are those groups that directly neighbor the *Rumsen*, and between 1770 and 1779 included the *Ensen*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc*. Second-tier groups are those groups separated from the *Rumsen* by at least one other tribelet; no such marriages took place between 1770 and 1779. (NISP: *Rumsen* men/*Rumsen* women = 63; *Rumsen* men/first-tier women = 4; *Rumsen* men/second-tier women = 0; TOTAL NISP = 67. NISP: *Rumsen* women/*Rumsen* men = 63; *Rumsen* women/first-tier men = 6; *Rumsen* women/second-tier men = 0; TOTAL NISP = 69).

between groups. It is also possible that people continued practicing traditional marriage practices, and generally married those from their own tribelet community but occasionally intermarried with individuals from other groups.

#### Solteros y Viudos, 1770–1779

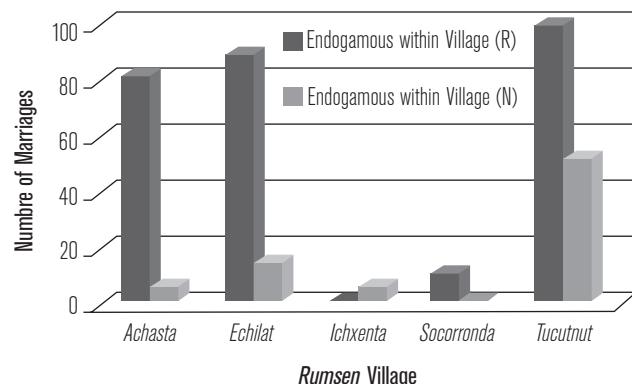
During the first decade of *soltero* (single) and *viudo* (widow) marriages at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, the data suggest that the predominantly *Rumsen* indigenous population continued to marry within the *Rumsen* tribelet (Fig. 6). The data also suggest that there was more intermarriage between *Rumsen* villages than occurred in renewed *Rumsen* marriages. In addition, intermarriage did occur between the *Rumsen* and people from neighboring tribelets living at the mission during this time. However, this was not necessarily a new social practice; it occurred at similar rates prior to missionization.

As in precolonial times, the *Rumsen* living at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel between 1770 and 1779 were largely endogamous, marrying within the *Rumsen* tribelet (Fig. 6). For example, 89% of the men and 100% of the women from the *Achasta* village married other *Rumsen* peoples. The pattern is similar among the

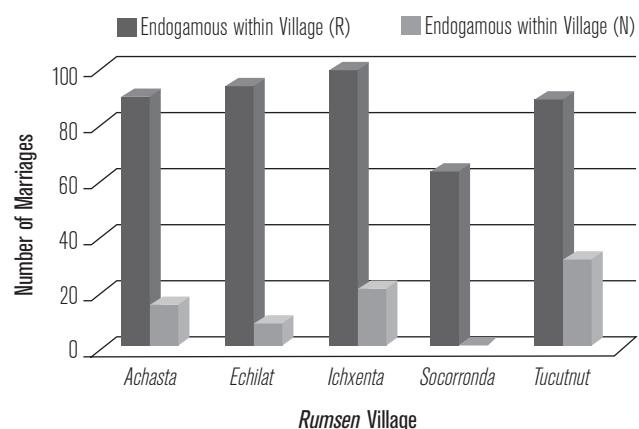
*Echilat*, where 100% of the men and 92% of the women married within the *Rumsen* tribelet. In fact, this pattern holds true for each of the *Rumsen* rancherías examined. The reason for this pattern of endogamy may be explained by the particular demographics of the mission between 1770 and 1779. As shown above, the mission population was predominantly *Rumsen* during this first decade; thus there was a plethora of eligible *Rumsen* marriage partners living together in the Indian village.

It is important, however, to note that the population at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during this period was not necessarily homogeneous. When village endogamy in the renewed *Rumsen* marriages (R) is compared to village endogamy in the new *Rumsen* marriages (N) between 1770 and 1779, there are some significant differences (Figs. 7, 8). The data suggest that there was a drastic reduction in the percentage of village endogamy after missionization. I suggest two possible interpretations of these data. First, the data may reflect problems in the mission records rather than real changes in marriage patterns. As previously mentioned, when documenting a renewed marriage, the priest may have recorded the individual's current place of residence rather than their place of birth. Intermarriages between village communities may have been much more common prior to Spanish colonization than is actually suggested by the records on renewed marriages. Thus, the village exogamy among the *Rumsen* illustrated by the data between 1770 and 1779 may have closely resembled the actual marriage pattern before missionization. An alternative explanation is that village exogamy did increase with the movement of individuals into the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. As *Rumsen* peoples moved from their respective villages located throughout the Carmel Valley (Fig. 4) and into a single community at the mission, they may have married across traditional village boundaries at an increased rate.

Some of the *solteros y viudos* from neighboring tribelets were also married in the mission during this early decade. For example, Cayetano Antonio (B-CA0102), a man from the *Rumsen* village of *Achasta*, married Chauac (B-CA0468) from *Ensen*, the neighboring tribelet to the east (M-CA0110). Men from *Achasta* and *Socorronda* married women from the *Excelen* tribelet (M-CA0107 and CA0132). In addition, Estevan José (B-CA0116) from *Tucutnut* married the *Sargentaruc* woman María



**Figure 7.** Number of marriages among *Rumsen* men who married women from their own village, comparing renewed marriages (R) and new marriages (N) between 1770 and 1779.

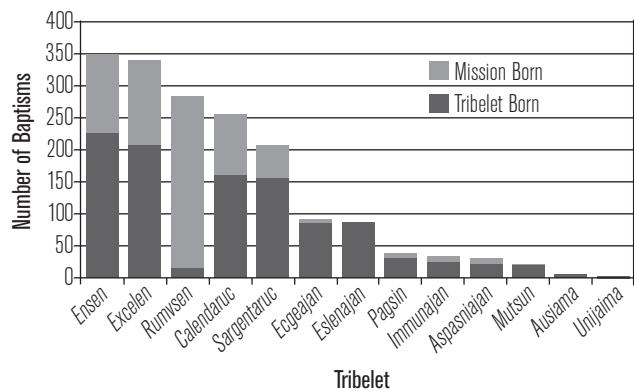


**Figure 8.** Number of marriages among *Rumsen* women who married men from their own village, comparing renewed marriages (R) and new marriages (N) between 1770 and 1779.

Josefa Assumpción (B-CA0416; M-CA0088). These few individual marriages across tribelet boundaries were in the minority when compared to the many *Rumsen-Rumsen* marriages that occurred during this period. In addition, marriages across these same tribelet boundaries did occur at a similar rate prior to Spanish colonization, as suggested by the renewed marriage patterns (Table 2).

#### *A Pluralistic Community, 1780–1808*

The 1780s mark the beginning of an extensive Franciscan outreach to tribelet communities neighboring Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel (Fig. 9). This outreach to tribelets other than the *Rumsen* continued until 1808. A few individuals from some *Rumsen* neighbors, such as the *Excelen* and *Sargentaruc*, were baptized at Mission



**Figure 9. Number of baptisms at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel between 1780 and 1808, divided by tribelet. For mission-born individuals, ties to a particular tribelet were traced through the paternal lineage. Nine individuals of unknown origin, four individuals from tribelets represented by a low frequency—B-CA2475, origin *Chojualae* (Chumash); B-CA1689, origin *Guemelento* (Costanoan/Ohlon); B-CA1863, origin *Noptac* (Costanoan/Ohlon); B-CA2116, origin *Matlan* (Costanoan/Ohlon)—and one individual (B-CA1681) who is listed as being from *Ecgeajan*/Sargentaruc are excluded from this figure (California Missions Access Database).**

San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel before the 1780s, as discussed above. However, after this time hundreds of people came to the mission from those tribelet communities. In addition, people from other neighboring (first-tier) communities, such as the *Calendaruc*, began to migrate to this mission for the first time. Tribelets to the north, south, and east of the *Rumsen*—the Pacific ocean lay to the west—were distinct sociopolitical entities that were organized much like the *Rumsen*. Their independence is notable in the documentary record. For example, Fages (1937:64–65) suggested that the *Rumsen* peoples encountered resistance when they traveled into the “Sierra de Santa Lucia” (*Excelen* territory) or to “the beach above Monterey” (*Calendaruc* territory) “to search for acorns.” As Kroeber argued (1962:33, 37, 49), each of these tribelet communities was an autonomous, self-governing, and independent land-owning unit that defended its territory. The first-tier tribelets that directly bordered the *Rumsen* and were represented by the most individuals at the mission during this time period were the *Ensen*, *Excelen*, *Calendaruc*, and *Sargentaruc*. Other tribelet communities at the mission between 1780 and 1808, though represented by fewer numbers, included the *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Pagsin*, *Immunajan*, *Aspaniajan*,

*Mutsun*, *Ausaima*, and *Unijaima* (Fig. 9). I refer to these tribelets as second-tier communities because they were located close to *Rumsen* territory, but they did not share borders with it. It was necessary to pass through at least one tribelet territory in order to reach *Rumsen* territory and Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel (Fig. 3).

The large movement of people from neighboring, or first-tier tribelets and second-tier tribelets to the Carmel Valley between 1780 and 1808 created an Indian village community that was drastically different from those in precolonial times. In addition, whereas the Indian village was occupied mostly by *Rumsen* peoples during the first decade of the mission’s existence, it was now a very diverse community composed of people who spoke different languages and dialects, and were from assorted tribelets and various villages within each of those tribelets. Prior to missionization, there was some fluidity across a few of these tribelet boundaries, but other communities had very little interaction with one another before living side by side in the Indian village.

An analysis of renewed marriage patterns among the groups living at the mission during this time illustrates this point (Table 3). People from neighboring tribelets such as the *Excelen*, *Sargentaruc*, *Ensen*, and *Eslenajan* had intermarried with *Rumsen* peoples prior to Spanish colonization. However, there are no examples of renewed marriages at this mission between *Rumsen* peoples and those from *Calendaruc* or any of the other second-tier communities mentioned above. The communities that neighbored the *Rumsen*, or were located one or more tribelets away, were—like the *Rumsen*—generally endogamous with some examples of exogamy involving their immediate neighbors. An analysis of intermarriages that occurred between these diverse tribelet communities between 1780 and 1808, along either traditional or non-traditional lines, tests whether California Indians continued to maintain distinct tribelet social boundaries (through endogamy), or superseded tribelet boundaries in this pluralistic Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel (through higher degrees of exogamy and new exogamous patterns).

#### Solteros y Viudos, 1780–1808

The *soltero y viudo* marriage patterns indicate that many indigenous peoples living in the Indian village

Table 3

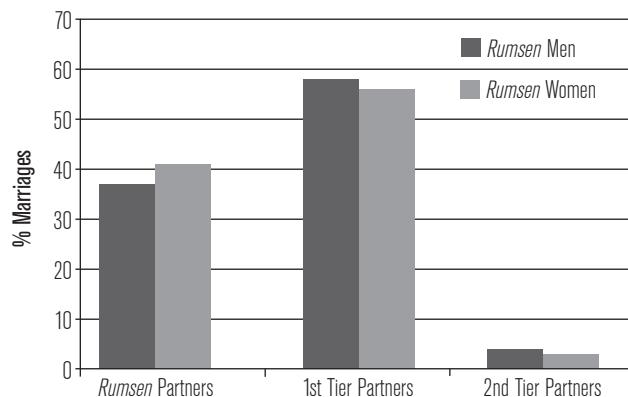
RENEWED MARRIAGES AT MISSION SAN CARLOS BORROMEO DEL RÍO CARMEL INDICATING THE TRIBELET ORIGIN OF THE WIFE AND OF THE HUSBAND. THIS TABLE SPECIFICALLY LOOKS AT RENEWED MARRIAGES AMONG THOSE TRIBELET GROUPS BAPTIZED AT THIS MISSION BETWEEN 1780 AND 1808 (CALIFORNIA MISSIONS ACCESS DATABASE).

Origin of Husband	Origin of Wife									
	Calendaruc	Ecgeajan	Ensen	Eslenajan	Excelen	Immunajan	Pagsin	Rumsen	Sargentaruc	
Calendaruc	23	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ecgeajan	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	
Ensen	0	1	30	0	0	0	0	1	1	
Eslenajan	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	0	
Excelen	0	0	1	1	20	0	0	1	0	
Immunajan	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	
Mutsun	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Pagsin	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	
Rumsen	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	59	1	
Sargentaruc	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	

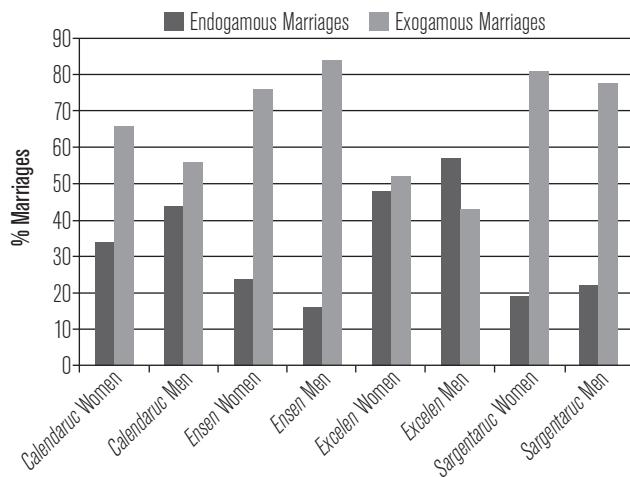
at this time were marrying across ethnolinguistic and tribelet boundaries (Fig. 10). However, endogamous patterns were maintained by a significant portion of the population. Another important pattern during this period is illustrated by the fact that people began to marry outside of a traditional marriage sphere. Between 1780 and 1808, a small percentage of Indians at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel married indigenous peoples from tribelet communities that did not traditionally neighbor their own—i.e., second-tier tribelets.

A major observable difference between this period (1780–1808) and the one preceding it (1770–1779) is the large number of marriages that occurred between people from different tribelets (cf. Figs. 6 and 10). While intertribal marriage was a practice that occurred in precolonial times and between 1770 and 1779, it was considerably less frequent than during this later historic period. For example, between 1780 and 1806, 58% of *Rumsen* men and 56% of *Rumsen* women married people from neighboring, first-tier, tribelets such as the *Calendaruc* and *Ensen*. As the mission community became more pluralistic, intermarriages between different tribelet communities increased in number.

Despite the dramatic increase in inter-tribelet marriages, many did maintain the endogamous intra-tribelet marriage patterns observed in precolonial times and in the first decade following missionization (1770–1779). For example, 37% of *Rumsen* men and 41% of *Rumsen* women continued to choose marriage



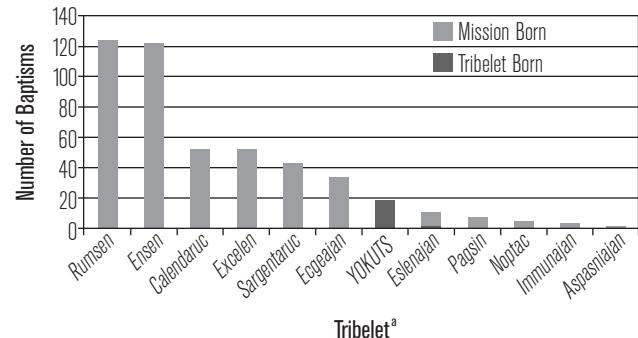
**Figure 10. Marriage partners among *Rumsen* men and women, 1780–1808.** First-tier groups are those groups that neighbor the *Rumsen*. Between 1780 and 1808 *Rumsen* men married women from the first-tier groups of *Calendaruc*, *Ensen*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc*. During this same period, *Rumsen* women married men from the first-tier groups of *Calendaruc*, *Ensen*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc*. Second-tier groups are those groups separated from the *Rumsen* by at least one other tribelet. Between 1780 and 1808 *Rumsen* men married women from the second-tier groups of *Aspasnajan*, *Ausaima*, *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Immunajan*, *Pagsin*, *San Francisco*, and *Unijaima*. During this same period, *Rumsen* women married men from the second-tier groups of *Aspasnajan*, *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Immunajan*, *Mutsun*, and *Pagsin*. (NISP: *Rumsen* men/*Rumsen* women = 51; *Rumsen* men/first-tier women = 80; *Rumsen* men/second-tier women = 6; TOTAL NISP = 137. NISP *Rumsen* women/*Rumen* men = 51; *Rumsen* women/first-tier men = 69; *Rumsen* women/second-tier men = 4; TOTAL NISP = 124).



**Figure 11. Exogamous and endogamous marriages (1780–1808) among the tribelet communities that directly surrounded Mission San Carlos and the *Rumsen* tribelet. (NISP: *Calendaruc* women = 56, men = 43; *Ensen* women = 45, men = 68; *Excelen* women = 80, men = 67; *Sargentaruc* women = 42, men = 37).**

partners with ancestral ties to *Rumsen* villages (Fig. 10). This pattern generally held true for other tribelet communities living at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel during this time (Fig. 11). Among the neighboring Costanoan/Ohlone tribelets, 19–44% of the marriages were endogamous. In the neighboring *Esselen* tribelet, the *Excelen*, the percentages of endogamous marriages were slightly higher than the norm, 48% for women and 57% for men.

Finally, some of the marriages during this time period involved individuals from tribelet communities that did not traditionally intermarry, based on the renewed marriage patterns. A small percentage of people in the community married others who were originally from tribelet communities (second-tier) located at some distance from the mission. For example, in 1792 Etlosh (B-CA0677) from the *Rumsen* village of *Achasta* married Catpash (B-CA1775), a man from the *Mutsun* tribelet (M-CA0456). In 1795, a woman from the *Calendaruc* tribelet, Ysuastam (B-CA0909), married Agenet (B-CA2069) from the distant tribelet of *Pagsin* (M-CA0520). The mission community created an environment in which people who in precolonial times were not in day-to-day contact (like individuals from the *Rumsen* and *Mutsun* tribelets) lived and worked together in the same Indian village. Under these conditions, some of those individuals began to intermarry.

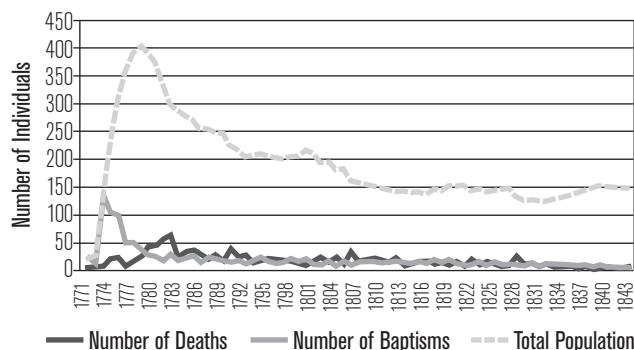


**Figure 12. Number of baptisms at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel between 1809 and 1834, divided by tribelet. For mission-born individuals, ties to a particular tribelet were traced through the paternal lineage.**

a: All of the place names presented on this axis are tribelets except for the Yokuts. Yokuts is an ethnolinguistic grouping, and there were multiple tribelets from Yokuts territory represented in the baptismal records at this mission. To conserve space, and because there are so few individuals from each tribelet, I have lumped them all into the Yokuts category here, but Yokuts tribelets represented included the *Chausila*, *Hoyima*, *Hualquemne*, *Luchaime*, *Nopchenche*, *Notoalls*, *Pitemas*, and *Wechihit* (California Missions Access Database).

#### *A Mission Born Population, 1809–1834*

Beginning in 1809, nearly all of the indigenous peoples baptized at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel were born there, in the Indian village (Fig. 12). Between that date and 1834, the year the missions were secularized, the Indian village was composed of indigenous peoples from the diverse tribelet communities discussed above, as well as their descendants who had been born at the mission. Most of the tribelet communities that had been incorporated at various times and rates during earlier years continued to be represented among the mission-born baptisms. The groups that were the most populous within the Indian village at an earlier date, such as the *Rumsen*, *Ensen*, and *Excelen*, continued to leave the most descendants after 1808. The later community was again different from that which came before it. The Indian village was no longer composed of people who came mostly from different villages within the *Rumsen* tribelet territory. It was also not a pluralistic community made up solely of those who had left their indigenous homelands to start anew in the mission community. During this later time period, the mission was composed of people who had left their homeland, survived disease and epidemics, and



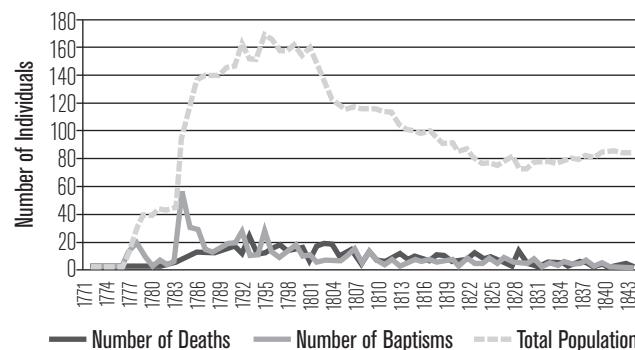
**Figure 13.** *Rumsen* baptisms, deaths, and total population per year. This includes individuals who either came from a *Rumsen* village themselves, or are descended from *Rumsen* villages. This does not account for individuals who may have deserted the mission and whose death may have never been recorded. In addition, 149 *Rumsen* individuals did not have a death date recorded (California Missions Access Database).

were trying to make a life for themselves in the mission, and people who knew no other life than mission life.

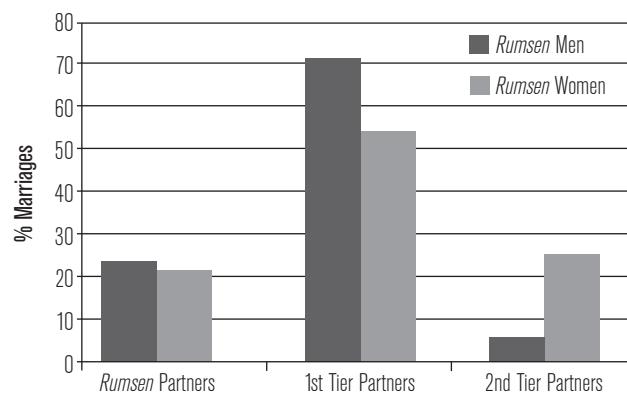
In the nineteenth century, high death rates and low birth rates transformed the indigenous population at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel. The population declined at an exponential rate over the course of the Mission Period as many people died and numerous young individuals did not live to reproductive age. This may have made it more than difficult for people to find eligible marriage partners within a traditional marriage sphere. For example, during the first ten to fifteen years of mission life, *Rumsen* people may have been able to find marriage partners from their tribelet community, as was tradition; however, after this time there were more *Rumsen* people dying than living to reproductive age, thus greatly reducing the number of suitable marriage partners (Fig. 13). The demographic profile of the *Excelen* (Esselen) at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel tells a similar story (Fig. 14). Like the *Rumsen*, *Excelen* peoples traditionally found marriage partners among those of their own tribelet. Within the missions, those interested in marrying other *Excelen* peoples likely had the best chance to do so before 1808, when the *Excelen* population was the most numerous.

#### Solteros y Viudos, 1809–1834

The *soltero y viudo* marriage patterns during this period are only slightly different from those observed between 1780 and 1809 (Fig. 15). The majority of marriages took



**Figure 14.** *Excelen* baptisms, deaths, and total population per year. This includes individuals who either came from an *Excelen* village themselves, or are descended from *Excelen* villages. This does not account for individuals who may have deserted the mission and whose death may have never been recorded. In addition, 83 *Excelen* individuals did not have a death date recorded (California Missions Access Database).



**Figure 15.** Marriage partners among *Rumsen* men and women, 1809–1834. First-tier groups are those groups that neighbor the *Rumsen*. Between 1809 and 1834 *Rumsen* men married women from the first-tier groups of the *Calendaruc*, *Ensen*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc*. During this same period, *Rumsen* women married men from the first-tier groups of the *Calendaruc*, *Ensen*, *Excelen*, and *Sargentaruc*. Second-tier groups are those groups separated from the *Rumsen* by at least one other tribelet. Between 1809 and 1834 *Rumsen* men married women from the second-tier groups of the *Aspasnajan*, *Chalon*, *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Orestac*, and *Pagsin*. During this same period, *Rumsen* women married men from the second-tier groups of *Chupcan*, *Ecgeajan*, *Eslenajan*, *Immuanajan*, *Noptac*, *Peloytica*, *Penins-Coast*, *Piiau*. (NISP: *Rumsen* men/*Rumsen* women = 8; *Rumsen* men/first-tier women = 25; *Rumsen* men/second-tier women = 2; TOTAL NISP = 35. NISP *Rumsen* women/*Rumsen* men = 8; *Rumsen* women/first-tier men = 21; *Rumsen* women/second-tier men = 10; TOTAL NISP = 39).

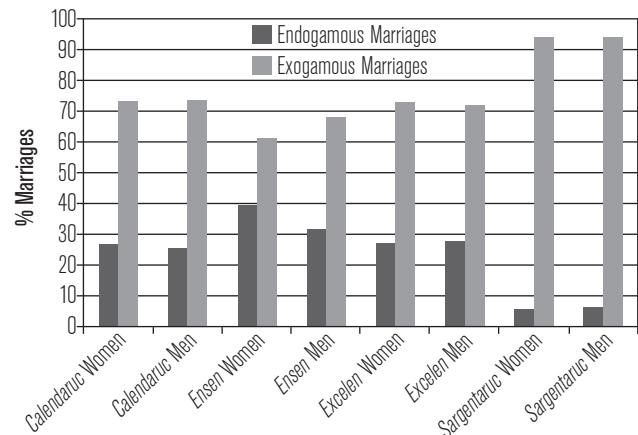
place between partners who were from or had ancestral ties to different, but traditionally neighboring, tribelet communities. However, a significant percentage of people did establish endogamous marriages. In addition, the number of second-tier marriages slightly increased during this period.

As during the previous historical period (1780–1808), a great segment of the indigenous population married people from tribelet communities other than their own between 1809 and 1834. Again, intertribelet marriages between bordering communities did occur in precolonial times, but not nearly to the extent that it occurred during this period. For example, during this period 71% of *Rumsen* men and 54% of *Rumsen* women married people who were from neighboring tribelets. These intermarriages occurred at a slightly higher rate than they did between 1780 and 1808.

However, even after 1809 a significant percentage of the population continued to marry those who shared their tribelet ancestry. For example, 23% of *Rumsen* men and 21% of *Rumsen* women continued to choose marriage partners who had ancestral ties to *Rumsen* villages. With some variability, this pattern generally held true for other tribelet communities living at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel between 1809 and 1834 (Fig. 16). Finally, it was during this later period that greater numbers of indigenous peoples married individuals who were from tribelets that did not traditionally border their own. In addition, higher percentages of women at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel married partners from these distant, second-tier communities than did men.

## SUMMARY

The marriage patterns among indigenous peoples at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel did change from their precolonial conditions. Prior to missionization, groups from this region such as the *Rumsen* and *Excelen* tended to marry within their own tribelet communities and (to a lesser extent) into neighboring tribelets. During the Mission Period, some did continue to marry according to these traditions, but many others married peoples from neighboring (first-tier) tribelets or even distant (second-tier) tribelet communities at increased rates, outside of a traditional marriage sphere. The degree of change from



**Figure 16. Exogamous and Endogamous marriages (1809–1834) among the tribelet communities that directly surrounded Mission San Carlos and the *Rumsen* tribelet. (NISP: Calendario women = 26, men = 27; Ensen women = 33, men = 41; Excelen women = 26, men = 25; Sargentaruc women = 17, men = 16).**

the traditional pattern was dependent upon time and the demographic profile of the mission during specific time periods. During the first decade in which a tribal population was incorporated into the mission community, the local people maintained a precolonial marriage pattern. For example, from 1770–1779, 93% of the *Rumsen* men continued to marry *Rumsen* women, and 79% of the *Rumsen* women still married *Rumsen* men, following the endogamous pattern of the *Rumsen* tribe. This retention of precolonial marriage patterns may have been aided by the fact that most of the indigenous population living at the mission during this time was *Rumsen*. These intratribal marriages, however, declined at a steady rate throughout the Mission Period. The most dramatic changes coincided with the most dramatic population declines. For example, beginning in the 1780s large numbers of *Rumsen* peoples began to die at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, and for the next decade, population numbers fell dramatically. That date also marked an increase in tribelet plurality in the Indian village at this mission. It is after 1780 that we also see the most dramatic change in *Rumsen* marriages. After the population decline and the influx of neighboring communities, many individuals started to marry people from tribelets that once bordered theirs at a much higher frequency than occurred prior to missionization, or chose to marry individuals from distant, second-tier tribelet communities, something that rarely occurred in prehispanic times.

The way in which I have organized the data illuminates how changes in demographic profiles over time affected marriage patterns at the mission. It also highlights some important idiosyncratic behaviors. For example, the pattern of change was different for each tribelet community. The *Rumsen*, for instance, maintained their precolonial tradition during the first decade after being incorporated into the mission. Among the *Excelen*, however, change occurred as soon as they joined the mission community in large numbers—i.e., after 1780. During precolonial times the *Excelen* predominantly married other *Excelen* peoples, and a smaller percentage also married those from neighboring tribelets. During their initial incorporation into Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel, however, more than half of the *Excelen* men were marrying non-*Excelen* women. This may be explained by the way in which *Rumsen* and *Excelen* peoples were incorporated into the mission community. Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel was established in *Rumsen* territory and the people from this tribelet were the first of any of the indigenous groups to be baptized and married there. Furthermore, the largest indigenous group living at the mission during the first decade of its establishment was the *Rumsen*. The historical and demographic circumstances may have made it easier for the *Rumsen* to continue their endogamous marriage pattern. For the *Excelen*, however, the situation was different. The *Excelen* moved to Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel from their home in the rugged Santa Lucia Mountains to the south. They spoke a different indigenous language than the majority of others living at this mission, and may have needed to use intermarriage as a way of creating social and political connections to *Rumsen* families. This may explain why we see so many intermarriages between *Excelen* and *Rumsen* partners during the initial arrival of the *Excelen* at the mission community.

While the way in which I have organized the data has illuminated some interesting patterns, some idiosyncrasies may have been overlooked as a consequence of my approach. In the future, our understanding of marriage at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel would benefit from alternatively-stratified data that address other questions, highlight other patterns, and bring out individual idiosyncrasies that may be masked by grouping data historically. Such idiosyncrasies might include, but

not be limited to, such factors as time since baptism, how many times an individual had been married previously, if an individual was born in a prestigious lineage, who an individual's siblings married, if they were born at the mission or not, and so on.

However, illustrating changes in marriage patterns between specific historical time periods with varying demographic profiles at the mission does lead to some interesting conclusions. Over time, people within the diverse indigenous population of the Indian village at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel began to intermarry. It is important to note that any change can be interpreted as not necessarily being a destruction of precolonial marriage practices but as their reproduction in new historical contexts. Marriage patterns at the mission were different than they were in precolonial times, but indigenous peoples may have continued to use marriage as a way of creating alliances within the mission context, where the alliances that were important may have changed (Newell 2004). For example, it may have become important to marry people from tribelets outside of one's traditional marrying sphere in order to avoid intertribal conflicts within the pluralistic mission community. In addition, however, a small minority of people continued to marry within their own tribelet communities, which illustrates the agency people had to build alliances with individuals from their own or neighboring tribelets on an individual basis.

## IDENTITY AND MARRIAGE PRACTICES

This discussion of changes in marriage patterns informs my interpretation of changes in social identity within the mission communities. I argue that as marriage patterns changed within the missions, so did social identities that once were based upon tribelet identification. Once diverse indigenous peoples started to marry people outside of a traditional marriage sphere, they were creating a new sphere—one centered around a mission community. People from different tribelets lived together in the pluralistic mission community. Over time, they began to marry one another, creating a network of relationships and ties within and between people from these diverse tribelets. Out of such practices involving kinship and lineage-making, social identities surrounding each intermarried mission community may have

emerged. For economic, social, or political reasons, members of the diverse community found it important to be able to identify themselves as being *Carmeño*. It should be emphasized, however, that this process did not occur instantaneously. It appears that indigenous peoples maintained traditional marriage patterns and social identities tied to their particular tribelet for as long as they could. Once the population started to decline, however, there was not always an eligible marriage partner available who fit the traditional criteria.

Furthermore, it was likely important for marital traditions to change concurrently with the altering historical circumstances. In these colonial moments, new kinds of relationships needed to be built and maintained. Where before it may have been important to create and maintain ties with your immediate neighboring tribelets, after missionization it may have been important to create social networks between people within the mission population, no matter where their ancestral territories were located. Note, however, that intratribal marriages persisted throughout the entire Mission Period. For some individuals, it continued to be important to marry others from their own tribelet. Marriage, for the indigenous peoples of California, was still a way to create and maintain relationships with others with which they found it important to have associations. While the relationships that were designated as important changed due to historical circumstances, the strategies that indigenous peoples used to deal with affiliation building (i.e., intermarriage) were maintained.

Finally, it is important to remember the story told by Father Serra about the indigenous groups on the Carmel Beach in 1774 taking communal advantage of the fish run while dividing into smaller factions to prepare and enjoy their meal. Also important is the story of the community unrest at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel in 1831 when Dominico's newly-granted official status was disputed because it was not his "people's" turn to have political power at the mission. A *Carmeño* identity was likely created as people intermarried across tribelet boundaries. That social identity had important significance within the mission community, by enabling alliances to be built between peoples who were not traditionally allied. However, identity is fluid and multilayered. As important as it may have been to create a community identity in the Indian village, it may have

been equally important to be able to move between that communal mission identity and identities tied to tribal homelands. During certain moments, like during a political election, it may have been more important to be *Rumsen* (and not *Exelen*) than to be *Carmeño*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This pattern of living changed through time and was variable by mission. For example, in 1807 and 1806 the diverse group of indigenous peoples at Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmel built nearly 100 small adobe houses roofed with *tejas* as part of the quadrangle adjacent to the mission church (Culleton 1950:171).

<sup>2</sup>The California Missions Access Database was created under the direction of Dr. Randall Milliken and is in his possession and under his copyright. All data concerning baptisms, deaths, and marriages included in this paper were acquired from this database.

<sup>3</sup>I accessed the ethnographic notes of J.P. Harrington through the Native American Studies Department at U.C. Davis, and the kind offices of P.I. Martha Macri. (<http://nas.usdavis.edu/NALC/JPH.html>)

<sup>4</sup>"Letters signed with the marks of Antonio, Landelino, Gaudin, and Martin to Buelna, Jan. 18, 1831, Archives of Monterey, CA, 150 1:266–68, Bancroft Library. The letter is in the hand of Jose Joaquin Gomez, customs officer for Monterey" (Hackel 1997:374).

<sup>5</sup>Archivo General de La Nación, Mexico, Archivo Historic de Hacienda. Documents of the History of Mexico Series II Tomos 2(2). Courtesy of Randall Milliken.

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