

**Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of the
Mission San Juan Bautista
Petition for Federal Recognition**

Exhibit 4

Mutsun Cultural Continuity in the 20th Century
A Preliminary Assessment

by

E. Richard Hart

January 29, 2003

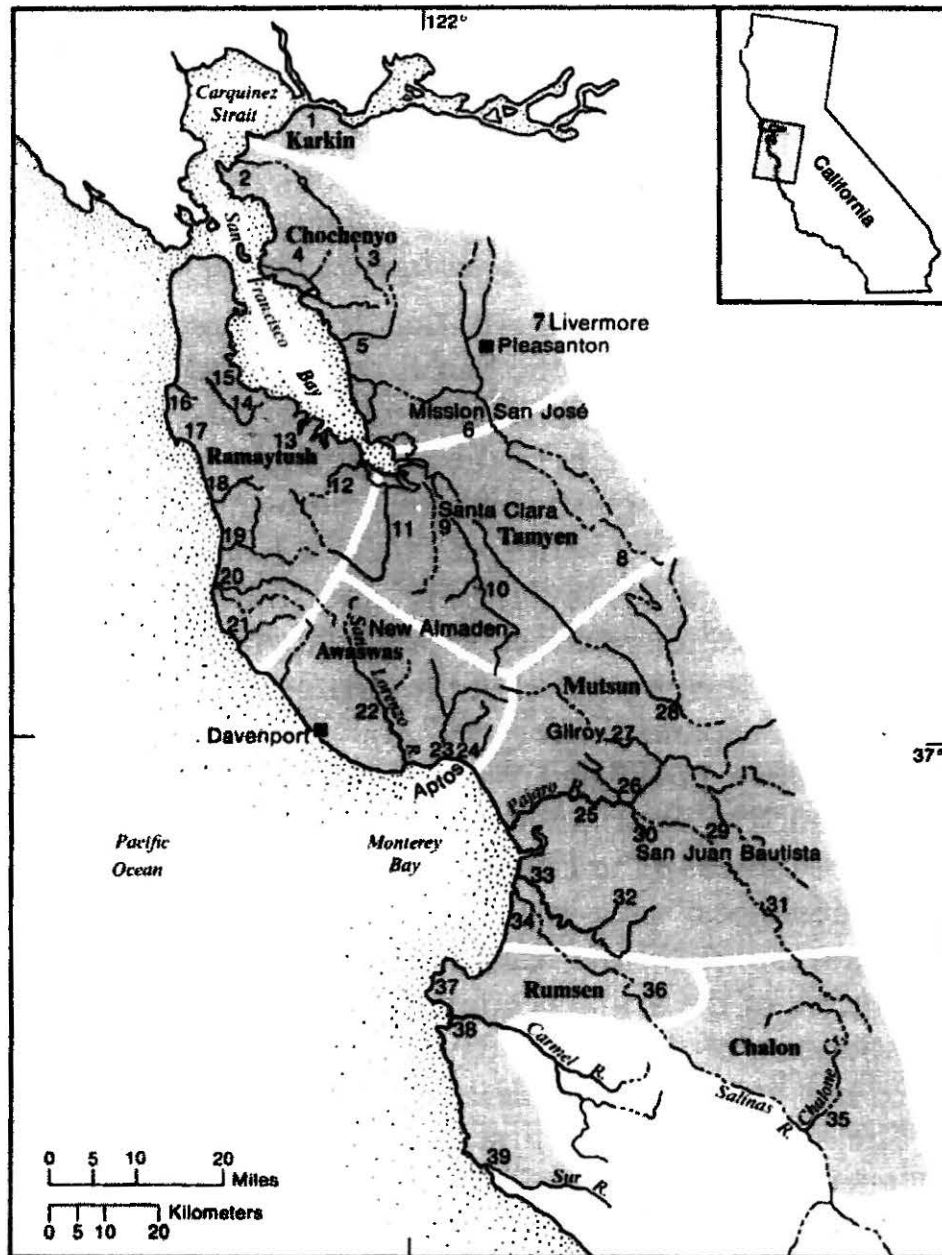
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Abstract

The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band has submitted a petition to the Bureau of Acknowledgment and Recognition (BAR) seeking recognition by the United States. Four volumes of accompanying exhibits and appendices provide historical evidence in support of the tribe's claim for recognition. Some of the criteria established by BAR relate to cultural continuity and leadership in the twentieth century. Considerable additional documentary evidence provides convincing grounds to conclude that the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band meets those criteria for federal acknowledgment as an Indian tribe. The tribe has been a distinct entity in both the pre-missionization and post-missionization periods. Extensive linguistic studies have demonstrated that Mutsun is a unique language which was spoken within definable boundaries among tribal members living in a number of villages, or *rancherias*, prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. The Mutsun were forcibly gathered under the Spanish civil and religious authorities at Mission San Juan Bautista. After their consolidation there they became known as San Juanefios and continued to practice traditional activities, to speak Mutsun among themselves, to pass on tribal traditions and to recognize tribal leadership. Tribal traditions and language continued to be passed down generation to generation after the region came under United States jurisdiction. Tribal leadership also continued to be recognized generation to generation among the San Juanefios.

The Mutsun Tribe had a unique language, definable territory, mutually held cultural beliefs and recognized leaders. Today's Amah Mutsun Tribal Band members are the descendants of the pre-Spanish Mutsun and San Juanefios. A remarkable documentary record of the Mutsun in the twentieth century was recorded by the ethnologist and linguist John Peabody



Boundaries of Mutsun speaking rancherias (villages or "tribelets") as they existed in the late 18th century. Numbers 25-33, and 36 are Mutsun-speaking. Number 32 is apparently a village named Mutson. From Levy, p. 485.

Harrington, working between 1920 and 1935 with Mutsun people, especially Ascención Solórsano, who was the most influential Mutsun leader in the twentieth century. She was widely recognized as such by both Mutsun people and by the non-Indian community. Her cultural knowledge of the Mutsun people and language provided an unprecedented look at tribal heritage as it was passed from aboriginal times into the twentieth century.

The Mutsun Language

Linguistic studies of Mutsun have been carried out from 1815 to the present. The results of these studies have demonstrated that Mutsun was a separate language, spoken in a distinct region where a number of identifiable villages were located.

Mutsun is a separate language in the Costanoan sub-group of the Utian Family within the Penutian Stock. It was spoken in the region of the San Juan Bautista Mission and the Pajaro River drainage.¹ It has been estimated that at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards there were some 2,700 Mutsun speakers among the villages in the Pajaro River drainage. Mutsun was a separate language, as different from the other Costanoan languages, "as Spanish is from French."² In 1770 there were at least ten villages in the Mutsun-speaking region, one of which was itself named Mutsun, from whence the name for the language was drawn.³

Between 1770 and 1797 the Spanish government established seven missions within Costanoan territory, including San Juan Bautista located in the valley near the Mutsun villages. The Indian residents of these villages were "missionized," gathered and forced to live under the

¹Shipley, William F. "Native Languages," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 81, 84, and 89.

²Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 486.

³Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 485.

authority of the missions. By about 1810 the Spaniards had largely eliminated the Mutsun villages and the people had all become known as "San Juan" or "San Juanefios" Indians.⁴

Although the Spaniards pressured the San Juanefios to abandon their language, the Mutsun language continued to survive. In 1814, Father Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta, a priest at Mission San Juan Bautista, noted that the Spanish authorities were having trouble getting the Indians to give up their language. He added, optimistically, "When the conquest is complete, and some generations shall have passed by, they will be able to speak Spanish well."⁵ John Wesley Powell, Director of the Bureau of American Ethnology under the Smithsonian Institution, reported in 1885, that the native languages had not disappeared nearly a century after missionization began. "As a matter of fact, however, in their own families and when away from the white men they discard Spanish entirely."⁶

Despite the fact that the Indians were taught Spanish at the mission, de la Cuesta understood the necessity of learning Mutsun in order to communicate with the Indians under his charge. He collected nearly 3,000 Mutsun phrases, which he published in 1815.⁷ De la Cuesta also translated prayers, songs, doctrines, confessions, acts, and other vocabulary into Mutsun and drafted a prayer book titled "El Oro Molido," which linguist J. P. Harrington called "the most important Indian document from the Franciscan period of California history." "El Oro Molido"

⁴Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista*; Santa Barbara, California: Mission Santa Barbara, 1931, p. 19. In de la Cuesta's 1812 response to an *Interrogatorio*, he reported that when Indians escaped from the mission they "return to the mountains as fugitives," suggesting the villages had by that point ceased to be occupied by the Indians.

Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 486, provides an overview of the history of the period among the Costanoans.

⁵De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the *Interrogatorio*), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 15.

⁶Powell, John Wesley. "Annual Report of the Director," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1884-'85*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888, p. xxxi.

⁷De La Cuesta, A. Fr. Philipp. Ab. Ar. Yo. *Alphabs. Rivulus Obeundus, Exprimationun Causa, Horum Indorum Mutsun, Missionis Sanct. Joann. Baptistae*. Conveniunt Rebus Nomina Saepe Suis, 1815.

or "Ground Up Gold" contained "precepts, acts, doctrine, a confession and a benediction" in the Mutsun language.⁸ Linguist J. Alden Mason later also commented on the importance of de la Cuesta's work, saying the phrases and grammar "form one of the fullest and most complete collections of data extant on a Pacific Coast language." He added that, "there is little doubt that the missionary knew the language well and interpreted its psychology and spirit fairly correctly."⁹

In 1861 and 1862, as part of "Shea's Library of American Linguistics," the Smithsonian Institution reprinted de la Cuesta's grammar and phrases in their entirety.¹⁰ Publication of de la Cuesta's work by the Smithsonian Institution likely prompted Albert S. Gatschet, a prominent linguist from the Institution, to conduct his own fieldwork among Mutsun speakers. His work was published first in 1877, in *Magazine of American History*, and later in the early 1880s in *American Antiquarian*.¹¹

⁸ Mills, Elaine L. (ed.) *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*, Volume Two, "A Guide to the Field Notes, Native American History, Language and Culture of Northern and Central California," Kraus International Publications: White Plains, New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1985, pp.94-95, provides the quotations.

Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 16 and 125-126, also discusses the document.

⁹Mason, J. Alden. "The Mutsun Dialect of Costanoan Based on the Vocabulary of De La Cuesta," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. 11, No. 7, March 9, 1916, Berkeley, pp. 399-472.

¹⁰De la Cuesta, Rev. F. Felipe Arroyo. *Vocabulary or Phrase Book of the Mutsun Language of Alta California*. New York: Cramoisy Press, 1862, reprinted de la Cuesta's original 1815 publication under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, and as a part of Shea's Library of American Linguistics (Vol. VIII).

Mason, J. Alden. "The Mutsun Dialect of Costanoan Based on the Vocabulary of De La Cuesta," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. 11, No. 7, March 9, 1916, Berkeley, pp. 399-472.

¹¹Hodge, Frederick Webb. *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*; Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, Part 1, 1975 (reprinting original publication by Smithsonian of 1905), pp. 941 and 964, briefly commented on his work with Gatschet, which attempted to categorize dialects, languages, and families.

Gatschet, Albert S. "Indian Languages of the Pacific States and Territories," *Magazine of American History* 1(1): 145-171.

Gatschet, Albert S. "Specimen of the Chum̃eto Language," *American Antiquarian*, Vol. V (1883), Nos. 1 and 2; Bancroft Library.

After the establishment of the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879, headed by John Wesley Powell, further interest was generated in the Mutsun language. Between 1884 and 1888, Henry W. Henshaw did fieldwork among Costanoan tribes, including the Mutsun.¹² He acquired a Mutsun vocabulary from a woman whom he identified simply as "Maria." This vocabulary led Powell to finally determine the correct demarcation of the several Costanoan languages into the correct families. Henshaw's vocabulary was also helpful in identifying the Indian place names for geographical locations in the region.¹³

The importance of the Mutsun language can be seen by the continuing interest of some of the best linguists in the world in the early 20th century. Between 1902 and 1905, C. Hart Merriam obtained linguistic material from Barbara Sierra and her daughter Ascención Solórsano early in the century.¹⁴

¹²Powell, John Wesley. "Annual Report of the Director," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1884-'85*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888, pp. xxxi-xxxviii.

Powell, John Wesley. "Annual Report of the Director," *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1888-'89*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893, pp. xiv-xv.

¹³Goddard, Ives. "The Description of the Native Languages of North America Before Boas," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 17 "Languages"; Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1996, p. 40.

Goddard, Ives. "The Classification of the Native Languages of North America," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 17 "Languages"; Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1996, pp. 296 and 304.

Afable, Patricia O. and Madison S. Beeler. "Place Names," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 17 "Languages"; Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1996, p. 197.

Heizer, Robert F. "California Indian Linguistic Records: The Mission Indian Vocabularies of H. W. Henshaw," *University of California Anthropological Records*, 15(2):85-202, 1955, Berkeley.

John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 92, 94, 95, and 101. Harrington used BAE Manuscript No. 296, in which the San Juan vocabulary is found following p. 228. He also notes BAE ms. 860.

¹⁴Merriam to Harrington, September 8, 1929, with attached notes from Harrington's consultation with Ascención Solórsano. John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984. Excerpts from "Interviews with the San Juan Indians." This material is found in Harrington's

"San Juan Report" in frames 240-996 of roll 58 and frames 1-1126 of roll 59.

Almost Ancestors: The First Californians. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1968, pp. 22 and 166.

Kroeber, Theodora and Robert F. Heizer (edited by F. David Hales).

Alfred Kroeber continued his work with de la Cuesta's publications early in the 20th century, creating a card index with the sentences in de la Cuesta's phrases. J. Alden Mason worked on Mutsun language, using de la Cuesta's publications and the work of Kroeber. In 1916 he published "The Mutsun Dialect of Costanoan Based on the Vocabulary of De La Cuesta."¹⁵

Finally, of course, was the monumental work of John Peabody Harrington with Ascención Solórsano in the 1920s, which continued in the 1930s with other members of her family, and resulted in one of the best linguistic and ethnological records of a tribe and tribal language in North America that exists in the 20th century.¹⁶

In his article in the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians* 1978 volume on California, linguist Richard Levy provides the most up-to-date assessment of scholarship on Mutsun language. Levy, who did his work in the 1970s, referred to previous work on the Mutsun language, mapped the boundaries of the Mutsun-speaking region, and provided the names of ten Mutsun villages within it. He described the Mutsun region as being the Pajaro River drainage.¹⁷

¹⁵Mason, J. Alden. "The Mutsun Dialect of Costanoan Based on the Vocabulary of De La Cuesta," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. 11, No. 7, March 9, 1916, Berkeley, pp. 399-472.

¹⁶Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, especially microfilm rolls 36-37 and 41-61.

¹⁷Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 485.

Mutsun Culture

The documentary record from the late 18th century to the early 20th century provides an excellent picture of the traditional culture of the Mutsun people. The extraordinary record of Mutsun culture documented by Harrington while working with Ascención Solórsano in the 1920s, when compared with the early record compiled by mission priests, demonstrates the cultural strong bonds which have united the Mutsun band.

The earliest extensive record of Mutsun culture was recorded by Father Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta in 1814. The Spanish government, on October 6, 1812, issued a questionnaire, or *interrogatorio*, which was sent out to all of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Spanish California. Thirty-six questions regarding the Indians in their jurisdiction were put to the priests running the various missions, including San Juan Bautista. The questionnaire did not reach San Juan Bautista until early in 1814. Father de la Cuesta signed a response to the questions and submitted it on May 1, 1814.¹⁸ In his response to the questionnaire, de la Cuesta reported that the San Juaneño people told traditional stories to their children, maintained traditions about hunting, games and utilitarian affairs. Mutsun people who had been forced under the control of the mission continued to pass on these traditions.¹⁹ According to de la Cuesta, the San Juaneños,

...whose history amounts to ridiculous fables, which are passed from generation to generation, and who relate them only for the purpose of passing the time, laughing, or to entertain the boys....The whole scientific knowledge of these people consists in the better way of telling the stories or in a greater aptitude in hunting and fishing.²⁰

¹⁸De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 15. "Cabins" was the translation for the tribal members living structures. The same translation was used for pre-Spanish, traditional structures.

¹⁹ Martin, John M. "Mission San Juan Bautista, California: The Causes and Effects of its Rise and Decline," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Santa Clara, 1933, pp. 58-60, described the flogging and other punishments inflicted on Indians who tried to escape from the mission.

²⁰De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa

Although the missionaries were attempting to teach the people agriculture, de la Cuesta said the San Juaneños continued to collect and eat traditional foods.

They have in their little cabins an abundance of acorns and wild seeds—their ancient food. They will not let a chance pass by to catch rats, squirrels, moles, rabbits and other animals, which they were wont to eat, and eat even now, for which reason it is not easy to compute their daily amount of food.²¹

The Mutsun people were one of several tribes that were distinct parts of a wider Costanoan culture group, with similar cultural patterns. Anthropological studies on the Costanoans conducted in the 20th century provide additional details of Mutsun traditional tribal life. Alfred Kroeber's early, but limited, view of Costanoan culture was completed in 1919 and published in 1925 by the Bureau of American Ethnology. Kroeber noted the former village named Mutsun which was located near San Juan Bautista Mission and said that with good weather, the people wore few clothes. He reported that the people harvested fish, and he also mentioned gathering practices to obtain vegetal foods. Prior to the establishment of missions, Kroeber said the people lived in tule lodges. His research among the Costanoans, however, was so limited that he had little of substance to add regarding religion, mythology, or social life among the people.²²

Richard Levy's chapter on the "Costanoan" in the 1978 California volume of the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians* provides a better summary of Costanoan culture, drawing on most the extant sources relating to the culture group, including sources that related particularly to the Mutsun-speaking villages. Levy described approximately fifty

Barbara, California, 1931, p. 22.

²¹De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 18.

²²Kroeber, Alfred L. *Handbook of the Indians of California*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1976 (originally published as *Bulletin 78* of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, in 1925), pp. 462-473.

"separate and politically autonomous [Costanoan] nations," which he called "tribelets." These included ten Mutsun villages within the San Benito drainage, in the vicinity of the future site of San Juan Bautista Mission. The religion of the Costanoans included prayers to the sun, accompanied by blowing smoke toward the sky, offerings of shells, beads, seeds and other items. Dreams were significant omens of things to come. According to Levy,

Shamans controlled the weather and could cause the rain to start or stop. They cured disease by cutting the skin of the patient, sucking out disease objects, and exhibiting the disease objects to the onlookers.²³

Levy also described dances and songs of religious leaders, who also herbs to cure disease. There were traditions of "bear witches" and social ceremonials and dances that were accompanied by traditional music, using traditionally made instruments. Traditional stories, including coyote stories, were passed down generation to generation.

According to Levy, the most important plant food was the acorn (noted in 1814 among the Mutsun by de la Cuesta), collected using sticks to knock the acorns from several oak species in the region. Other plant food included buckeye nuts, seeds of pine, cherry and other trees, berries, roots and other plants. Animals contributing to the Costanoan diet included deer, elk, antelope, bear, mountain lion, sea lion and whale. Many small mammals and birds were also harvested and eaten, as well as steelhead, salmon and other fish found in the region. Spears and baskets were used to bring in fish. A number of insects and insect larvae were also eaten, as were honey and mollusks found along the coast. Grass thatched houses were the most common structures. The people also had sweathouses, dance enclosures and assembly houses. Tule raft-like boats were used by the people to travel on water. Rocks, minerals and many other types of animal and vegetable matter provided materials for utilitarian and ornamental objects used on a

²³Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 485-486 and quoted at 489.

day to day basis by the people. Coastanoans also mined for cinnabar and hematite for use as pigments, according to Levy.²⁴

During the missionization of the California Indian tribes in the late 18th century, the Mutsun-speaking people were forced under the control of San Juan Bautista Mission. Forced out of their traditional villages and essentially held as captive serfs to work the mission fields, among non-Indians the Mutsuns also became known as the San Juans, or San Juanefios.²⁵ The work of Father Arroyo de la Cuesta in the early 19th century, as well as later linguistic work of Gatschet and Henshaw, provided some clues to the specific culture of the San Juan Indians. But it was not until the early 20th century that significant anthropological work on the Mutsun, or San Juans, was undertaken, first in a limited way by C. Hart Merriam, and then in great detail by John P. Harrington.

In 1902 Merriam met an old Indian woman named Barbara Solórsano living near Mission San Juan Bautista. He said she identified the name of her tribe and was able to purchase an example of her people's basketry from her. She told him her people had "occupied San Juan Valley long before the Padres came."²⁶ Merriam conducted some limited fieldwork with Barbara

²⁴Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 4889-492.

"Ohlone" is another term used to describe the Costanoan peoples. A number of works provide examples of "Ohlone" lifeways, songs, stories and oral histories. These are pertinent to a study of the Mutsun-speaking people and the San Juanefios, and include the following:

Margolin, Malcolm. *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area*. Heyday Books: Berkeley, 1978.

Margolin, Malcolm (ed.). *The Way We Lived: California Indian Stories, Songs & Reminiscences*. California Historical Society: Berkeley, 1981.

²⁵ Martin, John M. "Mission San Juan Bautista, California: The Causes and Effects of its Rise and Decline," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Santa Clara, 1933, pp. 58-60.

Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista*; Santa Barbara, California: Mission Santa Barbara, 1931, p. 19.

²⁶Merriam, C. Hart. "Ethnographic Notes on California Indian Tribes III. Ethnological Notes on Central California Indian Tribes," *Reports of the University of California Archaeological Survey*, No. 68, Part III, Berkeley: University of California Archaeological Research Facility, December 1967, p. 371. Harrington later corrected Merriam, pointing out that what Merriam thought was her tribal name ("Hoó-mont-wash") was actually a directional word.



Barbara Solórsano at Mission San Juan Bautista, age 60.. Photograph by C. Hart Merriam, September 26, 1902. Merriam Photographs of Indians, Bancroft Library.

Solórsano and with her daughter Ascención over the next three years and copied down linguistic notes on the Mutsun language.²⁷

But it was J. P. Harrington, working closely with Ascención, beginning nearly twenty years later, that provided the first comprehensive, in-depth view of San Juaneño culture. John Peabody Harrington conducted research among Native Americans for the Smithsonian Institution between 1907 and 1957. After his death in 1961 his papers, which numbered over a million pages, were eventually deposited in the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian sorted them, and in the 1970s and 1980s, microfilmed Harrington's papers. Harrington interviewed Ascención Solórsano extensively in 1921 and 1929, living in the Solórsano household for an extended period during the latter year, while Ascención was dying of cancer. Harrington called Ascención Solórsano's knowledge of Mutsun language and culture "astonishing." Of the hundreds of thousands of pages of Harrington's papers that were microfilmed, at least twenty-three rolls of microfilm, more than 25,000 pages of material relate to Ascención Solórsano, Mutsun Indians, and the Mutsun language. These materials include songs, vocabularies, geographical place names, and cultural details on language, jewelry, face-painting, kinship terms, material culture, minerals and paints, myths, people, place names, clothing, religion and philosophy, the San Juan Bautista Mission, songs, riddles, sayings, stories, swimming, other tribes' names, cooking baskets, fiestas, hunting and fishing, historical anecdotes and war. This remarkable material, provided to Harrington by Ascención Solórsano provides an important record of Mutsun culture in all its diversity.

Harrington was born in 1884 and was graduated in 1905 from Stanford University. He had met Alfred Kroeber in 1903, and became aware of questions regarding native languages in California. The year after graduating from Stanford he began his field career, which spanned

²⁷Merriam to Harrington, September 8, 1929, with attached notes from Harrington's consultation with Ascención Solórsano. John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

more than fifty years, thirty-nine of which he spent in the employ of the Bureau of American Ethnology. He was a man "driven by genius and so obsessed with zeal for recording data that he ignored the traditional routes to academic prestige, rejected all efforts to bring his name to public attention, and considered any activity which took him away from fieldwork with informants to be a waste of time." Most of his work was done among California Indians, though he also did significant work among other tribes, especially in the Southwest. He died in 1961, leaving five tons of field notes, including at least 80,000 pages of notes on California tribes.²⁸

Robert F. Heizer acknowledged the "important research" among California tribes by Harrington in his introduction to the Smithsonian's "California" volume of the *Handbook of North American Indians*. Harrington was friends with Merriam, but both of them had "antipathy" towards Kroeber. Harrington, said Heizer, was "almost pathologically secretive."²⁹ But, as Lowell John Bean said, Harrington's life work was virtually a "parahuman existence," and as scholars, "we must thank the gods that Harrington came along, whatever his faults or peculiarities."³⁰

Harrington's work documenting Mutsun or San Juaneño culture was some of his best. Working with Ascención Solórsano, Harrington documented many aspects of traditional Mutsun culture, including songs, vocabulary, grammar, place names, and medicinal cures. He collected

²⁸Walsh, Jane MacLaren. *John Peabody Harrington: The Man and his California Indian Fieldnotes*. Ramona, California: Ballena Press, 1976, pp. 5-7, 9-19, and 26, which also includes a bibliography of Harrington's California work, which was said to include 80,000 pages of notes.

Laird, Carobeth. *Encounter with an Angry God: Recollections of My Life With John Peabody Harrington*. Malki Museum Press: Banning, California, 1975, with an introduction Henry W. Lawton, pp. xv-xxii.

Callaghan, Catherine A. "Book Review: *John Peabody Harrington: The Man and his California Indian Fieldnotes*," *Journal of San Diego History*, Spring, 1977, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring, 1977), reported that at his death Harrington left over five tons of notes.

²⁹Heizer, Robert F. "Introduction," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 10-11.

³⁰Bean, Lowell John. "Foreword," *John Peabody Harrington: The Man and his California Indian Fieldnotes* (by Jane MacLaren Walsh). Ramona, California: Ballena Press, 1976, p. 5.

a number of Mutsun songs from Solórsano.³¹ Over century before, in 1814 De la Cuesta had commented on the importance of music and song to the Mutsun.

They are very fond of music and song. They learn with facility what is taught them, but on their instruments also remember the pagan tunes. Of these latter there are many and various. They have songs for games, but those for the men are distinct from those of the women.³²

Ascención Solórsano remembered many Mutsun songs when Harrington worked with her in the 20th century. According to notes transcribed by Solórsano's granddaughter, Marta Herrera, many of these songs were often "doctor songs."³³ Other songs were associated with fiestas, with traditional dances for both men and women.³⁴ In his notes on the songs, Harrington described the "kúksui," who danced in the hills and wore a special headdress.³⁵ Today, Mutsun people still tell stories about Kúksui, a "devil" with cloven hooves.³⁶ Herrera's notes on one Kúksui song indicate that "White people used to come from far & wide to see [the Kúksui song]," which "was sung in the sweat house." Ascención Solórsano continued some Hispanic Californians had acquired the tradition, but that they pronounced the word differently--that the Indians said

³¹See, for example:

John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 10, 38, 43 and 50.

³²De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 21.

³³John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 52 and 66.

³⁴John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 53, 56, 64,

³⁵John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 33, 72, and 80-81.

³⁶Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart, October 15, 2002, San Francisco, transcript of tape #1, p. 22.

"Kúksui," but the Spanish Californians said "cú cu sui."³⁷

Harrington did what he called "rehearings" with Ascención Solórsano. To do this, he obtained copies of the vocabularies, grammars and phrases that were obtained by Henshaw, Merriam, and de la Cuesta. He then read them back to Ascención in order that she could correct them and comment upon them.

Harrington read back to Ascención Solórsano a vocabulary of Mutsun words obtained by C. Hart Merriam in about 1902 from her mother. Ascención was able to elaborate on the words, for instance, providing the Mutsun word for "tobacco."³⁸

Arroyo de la Cuesta recorded a Mutsun Vocabulary at San Juan Bautista in 1815. De la Cuesta's vocabulary is actually a list of nearly 3,000 phrases in the Mutsun language. Harrington conducted a rehearing of all of these phrases with Ascención Solórsano in 1929, obtaining correct pronunciation, meaning, and often, memories triggered by the Mutsun words. This material is found on seventeen rolls of microfilm, more than 25,000 pages of notes. Other notes by Harrington regarding his conversations with Ascención Solórsano are also found in these rolls. For instance, Harrington read Chapter 31 ("The Costanoans") of Kroeber's *Handbook of Indians of California* to Solórsano, and went over Kroeber's map of Costanoan villages with her, drawing responses from her.³⁹

Solórsano added many stories and provided much additional information on the

³⁷John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 80-81.

³⁸John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame number 70.

De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 18, reported on some Mutsun tobacco practices.

³⁹Mills, Elaine L. (ed.) *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*, Volume Two, "A Guide to the Field Notes, Native American History, Language and Culture of Northern and Central California," Kraus International Publications: White Plains, New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1985, pp. 92-94.

thousands of pages of notes Harrington made during this rehearing. For instance, he reported that Solórsano said her maternal grandmother “used to go to S. Benito arroyo & used [to] bathe in it...” They also got drinking water there, using buckets and dippers.⁴⁰

Harrington also obtained copies of other manuscripts written by de la Cuesta from the Bancroft Library and read those back to Ascención Solórsano. These included prayers, songs, doctrines, confessions, acts, and other vocabulary. In one 1929 rehearing, Harrington read through de la Cuesta’s prayer book, which he called “the most important Indian document from the Franciscan period of California history.”⁴¹ Solórsano reviewed the texts with Harrington and described their meaning, adding other information, such as where a traditional Indian song had been used as part of the Catholic religious text of de la Cuesta.⁴² The rehearing of Arroyo de la Cuesta’s “Vocabulario Mutsun” also prompted Solórsano to recall traditional stories she had heard, including one about how a girl became a sirena (mermaid).⁴³

Harrington’s “San Juan Report” is found on portions of two rolls of microfilm. This report was essentially an edited and reorganized description of the Mutsun people taken from Ascención Solórsano. He put this material together in 1930, again assisted by Marta Herrera (with whom he worked for another five years), Dionisia Mondragón and a number of other Indians and non-Indians. Considerable biographical material is included on the family of Ascención Solórsano. Information about Mutsun culture includes details on language, jewelry,

⁴⁰John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame number 163.

⁴¹Mills, Elaine L. (ed.) *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*, Volume Two, “A Guide to the Field Notes, Native American History, Language and Culture of Northern and Central California,” Kraus International Publications: White Plains, New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1985, pp.94-95.

⁴²John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 57, for example, frame numbers 409, 412, 413, 414, 653, 654, and 655.

⁴³John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 58, for example, frame numbers 1 and 182.

face-painting, kinship terms, material culture, minerals and paints, myths, people, place names, clothing, religion and philosophy, the San Juan Bautista Mission, songs, riddles, sayings, stories, swimming, other tribes' names, cooking baskets, fiestas, hunting and fishing, historical anecdotes and war. This exceptional record, documented by Harrington while conducting fieldwork with Ascención Solórsano provides one of the most outstanding commentaries on tribal life provided by one traditional Native American.⁴⁴

Harrington also provided a very detailed description of elements of material culture among the Costanoan, most of which he acquired from Ascención Solórsano, and which therefore pertains directly to the San Juan people. Using a methodology conceived by Kroeber,⁴⁵ in his "Culture Element Distributions: XIX Central California Coast," Harrington provided extensive details on hunting and fishing practices, kinds of animals that were used, food that was gathered, methods of food preparation, construction of traditional houses, navigation on water, grinding utensils, household implements, tools and processes used with tools, ornamental stone, bone and shell work, and weapons. In the same work he provides many details on clothing, body adornment and piercings, weaving and basketry, and cradles. [See attached photograph of Marta

⁴⁴Mills, Elaine L. (ed.) *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*, Volume Two, "A Guide to the Field Notes, Native American History, Language and Culture of Northern and Central California," Kraus International Publications: White Plains, New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1985, pp. 96-97.

John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 58, for example, frame numbers 240, 241, and 246.

John M. Martin, in his University of Santa Clara, California Ph.D. Philosophy dissertation looked at the folklore and traditions of the San Juan Indians. Information that he reported, much of which came from de la Cuesta, can be found in the following sources.

Martin, John M. "Mission San Juan Bautista, California," Ph.D. dissertation for the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Santa Clara, California, 1933.

Martin, John M. *Indian Legends from Mission San Juan Bautista*. Mission San Juan Bautista: Angel Press, 1977, is a popular publication containing some of the San Juan folklore and stories.

Heizer, Robert F. "Mythology: Regional Patterns and History of Research," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 655, reported that the mythology of the Costanoan peoples was probably related to a central California complex of tribal peoples.

⁴⁵Heizer, Robert F. "Introduction," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 10-11. Kroeber's "Culture Element Survey of Native Western North America," was completed between 1934 and 1938.



Maria Dionisia Mondragon, with Victoriano Mondragon in a woven basket cradle. Photograph by J. P. Harrington, ca. 1922. OPPS Neg. No. 91-30352, Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives.



Ascencion Solorsano shortly before her death. Photograph by J. P. Harrington, taken between August, 1929 and January 1930. OPPS Negative No. 81-11249, Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives.

Herrera with cradle basket.] Harrington also documented Mutsun practices such as methods of keeping calendars and counting, understanding of "astronomy," games using "money," marriage, and kinship.⁴⁶

The overall documentary record of Mutsun culture shows a culture of extraordinary depth and variety, touching on every aspect of spiritual, recreational and utilitarian life. This culture was preserved by the Mutsun people through traditional means, passing along the information and knowledge from generation to generation by word of mouth or demonstration.

Territory

Traditionally the Mutsun people lived in villages in the drainage of the San Pajaro and San Benito Rivers. While the villages and bands were semi-autonomous and, by all accounts, the people very independent, the people shared the Mutsun language and Mutsun culture, and lived in ten to twenty villages, or *rancherias*, prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. Spanish authorities consolidated the Mutsun people around Mission San Juan Bautista starting in 1797 and prevented them from returning to their traditional villages in the San Pajaro Basin. Nevertheless, the Mutsun people maintained their traditional knowledge of their territory, villages, and natural resources. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band members are descendants of the Mutsun Tribe, whose territory was in the drainage of the San Pajaro and San Benito Rivers.

Richard Levy, in his article on the "Costanoan" in the California *Handbook of North American Indians*, published by the Smithsonian Institution in 1978, said that prior to missionization, the Mutsun speaking people were a recognized ethnic group with a distinct territory in the Pajaro River drainage. They lived in permanent villages and used their territory for necessary subsistence.

⁴⁶Harrington, John P. "Culture Element Distributions: XIX Central California Coast," *Anthropological Records*, 7:1, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1942, 46 pp.

During various seasons of the year parties went out from the villages to temporary camps at scattered locations in the tribelet territory to engage in fishing, hunting, and collection of plant foods.

Prior to missionization, Levy and some other anthropologists believe the Mutsun had an extended band structure, in a manner similar to the Navajo Tribe prior to United States subjugation. Each band, or "tribelet," as the anthropologists refer to the extended village organization of the Mutsun, was semi-autonomous, but all the Mutsun-speaking people, like the Navajos, had mutually-held language, culture and religion, within a definable territory.⁴⁷

Levy reported that in 1770 "Mutsun was spoken among the tribelets of the Pajaro River drainage..."⁴⁸ The Mutsun people were geographically isolated from their neighbors due to the physiography of the valley. Mutsun-speaking tribelets in the Pajaro and San Benito river drainages (the San Juan Valley) lived in a traditional manner until conquering Spaniards arrived in the region in the late 18th century. Several reports from the 1770s document Mutsun villages.

In 1770, when Fages' expedition passed through to evaluate locations for the construction of a mission, party chroniclers witnessed several large villages, which one historical report identified as the Mutsun speaking villages of Uñijaima and Ausaima in the vicinity of the future Mission San Juan Bautista.⁴⁹ Four years later, Father Francisco Palou was met with great friendship at a Mutsun village located near the future site of the Mission San Juan Bautista,

⁴⁷Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 485-486.

Iverson, Peter. *The Navajo Nation*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981, p. 4, among many other authorities, observed, "The Navajos did not claim one supreme leader but rather acted in smaller, relatively autonomous groups, much to the dismay of the more rigidly organized Spanish."

⁴⁸Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 485-486.

⁴⁹Milliken, Randall. "Chapter 3: Early History of Native Peoples," *Archaeological Test Excavations at Fourteen Sites Along Highways 101 and 152, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, California*, Volume 2: History, Ethnohistory, and Historic Archaeology. Davis, California: Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., 1993, p. 63.

which he described as containing "not less than three hundred souls of both sexes."⁵⁰ In 1776, during an expedition in the region, the famed Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza, displaying Spanish prejudice in the face of tribal generosity, described passing by a village of 17 huts from which emerged three "heathen inhabitants" who gave the explorer a present of three fish. This village was apparently located in the present Old Gilroy locality.⁵¹

In 1814 Father Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta provided a list of the villages from whence the people at Mission San Juan Bautista were gathered. These included all the Mutsun-speaking villages, including the village of Mutsun and Ausaime.⁵² In the 1920s Harrington reviewed these mission records containing rancheria and personal names with Ascención Solórsano, who identified the place names, providing information about them and stories about some of the names. For instance, she said that Cañada de los Osos, located ten miles from Gilroy, received its name when "some cowboys once found all the bears there dancing beneath an encino. . ." She identified a person who was identified as being from the village of "Mottssum," and she provided additional information on that village location (Harrington concluded that "Mutsun" was the name of the tribe as well as the name of one village). Another rancheria was identified as "Ausaima," which was also on the list of villages Merriam put together while working with Barbara Solórsano.⁵³ This appears to be the village identified by Richard Levy in Mutsun

⁵⁰Milliken, Randall. "Chapter 3: Early History of Native Peoples," *Archaeological Test Excavations at Fourteen Sites Along Highways 101 and 152, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, California*, Volume 2: History, Ethnohistory, and Historic Archaeology. Davis, California: Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., 1993, p. 65.

⁵¹Milliken, Randall. "Chapter 3: Early History of Native Peoples," *Archaeological Test Excavations at Fourteen Sites Along Highways 101 and 152, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties, California*, Volume 2: History, Ethnohistory, and Historic Archaeology. Davis, California: Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., 1993, p. 66.

⁵²De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 130.

⁵³John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 110, 111, 124, 128, 129, 145, and 148.

territory as No. 25 on his list of Mutsun villages. His number 32 is Mutsun.⁵⁴

Merriam, himself, wrote to Harrington on September 8, 1929, asking some questions regarding Ascención, whom he called Harrington's "admirable informant." He noted that Ascención's mother had given him to understand that "Mutsun" was the name of a village in the vicinity of San Juan Bautista, and her tribe there was "Hoó-mon-twash." Merriam also provided Harrington with a list of names of "rancherías" that were listed in the San Juan Bautista mission books, including Hoó-mon-twash, Mutsun, Popeloutchom, and Ysleyu. He provided two lists of traditional villages in the region, including Ausaima.⁵⁵

Harrington wrote back on September 16, saying that he had succeeded in "unraveling all the San Juan language..." by consulting with Ascención Solórsano, with whose mother Barbara, Merriam had worked with years before--he said Ascención's daughter Claudia remembered Merriam well. Harrington said that "Hoo-mon-twas is a directional name, from hoo-moon, a point of the compass." "Moot-soon," he said, was the name of the tribe, "as you can tell from the way it is handled in the language." He also provided place names for current-day Gilroy, identified the "Yak-shoon" as Merriam's Tulare Indians, as well as many other place names in Mutsun territory.⁵⁶

Harrington also obtained Henry W. Henshaw's 1884 list of "San Juan Bautista" words,

Harrington to Merriam, September 16, 1929, Appendix 29, "Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Petition for Acknowledgment," Submitted by the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Irene Zwierlein, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Chairperson, April 26, 2002.

⁵⁴Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 485.

⁵⁵Merriam to Harrington, September 8, 1929, with attached notes from Harrington's consultation with Ascención Solórsano. John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

⁵⁶Harrington to Merriam, September 16, 1929, Appendix 29, "Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Petition for Acknowledgment," Submitted by the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Irene Zwierlein, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Chairperson, April 26, 2002.

that Henshaw had obtained from an informant named Maria, who lived near San Louis Obispo and was "about 60." She had been "brought up by the Spaniards...with but partial comprehension of her language." During the rehearing of Henshaw's manuscript with Ascención Solórsano, she identified and corrected words on the list and made additional comments. She said, for instance, in response to one place name, "There were lots of S. Juan Inds. at Soledad, living there..."⁵⁷

After missionization, as noted, the Mutsun-speaking peoples from the tribelets in the San Juan Valley were consolidated into the San Juaneños in the 19th century. These San Juan peoples are today represented by the Amah Mutsun Tribe (Mutsun-Speaking People). The territory that Amah Mutsun Tribe represents is the Mutsun territory within the larger Costanoan culture group.

Between 1797 and the 1830s Spanish authorities aggressively attempted to erase even the language of the people, as well as their customs and traditions. This violent suppression of Mutsun culture continued under the Mexican government until United States forces arrived in the 1840s. Unfortunately, the United States did not bring freedom and peace to the people, but instead an even more intense, and violent, attack on the native peoples of the region. It is thus remarkable that when Merriam first found Barbara Solórsano in 1902, knowledge of the pre-mission villages and culture of the Mutsun people was still fresh in her memory.⁵⁸

Even more remarkable was the knowledge Harrington found available with Ascención Solórsano in the 1920s. The work of Harrington, with Ascención Solórsano, eclipsed all

⁵⁷John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 92, 94, 95, and 101. Harrington used BAE Manuscript No. 296, in which the San Juan vocabulary is found following p. 228. He also notes BAE ms. 860.

Powell, John Wesley. "Annual Report of the Director," *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1884-'85*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888, pp. xxxi-xxxviii.

⁵⁸Merriam to Harrington, September 8, 1929, with attached notes from Harrington's consultation with Ascención Solórsano. John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

previous scholarship on the Mutsun, as well, in fact, as any successive work. Harrington read Merriam's place names to Solórsano, as well as place names he copied from mission records. She was able to shed considerable light on the Mutsun and their villages and territory in the time prior to the missions.⁵⁹

The work of Merriam and Harrington is central to an understanding of pre-mission Mutsun territory today. Levy relied on this work in mapping Mutsun boundaries and villages for the Smithsonian between 1972 and 1975. Mutsun lands were bounded by physical landscape features that provided a demarcation of their territory. As Levy said:

Territorial boundaries of tribelets were defined by physiographic features. Anza found that the Costanoans who accompanied his expedition were unwilling to step beyond the limits of their territory because of the hostility of neighboring groups.

Levy described the Mutsun ethnic group as occupying the drainage of the San Benito and Pajaro drainages and located ten Mutsun villages, including Mutsun and Ausaima.⁶⁰ This territory is the aboriginal territory of today's Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. [See attached map.]

Continuing Mutsun Leadership

Traditional Mutsun culture was peaceful and warfare was rare. The documentary records suggests that among the Mutsun, as among the neighboring Costanoan peoples, military

⁵⁹John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

⁶⁰Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians* (edited by Robert F. Heizer), Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 485, 719 and quoted at 487.

Bolton, Herbert E. (ed.) *Anza's California Expeditions*, Vol. 3, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930, p. 129.

See also these works Merriam in regard to villages and boundaries:

Merriam, C. Hart. "Studies of California Indians," The Staff of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California, eds., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955.

Merriam, C. Hart. "Village Names in Twelve California Mission Records," (Robert F. Heizer, ed.) *University of California Archaeological Survey Reports*, 74, Berkeley, 1968.

leadership was recognized in times of war, as was the knowledge of tribal elders and shamans. Shamans provided spiritual, or religious leadership, and were healers, with traditional knowledge for treating the ailments that might befall tribal members. By the time the United States exercised control of Mutsun territory, traditional villages were gone and organized military action by Mutsun leaders was impossible. However, traditional healers continued to command respect and provide leadership among the people, through the 19th and into the 20th century.

In traditional Mutsun society tribal members were exceptionally independent, and recognized only religious leaders and military leaders in times of war. Levy stated that "ideas of personal freedom precluded the existence of any type of institutionalized coercive power," adding that "Obedience to a higher authority was rendered only in time of war."⁶¹

A response to a query from authorities on Mission San Juan Bautista, in 1811, probably written by Father Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta reported that the Indians at his mission spoke a common language, and that they were exceedingly independent.

They do not have chiefs. The bravest and strongest were those who went out to their wars. Every man acted as he wished.⁶²

In 1814, Father de la Cuesta reported that the Mutsun people "did not recognize either captain or superior," but added that they did consult with the elders of the tribe prior to going to war and during religious and cultural gatherings, and although "they had no captains," if battle was necessary among this peaceful people, "the bravest and strongest would go out to battle..."⁶³ A

⁶¹Duran, Narcisco and Buenaventura Fortuny. *The History of Mission San Jose California, 1797-1835*, Francis F. McCarthy (ed) "Reply to the Interrogatorio of 1812, Mission San Jose," pp. 268-276; Fresno: Academy Library Guild, 1958, p. 274.

Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 487-488.

⁶²Kroeber, Alfred L. "A Mission Record of The California Indians," From a Manuscript in the Bancroft Library, Published May 28, 1908 in *University of California Publications In American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Newly Edited by Joel Gazis-SAX, Web Edition Copyright 1999 by Joel Gazis-SAX, Contents (Arranged by Joel GAZis-SAX).

⁶³De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 20-21.

similar query to a neighboring mission, brought another response, which refined the understanding of Costanoan leadership. A "Reply to the Interrogatorio of 1812, Mission San Jose," said that outside of the recognition of war and religious leaders, the Costanoans, "do not recognize any subordination, either civil or political, or even domestic, but each one lives and does whatever his inclination may be, without anyone interfering with another."⁶⁴

Leadership positions could be filled by either men or women and were generally passed on within families. Reflecting the dual types of leadership among the Mutsun, Harrington said that a "chief was responsible for feeding visitors; providing for the impoverished," as well as directing "warfare expeditions."⁶⁵ Elsewhere Harrington provided additional insight into social status among the San Juanenos. Generosity with property was considered a virtue in establishing social rank. Again he noted that chiefs could be either men or women and that were commonly hereditary in families, sometimes going from mother to daughter. Even so, community approval was necessary for a chief to assume authority. Harrington noted again, that a chief was responsible for feeding visitors and the impoverished, as well as providing necessary materials for ceremonial activities.⁶⁶

Yet, even after missionization and the brutal treatment of the Mutsun peoples by Spain, Mexico and the United States, this type of political leadership continued. The Mission of San

⁶⁴Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 487-488, citing: Duran, Narcisco and Buenaventura Fortuny. *The History of Mission San Jose California, 1797-1835*, Francis F. McCarthy (ed) "Reply to the Interrogatorio of 1812, Mission San Jose," pp. 268-276; Fresno: Academy Library Guild, 1958, p. 274.

⁶⁵Harrington, John P. "Report on Fieldwork on Indians of Monterey and San Bernardino Counties," *49th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology for the Years, 1931-1932*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933, p. 3.

Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 487, citing Harrington.

Milliken, Randall. People of the Santa Clara Valley in the 1770s," *Archaeological Investigations*, California Department of Transportation, Dist. 4, 1994, p. ii, also citing Harrington.

⁶⁶Harrington, John P. "Culture Element Distributions: XIX, Central California Coast," *Anthropological Records*, 7:1; University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1942, pp. 31-34.

Juan Bautista was founded in 1797. This was a *reducción* mission, intended to gather the Indians around the mission and end native life.

Despite romantic interpretations found in literature and history, the California missions were coercive authoritarian institutions.

"Neophytes" or "Converts" were not allowed to leave. Harsh treatment, including

whipping with a barbed lash, solitary confinement, mutilation, use of stocks and hobbles, branding, and even execution for both men and women characterized the "gentle yoke of Catholicism" introduced to neophytes.

Throughout the region there were revolts against Spanish authorities by the Costanoans. A three-year Costanoan revolt occurred beginning in about 1793; another revolt by Costanoans took place at Mission San Jose in 1800; and other Costanoans escaped in 1795. Mutsun people found refuge in the hills above Mission San Juan Bautista, fleeing whenever Spanish troops approached. But even after the secularization of the missions beginning in 1834, military authorities of both Spain and Mexico brutally put down insurrections, and committed mass executions of those they believed to be involved.

The price of missionization had indeed been high: only 15,000 neophytes survived conversion of a total of 53,600 baptized between 1769 and 1836....⁶⁷

Opposition by Mutsun people against despotic rule by Spain was still evident after secularization, when an unsalaried missionary continued to maintain Mission San Juan Bautista. Depredations by ex-neophytes destroyed much of the mission property within 2 years. Non-

⁶⁷ Castillo, Edward D. "The Impact of Euro-American Exploration and Settlement," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 101-106.

Heizer, Robert F. "Treaties," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 701, estimated that the Californian Indians numbered 350,000 in 1769 and were reduced to 100,000 by 1846. Merriam, C. Hart. (Compiled and edited by Robert F. Heizer) "Ethnographic Notes on California Indian Tribes III. Ethnological Notes on Central California Indian Tribes," *Reports of the University of California Archaeological Survey*, No. 68, Part III; Berkeley: University of California Archaeological Research Facility, 1967, p. 392.

mission Indians killed two "neophytes" in 1837 and more depredations occurred in 1838. Some violence continued until the United States assumed rule in the territory. In 1849 non-Indian residents around Mission San Juan Bautista reported continuing depredations by the Indians and requested powder and lead. The government authorized dispensing ammunition and promised troops soon.⁶⁸

Following secularization of the mission, lands around San Juan Bautista were released from church ownership and San Juan became a pueblo. But mission authorities reported that much of the mixed population continued to support the church, and services were held without interruption. A few years later, in 1858 under United States rule, title to lands in the immediate vicinity of the mission, about fifty-five acres, was returned to the church.⁶⁹

Throughout the mission period, church leaders at San Juan Bautista Mission carefully kept track of all Indians under their control, whether converted or unconverted. Unfortunately, after the United States assumed control over the territory, as "hordes" of Americans entered California, violence against the Indians again increased. Massacres of California Indians were carried out by United States forces in the immediate years following the end of the Mexican War. Some twelve percent of California Indian population was lost due to military or vigilante (supported by U.S. funds) campaigns by 1860.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 61, 63 and 82-83.

⁶⁹For more information on San Juan Bautista Mission, see:

Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931.

Breschini, G.S., T. Haversat, and R.P. Hampson, *A Cultural Resources Overview of the Coast and Coast-Valley Study Areas* [California] (Coyote Press, Salinas, CA, 1983).

⁷⁰Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931.

Between 1797 and 1860, Spain, Mexico and the United States, in savage attacks against the Costanoans, ended any tribal military chiefs' activities and leadership reverted entirely to the religious and curative roles. It is important to emphasize that even after the missionization and the cruel treatment of the Mutsun peoples by Spain, Mexico and the United States, this type of political leadership continued within the Mutsun, or as it was then more commonly known, San Juaneño, community in the vicinity of San Juan Bautista Mission.

In the late 18th century, Junipero Sierra, a Mutsun named for the famous Spanish Junipero Serra, took on a role of leadership among the people. The Spanish authorities recognized his authority and he became *alcalde* of the mission. Although the exact dates of his birth and death are not known, his authority in this position must have been during the later Spanish period, through the Mexican period, and perhaps into the early years of United States rule. His granddaughter later recalled his leadership role and the authority invested in him by Spanish authorities.⁷¹

His daughter Barbara Sierra inherited a leadership role. She and her husband, Miguel Solórsano, were both full-blood Mutsun Indians. Barbara, with Miguel, acted as tradition bearers, preserving both the language and knowledge of culture of the people.⁷² Barbara was

Castillo, Edward D. "The Impact of Euro-American Exploration and Settlement," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 107-108, quoted at 107.

⁷¹John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 58, contains information on Sierra, including, for example, frame number 314 and 328.

⁷²Information on Miguel Solórsano and Barbara Sierra can be found in both the works of Harrington and Merriam, including, for instance, the following:

John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 58, for example, frame numbers 263, 264, 273, 274, 275, and 315-316. Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, Excerpts from

born at the beginning of the Mexican period, in 1836, and lived through the vicious years of Mexican and early United States rule, dying in 1913. C. Hart Merriam was amazed, in 1902, to locate Barbara and to learn she was thoroughly knowledgeable about the culture and language of the Mutsun people. He obtained linguistic and cultural information from Barbara Sierra during the years 1902 to 1904.⁷³

Although limited biographical information is available today about the leadership roles of Junipero, his daughter Barbara Sierra and her husband Miguel Solórsano, a wealth of information is available concerning the daughter of Barbara Sierra and Miguel Solórsano. Well before the deaths of her parents, Ascención Solórsano had become a leader among the San Juaneños. All culture must be to some extent dynamic in order to survive historic changes, and the Mutsun culture was no exception. Nevertheless, it is important to note the many traditional characteristics of tribal leadership that remained unchanged in the behavior and character of Ascención Solórsano.

Ascención Solórsano learned the Mutsun language from her father and mother. She, in turn, became an important leader and tradition-bearer among her people.. When John Peabody Harrington began interviewing her in the 1920s, she was able to provide a veritable treasure of information about the Mutsun people—culture, language, and biographical information.⁷⁴ She had

"Interviews with the San Juan Indians."

⁷³Merriam to Harrington, September 8, 1929, with attached notes from Harrington's consultation with Ascención Solórsano. John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 41, frame numbers 74-78.

Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984. Excerpts from "Interviews with the San Juan Indians." This material is found in Harrington's "San Juan Report" in frames 240-996 of roll 58 and frames 1-1126 of roll 59.

Kroeber, Theodora and Robert F. Heizer (edited by F. David Hales). *Almost Ancestors: The First Californians*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1968, pp. 22 and 166.

studied and learned healing practices coming out of Mutsun shamanistic curative leadership tradition dating to pre-Spanish times

De la Cuesta, in 1814, provided some good information on shamanistic curing practices among the Mutsun. Although he stated that, "These poor people know nothing about medicine," he went on to describe some of their medical practices.

They, indeed, cure themselves once in a while with herbs and roots which from experience they know to be beneficial. There are many healers and sorcerers who win many beads (Indian money) for curing, and at other times nothing. They cure by singing, and with gestures and shouts make their superstitious cures. The only case in which they succeed is in bleeding with a flint, and sucking the blood. Likewise, in the case of overeating, which resulted in distress and indigestion, they apply to the patient a sort of syringe.⁷⁵

Although the Spanish and Mexican authorities attempted to suppress Mutsun language and culture, they did allow the people to gather traditional foods and herbs. When the neophytes did not have a large enough food supply from mission agricultural pursuits imposed by the Spaniards, they relied on traditional practices. According to de la Cuesta,

the neophytes return to the mountains in search of wild seeds....The pagans do not understand agriculture, and although now they know something about it and have a knowledge of it, their indolence suits them better, and what the land yields them without any cultivation.⁷⁶

⁷⁴For example, see:

John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 58, for example, frame numbers 263, 264, 273, 274 275, 294, 300, 302, and 303.

⁷⁵De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 17.

⁷⁶De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 19-20.

Shamanistic healing practices continued to be passed along through the generations. Ascención was an herbalist who used traditional remedies to cure the sick and who knew traditional songs and practices of her people. Though she herself had limited means, she was exceedingly generous, taking in, feeding, and treating the poor and infirm, while refusing any payment. Two entire rolls of microfilm of Harrington's notes are devoted to the "Medicine Practices of Mrs. Ascención Solórsano." Harrington anticipated publishing an extensive monograph devoted entirely to the material in these notes. Hundreds of cures, using herbs and wild plants are listed, as well as lists of wild plants which she gave to Harrington. Also included are testimonies of others as to the generosity, as well as the efficacy of Solórsano's cures.⁷⁷ Ascención Solórsano described, "how my house in Gilroy was like a hospital for many years," and how she cared for and fed the poor when they needed attention.⁷⁸ Others testified to her knowledge, compassion and ability. One of them, Benito P. Sanchez, said he "saw an infinite number of persons get cured by herbs and the hand of that noble woman, who never asked recompense for her labor."⁷⁹ Sanchez said she cured an ailment in his legs using only "herbs and a salve." He said previously four doctors had told him he would have to have one of his legs amputated. He described the herbs and salve she used to cure him of this and other ailments.⁸⁰ On another occasion, Sanchez said she saved the life of a child using her traditional herbal remedies. He said Señora Solórsano agreed to treat the child, saying, "When the doctors fail,

⁷⁷Mills, Elaine L. (ed.) *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*, Volume Two, "A Guide to the Field Notes, Native American History, Language and Culture of Northern and Central California," Kraus International Publications: White Plains, New York: Smithsonian Institution, 1985, p. 98.

⁷⁸John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame numbers 2-3.

⁷⁹John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame number 10.

⁸⁰John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame numbers 17-18.

then people think of the Indian woman Ascención." She refused to be paid, saying:

It is not that I come to be paid señora. It is not money that has value, it is our health that has value. What does money avail without health. But now, señora, I am going to make an effort with your child. God is very powerful.⁸¹

Ascención described how she administered to an Indian woman named Maggie. The woman had been left in San Francisco as a child after all her people were killed by Californians. She was nearly lynched by Anglos for stealing, but was saved by "a committee of native California men" from the San Juan region, who "went and stopped the Americans." Maggie died the day after Christmas in 1915, in the home of Doña Ascención, who arranged for a proper burial for her.⁸²

Harrington copied down hundreds of different cures from Ascención Solórsano. These included remedies for serious ailments, such as epilepsy and asthma; and less serious ailments, such as blisters, swollen tonsils, colds, and yellow-jacket stings. There were also remedies used to help in child rearing. For instance, she described the following remedy that could be used for a child that had not begun to walk at the proper age. She said, "one takes coyote fat and fries it and then with this fat one rubs the little legs of the baby every night so that he will get strength and walk."⁸³

Traditional leadership among the Mutsun people was characterized by generosity.⁸⁴

⁸¹John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame numbers 18-19.

⁸²John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame numbers 33-36.

⁸³John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame number 80.

⁸⁴For instance see:

De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 19-20.

Female leadership was common, as was the familial inheritance of leadership roles. Tribal leaders were known to feed visitors and the impoverished.⁸⁵ Ascención Solórsano embodied each of these traditional characteristics of Mutsun leadership. She was recognized in her own Indian community for these same characteristics; she was recognized in the surrounding non-Indian community for the same characteristics. Indeed, even today, she is remembered in the non-Indian community--a new high school in Gilroy is soon to be named in her honor.⁸⁶

Mutsun culture and language did not die with Ascención. When Harrington desired more information on some of the medical subjects related to Doña Ascención, he contacted her daughter Dionisia, and her granddaughter, Marta J. Herrera, who were able to provide him with additional details.⁸⁷

Leadership among the people also continued in the 20th century. After Ascención's death, her daughter Maria Dionisia became a tribal leader. She had learned some of the herbal knowledge from her mother (as did Ascención's niece Tonia). Dionisia's home became a gathering place, where tribal members could share news. During the 1920s at the request of her people and non-Indian officials, she assisted in carrying out a census to determine the number of Indians in the region. Government officials requested her assistance because they knew she had knowledge of Indians living in the region. As her son recalled recently:

They must have come to her because she was so well known. In her own way, she knew everybody. She never went anywhere. They come to her. So, evidently somebody had a reference to her

⁸⁵Harrington, John P. "Culture Element Distributions: XIX, Central California Coast," *Anthropological Records*, 7:1; University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1942, pp. 31-34.

⁸⁶Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 2, transcript p. 25.

⁸⁷John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 60, for example, frame numbers 44 and 49.

that she knew the local people. So, evidently that's the only thing that I thought about a lot of times, that they come to her through the fact that so many people says, talk to Mary.⁸⁸

Maria Dionisia Cervantes also acted as an interpreter for the court, sponsored gatherings at her home, and distributed clothing to the poor. Each of these activities demonstrates that Maria Dionisia possessed the same traditional Mutsun cultural characteristics for leadership that were exhibited by her mother and grandmother.⁸⁹

Maria Dionisia's son has also continued in a leadership role among the Mutsun people. Today he is the Tribal Administrator of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. Through his family, one can see the inheritance, not only of tribal leadership, but of traditional leadership qualities, through the 19th and 20th century, and into the 21st century.

Amah Mutsun Cultural Continuity

Traditions are passed from generation to generation by word of mouth or demonstration. Mutually held traditions are the cement that holds tribal structure together. Traditions related to curative knowledge, religion, mythology and animal symbolism, and mortality that were recorded by Harrington in the early 20th century are still evident among the people today, in the early 21st century. Recent fieldwork conducted with Joseph Mondragon, Tribal Administrator for the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, provides evidence of this continuity of tribal traditions.

Harrington described in depth the medical practices of Ascención Solórsano, and his notes documented hundreds of cures, using herbs and wild plants, as well as many other

⁸⁸Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript pp. 4-5, 13 and 25; tape 2, pp. 34-37, quoted at 37.

⁸⁹Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript pp. 25; tape 2, pp. 27-30; and tape 3, pp. 2 and 4.

utilitarian uses for plants.⁹⁰ Joseph Mondragon was a child when Harrington lived in the house of his mother Maria Dionisia Cervantes, while documenting the knowledge of his grandmother Ascención Solórsano. He recalled his mother addressing Harrington as "Juanito," during the months that he lived with them.⁹¹ One of the important plants described by Ascención was called the "Yorba del pescado root," or "fish weed." Ascención described how this plant was prepared and then placed in still areas of streams to stun fish that they might be caught.⁹² Mr. Mondragon was able to describe the use of what he called "Dug Weed," which he said was found around the countryside around today's town of Gilroy.

What they do, is they would collect it and get a big bunch of it and then they would mash it and make it into a real pulp. Then, when like you've seen, where little rapids comes in and then there's a big pool and then it overflows. Usually, you can see in there all kinds of different fish. You thrown your hook in or whatever to try and get one. Nothing bites so you're frustrated. But anyway, the Indian people knew you took this Dug Weed and balled it up real good and then up in the top they would swish it around, and then my mother used to say, grandma was so brave she, where the edge of the willows the roots, well she'd get over there and grab a hold of the top and kick the stuff underneath it, about 15 minutes later the fish come belly up. You were down on the other end and you would pick out the fish you were going to have for supper. The rest of them you'd let go. It didn't kill them. . .

He added that his cousin Tonya, learned to identify this root and still could today. Another tribal

⁹⁰John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, reel numbers 58, 59, 60 and 61.

⁹¹Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002; tape 1, transcript p. 2.

⁹²Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, excerpts from "Interviews with the San Juan Indians."

Martin, John M. "Mission San Juan Bautista, California: The Causes and Effects of its Rise and Decline," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Santa Clara, 1933, pp. 39-41, also described yorba del pescado, and commented on Ascención's knowledge of herbal cures.

member, Antonia Corona, who was raised by his grandmother, also learned traditional herbal knowledge from her and from his mother.⁹³

Joseph Mondragon also reported traditional knowledge regarding food, which he learned from his mother and grandmother, and which was not recorded by Harrington. He recalled a bean that was used to feed a baby if the mother was without milk.

When the Indian people, say for instance, the mother didn't have enough to feed the baby, they would boil these beans and, you know, when you boil them you've got that little loop, they'd strain it, add a little water to it, put it in a milk bottle, in a baby bottle, and that baby would be the biggest chub you ever saw. But it was all protein. And they were just as fat as could be on that bean juice.

He also recalled communal distribution of venison, when he was young, in order to ensure everyone had sufficient meat.⁹⁴

Mr. Mondragon reported that the Amah Mutsun people worshipped the sun, a practice that was documented by a chronicler of the Anza expedition of 1774, and reported by Levy in his essay for the Smithsonian's *Handbook on California Indians*.⁹⁵ Mr. Mondragon said that the Mutsun Indians who built the church for the mission priests, built it so that the sun shines through the windows on the altar on the winter and summer solstice.⁹⁶

⁹³Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002; tape 1, transcript pp. 4-7, quoted at 5.

⁹⁴Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 2, transcript p. 29.

⁹⁵Bolton, Herbert E. *Anza's California Expeditions*, Vol. 3, "Palou's Account of the Founding of San Francisco," Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930, p. 425.

Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, p. 488.

⁹⁶Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript p. 12

Harrington reported a number of traditional beliefs and stories relating to animal symbolism. These stories and beliefs related to such animals as the coyote, owl, and fox.⁹⁷ Mr. Mondragon also reported similar animal beliefs. He reported that the people were "very superstitious about an owl visiting."

According to the old people, when an owl comes, and you saw it, it was an announcement of death. Someone was going to pass away by coincidence or something. They called it the bird of death.⁹⁸

The same tradition was reported by Harrington eighty years earlier.⁹⁹

Mr. Mondragon also commented on the coyote and the hummingbird:

Oh, we heard various all kinds of stories on the coyotes about them being devious, sneaky, and the other one was where the great spirit the eagle was flying when the flood had claimed that he was sent down on earth to see if there was a spot that was dry so he found a couple good spots so he came back and told the eagle that he didn't see nothing and then he said he didn't quite think that was true, so he sent the humming bird, and the humming bird went all the way around and found a lot of places and came back and whispered to the great spirit of the eagle, this and this, and so that is our logo of our tribe, is the humming bird.¹⁰⁰

Father Arroyo de la Cuesta recorded reports of Mutsun traditions concerning a great flood as early as 1811 and 1814.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, for example, see reel number 58, frame numbers 263, 264, 273, 274 and 275; reel number 60, frame number 80.

⁹⁸Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript p. 14.

⁹⁹Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 489, citing the following

Harrington work on a Costanoan tribe. Harrington, J. P. Chochenyo Fieldnotes. Manuscript in Survey of California Indian Languages, Department of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley.

¹⁰⁰Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript p. 15.

¹⁰¹Kroeber, Alfred L. "A Mission Record of the California Indians (1811)," from a Manuscript in the Bancroft

One of the most interesting Mutsun traditions described by Joseph Mondragon concerned the cucusui. He said that the cucusui was a personification of the devil, with human form but cloven feet. Mr. Mondragon reported another tribal member and acquaintance, Tony Corona, who had recently passed away at the age of 99, "swore he saw him."¹⁰² Mr. Mondragon said the tradition of the Mutsun people was that the cucusui "would appear at different places around...tribal territory, that he would hang from his feet like a bat."¹⁰³

Harrington also reported on Mutsun beliefs concerning the "cú cu sui" or "Kúksui." In his notes on Mutsun songs, Harrington described the "kúksui," who danced in the hills and wore a special headdress.¹⁰⁴ Ascención Solórsano's granddaughter Marta Herrera also provided notes on one Kúksui song, saying that "White people used to come from far & wide to see [the Kúksui song]," which "was sung in the sweat house."¹⁰⁵

Mr. Mondragon also recalled the tradition of "One-Leg," who lived in a cave in what is

Library, Published May 28, 1908 in University of California Publications in American Archaeology And Ethnology, Newly Edited by Joel Gazis-SAX, Web Edition Copyright 1999 by Joel Gazis-SAX, Contents (Arranged by Joel GAZis-SAX)

De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, p. 18.

¹⁰²Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript pp. 24-25.

¹⁰³Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript p. 33.

Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, excerpts from "Interviews with the San Juan Indians," also includes a description of the cucusui hanging by his toenails.

¹⁰⁴John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 33, 72, and 80-81.

¹⁰⁵John P. Harrington Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm, reel number 36, frame numbers 80-81.

now Pinnacles National Monument, and who was destroyed by the people because he ate children, a tradition also recited to Harrington by Ascención during his work with her in the 1920s.¹⁰⁶

Although traditional tribal gatherings were prohibited or discouraged by both church and government in the eighteenth and centuries, Mutsun people managed to maintain their language and traditions. In the twentieth century public tribal gatherings became easier. According to Mr. Mondragon, Mutsun people have gathered together at fiestas and rodeos (like many other tribes in the Southwest, Great Basin and Plateau regions) where they could keep track of families and where stories and traditions could be passed on to new generations. Mutsun people gathered at fiestas and rodeos, and later pow-wows throughout the twentieth century. Mr. Mondragon has been attending the Stanford pow-wow since the late 1960s.¹⁰⁷

Mutsun people can today still trace the outlines of the boundaries of their traditional lands.¹⁰⁸ They continue to tell the stories told by their ancestors for generations. They hold beliefs that were held by their Indian forbearers, and maintain traditions recalling other beliefs of their tribal ancestors.

A final example is illuminating. Mr. Mondragon reported that, "It was very bad of you

¹⁰⁶Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 2, transcript p. 4.

Peabody, John Harrington. "The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957," National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Microfilmed: Millwood, New York: Krauss International, 1984, excerpts from "Interviews with the San Juan Indians,"

¹⁰⁷Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript pp. 10-11; tape 2, transcript pp 10-11 and 25; and tape 3, transcript p. 14.

¹⁰⁸Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwierlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the

not to attend a funeral...it was insult to families..."¹⁰⁹ He also reported that his mother never mentioned people's names after they had died.¹¹⁰ Here again is a tradition inherited from an older tribal tradition and similar to what has previously been documented for the Mutsun people. In 1814 de la Cuesta reported the custom as it existed then.

[Mutsun people] would say that the spirits of the dead went to the west; but they could not tell what they did there. For this reason they never name the dead. Indeed, it is the greatest grief and injury even to name the dead before them; and they pagans still observe the foolish custom.¹¹¹

Conclusions

The documentary record provides abundant evidence relating to the language, culture, villages and territory of the Mutsun people. Even after their territory was controlled first by the Spanish government, then the Mexican government, and finally the government of the United States, the language, customs, culture, healing practices and leadership roles continued to be passed down, generation from generation, through traditional mechanisms.

The remarkable body of material collected by John Peabody Harrington, provides convincing evidence of the continuity of traditional Mutsun culture, language, and curing practices, as evidenced by the knowledge of Ascención Solórsano, who was recognized both

offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 2, transcript pp. 1-3.

¹⁰⁹ Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwielerlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 2, transcript p. 25.

¹¹⁰ Mondragon, Joseph. Interview by E. Richard Hart. Also present: Irenne Zwielerlein, Chairperson Amah Mutsun Tribe; Katherine Hicks, Secretary, Amah Mutsun Tribe; Jennifer Starks, Pillsbury Winthrop. Recorded in the offices of Pillsbury Winthrop, San Francisco, California; October 15, 2002, tape 1, transcript pp 13-14.

¹¹¹ De la Cuesta, Felipe Arroyo. "Repuesta" ("replies" to the Interrogatorio), May 1, 1814, as translated and reprinted in: Engelhardt, Zephyrin. *Mission San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music*, Mission Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara, California, 1931, pp. 23-24.

Levy, Richard. "Costanoan," *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 8, California; Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978, pp. 491, reported that, "The names of dead persons were not spoken until formally bestowed anew upon another individual."

within her own community and in the surrounding non-Indian community. This knowledge was passed down through the generations by the Mutsun people and then collected from Solórsano by Harrington. Only a fraction of the Harrington papers have been examined. A thorough analysis of this work will undoubtedly provide even greater detail of Mutsun traditional culture.

After the death of Ascención Solórsano, cultural beliefs and leadership roles continued to be passed down among people of Mutsun descent. Recent fieldwork among members of today's Amah Mutsun Tribal Band provides evidence of such cultural continuity among Band members. Current tribal members recount stories that Ascención told Harrington. They have traditional knowledge of plants, food, animals, and the supernatural. These mutually held traditions are the cement that holds tribal structure together and allows tribal cultural continuity to endure.