

The Trail to Fernando

JOHN R. JOHNSON

Fernando Librado *kitsepawit*¹ was among the most important native Californians to have lived during the historic era. Thanks to Fernando, and to the linguist-ethnographer, John P. Harrington, who wrote down what Fernando told him, a large corpus of Chumash linguistic data, traditional history, and lore has been preserved for future generations to enjoy and learn from.

Fernando's relation of Chumash traditional history and ritual knowledge has been reconstructed in *The Eye of the Flute* (Hudson *et al.* 1977). Many of the Chumash stories he remembered have appeared in *December's Child: A Book of Chumash Oral Narratives* (Blackburn 1975). His knowledge of Chumash plank-canoe construction has been documented in an intensive study of Chumash watercraft (Hudson, Timbrook, and Rempé 1978). Fernando's reminiscences of life during the nineteenth century in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties have most recently appeared in *Breath of the Sun* (Hudson 1979). The publication of this latter book has literally filled in a nearly forgotten chapter of California history, by relating incidents in the lives of the Mission Indians during the post-mission era. Other works derived wholly or in part from Fernando's collaboration with Harrington are currently in press, including a five-volume work incorporating the information obtained from Fernando and Harrington's other Chumash consultants regarding Chumash material culture (Hudson and Blackburn n.d.).

In light of Fernando's significant contribution to our understanding of Chumash cultural history and lifeways, it is of some importance to be acquainted with the basic



Fig. 1. Fernando Librado *kitsepawit* in 1907. The caption accompanying the original photograph put Fernando's age at "over 100 years old." Courtesy of the Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library.

facts of his life: when he was born, who his parents were, where he lived, and so forth. These life history details help us to sort out what Fernando actually experienced from what he was told by his elders about the cultural institutions and practices described in Harrington's notes.

Some of the basic information about

John R. Johnson, Dept. of Anthropology, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.

Fernando's life has been previously published. We know for example that his parents were Mamerto and Juana Alfonsa, both from Santa Cruz Island, and that Fernando was baptized at Mission San Buenaventura (Hudson *et al.* 1977:3). We also know that he lived much of his later life on ranches near Lompoc and Las Cruces (Blackburn 1975; Smith 1982). Fernando was a colorful character and was well known to many local residents, including some who are still alive today (Abbott 1957: 244; Nabokov 1980). Harrington met Fernando at Las Cruces in 1912 and thereafter worked with him constantly for the next several years (Hudson *et al.* 1977: 3-4). Fernando died after receiving sacraments on June 5, 1915, at Santa Barbara's Cottage Hospital. The cause of his death was listed as "heart trouble." His burial entry is #1473 on page 11 of the Calvary Cemetery Book of Interments (Hudson 1979: 146).

One basic piece of information regarding Fernando Librado has until now remained a puzzle: his date of birth. Fernando was unable to obtain this information himself when he asked Fr. Gonzelez Rubio to locate his baptism in the Mission San Buenaventura *Libro de Bautismos*. Recent attempts to locate his baptismal entry have also been unsuccessful (e.g., Hudson *et al.* 1977: 121-122). In 1980, while conducting research on Chumash demography and social organization at the Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, the author discovered a line of evidence which led him to Fernando's baptism. The missing link connecting Fernando with his baptismal entry has not been presented until now.

Several major problems have plagued previous efforts to identify Fernando in the mission and civil records. The foremost problem has been Fernando's true age. Contemporary records from the early twentieth century attributed an advanced age to Fernando. For example, an early Santa Barbara news-

paper, *The Independent*, printed the following article² on September 5, 1911:

The board of supervisors this morning granted county aid in the amount of \$12 a month to Fernando Librado, who is believed to be the oldest man in this section of the county.

Librado is an Indian and lives at Las Cruces. His exact age is uncertain, but it is believed to be in excess of 120 years. He was born on Santa Cruz Island, and is a member of the tribe known as "Mum" Indians. He was well educated by the priests and is highly intelligent.

When the Purisimo [sic] mission was built, about 98 or 99 years ago, he assisted in the work, and carried two tiles at a time to the roof. As two tiles are a heavy load, he must have been a full grown man at the time and a strong one at that, in order to have been physically able to perform the work.³

At present Librado is well and fairly active, doing odd chores around the place where he lives.

According to Fernando's burial entry, he was 110 years old at death. This would place birth in 1804 or 1805. However, as Hudson has pointed out, the U. S. Census records of 1880 and 1900 provide conflicting age estimates, suggesting birth dates of 1830 and 1805 respectively (Hudson 1979:x).⁴

In fact, when we identify Fernando's parents in the Mission San Buenaventura registers, we realize that Fernando could not have been as old as the early twentieth century records would indicate.⁵ Fernando's mother, Juana Alfonsa, was baptized in 1816 from the village of *swaxil* on Santa Cruz Island. She was five years old (SBv Bapt. Book 2 #533). Fernando's father, Mamerto *Yaguiahuit*, was baptized in 1814 from the village of *nanawani* on Santa Cruz Island. He was two years old (SBv Bapt. Book 2 #361; Hudson 1979: 147). The couple was not married until May 3, 1830 (SBv Mar. #1066). If Fernando's parents were indeed Mamerto and Juana Alfonsa, then he most likely was

born after 1830.

The *padron* of Mission San Buenaventura lists five children for Juana Alfonsa and Mamerto. Their entry numbers in the second baptismal register of Mission San Buenaventura and their dates of baptism follow:

Francisca	#1171	October 3, 1831
Venancio	#1199	April 1, 1833
Geronimo Emiliano	#1267	July 22, 1836
Juana de Dios	#1302	March 8, 1838
Bernardo	#1336	August 21, 1839

The reader will readily notice that *Fernando* does not appear among these children. Several possibilities present themselves: (1) Fernando's parents were not Mamerto and Juana Alfonsa, (2) Fernando was baptized at another mission, and perhaps while his parents were visiting relatives, or (3) Fernando's name was changed.

Several investigators had previously searched for persons by the name of Fernando in the mission records. Because Fernando's burial entry stated that he was from Santa Cruz Island, it might be expected that he would turn up among the Cruzeño Chumash baptisms at Mission San Buenaventura or Mission Santa Barbara. However, efforts to locate a Fernando which might be identified as Fernando Librado have previously met with no success (Robert Lopez, Steven Craig, personal communications).

When the discovery process had reached this point, information from an additional document came to light. In 1856 Fr. Juan Camopla prepared a *padron* of Catholics who were under the combined jurisdictions of Santa Inés and La Purísima missions. He listed their Christian names, their parents when known, their place of residence, age, and place of baptism.⁶ At La Espada rancho, along with the family of Gaspar Oreña and his wife, Maria Antonia de la Guerra, are listed the names of two Indian laborers, Ramon and Fernando. Both are stated to be from San Buenaventura.

It is known that there was a San Buenaventura Indian of Island Chumash descent who Fernando called his "uncle" Ramon (Hudson 1979: 150). Harrington's Purisimeño placename notes record the following information from Fernando:

Once at Espada ranch the old Indian [Silverio] Conóyo⁷ was telling Don Gaspar Oreña how the sea lion breaks rocks with its breast . . . [Fernando] asked Conóyo how [he] called Espada ranch. Conóyo answered shilimaqstush⁸ . . . [Fernando's] uncle Ramon was interpreting for Don Gaspar [Harrington n.d.].

This note associates Ramon, Fernando, and Gaspar Oreña together at Rancho Espada and confirms the identification of the Fernando in the 1856 *padron* as the Fernando Librado in whom we are interested. Fernando's estimated age of eighteen in 1856 would indicate a birth around the year 1838.

Another hint regarding Fernando's true age is contained in some information obtained from Harrington's Barbareño consultant, Luisa Ygnacia:

When la. [Luisa] was married to her first husband but had not had a baby yet (la.'s first husband died five years after they were married and la. was twenty-one when her first husband died), they were living near the beach *east* of the mouth of the Goleta estero . . . F. and S., two Indian boys who had run away from Ventura arrived. These boys were about fourteen years old. They stayed there. Don Daniel Hill took charge of the boys, and later they were returned – S. to Arnaz and F. to Escandón . . . when the two boys grew up, S. turned out tall and F. *chapito*. la. was several years older than S. and F. who were about the same age as each other [Harrington n.d.].

F. and S. may be identified from other sources as Fernando Librado and Simplicio Pico (Blackburn 1975: 18; Hudson 1979: 152). Luisa Ygnacia was married to her first husband, Policarpo, in August, 1851 (SBar

Mar. #1413). She had two children by Policarpo. The first, Rafael, was baptized on November 4, 1852. Therefore, Luisa's age estimate for Fernando would indicate a birth somewhere around 1838. We also know that Simplicio was baptized in May, 1839 (Blackburn 1975: 20; SBv Bapt. Book 2 #1330).

The information presented above provides us with a birthdate for Fernando in the 1838 vicinity. Returning to the San Buenaventura registers, it was quickly discovered that the first four of Mamerto's and Juana Alfonsa's children died in infancy. Only Bernardo's death was not recorded in the burial register. As it turns out, the year following Bernardo's birth brought the untimely death of his father Mamerto, who died at the presidio town of Santa Barbara. Mamerto perished from blows to the head by an unknown assailant on October 28, 1840 (SBar Burial #3454; SBv Burial #672; Hudson 1979: 147). A closer examination of the San Buenaventura *padron* revealed that Juana Alfonsa and Bernardo survived Mamerto's death, since their names were transferred from the family section of the *padron* to the widows' and singles' lists respectively. The total sum of the evidence supports a conclusion that Bernardo and Fernando were in fact the same person. Somehow Fernando's name changed in the years prior to his eighteenth birthday. The question becomes: How and why did this change occur?

While conducting further research on Chumash geneologies, another case was discovered, almost identical to that of Fernando Librado. The Mission Santa Barbara baptismal register records an entry of a newborn child to an Indian neophyte couple named as Valentin and Fernanda (SBar Bapt. #4557). However, when Fernanda's own baptismal and marriage entries were checked, it was revealed that her Christian name was actually Bernarda. Based on two cases of strikingly similar circumstances, Dr. Kenneth Whistler

of the Univ. of California, Santa Barbara, who is currently conducting studies in Chumash linguistics, was approached for an explanation. Whistler quickly provided a solution to the problem. Since no [b], [r], or [d] sounds existed in Chumash, a speaker of that language would have difficulty pronouncing the name *Bernardo*. A Chumash pronunciation might most closely approximate *pelnaltu*. It is interesting that the almost identical form, *pelnantu* would be the most likely Chumash pronunciation for *Fernando* since the [f] sound is also rendered as a [p]. This explicates the mix-up in names and provides the final solution to the mystery of Fernando's baptism.

This discovery might seem to be of only passing historical interest. However, knowledge of Fernando Librado's birthdate and age (Table 1) acquires significance because it allows us to place in perspective the information obtained by Harrington from his principal consultant on Ventureño, Cruzeño, and Purisimeño linguistics and folklore. Fernando Librado's birth took place in 1839 in the period following the secularization of the missions. As he grew up he witnessed the disintegration of the former mission communities and coming of the Yankees. While travelling throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, Fernando became intimately acquainted with many former neophytes from five principal missions. A number of these Indians had been born and raised in native Chumash society prior to their baptisms. But probably none whom he knew well had experienced native society prior to the coming of the Europeans.

Fernando represented the third generation of Chumash after the initial European colonization of California. He learned what he could from an older generation, which itself was relying upon a previous generation, for information on prehispanic Chumash lifeways. At least three sets of memories were thereby

Table 1

DOCUMENTATION OF FERNANDO LIBRADO'S NAME, RESIDENCE, AND AGE

Source ^a	Year	Name	Residence	Estimated Age ^b	Actual Age
Baptism	1839	Bernardo	Mission San Buenaventura	newborn	—
Luisa Ygnacia	c. 1852	F.	La Patera	est. 14	13
Padron	1856	Fernando	La Espada	18	17
U. S. Census	1880	Fernandez Lebrado	ranch of Henry Dibblee, Las Cruces	50	41
U. S. Census	1900	Fernando Librado	neighbor of Jacob Loustalot	95	61
Photograph	1907	Fernando Librado		over 100	68
<i>Independent</i> article	1911	Fernando Librado	Las Cruces	120	72
Burial	1915	Fernando Librado		110	75

^aMission register data from copies of registers on file at the Santa Barbara Mission Archives, Louisa Ygnacia's information recorded by Harrington (n.d.), U. S. Census data from Hudson (1979:146).

^bIt will be noted that Fernando's age, as estimated by his contemporaries, increased by more than annual increments.

involved before Harrington wrote it down. In our attempts to reconstruct Chumash culture, we must employ due caution because of the weaknesses inherent in ethnographic data derived from oral tradition. Awareness of these limitations does not detract from the valuable contributions of Fernando and Harrington. We are certainly fortunate that the rich traditions and way of life which Fernando Librado *kitsepawit* learned from his elders were shared in his old age with John P. Harrington.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks the following persons for their encouragement and comments: Michael Glassow, Paul Heuston, Travis Hudson, William Hyder, Mary Johnson, Robert Lopez, Chester King, Claude Warren, Kenneth Whistler, and Larry Wilcoxon. Tina Foss of Santa Barbara City College and Greg Schaaf of UCSB provided the quotation from Luisa Ygnacia. Phyllis Olivera of the Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library located the hitherto unpublished picture of Fernando which accompanies this article, and Fr. Virgilio Biasiol, director of the archives, permitted its use here.

NOTES

1. Fernando's surname, Librado, was apparently acquired late in his life and may have been derived from his ability to read. The Spanish word *librado* might be translated as "book lover" (Hudson 1977: 268). Fernando's Indian name, *kitsepawit*, was probably given to him while in infancy, although it is not recorded in his baptismal entry. Fernando stated that *kitsepawit* was also the name of his father, paternal grandfather, and great-grandfather (Blackburn 1975: 18). The passing of a patronym from father to son would be uncharacteristic of Chumash naming patterns as indicated by mission register evidence. Only in the late Mission Period do patronyms appear to have been applied to sons, usually by giving the father's native name to the son to serve as the latter's surname. This practice was probably modeled on the European custom and was not the original Chumash naming pattern. As is presented in the text of the article, a different native name, not *kitsepawit*, was given for Fernando's father in the latter's baptismal entry.

2. I am indebted to Dr. Travis Hudson of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History for providing the copy of *The Independent* article cited here. Further research in the office files of the Clerk of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors provided the following additional information:

In the Matter of the Petition of Fernando Librado for County Aid. It appearing to the satisfaction of this Board that said petitioner is a proper person to receive County Aid, it is ordered that the Auditor draw his warrant

on the Treasurer, on the Hospital Fund, in favor of Fernando Librado for the sum of \$12.00; and for a like amount on the first of each month hereafter until the further order of this Board [Santa Barbara County Minute Book of the Board of Supervisors Bk. L, p. 433, Sept. 5, 1911].

3. According to the information provided by Fernando to Harrington, he once lived at Mission La Purisima while working for Ramon Malo. This was apparently misinterpreted in the newspaper article. Ramon Malo was the grantee of Rancho La Purisima after the secularization of the missions. Malo's tenure at La Purisima lasted from 1845 until his death in 1859 (Hudson 1979: 14, 164; Hardwick *et al.* 1973).

4. Hudson's tentative identification of Fernando Librado with "Liberato" in the 1852 census is incorrect. The "Liberato" in that census refers to a different Indian, probably the person by that name who is recorded in the Mission Santa Barbara records.

5. Full geneological information on Fernando's family has been collected by Robert Lopez and the author for an article in preparation on the geneologies of Harrington's Chumash consultants. Smith (1982) has also investigated Fernando's geneology.

6. The original copy of the 1856 *padron* is presently at the San Fernando Mission Archives. A photocopy is on file at the Santa Barbara Mission Archives.

7. Silverio *konoyo* was of Santa Rosa Island Chumash descent and provided Fernando with information on Chumash plank-canoe construction (Hudson, Timbrook, and Rempe 1978: 178).

8. The linguistic form of the village name *shilimaqstush* as given here is that suggested by Applegate (1975). The common name for this village was "La Espada," hence the name of the ranch. The Spanish name derives from an incident which occurred during the Portolá expedition of 1769. A sword was surreptitiously removed from the scabbard of one of the soldiers by an Indian living at the village, but was quickly recovered by other Indians who chased the thief into the surf (Bolton 1927: 175-176; Brown 1967: 17). Archaeological excavations were conducted at the site of *shilimaqstush* (SBA-205) in 1950 (Lathrap and Hoover 1975).

REFERENCES

Abbott, Mamie Goulett

1957 Santa Ines Hermosa: The Journal of the Padre's Niece. Montecito: Sunrise Press.

Applegate, Richard B.

1975 An Index of Chumash Placenames. In: Papers on the Chumash. San Luis Obispo Archaeological Society Occasional Papers 9: 21-46.

Blackburn, Thomas C.

1975 December's Child: A Book of Chumash Oral Narratives. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bolton, Herbert E.

1927 Fray Juan Crespi, Missionary Explorer. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brown, Alan K.

1967 The Aboriginal Population of the Santa Barbara Channel. Berkeley: University of California Archaeological Survey Report No. 69.

Hardwick, Michael, Ursula H. Petty, Mary Rivaldi, S. Kristina Wilkinson, Jacqueline A. Ball, and Karen L. Wicks

1973 La Purisima Mission State Historic Park Archives: An Experiment in Interpretation and Preservation. Manuscript on file at the La Purisima Mission, Lompoc.

Harrington, John P.

n.d. Unpublished Chumash fieldnotes from Fernando Librado and Luisa Ygnacia. Washington: National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Hudson, Travis

1977 Patterns in Chumash Names. Journal of California Anthropology 4: 259-272.

1979 Breath of the Sun, Life in Early California as Told by a Chumash Indian, Fernando Librado to John P. Harrington. Banning: Malki Museum Press.

Hudson, Travis, and Thomas Blackburn

n.d. The Material Culture of the Chumash Interaction Sphere. 5 Vols. Oakland: Ballena Press Anthropological Papers (in press).

Hudson, Travis, Thomas Blackburn, Rosario Curletti, and Janice Timbrook

1977 The Eye of the Flute: Chumash Traditional History and Ritual as told by Fernando Librado *Kitsepawit* to John P. Harrington. Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

- Hudson, Travis, Janice Timbrook, and Melissa Rempe
1978 *Tomol: Chumash Watercraft as Described in the Ethnographic Notes of John P. Harrington*. Socorro: Ballena Press.
- Lathrap, Donald W., and Robert L. Hoover
1975 *Excavations at Shilimaqshtush: SBa-205*. San Luis Obispo Archaeological Society Occasional Paper No. 10.
- Nabokov, Peter
1980 *Chumash, The Rediscovery of a California Indian Nation*. Santa Barbara Magazine 6(3).
- Smith, Lillian
1982 *Descent of Fernando Librado*. Artifact, Newsletter of the San Luis Obispo Archaeological Society, 17(1-2):2-3.



Paleoecological Inferences from a Faunal Analysis of CA-SFr-07

MONTE L. McCROSSIN

CA-SFr-07 (also variously known as No. 387, Crocker Mound, Bay Shore Mound and Johnson Landing) is a prehistoric shell midden (now largely destroyed) in the San Francisco Bay area. N. C. Nelson excavated the midden in 1910. Nelson's (1910) field notes reveal that CA-SFr-07 was situated "on the first cove north of the S. F. and San Mateo County Line" and was the "largest of the 10-12 mounds located in the vicinity of Hunter's point."

An assemblage of 4130 invertebrate and vertebrate remains (805 of which are maximally identifiable) collected by Nelson are the subject of this report. Exact proveniences and associations of cultural and biological materials from CA-SFr-07 have not been recorded.

The great majority of the faunal remains were collected from 3 to 6-ft. depths below the ground surface. Some fairly complete cranial materials were recovered from 6 to 9-ft. depths. Due to the nature of the retrieval methods employed in collecting the faunal materials, detection of possible changes in dietary preferences through time and a rigorous assessment of (unbiased) taxonomic and body part representations are not possible. The retrieval of fish remains was no doubt severely biased by this collection technique. Therefore, I have chosen to emphasize the diversity of food resources and habitat zones exploited by the inhabitants of CA-SFr-07 as evidenced by the faunal remains.

Howard (1929) has admirably presented data on the organisms indicative of eight habitats represented in the Upper Sonoran life zone of the San Francisco Bay region. The eight habitats (associational areas) listed by Howard are: (1) open water (estuarine), (2) sandy beach, (3) salt marsh, (4) tule marsh, (5) willow, (6) live oak, (7) grassland, and (8) chaparral. It should be noted here that, in general, organisms with relatively narrow environmental tolerances were used in Howard's compilation. Thus, cosmopolitan species do not overly distort the environmental reconstruction so as to include habitats with very little faunal basis. However, one must realize that faunal remains are but very abstract representations of habitat unless large samples are available. The identified taxa from CA-SFr-07 mentioned in Howard's categories (along with a few included by the author, e.g., sturgeon in open water/estuarine) are shown below (Table 1). The minimum number of individuals (MNI) and number of identified specimens (NISP) are noted for each taxon.

The diversity of taxa identified from the CA-SFr-07 assemblage reveals that a wide variety of organisms were sought after and used as food by the people responsible for the