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REPORTS

Intermarriage at Fort Ross: Evidence From the San Rafael Mission Baptismal Register

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In 1812, Ivan Aleksandovich Kuskov, representative of the Russian-American Company, established a fort north of the Slavianska [Russian] River. In the long run, the desire to establish a productive agricultural colony to supply Russian settlements in Alaska failed, but for 29 years (1812-1841) a unique experiment in acculturation occurred at the fort and surrounding settlements¹ (Tikhmenev 1978: 133-142, 224-233).

The Russians established friendly relations with the Kashaya Pomo living at the site of Fort Ross and along the surrounding coast, and also with the Coast Miwok living along the shores of Rumiatshev [Bodega] Bay, the principal port serving the colony. Kashaya Pomo settled at Ross and provided the Russians with labor, and some of these Indians married or established relations with Russians or Aleuts brought from Alaska to hunt seals and otters. With the abandonment of the colony in 1841, a number of the Kashaya Pomo went to Alaska (O'Brien 1980:11-12).

Intermarriage or relationships also occurred between Russians, Aleuts, and Coast Miwoks from Bodega Bay. One entry in the

San Rafael Mission baptismal register documents the life of a Coast Miwok woman who married a Kodiak Aleut.²

Talia Unuttaca, a native of Geluatamal [Bodega] *ranchería*, married a "Codiaca" [Kodiak Aleut] named Andres Aulancoc during the administration of "Alexandro Koscoa" [Ivan Aleksandovich Kuskov, 1812-1820]. Aulancoc took his wife to "Sitica" [Sitka], where a Russian Orthodox priest named Malanoc baptized the woman. Aulancoc died about 1819, and Talia returned to Bodega. The couple had one daughter, Maria, born about 1815 at the "Presidio de Ros" (San Rafael Baptismal Register).

In 1819 or 1820, Talia established a relationship with a Coast Miwok man from Bodega, baptized in April of 1826 by San Rafael missionary Juan Amoros with the name José. Talia and José had a daughter born about 1820, who was given the name Rafaela when she was baptized at San Rafael.

The baptism of Talia's second husband and daughter posed no problems for Amoros, who accepted them into the church as gentiles with no previous knowledge of Christianity, but the woman and her first daughter had already received the waters of baptism in a different branch of Christianity, Russian Orthodox. Amoros's superiors, however, decided that their baptisms were indeed valid, and thus regularized their status at the mission.

Talia Unuttaca was not unique among Indian women living in the area of Russian influence. Kashaya Pomo and Coast Miwok formed unions with both Aleuts and Russians,

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with or without the blessings of the church. The development of the Russian-Indian society in northern California, however, requires further research.

NOTES

1. Kuskov established Fort Ross in 1812 with a contingent of 25 Russians and some 80 Aleuts. About 1840, some 60 Russians and 80 Aleuts lived at Ross in addition to an unknown number of local Indians.

2. Primary sources for this report were the San Rafael Arcangel Mission Baptismal Register, 1817-1839, and the Chancery Archive of the Archdiocese of San Francisco (Colma, California).

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A Maidu Acorn Dough Carrier

CRAIG D. BATES

Among the collections of the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation in Sacramento, is a Maidu acorn dough carrier (Fig. 1). A disposable container used by the Konkow Maidu to transport leached acorn dough, it may well be the sole surviving example of its kind collected at the turn of the century. Its complete description in the State catalog (No. MCS-369-3-SP) record reads "Bread Basket. Maidu. 3 x 11 in. Chico (?)." The "basket" was included in the large

collection of James McCord Stilson, an avid collector of Indian artifacts who lived in the city of Chico. The entire collection was purchased by the State of California sometime around 1930. Stilson was apparently well acquainted with the Indian people of the local Chico Rancheria, and his collection included artifacts from local Maidu as well as many other western North American groups (Bruce Bernstein, personal communication 1982).

The piece under discussion consists of a hoop, ovoid in shape, of an unidentified, unpeeled shoot. The hoop is approximately 15.0 cm. x 30.0 cm. and stretches two net-like weavings of the inner bark of the big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*).¹ Sandwiched between these woven layers is a thick layer of leaves (approximately 5.0 cm. thick) that are now largely decomposed, but appear to be from the big leaf maple. A short piece of maple bark is tied to two points on one side of the hoop, making a handle.

This acorn dough carrier is nearly identical in construction and appearance to one described to me more than a decade ago by Henry Keala Azbill (1896-1973). An aged member of the *Michoopda* Maidu, he was born and reared at the Indian Rancheria located on John Bidwell's Rancho Chico, today within the boundaries of the city of Chico. Azbill spoke his mother's language, Konkow, as well as *Michoopda*, and was conversant in neighboring Maidu and Nisenan dialects.

He stated that he took an early interest in the culture of his people, but it was not until late in life that he began actively to create traditional objects of personal adornment and ceremonial regalia, as well as to work with persons interested in Maidu culture. In about 1969 he told me of his having seen an acorn dough carrier made and used, and taught me the construction techniques involved in producing such a piece.

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