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The Dances Of Early California In Santa Barbara

Thea Vandervoort ~
Dance

Abstract

Thea's research project prompted her desire to pursue a career as a university professor, continuing research in dance and anthropology throughout her life. Her research was a materialization of her passion for dance history. She is working towards using the product of this research to aid fourth graders with their learning of California history. Thea gained valuable insights into the process of research and its rewards, which will benefit her during future research endeavors. Her advice to undergraduates pursuing research is: "Never, ever give up, always persevere towards your goals and have faith in yourself that you will achieve what you have set out to accomplish."

The dances of early California are social figure dances that took place during informal parties (*fiestas*) popular in Santa Barbara since the 1820s. This research documents three of the most popular dances through reconstruction, video filming and production, musical and costume specification, descriptions of historical style and choreography, and notation of movement and floor patterns. A general history of these dances within the Rancho Period of California history (1828-1868) is presented. Specifically, details concerning their performance, social connection, and importance to the Santa Barbara community are explored. The primary research of dance reconstruction is supported by readings on the general nature and history of early California dance. Further exploration includes extensive interviews and examination of official archives and personal collections from Santa Barbara. The purpose of this research is to preserve and perpetuate a significant aspect of California cultural history, while tangibly establishing physical, artistic, and social connections to the past.

Faculty Mentor



Thea Vandervoort's project sheds light on a phenomenon relevant to both dance history and California cultural history. Through original research and careful reconstruction of three dances practiced in nineteenth century California, Thea has unearthed an aspect of cultural heritage that would otherwise



be lost. The publication of "The Dances of Early California in Santa Barbara" represents only the tip of a larger project that included oral history and archival research, reconstructing dances from the Rancho Period of Santa Barbara's history, and documenting the dances on video. Her project helped to instigate a renewal of interest in historical dance in Santa Barbara and will introduce this unique social history to public school children in Orange County. Thea's professional level of work in each aspect of this project is truly remarkable. Thea has gained skills in research design, fieldwork, documentation, and the rendering of her findings in both video and written format.

Key Terms:

- El Tecolero
- Fiesta
- Figures
- Ramada
- Rancho Period

Deidre Sklar ~
School of The Arts

~ Nancy Ruyter
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Introduction

There is a growing need to preserve the dances of early California so they are not lost forever in the fragile memories of past generations. These dances enable participants to experience the positive, communal, and joyous lifestyle of the Rancho Period, a pastoral age of California history from 1828-1868, when Spanish, Indian, and Mexican people came together on large ranches (*ranchos*) to raise stock and agriculture (Czarnowski, 1950). Through dance, participants gain insight into the daily life of New Spain, while experiencing social connection and unity as a group.

This project is an opportunity to establish physical, artistic, and social connections to early California, as well as an attempt to bridge the arts with academia for the fourth grade classrooms of California. The dances will give the children a tangible experience of the life of the early Californians, as the primary educational focus in the fourth grade is the study of California history. Through dance education and history, this project aims to give fourth grade students an uplifting experience of the joy felt from social interaction and connection, community, and cooperation of the people of early California. This will give students the experience of learning the actual dances, bringing the reality of history into their movements. Also, research and lecture demonstrations presented in this field are valuable opportunities to stimulate children intellectually and to emotionally impact a large number of students through dance.

Historical Context of Early California Dance

The *pueblo* of Santa Barbara, California, was established on April 21, 1782. This small civilian village of adobe brick buildings, which included the Santa Barbara Royal Presidio (a military fort), was both the military headquarters and governmental center for much of central and southern California. The soldiers of the Presidio and their wives played an important role in the development of what became the city of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, 1991). From the time of settlement (circa 1820), the colonists of New Spain celebrated their joys with family gatherings, which included dance, music, song, and food. The dances were originally adapted by the settlers from English, Spanish, and other European versions that they had encountered. Now labeled “early *Californio* dances,” they are an important part of Santa Barbara and California history and continue to be passed down to present generations.

During the Mexican era, the Mexican government granted large areas of land to the early settlers and military officials, which were developed into prosperous ranches. The

primary occupation of these ranch communities was raising stock. From 1828-1846, the *rancho* system enjoyed great prosperity and is often labeled the “pastoral period” of California history (Czarnowski, 1950). Life on the ranches was communal, simple, pleasant, fruitful, and supported by strong familial bonds. Small, impromptu gatherings were frequent, and dancing was of utmost importance (Czarnowski, 1950). Such dances as *La Jota Vieja*, *La Contradanza*, and *La Varsouviana* were regularly enjoyed during these informal parties which have been popular in Santa Barbara since the 1820s. These social dances include figures similar to other popular dances, such as square dancing or New England contra dancing.

The dance and musical styles of Alta California were brought from Spain via Mexico. In some cases, they show European (New England) and South American colorings. Due to the geographical barriers of eastern California, the dances “remained isolated from outside influences long enough to become adapted to their new environment” (Czarnowski, 1950). The remoteness of California, its mild climate, outdoor life, and the hospitable friendliness of early settlers may explain why “dance and song [were] ready media for individual and group expression” (Czarnowski, 1950). Life in early California was simple, consisting of work, meals, rest, religion, and entertainment through social gatherings, dance, music, and playful recreation.

The new settlers of California had a passion for dancing. At gatherings of families and friends, dancing reinforced social connections, customs, tradition, and community, but most importantly, it reinforced familial bonds among all ages. Informal parties were an opportunity for families to share and celebrate with openness and generosity. Since the days of the Rancho Period, during which dance was a central activity, these celebrations have played a significant part of California life from the days to the present.

Public performances of the dances of early California during Santa Barbara’s annual community festival were integral to the survival of these dances. The “Poole-Verhelle Dance Group” and the Native Daughters of the Golden West kept the dances alive in Santa Barbara from the 1920s until the 1980s (see Figure 1). As the dances had lapsed into near obscurity in the last decade, the 75th anniversary of the annual Old Spanish Days Fiesta celebration in 1999 spurred a renewal of interest in the social and cultural traditions of the city. Several of the most popular dances were included in the 1999 celebration, with the goal of perpetuating, preserving, and renewing interest in the dances of previous generations.



Figure 1

The dances of early California have experienced many transitions over time; all versions are valid and should be celebrated. The figures have been altered and adapted into as many variations as there were ranches in California. It is important to note that these dances are a mix of what the settlers brought with them, what they found along their travels and when they arrived, and what they created during their lives.

Social Setting, Music, and Dress

Homes were built to include a dancing space. Outside, the space was referred to as a *ramada*, and inside the *casa* (house), it was called a *sala* (salon) (Czarnowski, 1950) (see Figure 2). The *ramada* was constructed



Figure 2

in a favorable location near the house. Three sides were enclosed, with the fourth open except for posts that formed a barrier across it to accommodate horsemen. The structure was covered with vines or tree boughs for shade. The dances were performed at informal gatherings, *meriendas* (picnics), weddings, religious functions, *fiestas* (social gatherings or parties) in honor of birth, baptism or death of children, washdays, *fandangos* (informal dancing parties of the lower classes), *bailes* (dances or balls of the upper classes, or large affairs of social significance), and other community functions like *Cascarone* balls. *Cascarones* are beautifully colored eggs emptied of their contents, dried, and later filled with confetti (Czarnowski, 1950). A master of ceremonies, called *El Tecolero*, directed the dancing at a *fandango*. The art of dancing was so valued that it was

included in almost all social gatherings of the early Californians. Those who did not participate “walked around the room as a complimentary gesture and then took their seats” (Czarnowski, 1950). The word *tecolero* stems from *tecolote*, meaning “owl” (Czarnowski, 1950).

A high degree of decorum and conservative behavior existed with respect to the courtship of men and women, who usually remained entirely separated at dance functions. Women might also have a chaperone, or *dueña*, to keep them focused on “their innocent amusements” (Czarnowski, 1950). The *dueña* would often be a close relative or friend of the family, like an aunt or nanny, who maintained careful watch over the young woman. If the woman became overly flirtatious or lacked a demure demeanor towards a gentleman, she would be scolded or escorted away. The custom of chaperoning a youth of courtship age is not often seen in society today. Many youths are permitted to attend social functions without a chaperone and are not subjected to the conservative behavioral customs of the Rancho Period.

The colonists’ conservative approach to social behavior correlates directly with the style and deportment of dances from the nineteenth century. While dancing, men and women remained at a distance from each other, slightly

modest and reserved in their physical carriage. Within a conservative social framework, dancing was an opportunity to court with members of the opposite sex. Dance was the only vehicle for close physical contact and commu-

nication. This mode of behavior is in sharp contrast to the dance styles of young people in contemporary society.

Changes in social customs due to population growth, the development of society, and class distinctions also affected the dances of early California:

In the early days simple dances took place in the home and everyone was welcome to come. As the growth of towns and communities brought in less desirable elements, it was necessary to issue invitations to balls, to all respectable families, rich or poor. Only those with invitations could attend. Before 1840, there was little class distinction, but during the following ten years class distinctions became well defined (Czarnowski, 1950).

Music for the early California dances, always lively and gay, was provided by a *vihuela* (guitar), violin, mandolin, occasionally a harp or flute, and a song. Members of the orchestra played in harmony with each other, complementing the song or accenting the dance steps. Repetition of musical phrases and melodies is common in the songs that accompany these social dances. Many of the old Spanish songs were written in varying tempos of the waltz (3/4) time signature, often giving the dances a lilting quality.

Paquita Del Rey, a costume historian and Spanish dance performer, says that the style of dress popular in nineteenth century Alta California included beautiful and elaborate Spanish-styled party dresses. These dresses were very colorful and included the following: 1) close-fitting bodices coming to a point in front, 2) fairly low necklines, 3) a slight puff to the three-quarter or full length sleeves trimmed with lace at the ends, and 4) long, full skirts with several ruffles edged with trim which hung below the ankles. The fabric for these dresses included silks, satins, velvets, and cottons (Del Rey, 1949). Several long, full petticoats would be worn under the dress (Del Rey, 1949). Also worn after the 1850s were decorative hair combs and lace *mantillas* (a popular style of head-covering, like a shawl, derived from Spanish influence). The large, so-called "Spanish shawls," dating from approximately the 1880s, were folded in a triangle and worn as wraps (Del Rey, 1949) (see Figure 3).

stockings, leggings, or long trousers with a flared bottom (fashionable after 1832) (Del Rey, 1949).

The Styles of the Dances of Early California

The style of dancing was light, gay, and informal, without "restraint or starchiness, in a natural unconscious style" (Vallejo, 1950). An integral part of the dance was the interaction among participants of all ages. The dances passed down were simple enough that anyone could participate, regardless of age, dance experience, or ability.

In the dance figures, the emphasis is on social connection, community, and the beauty of the spatial patterns and floor design. In effect, these dance figures are a form of non-verbal communication. The figures celebrate the joyous, communal, and social aspects of the *rancho* lifestyle and allow participants to dance together without formality in a fun, exciting, and sometimes challenging manner. Most figures symbolize aspects of daily life and may tell a story through their movements. Typically, "*El Tecolero*," a dance caller, would prompt the dancers before the start of each figure by calling out the figure's name.



Figure 3

The gentlemen's party ensemble included a felt, broad-brimmed hat (generally colored black, white, brown, or dark blue) and a brightly colored handkerchief worn around the head and under the hat (optional). A sash (made of silk, satin, or cotton) with fringe was worn around the waist and tied on one side. A white linen or cotton shirt with a high or open neck and long sleeves with cuffs was worn with a long, narrow silk or cotton tie. Vests, made from silk, velvet, or cotton in a contrasting color to the jacket and trousers, were optional. A short, "bolero-style" jacket with long sleeves made of velvet, satin, corduroy, broadcloth, wool, or gabardine, in a solid color, was worn open in front and often included embroidery in gold or silver. Also included were either knee breeches with white

The upper body carriage is lifted and open. The dancers touch by holding hands or shoulders. The ladies may hold their skirts at the sides with one or both hands, depending on the arms' freedom in a particular dance. The emphasis of the dances is not on formality or presentation to an audience, but on the positive experience of the dancers. There are often shouts of joy. The goal of the dance is an uplifting experience of shared movement and emotion.

Methods

A multi-functional video was produced in order to be released to elementary schools, dance schools, universities, museums, libraries, and historical societies. This paper presents the historical context in which the dances of early California occurred and documents these dances within a historical framework. The Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble, the video, "Dances of Early California in Santa Barbara," this paper, artifact displays, and lecture demonstration materials were created to share the beauty of early California dance with others in hopes that these dances would continue to be passed down through generations to come.

The project began with the coordination of a twelve-member dance group that rehearsed approximately every two weeks starting August of 1998 in Santa Barbara. All research details, dance reconstruction, rehearsals, interviews, dance notation, and video production took a total of nine months to complete.

The Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble was created to preserve and perpetuate the dances of previous generations (see Figure 4). The dances were revived with the aid of the local people who had once participated in the historic dance and music of this area. Through their shared memories and helpful instruction, three of the most popular dances (*La Jota Vieja*, *La Contradanza*, and *La Varsouviana*) were taught to the group. Especially helpful were several members of the "Poole-Verhelle" and Native Daughters, "Las Fiesteras" dance groups (William and Dorathy Russell, Mary Louise Days and Dolores Hartnett). The dances were reconstructed in their entirety and rehearsed with taped music until they were ready for filming in April of 1999.

Research included personal interviews and the gathering of archival material. During the early months of the project, preliminary research and preparation included in-



Figure 4

formal discussions with those who had done the dances years before. Data collection included examination of official archives and personal collections from Santa Barbara, including newspaper articles, original photos, journal entries, memoirs, correspondence, sheet music and recordings, and original dance notation by family members (see Figure 5).

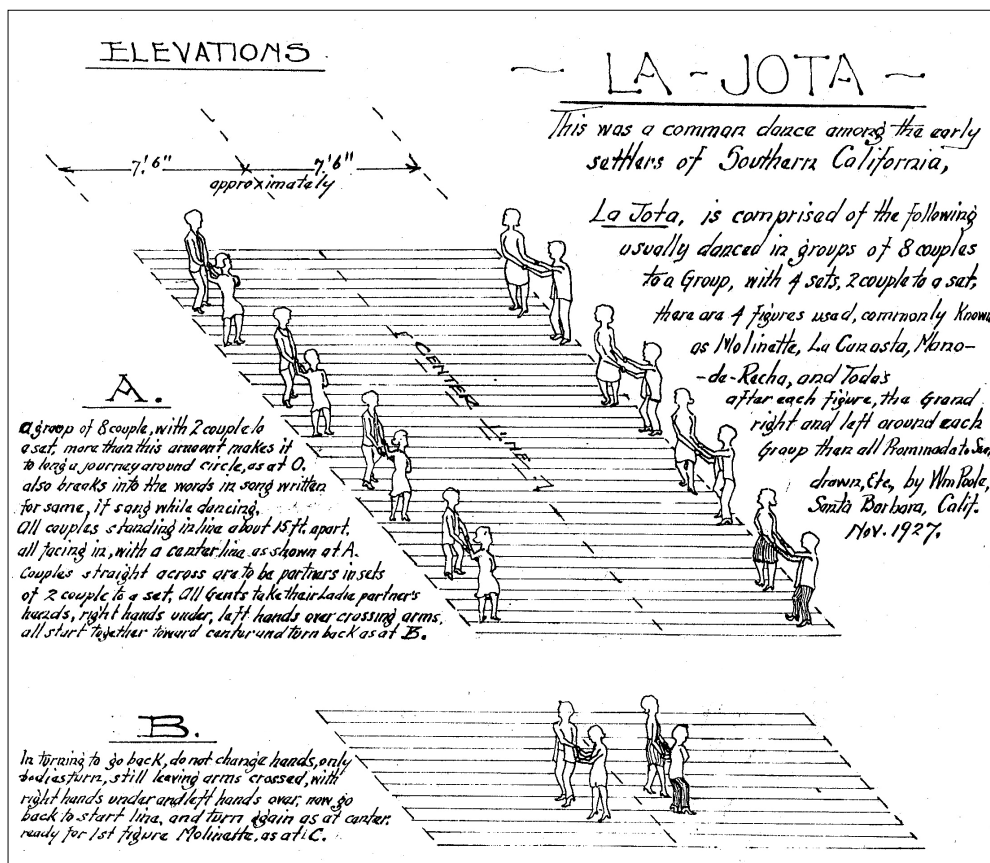


Figure 5

Project participants who were members of the community of Santa Barbara, including William and Dorathy Russell (my grandparents), were interviewed. Archival research was conducted at the office of the Old Spanish Days Fiesta, the Santa Barbara Historical Society, and at the homes of dance participants and others. Members of the Native Daughters of the Golden West provided materials concerning the "Las Fiesteras" dance group.

The Russells were the primary source of historic detail. They contributed valuable written and verbal background information through personal memories, their archival collection, and artifacts from previous generations. This data included specifics about the early California dances from Santa Barbara, the “Poole-Verhelle Dance Group,” and “Las Fiesteras.” In the same way the dances were taught to them, they recounted three favorites, *La Jota Vieja*, *La Contradanza*, and *La Varsouviana*, to the Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble.

Informal dance notation was written for each dance, accompanied by explanations understandable to the layperson. This included specific movement and choreographic descriptions, notes on floor patterns, diagrams, and helpful hints for the reader. The notation was written to accompany the video of the dances, thereby giving the viewer a clearer understanding of the details necessary to execute the dances accurately.

The video, “Dances of Early California in Santa Barbara,” enables current and future generations to learn, appreciate, and enjoy these dances, and to gain a more intimate knowledge of the people of early California. As the year continued, I rehearsed extensively with the dance group and prepared the video-filming schedule. The Santa Barbara Historical Society was chosen as an authentic and picturesque location. Its beautiful courtyard, with adobe buildings in the background, packed-dirt floor (used as the dance space), orange and pepper trees, wooden benches, geraniums, and flowing fountains was the perfect setting for the video. Three traditional musicians were employed who played the violin, mandolin, guitar, and who sang traditional versions of the Spanish songs of early California. All video participants were dressed in authentic costumes. A videography student was recruited from the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara to shoot and edit the video.

A total of twenty-three people participated in the project. There were fourteen dancers in the video and performance dance ensemble: two fourth-grade boys (Eric Benítez and José Luévanos), two young teenagers (Pablo Cabrera and Marisol Cabrera), and ten adults ranging in age from twenty-four to their early-seventies (Francisco Cabrera, Martín Corral, James García, Chad Harmon, Maria Cabrera, Mary Louise Days, Erin Graffy de García, Dolores Hartnett, Diana Vandervoort, and myself). Three musicians participated (Luise Moreno, Mike Mullins, and David Roine), contributing their expertise on the guitar, vocals, mandolin, and violin. The video was filmed and edited by Art Srithongkul, a student at Brooks Institute of Photography and member of Amber Productions in Santa Barbara.

Four people served as observers of the video: William and Dorathy Russell, Lucy Raffetto, and Raluca Razus. The Russells and Mrs. Raffetto contributed a significant amount of background information on the dances and related subjects. The photographer, Laurel Hungerford, attended a dance ensemble dress rehearsal as well as the video filming to shoot dance sequences, details, figure positioning, and group photos. Eight of the project participants were interviewed during the months of March and April, 1999.

The method of research and video production was guided by the goal of preserving the most accurate representation possible of the original dances. Each meticulous step was attended to, including script writing, production, direction, choice of filming details and camera angles, musical selection, editing, titles, credits, and voice-overs.



Figure 6



Figure 7

The Dances

La Jota Vieja

This dance is light, fun, and lively, with a fast pace and energetic feeling. The music is in 3/4 (waltz) time, but the tempo is fast, similar to a 3/8 meter. The dance formation consists primarily of an even number of couples in two lines about six feet apart. The woman is on the right of her partner in each line, which alternates male and female. Before the dance begins, partners join hands, crossing arms in front about waist height, left hand in left, right hand in right, with the right arm uppermost. The formation varies during the dance, with the two rows of couples side by side, in groups of four, or circling as a group.

The *Jota Step* is a quick “two-step” waltz, similar to a bouncy polka step. The dance phrase that repeats throughout the *Jota Step* starts with a step forward with the right foot, accenting the step on count one. A close of the left foot to the right foot marks count two, and count three calls for a step forward with the right foot. The phrase is repeated beginning again with the left foot accenting count one.

The dance begins with a bow to your partner who is next to you in line. The two lines advance toward each other and then retreat from each other before the start of each figure. The figures of *La Jota Vieja* include: *El Remolino* (the whirlwind or whirlpool), *El Molinete* (the little mill), the Grand Right and Left, *La Canasta* (the basket), *El Gancho* (the hook), *La Rueda* (the ring), *La Puente* (the bridge), and *El Caracol* (the spiral, serpentine, or snail-like pattern) (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).

El Remolino is the preparational step at the beginning of the first figure. It is repeated with a variation again and again throughout the dance, at the end of each figure, and after the Grand Right and Left. Figures often symbolize aspects of daily life. For example, *El Molinete*, which follows the first *El Remolino*, symbolizes a household mill for grinding spices, coffee, or grains. In *La Canasta*, a formation made of groups of four dancers creates the illusion of a woven basket. The Grand Right and Left follows each figure: the gentlemen dance counterclockwise while the ladies dance clockwise. The dancers finish in a semi-circle with their arms raised high in the air.

The tempo remains the same throughout *La Jota Vieja*, and there is little fluctuation in musical intensity or rhythmic pattern. Sixteen bars are used to complete each figure; eight bars are used for the Grand Right and Left with a nine-count bridge connecting each section. The complete dance is comprised of six sections: *El Molinete*, *La*

Canasta, *El Gancho*, *La Rueda*, *La Puente*, and *El Caracol*. At the beginning of the first four sections, before each figure, are the Advance, Turn, and Retreat, which are given two bars of music.

When the music commences, the singers begin their verses and refrains. During the verse, the figure is completed. During the refrain, the Grand Right and Left are completed. The length of the refrain or chorus depends on the number of couples participating. The words of the chorus differ when repeated (Czarnowski, 1950). At the start of a new figure a new verse is sung in the same style, repeated twice to keep the time necessary for the completion of the figure: “the verses were chosen at will by the musicians or singers, but were handed down from a former time” (Coronel, 1877). The words for the song which accompanied *La Jota Vieja* were often composed “on the spot” by the singer for the dance. At other times traditional verses were sung (Czarnowski, 1950).

La Contradanza

La Contradanza is an elegant, dignified, and stately dance with a slow pace. Through its figures, it tells a story of the daily life in colonial Santa Barbara. *La Contradanza* was an English country dance that “was [also] danced in Spain at balls and in the court in the early part of the eighteenth century” (Czarnowski, 1950). It was further adapted and altered once it arrived in the Santa Barbara area. Up to eighteen different figures are documented for *La Contradanza* (Czarnowski, 1950). Various figures were danced in different parts of California. This is one of the most beautiful dances of early California.

La Contradanza was danced by persons of the highest class and especially by the older members present. The general presentation of *La Contradanza* consists of music performed in slow waltz time. The dancers use the first 16 bars of music for the formation of the figure and the second 16 bars for the waltz chorus, in which couples circle around each other in a complex floor pattern. The opening formation consists of the couples in a long column, known as a “longways set.” The lady is on the right of her partner. Odd-numbered couples face down the set whereas even-numbered couples face up the set. This formation changes as the dance progresses, but the opening relationship between couples is maintained.

The general step pattern is a traditional, counterclockwise waltz square performed by the couples in a closed dance position (in which partners face each other), turning the body in a clockwise direction. The waltz balance step uses a similar step pattern but is performed side to side. The first accented step is the largest and is performed with a



Figure 8



Figure 9

gliding motion and a bend of the knees. It is used for traveling. Counts two and three are smaller steps used for changing direction (or remaining in place as in the waltz balance step).

The dance begins with a bow to your partner. Similar to *La Jota Vieja*, *El Tecolero* reminds the dancers of what figure comes next. After each figure comes the waltz chorus in which couples circle around each other in an intricate and choreographically precise floor pattern. The waltz chorus is used to change the formation of the group, which enables the couples to do the upcoming figure with new partners. Couples who are not participating in a figure due to the choreographic structure and specifications of the dance do the waltz balance step while waiting for the next waltz chorus. This waiting step may be performed holding hands or, for the lady, with both hands holding the skirt.

The figures for *La Contradanza* include *La Mano Derecha* (the right hand) and *La Mano Izquierda* (the left hand). This introduction is followed by *El Saludo* (the greeting), *El Molino* (the mill), *La Sola* (the woman alone, emphasizing the woman's duties), *El Nudo* (the knot, emphasizing

the male role in the family), *El Cristo* (worshipping at the shrine), and *La Cadena Grande* (the long chain, symbolizing community). At the end of *La Contradanza*, the couples waltz without a floor pattern until the music ends (see Figure 8 and Figure 9).

La Varsouviana

La Varsouviana is a smooth and graceful circle dance with French origins and European influences. It is lively in nature with an elegant feel to its steps and composition. The music includes a song that is sung in Spanish. It has a distinctive, lilting waltz melody and a moderate tempo. The characteristic step of this dance is called the *Varsouviana Step*, which contains two long phrases and four short phrases. This step sequence is done with a slight bounce of the supporting heel while the other foot is lifted in front of the ankle. The lifted foot then glides to the side and is joined by the supporting foot. The uniqueness of the *Varsouviana Step* contributes to the lively nature of the dance. It is executed in a courtly fashion similar to the balletic *pas de bourée* or the minuets of previous centuries. Also used in this dance is the open *Varsouviana Dance Position* in which the man stands behind his partner, holding her hands. Arms are relaxed, bent, and placed at shoulder level, slightly in front of the torso.

The dancers enter in the open *Varsouviana Dance Position*, using the *Varsouviana Step*, and proceed to form a circle. Next, the ladies face out and take their skirts while the men hold the waist of their partners to display their beauty and grace. Then the couples turn to form the spokes of a wheel in a closed dance position. They travel in towards the center of the circle and away (see Figure 10). To continue, the couples travel around the circle maintaining the *Varsouviana Step* pattern. The next section begins when the ladies

turn to face out and the gentlemen face in, as the entire group hold hands and circle first clockwise and then counter-clockwise. Then, everyone does the Grand Right and Left, the ladies dancing clockwise and the men dancing counter-clockwise. After traveling around the circle, the dancers may end up with a new partner, depending on the size of the group. To finish, the dancers repeat the beginning sequence in the open *Varsouviana Dance Position*.



Figure 10

Conclusion

People of early California lived on isolated *ranchos* and came together only occasionally to assist in large-scale chores like harvesting, round-ups, building construction, religious events, or social functions. In the evenings, after the tasks were completed, the parties would occur. The dances performed were a vehicle for early Californians to create joy and celebrate community. The focus of these parties was passing on tradition and having a good time. Dance was the core of the *fiestas*, and, in turn, the *fiestas* were the vehicle for social interaction. The experiences of the Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble mirror those of the early Californians: after dancing together for so many weeks, the dancers established strong, lasting friendships.

The dances of early California bring laughter, smiles, and joy to people of all ages who dance together without concern for generation differences. In doing the dances for the video, and in performance, we enjoyed ourselves tremendously, creating a unique bond between the entire Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble, musicians, videographer, and observers (see Figure 11). We interacted through the figures of each dance, forming a cooperative, multi-generational, and diverse community. We felt as if we really understood what it was like to have lived in the days of early California. This is the primary reason why it is necessary to revive these dances and pass them on to fourth grade students studying this period of history.



Figure 11

It is my hope that many others share in the experience of the dances of early California and taste the happiness of history that they have to offer. *La Jota Vieja* will be included in "Dancing History Collection," a vehicle for the international perpetuation of historic dances written by Jill Beck, Dean of the School of the Arts at University of California at Irvine. This research will also be included in an art documentary to be released on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) within the upcoming year. In addition, the video "Dances of Early California in Santa Barbara" will

be accessible through the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. I expect to further disseminate the importance of preserving our cultural heritage through continued lecture demonstrations with fourth grade classes in Laguna Beach, California. I hope to expand these lecture demonstrations to include schools throughout Orange County, California, and eventually to have this research included in the state public education curriculum. This information and dance experience, if implemented, will greatly enhance the fourth grade students' understanding of California history and culture. It is my hope that, through fourth grade public education and the video and public performances by the Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble, the dances of early California will proliferate into the culture of our society as an opportunity to recreate and relate to the past.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the following people for their generous contributions to my research, enabling me to recreate an accurate representation of early California culture and history. These contributions included primary sources of information and personal archival collections used for background reference. Their dedication, support, memories, and active participation are greatly appreciated. Many thanks to everyone who contributed: Mary Louise Days, Erin Graffy de Garcia, Dolores Hartnett, Laurel Hungerford, Luis Moreno, Mike Mullins, George and Vie Obern, Old Spanish Days Fiesta in Santa Barbara, Lucy Raffetto, Raluca Razus, David Roine, William and Dorathy Russell, Nancy Ruyter, Santa Barbara Historic Dance Ensemble (Eric Benitez, Francisco Cabrera, Maria Cabrera, Marisol Cabrera, Pablo Cabrera, Martin Corral, Mary Louise Days, Erin Graffy de Garcia, James Garcia, Chad Harmon, Dolores Hartnett, Jose Luevanos and Diana Vandervoort), Santa Barbara Historical Society and Museum, Deidre Sklar, Art Srithongkul, Amber Productions (Saulius Urbonas), Teresa Teres, and Diana Vandervoort.

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