

# Crystals in the Sky: An Intellectual Odyssey Involving Chumash Astronomy, Cosmology and Rock Art (Anthropological Papers: No. 10)

Travis Hudson, Ernest Underhay

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In Crystals In rhe sky, anthropologist Travis Hudson and astronomer Ernest Underhay of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History examine the Chumash, one of 300 or more indigenous groups or 'tribelets' of California. Before the arrival of Franciscan missionaries, as many as 10,000 Chumas inhabited the fringes of the Santa Barbara Channel, one of the most densely populated areas in the New World. Like the Skidi Pawnee who are the subject of Smithsonian astronomer Von Del Chamberlain's book, the Chumash were decimated by infectious diseases introduced by Europeans. Today only about twenty families occupy the tribe's small reservation near Santa Ynez, while several thousand other Chumash of mixed descent live elsewhere in Southern California. Best known for their vivid multicolored rock paintings painted in caves and on overhangs, the Chumash enjoyed a sophisticated culture without ever raising corn or other crops.



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