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## De Jesuita a Jane: Preservación digital, nombres personales y autorrepresentación en la experiencia mexicano-americana en el Medio Oeste de EEUU

*From Jesuita to Jane: Digital Preservation, Personal Names and Self-Presentation of Mexican American Experience in the US Midwest*

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### ABSTRACT

Pairing preservation with analytical endeavors, the corpus for the present analysis consists of 345 digital objects that include one or more iterations of the personal name of the mother and daughter of a Mexican American family that migrated from Zacatecas, Mexico, to the American Midwest, during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Data were analyzed along the following dimensions: self-presentation, language(s), geographical location, temporality, public/private space, and type of text. At the same time, we describe the challenges involved in encoding names that follow different naming conventions, that were produced by speakers of two different languages, and that changed over time. We seek to contribute these voices to the scarcely studied social history of Mexican Americans in the Midwest.

### KEYWORDS

Digital Humanities, Mexican Americans, Midwest, Identity, Personal Names.

### RESUMEN

Aunando preservación con esfuerzos analíticos, el corpus del presente análisis consiste en 345 objetos digitales que incluye una o más iteraciones del nombre de la madre y la hija de una familia mexicano-estadounidense que migró de Zacatecas, México al Medio Oeste estadounidense, durante la primera mitad del siglo XX. Los datos han sido analizados en las siguientes dimensiones: autopresentación, lenguaje(s), localización geográfica, temporalidad, espacio público/privado y tipo de texto. Al mismo tiempo, describimos los retos del marcado de nombres que siguen diferentes convenciones, que fueron producidos por hablantes de diferentes idiomas y que cambiaron con el tiempo. Buscamos añadir estas voces a la poco estudiada historia social de los mexicano-estadounidenses en el Medio Oeste.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Humanidades Digitales, mexicano-estadounidenses, Medio Oeste, identidad, nombres propios.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the eight decades of her life, Jesusita Baros Torres lived in two communities in Mexico, and four communities in the United States. By choice or factors beyond her control, her name suffered alterations in spelling, adaptations and exchanges that translate into 71 iterations of her name. We know this because of the surviving collection of her personal correspondence and other family documents. These objects provide us with evidence that, despite her limited geographical mobility, Jesusita Baros Torres was known by at least one of those names to correspondents in more than a dozen communities located on both sides of the US-Mexico border. Her name, we argue, was a concrete, every day, practical realization of self-presentation and of the negotiation of her social identity within several social networks, as well as in her interactions with institutions in the US and Mexico.

In making his case about the relevance of a Sociology of everyday life, Back (2015) argues in favor of a sensibility that allows us to remark on what is otherwise passed over as unremarkable. The study of ordinary objects and practices, he explains, allows us to think about society not as a set of structural arrangements, but “as a moving and dynamic entity that has a rhythm and a temporality” (p. 820). An example of one such ordinary social object is a person’s name. As Finch (2008) points out, personal names signal both individual citizenship and connection to kin, and are “a core marker of the individual, with legal force and with social purchase on an everyday basis” (p. 709). Thus, she claims, personal names are one of several means through which social actors constitute their own social worlds (p. 714). Finch reminds us, however, that a person’s name can also serve to stereotype and disadvantage<sup>1</sup> them, and thus, under certain circumstances, “a change of name can be part of a positive narrative of personal change, which rejects the perceived oppression associated with the former name” (p. 713).

In the following pages, we take Finch’s argument a step further and posit that in the case of individuals voluntarily or forcefully displaced from their homeland, the negotiation, alteration and transformation(s) of their name are sites for the display of competing social, cultural, and economic pressures to assimilate or to sustain links to a pre-migration self. Perhaps one of the most painful and defining characteristics of life trajectories associated with immigration is the need to shed: objects, places, practices, people. Leaving things behind is also, of course, the mark of becoming an adult and transitioning through different life stages. In the case of migration, however, this process is both diachronic and synchronic; both intense and recursive.

Continually definitive of what one is and what one is not. Despite all the things that an immigrant must leave behind, their name follows. Not petrified in time as a keepsake of former identities, but as a space of negotiation that both hides and displays.

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion on this topic, see Bertrand & Mullainathan (2004), Arai & Skogman Thoursie (2009), or Lieberman (2000).

Of all the actors referenced in the digital objects in the collection, we focus our analysis on Jesusita Baros Torres and her daughter, Santos Baros Schubert, members of generations 1 and 1.5 of a Mexican American family that settled in Colorado and Nebraska during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We document the ways in which their names changed over the decades, and we examine these changes in four broad categories: a) what they called themselves in public interactions, b) what others called them in public interactions, c) what they called themselves in private interactions, and d) what others called them in private exchanges. Importantly, though we place the notion of individual agency at the center of our inquiry, we recognize the impossibility of distinguishing with certainty which of these changes was a product of deliberate choice and which was not.

Because it is limited and partial by definition, personal correspondence presents many drawbacks when used as data in any attempt to understand larger historical processes. However, it also presents unique advantages, and we use it here in an attempt to gain insight into the roles socially and voluntarily ascribed to Mexican American women in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of these advantages is the description and evaluation of life events in participants' own voice, documented by date. We seek to contribute these voices to the scarcely studied social history of Mexican Americans in the Midwest. Concurrently, we argue for the importance of examining the gendered dimensions of this experience. Since the nineteen nineties, two fairly robust findings of research on Mexican migration to the United States is that the costs, risks, benefits, and mechanisms of migration differ by gender (Curran & Rivero Fuentes, 2003), and that migration reorganizes gender relations (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Despite this, as Parrado and Flippen (2005) point out, "the social and cultural processes that determine how gender relations and expectations evolve during the process of migration remain poorly understood" (p. 606). As stated above, we understand the transformations in Jesusita Baros Torres and Santos Baros Schubert's names over the decades as one of several sites where these processes can be observed.

What can one individual story tell us about larger social processes? There are several ways to answer this question, none of them conclusive. There is, for example, the danger of believing one knows the forest after having seen only one of its trees. This is: the danger of essentializing one case and thus negating the diversity of Mexican American experience. There is also the danger of failing to account for individual agency, reducing individual choice to the structural forces that predetermine an epic narrative of migration. Most important for the purposes of the present argument, is the danger of ascribing to the events and practices described in these letters and artifacts meaning and connections with which their authors might not have imbued them. Bearing this in mind, another way to answer this question is that this particular history is indeed illustrative of the ways in which individual choice is embedded within the context of larger historical processes.

### 1.1. A Name of One's Own: Agency, Self-Presentation, and Personal Names

There is a distinct difference between the identity one uses in public spaces and our own conception of ourselves. One's name is, we argue, a space where the two sets of perceptions mesh, disjoin, or are otherwise managed. This space is of particular interest to humanists because it brings processes of individual agency to the fore, even as larger historical and social processes constitute the context for those choices. Understanding the cultural and social influences present in all the transformations in Jesusita Baros Torres and Santos Baros Schubert's names is central to the larger aim of our project because it sheds light on the fact that personal identity is inextricably linked to the technical and ethical aspects of developing digital archives.

As archival researchers working with a collection of personal artifacts, we have a distinct advantage over our subjects. It is as though we are audience members watching a play, privy to the secret thoughts and actions of the characters who continue on, unaware of the future. On the other hand, we have limitations, because anything that was not recorded or saved is completely lost to us. In this respect, we are more akin to an audience watching the show through a hole in a wall that obscures part of the stage, and we are tasked with retelling the story to those standing behind us. In other words, we are able to create a narrative from what we've seen, but can only speculate about the parts we haven't. Furthermore, our subjects are people, not characters in a play. Their particular motivations, experiences, and complicated natures are only revealed to us in retrospect, through the photos, letters, and memories that survived them. And, though we acknowledge this, we must also acknowledge that in the process of creating a digital project with these artifacts, we have created a narrative. A narrative, furthermore, that may not concur with the evaluation that the participants would have given to the events and objects we have chosen to display.

In documenting and preserving the personal names in a digital archive, what metadata do we collect for an individual who used more than one name in their adult life? Which of those iterations would that person have identified as their true name? Should the metadata give precedence to a name that was given to that person or a name that the individual chose? And, most importantly for digital humanities projects, how do we compile metadata that accurately records not just all iterations of a personal name, but also the structure of that name according to the conventions of the society, time and language in which it was used? How do we ensure these conventions are clear for future readers, even if they may be unfamiliar with that language, society or period?

### 1.2. Locating the Digital in the Humanities

In the last issue of *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, Klein and Gold (2016) characterize the Digital Humanities as a diverse ecology, a metaphor that helps us imagine the paradigm of

interconnected practices as a network of academic disciplines that have traditionally functioned as isolated ecosystems (to follow the metaphor) but now interrelate to share methodologies while they combine resources to ask humanistic empirical questions. This *array of convergent practices*, as *The Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0* puts it, reflects the core value of interdisciplinarity of the Digital Humanities in their main task: the formation of necessary natively digital scholarly discourses that are now to facilitate both local and global dissemination of knowledge (Schnapp & Presner, 2009, p. 2). These discourses are natively digital because they sustain their birth and maintenance as well as their relevance and usefulness on their digital online forms, even if oftentimes they derive from existing objects with the goal of complementing them. The resulting cultural artifact is, on its own, a signifier for a practice, a discipline or a worldview as an act of creation that carries humanistic processes throughout its composition.

One way to think of such an artifact is “as hermeneutical instruments through which we can interpret other phenomena [...] ‘telescopes for the mind’ that show us something in a new light” (Ramsay & Rockwell, 2012). Originals and copies of maps, poems, letters, photographs, etc. have existed in a tangible form for centuries, and have been analyzed from multiple scholarly perspectives many times. However, the conversion of an analog object into a digital file brings about a new kind of hermeneutics that pairs humanistic and technical questions. By this we mean that not only do we document and preserve a copy of the object, but we produce new knowledge and tools for research in the process. In other words, it allows for questions and interpretations that would have been difficult to carry out within a traditional approach. That is, we believe, the contribution of Digital Humanities to academia.

One of the biggest achievements of the Digital Humanities has been the creation of digital editions of textual works with the TEI standard. These editions present online archives, with either simple or in-depth encoding, that can lead to the interpretation of phenomena difficult to read on its original form (manuscript or print). In general, projects of this nature seek to look into new paradigms in the cultural domain, however, due to the vast quantity of material available, and the time it takes to create a digital edition of a single piece, only part of cultural production has received attention. Usually, these are the traditional, biggest names in Literature, Philosophy, Art or History. For instance, in the context of the United States, there are many contextualized archives that present the work of important cultural figures, such as the *Walt Whitman Archive*<sup>2</sup>, or a collection of historical records, like the *Civil War Washington*<sup>3</sup> website, making these objects available to the general public while also providing marked down material for the scholar. To the interest of our academic work, however, the history of US Latinos has yet to be curated and

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Folsom and Kenneth M. Price. *Walt Whitman Archive*. Center for the Research in the Digital Humanities, University of Nebraska-Lincoln: <http://www.whitmanarchive.org>.

<sup>3</sup> Susan C. Lawrence, Elizabeth Lorang, Kenneth M. Price, and Kenneth J. Winkle. *Civil War Washington*. Center for the Research in the Digital Humanities, University of Nebraska-Lincoln: <http://civilwardc.org>.

explored further. There are few repositories that have curated material from immigrants in the American Midwest and we acknowledge the need to start working on composing a contextualized and marked digital collection that would allow us to study and theorize further about the role of the largest minority group in the country.

*Family Letters*<sup>4</sup>, our project, stands apart from existing efforts because it pairs preservation with analytical endeavours in offering a personal collection with marked texts, as well as linguistic, social and historical analysis. The *Mujeres Latinas Project*<sup>5</sup>, a work drawn from the Iowa Women's Archive developed by the University of Iowa since 2004, or the *Mexican Americans in Kansas*<sup>6</sup> by the Kansas Historical Society are projects intended to make public some aspects of this history. However, their main goal is to "preserve materials which document the lives and contributions" of Latinas in Iowa (*Mujeres Latinas Project*) or to add information about a specific group of people as a part of a bigger archive (*Kansapedia*)<sup>7</sup>. The first presents metadata and description of the objects but does not show the objects themselves; the second offers articles on the topic of Mexican Americans without historical or cultural artifacts.

The analysis of these digital objects has proven fruitful in our attempt to understand the interaction between technical format, and more complex humanistic questions related to identity, memory and self-presentation. Thus, the technical section of this paper outlines in detail the decisions made by our research team in order to collect personal name data for the individuals mentioned in this collection. We describe the challenges involved in encoding names that follow different naming conventions, that were produced by speakers of two different languages, and that changed over time.

## 2. THE BEGINNING

Sometime between 1928 and 1929, Jesusita Baros Torres<sup>8</sup> migrated from the town of Juchipila, Zacatecas, México, to the United States. She traveled with her two youngest children, without documents or knowledge of English, and leaving her two eldest sons behind. She faced considerable odds, but in the following decades went on to build a life for her and her family, first in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and later in Fort Lupton, Colorado. Eight decades later, in Eastern Nebraska, her granddaughter Jane was unable to read her words as she does not know

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<sup>4</sup> The website of the project is launching in December 2018. However, the images of the collection are available as part of the Hispanic/Latino Heritage Collection at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln: <https://mediacommons.unl.edu/luna/servlet/s/4uy13k>. For reference, here we use the identification number each letter, document or photograph has in the collection, i.e. Letter #26.

<sup>5</sup> *Mujeres Latinas Project*. Iowa Women's Archive: <https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/iwa/mujeres/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Mexican Americans in Kansas*. Kansas Historical Society: <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/mexican-americans-in-kansas/17874>.

<sup>7</sup> *Kansapedia*, Kansas Historical Society: <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/kansapedia/19539>.

<sup>8</sup> The team agreed on using the name Jesusita Baros Torres, out of all the variations of her name, because it is the one she chose to use as an adult.

Spanish. It was because of her interest in understanding her family's past and the challenges faced by her grandmother, that she arrived at the University of Nebraska with a cache of family photographs, documents and letters. It is because of this interest that this digital project was born<sup>9</sup>.

The *Family Letters* project is a collaborative, interdisciplinary work that arose from an apparently simple question about identity. What was originally a search for a translator grew into a digital project that was made possible through a multi-year collaboration between the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities and the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This collection, rich in personal artifacts, and correspondents' own accounts of major and everyday life events, contributes to our current understanding of the day-to-day lives of Mexican American families in the first half of the twentieth century. Our aim in this paper is to illustrate one way in which digital tools can be used to explore questions of identity formation on an individual and social level.

### 3. THE COLLECTION

The corpus for the present analysis consists of 345 digital objects that include one or more iterations of Jesusita Baros Torres or Santos Baros Schubert's name. As of May 2017, the collection described in these pages<sup>10</sup> was comprised of 713 digital objects<sup>11</sup> dated between the years 1835 and 1986. These include 225 personal letters, 199 documents, 19 miscellaneous items, and 270 photographs<sup>12</sup>.

149 letters in this collection were written entirely in Spanish or include some writing in Spanish. 73 of the 199 documents in the collection were written entirely in Spanish or contain some writing in Spanish. Letters written entirely in Spanish or including some writing in Spanish were written by 31 authors (Mendell & Velázquez, in preparation). Overall, personal letters were sent from 10 locations in Mexico and 28 locations in the United States, to 3 locations in México and 11 locations in the US.

Data for this analysis were organized in four broad categories: (1) what the mother and daughter in this family called themselves in private communications<sup>13</sup>, (2) what they were called

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<sup>9</sup> We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Shanahan family for allowing us to carry out research on their personal collection.

<sup>10</sup> Additional objects were found by the Shanahan family in 2016 and 2017 and included in the collection.

<sup>11</sup> The original collection consists of 144 documents. However, we have obtained 55 additional documents from Civil and Church Records in Mexico, distributed by online historical records sources Ancestry (for-profit) and Family Search (non-profit).

<sup>12</sup> Although some photographs include personal names, they were left out of analysis because they are the object of a different, ongoing analysis.

<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of our analysis, *private communication* is understood as any text in the collection handwritten or typed as a note to self, or addressed to a relative or friend, and dealing with subject matter primarily intended to perform a social bonding or emotional function. *Public communication* is

by others in these same textual spaces, (3) what they called themselves in public communications, and (4) what they were called by others. This information is presented on Appendix I. Once categorized, the data were analyzed along the following dimensions: self-presentation, language(s) used to produce the text, relationship between sender and addressee, geographical location, temporality, public/private space, and type of text. The reader will find the different iterations of their names organized by language and geographical location on Appendix II.

#### 4. RESULTS

In the summer of 1896, Jesusita Baros Torres was born in the mining town of Jalpa, Zacatecas, Mexico. Her father, Domingo Flemate, a 28-year-old day laborer, appeared before the civil registry judge to declare that she was his legitimate daughter, and to name her Livoria. Listed in the official record of her birth, which constitutes the earliest known mention of her life, are the names of her mother: María Mercedes Villarreal; her paternal grandparents –Alejo Flemate and María Ruvalcava, and her maternal grandparents: Tomás Villarreal and María Refugio Rentería.

Around the age of 32 or 33, Baros Torres emigrated from Zacatecas to New Mexico with her two youngest children and lived the remaining 48 years of her life in the United States. In the surviving collection of her personal documents and correspondence, her name appears written 71 different ways. In several cases, two forms of her name coexist in documents written in the same decade, or by the same writer, or, not infrequently, in the same piece of mail –e.g., one name or spelling used in the envelope and another in the letter. Examined as a whole, sources of variation in her personal name are of five types:

- Non-standard orthography produced by a speaker of Spanish
- Non-standard orthography produced by a speaker of English
- Variation in the use of honorifics (Sra., Mrs., Ms., Señora, or nothing)
- Adaptations to English naming conventions or American social mores
- Use of a different name altogether

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understood as any text in the collection meant to be read by anyone other than a friend or family member, and primarily intended to perform instrumental or institutional functions. In personal correspondence, for example, the letter would be considered private communication, as it is meant for the eyes of the addressee, while the envelope would be considered public communication, as it is assumed that it will be read by postal service employees –and potentially by other individuals, while in transit. Space is used here to mean textual space.

#### 4.1. Jesusita: Personal name and the construction of the social self

A valid question arises at this point of our discussion: From all possible choices, why identify the woman referenced in these letters as Jesusita Baros Torres? Why not, for example, following Mexican naming conventions, refer to her as Livoria Flemate Villarreal, a name that acknowledges the ties of kinship documented in the official record of her birth? We have chosen to refer to her using the name she chose for herself. The name she shared with her children, and grandchildren. The name she shared –and in many ways constructed, with the man with whom she lived for the last 37 years of her life.

In all forms of her personal name documented in this collection, the referent is the same: a female human born in Jalpa, Zacatecas, in 1896. Each change in her name, we argue, has embedded in it a set of social and linguistic features that give it meaning. Meaning is a conceptualization of the speaker, not a representation of the world, and is per force a subjective process. We further argue that this process is intimately tied to the social experience of the bearer of this/these name(s).

##### 4.1.1. Personal name in private and public use

Public texts in this collection include fourteen iterations of self-name by Jesusita Baros Torres, and 26 iterations of her personal name produced by others<sup>14</sup>. Private documents include six iterations of self-name and fifteen of name by others. All but one of the versions of her name used in private<sup>15</sup> were also used by her in public texts. Iterations of personal name for Jesusita Baros Torres (type) are listed chronologically on Appendix I.

Only four iterations of her name were used in private communication and not documented in the public texts in the collection: *Eliboria Flemate* (1934), *Sra. Elivoria Flemate* (1939), *Sra. Eliboria Flemate* (1940), and *Sra. Jesús Varos* (1959?). The liminality of social identity as demarcated in the public and private spaces of a personal letter is highlighted by the fact that all of these names were only used by her relatives in Mexico, and only on the interior text of personal correspondence. These four letters were sent from Juchipila, Zacatecas to Fort Lupton, CO between 1934-1959, by her son Jesús Samaniego, by her sister Guadalupe and her brother Demetrio Flemate, in envelopes addressed to *Sra. Jesusita Baros*, *Mrs. Jesusita Baros*, *Sra. Jesusita Varos*. Curiously, the collection also includes examples in which her relatives in Mexico appear to have reinterpreted *Jesusita* as a diminutive of the very common personal name *María*

<sup>14</sup> Texts classified as public for Jesusita include: envelopes; baptism, birth and marriage certificates; public school records; applications, affidavits and other immigration documents; war ration booklets; postcards; memorial cards; one store receipt; one county assessor document; one payroll document, and two handwritten copies of her will.

<sup>15</sup> In our analysis, we distinguish self-name from self-reference (either by morphological or lexical means –e.g. *tu madre*, *yo tu mamá*, *su gra(nd)ma*, *tu grandmother*, *yo*, etc.).

de Jesús, producing versions of her name that she never used herself and that were not her given name: *Sra. María Jesús Barrios* (1939), *Sra. María Jesús Baros Torres* (1955), *Sra. María de Jesús Varos* (1962), *Sra. Jesús Varos* (1959).

Awareness of the tension between both identities is evidenced in a letter written to Jesusita Baros Torres by her adult son ca. 1959:

Pues mama me dices ce cieres ce te alludemos asa car la cta de nasimiento una es ce no sabemos ce año nasio otra es qe aqui se llama jeliboria [seliboria?] flemate y enestados unidos se llama gesus ta varos en fin aqi con dinero se arregla En Guchipila en Galpa [Most likely Jalpa, Zacatecas] no nos conocen pero digame ce año masio ce mes y qenfueron sus padrinos aversi a cien Guchipila [Juchipila] lapo demos sacar digame en ce nomvrelivoria flemate gesusita varos llo creo ce en nombre de gesusita varos estadifisil<sup>16</sup>.

In an undated handwritten note to a now unknown correspondent, Jesusita Baros Torres wrote: “Mira Aci es como y quiero la mi acta de nacimiento. Nació el año 1895, en julio 15 Jesusita Flemate”. That, however, would not be the name she used most of her adult life. Only one documented instance of her use of the name Liboria Flemate<sup>17</sup> survives. This is the record of her marriage to Fernando Samaniego in 1912. No self-use of her maternal last name has been preserved. The earliest documented use of the last name *Baros* dates from 1939, a year in which she was living in New Mexico with her two youngest children. Of unknown origin, *Baros*<sup>18</sup> is the last name she would share with her children and some of her grandchildren in the United States. The earliest record of her use of last name *Torres* dates from 1952. By 1957, she had incorporated three surnames to her personal name: *Jesusita Flemate Baros Torres*.

A different name altogether, *Jesusita Rodríguez*, is documented exclusively for her years residence in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In a letter sent to Fort Lupton in 1939, her *comadre* Felipita N. Baca writes:

<sup>16</sup> “Well, mom, you tell me that you want us to get a birth certificate, but one [difficulty] is that we don’t know the year you were born. Another is that here you’re called Jeliboria Flemate and in the United States you are called Jesusita Varos. Anyway, with money anything can be solved in Juchipila. In Jalpa no one knows us, but tell me what year you were born in, what month, and who were your godparents, so we can see if we can request one in Juchipila. But tell me with what name, as Elivoria Flemate or Jesusita Baros. I think that [obtaining a birth certificate] under Jesusita Varos will be difficult”. Shannahan collection [Letter #26]

<sup>17</sup> The orthographic variation present in the following alternations: Liboria/Livoria, Baros/Varos, Torres/Torrez, Jesusita/Jesucita were all produced by speakers of Mexican or Mexican American Spanish. Along with educational level of author, the variability in graphemes can be largely explained by the fact that in Mexican Spanish the contrasting graphemes represent the same sound: b, v > [b], s, z, ci > [s]. The addition of an epenthetic e, as in Eliboria, Elivoria, is not uncommon in rural varieties of Mexican Spanish. “The addition of a phoneme to a word” writes Penny (2004), “normally occurs in order to aid in the transition from a preceding to a following phoneme” (p. 36).

<sup>18</sup> No matches of the surname Baros were found in the database [forebears.io](http://forebears.io). The alternate spelling Barros is listed as the 680<sup>th</sup> most common surname in the world, used most frequently in Brazil, Cape Verde, Portugal, and also present in Mexico and the United States. Barrios is listed as the 977<sup>th</sup> most common surname in the world, most prevalent in Venezuela and Guatemala. Mexico and the United States are listed as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place respectively in prevalence of the surname Barrios (<http://forebears.io/>).

Mi muy estimada comadre espero que esta carta los allen buenos Nosotros estamos buenos Gracias a Dios. Después de saludarla comadre le dire que isimos su en cargo de ir a la casa de corte a preguntar por su tax si estava pagado.  
 Pero comadre usted no me mando a disir en que nombre estava yo le dije a Eduardo que preguntara por Jesusita Rodrigues porque usted pienso que asi coria aqui  
 Primero fue a donde se asenan por que este es el ultimo mes pa asesar pregunto por Jesusita Rodrigues y no la allaron<sup>19</sup>.

To the US Dept. of Labor she was *janitress*. To the immigration authorities she was *applicant*. To the Office of Price Administration, she was the *bearer* of War Ration Book no. 986545. To the American Red Cross she was the *purchaser* of War Fund shares. To the Weld County CO assessor, she was *homeowner*. To those she loved she was *mamá, mother, dearest mother, estimada mamá, apreciable mamá de toda mi consideración, comadre, hermana, grandma, querida mamacita, mi muy estimada hermana*. To herself she was Jesusita Baros Torres. An undated draft of a timeline prepared to accompany an application for US citizenship bears the handwritten line: “My name given birth was Jesusita Flemate Baros”<sup>20</sup>. Perhaps the definitive iteration of her name –a literal and metaphorical act of will, so to speak, is the one she wrote in the two surviving drafts of her will, dated in 1957: Jesusita Flemate Baros Torres. One given name and three surnames, that served as *précis* of her bonds of kinship and affection:

- FLEMATE > ties to her parents, siblings, her two adult sons and extended family in Mexico.
- BAROS > ties to her two youngest children in the US.
- TORRES > ties to her husband of four decades.

Eighty years after her name was inscribed as Livoria Flemate Villarreal in the Juchipila, Zacatecas, civil registry, the memorial cards distributed by her children among her friends, acquaintances and members of her parish upon her death, read: JESUSITA F TORRES (1900-1976). One of the six pallbearers carrying her body into the St. Williams church in Fort Lupton CO was her grandson Jerry Baros, with whom she shared neither given surname nor language.

#### 4.1.2. Honorifics and social standing

In June of 1939, Maximino Torres sent a letter from Longmont Colorado, to his brother Clemente, in Churintzio, Michoacán, México. In it he wrote: “Brother, after greeting you and your

<sup>19</sup> “My dearest comadre, I hope this letter finds you all well. We are alright, thank God. After greeting you comadre, I will tell you that we followed your instructions and went to the court house to ask if your property taxes were paid. But comadre, you didn’t tell us under which name it [the property] was. I told Eduardo to ask under the name Jesusita Rodrigues, because I think that’s the name under which you ran here [the name you used here]. He first went to where they assess them, because this is the last month to have them assessed. He asked under Jesusita Rodrigues and they didn’t find you”. Shannahan collection [Letter #32]

<sup>20</sup> Shanahan collection [Document #6].

family, I wish to tell you the following. That I am living here with a family. The lady is a widow, and if God grants us his permission, I wish to marry her"<sup>21</sup>. This is the first known record of their life together.

Aside from the use of her husband's name, the use of prenominal honorifics Mrs., and its Spanish equivalent Sra., is one signifier that allows an adult woman to assert the social standing accrued to married individuals. This is to say, to construct a socially-salient aspect of one's identity. By 1941 Jesusita Baros Torres identified herself as *Mrs. Jesusita Baros*. By 1952 she had adopted the surname of the man with whom she would live for the next four decades: *Mrs. Jesusita Baros de Torres*<sup>22</sup>. By 1953 she identified herself in a letter to her daughter's former school principal simply as *Mrs. Torres*<sup>23</sup>.

The documents in the collection reveal traces of the cultural negotiation in Jesusita Baros Torres' self-presentation. For example, two letters dated in 1955 document her experimentation with the English language convention of replacing a married woman's name with that of her husband. The result are two non-target forms that do not erase her own name, but insert one name inside the other. The inserted name is underlined here: *Mrs. Max Jesusita B. Torres*, and *J. Max Torres Baros*.

Also present is the evidence of a co-construction of a joint identity as a married couple that allowed Jesusita Baros Torres and Maximino Torres to navigate institutional life in two countries. For example, in a handwritten affidavit written in 1952 at the request of Maximino Torres for immigration purposes, C.V. Maddux, former labor commissioner of the Great Western Sugar Company in Denver, wrote:

This is written at request of bearer Maximino (Max) Torres, aged 55 he says, [...] I well know that I've known him long years as a hard worker in beet and vegetable fields (Look at his hands!) [...] So far as I know he did not leave the U.S. after he started to work for Colo beet farmers. In 1946 he married Mrs. Jesusita Baros in Denver & he says he has marriage certificate, which he will provide on request. They desire to visit Mexico City and return in one or two months to their home in Ft. Lupton. [...] Mrs. Baros de Torres states that she has two children [...]<sup>24</sup>.

No record survives of a wedding ceremony or legal marriage document between Jesusita Baros Torres and Maximino Torres. The collection abounds, however, with records of a marriage of three decades: documentation of an ordinary life, of raising a family and building community through church, work and neighborhood. Ironically, the only record of marriage of Jesusita Baros Torres that survives is the civil registry entry of her marriage to Fernando

<sup>21</sup> Shanahan collection [Letter #36]. All translations are ours.

<sup>22</sup> This hybrid form follows both English and Spanish conventions by including both the English honorific Mrs., and the use of the Spanish preposition *de* (literally 'of', or 'belonging to') followed by the husband's paternal surname. This is to say, she is doubly marked, or doubly identified as a married woman.

<sup>23</sup> In the same document she writes: "I have remarried since that time and my last name is now Torres". Shanahan collection [Document #19].

<sup>24</sup> Shanahan collection [Document #56].

Samaniego, father of her two eldest sons, whom she married at 16 in Juchipila, Zacatecas, Mexico. The official record of his death, dated in 1943, in Juchipila, lists her as his widow. In 1943 Jesusita Baros Torres—or Eliboria Flemate, as recorded in the document, was 47 years old, and had lived in the United States for almost two decades. To our knowledge, no record survives of her life with Samaniego, or with either José Lara or Benjamín López, fathers of her two youngest children according to baptism records.

A second set of questions becomes relevant at this point: Why so many name changes? What would motivate a young mother to leave two of her children and start over in another country? A definitive answer to these questions goes well beyond the scope of this paper. The baptism registries of her two youngest children however, provide an important clue. Born in 1921 in Juchipila, Maria Santos Lara-Jesusita Baros Torres' third child, is registered in parish records as *hija adulterina*: a child born to two parents who could not marry at time of conception because one or both were married (*Enciclopedia Jurídica*). In 1924, the baptismal record of J. Jesús López, her fourth and youngest child, lists him as *hijo expureo* (i.e., *hijo espurio*, the illegitimate child of a single, married or widowed mother and unknown father; DRAE). The weight of those labels and its consequences for her children's economic mobility and social and emotional well-being are not to be underestimated in a semi-rural community in central Mexico at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two potential strategies for agency present themselves: migration, change of name.

Since her arrival in the United States, Jesusita Baros Torres was addressed by others using one of the many iterations of her bare name, or by her name preceded by Sra. or Mrs. Unsurprisingly, the honorific Sra. was used exclusively by correspondents who spoke Spanish and lived in Mexico. Bilingual and English-speaking correspondents writing in the US addressed her using Mrs., or her bare name. What are interesting however, and again suggestive of the liminality between public and private identity displayed in personal letters, are the many examples in which her adult sons, brother and sister wrote to her from Mexico and addressed her as Mrs. in the envelope and as Sra. in the letter contained within it. One example survives of the use of the deferential *doña*, signifier of respect (DRAE): A postcard sent to Don Max y Doña Jesusita by the Botello García family from Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico in 1974, when she was 78 years old.

#### 4.1.3. Language and location of writer

Examined by language, 75% of the documents in which JBT is referred to by name were written in Spanish. Of these, 75% were written in Mexico and 21% in the US. With few exceptions, the authors of documents written in Mexico lived in the states of Zacatecas, (89%), Baja California and Michoacán. Fourteen authors were located in the US. Of these, 29% lived in

New Mexico, and 57% in Colorado. One document was issued in the international border in El Paso, Texas. One document was written in an unspecified US location.

With the exception of baptism records and civil registry entries, all documents written in Spanish were produced by relatives and friends. With few exceptions that include brief notes from her daughter and one of her granddaughters, most of the documents in English included in the collection were written by institutional actors for instrumental or institutional purposes. Public iterations of Jesusita Baros Torres' name organized by language of author and decade are presented on Appendix II.

#### **4.2. Santos: Personal name in private and public use**

According to civil and religious records issued by the State of Colorado and the Denver diocese, Santos Baros, of Denver, married William F. Schubert, of Lincoln, Nebraska, on November 9, 1946. Her mother, Jesusita Baros Torres, had set three conditions to grant her blessing: that the couple remain in Colorado, that their future children speak Spanish, and that they be brought up in the Catholic faith. Over the course of the coming decades, only the latter would come to pass.

In joining her new husband to start a family in Nebraska, Santos Baros Schubert was leaving behind a Mexican American neighborhood, a Spanish-dominant household, and a social network where Spanish was vested with social capital. She was also increasing her interaction with English monolingual speakers and widening a personal network that began when she moved to Denver to join the workforce as a single woman. The negotiation of her identity as an adult married woman was to take place in an environment that was predominately White, and that presented few opportunities to interact with other Mexican Americans or to speak her family language. It is in this context that her mother's letters become the main source of Spanish and connection to her community of origin<sup>25</sup>.

Like Jesusita, Santos is an ethnically-marked name. Compared to her mother's experience, Santos Baros Schubert's is more complex. Having migrated as a child and having constructed an adult life outside of the Mexican American enclave of household and immediate neighborhood, Santos lived between linguistic and cultural spaces. In her adult life, she would alternate between a legal name, and variations of a social name that asserted different parts of her identity. The issue of agency and self-presentation in public and private spaces is never

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<sup>25</sup> The smaller number of documents that survive for Santos Baros Schubert as compared to those for her mother is related to the nature of the collection –i.e.: One has access to the correspondence one receives, and only rarely to the one that one sends. Surviving examples of letters and other correspondence sent by Santos Baros Schubert to her mother were saved over the years by Jesusita Baros Torres, transported to Nebraska by her daughter after her death, and then preserved by her granddaughter Jane after Santos' death in 2012. This highlights the gendered dimension of family memory.

simple. It is rarely conscious; it is perforce recursive, and, because it's a product of social interaction, it is also refractive.

No record survives of Santos Baros Schubert's self-reference using her paternal last name. Between the year of her arrival in the US around the age of six until her marriage in 1946, all surviving examples of self-reference used the last name *Baros*. After her marriage, she alternates between *Baros* and *Schubert*, her husband's paternal surname.

After her move to Nebraska, self-references alternate between the personal names *Santos* and *Sandra*. The first record of this negotiation of identity and self-presentation is private: a handwritten note on a personal calendar dated two years after her marriage. Starting in 1950, *Sandra* and *Santos* alternate in self-references included in letters to her husband. Between 1950 and 1975, all self-references in letters and cards addressed to her mother, are always using *Santos*. Only one greeting card to her mother, dated 1975, is signed as *Sandra*. With all other correspondents she will alternate between *Santos*, *Sandra*, *Mrs. William F Schubert*. By 1982, a letter addressed to Albuquerque Public Schools in which she requests verification of enrollment, she identifies herself as *Santos Baros*. In 1986, the memorabilia for the party to celebrate her 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary read: *Bill and Sandra 1946-1986*.

Why *Sandra*? The first potential reason is morphological similarity: Same number of syllables and a shared first syllable. A more nuanced explanation would have to account for the fact that *Sandra* is less ethnically-marked than *Santos*, that it would be recognizable to speakers of both social networks, and that, in what Parada (2016) describes as the Anglo-Latino continuum, *Sandra* is a neutral name because it works for both traditions and both languages (p. 23). What is the role of agency when choosing one's name in adulthood? Are individuals aware of a trend and choose accordingly, or are they part of the trend and don't know it? A satisfactory answer to this question is elusive within the context of this paper. What is worth noting here is that according to the Social Security Administration, *Sandra* was one of the most popular female names in the US during the 1950s (SSA).

The collection includes 158 documents in which Santos Baros Schubert is referred to or refers to herself by personal name. These translate into 26 iterations of her name used by others in public texts (type), and 19 used in private. Only one version of her name, *Santos Lara* (given name + paternal last name), was found in a private text, and not found in any public document or correspondence. This item is a handwritten timeline drafted by her mother for immigration purposes. Only one letter from her father, José Lara, survives. It was sent from Juchipila, Zacatecas to Fort Lupton, Colorado in 1942, when she was 21 years old. The envelope is addressed to *Srta. Santos Baros*. In the body of the letter she is addressed as *Querida hija*.

Although several photos survive of Santos Baros Schubert as a girl, a teenager and a young adult, most textual references to her are as an adult married woman. Until 1944, references by others address her with the surname *Baros*. After her marriage, references as

*Santos* and *Sandra* alternate and are used in conjunction with her husband's last name. No examples of the name *Sandra* used together with the last name *Baros* are found in the collection. In accordance with English naming conventions of the time, in most surviving documents *Sandra Baros Schubert* is referenced using her husband's full name, initials, nickname or bare last name.

Her two most prolific correspondents were her mother and her husband. Over the years, in private and public communication, her husband alternated between *Sandra* and *Santos*. Her mother, who often addressed her letters using a variation of her son in law's last name, addressed her daughter exclusively as *Santos*.

*Santos Baros Schubert* was born *María Santos Lara* in Juchipila, Zacatecas, Mexico, in 1921. Her obituary, published in 2012 in the *Lincoln Journal Star*, in Lincoln, Nebraska, lists the final iteration of her name as *Santos B. Schubert*. A name that includes neither *Sandra*, nor her parents' last names. Neither links to her two half-brothers in Mexico, nor *Baros*, the last name she shared with her mother and brother in the United States. A final iteration that includes the name she was given at the baptismal font in a rural town in Mexico, and the last name that served as a marker of the life she constructed with her husband her children in the US Midwest.

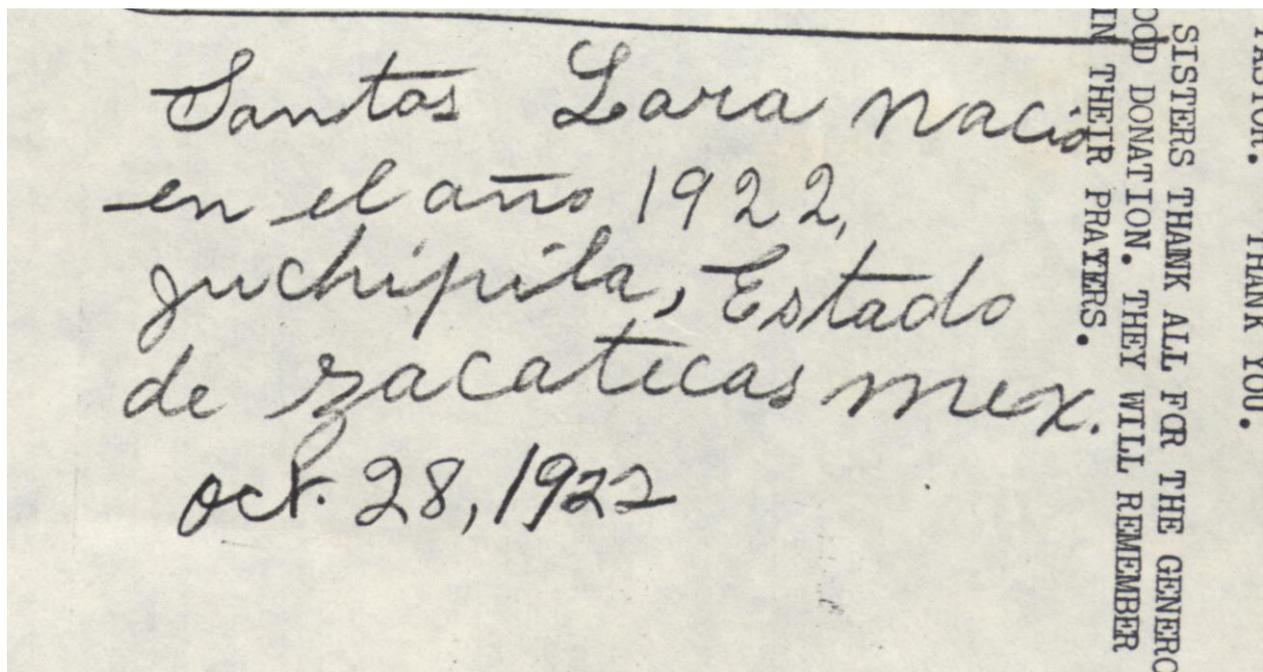


Figure 1. Santos Baros Schubert name by Jesuita Baros Torres.

#### 4.2.1. Honorifics and social standing

Only five examples survive of *Santos Baros Schubert*'s self-presentation as a married woman through the use of honorifics: *Mrs. Sandra Schubert* (1950); *Mrs. W.F. Schubert* (1950); *Mrs. William F. Schubert* (1959); *Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert* (1982), and *Mrs. Schubert* (undated). On the other hand, 61% of all instances of *Santos Baros Schubert*'s name used by others are preceded by an honorific. Of these, the overwhelming majority were preceded by

Mrs. Only seven personal letters, sent to her between the years 1937 and 1944, denote her status as an unmarried woman: Miss –six letters from childhood friends–, and Srta. –one letter sent from Juchipila, Zacatecas by her father in 1942.

Social construction of her identity as a married woman was negotiated and reiterated by others using English language conventions. This includes all the letters written in Spanish by her mother, who addressed her envelopes as Mrs. in all but two surviving instances in which she used the Spanish version Sra.

Variations of her personal name used with the honorific Mrs. can be organized into four categories. The first includes her given name, Santos, with the last name Baros and/or her husband's name: Mrs. Santos Baros (1); Mrs. Santos Schubert; Mrs. Santos B. Schubert, and Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert. The second category substitutes her given name for the name Sandra or by an initial: Mrs. Sandra Schubert, Mrs. Sandra B. Schubert, and Mrs. S. Schubert. The third category includes three letters or cards sent to her by her mother and addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Schubert, as well as the hybrid form Mr. y Mrs. Schubert.

Greatest in number (37 tokens), are the letters addressed to Santos Baros Schubert using her husband's full name: Mrs. William Schubert (2), only his last name: Mrs. Schubert (5); his initials: Mrs. WF Schubert (24); his abbreviated name: Mrs. Wm Schubert (1); his nickname: Mrs. Bill Schubert (3), or her husband's bare name: WF Schubert (2).

#### 4.2.2. Language and location of writer

Reflective of her experience as generation 1.5 in her family, the surviving correspondence for Santos Baros Schubert includes considerably less documents written in Spanish, and greater geographical dispersion of authors than that from her mother. Examined by language, only 46% of the documents in which SBS is referred to by name were written in Spanish. Most of these are personal letters written by her mother. Fifty two percent of these documents were written in English. The rest are envelopes addressed to her, with no surviving letter and no indication the language in which it was written.

Examined by location, only 6% of these documents were written in Mexico. With the exception of her certificate of baptism, all were written by relatives. In contrast, 96% of the documents in which SBS is mentioned by name were written in the United States<sup>26</sup>. These documents were sent from eighteen locations in CO, NE, NM, IL, AZ, TX, CA<sup>27</sup>, and Washington DC. Interestingly, the number of locations does not reflect multiplicity of correspondents, but the mobility of relatives and friends over the decades. Fifty six percent of the surviving documents were sent by Jesusita Baros Torres to her daughter from Fort Lupton, CO, to Lincoln, NE and

<sup>26</sup> Nine documents do not include place of origin. These are all personal notes and greeting cards written by her mother and her husband.

<sup>27</sup> Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, Illinois, Arizona, Texas, California.

other Midwest locations. They represent the lifeline through which family news and connections were maintained over the decades. Another 25% of these documents are personal letters written to SBS by her husband, William F. Schubert, over the course of their marriage<sup>28</sup>. These were sent from three locations in NE, two in IL, and one in TX during periods of his deployment in the army and work for a railroad company. Fourteen percent were letters and cards written by Mexican American childhood friends sent from NM, CO, CA and Washington DC. Only 5% of the surviving documents were letters written by English-monolingual friends that SBS had made in adulthood. These were sent from Bradshaw NE, as well as Tucson and Phoenix, AZ. Most of the documents written in Denver, CO, are official documents issued by institutional actors. Public iterations of Santos Baros Schubert's name are presented organized by language of author and decade on Appendix II.

It is worth noting that analysis of the multiple variants of Jesusita and Santos' names over time and space, in the entirety of the collection, has been facilitated by the digitization and metadata curation for the *Family Letters* project. At the same time, the need to track their several iterations resulted in an annotation convention tailored to bilingual projects. We discuss the process of its development in the coming section.

## 5. LOCATING THE DIGITAL IN THE HUMANITIES

We can describe the curation of this collection as a series of compromises to maximize clarity for a broad audience and to facilitate research in subject matters as diverse as linguistics, history, sociology, migration studies and the study of everyday material culture. To that end, we have imposed order on a rather disorganized set of letters, documents, and photographs. Chronology and genre (letter, document, photograph) are the two primary categories that we use to organize the materials, as they have traditionally informed most archives, both in physical and digital format, oftentimes raising ontological and interpretive questions about genre (Gray & Price, 2016, p. 2). Although most of our objects can be arranged according to one or both categories, they usually also contain features that are not bound to just date or style. As it is often the case with digital archives that contain a collection of personal letters, one of our biggest goals is to attempt to reproduce particular features of each object in encoding in order to maintain the essence of the physical object. For that reason, in this particular archive, we have found ourselves engaged in making humanistic decisions that affected our technical scope: several members of the family changed their names during their lifetime, using the different variants in their letters. This issue has made apparent the importance of asking humanistic

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<sup>28</sup> The predominance of letters from her mother and her husband in our sample is closely linked to the nature of the collection: only those letters and documents judged of sentimental or emotional valuable by SBT were preserved for posterity and are available to us for analysis.

questions during the process of creating a digital archive, as our final goal is to honor the identity construction of this family in their changes of names, physical locations, and family ties.

The personal names present a relevant example of the challenges of creating metadata of personal, family letters from a not well documented set of participants in this network. In this case, there is not a definite version of a forename or surname for the main participants in this journey. In the letters that different people write to them, there are spelling variations in their names (Livoria, Eliboria, Elibria) or radically different names (Eliboria to María Jesús to Jesusita). Moreover, in the collection there are names that follow the standard Mexican naming convention, this is, given name and paternal last name (Santos Baros), names on the American naming convention, first, middle and surname (William F. Schubert), and, more distinctively here, names that combine both forms (Santos Baros Schubert, Jess Jesús Baros) as some of the members adapted to the naming customs of their new home. This problem is a useful opportunity to ask ourselves: How should these documents be edited in order to present personal representations to the readers? If, as Finch (2008) argues, “a change of name denotes a ‘passage’ in the life course which is part of a creative construction of a personal narrative” (p. 712) encoding and preserving the change of names is, in this case, a creative construction of an archive for a personal narrative.

First, following the standard methodology in text encoding, the team created an Identity Tag Catalog as part of the metadata to give each person participating in the network an ID. This metadata also includes a resolved name for each person and all the name variations that are found in letters, documents and photograph inscriptions. As shown in figure 2 Jesusita Baros Torres is the regularized name for ID tag #jbt001, and she is referred to as Jesusita Flemate (given name), Jesusita Baros de Torres, Jesusita Rodriguez, María de Jesús Varos, Eliboria Flemate, María Jesús Barrios, etc. and different names that only vary from the mentioned ones in their spelling (Baros vs. Barros).

	A	B	C
1	<b>ID tag</b>	<b>regularized name</b>	<b>token name</b>
2	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Flemate Baros Torres
3	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Flemante Torres
4	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Barros
5	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Baros Torres
6	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Baros
7	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Torres
8	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Baros de Torres
9	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jesusita Rodriguez
10	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	María de Jesus Varos
11	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Eliboria Flemate
12	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	María Jesús Barrios
13	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Jeliboria Flemate
14	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Seliboria Flemate
15	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	E. Jesusita Baros Torres
16	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Ma de Jesus Baros Torres
17	jbt001	Jesusita Baros Torres	Mrs. Max Jesusita Baros Torres

Figure 2. Caption of our XML ID Catalog with name variants.

Second, the team agreed on using the name that is used in the textual item on its metadata, linking it to the ID tag. For instance, if the sender of a letter or an inscription on a photograph has one of the token names different to the regularized name, as in inscription text in figure 3, the ID tag serves as a reference but the token name is part of the subject.

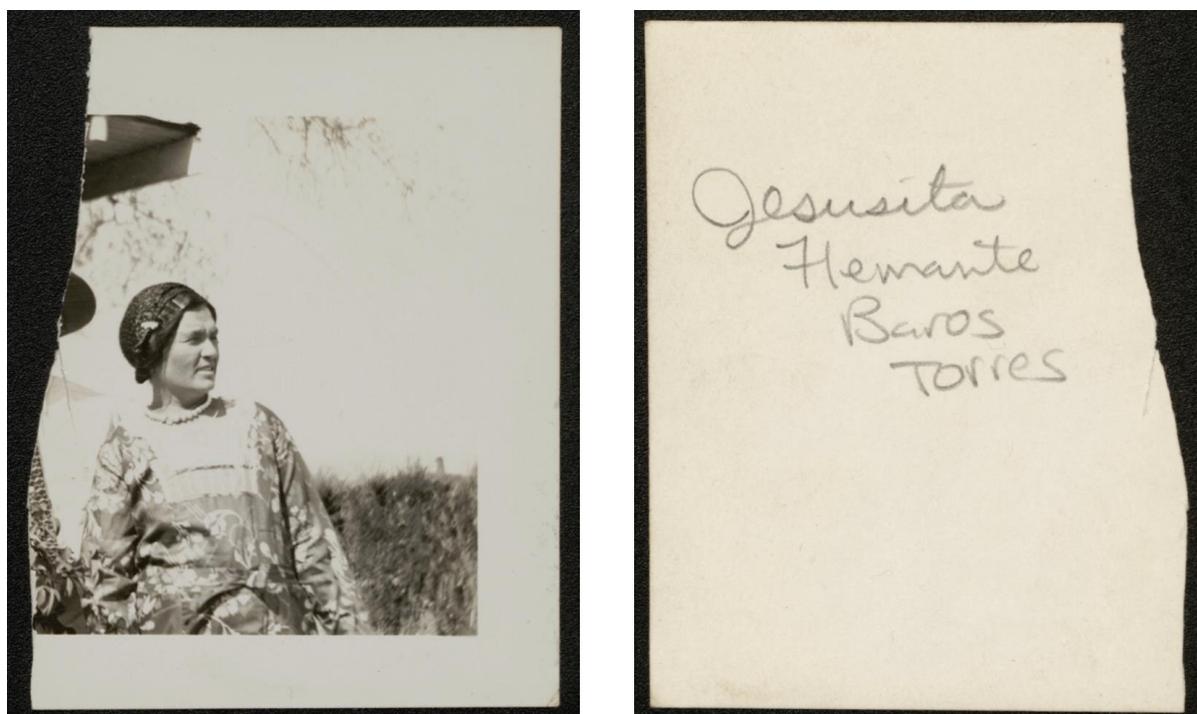


Figure 3. Caption of a photograph with a token name different from the regularized name for ID tag #jbr001.

```

5 <work id="shan_P002.meta">
6   <agentSet [6 lines]
13  <dateSet [3 lines]
17  <descriptionSet [2 lines]
20  <inscriptionSet>
21    <inscription>
22      <text source="back" xml:lang="en">Jesusita Flemate Baros Torres</text>
23    </inscription>
24  </inscriptionSet>
25  <locationSet [2 lines]
28  <materialSet [4 lines]
33  <measurementsSet [5 lines]
39  <relationSet [2 lines]
42  <rightsSet [5 lines]
48  <sourceSet [5 lines]
54  <subjectSet>
55    <subject>
56      <term refid="jbt001">Flemate Baros Torres, Jesusita</term>
57    </subject>

```

Figure 4. Excerpt of the VRA file for photograph in Figure 3.

Finally, in order to better organize the corpus, categorize all the token names, and provide all variants for the user, we created an encoded list of people in the network. Due to the different naming conventions in Spanish and English, we decided to mark down the type of name or surnames as well as their original language. In the cases when it is not possible to establish the origin of a surname, the type is encoded as unknown. As illustrated in Figure 5, the encoded description for Santos includes different variants for her name under tag #sbs001 and regularized name Santos Baros Schubert.

```

342 <!-- Santos Baros Schubert -->
343 <person xml:id="sbs001">
344   <persName type="display">Santos Baros Schubert</persName>
345   <persName type="full"><surname type="parental" xml:lang="es">Baros</surname> <forename type="first" full="yes" xml:lang="es">Santos</forename></persName>
346   <persName type="full"><surname type="marital" xml:lang="en">Schubert</surname>, <surname type="parental" xml:lang="es">Baros</surname>
347     <forename type="first" full="yes" xml:lang="es">Santos</forename></persName>
348   <persName type="full"><surname type="marital" xml:lang="en">Schubert</surname>, <surname type="parental" xml:lang="es">Baros</surname>
349     <forename type="chosen" full="yes" xml:lang="es-en">Sandra</forename></persName>
350   <persName type="full"><surname type="marital" xml:lang="en">Schubert</surname>, <surname type="parental" xml:lang="es">Baros</surname>
351     <forename type="chosen" full="yes" xml:lang="en">Sandy</forename></persName>
352   <birth when="1922" source="#viaf">1922</birth> <!-- Find out birth -->
353   <death when="1000" source="#viaf"></death> <!-- Find out death -->
354   <trait type="color"><ab></ab> <note></note></trait>
355   <trait type="ethnicity"><note>Hispanic</note></trait>
356   <socecStatus></socecStatus>
357   <occupation>Housewife</occupation> <!-- What she worked on? -->
358   <nationality source="Jane Shanahan">Mexican</nationality>
359   <residence source="Shanahan Collection">Albuquerque (NM)</residence>
360   <residence source="Shanahan Collection">Fort Lupton (CO)</residence>
361   <residence source="Shanahan Collection">Lincoln (NE)</residence>
362   <faith source="Shanahan Collection"></faith> <!-- Do we know? -->
363   <sex female</sex>
364 </person>

```

Figure 5. Caption of all name variants of Santos encoded in TEI XML.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding pages we have attempted to illustrate one way in which digital tools can be used to explore questions of identity formation on an individual and social level. Perhaps more importantly, we have argued that digital preservation practices that are at the core of the construction of digital archives is not neutral, not natural, and not devoid of ethical challenges. This is, that the choice to collect some metadata and not another, to digitize an object but not

some other one, and to display only a few objects, is by itself creating a narrative. A narrative, furthermore, that may not concur with the evaluation that the participants would have given to the events and objects we have chosen to display.

Following Ramsay and Rockwell (2012), we have posited that the conversion of an analog object into a digital file brings about a new kind of hermeneutics that pairs humanistic and technical questions, and that this interaction is –can be, fertile ground for addressing more complex questions related to identity, memory and self-presentation.

We've focused our analysis on the personal correspondence and other family documents of a mother and daughter of Mexican American family that settled in Colorado and Nebraska during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. We've documented the ways in which their personal names and self-presentation practices changed over several decades, in an attempt to understand the set of social and linguistic features that gave meaning to each transformation. Taking Finch's (2008) argument about the nexus between personal name and social world a step further, we have argued that for individuals voluntarily or forcefully displaced from their homeland, the negotiation, alteration and transformation(s) of their name are sites for the display of competing social, cultural, and economic pressures to assimilate or to sustain links to a pre-migration self. Under this light, the documents in the collection described above reveal traces of the negotiation between two cultural spaces, as well as competing self- and other-understandings of an individuals' identity as encoded in her personal name.

A second stage of examination presented in these pages has been inward looking: Understanding the cultural and social influences present in all the transformations in Jesusita Baros Torres and Santos Baros Schubert's names sheds light on the fact that personal identity is inextricably linked to the technical and ethical aspects of developing digital archives. From a purely technical aspect, for example, how do we compile metadata that accurately records not just all iterations of a personal name, but also the structure of that name according to the conventions of the society, time and language in which it was used? Most importantly, how do we address the danger of ascribing to the events and practices described in these letters and artifacts meaning and connections with which their authors might not have imbued them?

Ascribing to the notion of digital preservation as a neutral process entails the danger of reifying cultural assumptions that belong to the editor, rather than the producer of the original artifact. It is our belief that critical examination of these issues requires us to question encoding standards, connections between items and editors and, more importantly, between digital archives and minority communities in the United States and elsewhere.

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## APPENDICES

*Appendix 1. Iterations of Jesusita and Santos names in private and public texts**Type. Name listed by year first documented in collection.*

<b>Jesusita calls herself IN PUBLIC</b>	<b>Jesusita called by others IN PUBLIC</b>
(1912) Liboria Flemate (1939) Jesusita Baros (1941) Mrs. Jesusita Baros (1952) Mrs. Jesusita Barros de Torres (1953) Mrs. Torres (1954) Jesusita Rodriguez (1954) Jesusita Baros Torres (1954) Jesusita B. Torres (1955) Mrs. Max Jesusita B. Torres (1957) Jesusita Flemate Baros Torres (1958) Mrs. Jesusita Baros Torres (1963) Jesusita Torres (1965) Jesusita	(1896) Livoria Flemate Villarreal (1912) Liboria Flemate Villarreal (1912) Liboria Flemate (1934) Mrs. Jesusita Baros (1934) Eliboria Flemate (1937) Jesusita Baros (1938) Sra. Jesucita Baros (1939) Sra. María Jesús Barrios (1939) Sra. Jesusita Baros (1940) Sra. Jesucita Varos (1943) Jesusita Baros Torres (1949) Mrs. Jesusita Rodrigez (195?) Sra. Jesusita Baros Torres (1952) Jesusita Barros de Torres (1952) Jesusita Torrez (1955) Sra. M <sup>a</sup> de Jesus Baros Torres (1959?) Sra. Jesusita Varos (1961) Sra. Ma. de Jesús Varos (1962) Mrs. Jesusita Baros Torres (1962) Mrs. Jesusita F. Baros (1963) Mrs. Jesusita Baros-Torres (1965) Jesusita Torres (1967) Sra. Jesusita Torres (1969) Jesusita B. Torres (1976) Jesusita F. Torres
<b>Jesusita calls herself IN PRIVATE</b>	<b>Jesusita called by others IN PRIVATE</b>
(1941) Mrs. Jesusita Baros (1948) Jesusita Baros (1953) Jesusita Baros Torres (1955) J. Max Torres Baros (1963) Jesusita Torres (1965) Jesusita	(1934) Eliboria Flemate (1939) Sra. Elivoria Flemate (1939) Mrs. Jesusita Baros (1939) Jesusita Rodrigues (1940) Sra. Eliboria Flemate (1940) Sra. Jesucita Varos (1944) Jesusita Baros (1952) Mrs. Jesusita Baros Torres (1952) Jesusita (1953) Sra. Jesusita Baros (1959?) Señora Jesús Varos (1962) Mrs. Jesusita Baros Torres (1967) Sra. Jesusita Torres (1969) Sra. Jesusita Baros Torres (1969) Jesusita B. Torres

<b>Santos calls herself IN PUBLIC</b>	<b>Santos called by others IN PUBLIC</b>
(1939) Santos Baros (1950) Mrs Sandra Schubert (1950) Sandra Schubert (1950) Mrs. W. F. Schubert (1982) Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert (1986) Sandra (N/D) Santos (N/D) Mrs. Schubert	(1921) María Santos Lara (1937) Miss Santos Baros (1938) Mrs. Santos Baros (1944) Miss Santos Baros (1947) Mrs. Santos B. Schubert (1948) Mrs. Santos Schubert (1949) Mrs. Sandra B. Schubert (1950) Mrs. William F. Schubert (1952) Mrs. William Schubert (1953) Sandra (1953) Santos Baros (1954) Sandra B. Schubert (1955) Mr. and Mrs. Schubert (1957) Santos Baros Schubert (1957) Sra. Sandra B. Schubert (1958) Mrs. W. F. Schubert (1958) Mrs. Wm. Schubert (1963) W. F. Schubert (1966) Mrs. Schubert (1969) Mrs. S. Schubert (1974) Mrs. Bill Schubert (1974) Santos Schubert (1977) Santos B. Schubert (1982) Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert (1986) Sandra Schubert (2012) Sandra B. Schubert
<b>Santos calls herself IN PRIVATE</b>	<b>Santos called by others IN PRIVATE</b>
(1959) Santos (1959) Mrs. William F. Schubert (1975) Santos Schubert (1982) Santos Baros (1982) Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert	(1939) Miss Santos Baros (1942) Srta. Santos Baros (1950) Santos (1950) Sandra (1954) Sandra B. Schubert (1954) Mrs. S. B. Schubert (1955) Mr. y Mrs. Schubert (1957) Mrs. Sandra B. Schubert (1958) Mrs. Shubert (1968) Sra. Santos B. Schubert (1974) Santos Schubert (1976) Mrs. Santos Schubert (1977) Santos B. Schubert (1982) Mrs. Santos B. Schubert (1982) Mrs. Santos Baros Schubert (1984) Santos Baros (N/D) Santos Lara (N/D) Santos Baros

Appendix 2. Iterations of *Jesusita* names by location and language of author (type)

<b>Sent/written MEX</b>	<b>Iteration of name</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Date</b>
Jalpa, ZAC	Livoria Flemate Villarreal	Spanish	1896
Juchipila, ZAC	Liboria Flemate	Spanish	1913
Juchipila, ZAC	Mrs. Jesusita Baros	Spanish	1934
Juchipila, ZAC	Eliboria Flemate	Spanish	1934
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. María Jesús Barrios	Spanish	1939
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Elivoria Flemate	Spanish	1939
Mexicali, BC	Sra. Eliboria Flemate	Spanish	1940
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Jesusita Baros Torres	Spanish	195?
Churintzio, MICH	Jesusita	Spanish	1952
Juchipila, ZAC	Ms. Jesusita Baros	Spanish	1952
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. M <sup>a</sup> de Jesus Baros Torres	Spanish	1955
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Jesusita Varos	Spanish	1959?
Juchipila, ZAC	Señora Jesus Varos	Spanish	1959?
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Ma. de Jesús Varos	Spanish	1961
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Jesusita Torres	Spanish	1967
Juchipila, ZAC	Jesusita B. Torres	Spanish	1969
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Jesusita Baros	Spanish	1975
<b>Sent/written USA</b>	<b>Iteration of name</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Date</b>
Albuquerque, NM	Jesusita Baros	Spanish	1937
Albuquerque, NM	Mrs. Jesusita Baros	Spanish	1937
Albuquerque, NM	Jesusita Rodrigues	Spanish	1939
Longmont, CO	Sra. Jesucita Varos	Spanish	1940
Denver, CO	Jesusita Baros Torres	English	1943
Albuquerque, NM	Mrs. Jesusita Rodrigez	Spanish	1949
Denver, CO	Jesusita Barros de Torres	English	1952
Fort Lupton, CO	Jesusita Torrez	English	1952
Denver, CO	Mrs. Jesusita Baros Torres	English	1952
Denver, CO	Mrs. Jesusita F. Baros	English	1962

Greeley, CO	Mrs. Jesusita Baros-Torres	English	1963
Border El Paso, TX	Jesusita Torres	English	1965
Fort Lupton, CO	Jesusita F. Torres	English	1976
N/A	Sra. Jesucita Baros	Spanish	1938

*Appendix 2.2. Iterations of Santos names by location and language of author (type)*

Sent/written MEX	Iteration of name	Language	Date
Juchipila, ZAC	María Santos Lara	Spanish	1921
Juchipila, ZAC	Srta. Santos Baros	Spanish	1942
Juchipila, ZAC	Sra. Sandra B. Schubert	Spanish	1957
Sent/written MEX	Iteration of name	Language	Date
Albuquerque, NM	Santos Baros	English	1933
Albuquerque, NM	Miss Santos Baros	English	1937
Albuquerque, NM	Mrs. Santos Baros	English	1938
Albuquerque, NM	Santos	English	1939
Socorro, NM	Sandra Baros	English	1942
Oceanside, CA	Miss Santos Baros	English	1944
Havelock, NE	Mrs. Santos B. Schubert	English	1947
Fort Lupton, CO	Mrs. Sandra Schubert	Spanish	1948
Fort Lupton, CO	Mrs. Santos Schubert	Spanish	1948
Denver, CO	Mrs. William F. Schubert	English	1950
Adams, NE	Sandra	English	1950
Adams, NE	Mrs. Sandra B Schubert	English	1950
Lincoln, NE	Mrs. William Schubert	English	1952
Fort Lupton, CO	Mr and Mrs Schubert	Spanish	1953
Fort Lupton, CO	Mrs S. B. Schubert	Spanish	1954
Fort Lupton, CO	Mr. y Mrs. Schubert	Spanish	1955
Fort Lupton, CO	Sandra B. Schubert	Spanish	1956
Fort Lupton, CO	Santos Baros Schubert	Spanish	1957
Bradshaw, NE	Mrs. W.F. Schubert	English	1958

Bradshaw, NE	Mrs. Shubert	English	1958
Phoenix, AZ	Mrs. Wm. Schubert	English	1958
Fort Lupton, CO	W. F. Schubert	Spanish	1963
Fort Lupton, CO	Mrs. Santos Schubert	Spanish	1965
Fort Lupton, CO	Mrs. S. Schubert	Spanish	1969
Fort Lupton, CO	Sandra Schubert	Spanish	1968
Fort Lupton, CO	Sra. Santos B. Schubert	Spanish	1968
Lincoln, NE	Mrs & Mr Bill Schubert	English	1974