

# Evidence Analysis

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ProGen 69 (2025)

**Research Question** – for Part II, state your one research question here which applies to all sources.

Who were the parents of Sebastian Borja, married to Maria de la Ascension Gorrin, who was buried 17 July 1820, in Santa Cruz, Aragua, Venezuela?

## 1) Citation – 1820 - Sebastian Borja Death Record

Parroquia Montserrat (Santa Cruz, Aragua, Venezuela), Defunciones, Libro 7: p. 206, Sebastian Borja, 7 Jul 1820; imaged, "Venezuela, registros parroquiales y diocesanos, 1577-2022," FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9RRX-96GD?> : accessed 22 March 2025) >Aragua > Santa Cruz > Nuestra Señora de Monserrat > Defunciones 1783-1899 > image 1371 of 2165; citing "Parroquias Católicas (Catholic Church Parishes), Venezuela."

## 2) Source Analysis – Standards 12, 24, 41, 35, 37-39, 44

- Use the Source Analysis Factors found on page 10 of the assignment and discuss the ones you think are relevant to this source.
- Note if it is an original, derivative, or authored source and why.
- Determine and briefly discuss reliability.

### Contextual Elements

The death record was created under the Catholic Church's mandate for maintaining sacramental records, a practice established by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which mandated the maintenance of sacramental records, including deaths.

The book was copied by Father Faxardo on 14 November 1821, from the original records of the burials he performed. At the end of the book, Father Faxardo certifies it as a true and legal copy of the originals stored in the parish archives. The book was created five months after the war that finalized Venezuela's independence from Spain. The records in this book and the ones that follow do not appear to have been impacted by the war of independence, except for the removal of the requirement to maintain separate book registers based on ethnic classification.

### Recording Elements

The death record includes the sacraments administered to the deceased prior to death, as well as details known about the deceased. There is consistency in the way burials are recorded before and after this entry. Given the typical interval of 24-48 hours between death and burial, it is likely the priest kept notes about the deceased and rites performed, which were later summarized and transcribed into the record as a coherent story.

### Physical Elements

This record is a digital image of a microfilm taken in 1996. The image is of good quality and the handwriting remains legible despite some ink smudges and fading in certain areas. There is no visible damage, such as tears or deterioration, affecting the readability of the document.

### Source Type

This is a derivative source. As indicated by Father Faxardo's certification, this is a copy of the original records kept at the parish. Since the originals may no longer be available, this could be considered a near original that preserves the content of the original record as faithfully as possible.

**Reliability**

Father Faxardo performed the burials and created this copy of the burial book. His certification that the copy is “true and legal” enhances the credibility and reliability of the information recorded. However, there remains the possibility of errors, omissions or spelling variations introduced during the copying process.

**3) Information Analysis** – Standards 35, 42, 45

- a) Information Item(s) related to research question
- b) Informant – name or hypothesize the informant and describe relationship to research subject
- c) Information Type – did the informant have primary, secondary, or undetermined knowledge of this information item? Describe.
- d) Determine and briefly discuss potential accuracy

<b>3a) Information Item(s)</b>	<b>3b) Informant</b>	<b>3c) Information Type</b>	<b>3d) Accuracy</b>
Burial Date: 7 July 1820	Priest Faxardo	Primary – he performed the burial	High - direct observation
Deceased Name: Sebastian Borja	Likely a family member (possibly his wife) or the priest	Primary – close relatives would know his name	High - based on firsthand knowledge
Deceased Residence: Santa Cruz de Aragua	Likely a family member	Primary – residence would be well known	High – direct knowledge
Spouse: Maria de la Ascension Gorrin	Likely his wife or a family member	Primary if provided by his wife. Secondary if provided by others	High - based on firsthand knowledge
Testament availability	Priest Faxardo	Primary - he did not take or notarize a will and documented this fact	High - based on firsthand knowledge

**4) Evidence Analysis** – Standards 40, 43

Determine if the evidence in your information item is direct, indirect, or negative. There could also be no evidence based on your research question. Describe why.

This record provides indirect evidence for the research question. While it does not name Sebastian Borja’s parents, it does provide his spouse’s name. This is valuable information which can be used to locate marriage records that may include Sebastian’s parents’ names.

### 1) Citation – 1801 – Affinity Marriage Dispensation: Sebastian Borja and Maria de la Ascencion Gorrin

Archivo Arquidiocesano (Caracas, Venezuela), Expedientes Matrimoniales, Folder 144, Affinity Marriage Dispensation for Sebastian Borjas and Maria Ascencion Gorrin, 1801, imaged, "Venezuela, registros parroquiales y diocesanos, 1577-2022," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GRRV-9T5> : accessed 22 March 2025) > Distrito Federal > Caracas > Arquidiócesis de Caracas > Expedientes y dispensas matrimoniales 1768-1802 > image 441-53 of 3112; citing "Parroquias Católicas (Catholic Church Parishes), Venezuela."

### 2) Source Analysis – Standards 12, 24, 41, 35, 37-39, 44

- a) Use the Source Analysis Factors found on page 10 of the assignment and discuss the ones you think are relevant to this source.
- b) Note if it is an original, derivative, or authored source and why.
- c) Determine and briefly discuss reliability.

#### Contextual Elements

An affinity marriage dispensation was required under Catholic law when two individuals to be married were related by affinity. An affinity relationship exists between a spouse and the blood relatives of the other spouse. In this case, Sebastian Borja sought permission to marry Maria de la Ascencion Gorrin, who was a third cousin of his deceased wife Melchora Guevara. Therefore, Sebastian and Maria de la Ascencion were related by affinity, while Maria de la Ascencion and Melchora were blood relatives.

The marriage dispensation shares the degree of affinity to which the requestor is related to the person they intend to marry, detailing the genealogical connection up to the common ancestor. It also includes reasons for requesting dispensation and justification for the marriage. Statements from witnesses are included in the corroboration of the couple's relationship and circumstances. Finally, the church official determines if the dispensation is valid and documents it as such as part of the dispensation record.

#### Recording Elements

This dispensation process took place from the 1 April 1801 request to the approval on 17 June 1801 and was recorded across three different cities. Entries were recorded by notaries and priests with signatures from the involved parties. The structure of this dispensation is consistent with others from the same period.

#### Physical Elements

The original dispensation is a booklet of eleven loose-leaf papers that were bound together with thread and one additional smaller loose page containing notes.

The digital images are of good quality from the microfilm taken in 1998.

The handwriting readability varies throughout the document. The initial page is a bit faded and slightly difficult to read, while the rest of the document has many ink smudges. There is no visible damage, such as tears or deterioration, affecting the readability of the document. Fortunately, the repetitive nature of the dispensation allows for key details (names and relationships) to be confirmed in multiple places throughout the document.

#### Source Type

The document is an authored source. It does not record the event, but rather it is the formal request for marriage dispensation, including witness statements and the final disposition.

**Reliability**

The record is reliable as the information is provided by the requestor of the dispensation, Sebastian Borja, with corroboration from witnesses. Reliability is strongest for the names and relationships more contemporary with the informant and witnesses, and reliability is weaker for distant ancestors where oral tradition might play a larger role.

**3) Information Analysis** – Standards 35, 42, 45

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<b>3a) Information Item(s)</b>	<b>3b) Informant</b>	<b>3c) Information Type</b>	<b>3d) Accuracy</b>
Parents' names: Gregorio Borja and Juana Josefa Lovera	Sebastian Borja	Primary - he would know his own's parents firsthand	High – firsthand knowledge
Siblings' names: Gregorio Borja and Francisca Borja	Sebastian Borja	Primary – he would have firsthand knowledge of his siblings	High – firsthand knowledge
Intended wife: Maria Ascension Gorrin	Sebastian Borja	Primary - he is the one requesting the affinity dispensation	High – firsthand knowledge
Intended marriage location: San Jose de Tiznados	Sebastian Borja	Primary - he knows where he will marry	High – firsthand knowledge

**4) Evidence Analysis** – Standards 40, 43

Determine if the evidence in your information item is direct, indirect, or negative. There could also be no evidence based on your research question. Describe why.

The document provides direct evidence for the parents of Sebastian Borja. The dispensation explicitly states the parent's names as Gregorio Borja and Juana Josefa Lovera. The record provides the names of two siblings, Gregorio and Juana Borja. Search for their baptism records can be used to corroborate the name of Sebastian's parents.

There are no marriage records available in Family Search in San Jose de Tiznados prior to 1882, so this is the best available document to show the marriage of Sebastian Borja and Maria de la Ascencion Gorrin.

## 1) Citation - 1752 - Baptism - Gregorio Francisco Borja

Iglesia Católica Nuestra Señora del Rosario (Güigüe, Carabobo, Venezuela), baptism for Gregorio Francisco Borja, 26 December 1752, imaged, "Baptism Records December 1749–August 1775, Religious Death Records May 1779–October 1780," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9HZ-8G3N?> : accessed 24 Mar 2025), image 168 of 198; citing "Archivo Arquidiocesano de Valencia (Venezuela)."

## 2) Source Analysis – Standards 12, 24, 41, 35, 37-39, 44

- a) Use the Source Analysis Factors found on page 10 of the assignment and discuss the ones you think are relevant to this source.
- b) Note if it is an original, derivative, or authored source and why.
- c) Determine and briefly discuss reliability.

### Contextual Elements

The baptism record was created under the Catholic Church's sacramental record-keeping mandate, which date back to the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Baptism records are important to keep track of parishioners and are required for other sacraments like confirmation and marriage.

### Recording Elements

This baptism record includes baptisms performed by different priests in the parish. The information recorded appears to be captured at the time of baptism and either transcribed from the priests notes or directly captured in the book. There is no clear indication of which process was used.

The information captured in the baptisms of the same time period is consistent. The book was assembled out of order, which affects the ease of use, but does not compromise readability.

### Physical Elements

The book where this baptism is recorded is bound with thread, but some sections contain loose pages. The page where this baptism is recorded is damaged with missing sections. However, the specific baptism entry for Gregorio Francisco Borja remains largely intact, with only one word affected by a tear. Despite ink smudges and stains, the handwriting is mostly legible, and key names and dates are identifiable

### Source Type

The record is classified as original. The lack of a cover page or an explicit certification makes it difficult to verify whether this is a derivative record. However, variation in handwriting across the different baptisms suggests that each entry was recorded by each individual priest, supporting the classification of the source as original.

### Reliability

The information appears reliable and captured by the priest at the time of the baptism or soon after from his notes

**3) Information Analysis** – Standards 35, 42, 45  
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<b>3a) Information Item(s)</b>	<b>3b) Informant</b>	<b>3c) Information Type</b>	<b>3d) Accuracy</b>
Baptism date: 26 December 1752	Priest	Primary – he officiated the ceremony	High – direct observation
Baptism Location: Guigue, Carabobo, Venezuela	Priest	Primary – recorded at the time of the event	High – direct observation
Baptized name: Gregorio Francisco	One of the parents	Primary - parents selected the name	High – direct knowledge
Parent’s names: Gregorio Francisco Borja de Leon and Juana Lovera	One of the parents	Primary - they provided their own names.	High – direct knowledge

**4) Evidence Analysis** – Standards 40, 43  
 Determine if the evidence in your information item is direct, indirect, or negative. There could also be no evidence based on your research question. Describe why.

This record provides indirect evidence for the research question. While it does not explicitly name Sebastian Borja, it records the baptism of Gregorio Francisco Borja, son of Gregorio Francisco Borja de Leon and Juana Lovera.

Combined with the affinitive marriage dispensation, this record strengthens the case for Sebastian Borja’s parentage. The dispensation identifies Sebastian and Gregorio Borjas as brothers and this baptism confirms their shared parents. Additionally, the baptism record provides a fuller name for Sebastian’s father, which could be valuable in further research.