Introduction

While the 1769 founding of the Mission and Presidio of San Diego de Alcalá set the stage for the first and oldest Spanish colony of Alta California, the settlement of the Monterey Bay was long construed a vital maritime objective. With the financial and logistical support of the ninth Viceroy of New Spain, Gaspar de Zúñiga Acevedo y Fonseca, Quinto Conde de Monterrey (1560-1606), the Spanish soldier, merchant, and navigator Sebastián Vizcaíno (1548-1624) was charged with identifying suitable ports along the Pacific coast of the Californias for the safe passage of the Manila Galleons. Aboard the flagship San Diego, and in the company of the San Tomás and Tres Reyes, Vizcaíno charted the Californias. In so doing, he proclaimed the viability of the ports of San Diego and Monterey, with the latter construed “the best port one could desire,” and promptly christened the Puerto de Monterrey (Vizcaíno 1930: 91-92 as cited in Williams 1993: 3). The explorer’s endorsement of Monterey was such that considerable enthusiasm was had for the immediate settlement of the region. Nevertheless, subsequent viceregal priorities would delay the founding of San Carlos de Monterey for some 167 years.

In an effort to address the basis for Vizcaíno’s preferential assessment of the port of Monterey over that of San Diego, we review both primary and secondary sources bearing on the expeditionary evaluations of Cabrillo and Ferrelo (1542-1543), Cermeño (1595), Vizcaíno (1602-1603), and the Sacred Expedition of 1769-1770. In so doing, we address Spanish interpretive schemas for the cultural ecology, indigenous demographies, lifeways borne of the earliest ethnohistorical accounts bearing on the Native Californians of the Monterey Bay.

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The earliest Spanish maritime expeditions of the Californias were led by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Bartolome Ferrelo in 1542-1543 (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 140). The objectives of the Cabrillo-Ferrelo voyage (1542-1543) were to map the coastline of Alta California and to identify pertinent landmarks (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 4; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 141). The men of the expedition consisted of some 200-250 Spanish officers, sailors, soldiers, both African and Indian slaves, Indian interpreters, conscripts, cabin
boys, a priest, and a few merchants (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142). On 27 June 1542, Cabrillo, Ferrelo, and their crew departed from the Puerto de Navidad, Mexico, for the Californias (Wagner 1928: 22, 41). By early July of 1542, they reached the southernmost latitude identified with the Californias, and initiated the documentation of potential ports and indigenous peoples along the Pacific coastal margins of the peninsula (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142; Wagner 1928: 41). Some twenty locations were recorded where encounters with Native Californians occurred (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142).

Figure 4a. Map of Central Coast Tribal Territories. Adapted from Heizer and Sturtevant (1978: ix). Map redrawn by Jennifer Lucido (2015: 46).

Figure 4b. Route of the Cabrillo-Ferrelo voyage (1542-1543). Adapted from Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 139.

Figure 4c. Route of the Cermeño voyage (1595). Adapted from Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 139.

Figure 4d. Route of the Vizcaíno voyage (1602-1603). Adapted from Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 139. Maps redrawn by Jennifer Lucido, 2019.
Between the 22nd and 27th of August, the Cabrillo-Ferrelo expedition identified a port suitable for ship repair (Wagner 1928: 43). After making landfall along this stretch of Baja California, Cabrillo took formal possession of the port, naming it. During their short anchorage in the Puerto de la Posesión, the Cabrillo-Ferrelo narrative recounted the following encounter:

On the following Friday [25 of August], when going to take water, they found at the watering place some Indians who awaited them and who showed them a spring and a saline which contained much salt. These explained by signs that they did not have their home there but inland, and that there were many people. (Wagner 1928: 44)

Later that afternoon, five Native Californians who conveyed to the voyagers that they were not the first Europeans that they had encountered visited the crew:

They took them [the Indians] to the ships, and as they went aboard they pointed out and counted the Spaniards and made signs that they had seen other men like them who had beards and who had with them dogs, cross-bows, and swords. The Indians were painted on the thighs, body and arms with white bitumen, put on like slashes in cloth, so that they looked like men in slashed breeches and jackets. They made signs that the Spaniards were five days’ journey from there and also that there were many Indians and that they had much maize and many parrots. (Wagner 1928: 44)

The Cabrillo-Ferrelo narrative also noted cultural similarities between the indigenous peoples of the Californias, with those of New Spain or Mexico to the south:

[the Indians] were covered with deerskins which some wore dressed in the same manner as the Mexicans dress the hides they wear in their cutaras. The people are large and well built
In other observations, recorded on 9 and 10 October, a coastal Chumash town was sighted from the ship. (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 158):

We saw on land an Indian town close to the sea with large houses like those of New Spain, and they anchored in front of a large valley on the coast. Here many fine canoes holding twelve or thirteen Indians each came to the ships, and gave news of Christians who were going about inland. (Wagner 1928: 47)

Because of the sheer number of canoes encountered that day, the place was named *Pueblo de las Canoas*. The Cabrillo-Ferrelo narrative also described the exchange of goods after which the Chumash indicated the presence of other Spaniards (or perhaps other Europeans) living inland, thereby echoing the native people's narrative at Puerto de la Posesión:

They made signs that in seven days one could go to where the Spaniards were, so Juan Rodriguez decided to send on a chance two Spaniards inland with these Indians with a letter to the Christians. These explained besides that there was a large river...[and]...The people wear some animal skins, are
fishermen, and eat raw fish as well as maguey. The town is in 35° 20’. The country within is a very beautiful valley, and the Indians explained that inland in that valley there was much maize and food. Beyond this valley some high, very broken sierras were visible. (Wagner 1928: 47)

Following this encounter at Puerto de la Posesión, the expedition was delayed a week due to inclement weather in the islands of San Lucas, or more likely the northern Channel Islands (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 158). From there, the Cabrillo-Ferrelo ships attempted to continue their voyage, but after eight days at sea, northwesterly winds blocked their passage (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 158). As a result, they were forced to anchor in Cabo de Galera where they went ashore on November 1 (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 158; Wagner 1928: 49). After replenishing their potable water and wood supplies in the town of Pueblo de las Sardinas, they again attempted to depart, only to return to Cabo de Galera (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 158; Wagner 1928: 49). On 10 November, perhaps recognizing the ships, Native Californians assisted the voyagers:
Indians who came on board with water and fish and displayed much friendship. In their towns they have large plazas and circular enclosures around which imbedded in the ground are many stone posts which stand about three palm-lengths above it. In the middle of these enclosures there are many very thick timbers like masts sunk in the ground. These are covered with many paintings, and we thought they must worship them because when they danced they did so around the inside of the enclosure. (Wagner 1928: 49-50)

After their respite, the Cabrillo-Ferrello ships were able to continue northwards along the central California coast (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 159). On 16 November 1542, the ships arrived on the Monterey Bay, which they promptly named *Bahía de los Pinos*. According to Wagner (1928: 50-51):

At break of day they arrived off a large *ensenada*, which came from behind. As it seemed to have a port and a river, they went beating about all that day and night and the following Friday until they saw that there was no river nor any haven.
However, while in the Monterey Bay, the Cabrillo-Ferrelo fleet was unable to anchor due to the tenacity of the surf. Wagner (1928: 50-51) goes on to acknowledge that,

In order to take possession, they cast anchor in forty-five fathoms, but did not dare go ashore on account of the great surf. This ensenada is in full 39; all of it is full of pines down to the sea.

Following the transit of the Monterey Bay, Cabrillo-Ferrelo expedition returned to the islands of San Lucas (northern Channel Islands) where the voyagers wintered from 23 November to 19 January 1543 (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 159). In the interim, Cabrillo died on 3 January 1543 as the result of an injury caused by a fall during the previous visit to the islands (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 159; Wagner 1928: 51). Subsequently, Ferrelo assumed the role of captain for the remainder of the voyage (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 159; Wagner 1928: 51). The voyagers continued to face storms and strong winds as they sailed along the coast in the weeks that followed Cabrillo’s death (Erlandson and Kartoy 1995: 159; Wagner 1928: 53). On 14 April 1543, the Cabrillo-Ferrelo expedition returned to Puerto de Navidad, thereby completing with the royal mandate to the extent possible at that time (Wagner 1928: 54).

The Cermeño Expedition (1595)

In 1594, Felipe II (1527-1598), the King of Spain, directed the eighth Viceroy of New Spain, Luis de Velasco, Marquess de Salinas (c. 1534-1617), to coordinate a voyage of discovery. The mapping and exploration of the Pacific Coast of the Californias was the prime objective (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 3), and Velasco appointed Sebastián Rodríguez Cermeño (c. 1560–1602)² to command the expedition by order of Felipe II.
On 5 July 1595, Cermeño and his crew departed on the San Agustín from Cavite, Philippines, to explore the coastline of the Californias while enroute to West Mexico (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 5; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142). The crew consisted of 80 men, including four African origin slaves construed property of the captain, seven Indians, and a priest (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142).

The voyagers anchored in Drake’s Bay on 6 November 1595 (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 153). Within the first two days, Cermeño recorded initial encounters with the Coast Miwok. They exchanged European and Asian goods for seeds, acorns, hazelnuts, thistles, and bows and arrows. However, after a month of exploring the area and interacting with the Coast Miwok and Pomo groups, their ship sank in Drake’s Bay due to storm-related damage. As such, their expedition abruptly ended (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 141). On 8 December 1595, the survivors continued on to Mexico via a small launch vessel (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 14; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142). During the return to Mexico, Cermeño documented a host of islands, bays, and ports along the California coast. In his account, he wrote:

Sunday morning [10th of December] I commenced to sail, and discovered a very large bay, which I named the bay of San Pedro. It measures from point to point across the mouth a distance of fifteen leagues travel; and taking the sun in it I found that it was in the latitude of 37°. Sailing seven or eight leagues toward the south, I anchored behind a point so as not to travel at night. (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 15)
In his translation, historian and cartographer Henry R. Wagner contends that the Bahía de San Pedro “could be nothing else but Monterey Bay.” Wagner’s contention was predicated on two facts. First, the midpoint of the bay is situated at a latitude of 36° 50’. Second, Cermeño consistently demonstrated a propensity for miscalculating sailing courses and distances in related entries (Cermeño and Wagner 1924: 7, 15). Wagner also posits that the geographic points Cermeño used to survey the distance across the bay were likely measured from Point Año Nuevo to Point Cypress, as opposed to his anchorage at Point Sur.

After transiting the Monterey Bay, Cermeño was within landfall of San Luis Obispo, or Morro Bay. Upon docking, Cermeño reported sightings and interactions with Native Californian communities on 11 December 1595. According to Cermeño and Wagner (1924: 15-16),

there were observed on the shore of the sea many people on top of some bluffs, where they had made their settlements... the Indians had on shore many balsas made of tule, which are like reeds, or as otherwise called, tule. The balsas were made like canoes, and with these they go fishing. Calling to some of them from the launch, we gave them to understand that we were Christians, and one of the Indians responded with shouts, giving us to understand that they understood, saying, "Christians, Christians." And shortly he came down from the bluff, and taking a balsa, got into it and came on board the launch, where we made much of him and gave him some pieces of cotton cloth and taffeta. Soon others came in the same kind of boats, and we gave them to understand by signs that they should bring us something to eat, as we had no food. Understanding our necessity, which we made clear to them, they went ashore and brought some bitter acorns and mush made of these acorns, in some dishes made of straw like large chocolate bowls; and during some talk which we had with them they said "Mexico, Mexico." They are people well set up, of medium height, of a brown color, and like the rest go naked, not only men but women, although the women wear some skirts made of grass and of bird-feathers. They use the bow and arrow, and their food consists of bitter acorns and fish. They seemed to be about three hundred in number, counting men, women and children, some of them with long beards and with the hair cut round, and some were painted with stripes on the face and arms. The land seemed to be good, as it was covered with trees and verdure. The people seemed to be somewhat covetous, as on being given pieces of taffeta and cotton cloth they asked for more.
In subsequent landfalls over the next few days, Cermeño and his crew bartered with southern Native Californians for food and related goods (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 154).

The sinking of the San Agustin at Drake’s Bay was lamented by the Viceroy Gaspar de Zúñiga Acevedo y Fonseca, Conde de Monterrey (Griffin 1891: 21). In a letter to the King of Spain, the Viceroy noted not only the loss of the goods on board, but also “this exploration the intention of Your Majesty has not been carried into effect” (Griffin 1891: 22). Even so, Monterrey acknowledged that “some of the principal bays, where with greater reason it might be expected harbors would be found, [Cermeño and his men] crossed from point to point and by night, while others they entered but a little way” (Griffin 1891: 22). Thus, the potential for a successful expedition remained a possibility for later explorers. Moreover, the viceroy proposed that rather than repeat Cermeño’s voyage from the Philippines, future expeditions should disembark “from this coast [of New Spain] and by constantly following along it” (Griffin 1891: 22).

The Vizcaíno Expedition (1602-1603)

Unlike the previous voyages of Cabrillo and Ferrelo (1542-1543) and Cermeño (1595), the Vizcaíno expedition (1602-1603) was undertaken so as to identify a port along the coastal margins of the Californias suitable for the refitting of the Manila galleons (Walton 2001: 19). On 5 May 1602, Vizcaíno set sail from Acapulco, Mexico, with two ships, the San Diego and Santo Tomás, and the frigate, Tres Reyes, as per the Viceroy’s recommendations (Chapman 1920: 291; Griffin 1891: 22; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142). The crew consisted of some 200 men, including 150 sailors and soldiers, three Carmelite friars, and two cartographers (Chapman 1920: 291; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 143).
Through the course of the ten-month expedition, Vizcaíno charted prominent topographic features (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 142; Walton 2001: 19). On 15 December 1602, the expedition reached the bay originally christened by Cabrillo Bahía de Los Pinos, and subsequently renamed by Cermeño Bahía de San Pedro, after Peter the Martyr (Chapman 1920: 293). Vizcaíno promptly rechristened the future port in the name of the sponsor of the expedition, Viceroy Gaspar de Zúñiga Acevedo y Fonseca, Conde de Monterrey (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 357; Walton 2001: 19). The following day, Vizcaíno and his crew celebrated mass “under the shade of a very large live-oak to serve as a church” (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 357). They believed that they had “found [themselves] to be in the best port one could desire” (Vizcaíno 1930: 91-92, as cited in Williams 1993: 3; Walton 2001: 19).

Vizcaíno described the newly christened Puerto de Monterrey as consisting of “good lands, plentiful water, and abundant pines suitable for use in ship construction” (Vizcaíno 1930: 91, as cited in Williams 1993: 3). In a narrative written 28 December 1602, Vizcaíno further praised the prospective port as:

well situated in point of latitude for that which His Majesty intends to do for the protection and security of ships coming from the Philippines . . . the harbor is very secure against all winds. The land is thickly peopled by Indians and is very fertile, in its climate and the quality of the soil resembling Castile...it is all that can be desired for commodiousness and as a station for ships making the voyage to the Philippines, sailing whence they make a landfall on this coast. This port is sheltered from all winds. . . [and] if, after putting to sea, a storm be encountered, they [the Philippine ships] need not, as formerly, run for Japan, where so many have been cast away and so much property lost. (Chapman 1920: 294)

One of the three Carmelite friars, Father Antonio de la Ascensión echoed Vizcaíno’s praise of the Monterey Bay in his diary, describing it as a “fine port” (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 357). The Carmelite friar also described the bounty of the natural environment with respect to water sources, plants and trees, as well as the variety of wildlife (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 357):

It is a very good port and well protected from all winds. There is much wood and water in it and an immense number of great pine trees, smooth and straight, suitable for the masts and yards of ships; many very large live-oaks with which to build ships; great white oaks, and forests of great scarlet
oaks. There are rock-roses, broom, roses of Castile, brambles, willows, alders, poplars, and other trees like those of Castile.

The friar continues by way of observations specific to water sources and the flora and fauna of the region (ibid, p. 357):

There are springs of good water; beautiful large lakes, which were covered with ducks and many other birds; most fertile pastures; good meadows for cattle, and fertile fields for growing crops. There are many different kinds of animals, and large ones such as bears, so large that their feet are a good third of a yard long and a hand wide. There are other animals which have hoofs like mules (some said they were those of elks), of which there must be a great number, as the fields were full of their tracks. There are others as large as three-year-old bulls, resembling stags in their build. Their hair was like that of a ramicano [or roan], and almost a quarter of a yard long. Their neck was long, and on the head they had very large branching horns like those of a stag. Their tail must have been a yard in length and half a one wide, and their hoofs were cleft like those of an ox...There are many of these animals here, and besides them there are large deer, stags, jackrabbits, and rabbits, and wild-cats as large as kids.

The narrative expounds on the significant diversity of birds and other fowl available for sustaining habitation in the region:

There is an abundance of ducks of all kinds, geese, doves, thrushes, sparrows, linnets, cardinals, quail, partridges, magpies, cranes, and buzzards, all like those of Castile. There are some other birds of the shape of turkeys, the largest I saw on this voyage. From the point of one wing to that of the other it was found to measure seventeen spans (more than a yard). There are curly-jacks, gulls, crows and many other sea-birds which live on the fish they catch.

De la Ascensión ends his natural resources overview of the region with a summary of the bounty of marine resources available on the Monterey Bay:

In this port there are many good fish in the sea, and among the rocks there are
many lapas and mussels, and at depth attached to the rocks are some very large shells of fine mother-of-pearl, very beautiful and of a very fine color. There are oysters, lobsters, crabs and burgaos among the rocks, and many large seals, or sea-calves, and whales. One very large one recently dead had gone ashore on the coast in this port and the bears came by night to dine. (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 361)

The Carmelo River was first charted and named by Vizcaíno (Chapman 1920: 293; De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 357). Following these discoveries, the Santo Tomás returned to Mexico with sick and dying men, while the San Diego and Tres Reyes voyaged northwards to continue the expedition before returning to New Spain in February of 1603 (Chapman 1920: 295).

With respect to encounters with the Native Californians of the Monterey Bay, apparently Vizcaíno and his crew did not make contact and that despite indicating but a few days prior that indigenous people populated the land in large numbers (Chapman 1920: 294; Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 151). On 3 January 1603, Vizcaíno (accompanied by a small landing party) explored the region just south of the Monterey Bay (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 151). They noted, "No people were found because, on account of the great cold, they were living in the interior. He [Vizcaíno] sent Ensign Juan Francisco with four soldiers to a[n] indigenous village or ranchería to see what was there; he found it to be depopulated, and returned" (Bolton 1916:94, as cited in Lightfoot and Simmons 1998: 151). Contrary to this description, De La Ascension recounted the following encounter with the indigenous people of Monterey (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 361, 363):

The port is all surrounded by settlements of affable Indians of good disposition and well built, very willing to give what they have. They brought us some of the skins of bears, lions, lions, and mussels, and at depth attached to the rocks are some very large shells of fine mother-of-pearl, very beautiful and of a very fine color. There are oysters, lobsters, crabs and burgaos among the rocks, and many large seals, or sea-calves, and whales. One very large one recently dead had gone ashore on the coast in this port and the bears came by night to dine. (De La Ascension and Wagner 1928: 361)

Figure 13. *India y Indio de Monterey* by José Cardero, 1791. Courtesy of DOM Archives, Monterey, California.
and deer. They use bows and arrows and have their form of government. They are naked. They would have much pleasure in seeing us settle in their country.

Therefore, it is unclear if De La Ascension was referring to an earlier, or unrelated encounter, that occurred in December 1602; and that apart from that of Vizcaíno and his crew in January 1603. Moreover, given that Vizcaíno directed Juan Francisco to investigate the Monterey ranchería in turn indicates that a previous reconnaissance had in fact taken place.

Soon thereafter, in 1606 King Philip III ordered a settlement developed at Monterey (Williams 1993: 3). A plan was implemented and 20,000 pesos were allocated from the royal treasury for the settlement (Chapman 1920: 298; Williams 1993: 3). Vizcaíno was tasked with returning to Monterey with settlers to colonize the region (Chapman 1920: 298). However, Viceroy Marqués de Montesclaros, Monterey’s successor, persuaded King Philip to deploy the resources elsewhere (Chapman 1920: 297-298; Williams 1993: 3). Instead, Montesclaros redirected the resources to fund the Monterey venture toward another expeditionary objective, and that for an expedition to explore the islands of Rica de Oro and Rica de Plata believed to lie west of the Monterey Bay (Chapman 1920: 297-298; Williams 1993: 3). Fast forward some 135 years. In 1741, during his term of office in the Philippines, Pedro Calderón y Henríquez promoted the occupation of Monterey (Wagner and Calderón y Henríquez 1944: 220). Calderón y Henríquez recognized the unresolved issue for assuring safe passage of the Manila galleons, notably that of the San Carlos Borromeo (Wagner and Calderón y Henríquez 1944: 219-220). His concerns, nevertheless, once again fell on deaf ears.

The Sacred Expedition (1769-1770)

Another twenty-seven years would elapse before the Spanish settlement of Monterey once again surfaced as a serious point of consideration (Walton 2001: 19). On 14 April 1768, Calderón y Henríquez once again advocated for the settlement of Monterey as a means by which to provide logistical support and a base of operations for the Manila galleons, and in so doing acknowledged the potentials of the port for colonial ventures (Wagner and Calderón y Henríquez 1944: 220; p. 223).

From the port [Monterey] it will be easy, with two brigantines, to take possession of the coast up to 52° and thus prevent the Russians from moving farther south. Besides, the port
would serve as a stop for the galleons from the Philippines. From there they take forty days to reach Acapulco. During that voyage the deaths and sicknesses occur that are recorded in forty logs which I have examined. With such a port the population would be notably increased and it would be the principal basis for reducing the settlements of people who live around it [to Christianity].

However, by this time, the threat of Russian colonization had been well documented, and as such, on January 23, 1768, and this prior to Calderón y Henríquez's memorial, official orders were dispatched to occupy Monterey (Wagner and Calderón y Henríquez 1944: 220). Interestingly, the extent to which Calderón y Henríquez played an influential role in the colonization of Monterey remains unknown. Notwithstanding questions to the contrary, Visitor General José de Gálvez determined that the Monterey Bay held "tremendous potential" (Williams 1993: 3). He further elected that Monterey function as the center of military defenses and missionary programs for the Californias (Williams 1993: 3). Gálvez informed King Charles III of Spain that California required settlements to consolidate control and oversight of the province in order to defend against British and Russian encroachment (Fireman 1997: 96). One year later, Gálvez ordered the joint evangelical and military occupation of Alta California (Mason 1998: 18).

A missionary program was implemented in part to support this endeavor. This sought the "Hispanicization, Mexicanization, and Catholic conversion" of the indigenous populations of Alta California (Mendoza 2014: 114). These processes would in turn prompt the development of those hybrid mestizo or Hispanicized communities needed to support ongoing colonial ventures in California, and by extension, the Spanish Empire (Mendoza 2014: 117). The missionization of Alta California was financed in part with those resources expropriated from the Fondo Piadoso de las Californias or Pious Fund because of the Jesuit expulsions of 1768. Managed by the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, since 1697, the Fondo Piadoso was originally intended to support the Jesuit evangelization of Baja California and the thirteen missions founded as a direct result of said resource. Because of the mandate advanced by Gálvez, the Fondo Piadoso was repurposed for use by the Order of Friars Minor (OFM).
or Fernandinos for the evangelization of Alta California (Mason 1998: 18).

According to Jack Williams (1993: 5), “from its inception, the success of the California endeavor hinged on the occupation of Monterey. If the King’s forces failed to achieve this goal, then the expedition would be a complete failure.” In 1768, a land and naval expedition was dispatched with the intention of relocating and settling the Monterey Bay (Williams 1993: 5). As the first governor of Alta California, Captain Gaspar de Portolá y Rovira (1723–1786) led the land-based portion of the joint expedition in the company of Lieutenant Pedro Fages Beleta (1734-1794) and Commander Fernando Javier de Rivera y Moncada (1725-1781)(Williams 1993: 5). Portolá was nevertheless unable to corroborate Vizcaíno’s identification and description of the often fog-shrouded Monterey Bay, and that despite having
previously traversed the region, and therefore, failed to meet the prime objective of the expedition (Walton 2001: 19).

In 1769, the expeditionary commander commenced operations for a second expedition with the objective to relocate Monterey, and therefore retraced the route of the earlier expedition (Walton 2001: 19). Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, the first Father President of the evangelical enterprise ordained for Alta California, accompanied

Figure 16. "1770 - Carta Reducida del Oceano Asiatico, Ó Mar Del Súr, Que Comprende La Costa Oriental Y Occidental De La Peninsula De La California, Con El Golfo De Su Denominacion Antiguamente Conocido Por La De Mar De Cortés" (2017). Pre-1824 Maps. 27. https://digitalcommons.csusb.edu/hornbeck_spa_1_a/27
Gaspar de Portolà on this second expedition, identified with the *Sagrada Expedicion* or Sacred Expedition of 1769 (Temple II 1931: 72). Serra traveled by sea, aboard the *San Antonio*, also known as *El Príncipe* (Serra 1955a: 161). On 31 May 1770, the *San Antonio* anchored in the port of Monterey (Serra 1955a: 161). Serra thereby fulfilled his evangelical quest to serve as the Roman Catholic founder of both the mission and presidio of San Carlos de Monterey (Lucido 2014: 98). In a letter written on 12 June 1770, Serra (1955a: 169, 171) recounted the founding of the mission and presidio to Father Juan Andrés, which took place on the Catholic Feast of Pentecost on Sunday, 3 June 1770:

A little chapel and altar was erected in that little valley, and under the same live oak, close to the beach, where it is said, Mass was celebrated at the beginning of the last century [during the Vizcaíno expedition]. Two processions from different directions converged at the same time on the spot, one from the sea, and one from the land expedition; we signing the divine praises in the launch, and the men on land, in their hearts. Our arrival was greeted by the joyful sound of the bells suspended from the branches of the oak tree. Everything being in readiness, and having put on alb and stole, and kneeling down with all the men before the altar, I intoned the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus* at the conclusion of which, after invoking the help of the Holy Spirit on everything we were about to perform, I blessed the salt and the water. Then we all made our way to a gigantic cross which was all in readiness and lying on the ground. With everyone lending a hand we set it at an upright position, I sang the prayers for its blessing. We set it in the ground and then, with all the tenderness of our hearts, we venerated it. I sprinkled with holy water all the fields around. And thus, after raising aloft the standard of the King of Heaven, we unfurled the flag of our Catholic Monarch likewise. As we raised each one of them, we shouted at the top of our voices: "Long live the Faith! Long live the King!" All the time the bells were ringing, and our rifles were being fired, and from the boat came the thunder of the big guns. Then we buried at the foot of the cross a dead sailor, a caulker, the only one to die during this second expedition. The officers proceeded...
to the act of taking formal possession of that country in the
name of His Catholic Majesty, unfurling and waving once
more the royal flag, pulling grass, moving stones and other
formalities according to law - all accompanied with cheers,
ringing of bells, cannonades, etc.

Despite this founding event, the actual location of the mission and
presidio of San Carlos de Monterrey was not established at the Vizcaíno
oak where the Pentecost mass of 1770 was convened. Instead, Serra
notes that "A few days later the expedition moved to a pretty plain
about a rifle shot from the beach, and there established the presidio
and the mission to it" (1955a: 171 ). The presidio site was selected
by Miguel Costansó (1741–1814), an engineer, cartographer, and
cosmographer dispatched by the Spanish Royal Corp of Engineers
to map the new presidio at Monterey (Mendoza 2012,2013). His
reconnaissance of the Monterey Peninsula influenced his selection
of a site situated approximately one mile from the Vizcaíno oak
(Walton 2001: 21). Costansó selected the site such that the presidio
was situated adjacent an estuary, and oriented towards the newfound

Figure 19. Serra Mass of 3 June 1770,
Monterey, California. Titled Primera
misa en Monterrey by Juan Miralles,
1963. Courtesy Catalina Font of the
Associació d'Amics de Fray Juníper Serra,
Fundació Pare Serra. Photo © 2015 Rubén
G. Mendoza.
The launch of the newfound Real Presidio and La Misión de San Carlos de Monterrey thereby commenced.

The Royal Presidio at Contact

The ethnohistorical record provides an invaluable resource for understanding the initial years of Spanish settlement at the Royal Presidio of Monterey, and the Central Coast more generally. Spanish soldiers, missionaries, explorers, and other foreign interests penned a host of observations regarding first contact with the Esselen and Rumsen peoples of the region. Ethnohistorical accounts shared by contemporary and descendant communities of Rumsen and Esselen origin offer additional perspectives for the presidio at contact in 1770.

Lieutenant Pedro Fages rendered one of the earliest written accounts of the Rumsen and Esselen during the course of two Spanish expeditions to the Monterey Bay. The first in 1769, and the latter in 1770 (Fages 1937: vii, x). Fages acted as both the gobernante and provincial administrator (1770-1774) and military commandant of Alta California (Nuttall 1972: 252, 262). Fages (1937: 65-66) observed:

The natives of Monterey should be considered as divided into two parts for the purpose of dealing with their natural and political history, because the Indians of the port and its environs are not the same as the more remote ones, as for instance the hill tribes of Santa Lucia and other more distant villages.

Fages’ accounts document indigenous patterns of territoriality and internecine conflict on the Monterey Bay. He notes that the "[Esselen and or Rumsen] are prevented [by the Salinan] from going far from this district" and that the "new Christians" or neophytes are frequently persecuted by the...
gentiles or unconverted Indians (Fages 1937: 64). Fages (1937: 64-65) elaborated on the relationships obtaining among and between the local indigenous populations, by acknowledging that:

The situation was the same before the foundation of the Presidio de San Carlos [Presidio of Monterey], according to their confession, and they were continually at war. It is even supported that it was worse then, and that much warfare has been eliminated by the New Settlement, for it is very natural that those who now oppose the removal of acorns which grow in their country should have been themselves the aggressors in their turn, coming to provoke these Indians, which they would still be doing today were it not for fear that our arms would aid those who are now our friends and so live in confidence and understanding with us. The same thing will come in time to pass with all these natives of Monterey when they shall be reduced and submit their necks to the yoke of the holy law of God through baptism.

During his tenure as military commandant at Monterey, Fages continued to compile observations and information regarding the indigenous populations and the culture history and ecology of the region (Fages 1937: 1).

The Rumsen and Esselen limited their interaction with the missionaries and presidial company at the time of the founding of the Spanish Royal Presidio of Monterey in June 1770. On 2 July 1770, Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, the Father President and founder of the Mission and Presidio of Monterey, wrote to the Visitador General, Don Joseph de Galvez, the following:

I received a message today from the heathen who live at a distance from here, brought to me by two good Indians whom I sent out. The heathen say that at present they are fishing and that within four days they shall come to leave their little boys with me for instruction. They also sent me some fresh deer meat. [Temple II and Serra 1932: 279]

Despite this initial encounter, there were no baptisms or converts until over six months of Spanish occupancy in Monterey had elapsed (Culleton 1950: 45). On 26 December 1770, Serra officiated the first baptism of a child from the Rumsen village of Achasta (Huntington Library - ECPP 2006). Serra christened the boy Bernardino de Jesús. The following day, two more Rumsen boys, Joseph María and Buenaventura, were baptized.
The modern-day descendants of the Rumsen detail other accounts of these early encounters. According to Tony Cerda, Chairman of the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe:

When Father Serra arrived at Monterey in 1770, he was met by the people of the Rumsen villages of Achasta. The news of the arrival of those foreigners traveled fast through the five Rumsen villages. It wasn't long before "Chanjay," the Headman from the Rumsen villages of Echilat, learned of their arrival.

After gathering much knowledge and offering prayers to the creator, the sixty year-old Chanjay convinced tribal Chiefs from the villages of Achasta, Tucutnut, Soccorronda, Echilat and Ichxenta to send tribal members to assist Father Serra in building Mission San Carlos and planting crops. [Costanoan Rumsen 2014].

Cerda also supports Fages' early observations of the Rumsen and Esselen interactions at the time of the Spanish settlement in Monterey:

Chief Chanjay's role as a Rumsen Headman was to pass on the culture by his teachings, stories, songs, and dances, organizing gatherings and by conducting ceremonies. He led his tribal members who were mostly young men to the best hunting ground and coastal fishing areas. Chanjay sanctioned marriages and oversaw disputes among tribal members and other Rumsen villages. The villages of Echilat were in constant conflict with Esselens over crops and

Figure 22. Libro de Bautismos in the hand of Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, Monterey, California. This constitutes the founding document for Serra's ministry at La Misión de San Carlos de Monte-Rey, Fundada 3 June 1770. Courtesy of DOM Archives, Monterey, California. Photo © 2014 Rubén G. Mendoza.
hunting grounds. Chanjay was always able to out-maneuver the Esselens.

As a consequence of this constant conflict with the Esselens, most of the inhabitants of Echilat were always very young; most were under 25 years of age. [Costanoan Rumsen 2014]

Given these accounts, the cultural convergence between Rumsen and Esselen appear to be more hostile than reciprocal prior to and during the course of Spanish settlement of the region, and this despite archaeological evidence for long-term cultural and linguistic interactions.

Post-contact accounts serve to corroborate impressions of Native Californians. From 1789 to 1794, the Spanish government funded a scientific expedition to investigate “around the world” (Cutter 1960: v-vii). Captains Alejandro Malaspina and José Bustamante y Guerra who commanded two Spanish corvettes, Descubierta and Atrevida (Cutter 1960: v), led the naval expedition. In 1791, the ships made landfall at Monterey, and the captain documented his largely derogatory impressions of the Esselen and Rumsen (Cutter 1960: v). In effect, Malaspina describes the Esselen and Rumsen as follows (Cutter 1960: 53):
the stupidest, as well as the ugliest and filthiest [Indians] that can be found. In their rancherías they make meals of seafood that the sea spreads upon the beach in unspeakable abundance, thus saving the work of fishing and of preparing the equipment necessary for it. They are very skillful hunters, and thus provide themselves with hares, rabbits, foxes, squirrels and deer, of which there is abundance here. To kill the latter the Indians put on the stuffed head of an already killed deer; and hiding their bodies in the grass, they imitate the stance, appearance and look of a deer with such propriety that many are deceived until attracted to within range. As is the case with the work that they do in the mission, the fruits are then divided equally in order to feed and clothe them; but they lack the stimulus of private property and the advantage that the most active and most hardworking would achieve, and thus only engage in the tasks which they are obliged to perform.

Donald Cutter suggests that Malaspina's "unflattering" description of the Rumsen and Esselen derives from comparisons with other indigenous peoples, such as the Nootka of the Pacific Northwest (1960:53). Cutter also notes that Malaspina and other explorers' preconceived notions of the indigenous people of California influenced their accounting of the Rumsen and Esselen (1960:53). Clearly, the maritime subsistence pattern and relative abundance of the species culled, and observed, among the coastal peoples, was...
portrayed as an inferior subsistence pattern. Even so, Malaspina's particularly ethnocentric characterization of the Rumsen and Esselen proves both problematic and contradictory given other measured period accounts.7

Indigenous Peoples of the Monterey Bay

While the historical accounts from the Vizcaíno expedition, and those of the later Sacred Expedition, provide first-hand impressions of the indigenous people of Monterey from a Spanish colonial perspective, the archaeological record clearly informs the antiquity of the pre-Contact setting. Archaeologically, the evidence makes clear that the indigenous communities of the Monterey Bay had mastered the diverse ecological regimes of the region, and did so over the course of thousands of years of human occupation. This is particularly so for that dimension of the tradition dominated by maritime subsistence patterns, which integrated a seasonal round of collecting, and that accompanied by pyro-technologies required for clearing and renewing ecologies, and the plants and animals of the region.

While human occupation in central California has been extended through some 12,000 years of prehistory, that of the Monterey Bay has been characterized by four periods spanning approximately 6,000 years.8 These include the Early (4000-1200 BC), a gap period (1200-200 BC), Middle (200 BC-AD 700), and Late Periods (AD 700-1769).9

The Rumsen

At the time of European contact, the Esselen and Southern Ohlone/Costanoan (Rumsen) peoples occupied the Monterey Bay.10 Their millennial old traditions of harvesting the sea were ideally adapted to the ecology of the region such that Rumsen communities were dispersed across the San Francisco Bay and Carquinez Strait in the north to the Big Sur and Salinas rivers in the south (Levy 1978: 485; Milliken 1995: 19). The three primary Southern Ohlone/Costanoan districts that occupied the region extending from the Monterey Peninsula to the Big Sur River in the south included Rumsen, Ensen, and Sargentaruc (Breschini and Haversat 2004: 6; UCB 2013). These districts represented but a part of the Rumsen ethnolinguistic tradition comprised of some 800 speakers (UCB 2013).

Substantial shell middens and fishing technologies (e.g., whalebone pries, abalone and mussel fish hooks), and significant quantities of
carbon, dominate Rumsen sites along with fire altered rock, charcoal fragments, and marine mammal remains. Such “Monterey Pattern” sites demonstrate a “specialized peri-coastal food procurement and processing site” strategy utilized by the Rumsen. Residential bases associated with the Monterey Pattern were primarily situated inland (e.g., Carmel Valley) whereas the Esselen Sur Pattern residential sites were typically located by the coast (Jones 1992: 106; Lucido 2015: 52; Smith, Lucido, and Lydon: 2017: 160). Therefore, the Rumsen transported marine resources from the coast to interior village-communities (and nearby sites) for processing and consumption (Breschini and Haversat 1986: 8, 11; Smith, Lucido, and Lydon: 2017: 160). In contrast, the Esselen gathered, processed, and consumed resources near the origin of the food source, whether marine or terrestrial (Breschini and Haversat 1986: 8, 11; Smith, Lucido, and Lydon: 2017: 160).

The Esselen

Speakers of the Esselen language (Huelel) settled the northern Santa Lucia Mountain range and the coastal plains of Big Sur. The five primary Esselen districts or multi-village-communities identified at Spanish contact include Excelen, Eslenajan, Imunajan, Eggeajan, and Aspasniajan (Milliken 1990: 59). These spanned the Carmel Valley to the northwest, extending inland through the Arroyo Seco, Salinas River, and adjacent creeks of southeastern Monterey County (Breschini and Haversat 2004: 6; Milliken 1990: 59). Population projections ranged from 500 to 1,300 speakers; thereby distinguishing the Esselen as among the smallest such groups in California (Breschini and Haversat 2004: 5).

Despite their relatively sparse numbers, the Esselen established residential bases or coastal occupational sites within a mile of the intertidal zone along the coast. Such sites afforded access to a variety of maritime resources, including mussels, abalone, sardines, and other seafood, as well as marine mammals, including sea otters, harbor seals, California and Steller sea lions, fur seals, and a broad range of other creatures (Breschini and Haversat 2004: 109-110, 119; Jones 1992: 105; Smith, Lucido, and Lydon: 2017: 159).

In addition to those Esselen sites noted, “Sur Pattern” interior foraging bases are to be found dispersed through the forested coastal range and mountains of the region. Terrestrial resources such as deer and other small mammals, birds, and reptiles characterize these sites. Such sites functioned as base stations for the gathering of vegetation, and seed and nut or acorn processing (Breschini and
Haversat 2004: 110; Smith, Lucido, and Lydon: 2017: 159). Breschini and Haversat (2008: 16) hypothesize that from approximately 2000 BC to AD 1000, Esselen foraging reflected a greater emphasis on terrestrial resources with the influx of incoming Penutian speakers (Rumsen) into the Monterey Bay.

Conclusion

Archives & Archaeology, a contract archaeology and historical resources consulting firm operated by Principal Investigator Rubén G. Mendoza and associates (http://ArchivesArcheology.com), recovered an abalone shell pavement and its assemblage of ground stone hammers and mortars at the site of CA-MNT-117 in the summer of 2019 (Mendoza and Lucido, 2019). Each of the ground stone tools were deployed for tenderizing abalone, and the limited use wear and abrasion in the stone tool inventory indicate that the abalone processing locality saw only seasonal use, but that over the course of thousands of years. Given its four thousand years of long-term, albeit intermittent and seasonal occupation, and relative proximity to the future Spanish Royal Presidio of Monterey, one is left to wonder why Fray Junípero Serra, OFM, and his compatriots were left with the impression that the Monterey Peninsula was but sparsely occupied. While monitoring the archaeological recovery of the site, Mendoza was left to ponder whether the Rumsen people of the Peninsula did not simply retreat into the interior upon spying the arrival of the strangers with their ships, weapons, and foreign tongues. For it was precisely these long lived inhabitants of the land later dubbed the Puerto de Monterey, and “founded” on 3 June 1770, that experienced some 228 years of short-lived landfalls and ominous signs and tall ships, soldiers, and priests off the coastal margins of this, their ancestral homeland.

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Endnotes

1. Barra de Navidad, Jalisco, Mexico.

2. Sebastião Rodrigues Soromenho in Portuguese.

3. Chapman’s translation is worded slightly differently, noting that Monterey Bay was “the best port that could be desired” (1920: 294).

4. Again, Chapman’s translation is different. “...for besides being sheltered from all the winds, it has many pines for masts and yards, and live oaks and white oaks, and water in great quantity, all near the shore” (1920: 294).

5. See the Huntington Library - ECPP, Mission San Carlos Borromeo, Baptismal record entry 3309.

6. See the Huntington Library - ECPP, Mission San Carlos Borromeo, Baptismal record entries 00002 and 00003.

7. It should also be noted that Malaspina first declares the Rumsen and Esselen to be stupid but also recognizes their notable skills in hunting.


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