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## Fray Joaquín Pascual Nuez's Account of the Mojave River Expedition of 1819

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*This report provides a new translation of Franciscan Friar Joaquín Pascual Nuez's diary account of a Spanish military expedition that marched down the Mojave River in 1819 to punish the Mojaves of the lower Colorado River for alleged depredations. The political background to the expedition is briefly discussed, and comments are provided about native places that were visited by the expedition.*

The document reproduced here in translation is the diary account of the Moraga expedition down the Mojave River in 1819, recorded by Franciscan Friar Joaquín Pascual Nuez (1785–1821). The original is in the California Mission Documents collection of the Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library (Geiger 1947:256; Nuez 1819a). A translation was originally prepared by George W. Beattie and was published as Appendix III in Smith (1955); it was later reproduced in Walker (1986:262–267). That translation was made available to me through the courtesy of Adella Schroth of the San Bernardino County Museum of Natural History. A significant number of discrepancies between the Spanish original and the Beattie translation were found and have been corrected, so the present version of the translation varies from the one previously published on a number of points, including the rendering of some native place names. Beattie apparently relied on a Spanish language transcript of the Nuez account prepared for H. H. Bancroft and preserved in the collections of the Bancroft Library (Nuez 1819b). A number of the discrepancies in his translation can be traced to errors in that transcript.

Our diarist, Nuez, an Aragón-born Franciscan friar, had come to Mexico in 1810 from Spain and took up missionary responsibilities in Alta California in 1812 (Cutter 1995:231, 281). At the time of the 1819 expedition, he was serving at Mission San Gabriel alongside Fr. José María de Zalvidea, who had served in Alta California since 1805. Nuez had arrived at that mission too late

to be an eyewitness to the events of 1810–1811. In November of 1810, a number of mission neophytes, including both Gabrielino/Tongva and Serranos, had attempted to stage a revolt at the mission. This may have been partly in response to Zalvidea's controversial zeal in enforcing discipline and punishing runaways. The following year, Lieut. Gabriel Moraga authorized a series of punitive raids, led by Sgt. José María Pico, into the San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountains—and to the upper Mojave River region as well—directed at communities implicated in supporting the revolt. This appeared to have led to the forced missionization of many native families from villages in those regions during 1811 (Earle 2005:19–20). It was later reported that the attempted revolt had been supported not only by Serrano chiefs, but also by Southern Paiute/Chemehuevi and Mojave groups, and that a large Mojave war party had approached to within several leagues of Mission San Gabriel during the 1810 disturbance before turning back. Later in the decade, fugitive Serrano neophytes from Mission San Gabriel were known to have sought refuge with the Mojaves on the lower Colorado River, and a Serrano chief had attempted to induce the Mojaves to attack again through the prestation of quantities of coastal shell beads. Several Spanish military expeditions are reported to have operated on the upper Mojave River in circa 1816 (Earle 2005:20–21). The Mojave River served as a communication corridor between the Spanish frontier in the Cajon Pass region and the Colorado River. Both native mission fugitives and stolen Spanish saddle stock were reported to have traveled this route during this period.

In November of 1819, the Moraga expedition chronicled here was organized by Gov. Solá to march down the Mojave River and eastward across the Mojave Desert to the Colorado River. As Nuez notes, its objective was to 'punish' the Mojave Indians of the Mohave Valley (Needles) region for the killing of several Spanish soldiers at Mission San Buenaventura some months before. Nuez's preamble to his account refers to a fatal altercation between a Mojave trading party, variously reported as composed of 20 or 21 men, and the mission guard at Mission San Buenaventura on May 30th of 1819. Two Spanish soldiers, a mission neophyte, and a number of Mojaves had been killed in the fight. The Mojaves were inveterate travelers to the southern California coast,

even in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Since before the Spanish occupation of coastal Alta California, the Mojaves had traveled to the coastal regions and the southern San Joaquin Valley on exchange or trade expeditions that focused on obtaining shell beads (Earle 2005:12–15).

The Mission San Buenaventura incident led to widespread fears in coastal southern California that the Mojaves would come out of the desert to attack the Spanish at San Gabriel, San Fernando, and San Buenaventura in retaliation. Recent attacks against other native groups in the Mojave River area and the killing of mission runaways from Mission San Gabriel and Mission San Fernando had also been reported, presumably by native sources. These recent reported killings were also to be avenged by the desert expedition. As letters and other testimony of Franciscan missionaries clearly bear out, this was a period of great tension at the Franciscan missions in Southern California, as neophyte resistance to the missionary regime and flight across the interior frontier of unconquered native groups increased (Cutter 1995:210–211; De la Guerra 1819). The cutoff of mission subsidies and supplies due to civil war in Mexico and the effects of demographic catastrophe within the missions contributed to this crisis.

By the time of the Moraga expedition, the upper Mojave River area had been subject to Spanish military incursions for a number of years, coincident with the partial missionization of Desert Serrano (Vanyumé) rancherías found along the length of the Mojave River. The river communities had first been visited by Fr. Garcés in 1776, but were not officially visited again until 1806 and 1808. Some recruitment of upper Mojave River ranchería inhabitants to Mission San Gabriel had already occurred by that time. During the following decade, after the San Gabriel revolt attempt, the Spanish military presence was more frequent and recruitment pressure greater. Relations of both alliance and conflict appear to have developed between local Serrano-speaking native populations and the Mojaves during this era. Nuez's diary provides an eyewitness account of inter-native conflict in the area, and a later report by Fr. Sánchez provides additional details (Earle 2005:21–23; Sánchez 1821). Sánchez indicated that a Mojave war party headed toward the coast had killed local Serrano-speakers in the vicinity of Atongaibit, this after deciding to suspend

its march out of fear that native people of that area had given the alarm to the Spanish.

Nuez's diary also contains important clues about the location of native communities in the Mojave River region in the early nineteenth century. Interpretations of this document to help reconstruct local political geography in the region have been hampered by the application of commonly employed distance values (ca. 2.6–3.5 miles) to the unit of distance, the *legua* or league, used by Nuez (Earle 2005). This has led to considerable confusion. In fact, Nuez's *legua* usually referred to a shorter distance—between one and two miles. I have provided textual notes on ranchería and camp site locations mentioned in Nuez's account, and on the interpretation of Nuez's travel distances. The Nuez diary, along with other historical and archaeological data, has served to clarify the fact that the native rancherías in this region that are mentioned in Franciscan mission sacramental registers were aggregated 'political headquarters'—they were winter-village settlement locations that had existed over long periods of time. They were not just 'collections of people wandering around the landscape' but community groups occupying permanent village sites (Earle 2004:180–181).

The Nuez account is also of interest because of fragmentary ethnographic reports from the early twentieth century about the occupation of the lower Mojave River region and areas further to the east by a mysterious group of 'Like-Mojaves' or 'Land Mojaves' called the Tïira'ayatawî (Earle 2009:26–35, Kroeber 1959:296–298,307). These reports suggested that this occupation had occurred at some fairly recent point in time, perhaps after the early eighteenth century. Kroeber (1959:307) speculated that these reports might possibly have been connected to the Mojave incursions described by Nuez. However, the account itself does not indicate that the Mojaves in 1819 were permanently settled on the lower Mojave River or at the Sinks of the Mojave to the east (Earle 2009:33–35).

The failure of the Moraga expedition to reach the Colorado River underlined the perhaps surprising inability or disinclination of the Spanish colonizers of Alta California to penetrate the eastern deserts after the first dozen or so years of colonization. After the disastrous failure of the Yuma colony in 1781 and Pedro Fages' operations to rescue colonists taken captive there,

even the near-desert regions in southern California became *terra incognita* again until the first decade of the nineteenth century, when the southwesterly fringes of the Mojave Desert were visited by Spanish troops. Even during the following two decades the area to the east of the lower Mojave River remained little visited, until the opening of the somewhat inaptly named Old Spanish Trail to New Mexico in 1829–1830. Another desert expedition, undertaken in 1824–1825, aimed to blaze a trail to the Colorado River via San Gorgonio Pass and the Colorado Desert to the east of the Coachella Valley. It also ended in failure before the objective was reached, with exhausted men and saddle stock retreating to San Gorgonio (Bean and Mason 1962). Even in the cool months of the year, the Californio military contingents found the management of feed and water for their animals in the deep desert a daunting challenge. These difficulties contributed to the growth of trans-frontier raiding of saddle stock by unconquered native groups, including the Mojaves of the Colorado River.

## THE EXPEDITION ACCOUNT OF FR. NUEZ

### *HAIL JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH*

Diary which I, Joaquín Pasqual Nuez, of the regular observance of our Father San Francisco, son of the Holy Province of Aragon, Apostolic Procurator of the College of San Fernando, Mexico, for the spread of the faith, and Minister of the Mission of the Archangel San Gabriel, assigned by the order of the Reverend Father President of these missions of the New California, Fr. Mariano Payeras, who by letter dated the 12th of November, 1819 appointed me chaplain of the expedition which by order of the Señor Governor and Colonel of the Provincial Militias Don Pablo Vicente de Sola, the Lieutenant of Cavalry and Commander of the Royal Presidio of Santa Barbara Don Gabriel Moraga undertook with thirty-five leather-clad soldiers and fifteen of the Militia of Mazatlán, with their Lieutenant Don Narcisco Fabregat, in order to punish the bold and vile deeds of the Indians of the ranchería of Amajaba, who, after in the Mission of San Buenaventura to the number of twenty-one men, in the Passover of the Holy Spirit, during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, they slew the corporal of the guard named Rufino Leiba and a retired soldier of the Presidio of Santa Barbara, Mariano Cota, and a neophyte of said Mission, the Indians of the ranchería of Amajaba had the audacity to come and commit hostilities on the gentile Indians of the ranchería of Atongaibit and others of the region, and the Christians

who fled from the Mission of San Fernando and this one of San Gabriel.<sup>1</sup>

As the son of obedience that I am, I begin.

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, AMEN

**November 22, 1819.** The drum was sounded to gather in the church of this Mission of San Gabriel the faithful, and especially the individuals of the expedition, their respective leaders setting the example. The Reverend Father Fr. José Barona, Minister of the Mission of San Juan Capistrano, sang a most solemn mass for the happy success of the expedition in honor and glory to the mother of God under the title of Our Lady of Pilar, who was designated together with the Archangel San Gabriel by the Reverend Father President as patron of the expedition.

At about half past eight in the morning we set out for a rancho called La Puente,<sup>2</sup> distant about four leagues, and there was so furious a north wind blowing that all arrived at said rancho buried in dust, at about twelve in the day. We remained at La Puente until the following day, and we suffered in the night from very severe cold with the north wind.

**November 23.** At about seven in the morning, and with no less cold than in the night before, the expedition left the rancho of La Puente for a place called Cucamonga,<sup>3</sup> distant from the rancho about eight leagues. Nothing out of the ordinary occurred during the day, and after we recited the Holy Rosary I named the place Our Lady of Pilar of Cucamonga.

**November 24.** At about seven in the morning the expedition set out from our Lady of Pilar of Cucamonga for the mouth of the Cajón of Amuscopiabit, distant about nine leagues, and nothing in particular having occurred during the day, after reciting the Rosary of Mary I named the place Cajón of San Gabriel of Amuscopiabit.<sup>4</sup>

**November 25.** At about seven in the morning the expedition set out in a cold north wind, and passing the Cajón, by way of a shortcut of a large rough hill, it arrived at about twelve in the day at the ranchería of Guapiabit,<sup>5</sup> distant from the Cajón about nine and a half leagues, without anything unusual having occurred. After the Rosary I named the place Our Lady of Guadalupe of Guapiabit.

**November 26.** The expedition remained at Our Lady of Guadalupe of Guapiabit in order to rest the weary mules, there being in the place considerable grass. We passed a painful night because of the excessive cold.

**November 27.** The cold continuing, we set out about half past six from Our Lady of Guadalupe of Guapiabit, and after traveling about ten leagues through a most sterile and extremely dry region, we stopped to rest at the ranchería of Atongaibit.<sup>6</sup> At a league and a half distance, we came to the place where

the Mojave Indians<sup>7</sup> had killed four Christian Indians from this mission, three from San Fernando, and some gentiles. We found the burned bones and skulls, and about a gunshot away the camp was established. After having recited the Holy Rosary I named the place the Blessed Souls of Atongaibit.

**November 28, and Sunday, the first of Advent.** I blessed a large cross which all of the company venerated with devotion and tenderness, and immediately celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and preached a sermon suited to the day. The Holy Sacrifice being finished, I ordered the company to bring the bones and skulls of the Christians. They were deposited in the *capilla* with two candles burning. In the afternoon, all marching in procession, carrying in front the large blessed cross, and behind the remains of the neophytes, while I was singing the funeral service, we arrived at the same place where the bodies had been burned.<sup>8</sup> I ordered a deep pit dug, blessed the sepulcher, and buried them at the foot of the cross which we erected there. The principal reason why the commander suspended his march for a whole day was to perform this pious function. A little before celebrating said function a gentile Indian from the ranchería of Angayaba presented himself, who admitted that seven days<sup>9</sup> before he had left Amajaba, and because he considered it a very practical thing to do, the commander determined that he should travel with us, serving as a guide.

**November 29.** At around seven o'clock in the morning the expedition set out from Las Animas Benditas of Atongaibit, and at about eight leagues is the ranchería of Topipabit, without any inhabitants.<sup>10</sup> I named it the Sweetest Name of Jesus of Topipabit. In about a league more we encountered the bones of a pagan Indian, and farther on the skulls and bones of three children. At about three leagues distance from Topipabit is the ranchería of Cacaumeat, called by us San Hilario, which name the commander of the expedition assigned it three years ago.<sup>11</sup> All night there were dense clouds threatening rain.

**November 30.** I celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, it being the festival of the apostle St. Andrew. We did not set out until the clouds lifted which was about ten in the day, and at eleven o'clock, more or less, we directed ourselves toward a ranchería called by the natives Sisuguina, which in our Castilian language means the Ranchería of the Devil. They say that there he had appeared to them with great frequency.<sup>12</sup> About a quarter of an hour before arriving at the ranchería we encountered the bones of an adult pagan Indian, half fresh, who it could be seen was clubbed to death, because near the bones there were some pieces of the clubs such as the Mojaves use. The ranchería is distant about four leagues from San Hilario, from whence we set out. After having recited the Holy Rosary, I named Sisuguina the ranchería of the Archangel San Miguel.

**December 1.** We set out at about six in the morning from the ranchería of the Archangel San Miguel for Angayaba,<sup>13</sup> distant from fourteen to fifteen leagues, through a land very harsh and alkaline. At about the middle of the journey we found the bones of an adult gentile Indian. Sixteen animals that gave out were left on the road. After reciting the Holy Rosary I gave the ranchería the name San Joaquín and Santa Ana of Angayaba.

**December 2.** On account of having information by way of the Indians that the waters ahead were very scarce until one day's journey before reaching Amajaba [the Mojave settlement], the commander of the expedition determined to advance with ten soldiers and four of the civilian settlers who had come with us. After having traveled all day and a large part of the night, he became disconsolate because he was unable to proceed further because horses that they carried along had given out, notwithstanding that they were the strongest, for lack of feed and even water for all the animals of the expedition, and after having passed one watering place well supplied even with feed, called Atsamabeat, he stopped for the night in another called Guanachiqui.<sup>14</sup>

**December 3.** The commander decided to turn back to the camp of San Joaquín and Santa Ana, but God so disposed that he found four adult gentile Indians, three married, and a boy of thirteen or fourteen years, who, terrified, wandered aimless and unsettled, with seven women and three sibling children, the first eight years old, the second about six and a half, and a little girl about five, whose father the Mojaves killed and whose mother was taken away captive by them. The commander [sent] the interpreter, Yndalecio,<sup>15</sup> and the gentile guide in search of their father who had been traveling in company with another old man, presuming to be very near the spring.

**December 4.** Five Christian Indians were sent out in search of two old women, the one blind and the other crippled, who had been in Guanachiqui, and all day was spent awaiting the interpreter, Yndalecio, and the gentile guide.

**December 5, Sunday, the second of Advent.** I celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and preached the sermon of the day. The Mass ended, the commander sent four soldiers and a corporal in search of Yndalecio and the guide. The soldiers found, on the road, the Christian Indians who went out to bring in the old women, with some spurs in the hand. They said that they found Yndalecio dead with three arrows, one in the throat, another in the breast, and the other in the temple; that they ascertained that the youth had sat down to eat pinole, and that the gentile ascended a slight elevation nearby, and shot him from there. The gentile carried away with him the hat, the lance, and the horse<sup>16</sup> of Yndalecio, and threw away the bow next



to the body. They found nothing of the old women, and supposed that the gentile would have placed them on the horse and gone with them to Amajaba. [They also reported] that the Christians buried the body and placed a cross above it. This unhappy news reached us at half past eleven in the night.

**December 6.** Before leaving San Joaquín and Santa Ana of Angayaba, the soldier from San Diego, Ysidro Alanis, found the bones and skull of an adult Indian. At seven o'clock in the morning, disconsolate because of not being able to proceed to Amajaba, we started back toward a place where there was considerable water below a hill of red rock very suitable for mill stones,<sup>17</sup> and remained there all day. I named it San Rafael.

**December 7.** The expedition started for San Hilario and with nothing of note occurring we arrived at the place where we made camp and spent the night.

**December 8.** I celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and preached the Verbum Dei in San Hilario, from where we set out at about half past seven and arrived to pass the night, with nothing unusual having happened, at the Blessed Souls of Atongaibit. Twenty-seven animals were exhausted in the day's march.

**December 9.** [This day] we pass in Las Animas, where there was abundant feed, in order to let the animals recuperate.

**December 10.** The expedition set out from Las Animas Benditas of Atongaibit for Our Lady of Guadalupe of Guapiabit. About two leagues before arrival at the place it began to rain a downpour, and it did not cease until we reached our destination. As a result of the wetting some were made ill, and he who endorses<sup>18</sup> this, I believe, suffered more than anyone else because of not having the customary equipment for riding constantly in campaigns, for he did not bear arms, and rode in some thin old linen trousers so that he is suffering in his right leg and wrist.

**December 11.** The expedition set out from Our Lady of Guadalupe of Guapiabit for the Cajón of San Gabriel of Amuscopiabit, and we suffered throughout the morning an unbearable cold. We did not stay in the Cajón to pass the night because feed was scarce there, and we passed to a place about a league and a half away where feed was very abundant. I named the place La Beatísima Trinidad. A large part of the night it was raining.

**December 12.** I celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and preached about the miraculous appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe. About eight o'clock in the morning we set out for Our Lady of Pilar of Cucamonga, where we arrived at around twelve noon, where we grazed [the animals].

**December 13.** The commander sent on the troop and the animals to the Mission because grass was very scarce on the land of Rancho de La Puente. Said Señor and I spent the night at La Puente, and on the fourteenth, about midday, we arrived at this place [named] at the date [at the end of the document].

The ranchería of Amajaba, according to the route we took to the previously mentioned place of San Joaquín and Santa Ana of Angayaba and the information derived from the Indians, is far to the north of San Gabriel. On the road the variation in directions of the route as far as the ranchería of Angayaba was not significant, for sometimes we inclined to the northwest, at others to the south, and at other times to east and west, but very little, because the route was restricted to traveling along an arroyo that can be found from Las Animas Benditas of Atongaibit to much beyond the ranchería of Angayaba, heading into the sierra, without there being any other road, but strictly speaking we went always to the north.<sup>19</sup> The land is most sterile, and in proof of this, in all the road not a bird was encountered, nor ever hardly a worm.

If another time it be thought necessary to punish the Mojaves, I am of the opinion that more than thirty leagues of travel would be avoided by setting out from the Mission of San Fernando,<sup>20</sup> and by no means should an expedition be started until spring, because in the winter the same cold, even where there may be feed, will destroy the horses, because in truth it is very severe.

It is feasible that from the watering place of Guanachiqui to the last one called Patsoboabuet, in no season of the year will there be feed (and if there should be, it would be more harmful than helpful to the animals), but from said Guanachiqui an expedition can very easily go as far as Patsoboabuet if some storage sacks of maize or barley be established for them, which should be ready for when the expedition may pass. In Guanachiqui, the explorers now concede (and most of all the commander), that by performing some labor, they can give a sufficient supply of water for the animals, for which purpose some tanks, wide and sufficiently deep, may be dug in the earth, which is pure sand. Where it is most difficult to secure water for the horses is at Chichinipabeat, according to the declarations of the Indians, as it is very scarce, and the fount of water among the rock. Chichinipabeat is distant, I infer, some eight leagues, a little more or less, from Guanachiqui, and from that to another watering place called Uchique is the same distance, at which place they say there are three small springs, the soil being sandy, and it would seem to present no greater difficulty than that with proper tools they be made to yield much more water and be sufficient for the animals, especially if they are disposed so as to pass in sections. From Uchique to Patsoboabuet it would be more than eight or nine leagues, in which place there is an abundance of grass, and a river, where the animals can rest, and it will be possible to pass on to Amajaba

refreshed, to punish the insolence and perfidy of those natives.<sup>21</sup>

If in time an expedition be planned, the season of the year in which it sets out, be what it may, it is very appropriate that in anticipation there should be stationed at least three horses for each individual to graze at Angayaba about two months before the expedition sets out from these presidios, together with the pack loads of indispensable things such as ammunition, cannons, and foodstuffs, in order that thus, without any difficulty, within a few days, the perverse Indians of Amajaba may speedily learn the power of God and the superiority of our arms.<sup>22</sup> But, even if nothing else were to be achieved (since they live between branches of the Colorado River),<sup>23</sup> the burning of the crops of wheat, maize, brown beans, screw beans, and mesquite beans would be a great triumph which could be attained.

I do not desire to make this narrative tiresome, and perhaps away from the point, for it is not becoming in me to assume that my opinion will be followed, but I desire to state as clearly as possible that which I understand and feel as a consequence of what I have heard and seen. The Lord of Vengeance will provide in time opportune occasion so that such atrocious crimes as those ferocious enemies of humanity have committed may not remain unpunished. At the same time I ask the All Powerful, setting up as intercessor my Lady of Pilar of Zaragoza, that he apply all the labors I endured on that expedition to the rescue of their souls, Amen.

Fr. Joaquín Pasqual Nuez,  
Mission San Gabriel Archangel,  
December 16, 1819

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Governor Solá issued the formal order for the expedition in a letter dated November 3, 1819 (Solá 1819a). His instructions specified the assignment of 35 mission escort 'soldados de cuera' and 15 soldiers of the Militia of Mazatlán stationed at the San Diego Presidio. He also assigned to the expedition a small cannon 'that has been brought by Lieut. Dn. Francisco María Ruiz' with four artillerymen, this contingent to join the rest of the military party. In an earlier letter of instructions to Capt. de la Guerra dated September 18, Solá (1819b) had specified that one hundred or more armed Indians be brought from Missions San Buenaventura, San Fernando, and San Gabriel to serve as auxiliaries. Such armed natives had been organized to help deal with the threat of attack by the Privateer Bouchard in 1818 (Cutter 1995:154, 157, 159).

In a letter sent to Governor Solá on December 16, 1819 describing the outcome of the expedition, Moraga stated that the composition of the expedition was 50 troops and 10 civilian 'vecinos' (Gente de Razón inhabitants). He also mentioned 'muchachos,' Indian auxiliaries, that accompanied the expedition. These included Yndalecio, the interpreter who

was killed (Moraga 1819). It is not known how many auxiliaries were taken along.

There is no mention by Moraga of the extra complement of artillerymen, nor are they referred to in Nuez's diary. In his comments on supplying any future expeditions to the Mojave villages, Nuez does make reference to military materiel such as foodstuffs, ammunition, and cannons, to be stockpiled along the desert route of attack, as being 'pack supplies.' Such a small cannon would presumably have been carried by a pack animal.

<sup>2</sup>Rancho La Puente belonged to Mission San Gabriel at the time (Phillips 2010:92, 230).

<sup>3</sup>Possibly a camping place associated with a native ranchería located near Cucamonga Creek. The last baptism of a member of this community at Mission San Gabriel took place in November of 1813 (Huntington Library 2006).

<sup>4</sup>The camping location within the canyon is not made clear, although it may have been located down canyon to the south of the Serrano ranchería of Amutskupiabit at Cajon Junction.

<sup>5</sup>The site of Guapiabit is located at the Las Flores Ranch in Summit Valley. The successive communities visited by Nuez from Cajon Pass to the lower Mojave River west of Afton Canyon—Amuscopiabit, Guapiabit, Atongaibit, Topipabit, Cacaumeat, Sisuguina, and Angayaba—were all listed in the sacramental registers of Mission San Gabriel or Mission San Fernando (Earle 2004:176).

<sup>6</sup>Atongaibit has been located on the Mojave River as close as circa a mile or a mile and a half north of the junction of the South Fork of the Mojave River and Deep Creek. However, Nuez and other sources hint that it may have been located further north in the vicinity of the east or northeast side of Hesperia. Nuez's account places Atongaibit ca. 10 leagues north of Guapiabit and around 10.5 leagues south of Topipabit, the latter place probably located at Mojave Heights, just north of Victorville. Thus Nuez places it roughly halfway between Guapiabit and Topipabit. Nuez later mentions that the expedition's route to the north along the Mojave River commenced at Atongaibit, so it appears that he followed a shortcut trail from Guapiabit away from the river that can also be inferred from the travel account of Fr. Garcés, who visited Guapiabit in 1776 (Coues 1900:I:245–246). The total travel distance between these places might be placed at 22–24 miles, thus suggesting that the length of Nuez's league during this part of the journey had decreased to well under 2 miles per league. This can be compared to values for the league of 2.6–3.5 miles per league in different parts of the Spanish empire (Villasana Haggard 1941:68–70, 78–79). Fr. Zalvidea indicated in the diary of an 1806 expedition in the same area that he traveled four leagues from Atongaibit to Guapiabit, and another four leagues from Guapiabit to Amutskupiabit. His value for the league in this case appears closer to standard usage. He also mentioned a swampy place a league and a half north of Atongaibit that may correspond to a zone above or upstream from the Victorville Upper Narrows known as 'El Rancho Verde' (Cook 1960:247–248). These data would also place Atongaibit east or northeast of modern Hesperia.

<sup>7</sup>The document does not use the term ‘Mojaves’ or ‘Amajabas,’ but rather refers to ‘los de Amajaba’ or ‘the inhabitants of Amajaba.’

<sup>8</sup>This may possibly indicate that relatives of the deceased had attempted to cremate them, a common mortuary practice among the Serrano and Desert Serrano (Vanyumé).

<sup>9</sup>If this person had been at the Mojave rancherías seven days before, he may have been directly en route up the Mojave River from there when he encountered the expedition. Fr. Zalvidea was told in 1806 that the journey from the Mojave villages to the southern San Joaquin Valley took ten days (Cook 1960:247).

<sup>10</sup>Topipabit was located in the vicinity of Victorville. The San Bernardino County Museum of Natural History designated a site at Turner Springs Ranch, in the Mojave Heights area, west of the Lower Narrows, as the historic ranchería of Topipabit (Thompson and Thompson 1995:31–36). A site in this general vicinity is mentioned in one ethnographic account as the birthplace of a Vanyume Serrano woman named Tahamuha, possibly born in the 1820s, who later lived among the Mojaves on the Colorado River (Earle 2005:9). Nuez mentions that this ranchería had no inhabitants. It is not clear if this comment would hint that other communities were found to be inhabited upon the arrival of the expedition. It is noteworthy that Nuez does not provide further explicit information about the actual presence of native people at these places as the expedition passed through, since he is a missionary and these native people are central to his vocation. It is known that some of these rancherías, such as Atongaibit, still had some inhabitants in the 1820s. It would appear possible, however, that some of the rancherías might have been temporarily abandoned upon the approach of a military expedition.

<sup>11</sup>Nuez’s mention that Moraga had named Cacaumeat as San Hilario ‘three years before’ refers to Moraga’s having reached at least this far downriver during an expedition in 1816. This place was located along the Mojave River north of the Lower Narrows, possibly somewhere in the Bryman region.

<sup>12</sup>Sisuguina is related to the Fernandeano/Gabrielino term *šišu* (‘ghost’ or malevolent spirit), and *šišuŋa* (place of the ghost) (Harrington 1986:III:R.98:Fr.66; III:R103,Fr.31). Several places in the greater Los Angeles basin region were similarly named (McCawley 1996:44,48). This term appears to have been provided by Indians native to the place, who saw the manifestations of the spirit being there. This suggests that native residents of this place were either at the ranchería or formed part of the expedition.

<sup>13</sup>Angayaba was located along the Mojave River somewhere between Daggett and the Cady Mountains/Afton Canyon region, possibly in the vicinity of Camp Cady. In the latter locality, site of the 1860s Army post, both pasture and spring water were available.

<sup>14</sup>Atsamabeat appears to have been located somewhere within the Cady Mountains/Afton Canyon region along the lower Mojave River, east of Angayaba and west of Guanachiqui. In

Afton Canyon, near the east end of the Mojave River, there were camping places where grass and water were available. Guanachiqui is described as located in an area of pure sand. It may have been located in the vicinity of the so-called Sinks of the Mojave and Soda Lake.

<sup>15</sup>Yndalecio may have been a Mission San Gabriel neophyte of that name inscribed in the San Gabriel Burial Register on December 17, 1819, one day after the return of Fr. Nuez to the mission from the expedition. On that day, Fr. Zalvidea, Nuez’s colleague at San Gabriel, prepared ‘absentee’ death entries for seventeen neophytes who had died at places away from the mission at unspecified dates during the recent past. These entries included Burial Register entry no. 4235 for Yndalecio, who was listed as born at the Serrano village of Apinjaibit in circa 1803, and thus would have been 16 or 17 years old in December of 1819. His baptismal entry, no. 5550, is dated April 23, 1814. Five other neophytes were listed who were from villages in the upper Mojave River region, but it is not known if their reported deaths were associated in any way with the Mojave attacks (Huntington Library 2006). That the interpreter Yndalecio was trusted and an experienced mission horseman is indicated by his having been outfitted with a horse, sombrero, and a lance.

<sup>16</sup>The Mojave were known to have used horses to travel across the desert on occasion, and Jedediah Smith noted both horses and fugitive Serranos at the Mojave villages seven years later in 1826 (Earle 2005:24). Mojave survivors of the San Buenaventura fight told Spanish interrogators in 1819 that the coast could be reached in sixteen days on foot and in a slightly shorter time by horse (Cook 1962:161). In the instructions for the second of his two campaigns in 1816, Moraga had been asked to verify whether Los Angeles region vecinos and native auxiliaries had recently descended the Mojave River to attack the Mojaves on the Colorado River to retrieve stolen horses (Earle 2005:21).

<sup>17</sup>‘The hill of red rock suitable for mill stones’ is located along the river between Barstow and Daggett, and was a source for native milling stones (metates), as is attested archaeologically. This place provides a point of reference in locating Angayaba further to the east. Mojave Desert historian Clifford Walker has shown me the site.

<sup>18</sup>In diary entries for December 10 and December 13, Nuez makes reference to his endorsement of the account at Mission San Gabriel on December 16th, 1819. These references hint that the diary account would have been rewritten in its final form after the conclusion of the expedition.

<sup>19</sup>This discussion indicates that the expedition joined the Mojave River at Atongaibit, probably after taking an overland trail from Guapiabit, and followed the river through the mountains (Cady Mountains/Afton Canyon) to the east of Angayaba in the direction of Soda Lake. This clearly suggests that Angayaba lay on the river to the west of the Cady Mountains.

<sup>20</sup>The idea that Mission San Fernando was significantly closer to the Mojave River than Mission San Gabriel was an interesting geographical misapprehension apparently current at the time.



A number of residents of Topipabit and other Mojave River villages were actually recruited to Mission San Fernando. Nuez reported that runaways from Mission San Fernando who had fled to the upper Mojave River were among the victims of the Mojaves.

<sup>21</sup> Of the four watering places referred to here, the first, Guanichiqui, was probably located in the vicinity of Soda Lake, as I have noted above. The fourth watering place, Patsoboabuet, appears to correspond to Paiute Spring or Paasa, as it is mentioned as flowing like a river (Earle 2005:11–12). It is located a day's journey west of the Colorado River. Various alternate routes or trails across the Providence Mountains-Mid-Hills Ranges were used in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to reach the Colorado River. Principal pass routes were the southerly trail around the south end of the Providence Mountains by way of Arrowweed Spring, the Foshay Pass route further north, and a northerly trail by way of Cedar Canyon and Rock Spring. It is not clear what route is being referred to here.

<sup>22</sup> Nuez here appears to anticipate the system of supply stations actually used by the U.S. Army in parts of the California deserts during the Civil War. It is not clear, however, how he imagined that supply locations at Angayaba or elsewhere in the desert could be set up and secured against pilfering without mounting a military effort almost equivalent to that of the expedition that was supposed to be supported.

<sup>23</sup> Nuez's comment here suggests that he erroneously believed that the Mojaves had secured themselves at a site between branches of the Colorado River that would have made a direct attack on their 'ranchería' difficult, thus inviting the destruction of more vulnerable food resources. Capt. De la Guerra had allegedly collected information about the Mojave villages on the Colorado River from Mojave survivors of the Mission San Buenaventura fight (Cook 1962:161). It is not clear what information may have been passed on to Moraga and Nuez. It is ironic that Nuez is here fulminating about the Mojaves being ferocious enemies of humanity when, in fact, they had gone to San Buenaventura to trade peacefully and were the victims of a fight provoked by a Spanish soldier trying to steal from them.

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