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Manifest Re-Destined:
The Politics of Remembering and Forgetting in the American West

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Communication

by

Caroline Imani Collins

Committee in charge:

Professor Valerie Hartouni, Chair
Professor Patrick Anderson
Professor Angela Booker
Professor Zeinabu Davis
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2019

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Chair

University of California San Diego

2019

DEDICATION

To my grandmother Opal Younger Tucker, my great-aunt Alyce Sheppard Robinson, my sister Cathryn Pearl Sheppard Gamble, and my daughter Caitlyn Alyce Collins--may the love that bound us in this life sustain me till we meet again.

EPIGRAPH

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.

Zora Neale Hurston

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Chapters 1 – 8 are currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material. Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Manifest Re-Destined:
The Politics of Remembering and Forgetting in the American West

by

Caroline Imani Collins

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

University of California San Diego, 2019

Professor Valerie Hartouni, Chair

Representations of the nineteenth-century American West, including media, re-enactments, and edutourism sites have long informed political constructions of ‘Americanness’ in popular culture. The American Western frontier, once hailed “the most American part of America,” often exemplifies the United States’ perceived distinctness from the rest of the world in respect to individualism, ingenuity, resilience, economic equality, opportunity, and strength

(Slatta, 2010; Katz, 1971, p. xii; Turner, 1903). As such, frontier mythology plays a pivotal role in embedding particular notions of race, place, gender, and ‘Americanness’ into our national consciousness. This dissertation focuses on one particular (re)telling of the American West: the ‘birth’ of California as historically and culturally located in San Diego, the site of Europe's first permanent settlement on the Pacific Coast. This examination traces how a particular cultural remembrance of the West remains culturally entrenched not only because of continuous reiteration, as prevalent scholarship generally discusses American Western mythology (Limerick, 1988; Brown, 2007; Smith, 1950), but also on the important ways in which this origin story adapts and shifts over time when aspects of it are no longer serviceable.

Charting this evolution through specific cultural, historical, and civic projects of remembrance, this dissertation examines what falls in and out of this narrative in the face of sociocultural, economic, and political change. And it reveals how this origin story’s recalibrations not only ensure its survival and keep the past relevant, but how, despite these repairs, the overall cultural work of the story remains intact: reaffirming notions of American exceptionalism. In doing so, this examination interrogates the ways in which recalibrated forms of racial, social, ideological, and political power work and operate, even--and especially--within seemingly celebratory, festive, and ‘innocent’ American commemorative practices, foregrounding the entangled relationship between memory and politics at the core of our national imagination. Deploying historical, archival, and textual analysis, media archaeology, and visual ethnography methods, this dissertation bridges insights and approaches from Media & Cultural Studies, Performance Studies, and the Learning Sciences to create new knowledge about how we make meaning, imagine a nation, and shape adjacent notions of identity, power, and belonging in the process.

PART ONE:

**INTRODUCTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA'S COLONIAL
ORIGINS AT SAN DIEGO**



Figure 0.1: Original renderings of cultural remembrances of California’s origins at San Diego as discussed in this dissertation. Inspired by the frontispiece of Hobbes’ *Leviathan* (1651), by Abraham Bosse with creative input from Hobbes; See Figure 1.4), this illustration portrays various representations of California’s landscape, Indigenous roots, Spanish ‘Fantasy Heritage,’ Californio oligarchs, and its American ‘pioneer’ legacy. The mythical Queen Calafia, whose legend helped to inspire early Spanish conquistadores’ voyages to what is now San Diego Bay, embodies a particular body politic. Wielding critical symbols of state power--a rifle and a pen, these emblems represent the influence of pioneer and liberal ideals within regional and national political theory, imagination, and practice. The piece also gestures to notable features within the region including San Diego’s Spanish revival Balboa Park, its mission, and the railroads, objects of inquiry within the dissertation. Original artwork by Nalini Asha Biggs with creative input from the author, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Nalini Asha Biggs and Caroline Collins. Reproduced with permission of Nalini Asha Biggs.

CHAPTER ONE:

Remembering and Forgetting in The West

Collective memory is not an inert and passive thing, but a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and endowed with political meaning.

--Edward Said

1.1 Introduction

My dissertation examines cultural remembrances of the origins of California. This examination, however, is very much rooted in an underlying interest in the broader mythology of the American West, its cultural embeddedness, and its political implications. In May 2018, I had the opportunity to meet with New Western Historian Patricia Limerick¹ to discuss the influence of the Western Myth². Lounging in her comfortable sitting room in the front of her Boulder, Colorado home--her cat and my seven-year-old son at our feet, we pondered, among other things, the cultural paradox of Western conquest. And we questioned the phenomena of Western ‘fun.’ Why was it that, as her own writing observes, many American children engage in “cowboys and Indians play but stop short at masters and slaves?”³ And how was it, I asked, that tourists (myself included), could visit nineteenth-century Western themed historical attractions to

¹ Dr. Patricia Limerick is a leading New Western Historian. She received her Ph.D. in American Studies from Yale University in 1980, and from 1980 to 1984 she was an Assistant Professor of History at Harvard. In 1984, Dr. Limerick moved to Boulder to join the History Department of the University of Colorado. An author of multiple publications, in 1988 she published her best-known work, *The Legacy of Conquest*, an overview and reinterpretation of Western American history which for years has fostered important academic and public dialogue. Nominated by President Obama in Spring 2015, in January 2016, she was appointed to the National Endowment for the Humanities advisory board, the National Council on the Humanities, and has served as President of the Organization of American Historians, the American Studies Association, the Western History Association, and the Society of American Historians.

² This introduction will later attend in detail to the concept and scholarly use of this term.

³ Limerick, 1988, p. 19; P. Limerick, personal interview, May 15, 2018.

eat, shop, and be merry, when we certainly would not do so at memorial spaces like Southern plantations which, in recent years, often serve as sites of deep national contemplation?⁴ Like their Southern counterparts these Western locations are steeped in complicated histories--so why do we often *experience* them as if they are not? Instead, these locales are perceived as some of the more 'festive' environments that Western regions offer, generally epitomizing a particular version of 'Americanness' deeply embedded within our national consciousness--one rooted in an exceptionalism defined by ideals including individualism, opportunity, and adventure. In her new Preface to the 2006 paperback reissue of her influential history of the American West *Legacy of Conquest*, Limerick describes the entrenched nature of the Western Myth that at times seems to thwart the work of Western historians, conceding "[i]n countless showdowns and contests, the romanticized, commercialized Myth of the West prevailed over my plucky challenges to it" (p. 9). Limerick's admission reveals a tension between mythology and 'truth' that often remains a thorn in the side of historians.

Fortunately, in this instance, I am not a historian. As an emerging communication scholar, what interests me are not only the gaps and valleys between 'truth' and 'portrayal'--but also the process of representation itself. I am fascinated by the power and the persistence of the entrenched story of the American West, as so many know it, and the politics thoroughly entangled in its (re)telling. When I told Dr. Limerick as much on that May afternoon, it was a fascination into which she advised me to lean. When dealing with the complex ways in which people apprehend Western conquest, she claimed, "It doesn't always work to just correct the

⁴ To add nuance to this perspective, however, see the work of Carter, Butler, and Dwyer (2011) and their examination of plantation museums in the memorialized South which act as particular "fetish commodities that capitalize on the plantation by using it as a stage for the selling of a 'big house' story of planters, masters, and mistresses, while neglecting the stories of those whose labor built the estate and whose wealth generation furnished it" (pp. 128-129).

facts. In fact, it rarely does.”⁵ Stories, she explained, often provide a better way to engage with a public that has adopted convictions and apprehensions that do not always hold up well with reality.

This suggestion to lean into narrative practices as an inquisitive lens accommodates my personal research agenda. I have a long and evolving interest in storytelling, and especially particular kinds of national narratives. These stories help determine the ways we perceive ourselves and each other, and as such can act as building blocks in arbitrating who ‘counts’ or seems to matter within our national discourse. And though seemingly elementary--we interact with stories from birth--apprehending these narratives is a complex endeavor. The stories of who we are, or *perceive* ourselves to be, are seemingly embedded within our ways of being and enshrined as common sense, often to the point of self-evidence. This seeming *cultural embeddedness* is at the root of my research interests.

Thus, as a communication scholar I am not attempting to write a particular history of the West. My major objective is not to ‘set the record straight’ nor to somehow rhetorically overpower the entrenched Myth of the West. Instead, as a scholar of communication concerned with how cultures make meaning through remembrance, it is the complexity, lure, and cultural usefulness of Western mythology itself that is my major object of inquiry. In other words, this dissertation does not seek to overthrow the Myth of the West, but to interrogate *how* it persists and to consider the cultural and political implications of such persistence. That is not to say, however, that imparting often overlooked or under-examined historical accounts is an unwelcome outcome of my scholarship. Understanding the complex chronicle of events that underscore Western mythology is a necessary component of this research and as such Part One

⁵ P. Limerick, personal interview, May 15, 2018.

of this dissertation presents a relevant historiography of the San Diego / California region. Yet it is important that I be clear at the outset that this dissertation is not a history project and as such does not attend to the same obligations and objectives of that field. Additionally, plenty of important work is already taking place in that discipline, which is contributing to a long-established canon of historical scholarship of the West. My communication project instead takes as its starting point the cultural significance of storytelling. By focusing upon storytelling, narrative, myth, and yes--historical accounts, this dissertation recognizes these products as key mobilizations of remembrance that carry significant cultural and political weight.

Given my fascination with storytelling, I am particularly interested in a specific form of cultural remembrance: the origin story. Origin stories perform important cultural work as they “are a distinctive form of narrative. In their account of how something ‘began to be,’ such stories connect past and present, clarify the meanings of important events, reaffirm core norms and values, and assert particular understandings of social order and individual identity” (Engel, 1993, p. 785). As such, this dissertation positions *The Myth of the American West* as a culturally and politically significant and prolific American origin story. Focusing on representations of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century American West origin story, I analyze media, re-enactments, and (edu)tourism sites to chart a particular political construction of ‘Americanness’ in popular culture, paying special attention to how this construction negotiates cultural and social change.

Specifically, my dissertation focuses on one particular (re)telling of the American West: the ‘birth’ of California as historically and culturally located in San Diego, the site of Europe's first permanent settlement in California. This examination traces how a particular cultural remembrance of the West persists and remains culturally entrenched not only because of continuous reiteration, as prevalent scholarship generally discusses such persistence (Limerick,

1988; Brown, 2007 [1970]; Smith, 1950), but also on the important ways in which this origin story adapts and shifts over time. Charting this evolution through specific cultural, historical, and civic projects of cultural remembrance allows me to examine what falls in and out of this narrative in the face of sociocultural, economic, and political change. And it reveals how this origin story's recalibrations not only ensure its survival and keep the past relevant, but how--despite these repairs--the story itself continues to retain its overarching cohesiveness. In other words, the overall cultural work of the story, over time and across change, remains intact: reaffirming notions of American exceptionalism. As such, this examination interrogates one way in which we learn what it means to be American and how this particular cultural instruction persists. Thus, this dissertation deploys historical, archival, and textual analysis, practices of media archaeology, and visual ethnography methods, bridging insights and approaches from Media & Cultural Studies, Performance Studies, and the Learning Sciences to create new knowledge about the ways in which we make meaning, imagine a nation, and shape adjacent notions of identity, power, and belonging in the process.

1.2 Founding Concepts

Before providing a brief summary of the dissertation's organization and chapters, this introductory chapter will first address three critical components which inform my work: (1) the use of cultural memory as an inquisitive lens, (2) the cultural and political significance of Western remembrance in America, and (3) why this particular project focuses upon the California origin story specifically. Understanding these components will help to make clear the scope and context of my inquiry and the ways in which I critically arrive to this dissertation's broader discussions.

1.2-1 Cultural Memory as an Inquisitive Lens

An Overview of the Field's Early Origins

To develop a theoretical lens for thinking about the political implications of representations and productions of the past I turn to the field of cultural memory. Cultural memory studies investigate a range of cultural products⁶ and processes⁷ that tie past to present and future. In that sense, cultural memory is a harbinger of the stories we tell. These cultural narratives of the past are generally rooted in taken-for-granted practices that both (re)produce and reinforce these stories. Thus, we 'do' cultural memory in all kinds of manners, in the ways we create and consume popular culture to how we design, move through, and experience space. Through these practices cultural memory becomes a part of the fabric of what constitutes cultural 'facts,' influencing both individuals and groups. And, as such, it is often highly contested, negotiated, and adjudicated. Cultural memory does not simply encompass the various ways in which cultures remember. It also demonstrates that the ways in which we forget, distort, and neglect particular narratives are not without consequence.

Considering these various stakes, it is not surprising that contemporary memory scholarship exists in so many forms and configurations. These numerous fields of memory studies⁸ take up diverse objects of inquiry⁹ and methodologies¹⁰ in order to explore how cultural memory is sustained and shaped over time. In fact, given this breadth and flexibility of inquiry, memory scholarship at large is pervasive while at the same time difficult to tightly define

⁶ Sturken, 1997; See her discussion of memorials, public art, popular culture, literature, commodities, and activism as particular forms of cultural products.

⁷ Assmann & Czaplicka (1995) argue that cultural memory persists through repeated societal practice and initiation.

⁸ Including collective memory, genealogical discourse, materiality/embodiment studies, etc.

⁹ Including texts, rituals, monuments, media forms, neurological processes, the built environment, performance, etc.

¹⁰ Including literary analysis, psychoanalysis, oral history, etc.

(Confino, 1997; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Radstone, 2000). The field is in a continuous state of nomination with scholars working under the aegis of: collective memory, memory studies, social memory, collective remembrance, popular history making, myth, national memory, public memory, vernacular memory, counter memory, and cultural memory, just to name a few subject areas. Additionally, the field of contemporary memory scholarship is a relatively young discipline when compared to other branches of knowledge such as philosophy or history which draw upon steeped epistemological traditions. And unlike more established areas of study, most scholars who engage in memory studies are not actually formally trained in cultural memory scholarship as very few memory studies graduate programs exist. Instead, the majority of contemporary memory scholarship is conducted by a cadre of academics representing various disciplines and assorted areas of expertise. One element that binds these varying prisms of scholarship, however, are shared theoretical roots in bodies of foundational memory work that together help to inform contemporary notions of memory as culturally produced and sustained through practice.

Given both its recent development and its disciplinary promiscuity it was up to the field to attempt to build its own cohesive narrative and basis for legitimacy. And like any group seeking a sense of shared identity, coherence, and legibility the field tells itself an origin story to construct its lineage--a story which not surprisingly begins with the Greeks¹¹. Specifically, the field regards antiquity as a salient opportunity to begin with notions of *personal* memory. Both the Greeks and Romans highly valued personal memory, viewing it as a generative and

¹¹ This story ultimately traverses from antiquity to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and modernity (primarily as flourishing in Europe) before landing on contemporary memory studies. Such origins, like many ‘canonical’ epistemological traditions expound an essentially Global Western tale. There is, however, literature that also looks to (or calls for a looking to) the Global East and South for evidence of notable memory discourse (Legg, 2007; Huyssen, 2000). Yet, primarily, it is within an established Global Western tradition that scholars engaged in memory studies have mobilized particular touchstones to establish the field’s legitimacy.

predominantly productive vehicle for: instruction, for developing a sense of self, and most importantly for ensuring the continuance of social mores and values (Legg 2007; Gross, 2000; Casey, 1987; 2009; Radstone, 2000; Samuel, 2012; Bower, 1970). Thus, for individuals of antiquity, memory was an exercise in morality and as such, *forgetters* were considered “inconsistent, untrustworthy, and unethical” (Legg, 2007, p. 457).

After a focus upon antiquity, the field’s narrative generally leaps to the Middle Ages followed by a move to the Renaissance. According to the literature, the veneration of memory, and particularly *memorization*, as a preferred mode of tutelage, instrument for social preservation, and path to self-identity continues into both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Legg 2007; Gross, 2000). For example, in the Middle Ages it was the act of memory (not writing which was still largely viewed as supplemental to memory even until the 1100s) in which varying manners of authority lay (Fentress & Wickham, 1992; Smith, 1966). And during the Renaissance, the “art of memory” was celebrated as a highly regarded practice of place-based memorization with roots in antiquity (aligning with other cultural revivals of the period which venerated a rebirth of classical forms) (Samuel, 2012; Yates, 1992, p. x; Radstone, 2000).

Though not explicitly foregrounded within this scholarship, it is important to note the relationship between forms of knowledge production and notions of memory. During antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance knowledge was still largely considered as something that was ‘revealed’ through omniscient entities such as gods, Christian theology, and/or rediscovered relics of the past (Boje, 1994; Siedentop, 2014). Thus, obtaining and sustaining knowledge in these periods meant perfecting practices that faithfully and precisely conveyed revelatory awareness. As such, it is not surprising that during these periods memory, and specifically the critical practice of *memorization*, became a major vehicle which allowed for the circulation of

ideas while still maintaining the epistemological authority of revelation which organized daily life. Thus, in these cases, memorization worked to impose a culturally relevant static structure and organization to a world that was nevertheless constantly moving. This phenomenon helps to illustrate how the ways cultures make meaning also shapes how they view *and* produce forms of memory.

After detailing the role of memory in the Renaissance, the field generally marks modernity as the next crucial epoch in the lineage of memory studies. However, in this case it is to attend to a decided waning in the reverence for memory. Specifically, the literature notes that towards the end of the Renaissance scholarship began engaging in a pointed de-centering of memory. This period marked a transition from oral to written authority within culture, the Enlightenment's focus on futurity and progress, modernity's technological advances, political upheavals and revolutions that swept across much of Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *and* a phenomenological primacy towards the notion of *forgetting* which usurped memory's influence¹² (Legg, 2007; Huyssen, 1996; Casey, 2009). For example, the scientific and social changes that developed due to, and in tandem with, expansions of capitalism, media technology, and ideologies such as nationalism, were creating social, political, and cultural conditions which profoundly scrutinized the process of memory (Legg, 2007). This scrutiny interrogated the human mind's actual ability to accurately remember and authentically represent the past, engendering a turn to the notion that the process of memory was inherently flawed from the onset¹³. These events contributed to what has come to be termed by scholars as

¹² However, some scholars such as Susannah Radstone (2000) argue that an account of modernity's rejection of memory to favor a "forward-looking forgetting" is more complex than this narrative may convey, instead arguing that memory actually served as a site for the working out of modernity's "ambivalences and equivocations" and was not, as many contend, the binary 'other' to modernity's "legitimizing 'history' aligned with 'reason,' 'truth' and 'objectivity'" (3-4).

¹³ This particular positioning of memory as flawed and unreliable still influences extant literature. See Sturken's (2000) discussion of the "instability of memory" as not "fragile and threatened" as it is often presented, but instead

a “memory crisis” in which once seemingly ‘entrenched’ generational memories were cleaved to the point that the act of recollecting upon the past was considered an “obsessive and even pathological” preoccupation of artists, philosophers, and psychologists (Terdiman, 1993, p. 3; Legg 2007, p. 457; Lowenthal, 1993). The past at this point was viewed as “nostalgic fantasy” (Lowenthal, 1993, p. 172); and infatuation with memory was received warily and symptomatically, indicative of an incompetence to effectively navigate, reckon with, and thrive within an ever-developing present (Terdiman, 1993). Furthermore, intellectual pioneers of the time turned from a reverence of the past towards a celebration of progression and prosthelytized the virtues of particular kinds of forgetting and transformations. For example, Marx (2010 [1859]) formalized understandings of history which instead of revering the past, interrogated who looks forward and back and why (i.e. to sustain material conditions shaped by social relations and modes of production) (Legg, 2007). And Nietzsche (2006 [1873]) suggested an “obliteration of the past through forgetting” and a commitment to forward-looking as a salve against the “uses and abuses of history”¹⁴ (Legg, 2007, p. 461; Huyssen, 2012, p. 6).

Once again, it is important to pause and highlight the ways in which developing understandings of knowledge production also shaped these shifts in memorial practices and views of memory within modernity. For example, with the onset of modernity the practice of memorization was no longer considered the fulcrum for pedagogical instruction as knowledge ceased to be understood by scholars as that which is ‘revealed’ or ‘recollected’ and was instead perceived as that which is ‘determined’ by reasoned empiricism. Kant (1995 [1784]) declared

as “fluid and changing” (2); and Pollock’s (2005) edited collection which brings together scholars who employ oral history performance, and similar methodologies, to “comprise something of a polemic” despite (or in spite of) the pervasive dismissal of the ‘anecdotal’ by particular discourses (p. 4).

¹⁴ Nietzsche, however, did not reject history, or all notions of historicity, in an unmitigated, wholesale fashion. It was the “stifling historicism of his times” and its subsequent archival, monumental, objectifying, and legitimizing nature he renounced, instead calling for a more vital form of history better able to invigorate modern culture and its utopian possibilities (Nietzsche, 1873).

“Have courage to use your own understanding!” as the “motto of the Enlightenment” and positioned this mandate as his prescription for humanity’s “emergence from [its] self-imposed immaturity” (p. 1). This directive recalibrated previously entrenched notions of revelatory authority found in omniscient knowledge production mechanisms such as religion. For instance, a major tenet of Christian (and Hebrew) theology can be found in the scripture, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5, Barker & Burdick, 1993). Yet scholarship within the epochs of (pre)Enlightenment and modernity reshaped this particular notion of knowledge production. Locke (1988 [1689]), in his First Treatise, provided an exegesis of the scriptures, re-reading the Bible in order to lay out what he considered its political argument (i.e. translating our equality before God to parity before the law). Through re-interpretation, he reconfigured the meaning and place of biblical authority, rather than directly challenging it. Nearly one hundred years later, Kant (1995 [1784]) would take critical aim at particular types of epistemological deference that neglected the use of reason, calling for a mature, public, and ‘free’ use of rational discourse which would be tempered, however, with private obedience to authority rooted in universal reason (Foucault, 1984). Thus, as understandings of modes of producing and organizing meaning and knowledge shifted, so did attitudes towards memory and representations of the past. Practices of precise memorization were no longer considered primary vehicles for the circulation of ideas which faithfully conveyed received knowledge. Instead, the notion of memory as the reliable conduit for revelatory knowledge was rendered not only morally questionable but as epistemologically unsound. Furthermore, the embracing of knowledge as *determined* and not revealed, not only dethroned the past as the primary site of knowledge production; it also acknowledged that knowledge systems, including memory, are in fact determined and produced. This shift was a

critical epistemological development that would scaffold the intellectual foundation which would be necessary to produce and contextualize future understandings of memory as a *social* and *cultural* production.

The 'Social Turn' and the Theoretical Development of 'Collective Memory'

Understanding memory as a particular kind of production led to the next major epoch in the memory studies narrative: the 'social turn' and the theoretical development of 'collective memory.' Until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries memory was generally regarded by many scholars as an individual and interior process, much as it had been in earlier historical periods (Olick & Robbins, 1998; Assmann, 2011). And though a considerable literature contributed to the development of the study of memory in this internal capacity, most contemporary theorists of personal memory trace their theoretical lineage to the work of Sigmund Freud and his seminal claims that all memories are stored in the unconscious, though they are not all readily accessible (Sturken, 2000; Radstone, 2000). Whereas the scholars of antiquity to the Renaissance viewed the human mind as an archive of sorts that, if properly trained, could be tapped to recall vast amounts of accurately memorized knowledge, Freud was interested not in what memories the mind could reveal, but in those memories it obscured and suppressed. For Freud, this investigation meant focusing not on "memory's liberatory potential" but instead on the ways in which the unconscious worked to "escape memory's tenacious hold" (Radstone, 2000, p. 5). Thus, he claimed that though the individual's unconscious acts as a repository for all past experiences, the power of the mind lay in its ability to *forget* rather than remember (Legg, 2007; Sturken, 2000). Through this active process of repression, Freud contended that the unconscious mind created what he called "screen memories" that substituted and blocked access to more disturbing memories, effectively allowing for the 'forgetting' of the

trauma of the past (Legg, 2007; Sturken, 2000, p. 8). And according to Freud, these unconscious repressions, and the process of repressing them, were intimately related to a plethora of illnesses and neuroses (Freud, 1929; 1934). Therefore, in his articulation of the mind's ability to produce 'screen memories' as an inoculation from the past, Freud also entered into the radical new discourse of knowledge determination as opposed to revelation or recollection. According to him and his, at the time, heretic understandings of subjectivity, the mind does not simply store divinely revealed and recollected knowledge, but it actively produces and determines new and alternate meanings and representations as vehicles of self-preservation.

However, Freud was not a social theorist and as such was primarily concerned with the individual. He did acknowledge two levels of memory, the individual and the species. And in addition to his largely individual-centered work he did at times take on ontological projects that attempted to pinpoint "the beginnings of religion, ethics, society and art" to mark the moment when 'civilized' life began, which does gesture to a social understanding of memory¹⁵ (Freud, 2003 [1913], p. 202). Yet, Freud never actually articulated a social theory of memory. And when he and other psychoanalysts did attempt to develop theories that examined memory collectively, these early approaches still granted primacy to the human psyche and body as opposed to social relations to apprehend *collective memory*¹⁶ (Assmann, 2011). These early theories of "racial memory" positioned collective memory as "inheritable [and] biological" (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995, p. 125), and were foundational to the development of individualist approaches to memory that often neglect integral social processes (Olick,

¹⁵ See Freud's (2012) *Totem and Taboo* written in 1912-1913 where he locates the beginnings of religion, ethics, society and art as converging with his notion of the Oedipus complex; and Schey's (2013) contemporary contextualizing of this work in terms of its influence and controversy as a 'primal' theory of collective memory.

¹⁶ '*Collective memory*' is one of the first terms used in early memory literature to represent the ways in which groups 'remember' (Confino, 1997; Olick, 1999; Kansteiner, 2002).

1999). Thus, it is around Freud that contemporary scholarship of personal memory which positions memory largely as a psychological, neurological, and cognitive process is organized. What concerns me, however, is the literature that grew out of developments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which began to lay the foundation for collectivist theories of memory, examining the social and cultural processes that produce and codify memory both personally and publicly. As it is around this literature that contemporary cultural memory scholarship is organized.

Though many scholars¹⁷ helped to lay the groundwork for cultural memory scholarship, there are two theorists in particular that it makes sense to consider closely: art and cultural historian Aby Warburg and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. Both are quite prevalent in the secondary literature on memory studies. The work of German art and cultural historian, Aby Warburg, played an important role in this social, and especially cultural, turn in memory scholarship. Writing at the turn of the century, Warburg examined the transference of ancient motifs into subsequent societies, especially focusing on Renaissance Florence to argue that all human products (and most notably artistic endeavors) were articulations of earlier human memory conveyed through ancient symbols (Confino, 1997). Warburg never systematized this social memory approach, but his linking of artistic expression to the social world, and his notion of cultural objects as carriers of memory, helped to lay the foundation of the concept that would later be coined ‘collective memory’ (Confino, 1997; Ginzburg, 1983; Assmann, 2008).

¹⁷ Many early twentieth century scholars in various fields also contributed to evolving understandings of memory, even if they never explicitly used the terms ‘social’ or ‘collective’ memory such as: German philosopher Walter Benjamin (2008 [1936]) who traced the history of the past through examining commodity culture; historians and literary scholars like Ernst Robert Curtius of Germany whose seminal 1948 work argued that historicity was central to understanding language and literature. Additionally there has been work from those in the psychoanalysis fields such as Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung (2001 [1933]) who, like Freud, looked to the human psyche for notions of collective memory, from British psychologist Frederic Bartlett (1932) who was the first modern psychologist to examine social dimensions of memory, and Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1929) who positioned memory as culturally shaped narratives (Olick & Robbins, 1998; Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995).

Though Warburg was definitely significant to memory scholarship's outward turn, it is French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs that was perhaps the most influential and most oft named architect of the scaffolding that subsequently aided the development of contemporary understandings of collective memory. A student of Durkheim (the French sociologist, psychologist, and philosopher who studied commemorative rituals), Halbwachs (writing in the early twentieth century) explicitly connected memory to the social group and was the first to use the term 'collective memory' systematically (Olick, 1999; Confino, 1997). He defined collective memory as socially constructed notions of the past informed by social frameworks, supported by predominant thoughts, and specific to spatial and temporal constraints (Halbwachs, 1925/1992). According to Halbwachs, collective memory is distinct from 'autobiographical' or personal memory, from 'historical memory' which is engaged only through historical documents, and from 'history' which encompasses 'dead' memories which no longer influence everyday lived experience (Olick, 1999, p. 335; Olick & Robbins, 1998, p. 110). Thus, for Halbwachs collective memory is an enterprise of the present. Or specifically, collective memory is not a phenomenon in which the past imposes itself on the present; instead for Halbwachs, collective memory is the process by which present conditions influence what is remembered and how (Novick, 2000).

Halbwachs's approach also differed greatly from Warburg in a number of important ways: it was decidedly more social than cultural¹⁸, and it foregrounded notions of memory as temporally and spatially bound. Specifically, he argued that all memory, even what seems to be

¹⁸ See Assmann's (2008) accounting of Halbwachs's separation of collective memory from "traditions, transmissions, and transferences" as a decidedly careful exclusion of the cultural sphere (p. 17). Due to this segregation, Assmann argues against simply rebranding Halbwachs's concept of 'collective memory' as 'cultural memory' and instead positions Halbwachs's notion as 'communicative memory' which focuses on the social self (i.e. a person as carrier of social roles) and everyday interaction and communication as limited by "Social Time," as opposed to 'cultural memory' which examines cultural identities across "Historical, Mythical, and Cultural Time" (p. 17).

individual, personal, and autobiographical in nature, is produced (or *made sense*) through ‘social frameworks,’¹⁹ and further that there are no remembered, coherent, or persistent individual memories outside of what they become through the social context (Confino, 1997; Assmann, 2008; Olick, 1999). In Halbwachs’s view, there is no need to look to the individual mind and human psyche for what only becomes meaningful with social contextualization (ibid). Although he grants that it is individuals who remember, Halbwachs contends this remembering is done in groups: it is groups that organize and rank memories, parse out what is to be remembered and forgotten, and at times even *produce* memories that an individual never directly experienced but nevertheless accepts on their own as part of their identity (Olick, 1999). Thus, unlike Freud, for Halbwachs it is the social group, not the unconscious mind, that filters memory, and it is through social contextualization and practice that collective memory persists (Olick, 1999; Halbwachs, 1925/1992).

Halbwachs is integral in shaping current discourse within memory studies by explicitly tethering memory practices to the social through the articulation of his social theory of ‘collective memory.’ And while he is generally considered “the starting point for every scholar of memory,” contemporary scholarship has departed from him in many important ways (Confino, 1997, p. 1392). For example, both he and his mentor Durkheim are generally critiqued for neglecting notions of difference and contestation within collective memory production (Olick, 1999)--issues which are central to extant discourses of memory, identity, and power. Additionally, over time various forces of modernity and changes initiated by modern mass culture have made Halbwachs’s concept of collective memory inadequate. For instance, his shunning of the cultural does not allow for robust investigations of the ways in which

¹⁹ And particularly the social frameworks as contextualized by “family, religion, and social class” (Landsberg, 2004).

memory is interpellated into culture through the telling of stories. Furthermore, his notion of collective memory contended that memory was tightly tethered to a specific group, space, and time. This distinction is complicated by the proliferation of mass media as new technologies (such as cinema and television) have made it possible for memory to be further collectivized and as such to traverse geographic, national, and even temporal boundaries (Landsberg, 2004). Additionally, these critiques have also informed my own utilization of the moniker ‘cultural memory’ within my work (as my research largely interrogates cultural products of memory and in my view the term ‘collective’ connotes a sense of consensus that belies a politics of memory).

Contemporary Memory Studies

After the ‘memory crisis’ of the nineteenth century, and the social turn at the beginning of the twentieth century, contemporary memory scholarship experienced a resurgence beginning in the last decades²⁰ of the twentieth century. This rejuvenation resulted in a barrage of memory work, or what has been termed a ‘memory boom,’ across multiple disciplines (Radstone, 2000). For example, Alon Confino, a historian, claims that whereas ‘culture’ had once served as “a compass of sorts for historians steering the field’s analyses,” ‘memory’ (and not culture) had become the preeminent term at the time of his writing (1997, p. 1386). This revival of memory scholarship represents a departure from modernity’s march towards progress and its interest in the “becomingness” of the present for a focus upon the past and remembrance (Radstone, 2000²¹, p. 2; Huyssen, 2012). This distinct move propelled many memory scholars to question how this

²⁰ Huyssen (2012) identifies the early 1970s as the beginning of this renewal in memory, however some scholars point to the 1980s as the start and others such as Radstone (2000) state that pinning down an exact time frame is challenging.

²¹ See Footnote 12 which provides Radstone’s further contextualizing of this epochal narrative regarding the ebbs and flows of memory scholarship.

shift occurred. And to query what social, cultural, and historical conditions fostered a renewed interest in the past and especially in memory production. The literature provides a plethora of reasons for this turn to remembrance which I would categorize as: (1) specific *events*, (2) shifts in *mediations*, and (3) evolving postmodern understandings of the varying conceptions that organize social life and lived experience (principles such as, but not limited to, notions of culture, power, time, and space) or what I will more succinctly refer to as *organizing principles*.

In terms of specific events, it is difficult to ignore the impact of two world wars and the horror of the Holocaust on notions of cultural remembrance. These cataclysmic episodes were pivotal lenses through which to investigate evolving understandings of (in)humanity, power, trauma, scientific capacity, remembrance, geopolitical realignments, and other critical cultural and social phenomena. And as such these events would become fodder for a proliferation of future memory scholarship concerned with understanding their place and ramification. However, it would be several decades before a booming memory discourse would crystallize around these events. In fact, for decades immediately after the second world war's conclusion there was a marked repression of war remembrance in the U.S. (Huyssen, 1996; Novick, 2000). Yet by the 1980s, a cadre of "memory professionals" and institutions were engineering various popular remembrances of WWII, the Holocaust, and other historical and cultural moments (Novick, 2000, p. 6; Finklestein, 2000, p. 120).

What conditions allowed for such a turn? Several culminating, decades-long factors beyond the world wars and the Holocaust contributed to this revived memory activity. In tandem with the world wars and the Holocaust were the events of mass immigration and migration of bodies that began at the turn of the twentieth century. During the height of modernity and industrialization, unprecedented numbers of European immigrants flooded the

United States at historic rates (Landsberg, 2004). Simultaneously black Americans began departing the South in significant numbers for Northern and Western destinations in what would later be called The Great Migration (Landsberg, 2004; Wilkerson, 2011). Together these mass movements began the work of shifting American demographics and subsequent notions of identity and belonging as neither European immigrants nor black American migrants could depend upon traditional forms of “cultural, ethnic, and racial memory” transmitted through family and community (Landsberg, 2004, p. 2). By the late post-war era of the 1960s and 70s, these migrations had led to a distinct rise in multiculturalism. And this rising sense of multiculturalism, in tandem with pertinent social upheavals²², ushered in a renewed interest in memory as traditional forms of historiography were increasingly identified as dominant narratives that marginalized the experiences of otherwise repressed groups (Kammen, 1995; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Radstone, 2000).

In addition to the world-shifting events of the great wars and the Holocaust, and the sociocultural events of mass migration, the rise of multiculturalism, and the social unrest of the 1960s and 70s²³, the memory boom was also precipitated by particular shifts in mediation. New forms of media technologies and commodified mass culture, including cinema and television, allowed for a historic dissemination and circulation of narratives, images, and representations of the past (Landsberg, 2004). Additionally, given corporal tensions regarding changing notions of identity and concerns regarding undertold narratives, new intellectual forms of mediation also arose in concert with forms of mass media. The evolution of critical cultural theories spawned epistemological revolutions that interrogated hegemonic intellectual traditions and introduced

²² Such as the civil rights, feminist, and labor rights movements (Radstone, 2000).

²³ And other notable events not described in this chapter such as the fall of communism (Kammen, 1995) and the decline of presidential reputation (Schwartz, 1998).

notions such as ‘counter-histories,’ Foucault’s ‘archaeological’ approach, and a politics of victimization and regret (Radstone, 2000; Schwartz, 1998; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Kammen, 1995).

And finally, these pivotal events and shifting forms of mediation were also accompanied by evolving understandings of organizing principles that contributed to the varying and complex conditions that allowed for the contemporary memory boom. For example, changing notions of time were reflected in attitudes and scholarship regarding memory. Thus, what developed in response to modernity’s preoccupation with futurity were efforts to defend memory, which was perceived as being particularly threatened by the instantaneous and technological nature of postmodernity (Radstone, 2000). Specifically, as new technologies collapsed the distance that had once existed between an event and its representation, growing interest in memory scholarship reflected an attempt to slow the pace of information processing and recover modes of contemplation less likely to dissolve notions of time (Sobchack, 1996; Radstone, 2000). Additionally, the postmodern turn in critical thought was punctuated by expanding academic stances that questioned modernism’s confidence in “the ‘universality’ of ‘reason’” and the existence of “‘impartial’ theories [of] science and politics...morals and values” (Adam & Allan, 1995). This epistemological repositioning led to rejections of various ‘clean’ accounts of the varying conceptions that organize social life and lived experience such as totalizing notions of culture, political economy, materiality, ideology, and power. Postmodernists also critiqued linear concepts of history and interrogated notions of truth, bringing to bear crucial relationships between history, memory, and power (Schwartz, 1998). And the apprehending of memory was no different. It too was scrutinized as a diffuse and socially produced practice, dispersed across multiple aspects of everyday life, at times to the point of ‘invisibility.’ As a resurging interest in

memory studies grew, understandings of memory were increasingly presented in nuanced manners. Memories were recognized not only as vehicles of ‘counter-histories’ that could challenge the hegemony of history or ‘authorized’ tellings, but they were also understood as “complex productions shaped by diverse narratives and genres and replete with absences, silences, condensations and displacements that were related, in complex ways, to the dialogic moment of their telling” (Radstone, 2000, p. 11).

Given this perception of memory’s broad significance, contemporary memory scholarship interrogates how we construct and represent the past through an incredibly wide array of “vehicles of memory” (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 191) including books (Crewe, 1999;), TV and films (Sturken, 1997; Kuhn, 2002; Radstone, 2000 [Screening Trauma]), monuments (Huysen, 1996; Sturken, 1997), museums (Bal, 1999; Stier, 2009), food (Sutton, 2001; Holtzman, 2006), the built environment and space (Legg, 2007; Till, 2003; Said, 2000), and various other ‘sites’ of memory production. There are seemingly no limits to what can be scrutinized as an object of inquiry, and as such, contemporary memory studies has grown beyond the purview of psychology (with its focus on the individual) and has been taken up in earnest by diverse academic fields such as history, literary studies, communication, anthropology, sociology, geography, among numerous others.

Cultural Memory as a Specific Lens for My Project

The breadth and scope of the field of cultural memory informs my project in various ways. In the broadest terms the aforementioned literature just discussed helps me to view particular forms of memory as culturally produced and as shaped by extant modes of knowledge production and social, historical, economic, and political conditions. Additionally, two other conceptual frameworks within cultural memory scholarship which were not explicitly detailed in

the previous section also take up residence in my work in particular manners: (1) the relationship between memory and history, and (2) cultural memory's influence upon notions of identity.

Accounting for the nature of the relationship between 'memory' and 'history' is one of the most compelling theoretical challenges within memory scholarship (Kansteiner, 2002). And the literature presents no consensus regarding memory's relation to history. Instead this relationship is presented in various fashions including oppositional, comparable, and entwined. For instance, some recent scholars position the relationship between history and memory in oppositional (and even adversarial) terms, especially as determined by power and political forces. In examining the formation of collective Jewish historical memory, for example, Yerushalmi (2011) traces the ways in which 'history' by the nineteenth century had become the "validating arbiter of Jewish ideologies...[as] Jewish memory and Jewish history begin to oppose each other" (p. xix, from Bloom's foreword). Likewise, Nora (1989) in his "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*" investigates the erasure of "real environments of memory," calling attention to the threats to particular forms of embodied memory as a result of historical hegemony (p. 7). In fact, for Nora, history is a discourse that is "perpetually suspicious of memory [as] its true mission is to suppress and destroy it" (pp. 8-9). For other scholars, memory and history are comparable, yet distinct, entities. Niethammer (1995), for example, views memory and history as separated by a "floating gap" that delineates safeguarded institutional knowledge which reaches back hundreds and thousands of years from more recent events (p. 25). Similarly, Landsberg (2004) characterizes a separation between the two as defined by history's more distant discourse and memory's subjective and affective activity. And for Kansteiner (2002), memory and history are differing entities made of "similar material" (p. 180). Finally, some scholars identify an enmeshed and intertwined relationship between the two.

Olick and Robbins (1998) gesture to an almost symbiotic relationship in which “memory often employs history in its service” and note that growing numbers of historians are beginning to recognize memory as a plausible source of scholarly “evidence” (p. 110). And Sturken (1997) claims that memory and history are distinct yet “entangled” rather than oppositional, while arguing that it can often prove useless to attempt to maintain a border between the two given their almost constant interaction (p. 5).

However, in my view, both are produced representations of the past that are perceived as ‘history’ or ‘memory’ at particular junctions in time and space, diffused by extant apparatuses, and at any point may seem coterminous, intertwined, disparate, or at odds with one another given their situated conditions. As such it is often in their *perception* (not in their composition as produced representations of the past) that particular politics of memory and epistemological hierarchies come into play. Viewing them from this position helps to insulate me from the theoretical temptation found in some cultural memory scholarship to vilify history as *innately* formal, authorized, academic, and closed while valorizing memory as *naturally* authentic, invalidated, pedestrian, and open. This framework also helps to contextualize my dissertation’s discussion of the overlap between memory, narrative, and power.

Secondly, cultural memory scholarship that attends to notions of identity also particularly informs my work. These studies affirm that notions of identity are tethered to cultural memory production. In fact, this literature asserts that cultural memory practices not only (re)produce imagined identities, but that it is through such practices that identity becomes “concretized” and seemingly embedded (MacCabe, 1981; Sturken, 1997; Assmann, 1995, p. 129; Anderson, 2006). In other words, it is through the “monumental and performative dimensions of memory [that the]...significance of the past” helps to construct identity narratives which position cultural

memory products as essential “sites of cultural heritage” (Moore & Whelan, 2016, p. x). Thus, these core products and practices, and their role in the acquisition of ethnic and national identity are often at the core of particular forms of cultural “survival” (Ben-Amos & Weissberg, 1999; Agnew, 2005; Rodríguez & Fortier, 2007, p. 1). As such, this discourse is especially useful for my project’s focus on the production of national identity and notions of ‘Americanness’ and the political implications of cultural remembrances of California’s origins.

Although some scholars are wary of particular deployments of political discourse within memory studies (Confino, 1997)--for example, Sturken (1997) argues that cultural memory is not axiomatically the site of cultural resistance, stating “there is nothing politically prescribed about cultural memory” (p. 7)--this dissertation nevertheless, argues that cultural memory can, and should, allow for an exploration of both the political and the cultural. While I contend that cultural memory may not be organically political, politics are pervasive within it. Additionally, memories may be culturally produced, but they carry political implications which exist both ideologically and materially. Thus, my work argues that whether or not cultural memory is actually the sanctioned space for politics, politics have firmly settled and taken up residence within it and as such this process merits critical examination. Such an approach does not reduce memory to the political, sacrifice the cultural, or naturalize the presence of politics within memory. Instead it recognizes, and in some ways foregrounds, the entangled relationship between memory and politics that lies at the core of the memorial practices that shape our national imagination.

1.2-2 The Cultural and Political Significance of Western Remembrance in America

While the previous section detailed the field of cultural memory and how its discourse shapes my work, this section turns to my dissertation’s second founding concept: the cultural and

political significance of Western remembrance in America. Representations of the nineteenth century American West, including media, re-enactments, and edutourism sites have long informed political constructions of ‘Americanness’ in popular culture. The American Western frontier, once hailed “the most American part of America,” often exemplifies the United States’ perceived distinctness from the rest of the world, and particularly Europe, in terms of individualism, ingenuity, resilience, economic equality, opportunity, and strength (Slatta, 2010; Katz, 1971, p. xii; Turner, 1903). As such, frontier mythology, including the iconic cowboy archetype, quintessential notions of ‘wide open space,’ and the ruggedness of ‘frontier justice,’ plays a pivotal role in embedding particular notions of race, place, gender, and ‘Americanness’ into our national consciousness. However, I am interested not only in what comprises this rendering of ‘Americanness,’ but also in what is often subdued within predominant representations of the nineteenth century American West: histories of genocide, racism, and patriarchy--abridging that is often central to the establishment of the very conditions that define contemporary democratic life.

Despite its recognizable tropes, its cultural saturation, and seeming narrative coherence, the Myth of the West is not necessarily static. Thus, some scholars eschew mythic terminology when examining American West cultural products like Hollywood Westerns, claiming “it only confuses things to talk of ‘the myth of the West’ in film” as so many competing myths vie for dominance in visual products (Simmon, 2003, p. 23). Additionally, relevant literature gestures to varying versions of the Western Myth within popular tales including: The Ranch Story, The Empire Story, The Revenge Story, The Outlaw Story, The Good-Badman Story, The Marshal Story, and even the Postmodern or ‘Untraditional’ Western Story among others (Lenihan, 1980, p. 12; Slotkin, 1998, p. 276; D’haen, 1990, p. 169). These narrative patterns, distinctions, and

divergences, or “metanarratives” (Hassan, 1983), indeed confirm that no One ‘True’ Western Myth exists.

This dissertation nevertheless purposefully takes up both the language and the concept of the Myth of the West due to two primary logics. First, mobilizing mythic language helps to readily characterize a set of narrative patterns in an easily distinguishable manner through a kind of shorthand, which in many ways illustrates the representational power of formula--echoing a core concept of this dissertation’s analysis. In other words, choosing to use the overarching terms of ‘myth’ and ‘origin story’ to refer to a larger set of conventions allows for the immediate and accessible recall of relevant concepts including: traditional stories, symbolic early histories, explanations of natural and social phenomenon, folklore and legends, hero-tales, and widely held but often false beliefs. Second, while this dissertation acknowledges the existence of various incarnations of the Myth of the West, it is very much concerned with the ways in which these differing interpretations offer support for a cohesive national project. For this reason, if a narrative of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century American West still performs much of the broader cultural work of the Western Myth, most notably supporting notions of ‘Americanness’ and American exceptionalism, despite potential differences in regional affiliation, tone, cast of characters, and/or major themes, then this dissertation still categorizes that adaptation as part of the broader mythic project. This move gestures to social science scholarship concerned with how mechanics of power operate and the distinction between the at-times conflated concepts of *tactics* (i.e. specific means to gain an objective) and *strategy* (i.e. a comprehensive campaign plan which informs tactical decisions) (Law, 1992; Paret et al., 1986; Goh, 1998; Winne et al., 2002). Thus, this dissertation project positions various renditions of frontier narratives which

perform a specific set of cultural work as varying tactical executions of an overall narrative strategy.

Varying tactics aside, it is important to also acknowledge the prevalence and cultural embeddedness of a particular dominant version of the Myth of the West. In her groundbreaking work, *The Legacy of Conquest* (1988), Patricia Limerick summarizes the dominant or “White American” myth as such (p. 321):

Europe was crowded; North America was not. Land in Europe was claimed, owned, and utilized; land in North America was available for the taking. In a migration as elemental as a law of physics, Europeans moved from crowded space, to open space, where free land restored opportunity and offered a route to independence. Generation by generation, hardy pioneers, bringing civilization to displace savagery, took on a zone of wilderness, struggled until nature was mastered, and then moved on to the next zone. This process repeated itself sequentially from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and the result was a new nation and a new national character: the European transmuted into the American. Thrown on their own resources, pioneers recreated the social contract from scratch, forming simple democratic communities whose political health vitalized all of America. Indians, symbolic residents of the wilderness, resisted--in a struggle sometimes noble, but always futile. At the completion of the conquest, that chapter of history was closed. The frontier ended, but the hardiness and independence of the pioneer survived in America's character (p. 321, italics not added).

This narrative was born out of both the mundane and the epic (such as the idiom, “Go west young man, and grow up with the country,” which was popularized by newspaper editor Horace Greeley in ~1865; and artwork such as John Gast’s *American Progress* (1872) which was widely circulated in Western travel guides and depicts the ‘divine’ nature of westward expansion as pioneers travel beneath the ethereal personification of destiny (see Figure 1.1). And by the end of the nineteenth century, cultural memory products, in a variety of forms including Wild West shows, dime novels, serials, heritage tourism sites, and reenactments effectively concretized this narrative to the point that the Myth of the West would become a central element in the overall notion of ‘Americanness.’



Figure 1.1: *American Progress*, John Gast, 1872. Digital reproduction from chromolithograph by George A. Crofutt. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, reproduction number LC-DIG-ppmsca-09855. Copyright by George A. Crofutt. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Popular and entrenched as it has become, the Myth of the West mobilizes iconic components that do not always align with reality. As a bold group of Western historians attested during the mid to late twentieth century, (a group that would come to be known as the New Western Historians and their area of expertise as New Western History), America's Western march captured in early history books and on the big screen failed to capture the complexity of American conquest on multiple levels, a few of which this section will detail (Limerick, 1988; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994). First, the land that pioneers 'settled' was neither 'empty' nor 'available for the taking.' It was occupied by Indigenous peoples who had lived upon the land for thousands of years (including at the onset of conquest in which they even inhabited particular

lands under American ‘laws’ and ‘treaties’ which were repeatedly abrogated and/or ignored) (Brown, 2007; Carrico, 2008; Jackson, 1965; Anderson, 2006; Blackburn, 1975; Gamble & Zepeda, 2002). Second, American conquest was not an individual endeavor achieved solely by ‘rugged individualism’ and insular tight-knit communities. This ideal downplays the state sanctioned nature of westward expansion, diminishes the role of critical infrastructure within the ‘settling’ of the West, and minimizes the prevalence of both persistent pioneer failure and various forms of state intervention (Fraser, 2017; Orsi, 2005; Anderson & Hill, 2004). Third, pioneers were not only white males. Instead, a diverse group of people inhabited various social positions within the West including a wide array of women of various races from homesteading wives to single women, prostitutes, schoolmarms, laundresses, Indigenous daughters, Californianas, shotgun toting postal carriers, and black mail order brides traveling by wagon and train to meet the black men who had commissioned their trek via match-making mavens (Armitage & Jameson, 1987; Katz, 1995; Castañeda, 1990). And the men of the West were just as diverse. In fact, one in four cowboys were black (Nodjimbadem, 2017; See Figure 1.2) and besides these black men in the West were (among others) Indigenous, Chinese, Mexican, Russian, Italian, English, Irish, German, Peruvian, Argentinean, Polish, Jewish, Welsh, French, and Spanish men who made their way in the West as trappers, miners, homesteaders, lawmen, boomers, ranchers, blacksmiths, speculators, railroad men, laborers, scoundrels, and thieves (Slatta, 2010; Katz, 1971; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994; Brown, 1958/1981; Slotkin, 1973/2000; Limerick, 1988; Almaguer, 2008; Gomez, 2018; Pitt, 1998). Fourth, Indians were not obliterated by conquest. Though their numbers greatly diminished, their loss of land was significant, and their ways of life certainly ruptured in many ways, they continue to live, thrive, and contribute to the West as contemporary present day beings, and not relics of the past or at

worst--only in memory (Peters & Andersen, 2013; Graham & Penny, 2014; Deloria, 1969 [1988]; Tuck & Yang, 2012). And fifth, the American chapter of conquest did not officially ‘close’ and the frontier did not ‘end.’ This belief belies the realities of the ongoing project of settler colonialism as well as positions the frontier as a distinct historical phase (and not a concept as this chapter will later argue) (Turner, 1893/2017; Tuck & Yang, 2012, Limerick, 1988; Slotkin, 1998). Thus, these are the realities that grounded Limerick’s and other contemporary Western historians’ “plucky” attempts to place at the forefront an array of diverse historical narratives so often eclipsed by the sheer magnitude and persistence of the Myth of the West.



Figure 1.2: Author’s great-great grandfather (farthest left), Robert Fuller, stands before his barbershop in or around Waco, Texas in the 1870s. Cowboys within the doorway of the neighboring saloon also stand for the photo. From the author’s family collection.

However, despite these best efforts, the Western Myth has continued to persist because mythic stories perform vital cultural work. They construct shared identity, telling us what we are, who we are, and who we are *not*. They shape shared ideology, informing us of what is important to us and what values we hold dear. And they foster shared practices as myths are culturally embedded (in conscious and unconscious manners) into the fabric of our everyday lives. As Roland Barthes (1957 [2015]) explains, meanings, which are specific to certain groups, are made to *seem* universal, and thus given for a whole society, by myth--or a hidden set of rules and conventions which allow the connotative meaning to appear denotative, literal, and natural.

Furthermore, in 1949, American mythologist and literature professor Joseph Campbell articulated a particular mythic pattern seen across cultures and epochs within embedded mythology, which he referred to as the “monomyth” (1957, p. 1). In explaining this common structure, Campbell identified the “hero-journey” as its ultimate narrative archetype (ibid, p. 57; See Figure 1.3). This narrative framework follows a hero on a particular quest that features familiar story beats including among other tropes an initial call to adventure, guidance from mentors and/or supernatural aid, crossing over thresholds from the known to the unknown to face villains, tests, trials, and tribulations before triumphing over an ultimate challenge (including possible death and rebirth) to experience a transformation, gain an elixir, and return to a (new) status quo. It is a highly embedded framework which can be applied to the heroes of ancient myths, to the story of Jesus of Nazareth, to Dorothy and her ruby slippers, and to countless modern-day superhero tales. And I argue, it can apply in some ways to the Myth of the West. In fact, I contend that part of what allows Western mythology to persist is not only that its recalibrations still support a broader national project of reaffirming American exceptionalism, but that these reparative efforts also continue to adhere to a mythic structure which capitalizes on

an element of human nature that can be appealed to by a common story. As such, I view the particular recalibrations of the California origin story presented in this dissertation as specific strands of the broader Myth of the West (See Figure 1.3)--or varying narrative tactics of an overall mythic strategy.

1.2-3 Why the California Origin Story?

Finally, before providing a brief summary of this dissertation's organization and chapter summaries I will explain my rationale for selecting the California origin story as my major object of inquiry when there are so many products of Western cultural remembrance available (e.g. Hollywood Westerns, dime novels, rodeos, etc.). This dissertation examines particular representations of the California origin story as this narrative provides a rich and nuanced landscape for interrogating various questions at the core of Western mythology, both pertaining to the *content* of Western narratives and *how* these stories culturally persist. Specifically, four aspects (among others) make the San Diego-based California origin story a compelling case study for examining American Western cultural remembrance: (1) California's long-standing frontier status, (2) California's diverse cast of characters, (3) the cultural persistence of the California origin story, and (4) the pedagogical nature of the California origin story. The next sections will briefly unpack these elements.

California as the 'Final Frontier'

First, California's long-standing frontier status makes it immediately relevant given the centrality of the frontier in Western mythology. In fact, despite varying geographic and chronological definitions of what constitutes 'The West,' various representations of the West *do* consistently coalesce around a shared idea: the frontier. How this frontier has been historically

	Pioneer Myth	Mexican / American War Myth	California's <i>Ramona</i> → Spanish Arcadia → Mediterranean Myth	(Post)Modern California / U.S. Myth
Hero	White Male Pioneer	Anglo Protestant America	Anglo American Protestant Heirs ²⁴	(Post)Modern California / U.S.
'Superhuman' Strengths & Character	Rugged, choleric, impetuous, tenacious, forward looking and individualistic	Individual pioneer strengths AND the collective strength as an emerging world superpower	Pioneer identity, European lineage, heirs to Manifest Destiny, modernity's final pioneers	American exceptionalism through nation's remarkable capacity for ethnic pluralism
Social World	Isolated unsettled space with few savage Indians	U.S., Mexico (mongrels of debauched Spaniards and savage Indians), watching world	American California as restored Arcadia, marginalized Mexico, (near) extinct Indians	Diverse California (and U.S.), Limited re-incorporation of Mexico and Indian peoples
Moral Code	Manifest Destiny	Manifest Destiny	European Nobility	Ethnic Pluralism
Quest/Threat	Settle and civilize open land against both savage nature and Natives	Continental domination, validate democracy against Catholic Hispanic tyranny	Restore faith in American Dream against rising materialism and economic inequity	Maintain hegemonic ideals through palatable multicultural democratic narratives
Ethos	Survival of the Fittest, Frontier Justice, Rugged Individualism	Conquest of Mexico as honorable, natural, and right	Modern 'land of honey and flowers' = opportunity	Birthplace of California: a place of natural, peaceful, and fun diversity
Cultural Products	<i>LHOP</i> ²⁵ , Western shows, dime novels, 'classic' Western films	Penny press, novels, letters, lithographs, and political rhetoric	<i>Ramona</i> novel and tourism, Balboa Park, Spanish Revival architecture	Old Town San Diego, <i>The Magnificent Seven</i> (2016 remake)

Figure 1.3: Notable Strands of the Myth of the West discussed in the Dissertation as critically read through a monomythic and hero-journey lens.

²⁴ The broader myth's hero, not necessarily Jackson's heroic vision in *Ramona* which valorized Spanish Franciscans.

²⁵ *Little House on the Prairie* (Wilder, 1971) novels as '*LHOP*.'

represented, however, has evolved. In the late nineteenth century, the frontier was understood as a temporally bound *historical process*. American Historian Frederick Jackson Turner's seminal Frontier Thesis presented in his famous 1893 address, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," identified a distinct 'opening' (with the arrival of white settlers) and 'closing' of the Western frontier (in 1890 when the U.S. census indicated a dearth in available tract land). According to Turner, it was the national experience between these pivotal epochal bookends by which a unique American democracy was forged through conflict and characterized by core notions such as individualism and opportunity, defining the young nation's exceptionalism in the process. Later historians, most notably the New Western Historians of the mid to late twentieth century rebutted this definition, viewing the West and its frontier instead as a complex *place* with an ongoing human history--however a place still largely defined by conflict and conquest (Limerick, 1988; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994).

Building upon, and responding to, these frameworks I position the frontier as a *concept*. That is not to say that the frontier lacks materiality. Real people have occupied, and continue to occupy, actual locales in various distinct times upon varying edges, or "borderlands," across the Western frontier (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 1). However, central to my examination is the idea that the ways in which cultures envision their frontier(s), according to their distinct current conditions, has cultural, social, economic, and political implications on the belief systems and practices that organize their particular ways of life. In other words, I view the Western frontier as a conceptually defined meeting point where people and cultures in distinct times and places work out, define, and negotiate via contestation, conflict, conquest, and collaboration various critical organizing principles including notions of: 'civilization,' 'savagery,' 'identity,' 'legitimacy,' 'belonging,' 'opportunity,' and what is considered 'old' and 'new.' Since the

arrival of colonialism, California has long inhabited the outer limits of a particular frontier region whether it occupied the edges of New Spain, the northern reaches of the Republic of Mexico, or the Pacific destination of U.S. Manifest Destiny. Thus, examining various negotiations of the region's evolving frontier status through particular San Diego (re)tellings of the California origin story helps to illustrate the ways in which the Western frontier is not simply a historical process or a place, but is very much a concept informed by current conditions.

Diversity and California's (Re)Imagined Pluralism

Second, California's diverse cast of characters also makes for a compelling study. While its long-standing frontier status helps to examine the often-pondered query: *What* is the West? (to which this dissertation answers: a conceptually defined meeting point, or frontier, where cultures negotiate critical organizing principles), California's historical demographic diversity helps complicate another question often at the core of Western mythology: *Whose* West is it? Limerick (1988) once claimed that "Western history has been an ongoing competition for legitimacy" (p. 27). And the mythology of the West, which includes and extends beyond historical narratives, is often a core alibi of Western projects of legitimacy.

As discussed earlier in this introductory chapter, in its most legible form the Myth of the West lionizes the white male pioneer, who through sheer grit, determination, and rugged individualism took on and conquered open and wild space on behalf of a grateful nation. This version, which was constructed and disseminated by academic and popular cultural products alike, is often defined by its starkness. In this rendering, the Western frontier is sparsely populated by individual white men. There are, however, a few exceptions. There are the scattered 'savage' Indians who in many ways personify hostile nature itself, both of which the white male pioneer must subdue and defeat. And there are the few white women who embody a

genteel civility. This gentility, while unsuited for rugged Western environs, also simultaneously represents a noble promise of white America that must be fiercely protected like so many seeds held close by wayfaring pioneers in hopes of future fruition. Like its stark population, this dominant form of the Myth of the West also describes a mostly ‘empty’ landscape where the vast majority of land consists of wide-open space save a few homesteads, ‘crude’ Indian villages, and/or burgeoning yet often lawless Western towns. In other words, it was a space ready for occupation. Thus, in this version of the Myth of the West, when the American white male pioneer draws upon his rugged individualism to carve out a nation where there was none, he deservedly becomes the *legitimate* occupant and possessor of the West, a seemingly rightful inheritance for his exceptionalism. As such it is a clean and “tidy” narrative (Limerick, 1988, p. 22).

However, California’s origins complicate this particular rendering of Manifest Destiny and ‘Americanness,’ which perhaps explains Turner’s general dismissal of the Hispanic West in his theorizing. Unlike the West of the American Plains (which was originally inhabited by [semi]nomadic Indigenous peoples who did not construct large city-settlements like those found in Incan or Aztec regions for example) white American settlers who arrived in early nineteenth-century Mexican California did not encounter seemingly ‘empty’ land (Lint Sagarena, 2014). Instead, they entered into a region with a readily legible built environment, previous and current colonial infrastructures including religious, military, and civic institutions, a non-English European linguistic paradigm, and inhabitants whose ancestry reflected the mixture of the European, Indigenous, and African peoples who previously, and still, occupied the region. The presence of Mexican *pueblos* and even decaying Spanish missions and *presidio* outposts complicated the doctrine of Manifest Destiny which relied upon a narrative of the promise and

honor in seizing and fully capitalizing upon land that was otherwise open, fallow, and ready for occupation (Sagarena, 2002).

Yet within a decade of these early settlers' arrival, American leaders were mobilizing a version of California's origin story steeped in racialized rhetoric which justified the seizing, by force if necessary, of California's clearly 'occupied' land. And by the close of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, various American historical and cultural products sedimented yet another (re)telling of this origin story, which positioned Anglo American Californian settlers as the *natural* and legitimate heirs to a newly defined Americanized region, casting Mexican Californians as veritable outsiders. This dissertation charts this evolving origin story through specific cultural, historical, and civic projects of cultural remembrance within San Diego. In doing so, it traces the ways in which California's origin story often scaffolds perceptions of legitimacy, a discussion that is additionally relevant to current dialogue around contemporary notions of diversity and 'Americanness.'

Cultural Persistence and the Maintenance and Repair of the California Origin Story

Third, (re)tellings of California's origin story provide a rich example of the cultural persistence of cultural memory. It is one thing to create a narrative of shared identity; it is another project in itself to maintain it. Scholars have long questioned just how societies ensure cultural continuity and a unified sense of character. An element that binds varying positionings across the cultural memory theoretical landscape is a scrutiny of particular forms of persistence. In other words, cultural memory scholarship often articulates how certain "acts of transfer" culturally, individually, and socially *persist* through "reiterated" forms of practice (Taylor, 2003, pp. 2-3). This dissertation joins these efforts, exploring the persistence of a particular cultural narrative of the West and the shared identity it produces. Specifically, the

cultural persistence of the California origin story illustrates that it is not only reiteration and reproduction that maintains cultural remembrance, but also critical practices of recalibration and repair. Paying special attention to maintenance and repair practices within various renditions of California's origin story as opposed to simply examining faithful reiterations of Western cultural remembrance (e.g. canonical Hollywood Westerns, etc.) allows for a nuanced observation of what can fall in and out of the narrative picture in particular (re)tellings.

One notable recalibration within the San Diego-based California origin story is its various representations of Mexico and its relationship to the United States. Within these representations Mexico often serves as a particular kind of narrative foil to the U.S. depending upon evolving conditions within the United States. Examining the ways in which Mexico is at times vilified, diminished, erased, re-incorporated, and even to a degree celebrated within dominant versions of the California origin story, all while maintaining the overarching cohesion of the narrative project, underscores a key element of the origin story's persistence. This narrative persists because it performs vital cultural work: it consistently scaffolds notions of American exceptionalism in the face of changing anxieties. In other words, its specific tactics may alter (for example its evolving representations of Mexico) but its broader rhetorical strategy remains in place (i.e. to reaffirm America's exceptionality).

Educating Democracy: The Pedagogical Nature of the California Origin Story

And fourth, examining the California origin story allows for a robust opportunity to explore how these narratives are often mobilized to perform pedagogical cultural work. As the onset of this introduction stated, in telling the story of how something 'came to be' origin stories by their very nature impart important information which affirms cultural norms and values, underscores social orders, and shapes particular notions of identity. These lessons can affect

everyday ways of being including how people live, marry, child-rear, migrate, civically participate, work, create and consume cultural products, worship, think, fight, and imagine a nation. And the ways in which the California origin story informs our political imagination is a major focal point of this dissertation.

It is not radical or groundbreaking to note the influence of America's westward progression on the country's national character or political thought. Turner's Frontier Thesis (1893/2017) hinges on the assertion that America's democratic philosophy was fundamentally rooted in a "new democracy of the West" in which "American democracy...gained new strength each time it touched a new frontier" (pp. 88, 100). And when New Western Historians problematized Turner's portrayal of the West as overly Anglo-centric, patriarchal, and nationalistic, their scholarship was deemed at times as not only too "negative" by other historians (considering its preoccupation with invasion, conquest, and exploitation). To some outside of academia, New Western Historians were downright "*unpatriotic*" in their views (Gibb, 2018, p. 5, italics added). Given the common collapse of the Myth of the West onto notions of 'Americanness' this judgment by academic outsiders is unsurprising. To critique Western mythology is perceived in many ways as questioning American exceptionalism itself. In fact, given particular instances of antagonism towards many New Western Historians some recent Western scholars have looked beyond conflict-based paradigms, turning to diverse exploratory lenses that present a "less depressing story" of the West, one less likely to draw ire as being the work of a "bias[ed]" historian including frames of ecology, kinship networks, demography, and performance as ways through which to understand the West (Gibb, 2018, p. 5, West, 1998, Nugent, 1999/2007, Etulain, 2006, Hyde, 2011).

Thus, exploring the relationship between frontier mythology and American democracy is not necessarily uncharted territory. This dissertation, however, does propose a distinct political argument to already ongoing discussions regarding the influence of Western mythology upon notions of American democracy. Specifically, I am interested in the relationship between what I call America's 'pioneer identity' and what is already known as the classical liberal subject within the national consciousness and character. Generally, Western scholarship does not explicitly foreground this relationship. Instead within most academic literature this connection exists as a dull tension, or perhaps more accurately as a tacit presence. Richard Slotkin (1973/2000) in his *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* does gesture to this relationship when he claims the Myth of the West is America's "real mythical heritage" stating (p. 4):

In American mythogenesis the founding fathers were not those eighteenth century gentlemen who composed a nation at Philadelphia. Rather they were those who...tore violently a nation from the implacable and opulent wilderness--the rogues, adventurers, and land boomers; the Indian fighters, missionaries, traders, explorers, and hunters who killed and were killed until they had mastered the wilderness (ibid).

In Western mythology these "adventurers," "rogues," and "explorers" embody the rugged, choleric, impetuous, tenacious, vehement, forward-looking, and individualistic nature at the heart of the iconographic pioneer identity (Turner, 1893/2017; 1903, p. 317; Slotkin, 1973/2000). Slotkin asserts that within this myth, it was these hearty pioneers who "composed a nation" that were America's true "founding fathers," not "those eighteenth century gentlemen...at Philadelphia" (Slotkin, 1973/2000, p. 4). Furthermore, Turner's seminal Frontier Thesis argued as much. According to Turner, after the conflict on the Western frontier, American democracy was made anew. Specifically, Turner (1920) identifies a "Middle Western Pioneer Democracy," which constitutes a set of characteristics including individualism, self-sufficiency, and a general

forward-looking, that he claims was drawn from the experiences and mores of pioneers settling what came to be the “Middle Western” region of the country, including Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota (pp. 397-398). According to Turner, these ‘ideals of democracy’ helped to create the eventual “democracy of the west” adopted by the nation, which ultimately “destroyed” the country’s previous ideals set forth by our eighteenth-century ‘forefathers’ (Turner, 1920, p. 75).

I argue, however, that the characteristics associated with both our eighteenth-century founding and nineteenth-century expansion still exist today through what I am calling the ‘pioneer identity’ and the classical liberal subject. And while I contend that the pioneer identity is indeed central to notions of ‘Americanness,’ this dissertation asserts that it is upon these *two* national archetypes that a majority of our political imagination rests (unlike Turner’s assessment which positions the impact of the frontier upon American democracy as a finished matter in which the democracy of the West “destroyed” previous ideals [Turner, 1893/2017, p. 88]). Both are particular heroes within the national mythogenesis. The liberal subject, for example, is the personified archetype of classical liberalism. As articulated by John Locke (1689/1980) (who is often viewed as a general proxy for liberalism), the liberal subject is acquisitive, consenting, rational, calculating, competitive, self-interested, industrious, and autonomous. He is also equal in the sense that despite varying natural distinctions or abilities, he and his fellow man are equal before God. This equality grants the liberal man liberty and freedom, but also choice, which in conjunction with his ‘natural’ liberal characteristics eventually leads to “a state of war²⁶” (ibid: 278). According to Locke, to alleviate this state of war men ultimately enter a social contract agreeing to “joyn and unite into a Community” in which certain individual freedoms would be

²⁶ As opposed to Hobbes’ (2006 [1651]) account which begins with a war of all against all in the natural world.

forfeited in exchange for mutual security and peace (ibid, p. 96). This contract marks the origin of the liberal state in the form of a self-government or “Body Politick” (ibid). Once established, the state acts according to the will of the majority and guarantees political equality before the law as well as an ensemble of basic human rights including the ability to petition the state should those inalienable rights be encumbered (Locke, 1980 [1689], p. 96; Siedentop, 2014). Though flawed, especially in terms of the realities of inequity²⁷, the narrative of liberalism and its liberal subject remains an influential account that scholars argue is socially, culturally, and politically present within the ‘consciousness’ of our national identity and throughout much of the global west (Berlin, 1958; Avineri & de-Shalit, 1992; Kymlicka, 1989; Brown, 2015; Foucault, 1980). In fact, a major project of the west is sustaining this ongoing pretense of the notion of individuals as co-signers of a mutually beneficial contract which grounds a just society (Gauthier, 1992).

The mythic origins of the pioneer identity are just as storied. Similar to the industrious and autonomous liberal man, the pioneer identity is self-reliant and self-willed. However, the pioneer individual is no rational and calculating actor who *insulates* himself from nature²⁸ by tempering unabashed freedom with judicious mutual compromise in order to form a state. Instead, in a seeming fetishization of the liberal man’s industriousness as divorced from his rationality, the project of the Pioneer Identity is to go *into*²⁹ nature to conquer it (combating

²⁷ Many scholars have troubled this clean and pervasive account of the relationship between equality, individualism, and state power, asserting that it does not account for the realities of inequity and the fact that “the liberty of some must depend on the restraint of others,” and pointing out that the term ‘democracy’ only promises that the demos will rule, not the manner in which the popular will govern or how the power imbued within Locke’s majority may impact the few (Berlin, 1958, p. 8; Brown, 2015).

²⁸ See the frontispiece by Abraham Bosse of Hobbes’s (1651) *Leviathan*, and the rendering of the enclosed and walled off society (See Figure 1.4).

²⁹ In fact, the earliest etymological roots of the word ‘pioneer’ comes from the Latin *pedo*, meaning foot, and more recent meanings are derived from the sixteenth-century French word *paonier/pionnier*, meaning a foot soldier of the infantry to who leads military advancement from the front lines (De Vaan, 2008).



Figure 1.4: Frontispiece by Abraham Bosse of Hobbes's (1651) *Leviathan*, and the rendering of the enclosed and walled off society insulated from both the natural topography and the chaos of the “nasty, brutish, and short” way of life that accompanies nature, which is present directly below the prominently featured anthropomorphic collective figure of the body politic (p. 77). From J. Rick, n.d., Historical context for *Leviathan* [Webpage], retrieved April 29, 2019, from <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/content/leviathan/context> Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

wildlife, unforgiving landscapes, the elements, and ‘natural’ Indigenous peoples in order to settle vast segments of ‘open’ land), through his rugged, choleric, impetuous, tenacious, vehement, forward-looking, and individualistic manner (Turner, 1893/2017; 1903, p. 317; Slotkin, 1973/2000; quotations mine). “Turn[ing] their backs upon the Atlantic Ocean...to build up a society free from the dominance of ancient forms,” pioneers journey into nature, *leaving behind* the liberal social contract to instead “*recreate the social contract from scratch*” (Turner, 1903, p. 318; Limerick, 1987, p. 321, italics not added). Within this new social reality, the pioneer identity operates by an ethos of the *survival of the fittest* where differences matter (as opposed to a liberal parity where all are equal despite differences) and where a lesser man’s inability to defend himself will give way to a stronger man’s ability to dominate him. And though the pioneer identity’s ‘taming’ of nature was often aided and abetted by various forms of state-building infrastructure, within the mythology of the frontier, this taming is perceived as a largely individual endeavor where singular homesteaders carved out the West through their independent tenacity.

Given these two distinct mythic origins, it is unsurprising that the juxtaposition of the pioneer identity and liberal subject within our national character brings to bear ongoing political skirmishes regarding individualism and pluralism, the limits of state power, Americanism versus globalism (or at least a broader ‘westernism’), and other arenas of political ideology. However, while the pioneer identity and liberal subject may often seem to be at odds with one another within America’s national consciousness, I argue there is a productive quality to this tension. In other words, both represent core ideological tenets which not only contend with one another, but in many ways also support, scaffold, and fill in narrative and rhetorical gaps for one another when one reaches an ideological limit towards upholding and justifying a particular national

project at hand. This co-constitution towards a unique amalgamation of the two (depending on the nation’s current sociocultural, political, and economic conditions) is what I define as *Pioneer Democracy* (See Figure 1.5). Borrowing a portion of Turner’s term, I contend our nation’s ongoing engagement in *Pioneer Democracy* represents the balance at the heart of many of the nation’s *seeming* perplexing paradoxes as a supposed ‘liberal democracy’ (e.g. slavery, conquest, and various forms of disenfranchisement).

	<p>Pioneer Identity (Liberty-Frame)</p> <p><i>Self-reliant, Self-willed, Rugged, Choleric, Impetuous, Tenacious, Vehement, Forward-looking, Individualistic</i></p>	<p>Liberal Subject (Equality-Frame)</p> <p><i>Acquisitive, Consenting, Rational, Calculating, Competitive, Self-Interested, Industrious, Autonomous, Informed by Past</i></p>
Liberty	<p>RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual-based • Goes <i>into</i> nature • (Positive) liberty <p><i>The self-reliant freedom to go out in the world and subdue it to one’s will.</i></p>	<p>SOCIAL CONTRACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based (Body Politic) • Insulates <i>from</i> nature • Tempers individual freedoms <p><i>Certain individual freedoms are forfeited for mutual security and peace.</i></p>
Equality	<p>SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political consequences to differences (Frontier Justice) • No inalienable rights (as outside the social contract) <p><i>A lesser man’s inability to defend himself will give way to a stronger man’s ability to dominate him.</i></p>	<p>INALIENABLE RIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences are politically irrelevant • Where once equal before God, equal before the law <p><i>Despite differences individuals can petition the State should inalienable rights be encumbered upon.</i></p>

Figure 1.5: A grid illustrating the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy* as represented by the ways in which the Pioneer Identity and Liberal Subject balance and co-constitute one another within the national character, imagination, and political judgement in ways often at the center of our political theory and practice.

Thus, this dissertation explores one example that embodies the tension between pioneer and liberal rhetoric through the case study of the California origin story and specifically its

pedagogical capacity to educate particular understandings of democracy. In his influential observation of American political culture and its relevance to what he viewed as an emerging global change, *Democracy in America* (1835), Alexis de Tocqueville claims that “[t]he first duty imposed on those who now direct society is to educate democracy” (Rosenblatt, 2018, p. 156³⁰; Tocqueville, 1835/2012, p. 7). And in many ways, particular mobilizations of the California origin story do just that. Thus, this dissertation interrogates one way in which we learn what it means to be American, and in its later chapters gestures to how remembering the American West helps to (re)affirm our allegiance to the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy*, including expectations regarding the role of government, rights, identity, and freedom--concepts that remain relevant to this day.

In summary, four aspects (among others) make the San Diego-based California origin story a compelling case study for examining American Western cultural remembrance: (1) California’s long-standing frontier status helps to illustrate the ways in which the Western frontier is not simply a historical process or a place, but is very much a concept informed by current conditions, (2) the ways in which California’s origin story negotiates its diverse cast of characters highlights how this narrative often scaffolds varying perceptions of legitimacy and ‘Americanness,’ (3) the cultural persistence of the California origin story exposes how specific narrative tactics of this origin story may alter according to contemporary conditions to keep the past relevant, yet the broader rhetorical strategy of reaffirming American exceptionalism remains consistent, and (4) the pedagogical nature of the California origin story depicts one way in which

³⁰ This translation of Tocqueville’s quote is from Rosenblatt’s 2018 *The Lost History of Liberalism*. In Zunz’s 2012 translation of *Democracy in America* this passage reads, “To educate democracy...this is the primary duty imposed on the leaders of society today” (p. 7).

we educate democracy in America through specific remembrances of the past. The final section of this Introduction provides a brief summary of the dissertation's chapters.

1.3 Project Organization and Chapter Summaries

My dissertation is largely organized into two parts: Part One which includes both this introduction and a historiography of California's colonial origins and Part Two which includes case studies of particular forms of remembrance which represent the historical accounts presented in Part One.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA'S COLONIAL ORIGINS AT SAN DIEGO

Chapter One: Remembering and Forgetting in the West (Introduction)

Chapter Two: Pre-American Conquest ~8000 B.C. – Mexican Independence 1821

Chapter Two provides a historical account of California pre-conquest to 1821 when Mexico gained its independence from Spain (charting the complex implications of this colonial legacy especially in terms of racial miscegenation, the influence of Spain's two-pronged colonial infrastructure of the military and the church, and the consistent threat of conquest which faced the region). Its examination of Mexican independence also includes an analysis of Mexico's distinct political history including its active liberation from Spanish rule and the emergence of its own liberal tradition. Finally, Chapter Two concludes with an initial observation of how Mexico's liberal legacy was in many ways erased from U.S. public history and remembrance with lasting implications on the American political imagination.

Chapter Three: American Conquest 1821 – 1872

Chapter Three focuses on both Mexican California and the eventual U.S. conquest of Mexico. Its examination of California under Mexican rule charts Mexico's liberal policies including the secularization of the mission system, its creation of various Constitutions, its bouts with conservatism and downright despotism, its rising oligarchy, the young country's 1823 abolition of slavery forty-two years before the U.S. accomplished the same, and its continued geopolitical peril. The chapter's analysis of the U.S. conquest of California includes an examination of America's early settler presence in Mexican California in the 1820s, the Mexican American War (1846-1848), and the devastating 1872 fire that nearly destroyed San Diego's original Spanish settlement, solidifying its new port-based downtown as the city's commercial hub, and bringing the region's colonialist project to a seeming close. This chapter also explores the U.S. wartime mobilization of a particular California origin story which justified American conquest by deriding California's Hispanic past and casting Anglo America as the rightful and just liberators of Mexican California.

PART TWO: PUBLIC REMEMBRANCE OF CALIFORNIA'S COLONIAL ORIGINS

Chapter Four: (Re)Imagining the West: Arcadian California and the 'Erasure' of Mexican California 1880s – 1950s

Chapter Four charts the production of another (re)telling of the California origin story. Specifically, the first half of this chapter traces the conditions that led to a massive movement of bodies to Southern California in the late nineteenth century and the imaginative work associated with this real-estate 'boom.' Then, the second half of the chapter turns to two major cultural memory projects within San Diego which helped to (re)imagine California's (and especially Southern California's) distinct regional identity: (1) the tourism craze spurred by the popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson's (1884) Indian protest novel *Ramona*, including the making, selling, and

experiencing of ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’ in Old Town San Diego; and (2) the 1910-1915 development of San Diego’s architecturally innovative Spanish revival Balboa Park. Both projects were significant parts of a larger ensemble of products that fostered a (re)imagining of California during this period. The Ramona mythology helped boosters, settlers, and the nation at large idealize California’s Mission period and redefine its Spanish Catholic past--reparative work which marginalized the legacy of *Mexican* California in the process. Balboa Park, in its celebration of the region’s burgeoning Spanish ‘fantasy heritage’, continued the Ramona mythology’s realigning of critical racial distinctions. Specifically, providing a direct line of symbolic regional lineage to Spain, this project not only marginalized, but helped to effectively ‘erase’ Mexican California from public history. This chapter illustrates how such a move was part of a broader memorial trend which naturalized Anglo Californians as not only the region’s *rightful*--but its *natural*--heirs.

Chapter Five: Pluralism (Re)Imagined: Proposing the ‘Re-incorporation’ of Mexican California in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

The next three chapters examine the cultural and political implications of the cultural heritage site of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. Chapter Five (the first chapter of this three-part case study) investigates the park’s impetus. Specifically, it illustrates the multifaceted set of conditions which informed the proposal of the park between 1964 - 1967. These conditions, including an upcoming regional Bicentennial, an emerging national rhetoric of ‘multiculturalism,’ evolving notions of leisure, and an increasingly popular Mexican tourism industry, highlight the park’s impetus as a particular commemorative response to various forms of change. Additionally, Chapter Five examines how park proposers and supporters worked to mobilize public imagination in order to gain support for the project at the ballot, to navigate

logistical hurdles, and to secure its approval and funding from state and local agencies. Thus, by drawing upon particular political, economic, ideological, and cultural tactics, park proposers helped to set plans in motion that would ultimately represent a radical memorial shift for the region. As such, they ushered in the development of a designed space which repaired and offered yet another version of the California origin story--one which would not only re-incorporate Mexican California into its narrative, but which would seemingly *celebrate* aspects of Mexican culture.

Chapter Six: 'Designing' Remembrance: Old Town San Diego State Historic Park and the (Re)Making of Multicultural California

Chapter Six, the second chapter in this three-part study, examines Old Town San Diego State Historic Park's design. Specifically, through critical readings of two bureaucratic Old Town planning reports and supplemental archival materials, this chapter charts: (1) the articulation of the park's 'tasteful' and 'appropriate' "designed atmosphere," which provided a broader cultural and political ethos for the park; and (2) the development of what I call the park's overall visual design schema, which organized a particular 'economy of looking' that effectively obscures a critical historical framework (i.e. the complexity of colonialism and conquest) and mobilizes a specific optic frame (i.e. 'organic multiculturalism' imagery) to reinforce a more serviceable myth (i.e. the logical '*flow*,' '*transition*,' and '*progression*' of regional history, occupation, and territory). Taken together, Chapter Six examines how these design elements laid a critical foundation for the park's broader cultural work as a significant public, commemorative, and celebratory pedagogical site.

Chapter Seven: (Re)Constructing Conquest: Educating Mexican ‘Culture,’ American ‘Order,’ and Pioneer Democracy Within Old Town Historic Park’s Built Environment

Chapter Seven, the third and final chapter of this case study, examines Old Town San Diego State Historic Park in its (re)constructed form. Paying special attention to the park’s celebratory nature and broader pedagogical focus as experienced through its built environment, this chapter examines: (1) the park’s celebration of Mexico’s ‘colorful’ and ‘festive’ *culture* cast as enlivening the region in a distinctly *Hispanic* manner, (2) its veneration of America’s ‘model’ democratic institutions presented as ‘merging’ with Mexican culture in order to bring a sense of *order* to such a ‘lively’ region in a uniquely *American* capacity, and (3) the designed space’s (re)affirmation of America’s *Pioneer Democracy* imbued throughout the park in its celebration of both pioneer and liberal rhetoric. This chapter illustrates how the park’s celebration of Mexican culture, while highlighting and making visible a once marginalized and erased aspect of California’s public history, still relegates Mexico’s regional influence to a general ‘cultural’ flair. It is a relegation that in many ways *naturalizes* Mexican culture within the region helping to obscure the ongoing project of settler colonialism. And it also *depoliticizes* Mexico--not only helping to cast the ‘transformation’ of Mexican to American California as the result of a beneficial ‘merger’ and not nation-building conquest. But this depoliticization also helps to foster the park’s presentation of U.S. forms of democratic ‘order’ as a distinctly *American* conception. Finally, Chapter Seven also claims that the park’s (re)affirmation of *Pioneer Democracy* in many ways supports and justifies the previous and ongoing colonial practices at the heart of the park’s commemorative period. Thus, in its whole, this chapter illustrates the pedagogical focus of not only the park itself, but of the broader California origin story as it depicts one way in which we learn what it means to be American through specific remembrances of the past.

Chapter Eight: Memory's Webs: Concluding Thoughts on the Significance of Remembering and Forgetting in America

Chapter Eight, the dissertation's conclusion, specifically addresses: (1) the contemporary relevance of my project and (2) four core themes of this dissertation related to cultural memory and its broader significance, including: cultural memory's *presentness*, *embeddedness*, *usefulness*, and its *politics*.

Chapter 1 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.
Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

Preface to the Following Historiography of California's Origins at San Diego

At the core of this dissertation is an examination of a story about contact, conflict, collaboration, and conquest, which is why I essentially begin the major thrust of the following historical analysis with the onset of colonialism. However, I understand and recognize the thousands of years of rich history that existed in the region prior to conquest. Additionally, I acknowledge the important scholarly work taking place regarding pre-conquest California--some of it led by a diverse group of Indigenous scholars (Richard Carrico [2008]; Edward Castillo [1989]; Michael Connolly Miskwish [2007]; James Rawls [1986]; Stanley Rodriguez [2017 with Theresa Gregor]; and Florence Shipek [1982]). By starting primarily at contact, my project does not dismiss Native California nor is it meant to be exhaustive. I understand that I am granting contact primacy, but I do so for a specific set of reasons relevant to my project (as outlined in the Introduction of the dissertation). Furthermore, throughout this dissertation I often utilize the terms 'America' and 'American' to refer to aspects of the United States. I understand that many scholars use these terms to solely refer to the *continental* Americas (which I do as well early in the dissertation's historiography). However, given my project's focus on evolving notions of a United States based sense of 'Americanness,' I later consciously mobilize the language of 'America' to denote the U.S. and 'American' to reflect that which is related to the United States. Finally, though the following historiography speaks about California at large, I focus primarily on San Diego. Notwithstanding this focus, in order to contextualize particular events or moments, the next two chapters also address other regions in the U.S., Mexico, and Spain.

CHAPTER TWO:

Pre-American Conquest ~8000 B.C. – Mexican Independence 1821

2.1 Those Who Face the Water from a Cliff: The Kumeyaay Nation's Early Presence

For more than 10,000 years, the area now known as Old Town San Diego was occupied by the Kumeyaay people. Beginning at the Pacific Ocean, their settlements stretched 120 miles inland to the Colorado River sand dunes of present-day Imperial Valley (Erlandson et al, 2007; Viejas, n.d.). Their lands also reached as far south as present-day Ensenada, Mexico and as far north to what is now Warner Springs, which lies roughly 70 miles north from contemporary downtown San Diego (ibid; See Figure 2.1).

Comprised of a federation of autonomous and self-governing bands united by language and customs, the Kumeyaay were hunters of game, they fished, and contrary to prevalent descriptions as ‘hunters and gatherers,’ they engaged in sophisticated and ecologically sustainable animal husbandry, agricultural, land, and water management practices (Shipek, 2014; Viejas, n.d.; Laylander, 1997; Carrico, 2008; Gamble & Zepeda, 2002; Shipek, 1982). Utilizing a complex system of land ownership and labor division they managed a sprawling territory through seasonal cultivational processes involving networks of lands across individual and collective properties of families (Viejas, n.d.; Shipek, 1982; Lightfoot & Parrish, 2009). And meaning “those who face the water from a cliff” (Hoffman & Gamble, 2006, p. 71), it was the Kumeyaay who encountered the first European explorers to reach the shores of present-day California.

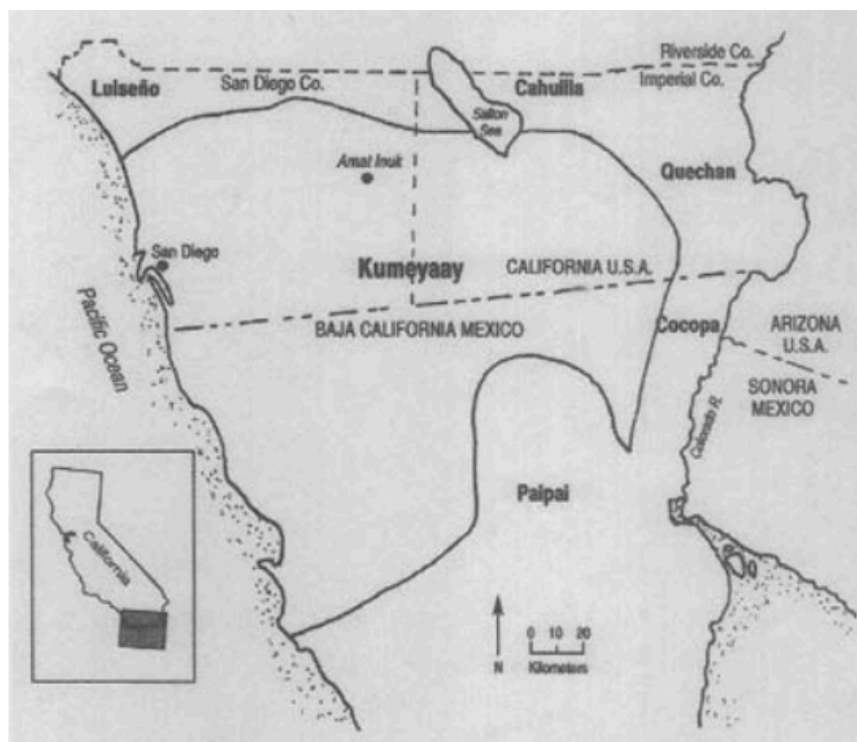


Figure 2.1: Map of Kumeyaay territory. From L. H. Gamble & I. C. Zepeda, 2002, Social differentiation and exchange among the Kumeyaay Indians during the historic period in California, *Historical Archaeology*, 36(2), p. 72. Copyright 2002 by Society for Historical Archaeology. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

2.2 From 'Ancient Earth' to a 'New World' of Opportunity: Early Spanish Conquistadores

In the mid sixteenth century, during the height of what many historians have deemed the "Age of Discovery¹," Spanish colonization of the Americas was rapidly materializing into a core project of the empire, becoming a major fulcrum around which political, economic, social, and cultural institutions and practices would coalesce. The world's first global empire, Spain was entering the apex of its colonial power in 1542 when explorer and conquistador Juan Rodríguez

¹ Also known as the Age of Exploration or the Age of Discovery and Exploration, this period describes an approximate era from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. Characterized by extensive maritime exploration of lands previously unknown to Europeans, this era consisted of heightened colonization, mercantilism, and the nascence of globalism. The period would also launch ethnographic, technological, human management, and even cartographic practices among others that would have long-lasting cultural, social, political, and economic implications worldwide (Matar, 2000; NPS, 2015; Lestringant, 2016; Brummet, 1994; Lewis, 1996).

Cabrillo² arrived upon the shores of what is now San Diego Bay. Commissioned by the Viceroy (or royally appointed ruler) of New Spain to uncover a new trading route to China and the Spice Islands³, two to three ships under Cabrillo's command initially left the port of Navidad near present day Manzanillo, Mexico to sail north along what is now the west coast of the United States (NPS, 2015; Erlandson & Bartoy, 1995; See Figure 2.2). Traveling with a crew of soldiers, sailors, and Native⁴ and African⁵ freemen and slaves, the expedition stopped

² Cabrillo's birthplace has come into question in the last century on multiple occasions. Originally assumed to be Spanish by historians, he was honored as such during the 1915 San Diego Expo and at the 1913 dedication of the U.S. National Monument in Point Loma San Diego in his honor. In the 1930's a Portuguese document surfaced that suggested Cabrillo (through the spelling of his name) was actually of Portuguese descent which was supported by a 1615 chronicling that described him as Portuguese. This finding, championed by both Portuguese officials and a large Portuguese-American community in San Diego, was at the time sufficient enough to change historical views, and soon both historical texts and the National Monument erected in his name described Cabrillo as Portuguese. Various theories, including the possibility that Cabrillo was perhaps a *converso* (or 'new Christian' who was in fact a Jewish individual hiding his place of birth and real name), swirled around the contrarian Portuguese spelling. However, this accounting has recently been upturned by detailed extant research that attributes the Portuguese documentation to a bureaucratic error and has uncovered newly found Spanish court documents and records that indicate Cabrillo was indeed Spanish born. On Friday September 28, 2018 officials at the Cabrillo National Monument officially changed the placard of his birth, to the consternation of both the Portuguese government and local Portuguese-Americans. The issue of his birth 521 years ago, or more accurately how his birth is depicted and remembered, illustrates the complex relationship between historiography, cultural remembrance, and national and regional identity (Kelsey, 1984; Kramer, 2016; Engstrand, 2018).

³ Located within the Banda Sea (off Indonesia) the Maluku or Moluccas islands were also known as the "Spice Islands" as at one time they were the sole known producer of nutmeg, mace, and clove, making the archipelago of colonial interest to sixteenth-century European countries, though at the time only two known trade routes existed to the islands (Van Gils & Cox, 1994; Ptak, 1992).

⁴ Native labor was the foundation of Spanish colonial society through explicit chattel slavery to other contrived forms of free labor--most notably the *encomienda* system. Established by Spain during the Roman era, the *encomienda* system, which rewarded conquerors with the labor of particular groups of conquered peoples, was used on a much larger scale during the colonization of the Americas and the Philippines. In this system of communal slavery, an *encomienda* (which granted a specific number of Native slaves) was issued to a particular individual or *encomendero* (often a conquistador) in trust and inheritable perpetuity in exchange for protecting, converting, and 'civilizing' their entrusted Natives. Considered vassals of the Spanish crown once conquered, Indigenous groups were allowed to keep possession of their land during earlier stages of colonization, but they were tasked with the process of deciding which members of their community would provide the *encomienda* labor. This policy capitalized on established Indigenous social hierarchies and gained Native participation in this pseudo-feudal system as eventually even non-conquistadors, such as well-connected settlers, women, and even elite Indigenous community members became recipients of *encomiendas* (Sherman, 1979; Gibson, 1964; Rawley, 2005; Bolton, 1917).

⁵ As early as the sixteenth century, black Africans were routinely on European vessels as free crewmen, servants, or slaves visiting ports of call across Europe, the Americas, and even Asia (Leupp, 1995; McKnight & Garafalo, 2009; Akyeampong, 2000; Linebaugh & Rediker, 2013). Many of the free sub-Saharan Africans among Spanish crews often bore Iberian names and surnames and served as pilots, interpreters, and commercial liaisons; additionally African and mulatto women, and their mixed children, could also be found onboard ships as concubines (though their state, or lack, of freedom was not always clear), and free African crewmen also often took Native concubines from various ports (Wheat, 2016; Leupp, 1995). During the slave trade, captains of Spanish slave ships routinely

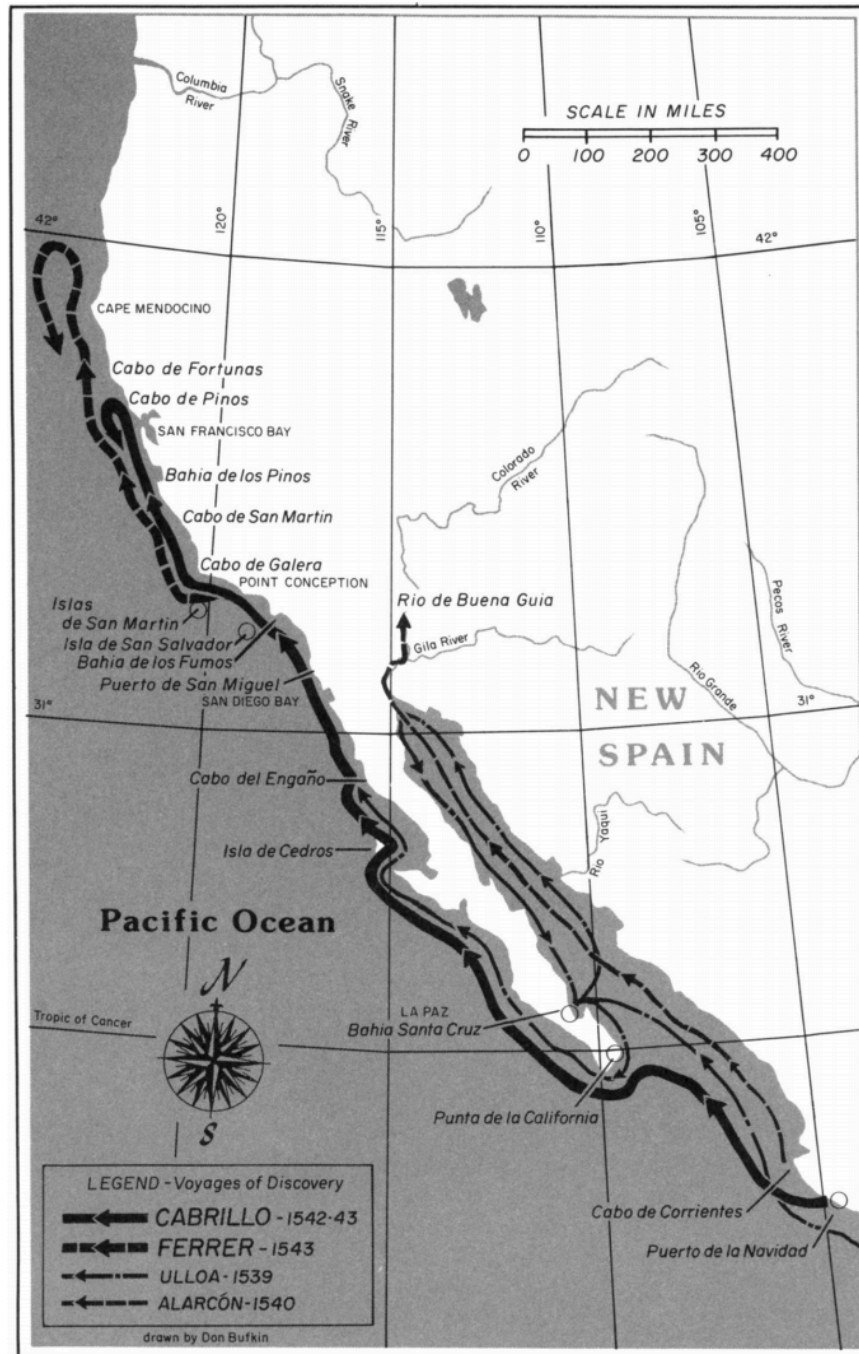


Figure 2.2: Map of Spain's Pacific Coast explorations from 1539 - 1543, including Cabrillo's expedition. From H. Kelsey, 1984, Mapping the California coast: The voyages of discovery, 1533-1543, *Arizona and the West*, 26(4), p. 319. Copyright 1984 by Arizona Board of Regents. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

had to assure ship owners they would not sell their enslaved mariners in the Americas, even paying hefty deposits as collateral for them (though some captains avoided these black market penalties by simply selling enslaved crewmembers and then claiming they perished during the voyage) (Wheat, 2016).

periodically and strategically (considering criteria including landscapes and possibilities for safe anchorage) as Cabrillo simultaneously explored, traded, clashed, and claimed in the name of the empire. As with previous anchorings, upon disembarking in the bay of San Diego--or San Miguel Archangel as he named it at the time in honor of the saint's upcoming feast the following day--Cabrillo claimed the surrounding area for Spain (Kelsey, 1984; Bokovoy, 2005). If this ceremonial claiming followed his already established practices in previous harbors from San Pablo to Cabo San Quitín (Cabrillo's testimony as summarized in Kelsey, 1984, fn. 23, 24) then Cabrillo would have taken up his sword and proclaimed in the name of the king-emperor that the land upon which he stood and its surroundings was now Spain's and that he was prepared to defend it as such. He then would have slashed surrounding trees with his sword, rearranged large stones, and poured a jar of ocean water upon the land in what can be interpreted as a physical and ceremonial display of the Spanish empire's vast reach as it dispersed armies of conquistadors across the sea to spill upon foreign lands with the power and ability to mark, alter, and rework--thus enacting an alchemy, or baptism, of sorts that in their eyes transformed ancient earth into a 'New World' of opportunity. And specifically, a New World free from the corruption and perversion of the triumvirate assault on established ways of knowing and being by the Protestant Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment (Bokovoy, 2005; Weber, 2005; De Vos, 2007; Bainton, 1985).

Cabrillo had sailed into California armed with the myth of an alluring island, one popularized by *Las Sergas de Esplandián*, a Spanish novel written circa 1500 which described an "earthly paradise" called California inhabited by beautiful Amazonian women and ruled by their regal and fierce black queen, Califia, who periodically allowed the presence of men for progenerative sake (Bokovoy, 2005, p. 315; Putnam, 1917; Castañeda, 2000; Rodríguez de

Montalvo, 2003 [1500]). Cabrillo's party found no such mythical island, but instead a land that was at times forbidding and barren and at others fruitful and lush and occupied in various locations by diverse Natives with whom their experiences ranged from nonexistent to wary to contentious to diplomatic--often experiencing a continuum of this range in one interaction (Erlandson & Bartoy, 1995; Kelsey, 1984). Contact was often complex but early historical accounts, (sparse as they may be and generally centered on the experiences of the Spanish conquistadors and not their Native counterparts), reveal that many coastal tribes interacted extensively with Cabrillo and his crew. These interactions included exchanging shellfish, fish, acorns, and water for glass beads, silk, cotton cloth, and clothes, visiting and even sleeping onboard the anchored galleons together, dining side by side on fish and roasted agave, and of course the intimate contact that comes with violence, at times leaving one another injured and in some cases dead (Erlandson & Bartoy, 1995; Blackburn, 1975; Gamble & Zepeda, 2002; Kelsey, 1984). Even with these various forms of contact, communication was still regularly a barrier as Cabrillo's expedition began to realize that each Native population they encountered generally spoke its own distinct language (Kelsey, 1984). Conquistadors well before Cabrillo had often taken to the practice of seizing Native "interpreters" (generally women and children) from trips ashore to bring aboard their ships, doing so often enough that officials in Spain began to suspect the exercise was simply a method of procuring slave labor⁶ (ibid, p. 314), or one could assume, of acquiring concubines given similar colonial maritime practices (Leupp, 1995; Weber, 2014; Galloway, 2015; Erlandson & Bartoy, 1995; Wheat, 2016).

⁶ Procurement (or smuggling) of this sort would have bypassed official channels of obtaining slave labor approved and regulated by the crown, including the *encomienda* system of Native slave labor, and sixteenth-century licensing agreements in which license holders had to purchase African slaves from the Portuguese (as Spain never gained territory in West Africa and thus were dependent upon governments that had such claims in major slave hubs) and then clear their purchases with Seville (Rawley & Behrendt, 2005; Sherman, 1979).

Sorely missing from many sixteenth-century historical reports is an accounting of Indigenous experiences and responses to these encounters as most journals from explorers document the overt material realities of Natives (e.g. dress, housing, utensils, etc.) but remain frustratingly oblique in regards to any substantial chronicling of their sociocultural, economic, and political practices and beliefs and most especially their interior lives (Blackburn, 1975; Castañeda, 2000; Hackel, 2003). Primary source records that reveal Cabrillo's thoughts and actions during the expedition are limited to the travel log of ship pilot Bartolomé Ferrelo (also known as Ferrer) (Bokovoy, 2005). This document details the expedition's first Native contact at San Diego Bay. Upon anchoring in the harbor and before disembarking himself, Cabrillo followed his established protocol of sending a landing crew ashore for exploration and reconnaissance. Sighting both canoes and Natives described as "well built and wearing animal skins," the landing crew rowed their skiff to shore, where all but three of the Kumeyaay, whom the Spanish referred to as Digueños, fled inland (ibid, Engstrand, 1997, p. 85). The remaining three accepted gifts from the landing crew and through physical gestures described sightings of horse mounted Europeans⁷ seen by the inland Yuman tribes, bearded men who carried lances with which they had slaughtered many Indians (ibid). In hopes of alleviating their fears the Spaniards offered more gifts--however when a Spanish fishing party came ashore that dusk, they were met by attacking Kumeyaay who sent arrows flying, injuring three crewmen in a presumed strategic assault given their known accounts of the previous Yuman slaughter. Cabrillo forbade any retaliation (perhaps as some of his men were already weak with scurvy), instead calling on caution, further offerings, and a reliance on the "holy faith" to obtain the Natives' trust (ibid, p. 6; Engstrand, 1997). Primary accounts do not reveal the thoughts or introspection of the

⁷ These mounted Europeans were most likely members of an interior Spanish expedition exploring present day New Mexico and Arizona, led by conquistador Francisco Vásquez de Coronado (Bokovoy, 2005).

Kumeyaay during these interactions, but what can be ascertained by the existing historical record is that this mingling of European, African, and Indigenous, either coerced, consensual, or combative laid a bedrock for the future complex interaction, surveillance, communion, conflict, conquest, and miscegenation which would socioculturally and politically influence the region for centuries.

In the end, Cabrillo's expedition was in many ways a failure. He never discovered an Asiatic trading route, nor Califia and her beautiful subjects. Cabrillo himself died from an infected limb injury just three months after claiming San Diego for Spain, a wound he sustained from a fall either during a skirmish with Natives, while trekking rocky terrain, or from a mutinous crew, depending on the historical account (Kelsey, 1984; Bokovoy, 2005, NPS, 2015). And though his crew, led by Ferrelo, pressed northward without him, perhaps eventually reaching the shores of present-day Oregon, bad weather, spoiled supplies, and illness of the crew forced them to turnabout and return to Mexico (Stephens & Sugihara, 2006; NPS, 2015). Furthermore, many of the names Cabrillo assigned to locations were later changed by subsequent navigational expeditions (as most of Cabrillo's maps were lost or damaged) (NPS, 2015; Engstrand, 1997). A sixteenth-century royal cosmographer in Spain who ultimately closed out Cabrillo's records for King Carlos I did so with the brief bureaucratic notation, "No ymporta" (unimportant) (Kelsey, 1984, p. 324). Yet Cabrillo's landing in San Diego, which marked the first European presence in the region, would ultimately establish a colonial stake that would lead to the formation of Nueva California or what would later be known as Alta California ("Upper California"), a province of New Spain, some two centuries later (ibid). For that Cabrillo's journey is in many ways significant, both logistically for empire and the ways in which it would eventually alter the lives of the Native peoples that inhabited California, but also

within the public memory and regional identity of a people who, though they would never claim allegiance to Spain, would ultimately harness the seeming gallantry and nobility of the Spanish empire to weave within their own Western origin story (See Figures 2.3 and 2.4).



Figure 2.3: “Cabrillo’s landing in 1542 as re-enacted and filmed in San Diego, August 2016, by the National Park Service” (Kramer, 2016, p. 237). From W. Kramer, 2016, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, citizen of Guatemala and native of Palma del Río: New sources from the sixteenth century, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 62(3/4), p. 237. Copyright 2016 by San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 2.4: A reconstructed version of one of Cabrillo’s ships, the “San Salvador in full sail during the San Diego Parade of Ships, Festival of Sail, September 2, 2016. Photo by Maggie Walton” (Kramer, 2016, p. 240). From W. Kramer, 2016, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, citizen of Guatemala and native of Palma del Río: New sources from the sixteenth century, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 62(3/4), p. 240. Copyright 2016 by San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Sixty years after Cabrillo's landing, the bay and its surrounding area was given the new name of San Diego De Alcalá by Spanish merchant, explorer, and diplomat Sebastián Vizcaíno while mapping the Alta California coastline for Spain in 1602 (Mathes, 1972; NPS, 2015; Engstrand, 1997). Unlike with Cabrillo's advance party, a hundred Kumeyaay met Vizcaíno's landing party at the shores--this time armed and according to the chronicler of the voyage, "yelling noisily" at them (Bolton, 1916, p. 80; Bancroft, 1884; Bokovoy, 2005). Instructed to avoid retaliation, the Spaniards once again elected to utilize gifts, accompanied even with an embrace of the Kumeyaay males, to assuage fears (Bokovoy, 2005). Vizcaíno's expedition remained in the San Diego Bay for ten days, during which the Kumeyaay brought the Spaniards gifts such as animal skins and took them to their homes or what the Spaniards called "rancherías," possibly to appease them and hasten their departure (ibid, p. 7). Vizcaíno's party did eventually leave--yet, they did so with the opinion that San Diego's sheltered harbor and relatively peaceful Indians would serve the empire well for any future Spanish settlement. It took the Spanish empire 167 years to act upon Vizcaíno's assessment as Alta California's remote location, conflicts with interior Natives, lower Mexico's abundant natural riches, colonization efforts in the Philippines, cryptic tensions between the crown and Jesuit missionaries, and Spain's increasingly thinning economic and human resources made settling Alta California a low priority (Starr, 2007; Eldredge, 1909; Mörner, 2004). However, as other colonial powers began honing in on the Pacific Coast, Carlos III, then ruler of the Spanish empire, decided if Spain was to settle and control the land claimed by Cabrillo over two centuries earlier it had to act (Starr, 2007). Thus, it would be the subsequent 1769 arrival of two primary Spanish colonial regimes--the military and the church--that would narratively sediment San Diego, and specifically Old Town, as "The Birthplace of California."

2.3 Convert, Civilize, and Exploit: Establishing a Permanent Settlement

In 1769 Spain established the first permanent European settlement on the Pacific Coast, erecting both a military outpost (or *presidio*) and a mission on a hill above a lower lying plain that is now Old Town San Diego (Bokovoy, 2005; McGrew, 1922). Founded by Gaspar de Portolá, commander of New Spain's colonizing expedition and newly appointed Governor of the Californias, the fort was the main base of Spain's colonial operations and as such was strategically located on a bluff overlooking the bay and surrounding areas, providing Spanish military forces with a visual advantage against possible Indian attacks or foreign invasions (NPS, n.d.-c). The previous year, in 1768, Portolá and Franciscan⁸ priest Junipero Serra, leader of the expedition's missionary front, set out with a colonial force of 300 from colonized Loreto in Baja California to travel the more than 900 miles north to Alta California (Bean & Rawls, 1983; NPS, n.d.-c). In addition to Portolá and Serra, the brigade comprised of other clergy, a contingent of Christian Indians, and a band of Spanish soldiers and officers. Three sub-groups traveled by sea and two others, including Portolá and Serra's company, made the trek by land via mule. Captain Fernando Rivera y Moncada led the advancing mule train tasked both with building a wagon trail and quelling Natives on the path (Burrus, 1970). The advance team also set out well ahead of Portolá and Serra as the friar was suffering from a debilitating foot injury and leg infection, an ailment which Portolá later documented as possibly being cancerous (Breschini, 2000; Geiger, 1959). Advising Portolá to start ahead of him, Friar Serra "withdrew within himself to commune with God to ask that He would grant him some slight alleviation," comfort that eventually

⁸ Serra was Franciscan, as the Jesuits who had previously operated and managed Spanish missionary projects in Baja California and elsewhere had been seemingly abruptly and mysteriously ousted in 1767 by Carlos III from Spain and its colonies and replaced with the Franciscan order (Mörner, 2004; Dunn, 1937; Bolton, 1917). This decision was most likely a precursor of the Bourbon Reforms of 1768 which sought to strengthen the crown's power, especially over the Catholic Church, and modernize Spain (Farriss, 1968).

arrived in the form of a poultice made by a muleteer allowing him to finally make way and eventually rejoin Portolá (Paulo, 1913 (2009), p. 72). Traveling north in the name of God and King, the contingents sought to convert the Natives of Alta California to Catholicism by which they would become productive Spanish subjects willing to fight for and defend the crown (Castañeda, 1993). If successful, their expedition would also protect Spain's geopolitical interests against Russia's imminent advancement south from their holdings in present-day Alaska, and Britain's westward march across Canada, which additionally placed the Pacific Coast firmly in Anglican colonial sights (Medina & Genet, 2015; Haycox, 2017; DeNevi & Moholy, 1985; Cook, 1973).

On July 1, 1769, Serra and what was left of their land expedition finally joined the advance land group and the equally diminished sea travelers on the banks of the San Diego Bay (NPS, n.d.-b). Most of the Christian Indians traveling with Serra died of malnutrition on the journey when military officers withheld rations from Natives as food supplies dwindled (Bean & Rawls, 1983). And many of the Indians who escaped starvation eventually deserted (ibid). Hopeful to see the built edifices of the *presidio* and mission upon their arrival, the land expeditions were instead greeted with an incomplete fort and the dismal sight of a cemetery and a makeshift camp for the sick and those wounded from an earlier Indian attack (Bokovoy, 2005; Weber, 2014). The sea voyagers, one group whose inadvertent mis-navigation resulted in 200 additional miles of travel and a subsequent depletion of provisions, had themselves sustained substantial losses, mostly due to scurvy (Bean & Rawls, 1983). In the end, 126 men of the original 300 made it to the shores of Alta California (ibid; NPS, n.d.-b). And of those survivors, more continued to perish from scurvy and exposure to the elements in their rudimentary camp, as their weakened bodies suffered even in Alta California's moderate climate (Eldredge, 1909).

Anxious to complete their assignment the remaining healthy forces were met with continued Native resistance. The Kumeyaay of 1769 were not easily subdued, regularly taking the offensive against the Spaniards' intrusions and pillaging the anchored vessels--according to ships' logs, the "heathens of the village near the harbor are so inclined to theft that they approach...in their little tule canoes and...attempt to steal what they can lay hands on" (Bancroft, 1884; Bolton, 1917, Bokovoy, 2005, p. 7).

However, on July 16, 1769, two weeks after his arrival, Padre Serra and three other clergy blessed a site on Presidio Hill, establishing Spanish California's first mission, San Diego de Alcalá, a small brush chapel adjacent to the still in-progress *presidio* (NPS, n.d.-b; Engstrand, 2005). Five years later Serra and his successor, Father Luís Jayme, would eventually move the mission away from the *presidio* to its present location several miles upriver in Mission Valley in an effort to relieve the Kumeyaay of consistent abuse by presidial soldiers. Many present day governmental and commercial sources, however, primarily attribute this relocation to an inadequate water supply. According to these present day narratives, Jayme, with Serra's approval, chose to move the mission along the San Diego River "to ensure a good water supply" as original "water supplies were insufficient" for their agricultural needs, and because the "strong military presence at the San Diego Presidio *seemed to deter* the Native people Serra was trying to reach" and "*made it difficult to build trust* with the Kumeyaay." (San Diego Tourism Authority, 2018; NPS, n.d.-b, italics added). Historical records, however, indicate that the military presence did not "seem to" deter Indian trust. Instead, presidial forces engaged in regular onslaughts of sexual violence, theft, and abuse upon the Kumeyaay people. In a letter to a Franciscan official in Mexico City, Friar Jayme complained of the behavior, claiming it was derailing attempts at conversion and subsequent loyalty to the crown as the Indians did not feel safe in and around the

mission--or even in their own villages where most were still residing. Until 1779, due to a lack of food and accommodations, most mission neophytes were allowed to remain in their tribal communities (Fages, 1787 diary in Cook, 1976). Yet even in their own villages, the presidial soldiers struck regularly. In his letter of complaint, Friar Jayme described how soldiers routinely entered Kumeyaay villages to steal food, graze their animals on Kumeyaay crops, and to even “lasso Indian women---who then became prey for their unbridled lust. [And the] several Indian men who tried to defend the women were shot to death” (Jayme, 1772; Bokovoy, 2005, p. 2). As the *presidio*'s military commander was unperturbed by the soldiers' sexual transgressions (these abuses also regularly occurred in other California missions connected to *presidios*) and as the military routinely drained the mission's food and supplies, in his letter Father Jayme formally petitioned Church leadership to remove the mission from the *presidio* site (Castaneda, 1993; Bokovoy, 2005).

Yet even without these military assaults, the missionary project was not often attractive to the Kumeyaay given the overall (even if tacitly expressed) missionary imperative to “convert...civilize...[and] exploit,” (Bolton, 1917, p. 43). Thus, these often-oppressive conditions contributed to a protracted state of Indian resistance and revolt during the San Diego mission's early years as the Natives of San Diego had become “some of the most militant in the Californias” (Castaneda, 1993; Bokovoy, 2005, p. 7). Recognizing the dangers of the mission system to their established ways of life--even before living within mission walls became compulsory--villages both “Christian” (in that most of their tribal members had been formally ‘converted’) and “heathen” alike, joined forces to resist missionary authority and occupation, some coming from as far as Yuma territory (Cook, 1976, p. 66). Many insurrections were planned and/or led by Indian women and some were orchestrated by former Indian neophytes,

including the 1775 raid (the first of many along the coast) in which eight hundred Natives representing more than eight villages attacked and razed the newly moved San Diego mission, killing Father Jayme and two artisans while seriously wounding soldiers (Bokovoy, 2005; Castaneda, 1993; Cook, 1976; Weber, 2014). When asked in subsequent testimony taken by Rivera y Moncada (the captain who had originally led the advance mule train in the Portolá expedition), why they had revolted, the neophyte organizers' answer was simple: they wanted to "live as they did before" baptism and the missionary presence (Cook, 1976, p. 66). After the rebellion, Father Jayme became the first martyr of Spanish California. The remaining Franciscan forces rebuilt the mission, slogged through years of chronic deprivation and hunger, and took note, as the insurrection would have lasting influence on the subsequent "Indian policy" of Franciscan leadership across the colony (ibid, p. 65; Weber, 2014). Despite these uprisings and acts of resistance, Father Serra, on behalf of the Spanish crown and in the name of the Holy Father, systematically planted the first nine of Spain's 21 California missions extending from San Diego to San Francisco, laying a critical colonial network that secured land, captive Indian labor, and a sociocultural order that would advance Spain's physical prominence in the region for decades and contribute to a nostalgic significance that would persist until the present day.

2.4 Unremarkable and Remote: San Diego as an Early Spanish Settlement

By the early nineteenth century the settlement at San Diego was relatively self-sufficient. A small community (now known as Old Town) arose at the base of the hill, acting as a hub of trading and commerce for Indians and Spaniards alike (Bokovoy, 2005). The mission was producing an agricultural surplus through its various labor regimes for both neophyte and gentile Indians while the *presidio* also helped to control the local Kumeyaay (ibid). Overt abuses continued within the missions, Serra himself testified to what he considered judicious uses of the

whip, claiming “spiritual fathers should punish their sons, the Indians, with blows,” and in a San Diego 1987 oral history, 73 year-old Kumeyaay chairman Tony Pinto shared his grandparents’ stories of Indian life in the mission where the Kumeyaay were “slaves [who] did all the work” and were locked up, fed little, and beaten or killed when too sick or resistant to work (Sandos, 1988, p.1254; Costo & Costo, 1987, p. 139). However, growing scholarship also adds nuance to the complex ways in which Mission Indians who did not retreat inland experienced, rejected, accepted, and/or negotiated various forms of acculturation into mission life (Jackson & Castillo, 1996; Lightfoot, 2006; Sandos, 2004). For example, early practices of colonial–Indigenous intermarriage, often encouraged by early missionaries, tethered Natives (most often women and their children) to colonists in complex and intricate ways (Voss, 2008; Lightfoot, 2006; Rothschild, 2003). Additionally, even without the bonds of marriage, various ties of mission life still persisted. For instance, once baptized, Mission Indian children were renamed and returned to their homes (traveling back and forth between the mission and villages) until their parents affiliated as well (Haas, 2013). Then at the age of nine, seen then as the onset of adulthood, baptized children were separated from their families and placed into gender segregated dormitories where they would remain until marriage, some eventually marrying and even raising children in the faith (ibid). Though most California Indian recruits only survived mission life for ten to twelve years (due to cramped quarters and European diseases which also severely decreased birth rates), early nineteenth-century conversions were actually ahead of projections despite overall Indian decline as the Indian coastal population fell from 60,000 in 1769 to 35,000 in 1800 (Weber, 2014). As most of the Indians who perished were either very young or elderly, and thus not part of the missions’ core productive labor force, these deaths actually reduced the missions’ economic bottom lines, as they could house and feed those who mainly physically

contributed, creating an economic reality in which missions “expanded even as Indians died” (ibid, p. 193). Thus, according to Spanish calculations, the settlement’s economy was relatively stable, conditions were relatively peaceful, and the California governor declared San Diego life as “uneventful” (Bokovoy, 2005, p. 9) As prominent nineteenth/early twentieth-century historian and California romanticist Hubert Howe Bancroft characterized it, San Diego was at the time the “dullest place in the province” (ibid, p. 9).

However, San Diego’s (and Alta California’s at large) non-Indian population was still relatively low as no dependable overland route existed from more concentrated regions of New Spain to the remote province, curbing the effective import of key necessities including troops, single women, married colonists, supplies, and livestock (ibid). As the Spanish colonial government forbade foreign settlement at the time, it tried to increase the numbers of Spanish-speaking, mainly Roman Catholic, settlers from other Spanish colonies including Chile and Peru, and more populated regions of northern and western Mexico, wooing settlers with promises of food, clothing, equipment, land, and temporarily waived taxes (Nunis, 1997; Old Town San Diego BID, 2013). It was a political calculation that did not sit well with many Californios (native born Spanish-speaking descendants of the original Spanish colonists and escort soldiers in Alta California, most of whom were of mixed Indigenous and/or African descent) (Hurtado, 1999; See Figure 2.5). This strategy to alter Alta California’s demographics was not the only source of unrest. Though Spain and its colonial officials might have characterized conditions in San Diego as “uneventful” and the province of Alta California as unremarkable and remote, multiple converging factors were hurtling the region towards a war for independence from Spain’s colonial authority.



Figure 2.5: Pío Pico, a first generation Californio, his wife María Ignacia Alvarado, and their daughters. Pico's paternal grandmother was a Mulata and his paternal grandfather was a Mestizo. He was a rancher, politician, and was the last governor of Alta California during Mexican rule serving from 1845 – 1846. From W. Estrada, October 10, 2017, The life and times of Pío Pico, last governor of Mexican California [Web article]. Copyright by Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

2.5 A Colony “Twice Removed”: Alta California’s Growing Unrest

Alta California’s physical and representational distance from Spain both geographically and politically isolated the province. Geographically, the region was on the outer edges of the territory of New Spain, making it a colony “twice removed” (Pitt, 1998, p. 2). And politically, colonial laws privileged the Spanish-born elite (or *peninsulares*) living in New Spain as representatives of the crown (Guedea, 2009; Pitt, 1998). In fact, colonial mandates granted *peninsulares* advantages not only over the mixed-race and local-born Californios, but even over upper caste *criollos* who like *peninsulares* were legally Spaniards. As they could be no more

than 1/8 non-Spanish blooded, *criollos* were of near to ‘full-blooded’ Spanish ancestry. But unlike *peninsulares* they were locally, and not Spanish, born. Furthermore, generations of miscegenation led to a plethora of racial combinations within the region, as three races (in this case: European, African, and, Indigenous) can produce up to thirty-nine different multiracial combinations by the third generation of mixing (Guerrero, 2010). Thus, since Spanish America’s social stratification could not rely upon clearly defined races, authorities instead constructed a complex racialized colonial order based on *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) and produced a hierarchical classification (or *sistema de castes*) which directly correlated to proportions of Spanish, Indigenous, and African ancestry (ibid, Martínez, 2008; See Figure 2.6). These mixed populations were by no means a minority. To the contrary, in many regions they outnumbered ‘pure-blooded’ Spaniards (Marshall, 1939; Nash, 1995). For example, in 1781 twenty-six of Los Angeles’ forty-four founders were of African descent (Estrada, 2018).

Spanish Racial Designations	
<i>Español</i>	Offspring of a Spaniard and a Spaniard
<i>Mestizo</i>	Offspring of a Spaniard and an Indian
<i>Mulato</i>	Offspring of a Spaniard and an African
<i>Indio</i>	Offspring of an Indian and an Indian
<i>Coyote</i>	Offspring of a mestizo and an Indian
<i>Lobo</i>	Offspring of a black, mestizo, or mulato and an Indian
<i>Morisco</i>	Offspring of a Spaniard and a mulato
<i>Chino</i>	Offspring of a lobo and a black or Indian; of a mulato and an Indian; of a coyote and a mulato; or of a Spaniard and a morisco.

Figure 2.6: Spanish racial designations organized by a larger caste rubric. From A. I. Castañeda, 2000, *Hispanas and Hispanos in a Mestizo Society*, *OAH Magazine of History*, 14(4), p. 30. Copyright 2000 by Organization of American Historians. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Heightening tensions, Alta California's geographic and political isolation also fostered a medieval-based system of provincialism (Pitt, 1998). Though the Bourbon Reforms of 1768⁹ were meant to limit the colonial powers of the church and create more self-sufficient northern provinces, in practice this aspect of the reformation was rarely carried out in provincial locations (Bokovoy, 2005). Instead, the Franciscan missions of Alta California (none of which were led by Californios) could subordinate surrounding areas and their residents according to the mission's inclinations (Pitt, 1998). Additionally, across the ocean in Spain, the kingdom was facing an avalanche of political turmoil. Not only was the empire as geographically stretched as it had been since fifteenth-century conquistadores had first laid claims in the Americas for the crown, but domestically the kingdom was facing economic crises, an eventual Napoleonic occupation, and temporary royal abdications, which offered colonies further argument for self-governance in the absence of 'legitimate' Spanish rule (Weber, 1982; Reinhart & Rogoff, 2008; Shubert, 2003; Anna 2001). Add to these circumstances the continued cultural and intellectual influences of the nascence of nationalism, the Enlightenment, and an emerging liberal tradition which even in the far reaches of the Spanish empire had begun to champion reason and individualism over tradition (Pitt, 1998; Savelle, 1974; Weber, 1982; Bokovoy, 2005; Rodríguez O., 2007), and New Spain's eventual 1810 call for independence and equality seems nearly inevitable as it united conservative *criollos*, Californios, liberal clergy, rural populists, and other aggrieved factions across the colony. In 1821, after a decade of armed conflict, including various guerilla skirmishes, the final Viceroy of New Spain resigned (Saldaña & Gil, 2009). And on August 24 of the same year a small cadre of Spanish representatives, including the resigned Viceroy, signed the Treaty of Córdoba granting New Spain--now the royal Mexican

⁹ See Footnote #8.

Empire, its independence, thereby ending three centuries of Spanish colonial rule (though the Spanish government at large would not officially recognize the colony's independence until 1836) (ibid).

In the end, the *kingdom* of Mexico--a fledgling empire state--was a brief lived experiment that would ultimately transition into a democratic republic within two years (a republic to which Alta California would belong for over two decades before American conquest). The only former Spanish colony to establish a monarchy post-independence, Mexico initially attempted to continue monarchic rule as it was a key component of three core guarantees around which the diverse independence factions had finally united. Also known as the Plan of Iguala, and championed by General Agustín de Iturbide, a *criollo* and formal royalist officer, the “Three Guarantees” sought the following (Weber, 1982, p. 6; Anna, 1985): First, the revolutionaries that banded together to overthrow Spanish rule agreed that upon independence their new constitutional empire state would be independent, but it would be governed by a conservative European monarch. Second, local-born *criollos* and Spanish-born *peninsulares* living in the empire would enjoy the same rights and privileges (in fact there would be no more race and class distinctions at all). And third, the Roman Catholic Church would remain the official religion of the land still possessing its same privileges and power as when the empire was under Spanish authority. Attempting to appease a few remaining royalists, the Mexican Congress appealed to Ferdinand VII, the re-established King of Spain, proposing that he serve as Emperor to Mexico (though the empire state would still govern itself as an independent commonwealth). In response King Ferdinand refused to acknowledge Mexico's independence (Anna, 1985). Given that their appeal had been a political stunt to please the last Mexicans still loyal to the Spanish crown, the congress then pivoted to the appeal's provisional clause should the Spanish monarch refuse--

governing by another conservative European prince, most likely from the House of Bourbon which originated in France but had produced monarchs in Spain and Italy, and if the Mexican congress had its way--now in the “New World” (Weber, 1982). However, Ferdinand also decreed that no other European prince could ascend to Mexico’s throne (ibid). The congress finally turned to General Agustín de Iturbide, the champion of the “Three Guarantees,” to serve as interim head of government as a constitutional emperor until a monarch could be chosen, though some even called for Iturbide to simply assume the throne himself (ibid, Anna, 1985). For the next two years, the new empire-state existed in a state of protracted turmoil as political skirmishes, economic trials, power jockeying, an attempted coup, a subsequent dissolution of Congress, provincial withdrawals from the empire, and finally Iturbide’s isolation and abdication, took its toll on the young empire until its eventual collapse in 1823, ushering in a re-drafted Constitution which represented a final rejection of monarchical rule and the establishment of a new democratic nation-state: the First Mexican Republic (Benson, 2014; Anna, 1985; Anna, 2001). It was a democratic state that would attempt to harness an emerging liberal tradition (Busch, 1983; Osio, 1986; Rodríguez O., 2007) while facing new challenges of self-governance, internal rancor, bouts of despotism, a rising oligarchal class, and a geopolitical landscape in which their newly independent territory was still very much in play for international conquest.

Chapter 2 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.
Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

CHAPTER THREE:

American Conquest 1821 – 1872

3.1 Creating Democracy Anew: Mexico's Emerging Liberal Tradition

Upon its founding the new republic began to produce a wave of progressive policies. In fact, despite contemporary views that often perceive liberalism as “alien and ill-suited to the Spanish world...liberalism constituted an integral part of Hispanic political culture” (Rodríguez, 2007, p. xi; Hale, 1968, 2014; Hernandez-Chavez, 2005). The 1821 Plan of Iguala had already called for the eradication of social and legal classifications by race and class (though gender equality was given no attention). And by 1829, the First Mexican Republic, then led by an Afro-Mestizo President Vicente Guerrero, abolished slavery more than three decades before their American neighbors (Vincent, 2001; Bauer, 1974/1992, See Figure 3.1). The young republic's leaders also set about the arduous task of creating new democratic institutions including a civil judicial system, and for first time since the onset of colonial rule large subsets of the new nation began to envision the promise of increased political voice (Weber, 1982). Furthermore, from 1831 to 1839 Mexico formally secularized the mission system--once one of the most powerful economic, political, and sociocultural infrastructures in colonial Spain and Mexico (Robinson, 1979; Pitt, 1998). Unimposed secularization had always been the goal of the missionary system as missions were meant to convert and ‘civilize’ Mission Indians until they successfully transitioned from reliant wards into productive and tithing members of self-sustaining parishes (Weber, 1982; Bokovoy, 2005; Castañeda, 1993). However, this transformation rarely truly took place--and in instances when Mission Indians did generate substantial agricultural or artisanal



Figure 3.1: Mexican President Vicente Guerrero (1850. Oil on canvas, by Anacleto Escutia. Museo Nacional de Historia, Castillo de Chapultepec, Mexico). Born in 1783 in a town near Acapulco called Tixtla (which was home to many Afro-Mexicans) Guerrero joined the 1810 revolution against Spain under the mentorship of another mulatto, General José María Morelos y Pavón, beginning his involvement in political life (Gates, Jr., 2012). After his second unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1828, Guerrero and his supporters claimed political foul play after his 1828 bid, toppling the government and establishing Guerrero as president (ibid). From H. L. Gates, Jr., November 5, 2012, North America's first black president? [Web article], *The Root*, retrieved from <https://www.theroot.com/north-americas-1st-black-president-1790894000> Copyright 2012 by Gizmodo Media Group. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

income, these monies were generally usurped by the Spanish military or faraway papal authorities (Bokovoy, 2005). Additionally, in many regions missions were already declining by the end of Spanish rule due to military aggravation and a reluctance of Spanish clerical recruits to come to a rebellious colony (though their power remained relatively firm in provincial Alta California) (Weber, 1982; Pitt, 1998). And some ecclesiastical authorities had begun to doubt

the reality of ever truly ‘civilizing’ the Natives of the New World in full (Lightfoot, 2006). During Mexican rule many liberals argued for the rights of Mission Indians and sought to pursue “political and social reforms divorced...from the Church” (Connaughton, 2005, p. 183). They viewed secularization as not only emancipatory, but also as part of a larger ensemble of “anticorporate” initiatives that would replace traditional authority regimes (e.g. the church, army, guilds, etc.) with a “regime of legal uniformity” (Hale, 2014, p. 4). Conservative factions also supported the move given the benefit to the Mexican government of making the missions mere places of worship, and removing the church’s monopoly over prime land and Indian labor (Weber, 1982; Bokovoy, 2005; Monroy, 1997).

After secularization most California mission land was sold or given away in *ranchos* (or large grants), including Mission San Diego (Bokovoy, 2005). Like in other parts of Alta California, a portion of the San Diego mission land was also given to Indians to be administered by the government through pseudo wardships. But within a matter of years their land (and the land of other Californian Indians) was “lost or given up” to ranchos by Californio administrators who ranged from incompetent to greedy to overwhelmed by external pressures to release the land (Engstrand, 2005, p. 64; Monroy, 1997). As major beneficiaries of the new rancho system, certain Californio families came to prominence in the early years of Mexican independence, most through lucrative agricultural and hide and tallow enterprises on ranchos, facilitating the establishment of a new oligarchic caste in the region (Pitt, 1998; Gibb, 2018). Given their Indigenous roots, many Californios also professed a particular empathy with the Natives dislocated by both the establishment and the disbanding of the mission system. Notably, however, this empathy was often framed in paternalistic rhetoric that self-identified Californios

as *gente de razón*¹ (people of reason) and positioned Californios as both logical heirs to mission land and the most appropriate guardians for the Indians' well-being, as they were amenable to providing the newly unmoored Natives with the stability of rancho wage labor (Bokovoy, 2005; Monroy, 1997). Beyond these grand estates, most Californios held modest farms, other small-scale operations, or even labored as artisans or rancho foremen; yet and still a sense of optimism spurred many in Alta California to seek out further opportunities for growth--even encouraging foreign trade, investment, and settlement, often to Mexico City's apprehension (Weber, 1982; Monroy, 1997).

3.2 Growing Pains: The Young Republic's Internal Strife

Despite these developments, or in many ways because of them, maintaining the new republic was no simple task. The largest of all of Spain's former colonies (See Figure 3.2), the First Mexican Republic stretched north until it butted up against Oregon Country (as the American government referred to the disputed territory in the Pacific Northwest where Indigenous, American, British, and French-Canadian people, interests, and land claims collided). It extended southeast to the Federal Republic of Central America, a republican democracy recently un-annexed from Spain and then from Mexico's short-lived empire. And it was met by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Gulf of Mexico to its east. Given this expanse of 1.7 million miles of pueblos, remote areas, and a multitude of ethnicities and social distinctions (even if they were no longer legally recognized), the act of governing this in many

¹ The term *gente de razón* derives from the use of the phrase *sin razón* (without reason) used during the Spanish Inquisition that released Indians from heretical culpability based on a logic which insisted that Indians attained a childlike inability to decipher right from wrong and thus could not be held theologically accountable for their heretical actions. In Spanish California, Californios began to self-identify as *gente de razón*: Spanish speaking, Roman Catholics who eschewed the 'baser' instinctual behavior of their Indigenous ancestry, choosing instead the 'reasoned' life of "work, community, and the Crown" (Monroy, 1997, p. 179).

ways disparate new nation was soon fraught with economic turmoil, instability, and even violence.



Figure 3.2: Map of the Mexican Republic in 1824. From Harvard University, Historical Studies A-23, n.d., Democracy, equality, and development in Mexico [Digital map gallery], retrieved April 29, 2019, from http://people.fas.harvard.edu/~hsa23/map_gallery.html Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Among other concerns, conservative landowners lobbied for a robust central government and a confessional state in opposition to liberal and republican demands for limited federal government, strong individual state authority, and a secularized nation (Tutino, 1988). Additionally, Mexico’s early attempts at self-governance failed to gain and sustain a sense of consistency and security. In 1835 the First Mexican Republic transformed into the more conservative Centralist Republic of Mexico--a centralized nation state which sought to curb

federalist excess and offer a more unified national identity (Weber, 1982; Bethell, 1991). But this transition was not the last. In just a few decades, the young republic created multiple constitutions and underwent dozens of governmental revolutions, most the result of coups (eleven of them led by the charismatic, opportunistic, and despotic General Antonio López de Santa Anna) (SRE, 2018; Weber, 1982; Stevens, 1991). And, despite earlier progressive policies regarding class, conservative governments when in power, began to embrace and promote political agendas that would endow power and voting rights for propertied males of means (Anna, 1985). Additionally, liberal states-rights policies that did remain in practice were not of much use in many disenfranchised regions. As was the case under the Spanish empire, Mexico's northern frontier continued to experience pointed political and geographic isolation even under republican governance. Physically, no roads adjoined many of the remote northern provinces to one another, and some provinces such as Alta California were as far as almost 2,000 miles from the nation's central seat of power in Mexico City. Representationally, they felt little connection. Alta California was one of the few provinces (including New Mexico, Sonora, and Texas) in which the 1824 Constitution did not grant full statehood (Weber, 1982). This lack of designation left the province without its own state constitution or legislature and without the same political benefits enjoyed by most sovereign states within the republic (ibid). Additionally, despite the supposed overhaul of the judiciary after independence, Alta California's perpetual provincial status meant that much of its legal system was still comprised of Spanish law, exacerbating the region's lack of political and legal autonomy and complicating issues from criminal matters to property disputes (ibid). These challenges fostered frustrations among many San Diegans including Peruvian born Juan Bandini, a central figure in early to mid-nineteenth-century San Diego affairs who began to publicly wonder if Alta California would better prosper if aligned

with another nation (Pitt, 1998). Thus, within the first twenty years of independence, northern national pride and optimism eroded as the region failed to experience the full promise of their new republican state. And as various governmental stakeholders in Mexico City battled between liberal federated or conservative centralist ideologies, many in the northern provinces felt abandoned by both political factions.

Not only did provinces such as Alta California feel slighted by the legislative and judiciary branches of their government in a faraway capital, they were also contending with local military and Indian aggressions. Many areas within Alta California were governed by non-local military officials whose ever growing payrolls were still the responsibility of regional municipalities--often driving these local areas into crippling debt. In 1835, the presidial community of San Diego was finally granted the status of *pueblo* (or town), extending to its citizens a wider range of rights and self-governance, only after a letter of complaint detailed abuses of the local military government (Weber, 1982). Furthermore, after decades of various forms of mistreatment, dislocation, and abuse, and as some Californios began to go “in the wild” to pursue Indian land beyond ex-mission territories, many non-Mission Indians were actively on the offensive and defensive as inland tribes and Mission deserters began to attack coastal communities with increased regularity and intensity seemingly “losing all fear of the inhabitants” (Monroy, 1997, p. 191; Weber, 1982, p. 93). Most heavily attacked in Alta California² was the small pueblo of San Diego which was periodically evacuated and soon described as “almost deserted” as settlers abandoned their outlying ranches and the town’s population plummeted from 520 in 1830 to 150 in 1840, causing the settlement to lose its newly minted designation of

² These uprisings were by no means the only within Mexico as provinces such as New Mexico were also heavily entrenched in the Comanche-Mexican and Apache-Mexican wars (Hämäläinen, 2008.; Vandervort, 2007; Roberts, 1994).

pueblo in 1837 just two years after its classification (Weber, 1982, p. 93; Engstrand, 2005; Monroy, 1997). Thus, by the mid 1830s the outer regions were experiencing a complex combination of rancho growth and decline, enlightenment and disenfranchisement, national pride and frustration, and between 1836-1838 various provinces engaged in a series of revolts, most notably immigrant-heavy Texas, which ultimately declared its independence from Mexico in 1836 (Montejano, 1987).

3.3 From Colony to ‘Neocolony’: Mexico’s Post-Independence Vulnerability

These internal political tensions were only part of a larger ensemble of vulnerabilities placing the new republic in legitimate jeopardy. Economically, Mexico seemingly transitioned from a colony dependent on Spain to an industrial “neocolony” dependent upon Britain, France, and the United States for the bulk of its imports and lending (Weber, 1982, p. 122; Stevens, 1991). Thus, though finally politically autonomous, severing ties with a land and maritime global power with access to a colonial network of human, material, and natural resources in concert with internal conflict meant that “independence transformed Mexico from Spain's largest and most prosperous colony to a sovereign nation suffering economic decline and political strife” (Stevens 1991, p. 1). Mexico also faced a myriad of external challenges that threatened its security. Most notably, the removal of Spain from the political field of play had in no way slowed down or alleviated the external threat of re-conquest. In many ways it accelerated it. Mexican territory, including Alta California with its coastal access, continued to be highly desired land and other colonial powers were still gunning for its occupation. And Spain’s loss of its colonial largesse only validated these other powers’ intuitions that Mexican land could in fact be seized--especially from a fledgling nation-state whose citizenry and leadership included mixed-race descendants of Indigenous and African colonial sailors, slaves, and scouts.

Adding to this precariousness was the weakened state of the Mexican army. The over ten-year battle for independence had cost the young nation 200,000 lives (Anna, 1985). After the revolution, the Mexican government continued operation of four Spanish presidios, including San Diego's, but troop levels waned and by the 1840s the forts had fallen into disrepair (Weber, 1982). In fact, even under Spanish rule, the hold on the Californias had been tenuous. When observing Spanish California in the late eighteenth century, George Vancouver (a British officer in the Royal Navy) noted the province's fragile defenses at the entrance of the San Francisco Bay and marveled that the territory was held by Spain at all, musing that with any substantial military force its rich land could most certainly be seized and occupied (Starr, 1986). Thus, whether citing cultural ties, analogous resources, gross mismanagement, or manifest destiny, various nations sought to advance narratives that positioned them as rightful heirs to the bounty that Indigenous groups, including the Kumeyaay people of Mexico's Alta California, had once inhabited and managed without much external interference less than eight decades prior. And as the midpoint of the nineteenth century approached, the Kumeyaay population had simultaneously fought against, lived amongst, married with, and for some, retreated inland from, the settlers as a mix of newcomers circled in and around Alta California placing settlements such as San Diego at the precipice of yet another conquest.

3.4 Barbarians at the Gate: Mexico at the Precipice of Conquest

Of all the countries interested in annexing some or all of Mexico's territorial holdings, the relatively young United States was the closest geographically, and perhaps even relationally as a substantial contingent of American settlers already resided in Mexico. This proximity, however, in no way guaranteed its conquest of Mexican territory as it had formidable competition. Just as Spain's royal government had predicted when it dispatched Portolá and

Serra to Alta California in 1768, Russia and Britain still envisioned Slavic and Anglican Californias. Russia's southward progression from Alaska to California seemed a logical goal as the southern coastal region could support its established northern fur trade and a military Pacific fleet, as well as grow crops in its more fertile environment than the Russian homeland (Starr, 1986). In fact, during Spanish rule, Count Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov, a forty-two-year-old diplomat of the Russian American Fur Company toiled over and created a Russian annexation scheme including proposed commercial agreements with the Spanish crown and winning the hand of fifteen-year-old Doña Concepción de Arguello, the daughter of the commandant of the San Francisco *presidio* (ibid; Castañeda, 1990). Eager to set the plan in motion after his engagement, Rezanov hastily departed Alta California for an ambitious administrative tour that would take him to St. Petersburg (for the Czar's permission to marry a Catholic), to Rome (where he would then seek papal permission as a non-Catholic to marry his well-connected fiancée), to Madrid and Mexico City before returning to California for his nuptials (Starr, 1986; Castañeda, 1990). Disregarding caution, the count threw himself into the overland portion of the first leg of his journey where the Siberian winter eventually exacted its price and on March 1, 1807 he succumbed to fever and exhaustion (ibid). For years, Doña Concepción, Rezanov's betrothed, awaited her fiancé's return until she ultimately learned of his death and later in life took vows and devoted herself to charitable works (Castañeda, 1990). And though there were other Russian attempts to obtain California (including the 1812 establishment of a fort north of San Francisco), none have been as romanticized as Rezanov's--an annexation scheme that ultimately perished with him in bureaucratic oblivion.

British plans were no more successful. Originally they pointed to history--though arriving after the Spaniards and perhaps with less flourish than the slashing of trees and pouring

of ocean water, Sir Francis Drake had left a stoic brass plate in the vicinity of San Francisco, claiming California for Britain in 1579 (Starr, 1986; Fink & Polushkin, 1939; Heizer, 1947). There was also the matter of a \$50 million debt owed to Britain from Mexico, which some British merchants suggested could be met by establishing a California Company modeled after the East India Company or Hudson's Bay, which would position Britain's imperial aspirations in California quite favorably (Engelson, 1939; Starr, 1986). Additionally, Britain had a physical presence in the region as Englishmen were soon becoming established in California, many even marrying Indian women, setting up ranches, and raising Californian children (Starr, 1986). Then there was the tie of religion for the northern region of the United Kingdom. In fact, in 1845 an Irish priest, Father Eugene McNamara, offered the Mexican government the tactic of sending thousands of Irish families to settle California to establish a human and ideological barrier against the packs of "Methodist wolves" invading the area (ibid, p. 11, Martinez, 2012). As the proposal included Mexico granting tracts of land to these families, some historians wonder if McNamara's plan was simply a scheme made in collusion with a London firm to acquire Mexican land (ibid). British Catholics were, however, not the only interested parties who attempted to appeal to a common culture with Mexico. French officials courted Mexico in the name of shared Latin bonds. They saw striking similarities not only in Roman Catholicism, but in particular topographies, climates, and even the burgeoning vineyards across California's rolling hills (some even grown from original French cuttings). Yet the French noted a decided lack of "Gallic order" in the region (Starr, 1986, p. 9). Reflecting upon the state of political affairs when visiting California in 1837, French Naval Officer, Abel du Petit-Thouars, remarked, "the old monastic order is destroyed, and nothing seems to have replaced it, except anarchy" (Weber, 1982, p. 15). Thus, eight years later in 1845, French foreign offices urged the Mexican

Minister of Foreign Affairs to allow France to establish a protectorate over California, where France could impart her “civilizing action” upon California and spread “her noble protection over all scattered members of the great Catholic family” (Starr, 1986, p. 9). Ultimately these staid British proposals and diplomatic French overtures ran afoul of time, as before long, it would be the youngest nation in the fray, the United States of America, that would perpetuate the re-conquest of California.

3.5 A Disguised Invasion: The Beginnings of American Conquest

In just under ten years the United States acquired more than half of Mexico’s land mass (Gómez, 2018). From 1845 to 1854, through active conquest, annexation, and even purchase, the vast northern portion of Mexico became the American Southwest, including the present-day state of California (ibid). For decades, American settlers had begun to establish homes, farms, businesses, and families in less populated Mexican regions including Alta California and Texas. Ironically, a portion of this influx initially came at the behest of local Spanish, and then Mexican, officials. In 1819, two years before Mexican independence, Spain had finally reversed course on its ban on foreign settlement, granting a parcel of Texas to European and U.S. settlers (Rowe, 2000).

Mexico eventually expanded these efforts, warily recruiting foreign and specifically American settlement, often with the expectation that these immigrants have a useful trade, learn the language of the land and convert to Roman Catholicism in exchange for land grants and eventual citizenship as this prospect seemed more promising than earlier scorned projects which relocated rowdy and often drunken southern Mexican prisoners to the less populated North (Davis, 2002; Weber, 1982; Limerick, 1988; Pitt, 1998). At the core of this policy was a paradoxical strategy in which many Mexicans believed that staving off American annexation,

and expanding control against uprising Natives in the sparsely populated North, depended upon growing the region's population via the settlement, and acculturation, of American settlers. However Mexican officials simultaneously worried about the possibility of "a disguised invasion" in which American settlers would "abuse [Mexico's] generous character" and vie for American annexation (Davis, 2002; Montgomery, 2001; Hämäläinen, 2008; Vandervort, 2007; Weber, 1982, pp. 181-182).

During this period some Euro-Americans, primarily men, also married into land, many grafting into established and well connected Californio families like the San Diego Bandinis and Estudillos, learning Spanish, and at times even adopting Mexican dress and customs (Pitt, 1998; Engstrand, 2005; Limerick, 1988). A variety of Anglo-American men also married less affluent Mexican and Indigenous women. For example, in the province of New Mexico, intermarriages most commonly occurred between Spanish-Mexican women and Irish immigrant men in which both spouses were generally working-class Catholics (Casas, 2009). However, the majority of Mexicans generally married one another, and most white American men, when married, found white American wives (though a significant minority did marry Californianas) (ibid; Wasserman, 2000). Yet, for a time historical and cultural depictions of the period often focused on these mixed marriages, portraying them as largely tension free, highly successful mergers between enterprising and often powerful Anglo American men and Californianas who were inevitably physically, culturally, and even morally drawn to their white husbands as opposed to their own 'deficient' and "savage" Californio men (Bancroft, 1888, in Casas, 2009, p. 10). These portrayals would serve as a powerful metaphor helping to cast the broader project of the reconquest of northern Mexico by America as a seemingly mutually beneficial and relatively peaceful venture, long after many of the marriages themselves fell out of public memory (ibid).

Thus, though often faded from national memory, when remembered or commemorated, what would ultimately come to be emblematic of California's Mexican period would be the complex collision of reality, myth, and nostalgia of a seemingly fruitful cross-cultural commingling between languages, cultures, and nationalities as individuals and families forged new starts and new identities to 'transform' the Mexican North into the American Southwest.

However, in reality, by 1830, the wave of Anglo Americans pouring into Mexico's northern region was becoming unwieldy for the Mexican government. Originally, they had offered, through a liberal-minded contract rooted in notions of property, liberty, opportunity, and the productivity of the liberal individual, generous land grants and the possibility of citizenship to foreign settlers with a useful trade willing to be productive, abide by Mexico's laws, and culturally assimilate. This offer widely appealed to American Southerners looking for agricultural opportunities as much of America's Southern land was fast 'disappearing' and as Mexico was offering "cheap land [with] easy terms of payment" (Weber, 1982, p. 166). Thus, from 1823 to 1830, Anglo American Southern immigrants flooded into neighboring Texas at a rate of one thousand per year, in many cases also accompanied by their black slaves (Reséndez, 2005). However, in 1823, Mexico had abolished slavery just two years into their independence. While a moral achievement, abolition was also a political calculation. Many Mexican leaders hoped the abolishment would stem the flow of Anglo immigrants and their slaves from America's contiguous slave-holding South who sought to settle in Texas, facilitating a more manageable flow of immigration as many potential American settlers would be deterred by the slavery ban. However, Mexico's prohibition on slavery was not always aggressively enforced and Anglo immigrants often took advantage of particular loopholes within the law to circumvent

the regulation or to outright ignore it and settle the land with their slaves in staggering numbers (Kelley, 2004; Bugbee, 1898).

Thus, in April 1830, the Mexican government banned outright any further American immigration into Texas, fearful that swarms of foreign settlers would soon lead to the American annexation of the region (Reséndez, 2005; Weber, 1982). Some in Mexico saw the legislation as short-sighted as it did not include the equally imperiled provinces of Alta California and New Mexico (Weber, 1982). The ban, however, did not stem the flow. In the 1830s Anglo Americans continued to illegally flood into Texas at a now growing rate of three thousand souls a year emboldened by the prospect of seemingly ‘free’ land available for the taking if one was resourceful and hearty enough to obtain it and work it (often via enslaved labor). It was an invasion which fulfilled the astute predictions made by Tocqueville (1835/2012) when he described both America’s 1831 landscape and its national character by claiming:

Beyond the Union’s border with Mexico lie vast regions that are still sparsely populated. The people of the United States will invade these empty spaces before the people who have the right to occupy them. They will appropriate the land, settle on it and establish a society, and when the legitimate owners finally arrive, they will find the wasteland made fertile and foreigners in tranquil possession of their heritage. The land of the New World belongs to whoever occupies it first, and empire is the prize in that race (p. 472).

Tocqueville’s in many ways accurate foreshadowing captured a distinct ethos of America: the capacity for a nation born out of a liberal contract (as defined by particular notions of rights, property, and equality) to so effectively engage in the conquest of another nation-state. This capacity illustrated the country’s *Pioneer Democracy*³ at work.

³ See Ch. 1 for a detailed accounting of what I define as *Pioneer Democracy*, the co-constitution towards a unique amalgamation of America’s two prominent archetypes: the pioneer identity and the liberal subject. It is a balance which depends on the nation’s current sociocultural, political, and economic conditions and creates a juxtaposition that I argue represents the balance at the heart of many of the nation’s *seeming* perplexing paradoxes as a supposed ‘liberal democracy’ (e.g. slavery, conquest, and various forms of disenfranchisement).

Thus by 1835, a year before Texas would declare its independence, Anglo American immigrants and their black slaves totaled about 24,700, eclipsing the population of Mexican *Tejanos* ten to one, leading to Texas's eventual secession from Mexico (ibid; Gutiérrez Ibarra, 1987; Weber, 1982). Upon its declaration of independence, the new Republic of Texas, led by its American emigrant majority, petitioned the United States for statehood (though Mexican *Tejanos* were divided on the matter of U.S. annexation as many *Tejanos* preferred independence from either Mexico or the United States while others were still loyal to Mexico) (Lack, 1992). Although many in the U.S. were eager to continue the project of Manifest Destiny, a possible war with Mexico combined with the probability of Texas entering the Union as a Southern slave state gave some Republican and Whig politicians pause (Bauer, 1974/1992). Representatives from Northern abolitionist and industrial states were not eager to tip the scales of political power to the Democratic slave holding South, and additionally some Southern politicians even worried that an influx of liberated ethnic Mexicans into the Union would inspire Southern black slaves to seek their own freedom (Griswold del Castillo, 1998). Thus initially, the United States declined Texas annexation (ibid). Yet despite these initial hesitations, the allure of continental domination eventually prevailed. In 1845 Democratic candidate James K. Polk won the U.S. presidency on an expansionist platform which promised to not only complete the annexation of Texas but to acquire California as well (Foos, 2003; Weber, 1982). By the end of the year, Texas was a U.S. slave state.

3.6 The 'Graduated Pressure' of American Imperialism

Upon annexation, Mexico and the United States could not agree on the southern border of the newly acquired U.S. state. The U.S. claimed that Texas ended at the Rio Grande (or the Rio Bravo as it was referred by Mexico) while Mexico insisted that the border began approximately

100 miles north at the Nueces River (See Figure 3.3). Adding to tensions was the seemingly upstart U.S. offer to purchase Mexico's long occupied (if including occupation under Spanish rule) provinces of Alta California⁴ and New Mexico, an offer which Mexico staunchly refused as it had already lost 389,166 square miles of territory through the Texas annexation (Pitt, 1998; Sloane, 2000; Miller, 2015 [1898]; Weber, 1982). Relying upon a strategy of graduated pressure, President Polk and his advisers trusted that America could eventually force Mexico into



Figure 3.3: Map illustrating the disputed Texas territory between the Rio Grande and Nueces Rivers. From University of South Florida, College of Education, Florida Center for Instructional Technology, 2009, Dispute between United States and Mexico [Map], retrieved from <https://etc.usf.edu/maps/pages/5200/5287/5287.htm> Previously published in R. Hall, H. Smither, & C. Ousley, 1920, *A history of the United States* (Dallas, TX: The Southern Publishing Company), p. 296. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

⁴ This was not America's first offer to purchase California. In 1843 the U.S. suggested that Mexico cede the territory in order to meet their debts to the U.S. (Rives, 1913).

negotiations to relinquish the disputed Texas territory and, eventually, additional land (Bauer, 1974/1992; Pitt, 1998). This strategy depended on the belief that the young country, still reeling from the costs of its recent independence and struggling to produce and maintain a cohesive government and national identity, would not seriously consider war with an emerging superpower (a logic that seemingly disremembered America's own stalwart battles with a formidable Britain--including those just decades prior in 1812).

When examining the Polk Administration's eventual miscalculation of Mexico, historians often highlight Mexico's sense of "nationalism," "self-respect," "honor," and "pride" that propelled the nation into conflict with the United States in a seemingly headstrong, albeit naively self-destructive, manner (Bauer, 1974/1992, p. xxv; McCaffrey, 1994, p. 4; Griswold del Castillo, 1998, p. 33; Pletcher, 2006). But often only tacitly framed are Mexico's moral and legal rationales for war which viewed the border dispute as a response to an unjust and illegal act of American invasion, the cultural philosophies that positioned their war efforts as a defense of Latin and Catholic values and ideals which they regarded as under Anglo-Saxon Protestant assault, and perhaps most significantly Mexico's deep-seated logic of self-preservation and defense. Not only did Mexican leaders perceive American aggression as a direct threat to their sparsely populated and feebly fortified north, one which would also bring an encroaching neighboring power within troubling reach of Mexico City and the republic's concentrated southern core. They also viewed any capitulation to American conquest through nonviolent negotiation without the exhaustion of all military options as signaling weakness on the global stage, laying them open to all manner of foreign invasion or even further American conquest. In fact, even after sustaining initial losses in battles with the United States, on July 8, 1847 the state-run gazette *El Diario del Gobierno* intensified this position claiming that beyond

experiencing disgrace, peace via negotiation would commence external, and even internal, ruin for the republic, stating:

...[The peace] that now could be accorded between the Mexican Republic and that of North America, would be humiliating to the first, and would gain to her, in the years to come, a dishonor among the rest of the nations, as well as domestic evils of such magnitude, that Mexico soon would be again theater of war and would disappear from the catalogue of the free and independent peoples... (Velasco-Marquez, 2006).

America too was cognizant of a global political gaze. For the United States, Mexico was a relatively unknown and mysterious new nation understood primarily as an exotic and antiquated state quixotically embracing a feudal past, representing the last remnants of the autocratic “Old World” on the ‘new’ American continent (Johannsen, 1992, p. xix; Bauer, 1974/1992; Foos, 2003). Nowhere in this presentation of Mexico was an acknowledgement of Mexico’s own emerging liberal tradition or a desire to strategically counsel and align with the younger nation as a possible ally (much in the manner of France’s strategic alliance with the U.S. during the American Revolution). Instead, the United States viewed victory in a Mexican War as an opportunity to not only fulfill its self-proclaimed destiny of continental domination but to also validate, for the world’s view, its relatively young democratic experiment, offering a guidepost for the world’s future and an elixir for the throngs still suffering under archaic European and Latin American autocracies (ibid). This vision not only required a reliance upon an egalitarian myth of republicanism that obscured blatant systemic inequalities within the American democratic project. But it also capitalized on the ability of the nation’s ‘pioneer identity’ to support, scaffold, and fill in narrative and rhetorical gaps for the nation’s liberal character which was reaching its ideological limit in attempting to uphold and justify a national project such as the conquest of a neighboring sovereign state. Thus, the nation could, if

necessary, also rhetorically fall back on frontier ideals of the survival of the fittest, frontier justice, tenacity, and a choleric ‘taming’ of the unknown to justify conquest.

3.7 The Mexican-American War Myth and the Anglo-American Protestant Hero

Also readily affirming this myth was a reservoir of racialized ideology. Like Mexico, the United States marched towards the impending conflict defending its own cultural traditions. Most notably were those steeped in a rhetoric of white supremacy (Almaguer, 2008; Foos, 2003). Since the days of its Spanish rule, the United States viewed the Western territory of the Americas, and especially the Pacific jewel that was California, as occupied by “unworthy” residents unable or unwilling to bring to bear the region’s full potential (Starr, 1986, p. 15). Drawing upon entrenched animus dating back to the Reformation, the Protestant American doctrine of Manifest Destiny, which enshrined Anglo Americans as a chosen people, was underscored by a contempt for Latin and Roman Catholic ways of being informed by a “Spanish Black Legend” which, through cultural and educational products, portrayed the Spanish “as depraved and cowardly people” and as “uniquely evil, cruel, bigoted ... [and] violent” (ibid; Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2013, p. 218; Castañeda, 1990). Additionally, among other dubious distinctions was the perceived Latin proclivity for debauched miscegenation which in the minds of some notable American explorers, politicians, and military leaders positioned Mexican Californians as “cowardly, ignorant, lazy,” vice-filled “niggers,” and a “mongrel race” living under the shackles of despotic tyranny (ibid, p. 16; Stephanson, 1996; Streeby, 2002, p. 55). This line of thinking also conveniently turned a blind eye to the rampant miscegenation within America’s own slave system, indicating that it was not only the act of racial mixing that was disturbing in itself, but the relative social acceptance and political incorporation of Latin America’s mixed offspring that seemed particularly perverse to many Americans.

Some American statesmen however rejected the impulse to confirm racial superiority by any means necessary. In heated congressional and public debates before and during the conflict, Whig politicians argued vehemently against war with Mexico, many viewing it as a ploy to obtain new slave holding states and vowing they would never support a war fought for the purposes of expanding and securing the bonds of slavery. John Minor Botts of Virginia blamed Polk's "unauthorized" actions for provoking the conflict in the first place while New Jersey's John Van Dyke bluntly described the U.S. invasion of Mexico as "an act of injustice, cruelty, and wrong;" and ex-slave, abolitionist, orator, and statesman Frederick Douglass lamented the nation's "mad" and "wicked" "rush" towards "proud ambition, blood, and carnage," an act which he claimed "would not go unpunished" by God's moral authority (Goethals & McDowell, 2010, p. 88; Douglass, 1848 in Foner, 1950). Additionally, a freshman congressman from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, utilized his training in the field of law and his emerging political savvy to critique the war effort while simultaneously praising a steadfast and ready American military. Questioning the legality of Polk's efforts which he argued placed the nation's venerable forces in harm's way, Lincoln offered eight resolutions twenty months after armed conflict began which demanded facts regarding the exact legal and territorial "spot on which the blood of [American] *citizens* was so shed" (Goethals & McDowell, 2010, p.88, italics not added).

Yet Polk, his cabinet, and his congressional supporters stood firm in their convictions. They viewed a majority of Mexico's territory as Mexican in name only, gesturing to its seeming unsettled and ungoverned nature, and crediting what little civilization that did exist in many areas to American settlement (DeLay, 2007). Furthermore, they argued that the incessant instability of the fledgling Mexican government was financially crippling many of these same American settlers who were engaged in lawful business in Mexico and who experienced

countless uncompensated losses in unpaid claims with each regime change (Lee, 2002). Armed with the emancipatory ideology of liberal republicanism combined with the fervor of a manifest destiny doctrine, which divinely demanded the nation not only live out its own republican creed but that it go forth, conquer, and spread this way of life, and aided and abetted by hostile racialized bias and forward-thinking pioneer ideals, those in favor of war viewed Mexican conquest as honorable, natural, and right. Thus, in January 1846, after another round of failed diplomatic talks where American representatives ignored the issue of the Texas border and instead offered once again to purchase California and New Mexico--an offer the Mexican government flatly rejected--President Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to advance troops to the Rio Grande (Weber, 1982; Pletcher, 2006). And in April of that year, the seemingly inevitable occurred. Mexican military forces, led by General Mariano Arista and defending against a perceived American invasion, called the Americans' bluff, crossed the river at Palo Alto, and attacked (Haecker & Mauck, 1997). Faced with the failure of his strategy of peaceful graduated pressure, Polk was forced to solicit congressional permission for the nation to officially take up arms (Johannsen, 1988). Mexico's charge at Palo Alto helped to secure overwhelming congressional support for Polk's revised efforts and on May 13, 1846 the United States officially declared war on Mexico (McCaffrey, 1994; Foos, 2003).

3.8 The Wages of War: New Borders, Reputations, and Ideals

In the end, the Mexican-American War, as it would later be known in America, only lasted from 1846 - 1848. Like most military hostilities, the war was complex, brutal, and ugly. Encompassing multiple theaters across Mexico, it was the first major U.S. conflict primarily waged on foreign soil (Johannsen, 1988; See Figure 3.4). Upwards of 38,000 soldiers, Mexican and American, eventually lost their lives (however the majority of these casualties were caused

by illnesses born out of unsanitary conditions) (Cirillo, 2009). Though often outnumbered, American forces were generally more heavily equipped and better trained than their Mexican counterparts who were fighting under continuously changing military and governmental leadership and with British consignment weapons and artillery that often malfunctioned or underperformed. These conditions allowed the U.S. to survive particular losses in minor battles and gain victory in most major campaigns against the younger nation (Frazier, 2006; DePalo, 2006; Johannsen, 1988; Haecker & Mauck, 1997). Strategically attacking Mexico on multiple fronts including the sparsely populated north, by sea at Veracruz, and further inland to the nation's core, the U.S. occupied most major Mexican cities by the conflict's end (Bauer, 1974/1992). In September of 1847, American troops led by General Taylor entered Mexico City, bringing the military phase of America's Mexican conquest to a close (ibid). After extensive negotiations (which were nearly derailed by Polk's growing impatience and were saved ironically by insubordination when a negotiating diplomat refused the President's orders to leave the bargaining table), the war finally ceased with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848 (ibid). Among other concessions, Mexico acquiesced on the Rio Grande border in addition to conceding the present-day American states of California and New Mexico and parts of what would later become Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, and Wyoming (ibid). In return, the U.S. agreed to absorb up to three million dollars of its citizens' unpaid claims against Mexico for previous economic losses and to pay fifteen million dollars in exchange for the conceded territory and war related damages, five million less than what it originally offered for California and New Mexico before the outbreak of the war (Griswold del Castillo, 2006).

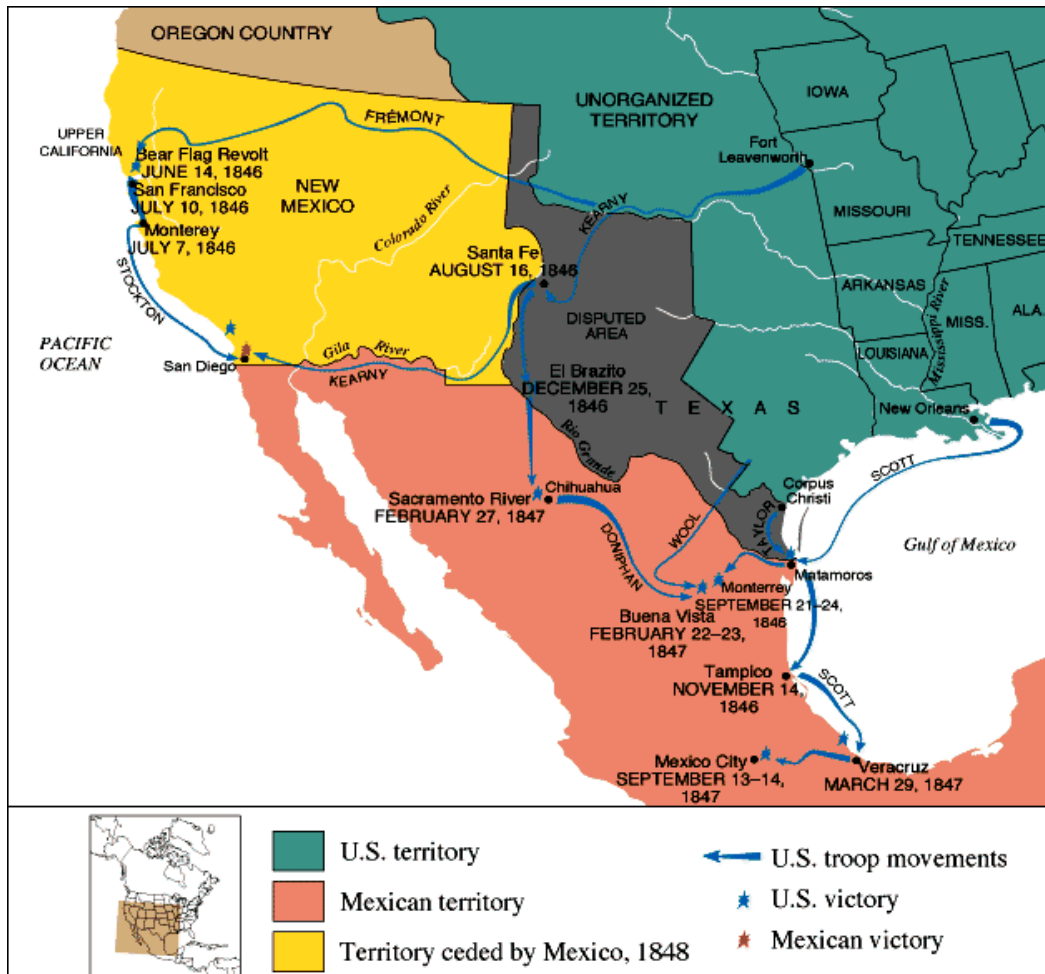


Figure 3.4: Mexican, U.S., disputed (annexed), and ceded territories 1846 – 1848. From University of Michigan, AC213 Introduction to Latina/o Studies, n.d., 1848 Mexican American War: Timeline of major events [Webpage], retrieved September 15, 2018, from http://umich.edu/~ac213/student_projects06/magsylje/timeline.html Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Though only lasting two years, the conflict would have lasting impacts on the geopolitical standings of both nations. It would also accentuate their own internal fault lines. After suffering a decisive loss which resulted in both a crucial reduction of land mass and an acute depreciation of global reputation, Mexico would continue the arduous and often violent project of ideologically and materially fortifying its republic, an enterprise that in many ways continues until the present day (Alcaraz, 1850; Acuña, 1998). For the United States, the war

would greatly increase its size⁵ and help solidify its emerging superpower status as a nation that could not only defend itself, but one that could achieve victory on foreign soil (Johannsen, 1988). Yet the war would also highlight key divisions within the nation. 1840s America experienced rapid demographic, technological, and ideological change stemming from increased European immigration, deep ethnic and racial divisions, and a rise of industrialism and materialism (Foos, 2003; Saxton, 2003; Slotkin, 1998; Belich, 2009; Streeby, 2002). These developments amplified an adolescent self-doubt within the nation as some citizens, especially white Americans who felt disenfranchised or ‘left behind’ by the country’s new directions, began to lose faith in the project of America and their positioning as a ‘chosen people.’

3.9 Storying Conflict: Early Media Representations of the Mexican-American War

Given the previously listed corporate anxieties, the Mexican-American War became a critical rhetorical vehicle for restoring a shaken national faith. The first major American war covered by the mass media during the so-called “print explosion,” and the first conflict to feature embedded reporters, the war represented the first time many Americans were intimately exposed in seemingly real-time to a culture not their own (Bauer, 1974/1992; Johannsen, 1988, p. 16; Streeby, 2002). As such, a plethora of news outlets including often exaggerated ‘penny press’ dailies, popular channels including novels and lithographs, and even soldiers’ letters and diaries accompanied political narratives that enveloped the conflict in a veneer of gothic and romantic heroism which seemingly catered to an insatiable public curiosity--often to the dismay and frustration of the war’s staunchest opponents (Johannsen, 1988; See Figures 3.5 and 3.6). This rhetoric also served as a vital recruiting tool for an American military that recognized it could not

⁵ Along with the successful negotiation of the Oregon Treaty in 1846 in which the U.S. also gained the expansive Oregon country (Pletcher, 2006; Commanger, 1927).

achieve victory with its standing army alone and relied considerably upon volunteer recruits, many of whom came from Southern and Midwestern states (ibid). In fact, so many volunteers initially came from Tennessee that it earned the moniker “The Volunteer State” (Foos, 2003, p. 8). This rush to volunteerism helped to cast the conflict within public imagination as a “civilian war” powered by the dignity of those so willing to serve their republic against an unenlightened enemy through the noble virtue of patriotism (Johannsen, 1988, p. 25). Incentivized by promises of land and opportunity, lower-class volunteer recruits initially joined in droves. However, many soon felt deceived by the war efforts as harsh conditions, unkept promises, withheld opportunities, and explicit class privileges and stratifications soon revealed their role in the war not as makers of their own manifest destinies, but as hired protectors of the interests of affluent officers, distant politicians, and at times even landed Mexicans (Foos, 2003). This disillusionment among average volunteers led to eventual recruitment and often coerced conscription within jails and rough taverns (ibid). It was also a factor in dereliction as the conflict had the highest rate of desertion of any American war (Ayers et al. 2011), including a few cases in which American soldiers flipped allegiance to fight with the Mexican army, hedging their futures of land and opportunity on a Mexican victory and/or due to the cultural ties of religion (such as the Irish Catholic contingent of deserters known as the San Patricios or St. Patrick’s Battalion who transferred their allegiance to Mexico and fought on its behalf before most of them perished in battle or were captured and sentenced) (Bauer, 1974/1992; Foos, 2003; Howes & Carnagie, 2003).



Figure 3.5: Battle of Monterey--The Americans forcing their way to the main plaza Sept. 23th 1846. Lithograph by N. Currier, 1846. Note that the American forces and their flag are painted brightly, with clearer definition, and in seeming forward progress. However, the Mexican army and its skyline seem to fade in the distance, suggesting an imminent demise. Digital reproduction of original lithograph. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, reproduction number LC-DIG-pga-06137. Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 3.6: Richard Caton Woodville, *War News from Mexico*, 1848, oil on canvas, 68.6 × 63.5 cm. This piece depicts a public fascination with the war and the media's role in information dissemination. Hierarchies of race, class, gender, and age are also portrayed in visual imagery, framing, and color (e.g. the black onlookers and crouching and are located outside of the building's frame post and the woman present is positioned in the shadows). From Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, 2010.74. Copyright by Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Despite these contentions among the ranks, historians initially continued the production of grand heroic narratives when chronicling the conflict (Foos, 2003; Bauer, 1974/1992). Though later scholarship did eventually turn to internal rancor, utilizing it as a microcosm of the nation at large to analyze the ways in which the Mexican-American war acted as a critical prelude to the Civil War (ibid). And attempting to both complicate the discussion of class and “eschew the heroic mode” which dominated earlier historical accounts, some scholars instead carefully unpacked previously neglected primary sources from the period that documented internal military relations and interactions between American soldiers and the Mexican people, examining contact ranging from unbridled hate, malice, and abuse of Mexican citizens by angry and vindictive soldiers, to instances of intercultural friendship and romance, and the complex emotions of disillusionment, hope, and disappointment (Foos, 2003, p. 4; Bauer, 1974/1992). Yet despite these efforts, the Mexican-American war would remain largely lost within American cultural memory for multiple reasons. For one, previous heroic renderings not only depicted the war as a victory of American military, cultural, and ideological superiority, but at times this romanticized rhetoric in fact obscured the actual conflict itself, subsequently aiding narratives that portrayed a seemingly mutually beneficial ‘transformation’ of a Mexican North into an inevitable American Southwest. For example, in his 1919 second volume of *War With Mexico*, American historian Justin Harvey Smith sanitizes the conflict stating:

By its terms Mexico appeared to sacrifice, independently of Texas, an immense area; but she really suffered little, for she had no grip--and deserved to have none--upon California and New Mexico. Indeed she had found those distant regions merely embarrassing. Nor did she really cede any territory. As...our Supreme Court has indeed decided...Our real title was conquest--conquest from those who had taken the county by conquest from its conquerors. What Mexico granted us was peace and an acknowledgement of our title. In return we gave her not only peace, which meant vastly more to Mexico than us, but extensive lands, the renunciation of all American claims...and fifteen million dollars in money--a wealth of gold that her treasury had never seen before. On both sides the treaty

conferred benefits; on our part it was magnanimous; and to settle the matter in this way gave the United States a feeling of satisfaction worth all it cost (Smith, 1919, pp. 240-241).

Additionally, as it began just thirteen years after the Mexican-American War, scholarly and cultural remembrances of America's Civil War would soon significantly eclipse reflections upon the previous conflict with Mexico. Thus, the Mexican-American War would eventually become virtually forgotten and/or relatively unknown to much of the American public⁶ (Henry, 1950; Rowe, 1998; Hernández, 1969; Foos, 2003; Bauer, 1974/1992; Johannsen, 1988).

3.10 From Mexican North to American Southwest: The American 'Transformation' of California

While often romanticized as a seemingly mutually beneficial process, the immediate wake of California's American 'transformation' was by no means an uncomplicated process. Though occupied by the American army since July 1846, San Diegan Mexicans saw no one route to negotiating a new American future. Some had been staunchly supportive of Mexico's efforts. For example, in October 1846, during the Battle of Beach Road, Señora María Antonia Machado de Silvas, a Native Californiana with eighteenth-century roots in San Diego risked life and limb to rescue and hide the Mexican flag flying in Old Town's Plaza before American forces could bring it down and "disgrace" it (Mills, 1968, not paginated; Hughes, 2015). Like Señora Machado, many San Diego Californios were wary or outright resistant to American annexation, yet some had championed California independence apart from Mexican or American governance, while a few even welcomed American rule (Weber, 1982). Regardless of their political stance, however, most Californios hoped their elevated status, and in some cases marital affiliations with Americans, could broker a beneficial integration into their new nation

⁶ Until a later resurgence of interest during and after America's involvement in Vietnam--a phenomenon Chapter Five will address.

protecting at least their economic and land interests, and perhaps their cultural traditions as well (Pitt, 1998). Furthermore, it was remarkably easier for Anglo American men who had settled in Alta California and at times even married Californianas, to return to their American cultural roots and negotiate the new realities of California's re-conquest, something that was demonstrably more difficult for their Californio counterparts to achieve (even their own in-laws) (Casas, 2009). And had circumstances and California demographics remained relatively consistent, this re-birth of California as an American territory may have allowed for greater instances of compromise and collaboration. Yet a pivotal shift would ultimately change California forever.

When Mexican officials signed the Treaty of Guadalupe they were cognizant that their nation was losing more than half a million square miles, but perhaps they took a modicum of comfort in the fact that the lost region of sparsely populated mission towns and desert was seemingly less economically viable than their more populated south. This calculus most likely shifted, however, once they eventually learned of the development that would drastically alter California demographically, economically, and culturally as it became "the cutting edge of the American Dream...geographically and psychologically [occupying] the final frontier" (Starr, 1986, p. 46). Just nine days prior the treaty's signing James William Marshall, a carpenter from New Jersey, found gold in the American River at Sutter's mill in the Sacramento Valley. The discovery would spark the California Gold Rush as tens of thousands of prospectors, aspiring miners, enterprisers, prostitutes, laborers, and hustlers would flood the area from other parts of America and the world, hanging their hopes and dreams on a new booming economy in the now American territory of California. Thus by 1850 Anglos vastly outnumbered Mexican Californians (as they had in Texas decades prior) (Gomez, 2018). However, joining Anglo-

American migrations was also a contingency of black Americans, many who traveled as servants of white fortune-seekers, but some of whom were independent former slaves including San Diego's Fred Coleman who capitalized on his Northern California mining experience when he discovered gold in the eastern portion of the county in 1870, instigating San Diego's own Gold Rush (Starr, 1986; Madyun, 1981; Jordan, 2008). Many Californios jumped into the fray as well. In fact, approximately 1,300 Californios mined for gold in 1848, often utilizing prior geographic knowledge and communal organizing to net about as much gold that year than the 4,000 "individualistic Yankees in the mine that year" (Pitt, 1996, p. 50). Global immigrants from South America, Europe, and China also descended upon the state, bringing a rich yet often complex blend of cultures and traditions with them (Johnson, 2001; Holliday, 2015; Chan, 2000). Furthermore, California's sudden boom, in which many fortunes were made off the failures and busts of others, would help the territory sail into official statehood by 1850 as the new territory reached the required 60,000 population threshold and bureaucratic requirements remarkably quicker than other territories (a process that would take Nevada four years, and Arizona and New Mexico sixty-three) (Limerick, 1988). And continuing the tradition of most U.S. territories and states, American California leaders leaned into their Anglo majority and went about the business of systematically disenfranchising Californios and other racial minorities such as blacks and Chinese (Pitt, 1998; Limerick, 1988; Kanazawa, 2005). Additionally, California's policies tightened restrictions, heightened violence against, and enacted the virtual enslavement of California's Native populations who suffered at increased rates under American rule in "a complete breakdown of all legal and moral constraints of Americans'...civic and criminal behavior" upon Natives, despite the region's designation as a "free" U.S. state (Trafzer & Hyer, 1999, pp. 1-2). However, it would not be these various constraints and tensions that would

define the period. To the contrary, California's Gold Rush era would ultimately be remembered as a period of exceptional opportunity, adventure, individualism, and grit and as such distinctly American in national memory--a pattern of remembrance that often obscures Mexican roots that date back to the very day of the discovery at Sutter Mill.

By the last years of the 1860s, after the Northern California Gold Rush subsided and as much of the American North and West chased the elixir of post-Civil War progress, local San Diego leaders decided that the economic future of their small town⁷ lay in developing its bayfront access as opposed to continuing investment in the settlement community that had grown at the foot of a Spanish colonial *presidio*. Viewing the port, and an adjacent railroad system, as the core of its economic viability, San Diego hedged its bets on a new central location, or "New Town" three miles south from Old Town. In a shift that may only rhetorically have illustrated a break from 'antiquity' and a Spanish legacy, businessmen like Alonzo Horton poured resources and salesmanship into the bayfront and growing downtown area, laying the foundation for eventual commercial and military investment in the area. As New Town became the future of San Diego, Old Town experienced a pointed decline as businesses shuttered, residents relocated, and the county's official records were transferred from Old Town's Whaley House (despite a protesting posse) to a new downtown county courthouse in 1871 (Engstrand, 2005; Schiff, 2011). In 1872, a devastating fire would mete a seemingly final blow to Old Town, resulting in the destruction of several key wooden structures. (ibid; Bokovoy, 2005; Schiff, 2011) And with that, both the community of Old Town and the region's colonialist project seemingly reached their closure. However, decades later San Diego would actively reinvest in its memory culture, utilizing depictions of the past to negotiate contemporary identity and ideological crises and

⁷ When California was admitted into the union as a state in 1850, San Diego's population stood at only 650 people (Engstrand, 2005).

concerns. Specifically, it would memorialize, marginalize, erase, and celebrate its Spanish and Mexican roots through the influential projects of Casa de Estudillo (or “Ramona’s Marriage Place”) in 1906, Balboa Park in the 1910s, and Old Town San Diego State Historic Park in the 1960s and 70s. The next chapter will attend to ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’ and Balboa Park, examining how particular social, economic, and cultural changes helped to reverse the vilification of Spanish culture explored in this chapter to instead collapse a “fantasy” Spanish heritage on the region with lasting results.

Chapter 3 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.
Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

PART TWO:

PUBLIC REMEMBRANCE OF CALIFORNIA'S COLONIAL ORIGINS

Preface to Part Two

Part One of this dissertation engaged in a historical analysis of particular events which chronicle the colonization and conquest of California, and San Diego specifically. It also gestured to the ways in which, by the mid nineteenth century, American leaders mobilized calculated remembrances of the region in order to justify and support the U.S. conquest of Mexico (and California particularly). Part Two of this dissertation now turns its attention to post-American conquest California and San Diego's remembrances of the colonial history discussed in Part One. As such, this second section charts particular mobilizations of an evolving California origin story through specific cultural, historical, and civic projects of cultural remembrance within and/or about San Diego. Specifically, through an examination of the cultural heritage tourism sparked within the region by the romantic novel *Ramona* (1884) and the building of San Diego's architecturally innovative Balboa Park, Chapter Four provides an overview of the emergence of San Diego's memory culture from 1884 - 1950s. Charting the rise of a 'Fantasy' Spanish heritage, this chapter examines how cultural producers of the day utilized memory projects to cast California as an Arcadian pastoral paradise while effectively 'erasing' the legacy of Mexican California in the process. And Chapters Five, Six, and Seven comprise of a three-part case study of the impetus, planning, and (re)construction of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. This three-pronged case study examines the park's emergence as a commemorative response to various forms of cultural and social change. Examining these changes, these chapters trace the park's strategic re-incorporation of Mexico into the California origin story. In doing so, this case study also charts how the park obscures and naturalizes the ongoing project of settler colonialism, relegates Mexico's regional influence to a general 'cultural' flair, and venerates notions of American democracy. While the memorial projects

addressed in these four chapters offer varying tactical deployments¹ of the California origin story, what binds these versions, and thus ensures the overall narrative's persistence, is their cohesive and strategic cultural work of reaffirming particular notions of American exceptionalism.

¹ See Figure 1.3 in Chapter One for an overview of these deployments, or strands, of the Myth of the West.

CHAPTER FOUR:

(Re)Imagining the West: Arcadian California and the ‘Erasure’ of Mexican California 1880s – 1950s

No other land has the romance and lazy dreaming of this sort. No other land has such splendor of waving palms and slim acacias and lofty eucalyptus...and perpetual comfort of weather in the perfect harmony which exists on the mesa in San Diego. It is a land where God is kind. It is a land...that makes men kind...It is opportunity.

--Balboa Park Panama California Exposition Publicity Agent, 1915

4.1 Introduction

In 1848, at the close of the Mexican-American War, California’s population stood at “barely 18,000” (Starr, 1986, p. 49). By 1915, 2,377,549 souls inhabited the state (Dale, 1991, p. 220). This expansion primarily came in two regional waves. The first, organized around the Northern portion of the state, resulted from a massive influx of new settlers lured to region by the discovery of gold. In a migration now mythologized as emblematic of the intrepid and opportunistic American pioneer spirit, this sudden rush of bodies not only radically changed the Northern region’s demographics. It also rapidly transformed California’s territorial status, helping it sail into statehood less than two years after America’s war with Mexico made it a U.S. territory. The second major migratory wave to California occurred in its Southern region. Beginning with what would come to be known as the real-estate “boom of the eighties,” Southern California experienced a substantial increase in settlement in the late nineteenth century, largely facilitated by railroad-led development (Dumke, 1944, p. 99). While the Northern migration of the Gold Rush changed California’s *infrastructure* taking it from a

territory to a U.S. state, this second migration would transform the state's *regional culture*, helping to create and foster a new shared identity for newly arriving Anglo settlers (ibid; Starr, 1986).

This chapter charts this imaginative process through the lens of cultural remembrance. Focusing upon specific commemorative products and practices, this chapter examines how a region once considered unremarkable and remote by colonial authorities in Spain; a “colony twice removed,” by Spanish settlers; provincial and disconnected by its Mexican citizens; and a land originally held by the “depraved and cowardly” Spanish by American leaders, would by the close of the nineteenth-century come to be perceived as “the cutting edge of the American dream” and by the beginning of the twentieth, as an Arcadian Eden steeped in a distinct Spanish ‘Fantasy Heritage’ (Bokovoy, 2005; Pitt, 1998, p. 2; Weber, 2005; Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2013, p. 218; Starr, 1986, p. 46; Sagarena, 2014). Specifically, the first half of this chapter traces the conditions that not only led to the massive movement of bodies to California in the late nineteenth century, but also the imaginative work associated with this ‘boom,’ paying special attention to notions of identity, the seeming ‘closing’ of the frontier, and the logistical *and* imaginative role of the railroads. Then, the second half of the chapter turns to two major cultural memory projects within San Diego which helped to (re)imagine California’s (and especially Southern California’s) distinct regional identity: (1) the tourism craze spurred by the popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson’s (1884) Indian protest novel *Ramona*, including the making, selling, and experiencing of ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’ in Old Town San Diego; and (2) the 1910-1915 development of San Diego’s architecturally innovative Spanish revival Balboa Park.

Both projects were significant parts of a larger ensemble of historical and cultural products that fostered a (re)imagining of California during this period. The Ramona mythology helped boosters, settlers, and the nation at large idealize California's Mission period and redefine its Spanish Catholic past--reparative work which marginalized the legacy of *Mexican* California in the process. Balboa Park, in its celebration of the region's burgeoning Spanish 'fantasy heritage', continued the Ramona mythology's realigning of critical racial distinctions. Specifically, providing a direct line of symbolic regional lineage to Spain, this project not only marginalized, but helped to effectively 'erase' Mexican California from public history. Such a move was part of a broader memorial trend which naturalized Anglo Californians as not only the region's *rightful*--but its *natural*--heirs. In taking up these objects of inquiry, this chapter not only examines how cultural narratives adapt, shift, and as such *persist*; it also traces the ways in which California's origin story often scaffolds perceptions of *legitimacy*, a discussion that is additionally relevant to current dialogue around contemporary notions of diversity and 'Americanness.'

4.2 'Two Californias': American California's Early Lack of a Shared Identity

In 1850, within nineteen months of the close of the Mexican-American War and the discovery of gold at Sutter's mill, California entered the union as a state. It was a remarkable feat. Historically, U.S. territories often lingered in this "transitional" status (Limerick, 1988, p. 79). Not necessarily colonies, for whom national incorporation is unattainable, but not yet granted statehood with all of its enfranchising benefits, some territories waited for years in political purgatory until they reached the nation's 60,000 population prerequisite for union entry. Nevada, for example, would need four years to reach this threshold (*ibid*). While both Arizona and New Mexico remained territories for sixty-three (*ibid*). Though the U.S. territorial

system was meant to reconcile “the problems of liberty and empire” by offering a pathway to statehood intended to stave off an aura of colonization within the territories, nevertheless, “citizens [within these territories] resented the territorial status” (ibid, p. 79; Pomeroy, 1947). Not only did they begrudge their disenfranchised stature, but many resented what this new status reminded them of: that “recently they had been Easterners” with “*memories of what it was to be citizens in an established state*” (Pomeroy, 1947; Limerick, 1988, p. 80, italics added). Therefore also at the heart of such resentment and longing was a social need for not only particular forms of political enfranchisement but the semblances of shared history and identity which are imbued by a memorial sense of belonging.

Contrary to these long-suffering territories and their residents, California achieved statehood in “no time at all” (Limerick, 1988, p. 79). While this swift infrastructural transformation carried with it an assemblage of hastily received political benefits, such a rapid ascension also meant that in many ways California became a state before it could attain its own distinct American regional culture. Kevin Starr (1986) in his comprehensive analysis of the origins of the “California dream” details California’s early lack of a shared identity. Though an eventual barrage of memory products beginning in the 1870s would recast the “forty-niners” who descended upon the Northern region of the territory to strike gold as daring “Pioneer[s]”-- at the time that these migrants were actually toiling, panning, fighting, and surviving in the late 1840s and into the 50s, building a coherent group identity was the least of their worries. Or as Starr phrases it, “anxious to strike it rich [and] having risked their lives to do so, miners wasted little time asking who they were” (p. 50). It is unsurprising then that this particular lack of self-awareness translated to a general dearth of “self-conscious” reflection within primary documents left behind by the individuals actively engaged in the frenzy of the rush (ibid, p. 50). And when

some introspective citizens of the era did reflect upon the future of the state's regional character, it was often with anxiety regarding the region's seeming crisis of identity. For example, in 1852, naval chaplain and influential Monterey figure Walter Colton regarded the "two Californias" that he saw emerging with the onslaught of activity and migration during the Gold Rush (ibid, p. 31). Not only did Colton disdain the feverish rush in general, but he was particularly distressed by the vision of California the "Forty-niners had...in mind" (ibid, p. 31). In Colton's view, it was as a "lust of gold" which occupied the center of an "American" version of California (ibid, p. 31). While within the "Californian" version of the region (i.e. meaning Californios, as they were regarded as 'Californians' at the time), Bolton saw "all that is lovely in the human heart," which if left unmolested could "spread its charms over" the state (ibid, p. 31). It was a contrast so stark that Colton added if forced to choose between both cultures he would have "no hesitation in saying, give me the Californian" (ibid, p. 31). From our contemporary vantage point, this perspective may seem like a particularly simplified and romanticized view of the complexity at the core of the sociocultural clashing and commingling of Anglo Americans and Californios during the period. Yet Colton's reflections were in fact representative of a future statewide desire to settle on a unified and *serviceable* vision of their whole, one which could carry a specific 'charm' of its own. It was a charm that would eventually be created through various cultural products and practices during the state's second wave of migration when emigrants descended upon the Southern portion of the state not simply to 'get rich quick,' but to settle--and make a home--within the "final frontier" of a rapidly 'closing' West (ibid, p. vii; Limerick, 1988; Turner, 1893/2017).

4.3 Opportunity Lost and the ‘Closing’ of the Western Frontier

As the nineteenth century neared its close, so too did the project of Manifest Destiny seem to be reaching its logical conclusion. America’s conquest of Mexico (including the subsequent Gadsden Purchase¹) extended the nation from coast to coast and settled territories were fast becoming U.S. states². Accompanying this expansion was an increase in particular forms of ‘progress’ including rising industrialization which ushered in transformative advancements. Factory-based manufacturing, for example, introduced technological innovations and assembly line labor structures; while rising urbanization perpetuated profound migration from rural communities to city centers (Thernstrom, 2009; Hoffman, 1982). Not only logistically influencing the nation, these developments fundamentally changed and (re)shaped ways of living and knowing. Emblematic of such diffuse influence was the radical innovation of the steam train--and more significantly, the linking of its various railways (Beniger, 2009). This new network of transport not only increased the pace of travel and connected people and goods in manners which before its existence could hardly have been fathomed (ibid). It also radically altered understandings of time and space, realigned social structures, and precipitated the need for standardized and synchronized scheduling across the nation (Schivelbusch, 2014).

However, with a growing nation came growing anxieties and with progress new complexities. Among these issues was a rising concentration of wealth among a very few individuals and corporations, the economic Panic of 1893³, and a wave of foreclosures across the

¹ The Gadsden Treaty or Purchase of 1853 describes the purchase of lands south of the Gila River in Arizona territory and a small strip of land at the New Mexico territory’s southernmost point (Schmidt, 1961).

² Multiple Western state entered the Union in the second half of the nineteenth century including California in 1850, Oregon in 1859, Nevada in 1864, Colorado in 1876, Washington and Montana in 1889, Wyoming and Idaho in 1890, Utah in 1896, and Arizona and New Mexico to follow in the early twentieth century in 1912) (Barto, 1947; Isaacs, 2001; Pomeroy, 1947; Limerick, 1988).

³ The Panic of 1893 was a serious economic depression caused by the over extension of railroad construction and its speculative financing practices as compounded by a run on the nation’s gold supply (Lauck, 1907). This depression

Plains (Frieden, 1997; Fraser, 2017; Carlson, 2005; Ramirez, 2009; Lauck, 1907). Taken together, these conditions helped to facilitate the belief that a new social order had usurped the economic and democratic promises envisioned within the nation's liberal project--a realization which undermined public faith in the character of the nation while stoking a particular longing for 'days gone by' (Slotkin, 1998; DiMaggio, 1982; Limerick, 1988; Fraser 2017; Wrobel, 1992).

Escalating these tensions was the seemingly fast-approaching 'closing' of the Western frontier, which for many in the nation seemed to mark the end of an era of opportunity (Turner, 1893/2017; Limerick, 1988). In fact, in 1890 when the U.S. census indicated a dearth in available tract land, this signaled to many--including prominent American historian Frederick Jackson Turner, that the era of Westward expansion was over (ibid). During his famous 1893 address, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," Turner officially declared the Western frontier 'closed'. For Turner, this was a significant event. According to his Frontier Thesis, the Western frontier played a pivotal role in the political and economic health of the nation. Viewing the frontier as a *historical process*, Turner contended that the frontier 'opened' with the arrival of white settlers and 'closed' with the exhaustion of available and 'free' land (ibid). And he claimed that it was the national experience between these pivotal epochal bookends that a unique American democracy was forged through conflict and characterized by core notions such as individualism and opportunity, defining the young nation's exceptionalism in the process (ibid). Claiming that "democracy [is] born of free land," Turner saw in the

caused a series of bank failures and railroad closures, mergers, and restructuring (ibid). It was considered the worst U.S. depression until the Great Depression (ibid).

American frontier a critical mechanism that offered every man⁴ an opportunity to acquire and cultivate acreage and become an independent member of society in the process (Turner, 1893 in Edwards, 1938, p. 221; Smith, 1950). In other words, for Turner “American democracy...gained new strength each time it touched a new frontier” (Turner, 1893/2017, p. 100). Within this framework, the closure of the frontier presented a particular *ideological* crisis, one which threatened the very fabric of the spirit of the nation.

Not only was the frontier a key political mechanism in Turner’s view, but it was also a critical economic factor within the nation. Presenting the frontier as a particular economic “safety-valve” for the country, Turner joined previous scholarship that viewed the frontier as releasing and relieving pressure on Eastern labor markets (Shannon, 1945, p. 31). Within this relieving capacity, the frontier provided a place of both opportunity and escape which helped to alleviate social discontent (as if need be the disgruntled and disillusioned worker of the East could always travel West where new opportunity awaited) (ibid; Von Nardroff, 1962). This school of thought argued that such a safety mechanism provided Eastern laborers with a particular amount of leverage, thus helping to maintain higher wages while avoiding extreme economic and class disparity within the nation (Turner, 1893/2017; Kane, 1936; Von Nardhoff, 1962). Yet, should the frontier close, this safety-valve would disappear, affecting not only the economy of the West, but Eastern realities as well. Given these stakes to both notions of democracy and economic opportunity and parity, Turner considered the closing of the frontier, without a viable replacement, as the root of the nation’s contemporary crises (Turner, 1893/2017; Smith, 1950; Slotkin, 1998).

⁴ See Chapters One and Three for a discussion of: (1) how the seeming democratic project of westward expansion often disenfranchised various participants, and (2) how cultural remembrances of expansion often continue this marginalization by omitting and/or distorting the experiences of non-white males within the frontier.

These national tensions towards the seeming closing of its Western frontier also reverberated throughout California, a region long symbolically and literally defined by its frontier status⁵ (whether as a far flung colony “twice removed” from Spain, as a remote Mexican province at its nation’s northern outer reaches, or as America’s “final frontier”) (Pitt, 1998, p. 2; Starr, 1986, p. 46). And despite conditions that suggested that: (1) the frontier was fluid, dynamic, and “far from closed,” as between 1890 and 1920 more public land would be “brought into production” than ever settled during the decades immediately following the passage of the 1862 Homestead Act (Slotkin, 1998, p. 30); and (2) the fact that the American Southwest (whose complex Hispanic/American sociocultural history was generally dismissed within a Turnerian framework) was a major hub of this increased expansion, these conditions did not completely alleviate Far Western tensions regarding the nation’s anxieties (Limerick, 1988; DeLyser, 2003; Dumke, 1944; McWilliams, 1946/1973; Starr, 1986). In other words, despite conditions that may have suggested otherwise, the region itself was still concerned that the very dynamism and perceived opportunity at its core was suddenly considered ‘closed’ or ‘settled’ by the nation at large.

Anxieties such as these reflect both the significance of the frontier *and* its conceptual nature. Specifically, while cultural and academic texts alike have utilized a plethora of configurations and signifiers to define the often opaque and slippery ‘American West,’ (gesturing to particular borders, states, regions and subsets often informed by apprehensions of certain historical periods of occupation and even tastes and customs), various representations of the West *do* consistently coalesce around a shared idea: the frontier (Limerick, 1988; Slatta, 2010; Katz, 1971; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994; Brown, 1958/1981; Slotkin,

⁵ Refer to Chapters Two and Three for an in depth discussion of California’s multifaceted and complex ‘frontier’ status.

1973/2000). How this frontier has been historically represented, however, has evolved. Turner understood the frontier as a temporally bound *historical process*. While later historians, most notably the New Western Historians of the mid to late twentieth century rebutted this definition, viewing the West and its frontier instead as a complex *place* with an ongoing human history-- however a place still largely defined by conflict and conquest (Limerick, 1988; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994). And others still have defined it as an *area*, as a *line of settlement*, and as a *result of the movement* of people (Danhof, 1941; Kane, 1936; Von Nardroff, 1962).

Building upon, and responding to, these frameworks I position the frontier as a *concept* or state of mind. That is not to say that the frontier lacks materiality. Real people have occupied, and continue to occupy, actual locales in various distinct times upon varying edges, or “borderlands,” across the Western frontier (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 1). However, central to my framework is the idea that the ways in which cultures envision their frontier(s), according to their distinct current conditions, has cultural, social, economic, and political implications on the belief systems and practices that organize their particular ways of life. In other words, I view the Western frontier as a conceptually defined meeting point where people and cultures in distinct times and places work out, define, and negotiate via contestation, conflict, conquest, and collaboration various critical organizing principles including notions of: ‘civilization,’ ‘savagery,’ ‘identity,’ ‘legitimacy,’ ‘belonging,’ ‘opportunity,’ and what is considered ‘old’ and ‘new.’

Such a framework allows us to better contextualize the ideological fallout regarding the impression of a ‘closing’ frontier during the late nineteenth century and the broader sense of impending ‘opportunity lost’ it accentuated. For example, arising out of such anxieties were growing populist sentiments and an escalating national crisis of identity which launched

interrogations of the past, questioning not only how the American republic had produced a new economic order so antithetical to its ideals, but whether it was possible to maintain America's core values of individualism and opportunity under such conditions (Slotkin, 1998; Starr 1986; DeLyser, 2005; Amero, 2013; Schivelbusch, 2014). Thus, as Americans increasingly lost confidence in the promise of the liberal framework's supposedly equitable social contract and assurances of mutual consent, in concert with a growing distrust in monopolistic institutions like banking, they were also exhibiting a general loss of faith in the *idea* of America. And if the frontier was no more, then who and what was the American Southwest? And likewise, if the opportunity of the frontier was spent, and if increased industrialism and economic disparity were on the rise, what was the future of the promise of America?

4.4 'Last Chance Bonanza': Federal Landgrant Railroads and the National Imagination

Facilitating a massive settlement project in the midst of economic uncertainty and national anxieties, Southern California developers needed to reconceptualize the frontier in a manner that could inspire confidence, sell opportunity, and get bodies moving West. Central to this project was America's railroads, which played a critical role in both the logistical *and* imaginative (re)organization of the West. In terms of their logistical import, while available tract land may have seemed to be fast 'disappearing' to the individual hardy pioneer, partnerships between government and railroads became a critical thruway by which vast segments of the West were seized, carved up, developed, and sold. In other words, the railroads not only moved people and goods; they also often provided the critical task of subdividing and selling lands received through what came to be known as Federal railroad land grants (Orsi, 2005; Henry, 1945; Jensen & Draffan, 1995; Mercer, 2016). Originally leading the charge of railroad-orchestrated development in California was Southern Pacific Railroad, an entity of the massive

Central Pacific Railroad which had already played a major role in the expansion of the nation. Central Pacific had already linked America's east coast to its west through the arduous task of cross-continental track laying--a connection celebrated on May 10, 1869 at Promontory Summit, Utah (north of the Great Salt Lake) (Orsi, 2005; Dumke, 1994; Lesley, 1939). It was at that point where Central Pacific President Leland Stanford drove a now famous golden spike with his silver hammer and fastened the final rail of the historic line (ibid). However, beyond this feat, Central Pacific leadership also portended the value of expanding into regional lines in the West. In fact in 1865, four years before the golden spike's historic driving, Central Pacific incorporated into its portfolio the Southern Pacific Railroad in order to capitalize on providing access to the Southern region of California which was increasingly becoming economically significant in its own right (Dumke, 1994). It was an investment which ultimately paid off as Southern Pacific soon obtained a monopoly on the local market becoming a formidable presence itself in the land development arena.

Not only did the railroads help to distribute land, they often provided essential regional infrastructure within expanding areas in the absence of other private organizations and governmental agencies including "farm mortgaging, agricultural marketing, forest management and firefighting, urban water systems...irrigation engineering and management," and other processes necessary for non-Native settlement and Indigenous displacement, making the railroads a critical technology of America's colonial project--despite a mythology built around the notion of 'rugged individuals' conquering the West through their own devices (Orsi, 2005, p. xiv; Jackson & Kinney, 1883; Cohen, 1947; Vernizzi, 2011; Limerick, 1988). In fact, according to the Commissioner of the General Land Office, the U.S. government patented a total of 131,350,534 acres of land to railroads, mobilizing a principle of state-based economic

intervention on behalf of “society’s overall well-being” (Henry, 1945; p. 172; Orsi, 2005, Jensen & Draffan, 1995; Mercer, 2016, p. 2).

The railroads, however, not only performed critical logistical functions in the settlement of the West. Given the nature of their relationship to real estate development in conjunction with an end-of-the-century wavering national confidence, a major task of these railroads became shaping the public imagination--at times mobilizing and/or countering the narrative of a ‘closing’ frontier. During the 1880s, with the frontier’s closure seemingly on the horizon, railroad-led development recaptured and marshalled pioneer rhetoric in a manner that helped to conceptually (re)organize the West. Such a marketing discourse not only relied upon the creation and/or harnessing of visual imagery and symbolic rhetoric of opportunity and abundance. It also invited possible settlers to (re)imagine *themselves* as pioneers. By mobilizing aspects of pioneer rhetoric railroad boosters conceptually and logistically (re)opened the West to new settlers, creating a sense of a ‘last ditch bonanza’ to settle a seemingly closing frontier (Orsi, 2005, p. xiv; Jackson & Kinney, 1883; Cohen, 1947; Vernizzi, 2011).

Though often conducted on an ad hoc manner in the early days of development in the 1850s and 60s, by the ‘boom’ of the 1880s railroads had developed robust advertising structures including print posters and pamphlets heralding opportunity and discovery in the region (See Figures 4.1 and 4.2). This media blitz concentrated on various topics most often organized around California’s: (1) climate (offering a “perpetual summer”) (Dumke, 1944, p. 102), (2) agricultural opportunity (with vines that grew so high that “if you want to pick a melon in this country, you have to get on horseback”) (ibid, p. 102), (3) low cost of living (touted as “the cheapest country in the U.S. to live in”) (ibid, p. 102), (4) healthy environs (proclaiming “The purity of air in Los Angeles is remarkable”) (ibid, p. 103), (5) its picturesqueness (as the Spanish



Figure 4.1: Illustrative of the ‘abundance’ and ‘opportunity’ rhetoric mobilized by railroad boosters, this late nineteenth-century Southern Pacific advertisement utilized the railroad’s common moniker for California: “Cornucopia of the World” to entice settlement. From R. J. Orsi, 2005, *Sunset limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the development of the American West, 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press) [Kindle version], location #1871. Copyright by Bancroft Library. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

HO! FOR CALIFORNIA!!

THE LABORER'S PARADISE!!

Salubrious Climate, Fertile Soil, Large Labor Returns.

NO SEVERE WINTERS, NO LOST TIME, NO BLIGHT OR INSECT PESTS.

Daily Trains from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis,
Omaha and Intermediate Points, for San Francisco.

EMIGRANT TICKETS AT LOW RATES.

*Choice from nearly every Variety of Farming, Fruit, Grazing and
Timber Lands.*

The Central Pacific Railroad Co.

now offer, in sections, adjacent to their Railroad lines in **CALIFORNIA, NEVADA** and **UTAH**, a large body of Land, most of which is well adapted to cultivation, and offer unequalled advantages for settlement or investment.

IN CALIFORNIA the lands lying on each side of the main line of the Central Pacific Railroad extend from the navigable waters of the Sacramento, above the Bay of San Francisco, across the broadest and most populous portion of the Sacramento Valley and both slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They are diversified in soil, climate and conditions—embracing the semi-tropical productions in the lower valleys—corresponding with those of Spain, Italy, and the shores of the Mediterranean—the vine, orchard and grain lands of the foot-hills—corresponding with those of France, Germany and Austria—and the timber lands of the mountain slopes—corresponding with those of Maine, Sweden, Norway, etc. This central portion of California is already noted for the excellence of its wheat, grapes, pears, cherries, strawberries, small fruits and garden vegetables generally, and for the ease with which they can be grown to dimensions and perfection unobtainable elsewhere. The lands in this belt purchased of the Company, have resulted in gratifying success to the settlers. Wheat can safely be in the field till threshed and shipped, and the fruit trees are not troubled by insects or blight.

Along the CALIFORNIA and OREGON BRANCH, in the renowned Valley of the Sacramento, extending from the centre to the northern boundary of the State, the Company also offer a choice selection, with the same general characteristics. This valley is at present the seat of the most successful culture of small grains (wheat, barley, oats, etc.), in the country, and also offers unrivaled facilities for extensive and profitable sheep and stock grazing. The whole comprises some of the Best Land in California.

IN NEVADA the main line of the Central Pacific Railroad occupies the Truckee and Humboldt Valleys, the largest and best settled in the State, at a short distance from numerous and important mining regions, whose yield of the precious metals is estimated at from fifteen to twenty million dollars annually. The lands of the Company are so situated as to command these markets for their produce. Wherever the proper cultivation has been applied, these lands have yielded good crops of cereals and esculents.

IN UTAH, in the great Salt Lake and contiguous valleys, where the Mormons have so successfully demonstrated the fertility of the soil and the healthfulness of the climate, the Company have also good land.

TITLE, PATENT DIRECT FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

These lands will be sold in quantities and on terms to suit. Immigrants, colonists and capitalists, who desire to acquire indestructible real property, certain to advance in value, will be benefited by an examination. Pamphlets, maps, etc., will be furnished by application to

B. B. REDDING, Land Commissioner Central Pacific Railroad Co.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD.

The undersigned has been authorized by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of California, to offer, in conjunction with the above, a vast extent of land, among the best in the southern half of the State, situated on both sides of the line of their road, now building, extending from the Bay of San Francisco to San Jose, southwardly to the Colorado River (700 miles). This grant covers some of the best lands in the coast and valley counties of the southern half of California, including the far-famed wheat lands of the Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Tulare, Kern River and other valleys. Wine-making, orcharding, tobacco, cotton and flax are plant-raising, and sheep and cattle husbandry, are extensively and successfully carried on there.

Parties desiring information relative to large tracts can apply at the Offices of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company.

No. 9 Nassau Street, New York, and

C. P. HUNTINGTON.

Cor. Fourth and Townsend Sts., San Francisco, California.

Figure 4.2: Central Pacific (and Southern Pacific) land-sales poster touting California's climate, soil, and labor returns and heralding the ability to choose from an array of farming options—a visual artifact which gestures to previous Westward Expansion media of the early to mid-nineteenth century. From R. J. Orsi, 2005, *Sunset limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the development of the American West, 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press) [Kindle version], location #1572. Copyright 2005 by Regents of the University of California. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

and Mexican periods had given California a “romantic aura”) (ibid, p. 103), and (6) its adequate development (in other words, in instances that railroad boosters worked to convince an American public that the frontier was in fact *open*, they often simultaneously endeavored to persuade possible settlers that these areas were not necessarily still “frontier *territory*,” assuaging fears regarding “snakes and poisonous reptiles, animals, etc.” [ibid, p. 102, italics added]). Thus, turn-of-the-century settlers were generally intrigued by the opportunity of discovery upon the frontier, yet often desired this discovery as presented in contemporary packaging.

Aiding these marketing endeavors was a changing business landscape that brought with it the element of competition, which in its subsequent unraveling generated a sense of adventure and free-for-all excitement often associated with the concurrent land rushes of the Plains (Weaver, 2003). Specifically, by the 1870s ever increasing government subsidies and complicated land deals accelerated the completion of additional lines to Southern California, spurring competition on the rails. Making a significant entry into the market was the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Company, otherwise known as the Santa Fe Railroad⁶ which quickly presented a viable alternative to Southern Pacific’s previously held monopoly. This new competition radically increased late nineteenth-century travel. Whereas “normal” early 1880s rates from the Mississippi Valley to California hovered around \$125 dollars, by 1885 tickets had fallen to \$100 and dropped to \$95 by the end of that year when the Santa Fe railroad completed its construction in entirety (Dumke, 1994, p. 100). What would follow next would be a price war

⁶ In 1879 the Santa Fe railroad acquired the Atlantic and Pacific Company, which had been chartered by the U.S. government to complete a route from Springfield, Missouri to Albuquerque, New Mexico. (Lesley, 1939). Additionally placing California in its sights, despite Southern Pacific’s apparent monopoly on the region, the Santa Fe Company selected San Diego as a final destination and orchestrated a series of complex and at times controversial land deals to ultimately complete the intrepid route (ibid, Dumke, 1994). These maneuvers initially paid off as before long Southern Pacific eventually lost its monopoly on train travel to California as Santa Fe presented a viable new alternative in the marketplace (though during the 1893 Panic Santa Fe would temporarily shutter due to over-extension) (Orsi, 2005; Dumke, 1994; Lesley, 1939; Lauck, 1907).

that “precipitate[d] such a flow of tentative migration, such an avalanche rushing madly to Southern California that [had] no parallel”--one which would allow the mobility of “hordes of people who otherwise would have confined their interest in California to reading about it” (Netz, 1915, p. 56; Dumke, 1994 in Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 72). Before long, ticket prices to traverse the country from Northeastern and Midwestern points including Boston, New York, Kansas City, and Chicago, plummeted to rebated rates of \$70, \$47, \$32, \$25, \$12, \$10, \$8, \$5 until for a few days in 1887, cross-country migrants and tourists could make the trip for a staggering \$1 fare (Dumke, 1994; Lint Sagarena, 2014; Netz, 1915).

However, these price wars alone were not the sole motivation for migration, while they certainly provided a major catalyst. To purchase a west-bound ticket, even at a vastly discounted rate, potential settlers had to also be *motivated* to make such a journey. Or in other words, “neither railroad rate wars nor agricultural development could bring people suddenly in large numbers without the stimulus of advertising a particular American phenomenon” (Dumke, 1994, p. 102). It was an imaginative undertaking the railroads seem to grasp even as the nation entered the twentieth-century and became increasingly tethered to modern ways of life. During this period their marketing materials transcended beyond *(re)establishing* a previous pioneer spirit. Instead, marshalling a Western mythology that since the end of the 1870s had begun to produce various cultural products including Wild West shows, dime novels, and serials--railroad marketing discourse harnessed the *memory* of previous ways of life including pioneerism, California’s “fast dying out” Indigenous populations, and what was coming to be seen as an idyllic Spanish Mission period (Slotkin, 1973/2000; Amero, 2013, p. 69; Dumke, 1944; Runte, 2011). These offerings not only gestured to possible settlers. They also *(re)imagined* California (and its Western rail route) as a unique tourist destination, full of whimsical charm imbued by

natural wonders and a Hispanic past that offered visitors negotiating an ever-changing present the opportunity to tie ‘old’ ways of life to ‘new’ (See Figures 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5). Therefore, America’s railroads in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries not only logistically and imaginatively (re)organized the West for possible settlers, they helped to lay the groundwork of the notion of California as a premiere tourist destination--a development that would have lasting effects in the region, including within San Diego’s burgeoning memory culture and heritage tourism industry.



Figure 4.3: Early twentieth-century Santa Fe advertisement touts the possible discovery that awaits during train travel to California, including visiting the Grand Canyon. From A. Runte, 2011, *Trains of discovery: Railroads and the legacy of our national parks* (5th ed., Lanham, MD: Robert Rinehart), p. 47. Copyright 2011 by Alfred Runte. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

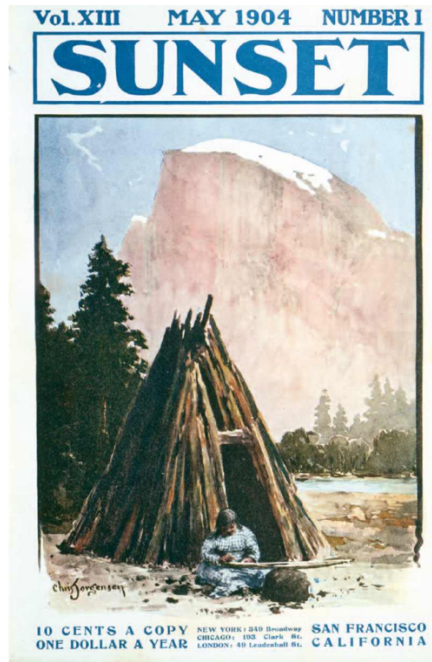


Figure 4.4: A 1904 cover of *Sunset* (a publication launched by Southern Pacific in 1898) advertising seemingly wondrous sights on one of their California lines, including the opportunity to gaze upon natural wonders and Indigenous ways of life. From A. Runte, 2011, *Trains of discovery: Railroads and the legacy of our national parks* (5th ed., Lanham, MD: Robert Rinehart), p. 33. Copyright 2011 by Alfred Runte. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

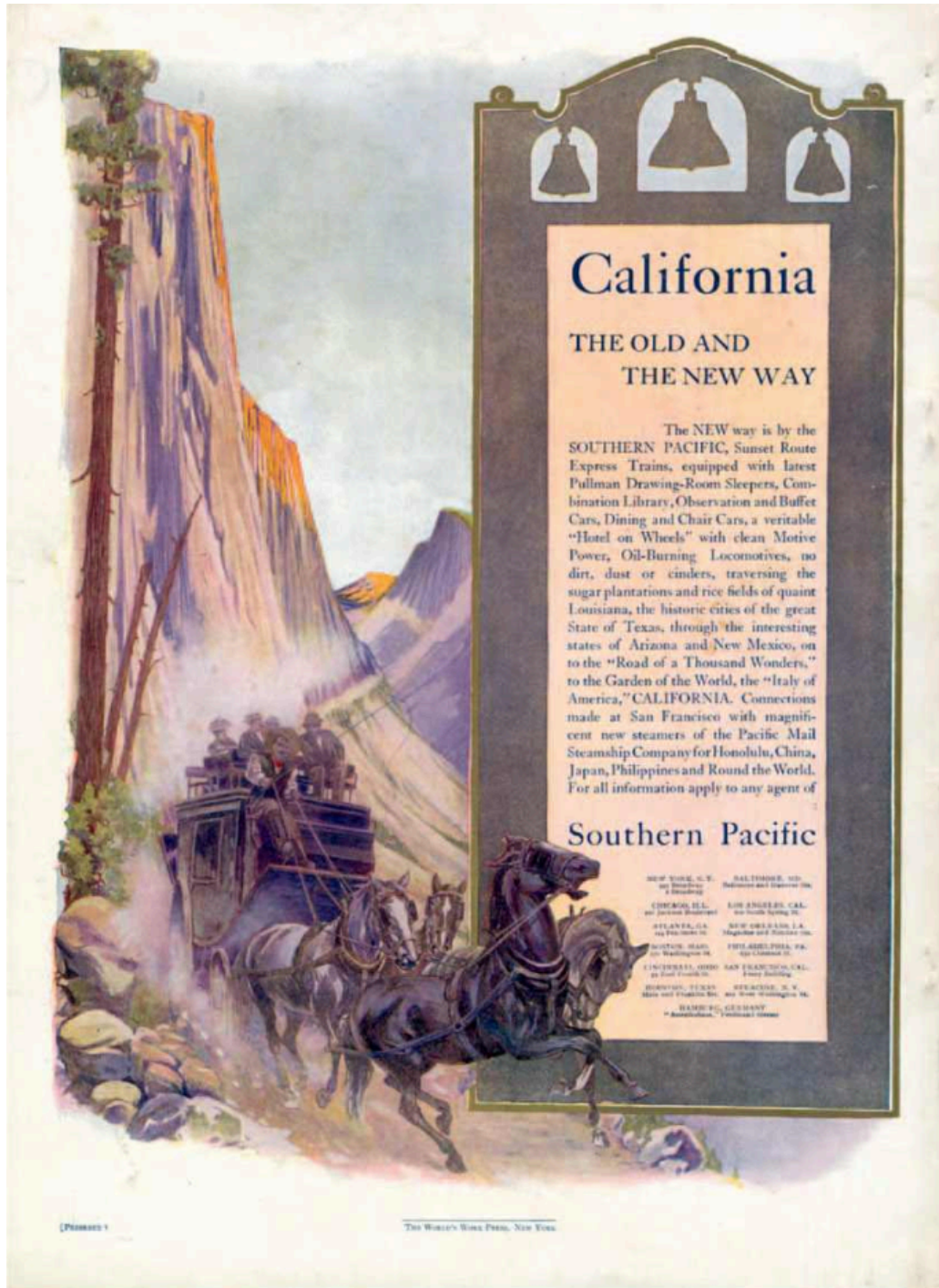


Figure 4.5: A 1907 Southern Pacific advertisement heralding a new achievement: railroad access through Yosemite, which from 1864-1907 was only accessible via stagecoach (Runte, 2011, p. 27). This rendering not only mobilizes adventurous pioneer imagery and a rhetoric of 'discovery' along with Spanish missionary imagery (i.e. the silhouetted mission bells), it also capitalizes on growing desires to reconcile both "the old and the new way" of living in a complex era of increasing change (ibid, p. 27). From A. Runte, 2011, *Trains of discovery: Railroads and the legacy of our national parks* (5th ed., Lanham, MD: Robert Rinehart), p. 27. Copyright 2011 by Alfred Runte. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

4.5 A New ‘Anglo-American Society’: Southern California’s Demographic Change

In its broadest terms, the period of railroad-led development helped facilitate extraordinary population bursts and regional development within Southern California. For instance, Los Angeles’s population increased 100 percent with the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad and 500 percent with the arrival of the Santa Fe, growing from tens of thousands in 1880 to over 101,000 in 1890 (Dumke, 1994, p. 101; Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 72). And federal railroad land grant development in San Diego directly (or tangentially) led to the 1880s creation of communities such as Coronado, Chula Vista, Encinitas, and La Jolla (Dumke, 1944). Demographically, the region also experienced radical shifts. Before the ‘boom,’ Southern California’s white settler population was relatively small (despite the drastic Anglo rise in the Northern portion of the state during the Gold Rush) (Sagarena, 2002). This ‘boom,’ however, brought with it a marked rise in Anglo American settlement in the area (Almaguer, 2008). The late 1880s also featured the migration of black Americans, who like their white counterparts had previously concentrated in greater numbers in Northern California during the Gold Rush, but in the 1880s were largely settling in the Southern region of the state--nearly doubling the state’s black population by 1890 (ibid). A significant number of these black arrivals worked the rails as porters and “redcaps” and decided to settle and/or retire in California with their families, given the state’s relatively more progressive racial policies than other parts of the country (though efforts to systematically subjugate black Californians, with respect to voting and housing laws for instance, certainly existed throughout the state) (ibid, p. 40).

Likewise, the state’s Mexican population was also chiefly concentrated in its Southern region (ibid). However, while the entire population of California dramatically rose from 1860 to 1900, increasing from 380,000 to 1.5 million, by 1900 Mexican Californians (who had been

systematically disenfranchised since American conquest) comprised only 1 to 2 percent of the state's population, putting them on par with black Americans and Japanese immigrants and statistically less than Chinese and Native American populations (ibid, p. 71; Pitt, 1998; Limerick, 1988; Kanazawa, 2005). And though migrating to the state in lesser numbers than their Northern California counterparts, a contingency of white Catholics (Native and European born) also decided to make Southern California their home (Frankiel & Frankiel, 1988; Paddison, 2009; Almaguer, 2008).

In fact, various European immigrants also made their way West to Southern California, many traveling on Southern Pacific's "low-fare emigrant cars" (Orsi, 2005, p. 134). These low fare cars were attached to lumbering freight trains which inched along the rails at "notoriously slow" rates, taking travelers around nine days to travel from the Midwest to California in dark and sweltering cars featuring high peepholes that could not open (ibid). Often derided as "dirty," "strange," and "speaking unintelligible languages," a writer in the 1876 *Reno Gazette*, upon catching a glimpse of the weary emigrant-car passengers bound for California, divulged, "this afternoon the western-bound emigrant train disgorged the shabbiest lot of mortals it has been our mis fortune (sic) to see for some time. The bell rang, all got aboard and went off. Reno...[was] relieved, but we could not help feeling for California" (Orsi, 2005, p. 136).

Yet despite these diverse shifts, the demographic most heavily represented within Southern California's 1880s population boom, and those most actively courted by boosters and developers, were thousands of white Protestant Midwestern and Northeastern settlers (DeLyser, 2003; Dumke, 1994). As such the dramatic rise in real-estate speculation and settlement of the 1880s not only *physically* transformed the region's landscape, but also ultimately introduced and sedimented a "new Anglo-American society" in Southern California, (re)imagining regional

culture and *society* in the process (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Almaguer, 2008, p. 41). For example, white Americans within the state began to embrace, and usurp, the moniker of “Californian,” an identifier which previously had only been associated with native-born Mexicans (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 65). This imaginative shift was a critical step in a regional process of casting Mexicans as foreign outsiders, and not natives⁷, of California (ibid; Weber, 2003). Additionally, not only were Anglo Americans taking up a ‘Californian’ identity, those in the Southern region of the state were increasingly embracing a distinct *regional* identity, referring to themselves as ‘Southern Californians,’ not only rhetorically escaping the shadow of the north’s more established hub of San Francisco, but also highlighting cultural differences in the southern portion of the state as well (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Weber, 2003). Glenn Dumke (1944) in his “The Boom of the 1880s In Southern California” articulates the impact of such a transformation on the regional and national imagination, stating:

The boom was significant, not only for its color, picturesque-ness (sic), and uproarious enthusiasm, but also because it wiped out forever the last traces of the Spanish-Mexican pastoral economy which had characterized California history since 1769. The gold rush made northern California a real part of the United States; the boom of the 80s did precisely that for the south. Where once the cattle of the plain had grazed in silence over rich areas, now the American citizen built his trolley lines, founded his banks and irrigated his orange groves. The boom was the final step in truly making California a part of the United States (pp. 113-114).

These shifts were not simply organic or accidental evolutions. Instead, this emerging development of a shared identity was often marshalled and nurtured by an array of cultural products that helped to (re)imagine California, and those who settled within it, as heirs to a distinct and exceptional regional past--renderings which were generally part of a broader

⁷ This terminology refers to Californios’ own self-imagining as ‘natives’ to Alta California of New Spain and then Mexico (Monroy, 1997; Pitt, 1998; Guerrero, 2010), and is not intended to conflate them with Indigenous peoples actually endemic to region.

Western mythology. Specifically, given contemporary conditions marked by an acceleration of mechanization, urban dwelling, and other ancillary social anxieties of Industrialization, developers often capitalized upon a national desire for pastoral ‘days gone by’ and seemingly slower, more peaceful ways of life. Therefore, the nation, and California’s new settlers, were particularly primed for a romanticized offering of the West. As such, boosters leaned into the longstanding cultural work and usefulness of “nostalgic fantasy” (Lowenthal, 1993, p. 172), creating and gravitating to cultural works which held on to pastoral aspects of California’s Hispanic history and landscape, most notably its Spanish Missionary past.

4.6 ‘Ramonamania’ and the Idealizing of California’s Mission Past

In September 1941, newlyweds Ruby-Faye and Loran Dennis piled into their 1937 Dodge to embark on a honeymoon trip from Texas to California. In San Diego, they would visit the well-known ‘historic’ ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’ adobe, a site closely associated with “the most important woman in the history of southern California [who] never lived” (DeLyser, 2008, p. 886). Purchasing a toothpick holder made of California redwood at the site, Ruby-Faye noted its purchase--even saving the Ramona stamped bag which once held it--in a scrapbook she made to remember the journey. Within it, she marveled at her experience within the attraction, writing, “[i]n this building is the chapel and altar where Ramona married Allesandro” (ibid, p. 899). And she also described her journey into the adobe’s courtyard where she stopped at a wishing well “nearly full with pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, etc.” and divulged, “I made a wish too! But I won’t tell--” (ibid, p. 899). It was a charming memory of an enchanted visit to a location that by 1941 was well steeped in--and in many ways central to--the romantic aura that had come to envelop representations of Southern California and its seemingly nostalgic Hispanic past. The book that helped to launch this myth, however, was written for an entirely different

purpose than spurring Texas newlyweds to honeymoon in Southern California. In fact, such an outcome was the furthest thing from Helen Hunt Jackson's mind when, fifty-seven years before Ruby-Faye's honeymoon trek, she closed herself off in a New York hotel room to pen the novel that would come to be known as *Ramona* (1884).

4.6-1 The Literary Roots of Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*

In 1883 author and Indian advocate Helen Hunt Jackson wrote to friends and declared: "I am going to write a novel...to move people's hearts," adding, "People will read a novel when they will not read serious books (Lint Sagarena, 2014, pp. 69-70; DeLyser, 2003; Phillips, 2003; Jackson to A. F. and M. Coronel, 8 November 1883, quoted in Mathes 1998, 297; Jackson, 2015; Jackson, 2008). Speaking out of a genuine frustration, Jackson felt that she had reached her final resort, deciding it was necessary, in her words, to "sugar" the reformist "pill" (Phillips, 2003; Jackson to A. F. and M. Coronel, 8 November 1883, quoted in Mathes 1998, 297). At the time Jackson penned this letter she was serving as a government appointed commissioner to the Mission Indians of Southern California (a post she petitioned the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to hold after her investigative writings on U.S./Indian relations exposed an abhorrent treatment of Native peoples within California) (Jackson, 2008; Lint Sagarena, 2014).

Once a military housewife, Jackson came to writing late in life after the deaths of her husband and sons, beginning her literary profession as a poet and essayist (Phillips, 2003; Jackson, 2015; Jackson, 2008). Childhood friends with Emily Dickinson and a member of the literary circle organized by Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson (the mentor of Dickinson who helped to re-introduce the childhood acquaintances), the Amherst native was sharp and intellectual (Jackson, 2008; Phillips, 2003; Sewall, 1994). And as such, early in her writing career she did not envision herself as a fiction writer, often deriding novelists that she found too

sentimental (ibid). Additionally, often described as a rebellious and precocious child, her seeming obstinacy evolved into an eventual tenacity regarding Indian affairs (ibid). Initially visiting California to compose travel essays, Jackson's earliest contacts with Indigenous peoples seemed not to immediately stir any latent reformist passions as within these essays she often evokes the familiar rhetoric of her time, dismissing or blatantly deriding Native Americans and Chinese immigrants (Jackson, 2008; Lint Sagarena, 2014; Phillips, 2003). Thus it would be in late 1879, four years before her proclamation to write a 'sugar-coated' novel of Indian reform and before she had yet to publish one word on the subject, in which Jackson's professional writing life would in fact take a dramatic turn.

In October of that year, while in the midst of a protracted "writing slump," Jackson attended a public reception at Boston's Horticultural Hall where she ultimately heard the moving testimony of Chief Standing Bear, a leader of the Ponca⁸ tribe (Jackson, 2008, p. 33; See Figure 4.6). Standing Bear, in full Indian "costume," delivered a passionate speech regarding his tribe's forced removal from their traditional homeland in Nebraska to an Oklahoma reservation where a third of his tribe perished there or en-route, including his two daughters, his son, and his infant granddaughter (Jackson, 2008; Howard, 1995; Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 64; Nebraska Education, 2018). Though previously uninterested in political causes (including both suffrage and abolition), Jackson was immediately moved and hurriedly wrote to an editor friend asking him to publish her editorial on the subject, stating, "Don't be funny about the Indians. They are right & we are wrong" (Jackson, 2008, p. 20; Gonzalez, 2004; Lint Sagarena, 2014). We can only speculate regarding the impetus of this conversion of sorts as the historical record does not

⁸ The Ponca are a Midwestern Native American tribe whose people originally inhabited (or migrated through) river lands and woodlands in what today are the Midwestern states of Nebraska, South Dakota, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, and Iowa (Howard, 1995).

divulge a clear reason for her sudden advocacy. Thus whether her new mission was simply the spark Jackson needed to emerge from her writing stall, or if it (un)consciously fulfilled her Calvinist minister father's long-standing admonishments to reject frivolity and seek revelation--and thus "true piety"--through submission (e.g. her comment that "we are wrong"), or whether Standing Bear's tale of extreme loss resonated with her own past tragedies (e.g. the loss of her husband and two children), or if her conversion experience reflected some complex combination of all or none of these circumstances, we cannot know. However, whatever the case, Jackson was indeed inspired, and it was a pivotal moment that would ultimately tether her to the nation's "Indian Problem"⁹ (Jackson, 2008, p. 33; Phillips, 2003, pp. 53-54).

This new line of interest resulted in Jackson's first major work of reform, *A Century of Dishonor*, an extensive nonfiction chronicling of persistent U.S. treaty abrogation with Native Americans (Jackson, 2008). Drawing upon the charged words of Benjamin Franklin to the English Parliament, she sent the book to various clergy and to every member of Congress with Franklin's message emblazoned on each copy's blood-red cloth cover stating, "Look upon your hands: they are stained with the blood of your relations" (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 63; Gonzalez, 2004). The book received scant congressional response and lackluster literary attention, and when it was acknowledged, critics often admonished Jackson's efforts as simply highlighting the plight of Native Americans without offering any viable solution to the "Indian Problem" itself (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 64). Seemingly propelled by both this criticism and a new round of travels to California where she was writing travel essays for *Century Magazine* on the state's

⁹ Akin to other "race problem[s]" within America (e.g. the "Negro Problem") which were often first articulated in nineteenth-century discourse, the "Indian Problem" or the "Indian question" positioned the plight and challenges faced by Native Americans (circumstances often created by American conquest and conflict), and the hindrance to national ambition that their continued presence presented, as a national nuisance and dilemma, which if left unresolved could threaten the nation's character, cohesion, peace, and morality (Weber, 2003, p. 258; DuBois, 1903, p. 13; Scheckel, 1998, p. 10; Gonzalez, 2004, p. 439; Jackson, 2008).



Figure 4.6: Chief Standing Bear (left) was born in 1829, just a year before Helen Hunt Jackson (Nebraska Education, 2018; Phillips, 2003). When his son, Bear Shield, passed from malaria in a makeshift Indian camp in Oklahoma Indian Territory, his son's final wishes were to be buried in their ancestral home (ibid). Setting off on a secretive and treacherous winter trek to honor his son's wishes, Standing Bear and his thirty travel companions were eventually apprehended and arrested by federal authorities, setting off a legal battle in which the District Attorney in Nebraska argued that under U.S. law the Indian was not a person nor a citizen (ibid). The ruling judge ultimately decided in Standing Bear's favor, releasing him and his party (ibid). Standing Bear remained a vocal advocate of Indigenous rights until his death in 1908 (ibid). From Nebraska Education on Location, 2018, Chief Standing Bear [Webpage], retrieved December 9, 2018, from <https://nebraskaeducationonlocation.org/nebraska-notables/chief-standing-bear/> Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

crumbling missions, Jackson petitioned the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, asking to be appointed special commissioner to the Mission Indians of Southern California--a post she received in 1882 (Jackson, 2008). This appointment led to another nonfiction publishing, this time one which offered specific solutions, her 1883 co-written Report on the Conditions and Needs of the

Mission Indians of California (ibid). In it, Jackson and her co-author Abbott Kinney¹⁰ recommended particular reparative steps including resurveying land, removing squatting white settlers from reservations, and the formulation of clear and distinct boundary lines (especially within murky railroad land grant areas) in order to provide Indians with their common request of “a paper to show to the white men where their lands were” (Jackson & Kinney, 1883, p. 7).

Apart from its historical significance, her late body of work (i.e. *A Century of Dishonor*, the Mission Indian Report, her California travel essays, and the influential biographies of missionaries she also composed at the time), reveals three key elements of Jackson’s ethos which would inform the content and tone of *Ramona*. First, though certainly passionate about her cause, Jackson displayed a particular ambivalence regarding Indian suffering. While she was remarkably clear in her indictment of the U.S. government and the fallacy of mainstream claims of any ignorance otherwise, underlying her accusations--and even her recommendations--was a sense that Indians were inevitably “doomed” (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 69). This sentiment was evident in her 1883 Report on the Mission Indians where she argued that the Southern California Indigenous peoples who had already succumbed to “suffering, hunger, disease, and vice” were in fact better off than their living counterparts, stating (Jackson & Kinney, 1883, p. 7):

With every year of our neglect the difficulties have increased and the wrongs have been multiplied, until now it is, humanly speaking impossible to render them a full measure of justice. All that is left in our power is to make them some atonement. Fortunately for them, their numbers have greatly diminished (ibid, pp. 6-7).

This fatalistic rhetoric, including Jackson’s frequent positioning of Native Americans as “helpless creatures,” and her calls for government led atonement aligned her with a broader

¹⁰ When appointed as special commissioner Jackson met Abbot Kinney, a wealthy real estate developer who was knowledgeable in California real estate law, fluent in Spanish, and likewise interested in the plight of Indians (Lint Sagarena, 2014). Jackson requested Kinney be appointed a special commissioner as well (which he was) and together they co-wrote and published their 1883 Report (ibid).

paternalistic view of Native populations shared by many white (and especially female) Indian advocates of her time (Senier, 2001; Gonzalez, 2004; Wagner, 2002; Phillips, 2003, p. 27). And though she never explicitly championed the exact policy of Indian allotment¹¹, her work would be mobilized towards its efforts, effectively minimizing and neutralizing waning tribal sovereignty in the process (Wagner, 2002; Gonzalez, 2004).

Second, in addition to her fatalistic and paternalistic positioning of Native Americans, Jackson's later work also illustrates a particular reverence and nostalgia for the Spanish Mission period. In fact, she was the "first nationally read author to cast the Spanish Catholic missionaries as moral exemplars for all American 'decedents of the Puritans'" (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 68) In other words, in her idealized portrayal of Spanish missionaries Jackson identifies what she views as the noble philosophy of Christian selflessness at the root of the Franciscan project, making a crucial distinction between the Franciscan order and Catholics in general, a move that suddenly made Catholicism not only palatable for Protestant Americans often distrustful¹² of Roman Catholicism and its practitioners, but one which positioned these Franciscans as moral ancestors of sorts on par with the more familiar Anglo colonial Puritans (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Sagarena,

¹¹ While some literature positions Jackson's work as advocating early "well-meaning" notions of Indian self-determination given the time in which she wrote (Jackson, 2015; Senier, 2000), many others view Jackson's positions as basically advocating Indian allotment as a form of Indian assimilation by other means (Wagner, 2002; Gonzalez, 2004). Allotment negated tribal sovereignty as it proposed a system in which the U.S. President would survey, divide, and hold in trust for 25 years, allotments of land for individual Native Americans who agreed to sever relations with their tribes in exchange for U.S. citizenship (Jackson, 2008). These individuals (including women only if they were married), would have to consistently work the land and clear various bureaucratic hurdles before finally receiving their allotment after the 25 year trust was ended (ibid). Some scholars and lawmakers have credited Jackson's *Ramona* as contributing to the establishment of the eventual 1887 Dawes Act which enacted the allotment program (to disastrous results for Native communities as it ended Native communal ownership of land as the U.S. government eventually kept 'surplus' lands 'leftover' after issuing allotments, resulting in the critical loss of up to 90 million acres of land--or two thirds of the land base left to Indians in 1887--in addition to the loss of individual tribal members from Native nations) (ibid, p. 17).

¹² See Chapter Three for an accounting of the political implications of particular biases against Roman Catholicism in nineteenth-century America. Specifically, drawing upon entrenched animus dating back to the Reformation, the Protestant American doctrine of Manifest Destiny, which enshrined Anglo Americans as a chosen people, was underscored by a contempt for Latin and Roman Catholic ways of being informed by a "Spanish Black Legend" which, through cultural and educational products, portrayed the Spanish "as depraved and cowardly people" and as "uniquely evil, cruel, bigoted ... [and] violent" (ibid; Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2013, p. 218; Castañeda, 1990).

2002). Thus, viewing Native conversion as both a spiritually and physically emancipatory practice, in her biography of Father Junipero Serra¹³, Jackson lamented the unfinished nature of the Spanish missionary project, deriding the “merry people of Mexican and Spanish blood, troubling themselves about nothing, dancing away whole days and nights like children, while their priests were gathering the Indians by thousands into communities and feeding and teaching them” (Jackson, 1883, p. 201). Further tethering this idealized version of the Franciscans to the nation’s contemporary Indian Problem, Jackson claimed that the Franciscans “would have preserved these Indian races if they had been left to pursue unmolested their work of pious beneficence” without the interruption of Mexican mission secularization (ibid, p. 215). It was a conclusion that despite Jackson’s extensive research on the period and the region (including archival study within the New York Public Library) ran counter to factual evidence of steep Indian decline¹⁴ during the Mission period (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Weber, 2014).

Finally, accompanying her fatalistic rendering of Native Americans and her romanticized portrayal of the Franciscans appeared a general sense of frustration. Writing to the Secretary of the Interior in 1880 Jackson chided, “For a hundred years the Indians have been victims of fraud and oppression on the part of the Government. Will anything put an end to it...? Promises and plans will not do it, for who can assure their performance?” (Jackson, 1880, in Jackson, 2015, p. 264). Four years later, after a muted response to *A Century of Dishonor* and no noticeable traction from her governmental report or essays, her frustration seemed to only intensify. Thus, claiming that she had reached her final resort, Jackson finally decided to write a novel in order to

¹³ See Chapter Two for a detailed accounting of Junipero Serra, a Spanish Franciscan missionary who led colonial Spain’s missionary efforts in the late eighteenth century, founding the first nine of twenty-one Spanish missions along the coast of Alta California (Bean & Rawls, 1983; Bolton, 1917; Bokovoy, 2005).

¹⁴ See Chapter Two for a discussion of overall Indian decline during the Missionary period as the native coastal population in California fell from 60,000 in 1769 (the year of the founding of the first Spanish mission in Alta California at San Diego) to 35,000 in 1800 (Weber, 2014).

“move people’s hearts,” (Lint Sagarena, 2014, pp. 69-70; DeLyser, 2003; Phillips, 2003; Jackson to A. F. and M. Coronel, 8 November 1883, quoted in Mathes 1998, 297; Jackson, 2015; Jackson, 2008). Hoping her book could become the “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin of the West*” and emulate Harriet Beecher Stowe’s 1852 novel which had intensified national outrage towards the injustices of slavery, Jackson stated, “If I could write a story that could do for the Indian a thousandth part what Uncle Tom’s Cabin did for the Negro, I would be thankful the rest of my life” (DeLyser, 2003, p. 891; Jackson letters in Strickland, 2000, p. 122; Sagarena, 2002, p. 432; Phillips, 2003, p. 252). Thus, within four months in 1884, while burrowed away in a New York hotel room, Jackson placed her faith the exact genre she had once disdained: sentimental fiction.

Originally circulated as a weekly serial in the *Christian Union*, her tale immediately captured the nation’s imagination. Set against a glorified and pastoralized Southern California after the Mexican-American War, *Ramona* chronicles the trials and hardships of the young, beautiful, and orphaned half-Indian half-Scottish Ramona. Adopted by the Morenos, a wealthy Spanish-Mexican family who still live comfortably in colonial luxury, Ramona falls madly in love with Alessandro, the son of a Luiseño Mission Indian chief and a hired hand on the sprawling Moreno rancho. When her austere adoptive mother Señora Moreno (who barely tolerates Ramona) disowns her because of the relationship, Ramona and Alessandro run away together and elope, beginning a married life marred by persistent racism, forced relocations across Southern California and Mexico, Alessandro’s mental breakdown, and ultimately death including the loss of their first daughter and the murder of Alessandro by a white American settler before Ramona’s eyes. Ramona is eventually rescued by her step-brother and long-time admirer, Felipe, who takes her back to the Moreno rancho--now also blighted and threatened by white settlement. They marry and eventually move to Mexico City where Ramona ultimately

leads a dignified life as a “*Grande dame*,” now free from the considerable shadow of American conquest and symbolically returned to their previous idyllic California life (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 70). Printed over 300 times in multiple languages, adapted as a film four times, and performed annually outdoors in a dramatic pageant nearly every year since 1923, the novel was a cultural phenomenon and an immediate commercial success, and it has never gone out of print since its publishing (Phillips, 2003; Strickland, 2000).

However, the novel’s enthusiastic reception did not initially translate into a changed U.S. Indian policy (Strickland, 2000; Sagarena, 2002). Instead it was Jackson’s romanticized portrayal of Spanish California’s *hacienda* culture that resonated within the national imagination. It was a public fascination not lost on Jackson. In January 1885, two months after the novel’s publication, she recognized that her sentimentality might have in fact derailed her project’s broader purpose, writing, “I fear the story has been too interesting...so few of the critics seem to have been impressed by anything in it, so much as by its literary excellence,” and adding, “I am positively sick of hearing that ‘the flight of Ramona and Allesandro is an idyl’” (Jackson, 2008; Jackson, 2015, p. 340). Perhaps had Jackson more time to engage with the public regarding the novel’s reception, she may have been able to substantially alter the course of its cultural influence. However, in August 1885, just eight months after the release of *Ramona*, Jackson died in San Francisco from declining health (See Figure 4.7).

4.6-2 The Public Repurposing of *Ramona*

After Jackson’s death, *Ramona* would be effectively taken up and mobilized as a driving force of local memory and lore without the complicating presence of its progenitor. Indeed, the novel and the mythology that would coalesce around it would have lasting influence upon the



Figure 4.7: Helen Hunt Jackson in 1884, the year *Ramona* was published and months before her death. Albumen silver print, c. 1884, by Charles F. Conly. From the National Portrait Gallery (Object number NPG.2011.99), Smithsonian Institution, retrieved from https://npg.si.edu/object/npg_NPG.2011.99 Copyright by Smithsonian Institution. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

identity of the American Southwest and San Diego particularly in three critical manners. First, the *Ramona* mythology helped to reconcile an ever-evolving present by idealizing the Mission era, helping to craft an image of California awash in romance, nostalgia, and pastoral days gone by before industrialism's complexities. Secondly, this romanticism would also help to provide new settlers within the region a seemingly deep-rooted shared identity by redefining California's Spanish Catholic past, beginning the work of marginalizing the legacy of Mexican California in

the process (Starr 1986; DeLyser, 2005; Amero, 2013). And finally, the frenzy which would surround *Ramona* would illustrate not only a popular interest in memory culture, but further opportunity for commodifying this interest, which helped to establish the ‘birth’ of San Diego heritage tourism practices which I argue would later influence larger scale projects in the region (DeLyser, 2003; Walsh, 2004; McWilliams, 1946/1973).

The Ramona Mythology’s Mission Era Idealization and Spanish Catholicism Re-definition

First, in terms of the novel itself (and not its broader mythology), Jackson’s prose began the work of both idealizing California’s Mission period and redefining California’s Spanish Catholic past. For example, early in her novel Jackson describes life in California during the first part of the nineteenth century when it was still a province of New Spain, claiming:

It was a picturesque life, with more of sentiment and gayety in it, more also that was truly dramatic, more romance, than will ever be seen on those sunny shores. The aroma of it all lingers there still; industries and inventions have not yet slain it; it will last out its century (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 47).

She continues, describing the natural abundance of the Moreno rancho as a veritable Eden, in this instance detailing the garden from an overlooking veranda, stating:

Between the veranda and the river meadows, out on which it looked, all was garden, orange grove, and almond orchard; the orange grove always green, never without snowy bloom or golden fruit; the garden never without flowers, summer or winter; and the almond orchard, in early spring, a fluttering canopy of pink and white petals, which, seen from the hills on the opposite side of the river, looked as if rosy sunrise clouds had fallen, and become tangled in the tree-tops. On either hand stretched away other orchards,—peach, apricot, pear, apple, pomegranate; and beyond these, vineyards. Nothing was to be seen but verdure or bloom or fruit at whatever time of year you sat on the Señora’s south veranda (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 51).

And when describing the heyday of Spanish Franciscan Catholicism and the mission system before its Mexican secularization, Jackson writes of the Moreno chapel and its idyllic services:

This chapel was dearer to Señora than her house. It had been built...while the estate was at its best, and hundreds of Indians living within its borders, there was many a Sunday when the scene to be witnessed there was like the scenes at the Missions--the chapel full of kneeling men and women; those who could not find room inside kneeling on the garden walks outside; Father Salvierderra, in gorgeous vestments, coming, at close of the services, slowly down the aisle, the close-packed rows of worshippers parting to right and left to let him through, all looking up eagerly for his blessing, women giving him offerings of fruit and flowers, and holding up their babies that he might lay hands on their heads...He was a Franciscan, one of the few left now in the country; so revered and beloved by all who had come under his influence... (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 53).

Jackson's presentation of early California not only romanticized its Mission period and Spanish Catholic past. It also laid critical groundwork in the region's eventual realigning of racial distinctions which would provide Anglo Americans with a direct line of symbolic lineage to Spain. Specifically, Jackson's novel helped to radically repair the influential 'Black Legend' Spanish rhetoric so prominent in the decades prior to the novel's publication, especially in the years leading up to and during the Mexican-American war, when many American leaders and culture makers portrayed¹⁵ Hispanic California as a region inhabited by vice-filled mongrels who, since the days of Spanish conquest, had laid waste to the land's natural abundance (Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2013; Castañeda, 1990; Stephanson, 1996; Streeby, 2002). Therefore Jackson's version of California helped to redefine this narrative, instead casting Spain and Spanish culture as elegantly European and as such inherently noble.

For instance, not only does she present the Morenos as a near-Spanish prominent family that flourished when "'New Spain' was an ever-present link and [a] stimulus to the warmest memories and deepest patriotisms of its people" and who are ultimately flawed by their cruder *mestizaje* half (Jackson, 2008). But she also frequently describes the titular Ramona's startling "steel-blue" eyes as a physical attribute that continually sets her apart and makes her remarkable

¹⁵ See Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of the racialized rhetoric mobilized by American leaders to justify the conquest of the Mexican North via graduated pressure or, if necessary, by force.

and seemingly special, while also claiming “she had just enough olive tint in her complexion...to enrich her skin without making it swarthy” (Jackson, 2008, p. 47, p. 81, p. 72). Furthermore, though Jackson characterizes Ramona’s love interest, the Mission Indian Allesandro, in many ways as a ‘noble savage’ which was a common trope of Jackson’s day, she also renders him in some ways as “a high-caste Spanish-Mexican” (Strickland, 2000, p. 123). For example, she details his heightened appreciation for, if not a mastery of, European culture (e.g. though “simple-minded” and “unlearned” he plays the violin, has a pseudo ‘Anglo Protestant’ work ethic, utilizes a ‘refined’ diction, has adopted Christianity, and is ‘innately’ aware that his bride, the half-Scottish Ramona, should not live within the ‘crude’ living conditions common to the Indian women of his own tribal community) (Senier introduction in Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 18, p. 15; Jackson, 2014).

For Jackson, the tragedy inflicted upon Southern California’s Mission Indian is not necessarily the injustice of conquest, but the interruption of the Franciscan civilizing project by Mexicans who took advantage of Indian labor without securing their enlightenment. Jackson also views as a second major infliction on the Mission Indians, the further abdication of this higher calling by neglectful and greedy Anglo Americans. Specifically, she positions Anglo Americans within the region as new settlers who arrived only to also fail to complete the task of Indian salvation and assimilation (a tragedy metaphorically represented through Ramona and Allesandro’s inability to secure American acceptance). However, for the majority of Jackson’s nineteenth-century readers, the novel’s dramatic ending in effect settles this tragedy.

Specifically, the ‘doomed’ Indians (personified by Allesandro) tragically pass away and the Hispanic Californians (e.g. Ramona and Felipe) are rightly returned to Mexico where they can

live in peace among their own people and within their own culture--symbolically making space for Anglo American California's inheritance of Spanish Arcadia (Lint Sagarena, 2014).

As Jackson gracefully romanticized Spanish culture and offered a seeming fatalistic rendering of the Indians' plight in an effort to propel her audience to moral outrage, her reading public ultimately dismissed her call to action on American Indians' behalf, viewing their predicament as a foregone conclusion. They instead found themselves captivated by the novel's suggestion of a possible noble Spanish heritage. In other words, when Jackson presented a "half barbaric, half elegant" society in California's not too distant past, Americans not surprisingly chose to embrace the "elegant" half (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 46). This new narrative fundamentally redefined understandings of Hispanic California, joining other contemporaneous narrative efforts that provided newly arrived Anglo Americans to Southern California with a new system of racial distinction which clarified Hispanic California's previous murky and miscegenation-based categorization¹⁶ of race which had run counter to an Anglo American 'one-drop' dichotomy of whiteness/blackness, producing a new 'properly' partitioned system within the American national imagination in which:

Spanish Franciscan colonizers = west-coast Puritans.
Mexicans = lazy foreigners who laid waste to the idyllic past.
Americans = rightful and appreciative heirs to California.
Native Americans = tragic characters who had passed away.
(Sagarena, 2002, p. 437)

Jackson's depiction of Señora Moreno's repulsion towards the mixed Ramona further illustrates this realigning of racial distinctions, as Señora Moreno "did not wish any dealings with such alien and mongrel blood" (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 64). This characterization of Ramona as an

¹⁶ See Chapter Two for a detailed discussion of Hispanic California's complex racialized colonial order based upon *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) which produced a hierarchical classification (or *sistema de castes*) directly correlated to proportions of Spanish, Indigenous, and African ancestry (Guerrero, 2010, Martínez, 2008).

“alien” being, or a cultural aberration, sorely misrepresents the racial mixing that commonly occurred within Hispanic California dating back to Spanish/Indigenous intermarrying, which was encouraged by early Franciscan missionary priests, to the various unions between Native scouts, African sailors, and Spanish soldiers, to the Anglo/Hispanic/Indian marriages of pre-American conquest Mexico (Voss, 2008; Lightfoot, 2006; Rothschild, 2003; Hurtado, 1999). Yet in presenting Señora Moreno as staunchly opposed to, and seemingly astonished by, Ramona’s mixed heritage, Jackson effectively transposes Anglo-American racial sensibilities onto a Hispanic past.

Jackson also helped to effectively reduce Mexican California to a simple foil to America’s legitimate California inheritance within the public imagination. This marginalization underscores a fundamental quality of Western remembrance. New Western Historian Patricia Limerick eloquently summarizes the nature of these commemorative battles, stating, “Western history,” to which I would also add memory, narrative, and other elements that inform the Myth of the West, “has been an ongoing competition for legitimacy--for the right to claim for oneself and sometimes for one’s group the status of legitimate beneficiary of Western resources” (Limerick, 1988, p. 27). Thus Jackson’s description of post American conquest Southern California as a place where it was quite probable that no Mexican had even stayed in the country “except those [few] who were absolutely forced to it,” figuratively marginalizes, and nearly dispatches, Mexican Californians in a manner that engages in the centuries old competitive project of securing Western legitimacy for one’s group (Jackson, 2008, p. 48). As such, such a presentation would help to lay the critical groundwork for an eventual cultural ‘erasure’ of the memory of Mexican California in the region.

“Ramonamania” and the Emergence of San Diego’s Heritage Tourism Industry

Upon its publication, public fascination with the novel, and the ‘historical’ account many believed it depicted, spurred a cottage industry of Ramona-themed products including tourist sites and trinkets such as teaspoons, toothpick holders, letter-openers, ash trays, coin banks, plates, salt-and-pepper shakers, napkin rings, pocket notebooks, tape measures, miniature vases, pennants, silver matchbox covers, postcards, pictures, beauty products, beer, and even auto parts, all illustrations of what some called a “Ramonamania” frenzy that by 1916 had generated \$50 million of revenues in the region (Sagarena, 2002, p. 433; DeLyser, 2003; Phillips, 2003; Strickland, 2000; See Figure 4.8). Capitalizing on sleuthing efforts that matched detailed physical descriptions¹⁷ of landscapes and architecture (including features such as roof tiling) within the novel to Southern California locations, within years of its publication Ramona sleuths discovered and shared the “real” places and people of the novel with an inquiring public through books and hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles (DeLyser, 2003, p. 888; Strickland, 2000; Vroman & Barnes, 1899; James, 1911; Davis & Alderson, 1914; See Figure 4.9). These detective efforts, some now archived in the Huntington Library, often offered inquisitive readers explanatory text, detailed illustrations, and original photography that guided Ramona enthusiasts through “Ramona’s Country” across swaths of Southern California where they could visit an array of sites ranging from more or less informal, ad hoc, or ambivalently presented operations to highly commodified tourist enterprises (DeLyser, 2003; Vroman & Barnes, 1809; James, 1911; Davis & Alderson, 1914).

¹⁷ Jackson did visit the region and conduct archival research before writing the novel and as such most likely based some locations within the book on actual locales (Jackson, 2008).



Figure 4.8: Packaging for Ramona themed perfume. From D. DeLyser, 2003, Ramona memories: Fiction, tourist practices, and placing the past in southern California, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 93(4), p. 890. Copyright 2003 by American Association of Geographers. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

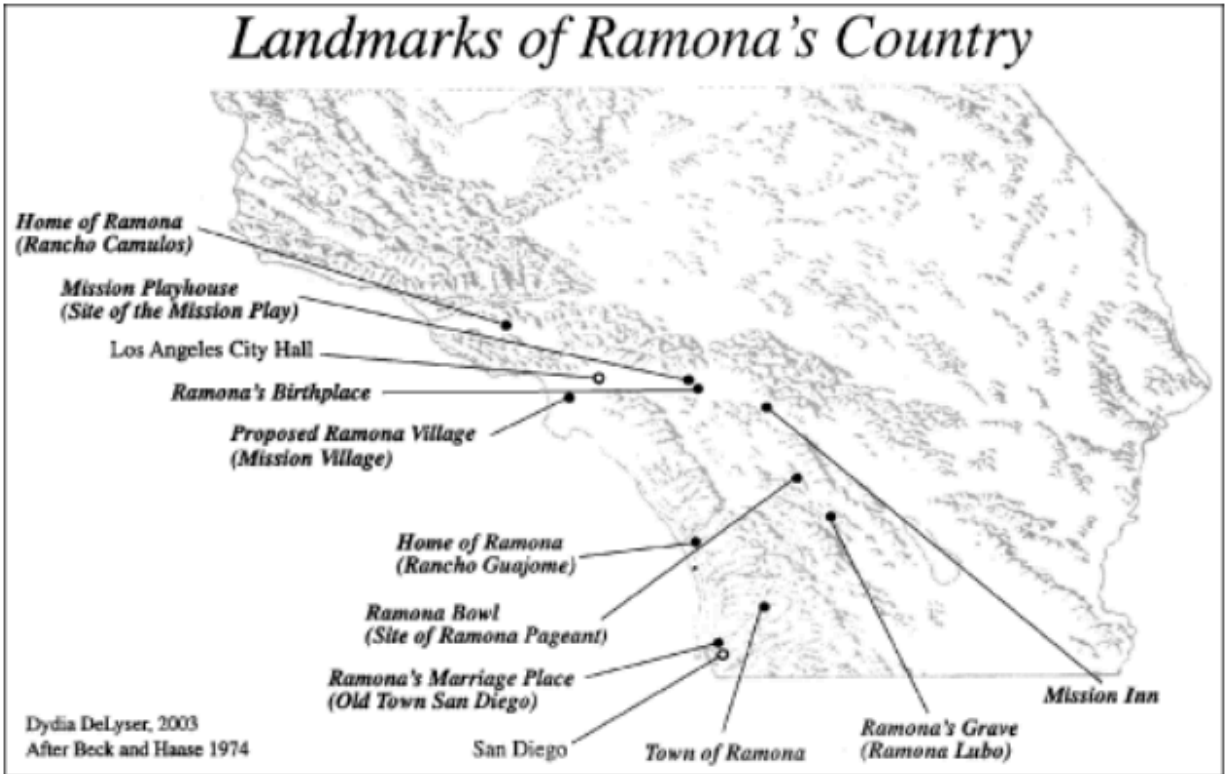


Figure 4.9: Approximate map of Southern California landmarks within “Ramona’s Country,” several of which became tourist attractions which sold Ramona themed souvenirs. From D. DeLyser, 2003, *Ramona memories: Fiction, tourist practices, and placing the past in southern California*, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 93(4), p. 888. Copyright 2003 by American Association of Geographers. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

One of the most deliberately and purposefully constructed sites of Ramona memory tourism was also among the first associated with the Ramona mythology: The Estudillo Adobe, also known as ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’¹⁸ (DeLyser, 2003; Sandos, 1998; Walsh, 2004). Located in Old Town San Diego, the adobe was first built around 1830 by Jose Antonio Estudillo, a prominent local Californio and son of a former San Diego *presidio* commandant (DeLyser, 2003; Walsh, 2004; van Balgooy, 2011). The adobe was an architectural and

¹⁸ Though advertised as “Ramona’s Marriage Place,” this site actually represents the location in the novel where Ramona and Allesandro’s names were entered into Father Gaspara’s records. Their actual ‘marriage’ (though not depicted in real time in the novel) took place at the Adobe Chapel, a present day San Diego museum which even in 2018 bills itself as “Ramona’s *Real* Marriage Place” and through the administration of the Save Our Heritage Organisation offers contemporary couples the opportunity to make it their “marriage place too” (DeLyser, 2003; SOHO, n.d.-b, Ramona landing page, italics added).

sociocultural fixture within San Diego's small settlement. Considered a "mansion," the *casa de poblador* (or townhouse) was home to Jose Antonio, his racially-mixed and charitable wife María Victoria Domínguez, and their 10 children, 4 grandchildren, 5 nieces and nephews, and various adopted Indian orphans (Walsh, 2004, p. 2). Originally L-shaped and single-story, the whitewashed adobe wrapped around an inner courtyard in a manner which "reflected a rustic elegance unmatched in Southern California of that day" (ibid, p. 2). The home was also a physical manifestation of the region's natural resources, featuring raw materials from its immediate and surrounding area. Its ridge pole frame and *sala* (or living room) floor were made from pine timber from the Cuyamaca forest thirty miles east of San Diego, and the narrow rawhide strips which held the frame's beams together (ibid; Fetzer, 2005) were most likely from local Californio hide and tallow enterprises (if not from one of the Estudillos' very own *ranchos*). And meaning mudbrick in Spanish and made from earth and organic materials including sand, silt, clay, straw, and/or dung, the home's adobe walls were two-to-four feet thick and constructed over a river-cobblestone foundation (Caporale et al., 2014; Millogo et al.; 2016; Walsh, 2004). Originally, the adobe contained earthen packed floors before eventually transitioning to heartier brick in all of the rooms save the pine-floored *sala*; additionally it featured wooden windows and shutters, and a clay tile roof (Walsh, 2004). At its most expansive, as the Estudillos continued to remodel and improve upon the home over the years (eventually adding another wing to make it U-shaped), the adobe boasted twelve rooms including private living areas, servants' quarters, kitchen, work and storage rooms, and social areas including a living room, dining room, and chapel (ibid; California Department of Parks and Recreation, 2018).

In addition to harnessing local natural resources, the home was also a material representation of the region's sociocultural and political orders. The home was built, remodeled, and primarily maintained by Indian labor (Walsh, 2004). Additionally, it often served multiple purposes, housing not only the Estudillo family but at times serving as a community chapel and as a key hub for social gatherings (California Department of Parks and Recreation, 2018). As Jose Antonio held a variety of political positions including treasurer, tax collector, mayor, and county assessor (both before and immediately following American rule), the Estudillos regularly hosted critical gatherings from their stately balcony where guests could watch bullfighting or *fiestas* on the Plaza below while the Mexican flag waved atop their rooftop pole (Walsh, 2004). Though certainly sources of amusement, these festive gatherings also carried complex social and political significance¹⁹ within Mexican, and specifically Californio, life (Gibb, 2018; Brandes, 1988; Monaghan, 1990; Field et al, 2012). Given the social status of both the Estudillos and the adobe, the home also served as a community hub and refuge during Indian uprisings and the Mexican-American War (through which the Estudillos remained politically neutral) (Walsh, 2004). Upon Jose Antonio's death in 1852, María Victoria renovated portions of the home in efforts to bring in rental income while facing a barrage of challenges from surrounding economic crises, dropping Old Town property values, legal disputes, and internal familial rancor (ibid). Doña María Victoria died in 1873, a year after a massive fire gutted portions of an already steeply declining Old Town (ibid). Afterwards a cluster of Estudillo heirs remained in the home until 1887, by which point the adobe had fallen into marked disrepair and they eventually moved to Los Angeles, leaving the home with a caretaker (ibid; NPS, n.d.-a).

¹⁹ See Chapter Seven for a detailed accounting of this significance along with the manner in which particular spaces of regional (edu)tourism downplay or dismiss this aspect of Mexican California cultural life.

Within the same year of its abandonment Ramona sleuths associated the property with the novel and by August 28, 1887, the San Diego Union displayed a front-page illustration of the decrepit Estudillo adobe about which an unnamed author wrote, “To sleepy Old Town, [the house] is known as the Estudillo’s, but the outside world knows it as the marriage place of ‘Ramona’” (*San Diego Union*, 1887, p. 1, in DeLyser, 2003, p. 897). Promptly becoming an essential visit for Ramona pilgrimages, even in its decrepit state, thousands of annual visitors toured “Casa de Estudillo” and envisioned the young and optimistic couple who were once ‘married’ there against a romantic and pastoral Hispanic California landscape (ibid; Walsh, 2004, p. 3; See Figure 4.10).



Figure 4.10: “Casa de Estudillo, January 1, 1893. Collection of Marjorie Reeves, Rancho Santa Fe.” (Walsh, 2004, p. 3). Tourists stand before the crumbling and abandoned adobe thirteen years before restoration efforts begin. From V. A. Walsh, 2004, Una casa del pueblo—A town house of old San Diego, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 50(1/2), p. 3. Copyright 2004 by San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Almost immediately, the destination showed early commercial potential. Initial visitors toured the abandoned home where its caretaker began not only regaling tourists with tales of the site's Ramona fame, but also selling them bits and pieces of the building as well including tiles, adobe, and even windows and doors (ibid). These fragments not only represented seemingly foreign stylistic features and materials which differed from the rest of the nation's wood and brick Colonials, stone Tudors, high-roofed Victorians, or humble sod or log Plains homesteads. Obtaining pieces of the home also illustrated a particular reverence for the materiality of the site (or an irreverence considering its commodification and the piecemeal dismantling of the home) which reified 'Casa de Estudillo's' cultural position as a place of pilgrimage, including the veneration of material relics that acted as tangible, and eventually portable, memorials of the Ramona mythology. Not only did visitors often take pieces of the home with them, they also left their own marks within the empty space, carving or writing their names upon the adobe's worn walls (ibid). This engagement drew upon pilgrimage like practices of leaving material representations of one's visit behind much in the manner of slipped letters into the crevices of Jerusalem's Wailing Wall or prayer flags planted upon Himalayan summits.

Adding to the site's commercial viability was the recent arrival of the railroad to San Diego along with radically lowered ticket prices from a concurrent rail line pricing war (DeLyser, 2003; DeLyser, 2004; NPS, n.d.-a; Lint Sagarena, 2014). Thus in 1906, the Estudillo family sold the adobe to John D. Spreckels and his San Diego Electric Railway Company as Spreckels planned to restore the adobe and set it up as the prime destination for one of his city-line trolley cars (DeLyser, 2003; DeLyser, 2004). Hired to lead the restoration efforts was self-trained architect Hazel Wood Waterman, who studied art at the University of California, Berkeley and apprenticed under renowned local architect Irving Gill (Walsh, 2004). Waterman

created a space which accommodated an immersive memory experience (i.e. hiring Mexican workmen knowledgeable in making adobe “in the old way,” and ordering that all new materials be “distressed” and often “irregularly installed” as to give off the impression of a worn but ‘authentic’ handcrafted nature) (DeLyser, 2003; p. 898; Walsh, 2004, p. 12; See Figure 4.11). She also simultaneously catered to the space’s purpose as a modern commercial enterprise which further diverted her efforts from a fully restorative project (i.e. installing non-period accurate electricity, designing and constructing an attached curio shop, and adding a dramatically sweeping veranda around the courtyard where there had originally been none) (ibid; Morgan, 1979, See Figure 4.12).



Figure 4.11: Workmen dry adobe bricks during the site’s renovation ~1908-1909. From V. A. Walsh, 2004, *Una casa del pueblo—A town house of old San Diego*, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 50(1/2), p. 9. Copyright by San Diego Historical Society, #2387. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 4.12: Postcard depicting museum signage and the desk provided for visitors to leave their names and cards, evolving the earlier pilgrimage practices of writing and carving visitor names onto the building itself. From D. DeLyser, 2003, *Ramona memories: Fiction, tourist practices, and placing the past in southern California*, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 93(4), p. 902. Copyright 2003 by American Association of Geographers. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

This commercial emphasis reached new heights in 1910 when, in a move disconcerting to Waterman, Spreckels leased²⁰ the enterprise to Thomas Powell “Tommy” Getz, a Midwest minstrel performer and avid promoter with a flair for the dramatic if not the ‘authentic’ (Walsh, 2004). While he had no experience in antiquities or museum management but he claimed to have a professed love for the past and “the memory of Ramona” (DeLyser, 2003, p. 898). Though left undiscussed in Ramona based scholarly literature, we can presume that Getz’s background as a minstrel performer significantly influenced his own approach to presenting ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place,’ as well as eventually inviting its subsequent critique. As

²⁰ Additionally, Spreckels subsequently transferred ownership to Getz in 1924 (Walsh, 2004).

nineteenth-century America's most popular homegrown and everyday form of entertainment, minstrelsy engaged audiences across the country (not just the American South--or the seeming nucleus of the nation's racial tensions) (Lott, 1993; Toll, 1997). This highly popular form relied upon practices of curiosity, voyeurism, and spectacle in manners that allowed white audiences to work through their own anxieties, tensions, and difficulties all while feeling relieved that someone was worse off than them, and as such, "the minstrel show was...highly responsive to the emotional demands and troubled fantasies of its audiences" (Lott, 1993, p. 6; Toll, 1977; Lewis, 2007). Additionally, nineteenth-century blackface (in its popular antebellum forms) obscured complex race relations by "pretending that slavery was amusing, right, and natural" (Lott, 1993, p. 3). Thus, Getz's fluency within a mode of entertainment that relied upon the spectacle of gazing upon an Other in order to work through national and regional anxieties in ways that validated established social orders, most likely positioned him quite well for the undertaking of presenting and maintaining the romanticized Spanish *hacienda* mythology of Ramona (as he once did--to varying degrees--with the mythology of the antebellum South). Likewise, his roots in a thoroughly 'common' and pedestrian artform provides further texture to local criticism that later arose regarding "Ramona's Marriage Place" as a coarse and 'lowbrow' operation (Pourade, 1960-77; Helmich & McMeeken, 2012).

However, upon its initial debut as a formal tourist attraction, it was a smashing success. Officially billed as the already popularized 'Ramona's Marriage Place' as opposed to 'Casa de Estudillo,' the site fascinated visitors and opened to rave reviews as the June 10, 1910 edition of the *Los Angeles Times* proclaimed, "...hundreds visit Old Town every day where dozens visited it in months in the past. Yes, Old Town is waking and again coming into her own" (Walsh, 2004, p. 10). 'Ramona's Marriage Place' soon became one of the most commodified of

all Ramona landmarks as Getz peddled all manner of Ramona memorabilia including postcards featuring now lush, yet no longer functional, Spanish-style gardens (See Figure 4.13), Missionary relics, Indian beads and baskets, and deluxe editions of *Ramona*, all of which could be wrapped and packaged in Ramona stamped paper bags (DeLyser, 2003; Walsh, 2004). Beyond peddling physical items, Getz also capitalized on visitor experiences, offering the opportunity for couples to wed within the adobe's restored chapel (Walsh, 2004).



Figure 4.13: Postcard illustrating the rear gardens and courtyard of the renovated site ~1920s. From V. A. Walsh, 2004, *Una casa del pueblo—A town house of old San Diego*, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 50(1/2), p. 11. Copyright 2004 by San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

These commercial efforts eventually frustrated the Estudillo family who had hoped the renovated site would preserve their family history and not an invented mythology (ibid). Given the site's growing Ramona emphasis several local Californio families even rescinded their offers to help furnish the renovated adobe with their family heirlooms, causing Getz to decorate the

space with Ramona knickknacks, Mission era curios, and religious relics instead (ibid). And in 1913 when an Estudillo descendent, José Guadalupe Estudillo, voiced his disapproval regarding the new name of the building, Spreckels' vice president and managing director, William Clayton countered that what drew visitors to the home was its "connection with the book written by Helen Hunt Jackson," proclaiming, "It would have no value²¹ whatever if it were advertised as the Estudillo house...People go see it...and become charmed with it...irrespective of the fact [if] Ramona was married there or not, or whether there was ever any Ramona" (Clayton, 1913 in Walsh, 2004, p. 11).

Ramona-inspired pilgrims continued to visit the adobe well into the mid twentieth century often driving cross-country on vacations and honeymoons (DeLyser, 2003) during a period in which increases in personal automobile ownership provided those bestowed with particular social privileges and cultural capital a sense of freedom, mobility, and symbolic and literal vehicles through which to experience America (Jackle, 1985; Lebergott, 2014; Clarke, 2007; Gartman, 2004). In fact in one day in 1940, the site drew in a remarkable 1,632 visitors (NPS, n.d.-a). As mid-century cultural tastes evolved, however, some local critics resented the seeming pedestrian nature of the enterprise, including a former Democrat State Senator from San Diego and Administrator of the California State Resources Agency, Hugo Fisher, who in the 1950s dismissed 'Ramona's Marriage Place' as a "honky-tonk operation for rooking tourists"

²¹ Clayton's analysis in many ways sums up the cultural influence of the Ramona mythology. However, what his assessment misses is the rhetorical power of myth as a whole, including the dynamic nature of origin stories and cultural memory to both appear culturally entrenched while also attaining the facility to adapt, change, and recalibrate when they are no longer culturally serviceable. Thus, five decades after Clayton's comments, the site would in fact be relaunched to the public as "La Casa de Estudillo" within a newly opened Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (as 1960s and 70s planners would decidedly not mention its Ramona phase at all within its public presentation and layout--a decision not reversed until a recent renovation of the site debuted in 2019) (Pourade, 1960-77; CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-c; See Chapters Five through Seven for a detailed analysis of this park).

when discussing the possibilities of governmental development within Old Town (Pourade, 1960-77, not paginated; Helmich & McMeeken, 2012, p. 45).

Thus Ramona visitors were often dismissed as “naive” and “uncritical” tourists manipulated by enterprising hustlers tapping into the lure of fantasy and myth (McWilliams, 1946/1973; Walker, 1950; Dobie, 1959; Davis, 1990/2006; Stevens, 1998; DeLyser, 2003, p. 886). However, additional examinations reevaluate visitor motives in general, validating both their experiences within various popular cultural spaces and the ways they make meaning through them (Crang, 1997; Edensor, 2000; Goss, 1999; Rojek & Urry, 2002). These readings help to position Ramona pilgrims and promoters as actively engaged in transformative practices that mutually constituted various constructions of cultural memory and invented social traditions to accommodate their rapidly changing times (DeLyser, 2003; Walsh, 2004; Sagarena, 2002; Phillips, 2003). As such, the final section of this chapter explores a project that in many ways built off the foundation of the cultural work of the Ramona mythology within San Diego’s emerging popular memory culture, especially in terms of its relationship to the built environment.

4.7 ‘Land of Honey and Flowers’: Balboa Park and the (Re)Making of Mediterranean California

Whereas the Ramona Mythology in many ways marginalized public remembrance of Mexican California, (idealizing and romanticizing California’s Spanish Mission past), the 1915 project of Balboa Park would in fact push this narrative to greater rhetorical and physical lengths by fully embracing what would come to be known as an emerging regional Spanish “Fantasy Heritage” (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Rosales, 1996; Castañeda, 1990; Gonzales-Berry, 1996; Weber, 1992; del Castillo, 1980). Specifically, through innovative design practices within its built

environment, Balboa Park would mobilize another critical recalibration of the California origin story. Specifically, this (re)imagining provided a direct line of symbolic lineage to Spain, effectively helping to ‘erase’ Mexican California from public history and naturalizing Anglo Californians as the region’s legitimate *and* natural heirs.

4.7-1 The Regional Emergence of a Spanish ‘Fantasy Heritage’

As Anglo American settlers continued to heavily settle the region, late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Southern California commemorative projects increasingly ‘erased’ representations of Mexican California from public remembrance. Instead, public forms of commemoration often focused upon the grandeur and regalness of a ‘fantasy heritage’ rooted in Spanish imagery and culture. Examples of such remembrance include: (1) regional businesses which harnessed Spanish imagery to evoke particular sensibilities for commercial gain (See Figure 4.14); (2) municipal Spanish-themed pageants and festivals where attendees dressed as colonial Spaniards (but generally not Mexicans despite a massive influx of Mexican immigration beginning in the 1910s [Sagarena, 2002]) providing citizens the ability to overtly perform this legacy; and (3) public recognition of local Spanish discovery such as San Diego’s acknowledgement of conquistador Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo (the first European explorer to reach the shores of California) during the 1915 Panama California Exposition and at the 1913 dedication of the U.S. National Monument in Point Loma San Diego in his honor--mobilizing a public legitimizing and canonizing of this heritage (DeLyser, 2003, p. 890; Starr, 1986; Kelsey, 1984; Kramer, 2016; Engstrand, 2018). Yet among the most lasting and significant commemorations of this Spanish heritage would be the development of Southern California’s built environment in which private and public entities rapidly took up Mission and Spanish-Colonial Revival aesthetics and architectural projects, a stylistic movement which would add

new dimensions to the Myth of the West, as the final section of this chapter briefly examines (Starr, 1986; McWilliams, 1946/1973; Sagarena, 2002).



Figure 4.14: 1940s crate label (created decades earlier) by Charles Chapman, businessman, Fullerton mayor, and “Father of the Citrus Industry” who “elevated the orange crate label to an art form” (Fullerton College Centennial, 2015, landing page; Zoellner, 2016). Placed upon crates for the Old Mission Brand oranges grown and shipped by his Placentia Orchard Company based out of Fullerton in Orange County, California, these labels were critical marketing tools (ibid). This effectively branded label highlights iconic imagery of the pastoral Spanish Fantasy Heritage often mobilized by Southern California based businesses of the time (e.g. Mission architecture, abundant agriculture, palm trees, and rosy cheeked seemingly benevolent Franciscan friars). From T. Zoellner, April 18, 2016, April 18, The orange industrial complex [Feature article from the *LARB Quarterly Journal*, Spring 2016 edition], retrieved from <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/orange-industrial-complex/> Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

4.7-2 From Spanish Arcadia to Neo-Mediterranean: Balboa Park's Innovative Built Environment

One of the region's most notable early twentieth-century Spanish revival architectural projects is San Diego's sprawling and aesthetically innovative urban cultural park, Balboa²² Park, which was built for the 1915 Panama California Exposition (Bokovoy, 2005). Featuring open space areas, museums, theaters, various themed exhibits, a wide promenade, an outdoor organ pavilion, gardens, pageants, and an eventual zoo, the park (and its Exposition) was meant to serve as a civic landmark and cultural institution which blended culture, science, and nature (ibid; Amero, 2013). Utilizing a large tract of land which had originally been set aside by Alta California Mexican authorities in 1835 for the common use of its citizens (Christman, 1985), this massive private and public project implicitly and explicitly tethered portrayals of American cultural remembrance to the built environment. In fact, Jackson proclaimed in her novel *Ramona* that the "picturesque," and "dramatic" life associated with the "romance" of "New Spain" could "never be quite lost, so long as there is left standing one such house as the Señora Moreno's" (Jackson, 1884/2008, p. 47). Embracing this sentiment, the literal and cultural architects of Balboa Park advanced it to extraordinary degrees.

Thus whereas launching Old Town San Diego's 'Ramona's Marriage Place' entailed the restoration and presentation of a twelve room home through a process which invented social traditions, revealed economic opportunity, and mobilized a mythology--the city's creation of its twelve hundred acre Balboa Park would capitalize upon these lessons within a large-scale public effort. The 1915 Exposition celebrated not only the engineering achievement of the Panama

²² Originally named City Park, organizers including Colonel David "Charlie" Collier, the project's general-director, eventually decided the original name lacked verve, renaming the park after Vasco Núñez de Balboa, a Spanish explorer and conquistador who upon crossing the Isthmus of Panama was the first European to see the Pacific Ocean from the Americas--a decision they felt honored the Panama Canal's joining of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans (Lint Sagarena, 2014; Amero, 2003).

Canal (as San Diego would serve as the first American port of call north of the canal), but it was also a business endeavor meant to highlight the city, alleviate economic concerns from a recent 1907 Wall Street Panic, and advertise to the nation, and the world, the agricultural and settlement opportunities available within the relatively small San Diego²³ (Amero, 2013; Bokovoy, 2005).

Initially, San Diego found itself in a heated competition with a much larger San Francisco to host a Panama Canal related Fair (as San Francisco was not only another port of call, but its city leaders also wished to announce to the world their phoenix-like rebirth from the ashes of the great 1906 earthquake and fire) (Starr, 1986; Amero, 2013). The stakes of this competition were critical to both cities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, world fairs of this sort were *spectacular* events, organized around particular understandings of spectacle and marvel. During the railroad era, most visitors travelled to host cities by train, often planning to stay within their destination for at least a week, thus making these events highly significant commercial investments for both the civic bodies hosting them and the railroads bringing spectators, as the railroads themselves also often served as major underwriters and/or exhibitors within the fairs (Bokovoy, 2005; Amero, 2013; Runte, 2011). In fact, in 1915 when justifying the significance of holding a Panama related Exposition, the Union Pacific System of railways released a statement proclaiming, “The Panama Canal is the world’s greatest commercial achievement. There is nothing to compare with it and a grand International Exposition to celebrate the realization of this dream of four centuries is eminently appropriate” (Runte, 2011, p. 432). Therefore given this significance, when San Francisco ultimately received national backing for its Exposition, it makes sense that San Diego leaders decided to press on with their

²³ San Diego was much smaller when compared to other California cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco which in 1910 had populations of 319,198 and 416,912 respectively, as opposed to San Diego’s 39,578 (and 81,665 County-wide) (Amero, 2013, p. 13).

plans (Bokovoy, 2005; Amero, 2013). However, this development also prompted planners to strategically lean into a smaller, more intimate, design plan--one which could be celebrated by adopting a leisurely ambrosial aesthetic for the Fair (ibid).

It was a decision that immediately influenced architectural decisions within the park. Originally, Colonel David “Charlie” Collier, a real estate developer and appointed general-director of the project decided to eschew the tradition of impersonal Renaissance and neoclassical styles regularly displayed at International Expos, including the aesthetic in development at the rivaled San Francisco Exposition, instead seeking an aesthetic which would be “a far cry from the cold, gigantesque classic beauty, sepulchral melancholy and eerie infernal lighting of San Francisco’s Exposition” (Amero, 2013, p. 134; Starr, 1986; James & Tyler, 1917; See Figures 4.15 and 4.16). Specifically, Collier decided upon an architectural style of Mission revival (including Indian and Pueblo design elements) and human progress as the Expo theme; and he enlisted the help of local architect Irving Gill who was relatively familiar with these architectural approaches (Amero, 2013). However, when the Board of Directors of the project landed the high-profile hiring of renowned New York architect Bertram Goodhue as supervisory architect, these plans fundamentally shifted (ibid, Starr, 1986; Starr, 1991; Starr, 2007). Celebrated for his work in Gothic Revival, but growing increasingly interested in opulent Spanish baroque styles, Goodhue’s grand vision soon clashed with Collier’s simpler design elements. Goodhue felt the Mission revival style had “passed its peak,” an opinion that resulted in power jockeying, personal disputes, frustrations, and resignations (including the eventual loss of Gill before the park’s completion), until Goodhue’s designs eventually prevailed (Starr, 1986; p. 408; Lint Sagarena, 2014).



Figure 4.15: Postcard, Panama Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915. Though featuring the cornucopia imagery often associated with California, it is the neoclassical aesthetic that dominates this postcard's rendering of the San Francisco Exposition. Specifically, the postcard offers gigantesque and larger than life classical figures of strength (e.g. the lithe man with a stately robe, shield, and Hermes like winged helmet [the Greek god of dreams, travel, trading, and gain]), abundance (e.g. the rotund woman bearing nature's bounty, reminiscent of Demeter, the Greek goddess of agriculture), and the powerful stone colonnade framing a modern harbor and cityscape in the distance. Additionally, the major pastoral display (i.e. the overflowing cornucopia) at the feet of the towering figures, who look down upon the world (i.e. the maps), presents an almost godlike motif of offering, resembling classical reliefs of omnipotent gods removed from the warmth of daily life (much as the cold and modern city hovers in the postcard's background, divorced from signs of life and illustrating an impersonal nature of modernity). From L. A. Ackley, November 9, 2015, The "nibbling arts" at San Francisco's 1915 World's Fair [Blog post], retrieved from <https://californiahistoricalsociety.blogspot.com/2015/11/the-nibbling-arts-at-san-franciscos.html> Courtesy of California Historical Society, CHS2014.1791. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 4.16: Postcard, Panama California Exposition, San Diego, 1915. Mobilizing Collier’s earlier Mission revival style, this postcard presents a Spanish Arcadia aesthetic featuring fountains, lush greenery, Spanish architecture, and harkens to the past by presenting the Spanish missions as the gateway (e.g. the wide archway reading “San Diego 1769”) to a pastoral and idyllic 1915 landscape and waterway below. The postcard’s use of depth and perception positions the viewer as looking ‘into,’ and nearly descending upon, a waiting and welcoming Eden (as opposed to the distant and removed modern cityscape, safeguarded by neoclassical icons, at the horizon of the San Francisco postcard). From D. G. Davies, 2018, Balboa Park: 1915 Panama-California Exposition, *Ranch & Coast Magazine: San Diego’s Ultimate Lifestyle Magazine*, retrieved December 11, 2018, from <http://www.ranchandcoast.com/2013/07/01/balboa-park-1915-panama-california-exposition/> Courtesy of Darlene G. Davies. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

It would be a pivotal victory. Goodhue would ultimately push “the architecture of the Fair back in time, to the style of which Mission had been but a faint recollection, Spanish colonial” (Starr, 1986, p. 408; Starr, 2007). However, he would also embellish upon this approach, introducing an eclectic Spanish style that incorporated Moorish, Mexican, Italian, and Persian architectural elements including “minaret-like towers, reflecting pools, colored tile inlays,” impressive domes, and semi-tropical plantings to “create a vision seen before that time only in paintings of imaginary cities,” a “magical wonderland...that had no counterpart in Spain or Mexico,” and an aesthetic some contemporary Mexican critics of Goodhue described as

“Hollywood Spanish” (Amero, 2013, p. 57, p. 30; Starr, 2007; See Figures 4.17, 4.18, and 4.19). In doing so, Goodhue took the romanticism present in the works of Helen Hunt Jackson and others and “shifted them to a new, even more unhistorical plane...[where] the dons and donas of rancheros in early nineteenth-century California had become grandees...living in palaces, cathedrals and plazas” (Amero, 2003, p. 134). Yet, for many observers and experiencers of the Exposition, this fantastical gesturing to Spanish colonial history helped to validate a seemingly authentic origin story, firmly tethering San Diego’s built environment to a growing fondness and celebration of Spanish lineage. In fact, on the Exposition’s Opening Day the San Diego Union described the historical significance of the intricate busts of Spanish forefathers carved into one of Goodhue’s most ornate constructions--the buildings of the California Quadrangle, stating:

At the top stands the statue of Fra Junipero Serra²⁴ to whose labors was due in great measure the real start of civilization on the coast of what is now the United States. At one side stands Cabrillo²⁵, the discoverer of 1542... At the other is Viscaino²⁶, the explorer of 1602, beneath the bust of Philip II²⁷ of Spain... and across the arch is Fray Jaumo²⁸, the first white martyr. It is a pictorial history of the American west coast (Bechtol, 2009, unpaginated).

However, this ensemble of stylistic elements also went beyond a Spanish rendering of California, additionally distributing a national image of California as distinctly

²⁴ See Footnote 13.

²⁵ See Chapter Two for a detailed accounting of the 1542 Spanish colonial expedition when explorer and conquistador Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo became the first known European to arrive upon the shores of what is now San Diego Bay (Kelsey, 1984; Bokovoy, 2005).

²⁶ See Chapter Two for a description of the 1602 Spanish mapping expedition of Sebastián Vizcaíno, Spanish merchant, explorer, and diplomat who arrived in what is now California sixty years after Cabrillo’s landing, renaming the bay and its surrounding area as San Diego De Alcalá (Mathes, 1972; NPS, 2015; Engstrand, 1997).

²⁷ King Philip II reigned over the expansive Spanish empire in the sixteenth century at the height of their colonial power and was responsible for, among other things, sending Cabrillo on his voyage which brought him to the shores of what is now San Diego Bay (Engstrand, 2005).

²⁸ See Chapter Two for descriptions of Fray Jaumo or Friar Jayme who took over clerical control of the San Diego mission upon Serra’s departure north. He was instrumental in getting the mission moved to a new location after presidial soldiers continually attacked, raped, and aggravated local Kumeyaay. He was killed in an Indian uprising in 1775. (Bokovoy, 2005).



Figure 4.17: 1915 image of Goodhue's ornate California Quadrangle building, an architectural highlight of the park. From J. Bechtol, 2009, 1915 Panama-California Exposition, retrieved from <https://public.csusm.edu/becht004/1915expopage.html> Previously published on January 1, 1915 in the *San Diego Union*. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 4.18: 1915 Carved busts of Spanish forefathers grace the front of the California Quadrangle building. From J. Bechtol, 2009, 1915 Panama-California Exposition, retrieved from <https://public.csusm.edu/becht004/1915expopage.html> Previously published on January 1, 1915 in the *San Diego Union*. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

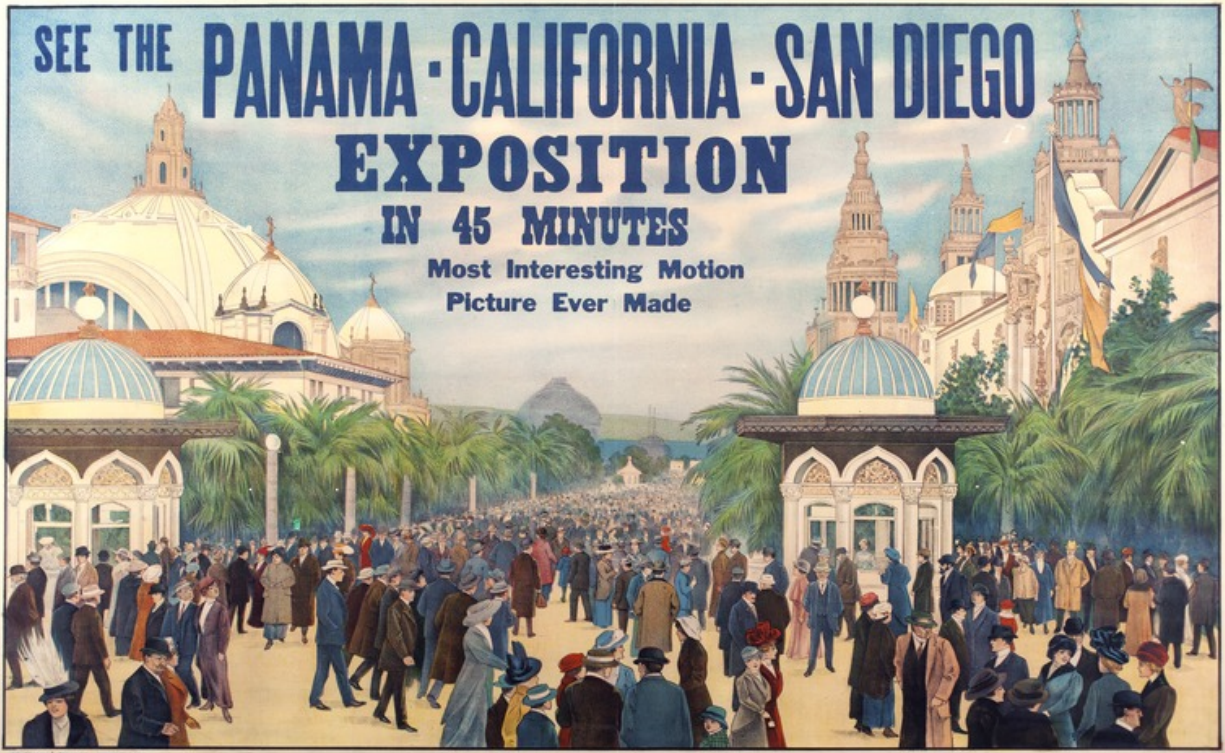


Figure 4.19: ~1915 poster advertising a promotional movie for the 1915 Panama-California Fair, San Diego. This postcard highlights Goodhue's distinct use of towers, domes, and semi-tropical plantings which cast San Diego as a seeming magical and imaginary city, which simultaneously tethered the romanticism of a fantastical past to the wonders of a progressive present and future (e.g. the swarms of buzzing tourists, the use of new media with "most interesting motion picture ever made," etc.). From Ackermann-Quigley Litho. Co., [ca. 1915], See the Panama-California-San Diego Exposition in 45 minutes: Most interesting motion picture ever made [Color lithograph poster], Kansas City, digital reproduction by Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego, retrieved from <https://library.ucsd.edu/dc/object/bb07878017> Public domain.

Mediterranean. This Mediterranean interpretation capitalized on California's similar climate and topography and drew upon not only a historical relationship to Spain, but also Italian notions of leisure, a Greek reverence for pageantry and art, and the poetic "mystic[ism]" of North Africa and the Near East (Starr, 1986, p. 370). In doing so, Goodhue and other fair makers were able, in their portrayals of 1915 San Diego, to tap into growing local efforts to cast California as "a land of honey and flowers" able to combat a contemporary "restriction of spirit [and] harsh materialism which continually threatened to make a further mockery of an already embattled American dream" (ibid, p. 370, p. 414). This heady mix was American exceptionalism at its finest: at its core it offered the American elixir of opportunity. In fact, a publicity agent for the

Exposition described the fair and San Diego's "intoxicating mixture of aestheticism, materialism, and nostalgia" (Amero, 2013, p. 31):

It is hard to pull oneself back to the twentieth century for it is wondrous sweet to dwell in the romance of the old days, to peer down the cloister and try to see the shadowy shapes of the conquistadores creeping up the dell from their caravel at anchor in the Harbor of the Sun...No other land has quite that atmosphere. No other land has the romance and lazy dreaming of this sort. No other land has such splendor of waving palms and slim acacias and lofty eucalyptus, such as a riot of crimson and purple and gold, such brilliant sky or flashing seas or rearing peaks, and perpetual comfort of weather in the perfect harmony which exists on the mesa in San Diego. It is a land where God is kind. It is a land of loveliness that makes men kind. And, decked in such fair garments, it beckons the stranger in other lands and bids him come. It is opportunity. (Amero, 2013, p. 31)

By collapsing a romantic Spanish, and then an idyllic and somewhat fantastical Mediterranean past, onto the region, Balboa Park and Exposition organizers created a material display of a new version of Southern California that radically repaired previous versions of the Myth of the West, which had derided Hispanic culture. However, this revised narrative still performed the important cultural work of previous renderings of Western mythology, most notably scaffolding exceptionalism via established notions of white supremacy by: (1) privileging European lineage (not only in architectural choices, but also in offering eugenics-adjacent exhibits, the choice of the name Balboa Park, and the orchestrating of a fantastical reenactment of Cabrillo's landing in San Diego [Amero, 2013; Bokovoy, 2005; See Figures 4.20, 4.21, and 4.22]; (2) erasing Mexican heritage (through its near invisibility); and (3) presenting Indians as tragically near extinction through strategic staged cultural displays (ibid, See Figure 4.23).

The production of this Mediterranean ideal of California illustrates a narrative project of maintenance and repair that served its current hegemonic majority quite well. However, as is the nature of time, both America and California would once again soon occupy the forefront of change. By the mid twentieth century the region and the nation would simultaneously require



Figure 4.20: “Young girl poses for sculptor Frank Mischa, 1914. Harris & Ewing, photographer, Library of Congress photo LC-H261-4347” (Amero, 2013, p. 68). Curated by Dr. Edgar L. Hewett (Archaeological Institute of America) and Dr. Ales Hrdlicka (U.S. National Museum), a major exhibit within the Panama California Expo was its Science and Education Building which housed various cultural and educational displays (ibid). Assembling the exhibit at the height of a domestic and international eugenics movement, offerings included representations of “man’s development” across “white, Indian and black races” through plaster sets made from human subjects including the young girl pictured (ibid, p. 67). Underscoring the racial undertones of various displays offered in the building were its curators’ own views as Dr. Hewett claimed at the Race Betterment Congress at the San Francisco Expo in 1915 that Mexicans “imperil...the health of the human race” and openly denigrated “mixed-bloods” (ibid, p. 65; Bokovoy, 2005). Likewise, Dr. Hrdlicka had a long history of race-based anthropological research including a study in which he concluded that “full-blooded Negroes ‘appeared to be of inferior mentality’” (Amero, 2013, p. 66). From R. W. Amero, 2013, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston, SC: History Press), p. 68. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, photo LC-H261-4347. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 4.21: “King Cabrillo” and his “attendants” at a July 20, 1911 parade during groundbreaking events for Balboa Park’s construction (Amero, 2013, p. 22). This image illustrates growing local affinity for a regional noble Spanish lineage as not only San Diegans, but even the conquistador Juan Cabrillo, were made royal. From R. W. Amero, 2013, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston, SC: History Press), p. 23. Courtesy of the David Marshall Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

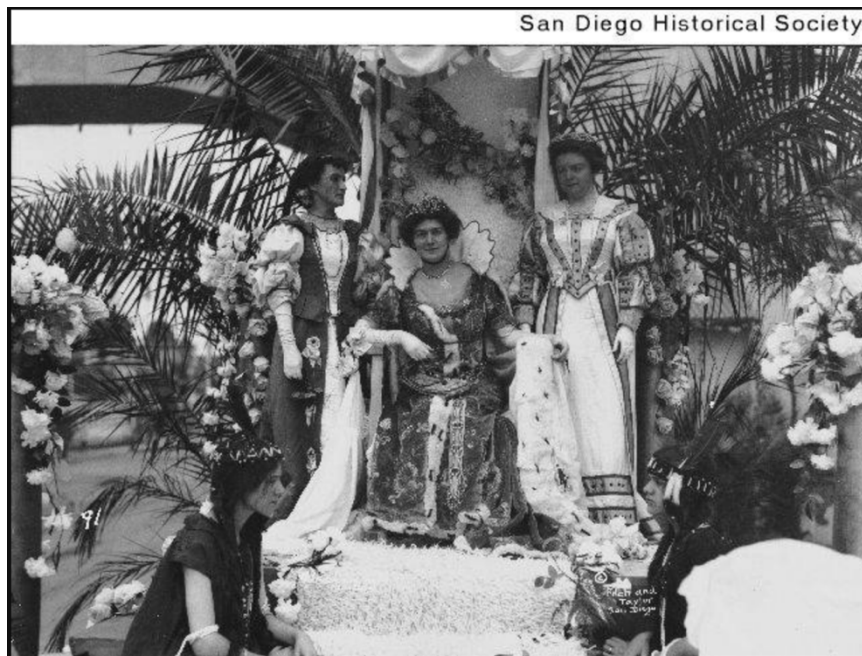


Figure 4.22: “Queen Ramona” and her “attendants” in a 1915 Exposition celebration. During these festivities Queen Ramona (dressed in European costume as opposed to the kneeling attendants in Indian garb at her feet) and King Cabrillo “married,” (Amero, 2013), a ceremony that helped to rhetorically subsume Southern California’s Indian legacy into a broader and more locally attractive Spanish lineage. From J. Bechtol, 2009, 1915 Panama-California Exposition, retrieved from <https://public.csusm.edu/becht004/1915expopage.html> Copyright by San Diego Historical Society. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 4.23: Indian woman weaving a blanket at a loom (Photo by Allen Wright, 1915). As part of a detailed marketing scheme, Santa Fe Railroad constructed an ‘Indian village’ on a five acre mesa within the park premises (Amero, 2013; Bokovoy, 2005). However, the Indian culture represented in this space was not local Kumeyaay, but that of New Mexican tribes including Apache, Navajo, Supai, Tewa, and Tiwa, people whose ancestral lands the Santa Fe Railroad made strategic stops--trains aptly named “Navajo, Chief, and Super Chief” (Amero, 2013, p. 177). Led by “image makers” to act as “show” Indians who embodied a peaceful, noble, and tragic ideal, fair and railroad marketers employed Indians who they claimed were “fast dying out,” including the woman pictured, to display what Dr. Hewett described as their “queer customs,” urging tourists to view this spectacle while they could, both at the Exposition and from a Santa Fe rail car in New Mexico (ibid, p. 69, p. 157). From R. W. Amero, 2013, *Balboa Park and the 1915 Exposition* (Charleston, SC: History Press), p. 63. Courtesy of the David Marshall Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

both the maintenance of this mythology and yet another mythic repair to fit the contemporary needs of a changing American public. Entering into this changing commemorative landscape would be a large-scale public effort influenced by the Ramona mythology, the Spanish Arcadia aesthetic, and the California as Mediterranean analogy: San Diego's Old Town State Historic Park.

Chapter 4 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.
Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Pluralism (Re)Imagined: Proposing the ‘Re-incorporation’ of Mexican California in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

5.1 Introduction

On November 4, 1971 roughly 1,000 visitors flocked to a recently converted motel in Old Town San Diego (“Mayors of San Diego,” 1971). Sitting beneath “bright-colored umbrellas” they “nibble[d] [on] Mexican delicacies,” taking in the pageant of sensation around them (*San Diego Union*, 1971, as quoted in Lamb, 2004). At the center of the new development, a mariachi band serenaded attendees from a colorful red and yellow gazebo nestled within a grassy square. And while the sweeping verandah which encircled the square no longer connected the wide exterior porches of the previous Spanish Colonial styled motel, the walkway currently joined a Mexican themed restaurant to a collection of shops selling Mexican handcrafted wares, flowers, and foodstuffs. The Bazaar del Mundo, as the renovated site was christened, was now open for business to the public. Inspired by the open-air arts and crafts markets of various Mexican villages and the Los Angeles Farmers Market, and funded through private monies and its California State Parks landlord, the space was the brainchild of San Diego former college professor, bank executive, and investor Richard Silberman and a young up and coming entrepreneur and designer, Diane Powers (See Figure 5.1). Located within the recently established Old Town State Historic Park, “a new state program designed to make living museums out of historic sites,” community stakeholders viewed the vibrant Bazaar del Mundo as a vital development within the state’s new venture (“Mayors of San Diego,” 1971). In fact,

Clarice Gilchrist, chairman of the state Parks and Recreation Commission at the time, saw the newly designed space as providing a needed “spark that ha[d] been lacking in Old Town in the past” (ibid).



Figure 5.1: *The San Diego Tribune* captures State Parks Director William Penn Mott’s (right) tour of the new Bazaar del Mundo by project creators, Richard Silberman (left) and Diane Powers (center), in 1971 (ibid). From “Mayors of San Diego, Tijuana, open novel Old Town ‘bazaar’” [Newspaper clipping], November 5, 1971, *San Diego Tribune*, copy accessed at the San Diego History Center Archives. Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Beyond its commercial purpose within the park, the lively cluster of restaurants and shops represented a long-awaited Old Town economic revival. Earlier attempts to reinvigorate the neighborhood after its steep decline in the 1870s had previously failed to reach peak capacity. Hope for major reinvestment in the community which sat at the base of *presidio* hill, and which

at one point served as the primary trading and residential hub for Spanish, Mexican, and American California, originally commenced in 1906. That year railway and real estate magnate and sugar cane heir John D. Spreckels purchased and restored the Estudillo adobe and set it up as the prime destination for one of his railway cars in order to capitalize on its affiliation with the *Ramona* tourism¹ craze (DeLyser, 2003; DeLyser, 2004). However, Spreckels' Old Town involvement ultimately did not expand beyond his 'Ramona's Marriage Place' investment (as he instead focused his development primarily on San Diego's downtown, Coronado, and Mission Beach regions) (Erie et al, 2011). In 1907, a year after Spreckels' Casa de Estudillo acquisition, businessman, politician, and philanthropist George Marston also began purchasing historic sites in the area (Shiraishi, n.d.). In a flurry of commemorative activity he acquired the original Spanish *presidio* site, established a Father Junipero Serra² Museum on its grounds, and founded the San Diego Historical Society--actions that aligned with other early twentieth century memorial practices which celebrated the region's Spanish heritage. Unlike Spreckels, Marston was interested in a broader Old Town redevelopment. With the *presidio* site reimagined for contemporary audiences he lobbied for a renovation of Old Town's historical center, envisioning an "up-to-date tourist facility on the Plaza in Old Town that would reflect the popularly held beliefs in the community's Spanish Colonial Roots," (ibid, unpaginated). Despite submitted plans, the San Diego Planning Commission never took up or authorized the actual project. They did however, in 1937, implement suggested building restrictions in the historical neighborhood that had been proposed by Richard Requa, a renowned local architect who was celebrated for his

¹ See Chapter Four for a detailed discussion of Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 Indian protest novel *Ramona*, its subsequent tourism frenzy, and its cultural position within a broader trend that favored a 'fantasy' Spanish heritage--effectively minimizing remembrance of Mexican California in the process.

² See Chapter Two for a brief history of Franciscan priest Junipero Serra, leader of the 1768 Portolá expedition's missionary front and founder of the first Spanish mission in Alta California at San Diego in 1769.

contributions to “Southern California Architecture” and its romanticized Spanish influences (ibid). These construction restrictions would carry lasting implications for Old Town’s future redevelopment.

By 1939, Marston did at least convince Requa to undertake an extensive redesign and reconstruction of a crumbling Old Town historic home, Casa de Pico. The home had originally been built in 1824 by Pío Pico, the last Mexican governor of California, for his mother (ibid; See Chapter 2, Figure 2.5 for an image of Governor Pico and his family). The result of the renovation was the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel which opened in 1940 to accommodate an ever-growing number of automobile traveling tourists (See Figure 5.2). Soon an El Pico Dining Room opened, followed by another historic *casa* renovation with the reconstruction and relaunch of the Casa de Bandini³ Hotel in 1950. Yet despite these efforts and a few others, large-scale Old Town redevelopment never came to fruition during the early twentieth century due to a Depression stall, a preoccupation with World War II, and San Diego’s 1950s and early 60s postwar focus upon suburban expansion and growing industry and research development (Showley, 1991; Pourade, 1960-1977). However, by the mid 1960s various community, business, and civic leaders once again trained their sights on Old Town redevelopment. And in 1968 the State of California acquired the “rundown” Casa de Pico Motor Hotel as part of a suite of annexed properties secured within a twelve acre radius for the development of the state’s Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (Lamb, 2004, unpaginated). Three years later, the historic hotel site was once again repurposed--this time as the Bazaar del Mundo. Thus the Bazaar del Mundo’s launch illustrated more than a promising and vibrant economic engine for the state’s

³ See Chapter Three for a reference to Peruvian born Juan Bandini, a central figure in early to mid-nineteenth-century San Diego affairs.



Figure 5.2: “Picture postcard of Casa de Pico Motor Hotel in San Diego, California” (n.d.). From John and James Adams Post Card Collection (Collection MS-0008, Identifier PC-000-825), San Diego State University Special Collections, retrieved from <https://digital.sdsu.edu/view-item?i=140545> Copyright unknown. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

most recent endeavor. It additionally represented the culmination of decades of commercial sowing and tilling within the area.

The newly designed space, however, *also* embodied a pivotal recalibration of the California origin story in San Diego. By the time Diane Powers took creative helm of the project in 1971, she was not designing an atmosphere that, as George Marston had once envisioned at the dawn of the twentieth century, would reflect the “community’s Spanish Colonial Roots” (Shiraishi, n.d., unpaginated). Instead, it was her many trips to Mexico that would inform a majority of her design choices. “The more I traveled around and learned about Mexico’s arts and crafts,” Powers once said, “the more I became fascinated and gained a real appreciation for the textiles, the weavings, the ceramics, the jewelry—all of the art” (Lamb, 2004). This gesture to

Mexican culture was part of a significant shift in remembrance for the region. Thus, on that November 1971 day as a thousand visitors enjoyed a curated take on the sights, sounds, and flavors of Mexico, they were also participating in a critically symbolic event. In fact, present to help dedicate the new site were San Diego Mayor elect Pete Wilson, outgoing Mayor Frank Curran, and Tijuana Mayor Jose Manuel Gonzales. *The San Diego Tribune's* feature for the event highlighted the seeming cooperative and diplomatic effort with a headline entitled, "Mayors of San Diego, Tijuana, Open Novel Old Town 'Bazaar'" (1971). Encouraged by the new endeavor, Tijuana's Mayor Gonzales stated, "being here makes us forget there's a border...If the opportunities existed in other countries to visit back and forth like this, the world would be in much better shape" (ibid.). Gonzales' statement, along with his presence at the Old Town ceremony, was a culturally and politically loaded symbol of the new state project's implied ethos. And his evoking of the U.S./Mexico border underscored the optics of the occasion. Though often 'forgotten' by much of the American public by the 1970s, the Mexican-American War (a conflict General Ulysses S. Grant once summed up as "one of the most unjust [wars] ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation") and its lasting implications upon both countries' borders and global reputations, still ran deep within 1971 Mexican consciousness (McPherson, 2013, p. 1; Greenberg, 2013; Acuña, 1998). Thus by attributing the new effort in Old Town with making a Mexican official "forget" the existence of a border carved by American conquest, Gonzales articulated the power of commemorative spaces like Old Town San Diego State Historic Park to act as critical places where societies can negotiate anxieties, work through corporate tensions, communally remember, and at times attempt to collectively forget (Sturken, 1997; Radstone, 2000; Bal, 1999; Stier, 2009; Huyssen, 1996; Legg, 2007; Till, 2003; Said, 2000). Additionally, by inviting Gonzales' participation in this seemingly binational event, Old

Town leadership⁴ publicly reiterated a powerful reparative mechanism at the core of their cultural memory project: the re-incorporation of Mexico within the California origin story and San Diego's public memory--including the apparent *celebration* of this previously marginalized and/or erased facet of California history.

These next three chapters examine the cultural and political implications of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. This chapter (the first part of this three-part case study) investigates the park's **impetus**. Specifically, it traces the park's origins as a particular commemorative response to forms of social and cultural change and the various mechanisms that were necessary to secure the park's approval and funding. The next chapter in this three-part study examines the park's **design**, specifically charting the 'making' of the park's 'economy of looking' which helps to both reveal and conceal aspects of the California origin story. And finally, the third and final chapter of this case study examines the park in its **(re)constructed form**. Specifically, that chapter charts the pedagogical work of the park's built environment which presents vital political renderings of Mexico and the United States.

This chapter takes as its starting point various forms of change which influenced the impetus of the park in its earliest conceptual stages before examining its complex road to approval as well as the politics of its decidedly celebratory nature--aspects which on their face may seem self-evident. However, I argue that San Diego's (limited) re-embrace of its Mexican heritage reflects the implications of a pivotal sociocultural, economic, and political moment for the nation and region. Specifically, by examining, among other concepts, evolving notions of modernity, liberalism, and leisure, in concert with the emergence of a "*new politicization of whiteness*" (Winant, 2004, p. 3), this chapter charts how this particular recalibration of the

⁴ Including an array of planners, designers, politicians, board members, state representatives, scholars, investors, etc. which helped to plan and launch the park.

California origin story not only afforded its persistence within changing sociocultural conditions and responded to an emerging rhetoric of multiculturalism (with its re-incorporation, and particular celebration, of Mexico). But also how this repaired story reaffirms dominant notions of American exceptionalism in the process. This examination then serves as a specific case study of the ways in which recalibrated forms of racial, social, and political power work and operate, even--and especially--within seemingly celebratory, festive, and 'innocent' post-civil rights movement American cultural spaces.

Finally, before launching into this study, I want to first acknowledge my own distinct relationship to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. As a San Diego Native who has spent ample time in the park (both as a youth as part of my compulsory San Diego Unified School District week-long Old Town fourth grade California History field trip, and as a young woman visiting with family and friends), Old Town has been a cultural staple in my life. From weekday jaunts, to museum trips with my children, to family celebrations, after-game get togethers, and weekend staycations, Old Town is a consistently favorite haunt (See Figures 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5). Its complex blend of edutourism and cultural celebration makes for a heady mix. Basically, we go there because it's 'fun.' As a critical "place" and "pedagogical site" of multicultural celebration, it cheerfully commemorates San Diego's Mexican roots--an often welcome emphasis for my black, brown, and white family (Massey, 1991; Mukerji, 2012; Kosasa, 1998). The park, however, is also the historical site of genocide, conquest, and ongoing settler colonialism. Yet, like many nineteenth-century Western themed (edu)tourist attractions, a sense of revelry--and not gravity--permeates the space. Thus, despite--or in many ways *because of*--my own charmed relationship to the park this chapter begins the process of examining the political implications of these types of 'fun' spaces by joining scholarship which finds it

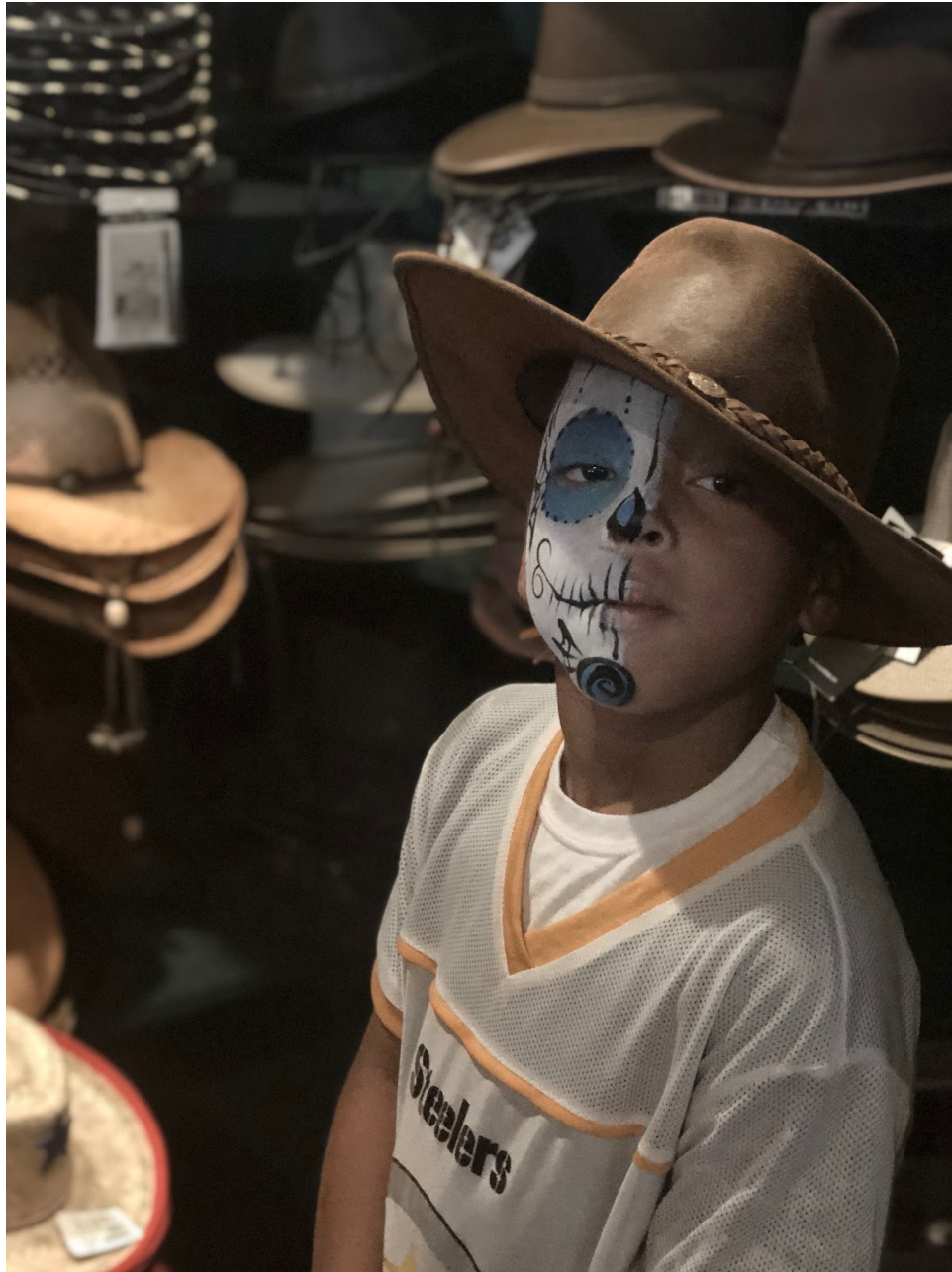


Figure 5.3: Author's younger son tries on Western style hats in a park leather shop during a *Día de los Muertos* park-wide celebration. Photo by author, 2018.



Figure 5.4: Author's older son and his visiting great-grandmother at a Mexican themed restaurant, Barra Barra Saloon, which serves as a major concessions offering within the park. Photo by author, 2017.



Figure 5.5: Author's younger son explores a park wagon in front of the Cosmopolitan Hotel (previously Casa de Bandini). Photo by author, 2016.

“necessary to trace the links between the seemingly innocent cultural works of a society (e.g., our visual images and pedagogical practices) and the more objectionable acts of oppression they sanction (e.g., imperial conquest)” (Kosasa, 1998, p. 48; Said, 2000).

5.1-1 Old Town State Historic Park: An Overview

To better understand the impetus of the park, it is important to provide a brief overview of the park itself. Old Town San Diego State Historic Park sits on approximately twelve acres of land at the core of the mixed-use neighborhood of Old Town, a 230 acre community just three miles north of the city’s downtown (City of San Diego, 2019, See Figure 5.6). Adjacent to Interstate Freeways 5 and 8, less than five miles from the nearest beach, and nestled below dotted hills, the park is in many ways a centrally located destination (ibid). Established as a state park in 1960, and classified as a state *historic* park in 1968, California’s most visited state park presents visitors with “the opportunity to experience the history of early San Diego by providing a connection to the past” (CA Parks and Recreation, 2018). Through a curated collection of museums, restored historic buildings, reconstructed sites, restaurants, shops, and live demonstrations and entertainment, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park recreates and commemorates what the park categorizes as an “interpretive period” from 1821 - 1872, offering visitors a “glimpse into yesteryear, as converging cultures transformed San Diego from a Mexican *pueblo* to an American settlement” (CA Parks and Recreation, 2018, italics not added) (See Figures 5.7 and 5.8). Serving as both a historical resource and a major tourist attraction in the region, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park draws over three million visits annually⁵ from schools, tourists, and locals alike (OTSHP, 2018). In fact, by 1977 more annual visitors⁶

⁵ Old Town State Historic Park has averaged a little over 3.2 million annual visitors since 1995 (OTSHP, 2018).

⁶ As Old Town State Historic Park welcomed 1,844,739 visitors that year opposed to the 1,258,789 that visited Independence Hall (Schiff, 2011, p. 192).



Figure 5.6: Map and destination guide of the key tourist district within the 230 acre Old Town neighborhood, including Presidio Park, Heritage Park, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, the MTS Transit Center, and shops and restaurants among other notable sites (Old Town San Diego Guide, 2016, note its orientation as North is represented on the left of the map). As much of the area reflects a nineteenth-century time period and/or Mexican heritage in some manner or other (with Heritage Park concentrating on late nineteenth-century Victorian architecture), visitors (including locals and tourists alike) often conflate Old Town San Diego State Historic Park with the surrounding Old Town neighborhood, utilizing the moniker ‘Old Town’ to refer to the general area and the state park, often with vague understandings of where one ends and the other begins. From Old Town San Diego Guide, 2016, Historic Old Town San Diego [Map], retrieved from <http://www.oldtownsandiegoguide.com/images/OTWebmap.pdf> Copyright by Visual Media Group. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 5.8: Southwest entrance to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. From M. Gossie, March 10, 2019, 9 must-see sites as Old Town San Diego celebrates 250th anniversary [Web article], *AZ Big Media*, retrieved from <https://azbigmedia.com/9-must-see-sites-as-old-town-san-diego-celebrates-250th-anniversary/> Copyright 2019 by AZ Big Media. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 5.9: Neighborhood of Old Town's "Birthplace of California" Marker. Photo by author, 2019.

observed this presentation of San Diego's beginnings than Philadelphia's Independence Hall, a site often considered to be the 'birthplace' of the United States of America (Schiff, 2011). Through these efforts Old Town San Diego State Historic Park presents a pivotal origin story which specifically highlights its significance as the 'Birthplace of California'--an epithet which in many ways highlights yet simultaneously obscures the area's complex colonial⁷ roots (See Figure 5.9).

5.2 Old Town San Diego State Historic Park As A Commemorative Response to Change

In 1979 as a tumultuous American 1970s drew near its close, the U.S. was a nation which had faced substantial sociocultural, economic, and political change. In just a few decades it experienced the upheaval of internal civil, feminist, and labor rights movements, the angst of an unpopular and protracted Vietnam War, and the awe, apprehension, and promise of exploring the 'final frontier' of space. And as the nation seemingly marched forward in the name of progress, on March 4, 1979 the U.S. space probe Voyager 1, the first spacecraft to reach interstellar space, discovered rings around the massive gas giant Jupiter, releasing photos that presented radical new insight to something as ancient as the cosmos (Smith et al., 1979; Owen et al., 1979). Yet despite these rapidly changing twentieth-century developments, and in many ways because of them, the nation never completely ceased its practice of looking back--returning to, maintaining, and repairing the origin stories that scaffold national identity and a sense of cohesiveness in times of flux. In fact, on the same day that a space probe hurtling 365 million miles from Earth released its groundbreaking photos, a San Diego County newspaper examined a local project of contemporary remembrance, featuring a story titled, "Old Town's New Town On Its Way" ("Old

⁷ See Chapters Two and Three for a detailed accounting of San Diego's colonial history and the beginnings of commemorative trends regarding this complex history.

Town's new town," 1979). Fascinated that a "few tiny blocks" in San Diego could "generate a third of the gross revenue of the entire state park system," or roughly \$7 million dollars in 1977, the author credits "the very blend of commerce and history that happened *more or less by chance* [as] the heart of Old Town's financial success" (ibid, italics added). If we can resist the lure of presentism and the benefit of decades of insight, then it should not be surprising that Old Town's growing success, in its early emergence, was in many ways perceived as an organic accident. After all, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park offers its visitors a critical origin story, specifically maintaining and repairing a particular strand⁸ of Western mythology through its presentation of California's beginnings. And as this dissertation has already asserted, origin stories are often taken for granted and enshrined as common sense. Likewise, if viewed through an infrastructural lens then we also recognize that maintenance projects, including their "subtle arts of repair," are frequently rendered mundane often to the point of seeming invisibility, until or unless an infrastructure becomes so broken that it fundamentally disrupts patterns of everyday life (Star, 1999; Graham & Thrift, 2007; Jackson, 2014, p. 222; Graham & Marvin, 2002). However, despite Old Town San Diego State Historic Park's often inconspicuous cultural, historical, economic, and even educational regional embeddedness, its effective "blend of commerce and history" was no accidental fluke, though fortune and circumstance certainly played a role in its success. Instead, through a set of often deliberate and active commemorative practices influenced by converging national and local conditions and an already rich local

⁸ See Chapter One for a detailed discussion of the ensemble of narrative versions included within Western mythology, as well as my two primary logics for utilizing both the oft-used language and the concept of the 'Myth of the West' when I readily acknowledge that no One 'True' Myth of the West exists (i.e. (1) representational legibility and clarity (including academic consistency), and (2) in order to position various renditions of frontier narratives which perform a specific set of cultural work as varying tactical executions of an overall narrative strategy).

memory culture⁹, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park acts a critical and purposeful site of maintenance and repair of the California origin story.

This section of the chapter describes the various national changing conditions taking place in America in the early second half of the twentieth century that in many ways relate to the emergence of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park as a particular commemorative response to change. These developments include changing notions of modernity, a disastrous foreign war which undermined confidence in American exceptionalism, demographic shifts that nurtured identity crises, social and cultural upheaval along with an emerging politics of inclusion, and various ideological developments including changing expectations of liberalism and evolving notions of leisure. In conjunction with these overarching national shifts this section also addresses three specific local phenomena: (1) the upcoming 1969 Bicentennial of San Diego's origins as a Spanish settlement, (2) a 1964 California bond measure, which once again drew upon a familiar 'closing frontier' rhetoric within the region, and (3) the rising popularity and economic success of Mexico as a tourist destination for San Diego visitors and locals alike. This section illustrates how these converging conditions shaped the eventual embrace of yet another mythic repair of the California origin story to be presented in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, one which would not only re-incorporate Mexican California into its narrative, but to a certain degree would celebrate a particular regional Mexican heritage.

5.2-1 A Changing Nation

By the 1960s America was decades into the throes of an ever-increasing rise in 'modern' forms of development as it entered an emerging 'postmodern' age. In fact, social scientists of

⁹ See Chapter Two for a brief mention of the importance of the history of Spanish colonization in San Diego's memory culture with accompanying images, and Chapter Four for a detailed examination of San Diego's memory culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

the day had been readily wielding the term “modernization” since the 1950s (Gilman, 2003, p. 3). Attempting to describe the ongoing “singular path of progressive change” which “simplified the world-historical problems of decolonization and industrialization,” the concept of modernization was “defined by progress in technology, military, and bureaucratic institutions, and the political and social structure” (ibid, p. 3). This dominant “modernization theory” hinged on the distinction between “traditional” and “modern” societies, and for decades influenced the organization and execution of both U.S. domestic affairs and foreign policy, including economic aid and military intervention decisions--at times with disastrous results (e.g. America’s involvement in the Vietnam War) (ibid, p. 3; So, 1990). However flawed, this concept was rooted in an attempt to create a comprehensive theory that could grapple with the realities of a postcolonial and Cold War world while also supporting the overarching neo-colonial project of making particular parts of the world “more like ‘us’--and less like the Russians or the Chinese” (Gilman, 2003, p. 3). What and who defined this ‘us’ is not only at the core of more recent historical and political scholarship which interrogates twentieth-century modernization theory in the U.S., but it is also a critical concern of this dissertation (ibid; So, 1990; Connolly, 2003; Fisher, 1998). Thus, the nation’s growing embrace of modernization in the early second half of the twentieth century represented more than simply an endorsement of technological or military advancement. It also illustrated a broader promotion and defense of particular ways of being, norms, values, belief systems, and traditions that in essence preserved a sense of ‘Americanness’ believed to be critical in ensuring a ‘modern’ world order.

Though dominant, this theory of modernization was not without its fissures. And soon, a new school of thought arose to understand the ways in which development worked and operated from a “Third World perspective” (So, 1990, p. 91). First gaining popularity in Latin America

before attaining traction in North America and a swift uptake in the U.S. in the late 1960s by a “radical” generation of researchers bred out of social movements and campus protests, was the new “dependency school” which contested the moral authority of the modernization theory (ibid, p. 92). In his 1981 examination of various social causes of economic and political change, American sociologist Daniel Chirot describes the dependency school’s rebuke of the dominant modernization theory, claiming:

The American debacle in Vietnam and the eruption of major racial troubles in the mid-1960s, followed by chronic inflation, the devaluation of the American dollar, and the general loss of America’s self-confidence in the early 1970s, ended the moral conviction on which the modernization theory had come to base itself. A new type of theory became popular among younger sociologists, one that reversed all of the old axioms. America became the very model of evil, and capitalism, which had been seen as the cause of social progress, became a sinister exploiter and the main agent of poverty in most of the world. Imperialism, not backwardness and lack of modernity, was the new enemy (pp. 259-260).

While certainly embraced by various ‘radical’ theorists and researchers of the day, this revolutionary school of thought and its rootedness in non-Western perspectives stoked particular national anxieties regarding the increasing slippage, and in some cases downright vilification, of elements such as capitalism, modernity, and conquest which had once firmly scaffolded notions of American exceptionalism. This ideological tension would influence the social landscape into which Old Town San Diego State Historic Park would later emerge and which project planners would have to negotiate (as detailed later in the chapter).

In addition to changing economic and foreign policy realities facing the nation, Chirot’s observations also allude to the various forms of social and cultural upheaval taking place during the 1960s and 70s, at times due to particular demographic shifts. Post-war America witnessed historic rates of immigration from Europe as well as the mass migration of black Southerners to Northern and Western regions of the country (Landsberg, 2004; Wilkerson, 2011). These

migrations also came on the heels of an explosive growth of Mexican and Mexican American communities in the 1910s and 20s as huge numbers of Mexicans immigrated to the U.S. due to a bloody revolution in Mexico and to pursue growing opportunities in agribusiness in the American West. In fact, between 1900 and 1930, the Mexican-born population of the United States grew from 103,000 to 1.4 million (Sagarena, 2002, p. 438). By the late post-war era of the 1960s and 70s, particular longitudinal effects of these previous national and regional migrations were beginning to germinate including the emergence of a growing rhetoric of ‘multiculturalism’ and increasing social expectations of a politics of inclusion (Landsberg, 2004; May, 2002; May, 1999; Scott, 1992; Dryzek, 1996; Sainsbury, 2012). These changing demographics also nurtured particular identity crises centered around notions of legitimacy, belonging, and what it meant to be ‘American’ (May, 2002; Scott, 1992). Specifically, this period bore witness to both expanding notions of ‘Americanness’ and protracted efforts to preserve ‘traditional’ notions of identity and heritage as rooted in the currency of white supremacy (even if not explicitly described as such). In terms of identity expansion, various forms of ethnic pride movements emerged in the 1960s and 70s including (but not limited to) the Black Power and Red Power movements and a growing Chicano Aztlán¹⁰ affiliation (in which Chicano Americans embraced a particularized mythos of their Indigenous roots in an active response to the dominant adoption of the Spanish Fantasy heritage by American Western regions) (Sagarena, 2015). Conversely, this period also saw an uptick, or greater visibility, in particular forms of cultural and historic preservation efforts, including projects centered around postmodern “urban renewal” often aimed

¹⁰ Aztlán, which was the focus of renewed interest in the 1960s by leaders of the Chicano Movement, is the mythical birthplace of the Aztec people (Dartmouth, n/d; Sagarena, 2015). “In Chicano folklore, Aztlán is often appropriated as the name for that portion of Mexico that was taken over by the United States after the Mexican-American War of 1846, on the belief that this greater area represents the point of parting of the Aztec migrations” (Dartmouth, n/d, unpaginated).

at ‘reclaiming’ city centers (e.g. the “Negro-removal” efforts of the 1960s) and even more explicit forms of cultural preservation via “another wave of KKK activism and violence” (Reichl, 1997, p. 516; Futrell & Simi, 2004, p. 18; Stone, 1989; Harvey, 1989). As the U.S. wrestled with notions of exactly who and what defined ‘Americanness,’ it makes sense that these questions were accompanied by particular transitions regarding many of the organizing principles, beliefs, and ideologies which also informed the ways in which Americans lived their lives and viewed the world around them.

Therefore this period was also largely defined by pertinent ideological shifts including changing expectations of liberalism. Like many political ideologies liberalism¹¹ is “highly sensitive to time and circumstance” and “in twentieth-century America...[it] emerged as a variable, somewhat tractable, political philosophy” (Dagger et al., 2019; Gerstle, 1994, p. 1045; Graham, 1992). One core area of debate pertaining to liberal philosophy during the second half of the twentieth century was determining the ‘appropriate’ role of the state. Specifically, in a post New Deal America, a new understanding of liberalism was beginning to consolidate around notions of social justice as various liberal schools of thought debated whether the government should “actively promote individual freedom rather than simply protect it” (e.g. through welfare state vs. laissez faire policies and as often discussed through the concepts of ‘positive¹²’ and ‘negative¹³’ liberty) (Dagger et al., 2019, unpaginated). Thus, a “‘new liberalism’ [had] become focused on developing a theory of social justice...[where]...what was previously called ‘welfare state’ liberalism [was] now often described as liberal egalitarianism” (Gaus, Courtland, &

¹¹ See Chapter One for a brief discussion of the liberal subject and contract and their relationship to the nation and notions of ‘Americanness.’

¹² An understanding of liberty as the ‘freedom *to*’ or “the ability to act” in particular ways in the world (Tawney, 1931, p. 221).

¹³ An understanding of liberty as positioned by an absence of coercion, or the concept of ‘freedom *from*’ coercion from others. In this view, “[y]ou lack political liberty or freedom only if you are prevented from attaining a goal by other human beings” (Berlin, 1969, p. 122).

Schmidtz, 2018). In other words, liberalism, as a core theory of the modern American state, began to evolve from an ideology grounded in distrusting state power to a belief system which seemingly embraced the mobilization of governmental power to correct perceived social, political, and economic inequities and redistribute means and opportunity (ibid). This debate would play out in various situated contexts, including in the development of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, especially in terms of notions of individual vs. state property rights and negotiating understandings of appropriate civic responsibility (which this chapter will later unpack in detail).

Not only were concepts of modernity and liberalism evolving during this period, so too was the notion of ‘leisure,’ as changing circumstances additionally influenced how Americans viewed concepts of time, recreation, and status in their everyday lives. Specifically, by the 1960s, Americans were increasingly viewing leisure as a solidly middle class expectation and a status of national and personal economic stability, growth, and ‘modern’ progress¹⁴. Since the late 1950s America’s “problem of excessive working had been solved--at least in the minds of the experts” with what was seen as a final sifting of Industrialism’s fruits including automation, consumerism, and the long sought-after securing of particular labor rights (Schor, 2008, p. 4). In fact, by the late 1950s as the nation evolved from a ‘needs-based’ to a ‘consumption-based’ economy, many Americans were actually looking for ways to address a contemporary “common curse” of “boredom,” as epitomized in a seeming “crisis of leisure” (ibid, p. 4; Friedman, 2005; Cohen, 2004). This crisis caught the attention of various academic and cultural institutions. The Harvard Business Review, in 1959, openly questioned among other issues how American

¹⁴ Even in many non-white communities as explored in scholarly projects like Alison Rose Jefferson’s 2009 examination of Santa Monica California’s ‘Inkwell’--a beach enjoyed by black Americans from 1900-1960s during an era of segregation.

housewives would now fill their days, while The American Council of Churches took up “the issue of spare time” in formal conferences, and academia began producing work on leisure studies, the social workings of play, and the consequences of loneliness (ibid, p. 4).

This emerging notion of leisure as a ‘social necessity’ was also taken up by American urban planners. Inspired by the European post war “new-town movement” which capitalized on strategic planning and development to “rebuild and decentralize older urban centers” in order “to *erase the bitter memories of war*” and increase overall quality of life for citizens, American designers sought to construct innovative (sub)urban communities that anchored modernist buildings to surrounding natural features or plazas (Bloom, 2001, p. 20, italics added). Along with these design elements, planners additionally mobilized emerging American ideals regarding the “nature of the good society” which largely revolved around the notion of a “leisure society” that was now attainable to “most Americans” (ibid, p. 21). Robert E. Simon Jr., an innovative real estate developer in the 1960s summed up this ideal society stating, “in this age of leisure people should have a wide choice of things to do which are stimulating, pleasurable, exciting, fun” (ibid). His urban planning approach, as applied to communities like Reston, Virginia (a town Simon founded and named after his initials), helped to introduce the concept of community “villages” anchored to particular types of leisure with accompanying architectural features (e.g. a village with a lake and docks for sailing, a horse riding village featuring winding trails, and a golfing community characterized by greenbelt courses) (ibid).

In the late 1960s, however, working conditions slowly began to evolve with a steady uptick in working hours (Schor, 2008). Yet, well into the 1970s Americans continually embraced the ideal of a lifestyle of leisure, despite the fact that America was entering a new era of increasingly rising work time featuring a growing workforce (including the acceleration of

women in the workplace) (ibid). Additionally, Americans began to increasingly view time itself as a particular form of currency, as something to be ‘spent’ and not ‘passed,’ and in which “time poverty” could negatively affect one’s quality of life (ibid, p. 5). Thus, the combination of a cultural embrace of leisure, the social reality of increased work commitments, and figurative and literal time constraints would bode well for tourist destinations which could mimic the lively and carefree experience of ‘getting away’ to an ‘exotic’ locale in just an afternoon’s time--a social, cultural, and economic convergence particularly suited to the success of a designed space like Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.

5.2-2 Local Conditions

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, as an effort to commemorate the past, also grew out of an ensemble of local conditions including a desire to celebrate an anniversary by marking a regional milestone. This impetus is unsurprising as major milestones generally bring with them an impulse for reflection. As such, nationally oriented cultural memory scholarship often investigates the ways in which “marking anniversaries of events...reinterpret[s] their lasting meaning for the country [in order to] discuss American ideals and identity” (Kitch, 2002, pp. 44-45; Huyssen, 1996; Sturken, 1997). The San Diego Bicentennial, in its reflection upon its Hispanic heritage, presented just such an opportunity. Specifically, though much of California had been enthusiastic about the state’s 100th anniversary in 1950, it was the upcoming 200th anniversary of the first permanent European settlement in California in Old Town San Diego, to be celebrated in 1969, which captivated San Diegans (Schiff, 2011). Thus, they turned their collective attention to commemorating the distinct history which they believed grounded their regional and national exceptionalism. By the early 1960s the city began to envision and plan a slate of projects and activities to observe the upcoming 1969 Bicentennial, instigating an

assemblage of cultural reflections and memorial practices, including the ambitious Old Town project.

Closely intertwined with this endeavor was a California bond measure endorsed by Governor Pat Brown. Slated as Prop 1 on the 1964 ballot, “The State Beach, Park, Recreational, and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1964” sought to invest \$150 million in tax monies towards public parks and beaches (CA Secretary of State, 1964). Advocates of the measure pushed for the government development of ‘fast-disappearing’ public lands and beaches (in opposition to bond opponents who saw in the measure government waste and over-spending of public funds). Arguing in favor of the bond, and co-authoring the written ballot’s ‘pro’ argument, were prominent leaders and business owners: State Senator Alvin C. Weingard of Santa Barbara, Superior Court Judge Ronald G. Cameron of Placer, and entertainment mogul Walt Disney. In their appeal to the people of California, they mobilized language that harkened back to the late nineteenth-century ‘closing-frontier’ rhetoric that spurred a bonanza of Southern California development in the 1880s and 90s, using bold subheadings, capitalizations, and urgent language, while also gesturing to the contemporary ‘crisis of leisure’ which in 1964 positioned recreation as a social necessity, stating:

YOU CAN SOLVE CALIFORNIA’S CRISIS IN RECREATION BY VOTING “YES” ON PROPOSITION ONE. California’s vacation lands--beaches, parks and recreational areas--are being used today by more people than they are capable of accommodating. Potential beach and park areas, which should be acquired immediately, are being lost forever to the exploding population increases and industrial expansions in California. Proposition One provides \$150,000,000 to purchase beaches, parks, recreational and historical facilities. You have an opportunity--the last opportunity--to acquire and develop our State’s rapidly disappearing open spaces. California’s land values continue going up-up-up. Purchasing vacation land areas NOW makes economic sense. The cost will be far less TODAY than tomorrow. WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH BEACHES AND PARKS FOR OUR PEOPLE. Development with our recreational areas has not kept pace with California’s heritage as the Number One state in the nation...WE MUST ACT NOW...IT’S NOW OR NEVER...The future is NOW in the race for

California's remaining open spaces--areas that will fulfill YOUR present and future recreational needs...The TIME is NOW--YOUR YES VOTE ON PROPOSITION ONE is vital to you. The recreational areas of our State--for today and tomorrow--must be preserved...before they disappear forever. VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION ONE (Weingard, Cameron, & Disney, 1964 in CA Secretary of State, 1964, p. 1).

This argument, however, not only capitalized on 'closing-frontier' 'land-race' rhetoric and a looming 'crisis of leisure.' It also underscored notions of California's exceptionalism. In other words, their argument positioned California voters as active agents inhabiting yet another critical 'final frontier': one in which "California's heritage as the Number One state in the nation" had to be urgently preserved and protected through the proper and final 'settlement' of its last "remaining open spaces." Though certainly highlighting a distinctly Californian perspective, this narrative was not at odds with other frontier rhetoric which also scaffolded notions of a broader American exceptionalism. For example, during the late nineteenth-century Southern California real estate 'boom', "life in California was portrayed as a cure-all of the woes of Americans and Europeans, be they related to ill health, financial misfortune, or crowded urban environments (Lint Sagarena, 2014, p. 53). And decades later, Balboa Park promoters would cast Southern California, and San Diego specifically, as a "land of honey and flowers" where opportunity bloomed from a Mediterranean oasis in America (Amero, 2013, p. 31). Though seemingly California-specific, these portrayals, like the Prop 1 rhetoric, would ultimately aid and abet particular presentations of California as particular beacons of America at its best--a place where the 'American Dream' was done right, thus in a manner supporting the notion of American exceptionalism itself. Furthermore, this written bond measure advocacy also acted as a frontier message tempered with liberal rationality, which presented Californians with the choice to muster the economic foresight and cultural vision to act as self-interested individuals

within a body politic in order to collectively protect their future through particular forms of preservation.

Despite these various forms of persuasive rhetoric, Governor Brown was not content to rely on powerful messaging alone. Adhering to the maxim that ‘all politics are local,’ the Brown Administration appealed to statewide Assemblymen asking them to identify and develop viable local projects that could vie for a portion of the \$150 million bond monies if passed, ensuring wide reaching public support at the ballot. In San Diego, two such local projects were identified: the development of a Torrey Pines State Park upon the La Jolla bluffs, and converting an existing state park in Old Town San Diego into a *historic* state park in honor of the upcoming regional Bicentennial. On November 3, 1964, Proposition 1 passed, moving Old Town San Diego State Historic Park one step closer to its development.

Percolating at the outskirts of this commemorative and civic landscape was another critical local condition for the park’s impetus: Mexico’s growing tourism industry. Specifically, the rising popularity and economic success of Mexico as a tourist destination for San Diego visitors and locals alike spurred local interest in creating opportunities for profiting off of its appeal. The roots of this tourism lay at the San Diego-Tijuana border (which first experienced notable southbound American tourism during the days of Prohibition) and continued as an American demand for leisure activities increased considerably, enticing a myriad of visits to Mexico from San Diego-based Marines to Hollywood stars (Hiernaux-Nicolas, 1999). In fact by the 1960s, tourism was becoming a major economic force within Mexico, one which its government actively promoted and for which the United States made up its largest sending market (ibid; Clancy, 2001). By 1963 entering international tourists into Mexico passed the one million mark and just six years later in 1969, this number doubled (Hiernaux-Nicolas,

1999). Thus, as Mexico's Tourism Department and an expanding cadre of American visitors engaged in Mexico's growing tourism market, this process initiated particular reparative work which, among other conditions, helped to facilitate a shift within American public imagination that rendered Mexico as not only 'visible' but as a contemporary leisure destination which could offer fun, celebration, excitement, and adventure (See Figure 5.10). This was a significant development as excitement, as a marketable product, flourished in the 1960s. In fact, scholars of social leisure characterize this era, like "the 1920s...and arguably the 1990s," as having a "fast" orientation to leisure (as defined by a society's increasing "hunger for constant novelty" and a preference towards rapidly "switching activities" and variety as opposed to "slow" and sustained forms of leisure "like reading a book") (Rojek, 1999, pp. 23-24). Thus, Mexico's popularity as a prime destination of "fast" leisure would also cast Mexican *culture* as representative of this general sense of festivity--vital cultural work upon which the developers of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park would ultimately capitalize.

These local conditions (i.e. the upcoming Bicentennial, the passed bond measure initiative, and Mexico's growing tourism industry) in conjunction with an ensemble of national change (e.g. changing views regarding 'Americanness,' the role of government, notions of leisure, etc.) combined to create an environment that gave rise to the impetus of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park as a particular commemorative response to various forms of change. The final section of this chapter will take up the complex funding strategy enacted by park planners to that simultaneously negotiated these changing conditions in order to move the project from concept to reality.



Figure 5.10: A 1967 advertisement from the Mexican Government Tourist Department run the same year that an eventual “Economic Potential of the Old Town Community” report was prepared for city developers. The ad claims, “there’s more to do in Mexico” including the message: “I’m a doer! Send me literature on how I can do more in Mexico...do more swimming, more shopping, more celebrating, more relaxing, more exciting fun and games. Tell me more!” The advertisement’s daring, carefree, ‘abundance’ and ‘fast-paced’ rhetoric, along with its forward-looking fashion, posh imagery, and sexualized visuals (e.g. the close-up of a modern looking woman, mouth partially open, nearly-hidden eyes peering suggestively over fashionable shades, and the man in blue’s hand firmly grasping the waist of his partner who is decked out in a short skirt) played on evolving American sensibilities of leisure, class, status, and desire. From Mascola Group, 2018, Retro ad of the week: Mexico tourism, 1967 [Blog post], retrieved November 27, 2018, from <https://mascola.com/insights/international-tourism-marketing-retro-ad-week-mexico-1967/> Copyright by Mascola Group. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

5.3 Funding and Approving Preservation in an “Economic Wasteland”

As the previous section alluded, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park was primarily funded via a statewide ballot initiative to invest in the preservation of public lands. However, the specific details regarding the park’s funding reveal a complex strategy that mobilized political, economic, ideological, and cultural tactics. Politically, the park’s central champion was San Diego Assemblyman James R. Mills (who represented the 79th district including downtown San Diego, North Park, and East San Diego) (Schiff, 2011). Before gaining public office Mills had previously served as the director of the San Diego Historical Society and the Junipero Serra Museum on Presidio Hill (the organization George Marston had founded at the turn of the twentieth century before setting his commemorative sights on the Old Town Plaza) (Shiraishi, n.d.). In 1964, in response to Governor Brown’s appeal for local projects and given his interest in San Diego history, Mills proposed a major project of cultural memory which would commemorate California’s ‘birth’ at San Diego (Schiff, 2011). Specifically, Mills introduced what he called “a piece of promotion for the bond issue” in the form of a resolution to the state legislature which would create, with Prop 1 bond funds, a State Historical Park at Old Town in order to, in the words of the Assemblyman, “preserve that part of San Diego that existed from Mexican times to now; [or] at least elements of it...[a] project which would bring to the region: state funds, tourist dollars and civic pride” (Mills interview in Schiff, 2011, p. 186; Shiraishi, n.d., unpaginated). The goal was to renovate and recreate much of the original settlement for the public’s enjoyment and edification in time for the July 1969 Bicentennial, concentrating on the years 1821 (when Mexico won its independence from Spain) to 1872 (the year a devastating fire basically shuttered an already declining American settlement at Old Town).

In order to be competitive for a portion of the state bond monies, proposed projects had to prove their economic viability and be selected by a legislative subcommittee from a list of potential candidates. Historical documents claim that “as luck would have it” both Mills and Assemblyman Hale Ashcraft (who was proposing the Torrey Pines project) sat on this particular subcommittee, though one could also conjecture whether or not Mills and Ashcraft were also selected as their project proposers for this is exact informational access and political capital (Schiff, 2011, p. 187). In fact, these strategic positions would later come into play when both the Old Town and Torrey Pines proposals were somehow left off of the statewide list of potential projects to be discussed by their sub-committee (ibid). According to Mills, he and Ashcraft subsequently “raised hell” about their projects’ omissions, successfully orchestrating their inclusion into the appropriation discussion and their ultimate selection (ibid, p. 187).

The majority of the project’s economic tactics, however, would require a bit more nuance. In his bid to secure the actual release of state monies (which hinged on a final assessment of the park’s financial feasibility), Mills also lobbied local civic bodies and business organizations. Though the state bond monies were slated to fund the majority of the project, further investment was necessary to complete the park in its entirety. Thus Mills decided the project would need the economic assistance of the San Diego City Council. Before appealing to city hall though, Mills and Ashcraft drew upon their political skills to identify other potential advocates. Recognizing the public sway of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, they sought out support from the organization. In what would be a pivotal coup, they gained the backing of Chamber staff member, Lucille Mortimer, who sat on the Chamber board weighing the economic merit of the project (Schiff, 2011). According to Mills, Mortimer eventually “singlehandedly persuaded the board to go along with the proposal” (ibid, p. 189). It was an endorsement from

an influential body which Mills long held was key in swaying the City to support the project as the City ultimately agreed to assist with funds and property acquisition. Additionally, Mortimer's backing would also have lasting effects as she would later become an integral force in the planning and development of the park (an influence the next chapter will further discuss).

The eventual support from the City not only helped the project's economic cause, it was also key to negotiating ideological roadblocks to the park's funding and development. Specifically, one major ideological concern revolved around evolving understandings of the role of the state, especially in terms of what the government could deem as 'public' property and space. Though the proposed area of the park was sparsely occupied in 1964, "Old Town State Park was not created in empty space" (ibid, p. 189). The area was, however, still relatively undeveloped. Instead, it was San Diego's 'New Town,' now almost exclusively referred to as 'downtown' that served as the major hub for much of San Diego's commerce (Pourade, 1960-1977; Schiff, 2011). In fact, during the 1950s Mills described Old Town as "an economic wasteland" given its decided lack of commercial activity, especially when compared to the thriving downtown district just three miles south (Schiff, 2011, p. 192). By 1964 only a few residents, businesses, and organizations occupied the twelve acres of land slated for the project's development. The seemingly pedestrian 'Ramona's Marriage Place' had lost its enthusiastic public appeal by the late 1950s yet was still floundering, along with a remaining operating olive cannery, the Casa de Pico motor hotel, a carpenter union, and a few other operations (ibid; Keister, 2005; See Figures 5.11 and 5.12). Likewise, a smattering of restaurants and a meagerly visited Whaley House (a historic home built in 1857 during the American period) operated in the area outside of the proposed park boundaries yet still within the 230 acre surrounding neighborhood of Old Town San Diego. Ironically, it would be this decided



Figure 5.11: Old Mission Olive Factory as it stood in 1928. From M. G. Schiff, 2011, *Placing the past in the present: The creation of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park*, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 57(3), p. 192. Copyright by San Diego History Center #6716-A. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 5.12: Old Town homes, which the state would ultimately remove, at Congress and Mason streets in 1968 within the proposed park's boundaries. From M. G. Schiff, 2011, *Placing the past in the present: The creation of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park*, *The Journal of San Diego History*, 57(3), p. 189. Copyright by San Diego History Center #84:14942-1. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

lack of Old Town redevelopment that would actually inspire its eventual renaissance as a commemorative designed space. Due to previously adopted building restrictions by the San Diego Planning Commission (from the 1937 suggestions from Spanish revival architect Richard Requa), by the time of Mills' 1964 proposal a portion of San Diego's original Spanish and Mexican settlement was remarkably still intact (though often in a state of marked disrepair). This condition distinguished San Diego from most major California cities (e.g. San Francisco, Los Angeles, or San Jose), as these cities had continually built upon their original Spanish and Mexican infrastructures until little trace of those early settlements and *pueblos* were visible or present by the mid-twentieth century (Schiff, 2011). Although this circumstance was historically remarkable, it failed to impress Old Town property owners within the twelve acre radius of the proposed historic state park.

In fact, many property owners were downright livid. Given the prospect of displacement many forcefully resisted the proposed development, including the entire carpenter union which banded in solidarity against the project (ibid). Though centered around the materiality of property--this debate was also largely ideological. Liberalism, as a core state ideology, has an intimate relationship¹⁵ with notions of property¹⁶ ownership. As does the legacy of pioneerism

¹⁵ Ideological relationships to property can be characterized in various manners according to a person's or a society's "fundamental beliefs" about property including: (1) an *intuitive* theory (in which individuals expect to gain certain benefits from property ownership), (2) *republican* beliefs (in which property ownership is seen as granting individuals with personal independence, enabling "citizens to pursue the common good, instead of concentrating on their own self-interest," (3) a *liberal* framework (in which equal individuals are principally, if not exclusively, motivated by their own passions or self-interests and where property, and its use, serves these self-interests), and (4) a *utilitarian* approach (in which property and property laws are "artifacts, human inventions, social institutions, and a means of social organization" to which people adhere, not because of a sense of obligation, but because it is in their self-interest to do so. Some scholars position this utilitarian approach as the current dominant view of property (Sheppard, 2003, p. 312).

¹⁶ "CAL. CIV. CODE § 654 [defines property]...as follows: 'The ownership of a thing is the right of one or more persons to possess and *use it to the exclusion of others*. In this Code, the thing of which there may be ownership is called property' ...CAL. CIV. CODE § 658...defin[es] real property as land, that which is affixed to land, that which is incidental or appurtenant to land, or that which is immovable from land by operation of law...An accepted definition of "land" [see CAL. CIV. CODE § 659] is that it is the material of the earth whatever may be the ingredients of which the earth is comprised, and it includes air space below and above the surface of the

in the West. For example, within the classical liberal tradition, private property ownership is a fundamental right consistent with individual liberty and within some liberal schools of thought, liberty and property are actually viewed as one in the same (Locke, 1689 (1988); Dewey, 1963; Gaus, 1994; Steiner, 1994; Robbins, 196; Hayek, 1978; Sheppard, 2003). Additionally, as earlier chapters of this dissertation have detailed, concepts of land and property played a vital role within the ‘settling’ of the West. Patricia Limerick in her *Legacy of Conquest* describes Western history as a practice responsible for “drawing lines and marking borders” and positions property ownership as an ultimate “cultural imperative” for white Americans (Limerick, 1988, p. 55). Thus, between Western land and notions of ‘Americanness’ exists a complex relationship informed by understandings of the role of the state, property, liberty, and power, and notions of race, gender, class, and culture. As such, these Old Town owners and residents within the boundaries of the proposed project most likely saw any government takeover of their properties (including buyouts which divorced them from the ‘natural right’ of land ownership) as a fundamental infringement upon their individual liberty and right to the possession and/or use of their property (Locke, 1689 [1988]). This contention would most likely have resonated with national debates surrounding evolving notions of liberalism and a seeming overreaching state-- especially in a city that by the mid 1970s would shift towards conservative politics (though the city would, especially in later decades, balance fiscal conservatism with social liberalism) (Corso, 1983; Erie et al., 2011). Additionally, beginning in the 1920s, but gaining remarkable traction in the mid twentieth century, was the increased capacity of the American government to claim private property through fundamentally changed Public Use Laws and the legal interpretation of eminent domain, often in the name of “urban renewal” or in order to turn

earth...[And] CAL. CIV. CODE § 663 [defines] personal property as every kind of property that is not real property” (Sheppard, 2003, p. 312, italics added).

property over to “others who would use it more appropriately,” (and often to the disadvantage of the nation’s most disenfranchised individuals and communities)--once again bringing to bear debates regarding the role and scope of government in relation to the lives of its private citizens (Pritchett, 2003; pp. 1-2; Bloom, 2001; Teaford, 2000; Lipsitz, 1995).

Beyond interrogating logistical and legal uses of space, some scholars during this period also began to radically question the nature of space itself and the physical environment, viewing them as constructs and epistemes that carried social, economic, cultural, and political implications (Lefebvre, 1968 - 1974 in Stanek, 2011; Blaut, 1953; Kates & Wohlwill, 1966; Burton & Kates, 1964; Lynch, 1960; Lowenthal, 1961; Buttimer, 1976; Foucault, 1977a). This academic turn to space as a social and cultural concept and production initiated a future wave of studies which would extend well into the latter half of the twentieth century and beyond. As such, much of this research laid the foundation for examinations of the role of public space as a *political* sphere “essential to the functioning of democratic politics” through which notions of legitimacy, power, belonging, and identity are negotiated, thus fashioning who and what constitutes “the public” in the process, a concept at the core of the impetus to create a park for the public’s enjoyment and edification (Mitchell, 1995, p. 115; Fraser, 1990; Carr et al., 1992; Warner, 2002; Gehl, 2011; Low & Smith, 2013, Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, though perhaps not at times explicitly articulated in such academic phrasing, these percolating ideological developments and debates underscored a philosophical and theoretical landscape within which the early development of Old Town San Diego State Historic would have to navigate. In fact, the project soon became controversial enough that the current mayor of San Diego, Frank Curran, called Assemblyman Mills and implored him to abandon the project, saying (according to Mills), “Jim, I wish to God you’d drop this. This is a hot potato, it’s very controversial and it’s

very hard to go along with and you would do everyone a favor if you'd just forget this" (Mills interview in Schiff, 2011, p. 189).

Thus it would eventually take a creative solution to clear this ideological and logistical hurdle of securing the slated privately owned properties, one which harkened back to Old Town's eighteenth-century colonial founding as a trading hub at the foot of the *presidio*. Though not yet formalized, Mills had secured assistance from the City Council towards property acquisition for the park (with the help of the influential endorsement from the San Diego Chamber of Commerce). Therefore, in cooperation with the City, planning leadership devised a barter scheme in which the project would offer various city lands to Old Town property owners in exchange for the lands that the state sought to complete the project--thus gaining resident and property owner cooperation without impacting the project's tenuous finances through costly property buyouts, freeing up municipal monies for project development as opposed to property acquisition (ibid). This resolution not only made economic sense, but it was also ideologically palatable. The maneuver, which traded property for property, did not just protect the owners' landowning status, it also buttressed vitriol towards a seemingly overreaching state. Specifically, by mobilizing a rhetoric of laissez faire economic liberalism in which the marketplace through its 'invisible hand' righted the situation, this barter solution positioned Old Town property owners as active agents within the market (or in pioneer rhetoric: as actors 'fit' enough to survive), instead of passive (or 'unfit') pawns subject to the whims of an overbearing state. In fact Mills gestured to this rhetoric when reflecting upon the compensated owners, stating, "property owners did all right with the arrangement," additionally pointing out that owners whose properties laid outside the park's boundaries also "saw their property values increase substantially with the

creation of the park,” adding, “if I wasn’t carrying this legislation, I told my wife, I’d buy property there tomorrow” (Mills interview in Schiff, 2011, p. 190).

Finally, besides political, economic, and ideological approaches--securing funding for the park also required drawing upon cultural tactics. When pitching the project Assemblyman Mills not only touted the state funds and tourism dollars the park would bring to the region, but also the “civic pride” it would illicit (ibid, p. 186). Additionally, when he appealed to the San Diego City Council for support towards the state project’s funding shortfall he argued, “it is important for San Diegans to remember our heritage, important for us to *preserve* our heritage” (Schiff, 2011, p. 188, italics added). It was an appeal which would carry weight in 1964 in the midst of an era of radical change in which, for many, cultural heritage preservation seemed especially prescient. For example, the year of the Bicentennial also brought the 1969 founding of the Save Our Heritage Organisation. This San Diego nonprofit, which grew out of an effort to save an aging downtown Victorian home, was established to preserve “community identity...and cultural heritage” (SOHO, n.d.-a). Over thirty years later, at the turn of the millennia, the organization would also take over the stewardship of the historic Whaley House and the Adobe Chapel (which was featured in the novel *Ramona* [1884]), both located in Old Town adjacent to the state historic park where the organization continues to shape the ways in which particular local narratives, as told through historic buildings, are presented to the public (SOHO, n.d.-c; SOHO, n.d.-b, Ramona landing page).

In addition to specific attempts to protect cultural heritage was a broader growing national trend of remembrance. At the same time as the once seemingly solid foundations of American exceptionalism appeared to falter (via changing attitudes towards notions of modernity, progress, capitalism, and conquest) scholarly practices began to enter what would

later be termed as a ‘memory boom’¹⁷ (Radstone, 2000). Specifically, various research across multiple disciplines departed from a modernity-based preoccupation with progress and “becomingness” to instead focus upon the past and remembrance as major mode of inquiry (Radstone, 2000, p. 2; Confino, 1997; Huyssen, 2012). Among past narratives that began to receive increased scrutiny during this period was America’s nineteenth-century war with Mexico. Previously apprehended as a heroic grand narrative¹⁸, emerging scholarship began to revisit and rethink this entrenched historical account, leading one reviewer in 1976 to question why “has there been so much writing on the Mexican War of late?” (McDonald, 1976 in Johannsen, 1992, p. xv). For many historians, the answer to this query was found in America’s contemporary conflict in Vietnam, an unpopular and costly war that dragged on for nearly two decades (1955-1973) given its long exercise in graduated pressure (contributing to this general protracted period of upheaval’s epithet: “the long sixties”) (Strain, 2016, p. vii; Thies & Thies, 1980; Logevall, 2004; Freedman, 1996). Though certainly not interchangeable, studying the war with Mexico during (or immediately in the wake of) the Vietnam conflict performed vital cultural work. As America found itself entangled in a disastrous war with Vietnam (on the heels of a previous ‘unwon’ and ‘failed’ endeavor in Korea) many twentieth-century scholars found comfort in this particular comparative lens. By examining a similarly unnecessary war with Mexico (which also faced strong political opposition and was punctuated by stalled diplomatic efforts), their research could attempt to work through contemporary anxieties and interrogate the “dangers inherent in the application of graduated force,” a strategy which was also proving ineffective in Vietnam (Bauer, 1974/1992, p. xxv). In fact one scholar claimed that had

¹⁷ See Chapter One for an extended summary of this scholarly ‘boom.’

¹⁸ See Chapter Three for a discussion of this heroic rhetoric.

televisions existed during the Mexican-American War, *that* conflict “might have developed into another Vietnam” (Johannsen, 1992, p. xvi). Thus, these studies charted a particular political development of America, through the tale of the Mexican-American War, which could help to make sense of current U.S. foreign policy woes (Coles, 1966; Bauer, 1974/1992; Sherrill, 1974; Graebner, 1980, Johannsen, 1992).

This critical model, however, was not the only commemorative route taken to revisit the U.S. relationship with Mexico during that period. In fact, San Diego’s proposed public re-examination of nineteenth-century Mexican/American contact would take another approach altogether. Unlike scholarly projects of the 1960s and 70s that actively interrogated the inherent violence and contention of the Mexican-American War, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park planners offered the public a commemorative return to this time period seemingly devoid of conflict. Instead, they maintained a historical, political, and moral acquittal of America by new means: multicultural celebration. This mythic tactic proved increasingly useful for launching this particular cultural memory project in the face of changing social and cultural contexts. In other words, park planners attempting to collectively remember nineteenth-century San Diego in 1964 could not readily rely on previous memorial practices which effectively ignored and/or erased Mexican California¹⁹. It was not economically or socioculturally viable to continue to do so. Not only did planners have to take into consideration increased public interest in Mexico and Mexican cultural consumption as a source of leisure, festivity, and play. Cultural makers of the time were also contending with an emerging rhetoric of ‘multiculturalism’ that would not have complemented an outright cultural erasure of Mexico. Specifically, since the late 1950s the emergence of particular notions of multiculturalism and inclusionist policies fostered an

¹⁹ See Chapter Four for a detailed discussion of this cultural ‘erasure’ of Mexican California.

“increasing social stigma attached to racist ideologies and those who espoused them” (Futrell & Simi, 2004, p. 19; Barkun 1994; Bennett 1998; Blee 2002; Diamond 1995; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997; Kaplan 1995; Wellman 1993). Likewise, 1964 park planners would have found it difficult to explicitly valorize conquest as previous memorial practices had done--especially those rooted in explicit models of white supremacy nurtured and co-constituted (even up to the early twentieth century) by eugenics-based scientific approaches²⁰. It was becoming increasingly theoretically and culturally inappropriate for ‘progressive’ projects to do as much. And at the core of the 1964 California bond measure was the ethos of funding public projects that protected not only cultural heritage and a present way of life, but also ensured a particular forward-thinking futurity for the state. In other words, the dominant California origin story would once again require a recalibration, one that would coincide with a “*new politicization of whiteness*” (Winant, 2004, p. 3, italics not added). Howard Winant (2004) in his (2004) “Behind Blue Eyes: Whiteness and Contemporary U.S. Racial Politics” describes the “*new politicization of whiteness*” that emerged during this period, stating:

Since the 1960s contemporary racial discourse has been unable to function as a logic of racial superiority and racial exclusion. Therefore it has been forced into *rearticulations, representations, reinterpretations* of the meaning of race, and perforce, of whiteness...[ushering in] the *new politicization of whiteness* that has taken shape in...the period since the ambiguous victory of the civil rights movement in the mid-1960s (ibid, p. 3, italics not added).

Thus wooing voters, navigating political hurdles, and securing approval and funding from state and local agencies was just a particular preamble as the true project of recalibrating the California origin story through the park’s presentation had just begun. In 1966, two years after the ballot vote, project monies were finally released and a year later in 1967, property acquisition

²⁰ See Chapter Four for a discussion of the eugenics-based memorial practices mobilized within the 1915 Balboa Park project and exhibitions.

began (Schiff, 2011). It was now time to **design** and **(re)construct** the park in earnest (efforts the next two chapters will explore). As this chapter lays out, in doing so park planners would have to reconcile among other conditions: (1) How to negotiate a legacy of colonialism (during an era of increased scrutiny regarding neocolonial projects rooted in a questionable theory of modernization), (2) How to honor the legacy of the past while still venerating the present, the future, and particular notions of progress and exceptionalism (when the elements that generally defined those concepts seemed to be increasingly slipping away), and (3) How to--amidst all of these changes--continue to protect and preserve a dominant culture (that emerging schools of thought were beginning to characterize as problematic). The reparative tactic of *celebration* attended to all of these conditions. By landing on a celebratory theme for the commemorative site, park planners negotiated complex contemporary anxieties by presenting an America only made stronger, more cohesive, and more unique by a particular take on multiethnic contact. However, despite the reincorporation of Mexican California into this celebratory narrative, this recalibration of the California origin story would continue to reaffirm notions of American exceptionalism by mobilizing a new politicization of whiteness (as collapsed upon American California's distinctness). In other words, through specific design and implementation choices, the park would venerate the establishment of American democratic institutions, effectively relegating Mexico's regional contributions to a general 'cultural' flair characterized by a sense of Hispanic festivity (ignoring Mexico's own liberal tradition and downplaying the social and political nuances of many of its cultural practices). The second part of this three-chapter case study charts the design of the park, specifically examining the development of the park's 'tasteful' and 'appropriate' "designed atmosphere" which rendered aspects of Mexican culture palatable, safe, and *useful*.

Chapter 5 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.

Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

CHAPTER SIX:

‘Designing’ Remembrance: Old Town San Diego State Historic Park and the (Re)Making of Multicultural California

It is hoped that visitors to the park will enjoy a ‘living experience’--that they will be able to experience life as it was during the Mexican and American periods from 1821 to 1872--the Early California Feeling.

--Old Town San Diego State Historic Park
General Development Plan, 1977

6.1 Introduction

When Old Town San Diego State Historic Park planners set out to visualize a narrative for the park, they had a formidable task before them. As the previous chapter revealed, despite--and because of--various changing conditions, park designers needed to carefully negotiate a legacy of colonialism, honor this regional past while still venerating the present, future, and particular forms of ‘progress’ and exceptionalism, and continue to protect and preserve a dominant culture. These conditions, along with other local and national trends (including a regional milestone, emerging notions of ‘multiculturalism’, a growing Mexican tourism industry, and increased public interest in ‘fast’ and lively forms of leisure and entertainment), critically informed the design of this recalibration of the California origin story. In other words, not only would park planners re-incorporate Mexico into the region’s origin narrative. Through the creation of the park, they would also *celebrate* this history--offering the public a circumscribed commemorative space through which to reconcile, negotiate, and in many ways *enjoy* rapidly

changing sociocultural conditions. This second chapter in this three-chapter case study charts how park planners translated these narrative tasks into the park's strategic design.

While Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, as it stands now, is a multifaceted cultural heritage and edutourism site (spanning twelve acres, consisting of various 'historic' buildings, scores of restaurants, specialty shops, and even an operating theater all run and operated by hundreds of employees and volunteers in order to welcome over three million visitors a year)--despite these intricacies of the park, the preliminary work of designing the space in the 1960s and 70s often began with developing a specific 'look' and 'feel.' Old Town's General Development Plan (1977), for example, offered various definitions of these often ephemeral qualities, continually asserting the significance of the park effectively re-creating and portraying the "appearance" of an "Early Southern California Image," an "Old Town Image," or an "Old Town San Diego Image" that evoked a particular "Early California Feeling" (pp. 14, 41, 42, 46). Therefore articulating, designing, and operationalizing an ideal image and atmosphere required the mobilization of various institutional and human resources involving multiple scopes and contexts. Given the breadth and complexity of such an endeavor and my own project's constraints, this section does not attempt to offer a comprehensive or exhaustive account of each historical site's design process. Instead this chapter offers a close reading of two particular bureaucratic mechanisms that were particularly influential to the development of the park's overall design: The 1967 *Economic Potential of the Old Town Community Report* and the aforementioned 1977 *Old Town San Diego State Historic Park General Development Plan*.

Though not as detailed or specific as the eventual General Development Plan, the preceding Economic Potential Report helped to identify significant local cultural and economic trends as well as begin the work of articulating the park and its surrounding community's ideal

“designed atmosphere” (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, p. 6) And created ten years later, the General Development Plan developed, via a more macro approach, an overall visual design schema which carefully organized the park’s visual narrative. Together, this analysis of these two reports (in conjunction with supplemental archival material) illustrates the ways in which park planners conceptualized and operationalized the park’s meaning-making capacity.

6.2 A ‘Tasteful and Appropriate’ Design: The 1967 Economic Potential Report

While there are many ways to examine the 1967 *Economic Potential of the Old Town Community* report (e.g. as an economic, public opinion, or urban planning artifact), I primarily analyze the report through a *cultural* framework--albeit as a cultural product that carries significant economic, social, and political implications. Such an inquisitive frame helps me to investigate the various levels of meaning produced by the park’s assorted artifacts (including seemingly bureaucratic reports). That being said, it is important to also briefly discuss the report in its most legible context as an administrative artifact, specifically in terms of its methodological design and its research findings.

6.2-1 Designing Public Opinion: Methodology and Findings of the Economic Potential Report

Facilitated by the Economic Research Bureau of San Diego and written by Chamber of Commerce Staff Member Lucille Mortimer and San Diego State College Professor of Psychology Oscar Kaplan, the two Co-Directors of the research study submitted their concise sixteen-page Economic Potential of the Old Town Community report on January 30, 1967. The report was largely informed by a seventeen-question survey conducted by 65 students enrolled in a Public Opinion course at San Diego State College (ibid). This survey collected the responses of 1,050 San Diego residents regarding their local tourism practices especially as they related to

historic sites and their relative interest in Old Town San Diego (ibid). Though the report does not explicitly reveal the architecture of its methodological design, we can infer that Professor Kaplan was heavily involved in its construction given his affiliation with San Diego State College and what the historical record indicates about his dedication to research practices. For example, he was instrumental in pushing the college towards its evolution into a research institution as opposed to a teaching college (SDSU Department of Psychology, 2019). And though his area of speciality was gerontology, Kaplan began his professional career in the study of public polling and eventually his growing interest in mass psychology led him to develop courses that examined public opinion measurement (ibid; California Digital Library, 2008).

Thus Kaplan was a seasoned pollster and as such mostly like heavily contributed to, or created, the design of the study's survey questions which ultimately revealed key trends including: (1) a "significantly high percentage of adult San Diegans ha[d] never been to the area's most historic places" including the Serra Museum¹, 'Ramona's Marriage Place,'² and Mission San Diego de Alcalá³. (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, p. 1); (2) Old Town ranked low as a local visitor attraction as San Diegans had given little attention to the area in the past and rarely took out of town visitors there (opting instead to take visitors to locations like the Cabrillo Monument⁴ and the San Diego Zoo⁵); (3) "respondents favored the featuring of recreational

¹ See Chapter Five for an accounting of the founding of the museum on the former *presidio* premises in 1907 by businessman and philanthropist George Marson; and see Chapter Two for a historical account of Franciscan friar Junipero Serra who founded the San Diego mission in 1769.

² See Chapter Four for a detailed accounting of the popular *Ramona* themed tourist destination on the premises of the Casa de Estudillo adobe in Old Town which operated in one form or another from ~1887 until the mid 1960s.

³ See Chapter Two for a detailed accounting of the mission's founding in 1769.

⁴ See Chapter Two for a detailed account of Spanish conquistador Juan Cabrillo's expedition in 1542 when he became the first European to arrive upon the shores of what is now San Diego Bay. This chapter also briefly refers to his eventual legacy within local cultural memory practices--as does Chapter Four.

⁵ See Chapter Four for a historical account of the development of San Diego's Balboa Park in 1915, including a brief reference to the eventual creation of the Zoo within the sprawling urban park.

activities such as fiestas and exhibits dealing with early village life over other alternatives in developing the Old Town community” (ibid, p. 2); and (4) “all visitor studies show[ed] that Mexico [was] the area’s ‘number one’ visitor attraction” (ibid, p. 7).

These findings are significant in several ways. First, the initial low rates of interest and visitation within Old Town (and historic locations on a whole) indicate that *something* occurred to spur the historic park’s eventual success. In other words, the area was not already a site of significant interest simply waiting to be further tapped. Thus drawing visitors (to the point that the park would ultimately become the State’s most visited) would require the mobilization of specific sets of practices which aligned with the region’s situated conditions. Second, respondents’ interest in recreation and potential *fiestas* and live exhibits within Old Town align with Chapter Five’s discussion of emerging notions of leisure that characterized the era of the park’s development--notions which prioritized and valued access to the enjoyment of various forms of ‘fast’ and lively recreation as a solidly middle class expectation. And third, Mexico’s identification as the top tourist interest in the area also reaffirms Chapter Five’s discussion of Mexico’s growing tourism industry--an emerging condition which not only helped to make Mexico ‘visible’ within the region, but which also cast Mexican *culture* (through marketing materials and experiences) as a developing representation and source of ‘fast’ recreation. Given these findings, designing an experience within the park that capitalized on these interests became not only an *economic* imperative for park planners but a *cultural* project as well.

6.2-2 Appropriating ‘Appropriateness’: The Economic Potential Report’s Cultural Work

When viewing the report through a cultural lens, Lucille Mortimer’s presence as a Co-Director of the study becomes especially significant. Specifically, in charting the development of the park, Mortimer, though not often centrally positioned within primary sources, emerges as

an influential figure in not only helping to articulate the “designed atmosphere” of the park, but also as a particular cultural standard-bearer or *tastemaker* regarding the park’s broader cultural composition (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, p. 6). This observation does not assume or claim that Mortimer was the sole architect of the park’s conceptual framework. Instead, aspects of her involvement (in addition to her economic and civic engagement) help to illustrate the broader cultural work of the project as a whole as a particular site of commemorative maintenance and repair which helped its visiting public reconcile various forms of change. Within this framework, we can view the Economic Potential Report’s articulation of a certain ‘designed atmosphere’ as particular kind of cultural work. In other words, though the report is not as specific as the future General Development Plan in its design proposals, it was fundamental in influencing the broader ethos, politics, and cultural intervention of the park that is at the heart of its narrative balance.

To better understand this particular cultural significance, it helps to contextualize Mortimer’s role within park development as an economic, political, and cultural asset. As a staff member of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce for over twenty-five years⁶, we can infer that Mortimer was administratively and economically savvy. However, she apparently was also politically shrewd. For instance, by the time of the economic report’s 1967 publication, Mortimer had already played an integral role in the park’s initial development. As Chapter Five revealed, according to the project’s statewide proposer, Assemblyman James R. Mills, Mortimer’s early advocacy of the park “singlehandedly” secured the endorsement of the Chamber of Commerce—and this backing helped to assure critical City support for the project (as the City ultimately provided the needed property acquisition to ensure the park’s final State

⁶ L. Mortimer, personal communication, November 11, 1975 (to California Parks & Recreation Director Rhodes re: retirement).

approval) (Schiff, 2011, p. 189). And though only mentioned in passing in one of the few slim local historical publications regarding the park's development, and minimally inventoried in particular regional archives, records that do exist regarding her work indicate that Mortimer was a formidable power broker.

Deeply engaged in the park's development for over a decade, Mortimer was not only an early park advocate (even traveling to Santa Barbara to present before the California State Park Board to support the park's creation⁷). She also served as a project researcher (via the composing of the initial economic report). And she was a member, and the eventual Chairman, of the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park Citizens Advisory Committee⁸. Historical documents, including Mortimer's personal notes, within the San Diego History Center archives reveal not only her interest in the park's general success, but also a sustained commitment to the project as a particular *cultural* production. For example, in addition to logistical and economic concerns (such as acquiring ample public parking for the park), available correspondence, notes, and news media contain evidence of her multiple efforts to wield her influence in order to craft and protect a particular designed atmosphere within the park, including: (1) Requests to civic leaders for historical artifacts for exhibits that display "the way of living⁹" in Old Town; (2) Creating a docent program¹⁰ for the park inspired by one facilitated by a prominent Los Angeles women's historical organization which would meet the "need for...trained guide[s] to assist in promoting...cultural heritage" (a program that would partner with local groups like the Women's

⁷ L. Mortimer, personal communication, November 11, 1975 (to California Parks & Recreation Director Rhodes re: retirement).

⁸ L. Mortimer, personal communication, November 11, 1975 (to California Parks & Recreation Director Rhodes re: retirement).

⁹ L. Mortimer, personal communication, December 18, 1975 (to Mrs. Tom Ham).

¹⁰ L. Mortimer, personal communications, February 9, 1971 (to Save Our Heritage Organization [sic]) and July 7, 1971 (to CA Parks & Recreation Director Mott); L. Mortimer, Old Town Citizens Advisory Committee Agenda and handwritten notes, March 8, 1971; Las Angelitas del Pueblo brochure, 1970, p. 1.

Committee of the San Diego Historical Society, the Save Our Heritage Organisation, and the Junior League); (3) Contacting the State Attorney General of the Internal Revenue Service to inquire about “trust funding for historical preservation¹¹”; (4) Drafting “Recommendations Governing Fiestas¹²” for events within the Old Town area which outline “orderly...standards” that prevent “detractions” from the park including the requirement that participants be practicing “artisans” who were “encouraged to wear *appropriate* costume” and would refrain from the use of modern devices including portable radios and T.V. sets; (5) Handwritten notes stipulating that workers within a proposed arcade within the park’s Casa de Pico Restaurant “must dress in Mex. (sic) period when employed¹³”; and (6) Her public opposition to over-commercialization of the park in 1972 in which she accused the then State Concessions officer Tod Neiger of attempting to “sacrifice the historical integrity of th[e] park¹⁴” for revenues.

In addition to these Old Town specific efforts, her personal notes also reveal her involvement in other forms of legitimacy-labor across various local projects as she notates an upcoming council conference “for purpose (sic) of *legitimizing* downtown, Horton Plaza¹⁵¹⁶” and “urgent” developments regarding “Spreckles Bldg & Theatr (sic)...Balboa Theatre, Horton Hotel, and Horton Plaza” where “all that [was] needed [was] *justification* of historic research¹⁷”. Taken together, these examples illustrate Mortimer’s ongoing presence as a particular cultural

¹¹ L. Mortimer, Old Town Citizens Advisory Committee Agenda and handwritten notes, March 8, 1971.

¹² L. Mortimer, personal communication, November 11, 1975 [re: fiestas]; Old Town San Diego State Historic Park Fiesta - Recommendations, sections 2 and 3, italics added.

¹³ L. Mortimer, handwritten notes, not dated.

¹⁴ “Historic Site Restaurant Opposed,” (1972), newspaper unnamed, copy of article residing within the San Diego History Center Archives.

¹⁵ Horton Plaza is a downtown San Diego shopping mall which was proposed in 1972 during the early stages of urban revitalization in the area. The mall was named after sugar heir and railroad magnate Alonzo Horton who was one of the most vocal early supporters of the establishment of San Diego’s downtown (or New Town) in the mid nineteenth century. Construction began on the mall in 1982 and it opened in 1985 (Eddy, 1995).

¹⁶ L. Mortimer, handwritten notes, not dated.

¹⁷ L. Mortimer, handwritten notes, not dated, italics added.

gatekeeper of the Old Town project arbitrating notions of appropriateness and taste with respect to the park's designed atmosphere and presentation.

Therefore, when the 1967 Economic Potential report explicitly states that though current visitor levels to the Old Town area were minimal when contrasted to its “potential if the area were developed and promoted *tastefully and appropriately*,” it is hard not to detect the direct influence of Mortimer within this suggestion (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, p. 1, italics added). In fact, this rhetoric of ‘appropriateness’ becomes increasingly abundant within the report when it describes the potential of the area to capitalize upon the popularity of Mexican tourism. Specifically, the report contends that the Old Town area should “develop a world-wide reputation...in which Mexican foods of various kinds are available. First-class restaurants with *appropriate* atmosphere might thrive in the area...[and]...since many visitors are fearful of eating in Mexican bordertowns, the prospects of the area are particularly good” (ibid, p. 7, italics added). Continuing, Mortimer and Kaplan recommend ways in which Old Town might not only “participate in and profit from...interest,” in Mexico, but how the area could compete with, and perhaps even undercut, Tijuana in prices for Mexican-made goods, stating (ibid):

[t]here appears to be a promising market in the Old Town area for merchandise made in Mexico, and for craft shops manufacturing such merchandise on the spot. Mexican-made merchandise could be sold in Old Town at prices competitive with those asked in Tijuana, and perhaps even lower. The craft shops would present an atmosphere of *activity*, and the availability of such merchandise would itself be an important visitor attraction (ibid, italics added).

Thus, the report begins to lay a blueprint for recreating Mexico's promoted sense of adventure and “activity” through a “tasteful” lens--one which ironically depends upon the act of *appropriating* Mexican culture while simultaneously rendering it “*appropriate*” and palatable for local consumption (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, p. 1, italics added). While the report's language of propriety may have simply gestured to various American tourist practices in Mexico

which centered around alcohol consumption, prostitution, and gambling, the region's complex history suggests otherwise (St. John, 2010; Hiernaux-Nicolas, 1999; Pourade, 1960 - 1977). Specifically, most likely percolating at the surface of these recommendations for appropriateness and observations regarding visitors who were "fearful of eating in Mexican bordertowns," is a long history of racialized rhetoric mobilized in America regarding Mexico (Stephanson, 1996; Streeby, 2002; Sánchez & Sánchez-Clark, 2013; Castañeda, 1990; Almaguer, 2008; Foos, 2003; Starr, 1986). Given this complex history, descriptives such as 'tasteful' and 'appropriate' can also be read as loaded language that act as metaphors for 'white' and 'American,' while the term 'fearful' connotes a perceived underlying and troubling 'otherness' thought to lurk beneath the surface of Mexico's festive and 'hedonistic' allure as an "ethno-racial signifier of peril" (Márquez, 2012, p. 473). In other words, highlighting the border as an area to be feared very likely conjured up entrenched Anglo American anxieties towards the murkiness of the Hispanic northern border before American conquest--one where social, cultural, and racial boundaries often blurred and mixed (Gibb, 2018; Guerrero, 2010; Martínez, 2008; Marshall, 1939; Nash, 1995; Estrada, 2018).

Such a nebulosity, I argue, is at the core of the cultural work of California's various correcting origin stories. Specifically, Mexico's 'otherness' and consistent positioning as a narrative foil within American California's mythology spurred various iterations of the origin myth across time and change. For example, as this dissertation has examined, leading up to and during the Mexican-American War, Mexico was cast as the dark seed of Hispanic tyranny and miscegenation thus justifying American conquest. During the development 'boom' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mexico's perceived murky status validated its marginalization and/or cultural 'erasure' in favor of a seemingly elevated Spanish 'fantasy'

regional heritage. And when Mortimer and Kaplan composed their report in the second half of the twentieth century, as social and cultural change introduced an emerging rhetoric of ‘multiculturalism,’ Mexico’s perceived ‘otherness’ required yet another memorial shift: if Mexican culture was to be portrayed and celebrated within a space of *American* commemoration, it first had to be made tasteful and appropriate, and thus palatable, safe, and *useful*. In other words, park designers were not only tasked with determining what parts of Mexican culture were culturally prudent to appropriate--but how then to monetize them.

In proposing an “attractive” and “fun” “designed atmosphere” punctuated by “‘live’ activity [of] strolling troubadours and fiestas,” the report laid the groundwork for the Old Town area, including its State Historic Park, to perform critical cultural work for a region in flux (Mortimer & Kaplan, 1967, pp. 6-7). Specifically, it rationalized the offering of particular elements of Mexican culture (e.g. food, music, and dress) and a general sense of excitement and liveliness from the southern border all within the safe confines of a twelve-acre “designed space” firmly planted within the bosom of America--effectively crafting a particular sanitized and reassuring version of ‘multiculturalism’ in the process (ibid, pp. 6-7). It was a reimagining so culturally and politically significant that within four years it would make a Tijuana mayor ‘forget’ a U.S. / Mexico border existed in the first place (“Mayors of San Diego,” 1971).

6.3 Designing ‘Organic Multiculturalism’: The 1977 Old Town General Development Plan

While the 1967 Economic Potential Report began the work of conceptualizing the *nature* of the park’s designed atmosphere, the 1977 General Development Plan provides a detailed roadmap for its *enactment*. In other words, the Plan in many ways served as a particular *manual* of commemorative maintenance and repair. Specifically, it provided a longitudinal 25-year design treatment intended to guide a comprehensive effort to “recreate the total, authentic

atmosphere of the [park's] interpretative period [1821-1872] so that visitors...experience all dimensions of that historic era," (as created from the perspective of the 1970s) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. v). Created under the auspices of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, three architectural professionals¹⁸ prepared the Plan under the supervision of a cadre of State officials¹⁹ (ibid). Additionally informing the Plan was a Site Study (1974) conducted by a previously commissioned architectural group along with an academic Historical and Architectural Report (1974) prepared by a team of scholars²⁰ from the University of San Diego (ibid; Walsh, 2010). Thus, this ninety-seven page report was longer, more complex, informed by a larger data set, and involved a greater number of contributors than the 1967 Economic Potential Report. Two aspects of this comprehensive General Development Plan particularly interest me: (1) the ambivalent relationship between the Plan's historical *philosophy* and its historical *work*, and (2) the Plan's development of what can be viewed as a particular 'economy of looking,' which organizes what I am calling the park's visual design schema. Focusing upon these inquisitive lenses allows me to highlight particular underlying tensions at the core of the park's project and specific practices of looking mobilized by park planners to negotiate and alleviate these corporate anxieties.

¹⁸ Associate Architect Frank V. Sturgeon, Associate Landscape Architect Ronald J. Allison, and Architectural Assistant Ron Vaughn prepared the report for the State (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977).

¹⁹ Supervising the preparation of the General Development Plan was as a State Project Manager and various leaders of specific units and divisions including Preservation and Interpretation, Acquisition and Development, Interpretive Services, and Interpretative Planning (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977).

²⁰ History and archaeology scholar Ray Brandes, historian James Moriarty, and historian Iris Engstrand, who would each individually continue to examine the region for decades, wrote the 1974 Old Town Historical and Architectural Report (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977).

6.3-1 Reconciling Historicity: The General Development Plan's Ambivalent Historical Approach

The Plan's ambivalent relationship between its historical *philosophy* and its historical *work* presents an equivocal dynamic that I argue grounds its eventual design recommendations. Prepared ten years²¹ after the 1967 Economic Potential Report, the 1977 Old Town General Development Plan was released within an era of even further sociocultural change and rhetorical evolution²². Given these social and cultural conditions, the General Development Plan puts forth a rather nuanced and progressive view of historical production. For example, the Plan openly acknowledges the impact of social and cultural change on practices of remembrance--an assertion which supports this dissertation's argument that the park represents a particular commemorative response to change. Specifically, the Plan contends that:

We are living in an era marked by rapid change. New technologies that affect our lives are being introduced almost daily. With our familiar surroundings and old structures being altered and replaced at an unprecedented rate, it becomes even more important to preserve a part of our past. It is to keep a portion of our California heritage for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations that the Department of Park and Recreation proposes the development of Old Town San Diego (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 41).

Additionally, not only does the General Development Plan acknowledge a relationship between change and remembrance, it also recognizes the complexity of representing historicity and the cultural weight of interpretative work. For instance, the Plan advises periodic reviews (approximately every fifteen years) to account for the emergence of "new archeological and historical information," and it recommends that (ibid, pp. 3, 41):

The final plan should not be too strict in its adherence to re-creating Old Town as it was at one particular moment in time. History is the cumulative record of

²¹ As such, some initial construction had already taken place within the park, including the renovation of the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel into the Bazaar del Mundo collection of shops and restaurants in 1971.

²² See Chapter Five for a detailed accounting of the various forms of social change taking place within the 1960s and 70s which influenced the park's impetus.

constantly changing situations. The most significant events and structures did not all occur and coexist at one time, so a careful and considered judgement must be exercised in some instances to determine the best of two or more structures to be reconstructed on a given site. This will result in a blend of Mexican and American style buildings (ibid, p. 4).

Finally, park planners also seemed to understand the *narrative* undertaking of their project. In fact, the Plan states the “architecture of a place and period tells a story of the inhabitants” (ibid, p. 42). Thus, they seemed to acknowledge that their carefully designed architectural re-creation would in fact tell a particular story of the region, one that they intended to be “as historically accurate and authentic as possible” (ibid, p. 4).

Yet despite this nuanced and progressive historical *philosophy*, the Plan’s actual *work* of historical interpretation often departs from its own asserted ethos. For example, while certainly impressive, attempting to create an overarching ‘feel’ that conveys over fifty years of history and (re)creates a full experience of the past for visitors relies upon a particular *compression* of time which in many ways requires the reorganizing and abridging of the historical record. Beyond this broader challenge, the Plan also relies upon a historiography that, among other oversights, fails to convey the complexity of the region’s colonial history. For example, the plan’s “Historical Background” section mobilizes a previously authorized and hegemonic (re)telling of the region (one reminiscent of earlier historical frames and not the emerging New Western History scholarship that was coming into its own by the late 1970s [Limerick, 1988; White, 1991/2015; Worster, 1994]). It is a narrative that essentially goes as follows: a hardy early San Diego Spanish settlement that despite facing “numerous difficulties” including failed agricultural efforts, arduous supply routes, and “unfriendly Indians,” “was not abandoned” by Spanish colonists (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 3). These settlers created a community including a *presidio* and mission, the latter which later relocated to “its present site in

order to have a better water supply” (ibid, p. 3). And by 1835, this community was elevated to “pueblo” status during the Mexican period--a period in which the “missions were secularized” (ibid, p. 4). It is a familiar historical account that in many ways obscures particular realities. Therefore, despite the Plan’s asserted commitment to historical accuracy and nuance, this version of events fails to recognize: (1) the underlying reason behind the mission’s relocation (i.e. sustained physical and sexual violence enacted by presidial soldiers upon the Kumeyaay²³), (2) San Diego’s actually quite brief tenure as an official Mexican *pueblo* (given its significant reduction in population when Kumeyaay and interior tribes mounted sustained offensive and defensive strikes against encroaching Californios, spurring bouts of settler flight which resulted in the revocation of its *pueblo* status just two years after its accession²⁴), and (3) Mexico’s *active* role in secularizing the missions as part of a larger ensemble of progressive, liberal, and democratic policies²⁵ including the abolishing of slavery (as opposed to the *passive-voiced* “the missions were secularized”--a common rhetorical occurrence²⁶ in Old Town materials that refer to mission secularization, when mentioned at all). Additionally, casting the Kumeyaay as “*unfriendly* Indians” illustrates a narrative judgment that connotes notions of an inhospitable and troublesome people (and the valor of a civilization that prevailed despite this

²³ See Chapter Two for a more detailed accounting of the Spanish presidial forces’ regular onslaughts of sexual violence, theft, and abuse upon the Kumeyaay people, including mission leader Father Jayme’s formal petition to Church leadership to remove the mission from the presidio site (Castaneda, 1993; Bokovoy, 2005).

²⁴ See Chapter Three for an account of San Diego’s periodic evacuations as settlers abandoned their outlying ranches and the town’s population plummeted from 520 in 1830 to 150 in 1840, causing the settlement to lose its newly minted designation of *pueblo* in 1837 just two years after its classification (Weber, 1982, p. 93; Engstrand, 2005; Monroy, 1997).

²⁵ See Chapter Three for an accounting of Mexico’s mission secularization as part of a larger ensemble of “anticorporate” initiatives that would replace traditional authority regimes (e.g. the church, army, guilds, etc.) with a “regime of legal uniformity” (Hale, 2014, p. 4).

²⁶ For example, the CA Department of Parks and Recreation Old Town History webpage states, “By 1834, the San Diego missions *were officially secularized* and placed under civilian authority” (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, 2019). While the park’s official brochure does not mention secularization at all in its concise two paragraph summary of Mexican history.

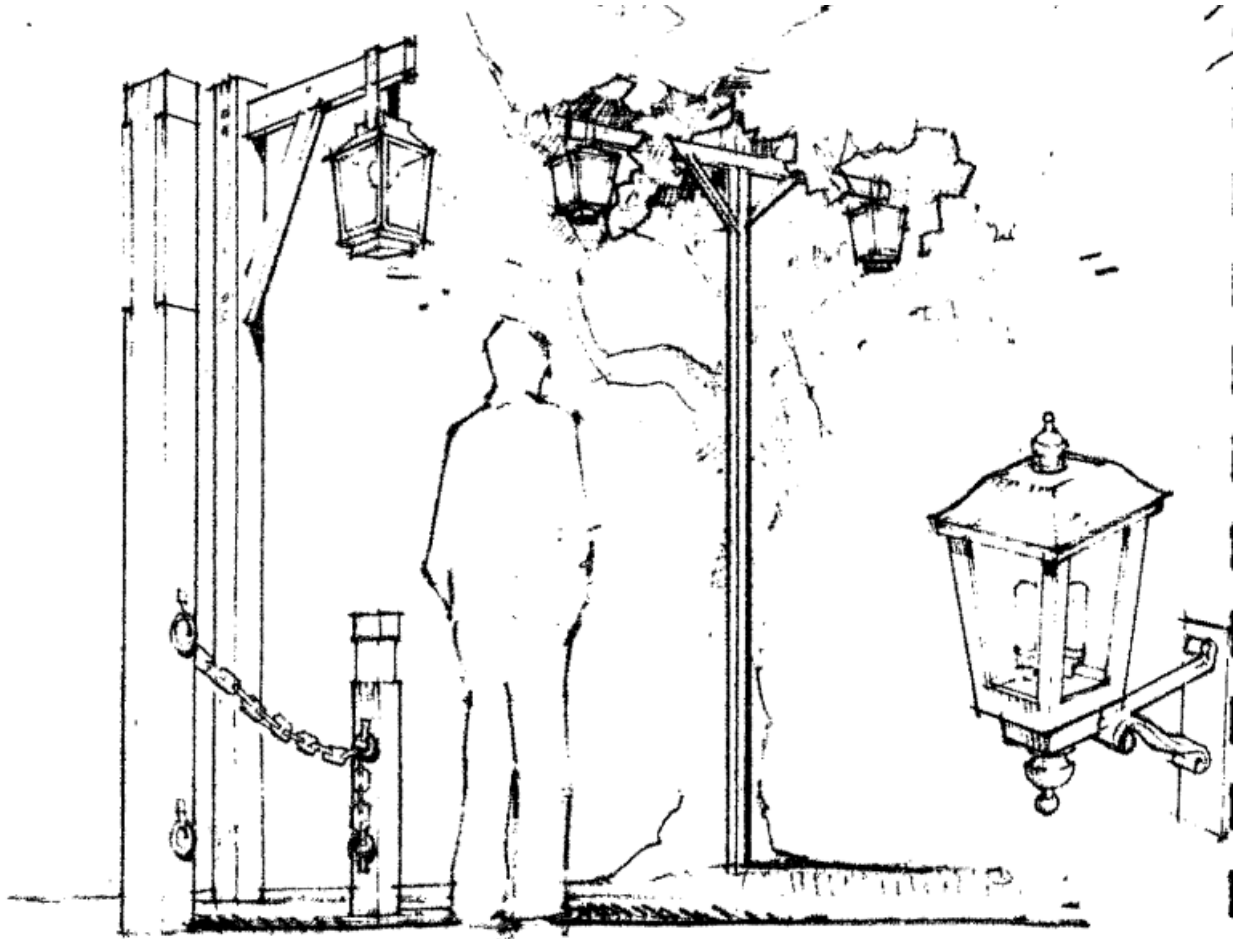
irksome behavior). This framing starkly opposes the heroic language generally mobilized within academic and cultural texts when describing aspects of the American national character which are thought to be revealed in times of corporate duress--language like ‘courageous,’ ‘determined,’ and ‘resolute’ (Frederickson et al., 2003; Quinn & Worline, 2008). Thus, this tension between the Plan’s progressive historical *philosophy* and its hegemonic interpretive *work* can in fact serve as a microcosm of the broader Old Town project itself. In other words, on the one hand the park acts as a particular commemorative response to emerging expectations of multiculturalism and inclusion. However, it simultaneously preserves, reproduces, and/or recalibrates the dominant, reassuring, and serviceable myths that organize the American political imagination and protect the status quo. As such, it is not surprising that these various inconsistencies within the General Development Plan’s historical dynamics translate to its visual planning.

6.3-2 Making an ‘Economy of Looking’: The General Development Plan’s Visual Design Schema

Given this historical ambivalence, the General Development Plan systematizes a particular ‘economy of looking’ to organize what I am calling the park’s visual design schema (See Figure 6.1). Specifically, the Plan exhibits the park planners’ “careful and considered judgment” in dictating what would ultimately be ‘seen’ and ‘unseen’ within the park, from the seemingly mundane (e.g. light fixtures and fire hydrants), to the organization of historic sites (e.g. the centrality of the main Plaza), to broader ideological messages (e.g. the people of Old Town’s contributions to “human progress”) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, pp. 4, 18; See Figures 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4). This particular ‘economy of looking’ reflects a *visual* philosophy that in many ways parallels the Plan’s *historical* outlook: the belief in a

Visible	Disguised / Hidden From View	Removed/Prohibited
The “natural boundary” of the park (p. 44)	Stabilized earth and other hard surfaces to resemble “Native soil” (p. 49)	Automobiles, bikes, and gas trains prohibited (transportation only via foot or horse and buggy) (p. 43)
Historic buildings and sites: including the (re)construction of new buildings including the Visitor Center (p. 41)	Low wattage and “flickering” lanterns and lamps to “avoid the obvious appearance of a modern fixture” (p. 52)	Large eucalyptus trees and other non-Native vegetation removal in addition to vegetation that impedes views of Plaza (pp. 47, 54).
The Plaza (emphasized as the “town center,” “core,” and major “open space” central to creating the “Old Town Image”) (p. 41)	Manholes, handholes, and valve covers to be easily “blended” with ground surface (pp. 54-55)	Modern street light removal and prohibition from park premises (p. 53)
Directional signs given that they are “historically appropriate” (p. 51)	Fire hydrants, telephone pedestals, and fire alarms to be “easily disguised” (p. 55)	All asphalt and pavings to be removed (p. 53)
Selected, appropriate, and limited street furniture (e.g. benches, troughs, windmills, wheeled cannon and flag pole on the Plaza, fences, carts, wagons, buggies, etc.) (p. 51)	Gas and electric meters to be located in rear of buildings, while more problematic transformers to be housed in unroofed sheds (p. 54)	All memorials, monuments, plaques from Plaza to be removed (and relocated to the Visitor Center) (p. 51)
Restrooms (presented within the “period architecture”) (p. 55)	New drainage structures to be concealed as they are not part of the “historic scene” (p. 50)	Television use and display to be prohibited (p. 55)

Figure 6.1: The 1977 General Development Plan visual design schema’s ‘economy of looking’.



Lighting: Good lighting design for the park is probably the most difficult of all problems to be solved. Historically the first lights used here were candles or whale oil lamps and, later, kerosene lamps and lanterns. To promote a greater use of the park it is necessary to provide adequate lighting of streets and public areas. This can be done by the use of lamps, lanterns, and low candlepower lights attached to or hung from the structures, trees, and lighting poles. This should be the main source of lighting as it is the most acceptable historically.

Lamps and lanterns will not serve to light the plaza and other large areas between buildings; supplementary lighting will be required. It can be of two types — low, post-mounted lanterns similar to those placed on buildings or concealed-source fixtures used to light trees or perhaps a side wall of a building.

Careful study must be done to effectively hide the light source from direct view. Light levels should be kept low so that the lighting is not obtrusive as a non-historic element. The lantern and lamps could use low-wattage flickering lamps or gas lamps made with either a glass of hand blown quality or a smoked glass to avoid the obvious appearance of a modern fixture.

Figure 6.2: Lighting recommendations within the 1977 General Development Plan advising methods to “*avoid the obvious appearance of modern fixtures*” (p. 52, italics added). From California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, *Old Town San Diego State Historic Park resource management plan and general development plan* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation), p. 52. Copyright 1977 by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

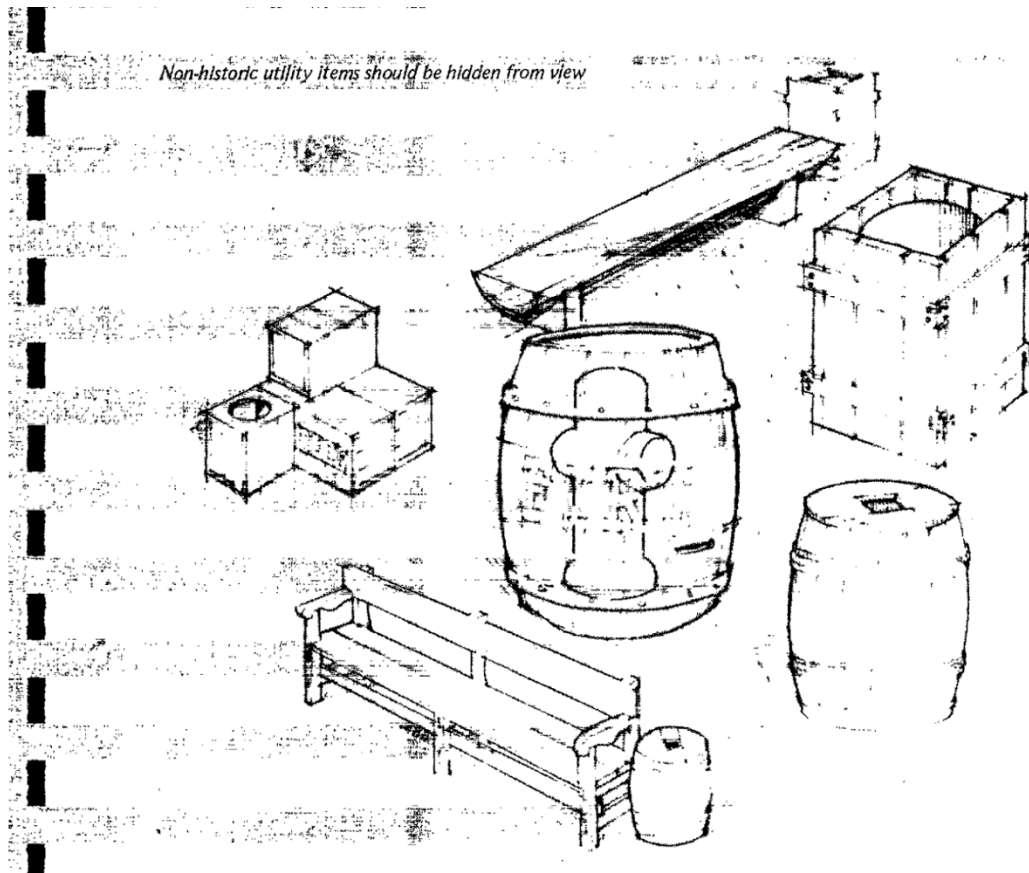


Figure 6.3: Another example of a concealment method within the 1977 General Development Plan which illustrates the disguising of a fire hydrant, while its caption directs that “non-historic utility items should be *hidden from view*” (p. 55, italics added). From California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, *Old Town San Diego State Historic Park resource management plan and general development plan* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation), p. 55. Copyright 1977 by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

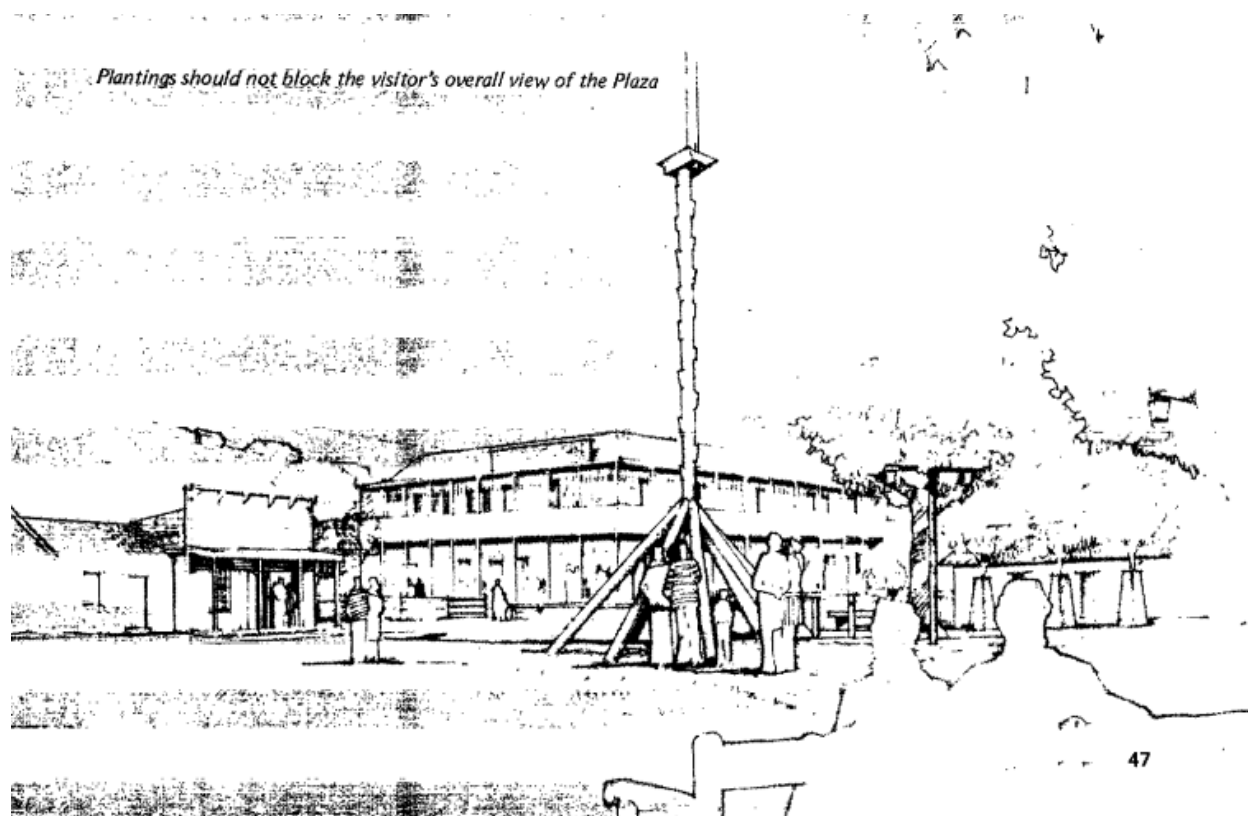


Figure 6.4: A rendering of the visual focal point of the park: The Plaza (also emphasized as the “town center,” “core,” and major “open space” central to creating the “Old Town Image” within the 1977 General Development Plan [p. 41]). This illustration asserts that “plantings should not *block the visitor’s overall view of the Plaza*” (p. 47, italics added). From California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, *Old Town San Diego State Historic Park resource management plan and general development plan* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation), p. 41. Copyright 1977 by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

commitment to accuracy, until authenticity is no longer serviceable. As such, the Plan's manipulation of various practices of looking not only seeks to engender a certain 'pleasant' or 'enjoyable' visitor experience, it also acts as a particular form of pedagogical cultural preservation, determining what stories and cultural facts would and would not be shared throughout the park's premises. In doing so, the General Development Plan presents a visual design schema that effectively obscures a critical historical framework (i.e. the complexity of colonialism and conquest) and mobilizes a specific optic frame (i.e. 'organic multiculturalism' imagery) to reinforce a more serviceable myth (i.e. the logical "*flow*," "*transition*," and "*progression*" of regional history, occupation, and territory) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, pp. 18, 46, italics added). It is also notable that most of the 'hidden' elements within this 'economy of looking' are objects which readily reveal the *manufactured* nature of the park's historical presentation. In some ways, this dynamic acts as a metaphor for the ways in which particular hegemonic narrative practices 'hide' and 'disguise' the elements that manufacture, reconstruct, maintain, and repair the serviceable myths and origin stories which organize our lives and inform our worldviews.

6.3-3 The Cultural Work of the General Development Plan

The Plan's visual design schema and its organizing 'economy of looking' not only provide critical instructions for the logistical design and future (re)construction of the park. They also accomplish valuable cultural work. Specifically, these design strategies mobilize what I call an 'organic multiculturalism' imagery to reinforce the serviceable myth of a logical "*flow*," "*transition*," and "*progression*" of regional history, occupation, and territory (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, pp. 18, 46, italics added). In other words, the Plan offers visual design recommendations that foster a sense of organic multicultural contact

decidedly divorced from entrenched conflict and state projects of conquest. This optic framework aligns with broader hegemonic narrative practices or “moves” which often seek “to alleviate the impacts of colonialism,” including specific “settler moves to innocence²⁷” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 3). Thus the General Development Plan, through its mobilization of the Old Town project’s broader ethos of multicultural *celebration*, designs visual maneuvers which: (1) *naturalize*, (2) *neutralize*; and (3) *elevate* the region’s colonial record.

First, in terms of *naturalization*, the Plan notes, “[i]t should be clear that the story of Old Town is told through a *flow* of history,” starting with “the occupation of the site from endemic man, through the establishment and development of the original European settlement, to the time of 1872” with an emphasis on its interpretative period (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 18, italics added). This presentation of a history which “flows” suggests a *natural* and *organic* continuance from one historical ‘occupation’ of peoples to the next--in effect normalizing the projects of colonialism and conquest within a seemingly reasonable and inevitable “historic chain of events” (ibid, p. 46). In doing so, this visual design schema naturalizes and obscures the ongoing project of settler colonialism²⁸, at times through particularly nuanced manners. For example, the Plan offers extremely detailed landscaping guidelines (requiring that all landscape work be approved in Sacramento), and repeatedly asserts that only vegetation which had been “grown” or “occurring *naturally* in the area” during the

²⁷ Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang (2012) in their groundbreaking “Decolonization is not a Metaphor” introduce the term “settler moves to innocence” to describe a set of maneuvers that “problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity” (p. 1).

²⁸ Tuck and Yang (2012) describe the distinct, pervasive, and ongoing model of *settler colonialism* (and its application within the U.S.) as: “operating through internal/external colonial modes simultaneously because there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony...Settler colonialism is different from other forms of colonialism in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain...[The] profound epistemic, ontological, [and] cosmological violence [of disrupting Indigenous relationships to land] is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is *reasserted* each day of occupation (p. 5, italics added).

interpretative period would be “planted or maintained” (ibid, p. 42). In fact, the Plan goes to great lengths to appraise and identify what qualifies as a ‘native’ plant species given that most current vegetation at the time represented a “hodgepodge of historic and recently introduced plants” consisting mostly of “exotics” including invasive and “troublesome” “passenger” weeds (ibid, p. 13). Park planners’ efforts to recover and “reintroduce” native plant life (and “phase out and remove” vegetation more recently introduced) included utilizing adobe analyses to uncover traces of “seeds and pollen” and compiling a comprehensive thirteen page appendix to the Plan listing trees, shrubs, herbs, weeds, ornamental, garden, and utility plants, designating their common and scientific names, cataloguing their lineage (i.e. native or exotic), and if relative, their purpose (ibid, p. 54). As the Plan scantily refers to, or incorporates, the material architectural contributions of “endemic man,” the Plan’s continued references to ‘native’ landscaping begin to emerge as a particular proxy for Indigeneity (ibid, p. 18). Additionally, these references to various biological analyses of adobe (a particularly *organic* building material²⁹) to identify hereditary “seeds and pollen,” in conjunction with the genealogical taxonomy of natural resources, identifies and reintroduces a particular ‘common native ancestry.’ In fact, this collapsing of particular apprehensions of the land and Indigeneity revives early Spanish colonial practices which “classified Indigenous women as ‘daughters of the land’” given their early abilities to bring land into interethnic marriages during early waves of eighteenth-century conquest (a moniker that eventually transferred to Californianas in the nineteenth-century) (Casas, 2009, p. 8). When taken together these various aspects allow us to position this nativizing view of landscaping as a particular “settler move to innocence”--and

²⁹ See Chapter Four for a description of adobe materials as earth and organic materials including sand, silt, clay, straw, and/or dung within a broader discussion of the Casa de Estudillo / “Ramona’s Marriage Place” dynamic (Caporale et al., 2014; Millogo et al.; 2016).

specifically as a form of “settler nativism³⁰” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 1, 10). In other words, as the General Development Plan encourages the consistent presence of specific forms of landscaping to provide a continued connection to a particular kind of ‘ancestral link’ within a visual “flow of history,” this maneuver manufactures a quasi source of ‘kinship’ with Native peoples. It is a move which helps to deflect settler identity, assuage settler guilt, and naturalize and obscure the ongoing project of settler colonialism (while simultaneously casting Indigenous life and culture as elements of a distant past reached only via exhaustive study, analyses, and remote forms of ‘kinship’).

Second, while particular visual uses of landscaping help to naturalize the region’s colonial record and manufacture a quasi form of Native ‘kinship,’ the Plan’s visual design schema also *neutralizes* understandings of colonialism. Specifically, the Plan references utilizing “design *transitions*” between depictions of particular historical periods (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 46, italics added). In its “Basis for Design” the Plan discusses the region’s “fusing of immigrant cultures with that of the natives [and the] merging of populations” in which settlers “found it necessary to rely to some extent upon local materials and native labor and skills” to “construct buildings that were familiar in their former civilization” (ibid, p. 42). In addition to exhibiting a blatant neglect of imposed systems of *forced* labor upon the Kumeyaay and other Native peoples, this emphasis on ‘fusions’ and adoptions of Native materials, labor, and skills in order to construct a new civilization represents another ‘settler

³⁰ Tuck and Yang (2012) describe “*settler nativism*” (or what is also called the Indian-grandmother complex [Deloria, 1988]) as a specific ‘settler move to innocence’ which attempts to deflect a settler identity via found or manufactured ‘kinship’ with Natives (p. 10).

move to innocence’: a “settler adoption fantasy³¹.” In this instance the “immigrants³²” capitalize on the desire to “become without becoming” by adopting Indigenous customs, skills, and knowledge which they carry into new settler ways of knowing and being as a particular mythical inheritance of ‘Indianness,’ effectively securing settler claims to land and futurity via cultural bequeathing and not “settler crimes” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 14). Furthermore, the visual design schema also calls for “a blend of Mexican and American style buildings,” which places rebuilt buildings from different eras next to each other in order to visually enhance a broader sense of harmonious transition even though, as a later 2005 Old Town Strategic Plan for Interpretation Report would acknowledge, these buildings “historically...never stood together” (CA State Parks, 2005, p. 36; See Figure 6.5). Thus, this visual presentation of particular “*transitional* styles” and historical “*transitions*” engenders a *seamless* and *cooperative* view of nation-building as opposed to conflict-based paradigms of conquest, invasion, and occupation (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, pp. 42, 46, italics added). It is a visual representation that the next chapter will also take up when it examines (re)construction efforts which relegate Mexico’s regional contributions to a general ‘cultural’ flair, downplaying Mexico as a distinct geopolitical unit--and a clear target of American nation-building conquest--in the process.

And finally, the third aspect of performed cultural work exhibited within the Plan’s overall visual design schema (which the next chapter will also further examine at length) is: its *elevation* of colonial contexts. Specifically, the General Development Plan marshals a rhetoric

³¹ Tuck and Yang (2012) define “*settler adoption fantasies*” as a specific ‘settler move to innocence’ which capitalizes on the desire to “become without becoming” (e.g. adopting Indigenous customs and knowledge, or the popularized settler mythical inheritance of ‘Indianness’ from a dying people for cultural safeguarding, effectively securing settler claims to land and futurity via cultural bequeathing and not “settler crimes”) (p. 13).

³² Though these settlers are at times positioned as ‘immigrants’ within the Plan, Tuck and Yang (2012) remind us that “Settlers are not immigrants. Immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to. Settlers become the law, supplanting Indigenous laws and epistemologies. Therefore, settler nations are not immigrant nations” (pp. 6-7). Thus, this collapsing of the ‘immigrant’ and ‘settler’ which effectively equates the two can also be viewed as a particular move to innocence.

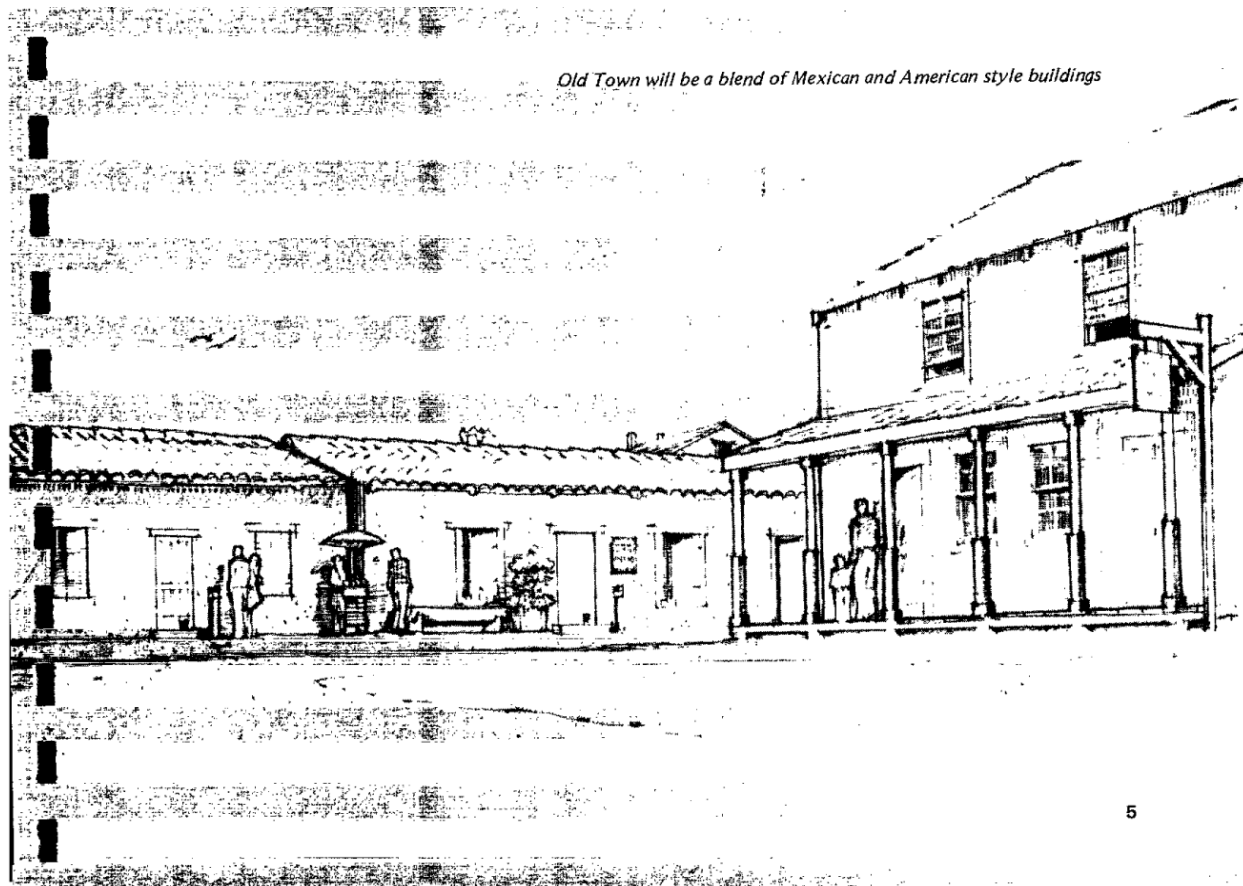


Figure 6.5: Illustration of adjacent placement between Mexican and American style buildings, adding to the design schema's promotion of a particular sense of seamless 'transition' from one territorial occupation to the next (ibid, p. 5). From California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, *Old Town San Diego State Historic Park resource management plan and general development plan* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation), p. 5. Copyright 1977 by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

of 'progress' throughout its design plan. For example, within its "Declaration of Purpose," the Plan claims that the park is intended to emphasize "the important contributions which the peoples of San Diego have made to *human progress* in California and in the nation" (ibid, p. 18, italics added). Additionally, it tracks this seeming progression, contending that "when the Spanish came, they brought with them a more highly developed knowledge of building and government," that Mexican homes utilized the "simple technology" of their era, and it details the progress of the "mid 1800s," during the American period when, "the social and economic importance [of the San Diego area] continued to rise...[as] it experienced the effects of...the

industrial revolution, the Gold Rush, and the great westward expansion” (ibid, pp. 4, 11). This rhetoric of progress connotes particular notions of *betterment* and *evolution* that accompanied ‘flows’ of ‘transitioning’ territorial occupation. It is a theme which the following chapter takes up in earnest through its examination of how forms of park (re)construction venerate notions of American democracy, effectively positioning Anglo California as bringing a particular form of transformative ‘order’ to the region in a manner that casts particular democratic practices and structures as distinctly *American*.

Chapter 6 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.

Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

(Re)Constructing Conquest: Educating Mexican ‘Culture,’ American ‘Order,’ and *Pioneer Democracy* Within Old Town Historic Park’s Built Environment

A most important consideration is that Old Town be rebuilt for posterity and not just for the present generation.

--Old Town San Diego State Historic Park
General Development Plan, 1977

7.1 Introduction

In 1972, ten months into his Bazaar del Mundo¹ endeavor, when the venture was still losing money within the park, investor and co-founder Richard Silberman was nevertheless “confident that eventually his efforts [would] be profitable--financially, historically and ecologically” (*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 1972). The key to this future success, in Silberman’s view, was moving beyond what some observers identified as Old Town’s “revival” and renewal into a “Tijuana North” (ibid). Silberman pushed instead for what he saw as a more ambitious and distinctly *Californian* goal for the area, contending, “If we’re ever going to have significant peaceful areas in this state--green belts, historic monuments, open spaces--the practical way to accomplish it is a *marriage* between the business and environmental communities” (ibid, italics added). This assessment not only exhibited Silberman’s astute apprehension that the original call for a ‘tasteful’ and ‘appropriate’ (re)design of Old Town was

¹ See Chapter Five for a detailed accounting of the collection of restaurants and shops selling Mexican handcrafted wares, flowers, and foodstuffs upon the previous grounds of Governor Pico’s mother’s home and the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel.

still a part of a broader communal vision. It also in some ways harkened to a well-worn vision of the region: one in which California, at its best, illustrated a fruitful “marriage” between “business” (or various forms of *order*) and “environmental communities” (or the people and the ways of life--or *culture*--that define living upon the land). Given his faith in the public’s eventual embrace of a particular desired rendering of its past, one which successfully gestured to and mobilized this effective merger, Silberman predicted that in five years time Old Town would be a major Southern California tourist attraction.

Silberman’s prediction proved correct. Five years after his proclamation, business within the Bazaar del Mundo was booming and the “few tiny blocks” that constituted the park were “generat[ing] a third of the gross revenue of the entire state park system,” or roughly \$7 million dollars in 1977 (“Old Town’s new town,” 1979). Park attendance had also significantly increased from 717,063 during the 1971-1972 fiscal year to nearly two million (or 1,802,012) in the 1975-1976 fiscal year (an over 250% increase including accelerating rates of peak summer attendance) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977). However, despite this growing public endorsement of the park, and especially the wildly popular Bazaar del Mundo’s “bright[ly] colored” rendering of Mexican culture, broader tensions remained regarding the park’s overall intended historical representation (*San Diego Union*, 1971, as quoted in Lamb, 2004). Specifically, the newly introduced longitudinal 1977 General Development Plan to *accurately* restore the park to its 1821-1872 “interpretive period” through “reconstructions of authentic [once-standing] buildings” spurred public worries that the Plan was in fact reaching for *too much* authenticity, concerns some citizens broadly expressed (Los Angeles Times, 1977). For example, a past president of the San Diego Floral Association, Mrs. Beverly Kulot,

proclaimed, “[State planners] want to take [Old Town] back to a ghost town of 100 years ago, and it’s not going to be pretty...this was a miserable period” (ibid).

In response to these growing concerns, James E. Neal, then State Parks and Recreation Area Manager, tried to ease anxieties, even quipping that the public believed the State was “so committed to strict historical accuracy” that some citizens probably thought park planners intended to also “bring back rickets and lice” (ibid). However, the public was not amused. Appalled that the Plan called for the area’s “lush foliage” and “tall eucalyptus and...lawn” to be replaced with trees and bushes that were “native to the [interpretative period’s] time and place,” this new Plan was becoming increasingly unpopular with the public (ibid). Area Manager Neal walked through the State’s rationale asserting that while the grass lawn would not be entirely ripped up, the popular eucalyptus trees would eventually be removed. He contended that not only were eucalyptus a non native species². According to Neal, “they [also] seed[ed] like mad and [were] dirty trees, always dropping bark” all year long (ibid). Shedding trees aside, local newspaper articles bearing titles like, “State Plans ‘Dirty’ Old Town” and “Restoration Can Go Too Far,” featured columnists and locals who also fretted over the Plan’s proposal to eventually remove the newly beloved Bazaar del Mundo, acerbically wondering if it would be replaced by more historically accurate “dusty” “chicken coops” (ibid). Area Manager Neal conceded that while the new cluster of shops and restaurants was certainly “one of the best things in Old Town,” he clarified, “it’s not authentic to the interpretive period, and ultimately we plan to

² As they were brought to the region from Australia in the 1870s when Southern Pacific railroad management wanted to see if the softer trees could more easily provide lumber for rail ties and “they just started to grow wild” (Los Angeles Times, 1977).

replace it,” before adding that the Bazaar’s (sweetheart) lease³ would run out in 1991 and, “who knows where any of us will be by then” (ibid).

Underestimated in Neal’s assessment was the public’s sense of their own practices of “active spectatorship” (even if not explicitly articulated in such theoretical verbiage) (Taylor, 1997, p. xi; Taylor, 2003; Pollock, 2005; Hall, 1973). In consuming the park’s visual displays and in participating in its festive atmosphere, park visitors became both witnesses to and actors within the “public spectacle” of the park (Taylor, 1997, pp. 119-120, ix). In other words, the public’s active engagement with the park was not only ‘fun’ and ‘enjoyable.’ It also represented a larger visual and political performance--one which performed vital cultural and social work. Specifically, in order to negotiate collective anxieties⁴ and ‘qualify as good Americans’ the San Diego public embraced a palatable version of ‘multicultural’ celebration as a particular mode of sociocultural and political preservation. Given this framework, the public was tacitly (and at times acutely) aware of not only the desired visual and participatory encounter they sought to experience within the park--including just how much ‘authenticity’ they were willing to bear. They were also in many ways cognizant of what such a desired experience communicated about their own shared identity and sense of exceptionalism.

Diane Powers, the young co-founder and designer of the Bazaar del Mundo seemed to fundamentally understand this exercise, crafting a visual experience based on a particular sense of Hispanic ‘festivity.’ Often defined as ‘just’ a designer or described through various lenses of

³ After Powers’s winning bid was accepted by the state to renovate what would become the Bazaar del Mundo, no tenants materialized. Thus she proposed that she would take over the entire project as not only its designer but its major tenant. Relieved that the project would continue, state officials agreed to what many perceived as a twenty-year “sweetheart deal” in which Powers’s rent for the complex was only \$3,600/yr (Showley, 1991). Within years, the investment was a multi-million dollar enterprise.

⁴ See Chapter Five for a detailed examination of the collective anxieties present at the time of the park’s proposal including various social movements, an unpopular and protracted Vietnam War, and rising doubt in once esteemed ideals of capitalism, liberalism, and conquest.

gendered language (e.g. “belle,” “impeccably coiffed,” and “mannered”), the comprehensiveness of Power’s complex cultural undertaking is at times dismissed (Lamb, 2004, unpaginated news story; Cunningham, 2014). However, through the Bazaar del Mundo, Powers did not simply ‘decorate’ a tourist destination, she helped to design a particular imagined or what Holland (2001) calls a “figured world.⁵” This figured world, as experienced through a highly visible public spectacle, helped the region openly negotiate and apprehend changing social and cultural conditions through its positioning of new notions of multiculturalism as palatable, safe, *enjoyable*, and thus culturally and politically useful. Therefore, when public outcry erupted over the General Development Plan’s recommended future removal of the Bazaar, Powers claimed with political deftness that she was sure that most state commissioners were “on [the Bazaar’s] side” and welcomed the fact that the “misinterpretation” of the State’s intentions actually “brought to light who really cared about Old Town,” adding, “The controversy interested a lot of people who otherwise might not have stirred” (LA Times, 1977). Fourteen years later, in 1991, (despite some objections) the State renewed Powers’ Bazaar del Mundo lease (Department of Parks and Recreation for the State of California v. Bazaar del Mundo Inc., 2006).

When (re)construction of the park began in earnest, much of the lush foliage was indeed removed (though the eucalyptus trees remained until 2002⁶). However, despite this removal, the park’s eventual built environment and its ancillary infotainment practices produced a visual narrative that not only mobilized detailed park planning, but which capitalized on corporate desires and fantasies--remaining compatible with contemporary public tastes. As such, the space

⁵ Holland (2001) defines a “figured world” as “a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others” (p. 52).

⁶ The trees were finally removed when the tall trees were deemed too “hazardous in high winds” (CA State Parks, 2005, p. 31).

in its materialized form ultimately relays a specific kind of narrative. Though the park's 'interpretative period' represents approximately twenty-nine years of Mexican rule and influence (1821-1850⁷) and twenty-six years of American military occupancy and eventual statehood (1846-1872), what visually emerges within the park is an essentially *American* story. In fact, it is a story built around the ethos and practice of *celebration*.

In its most visible capacity, the site offers a space which celebrates a critical recalibration of the California origin story, one that tells how it '*came to be*' that "converging cultures transformed San Diego from a Mexican *pueblo* to an American settlement" (CA Parks and Recreation, 2018, italics not added). In other words, it is a tale that in many ways is emblematic of California's--and America's--perceived and highly touted capacity for ethnic pluralism. Given this narrative framework, the park's built environment executes the General Development Plan's visual design schema which crafted a blueprint for presenting a seamless 'flow of history.' It is a 'flow' that I argue fosters a sense of organic multicultural contact that, while certainly advantageous for such a celebratory space, is also decidedly divorced from conflict and conquest--foreclosing a more complex and 'authentic' rendering of the park's 'interpretative period' in the process. Embedded within this visual story are also significant celebratory metanarratives including: (1) a celebration of Mexico's 'colorful' and 'festive' *culture* cast as enlivening the region in a distinctly *Hispanic* manner, (2) a veneration of America's 'model' democratic institutions presented as 'merging' with Mexican culture in order to bring a sense of *order* to such a 'lively' region in a uniquely *American* capacity, and (3) (while

⁷ Though the Mexican-American War lasted from 1846-1848, the General Development Plan most likely marks 1850 as the end of the "Mexican period" as this year marks the date of California's entry into the Union and San Diego's ratification as an official U.S. city (both events accelerated by the significant increase of Anglo migration during the Gold Rush).

more subdued, but I argue just as critical) a (re)affirmation of America's *Pioneer Democracy*⁸ imbued throughout the park in its celebration of both pioneer and liberal rhetoric--in many ways supporting and justifying the previous and ongoing colonial practices at the heart of the park's commemorative period. These narratives illustrate the pedagogical focus of not only the park itself, but of the broader California origin story as it depicts one way in which we learn what it means to be American through specific remembrances of the past.

Thus this final chapter of this three-part case study builds off of work which examines the cultural, social, and political significance of space and built environments in everyday life, including their capacity to (re)shape political imaginations and social practices (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2002; Alexander, Bartmański, & Giesen, 2012; Joyce & Joyce, 2003; Mukerji, 2002, 2012, 2014, 2018; Kosasa, 1998; Said, 2000; Massey, 1991). Specifically, it unpacks the particular pedagogical aspects of the park's celebratory narrative as illustrated by its built environment and its ancillary materials and practices. While this analysis begins with a brief examination of the more explicit pedagogical experiences within the park (including partnerships with local educators), the majority of this chapter is concerned with the "hidden curriculum"⁹ within the park (Anyon, 1980; Margolis, 2002; Freire, 2005; Hafferty & Castellani, 2009; Hafferty, 1998). It is a curriculum which mobilizes celebrations of Mexico's 'culture',

⁸ See Ch. 1 for a detailed accounting of what I define as *Pioneer Democracy*, the co-constitution towards a unique amalgamation of America's two prominent archetypes: the pioneer identity and the liberal subject. It is a balance which depends on the nation's current sociocultural, political, and economic conditions and creates a juxtaposition that I argue represents the balance at the heart of many of the nation's *seeming* perplexing paradoxes as a supposed 'liberal democracy' (e.g. slavery, conquest, and various forms of disenfranchisement).

⁹ A 'hidden curriculum' is a particular outlying effect of learning in which certain lessons are imparted and learned outside of formal curriculum within or outside of traditional class time and usually conveyed in the social environment--lessons including norms, values, customs, and beliefs. This set of curriculum is generally culturally informed, carries social weight, and often works to (re)produce existing hierarchies and as such recent scholars have applied the concept beyond traditional primary and secondary educational settings to various social environments including social class and work, higher education, and medicine (Anyon, 1980; Margolis, 2002; Freire, 2005; Hafferty & Castellani, 2009; Hafferty, 1998).

America's 'order', and *Pioneer Democracy* to present a recalibration of the California origin story that responds to sociocultural change in a manner that maintains hegemonic ideals while still (re)producing the late twentieth-century democratic narratives of ethnic pluralism that continue to organize contemporary democratic life well into the twenty-first century.

7.2 Educating Conquest: Old Town San Diego State Historic Park's Pedagogical Focus

In the Introduction of this dissertation I explain my rationale for examining the California origin story within the broader mythology of the West. In doing so, I claim that investigating origin stories allows for a robust opportunity to explore how these narratives are often mobilized to perform pedagogical cultural work. In other words, in telling the story of how something 'came to be' origin stories by their very nature impart important information which affirms cultural norms and values, underscores social orders, and shapes particular notions of identity. This is a framework, then, that consistently shapes this three-part examination of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. Specifically, while I have examined the park through various inquisitive lenses including its framing as a particular commemorative response to change, as a public site designed to be experienced through an array of visual practices, and as an attempt to alleviate the impacts of colonization--these stances all coalesce around particular pedagogical practices. This common pedagogical thread reflects the fact that the park's public edification takes many varying and diffuse forms. In its inception, park proposers *instructed* a frontier region to preserve, protect, and properly 'settle' its "remaining open space" (Weingard, Cameron, & Disney, 1964 in CA Secretary of State, 1964, p. 1). During its design phases, park planners *imparted* which aspects of multicultural remembrance were 'tasteful' and 'appropriate' and thus palatable, safe, and useful. Various park stakeholders also mobilized explicitly pedagogical language when defining the park, referring to interacting with the park's designed

space as “an educational process,” citing the “education of its visitors” as an ultimate goal of the park, and championing the need for “trained guide[s]” to assist in the public’s proper apprehension of the park’s cultural heritage exhibits (*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 1972; CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 4; L. Mortimer, personal communication July 7, 1971).

This pedagogical foundation is further evident in the park’s past and present relationships with educational providers, a relationship that reflects the significance of the role of education in (post)modern museum spaces (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999; Dean, 2002). For example, the park facilitates what it calls the Old Town Field Experience for San Diego Unified School District fourth graders studying the state’s curricular unit on California history (Old Town San Diego Foundation, 2018). In past decades, this field experience included a week long immersive program designed to align specific park sites and artifacts with state curriculum standards. This experience has shifted and evolved over time, and beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year the park began offering (in partnership with the Mormon Battalion Historic Site¹⁰ and the Old Town San Diego Foundation¹¹) a one day program for fourth graders within the district. In addition to this specific partnership, the park regularly hosts, and encourages the visitation of, various other school groups (including homeschooling families) (ibid; J. Liebke, personal communication, August 31, 2018; See Figure 7.1). This promotion is supplemented by educational resources including a forty-six page Teacher Resource Guide provided by the Old Town San Diego

¹⁰ “The Mormon Battalion Historic Site in San Diego is a visitors’ center that commemorates the Mormon Battalion’s historic journey from the Council Bluffs area of Iowa to San Diego, California. The Mormon Battalion was a group of about 500 Latter-day Saints who joined the United States Army in 1846” (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 2019).

¹¹ The Old Town San Diego Foundation is a non-profit organization that supports educational offerings of the park and the surrounding Old Town community (Old Town San Diego Foundation, 2018).



Figure 7.1: A group of young visitors passes by the ‘American Period’ Robinson-Rose House, which also serves as Old Town San Diego State Historic Park’s Visitor Information Center. Photo by author, 2019.

Chamber of Commerce¹² and adapted by the Boosters of Old Town San Diego¹³ (Old Town San Diego Chamber of Commerce, 2013). In exploring the park, its Educational Tours department claims, “[s]tudents will be taken back in time to 1821 through 1872” (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-c). Highlighting what they assert is a decidedly inclusive and multicultural pedagogical learning environment, the park claims that through their park experiences visiting students “will learn about the transformation of San Diego from a Native American village, through Spanish and Mexican sovereignty, until it became an American city with cultural influences from local Native Americans, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans...By engaging in these living history stations, students will...develop a better understanding of our shared history” (ibid). Thus, this educational programming claims to offer student visitors a set of newly

¹² The Old Town San Diego Chamber of Commerce is a commercial body which supports the Old Town community at large (Old Town San Diego Business Improvement District, 2013).

¹³ The Boosters of Old Town is a 501 (C)3 organization that offers and facilitates among other things supplemental educational Old Town programming (Boosters of Old Town, 2019).

authorized and accepted stories of local ethnic pluralism, narratives which have increasingly come to rhetorically define the region's origins. And though this programming does offer exposure to a diverse set of regional inhabitants, much like the 1977 General Development Plan's ambivalent relationship between its progressive historical *philosophy* and its actual historical *work*, so does such a gap emerge within portions of the park's supplemental teaching materials. It is a significant rift. In fact, interrogating these representations and gaps provides one way to examine the ways in which "the educational role of the museum has become part of cultural politics" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999, p. 4).

For example, the 2013 Teacher Resource Guide presents an often popularized, canonical, and sanitized view of mission life in its history section which attempts to contextualize the mistreatment and abuse of Mission Indians by stating:

The times were hard and attitudes and outlook very different from ours. A completely different value-system dominated Spanish and Native thinking. In our eyes, the mission conditions could be considered extremely harsh. However, the Native peoples were treated in much the same way that the Spanish treated their own people, and certainly better than the English were treating Natives on the other side of the continent. No one was forced to accept the faith nor join the system, but once in, there was no backing out. In Spanish eyes, once the immortal soul was committed to the faith, it must be nurtured and protected within the "quarantine" of the mission...The Spanish intentions were good. The guided mission system was supposed to last for ten years, at which time the Natives would be fully functioning Spanish citizens with European skills, culture and a faith that gave them the best possible existence in this world and in the afterlife as well...As time passed there were many conflicts that arose between the Spanish soldiers and the Kumeyaay. How did the Spanish leaders and padres resolve the conflicts? They moved the mission six miles away from the Presidio. This helped because it separated the soldiers and the Kumeyaay. In 1775 the [new] Mission San Diego de Alcalá was attacked by Native Californians. There were eleven Spanish people at the Mission when the Indians raided the Mission and set fire to the buildings. Father Jayme, awakened by the attack, walked directly into a group of Indians and was murdered by them. Two other men were also killed during the raid, What do you think the Spanish did as a result of this? Why do you think Spanish decided to rebuild the Mission in San Diego and to continue their work with the Kumeyaay? (Presidial-Spanish Colonial System, the Mission, unpaginated).

While this narrative does move away from the previously entrenched ‘water supply’¹⁴ rationale for the original Mission’s relocation, this particular historical accounting still presents several inconsistencies from the historical record. For example, while more racially progressive than some colonial societies, the Spanish¹⁵ not only treated the Indians differently than their own citizens, but even their own citizens were subject to politically and socially tiered treatment according to factors such as location of birth, ‘blood’ lineage, etc. (Guedea, 2009; Pitt, 1998). Additionally, the passage includes certain moral and cultural judgments, including that the Spanish had “good” intentions in their particular ‘enlightenment’ and ‘civilization’ of the Natives. Furthermore, it leaves particular historical accounts significantly uncontextualized. For instance, in stating that “many conflicts...arose” between Spanish soldiers and the Kumeyaay, this teaching resource fails to offer age-appropriate specification which clarifies that these “conflicts” were particular acts of aggression¹⁶ upon the Kumeyaay. And finally, its statement that the new mission “was attacked,¹⁷” not only fails to fully contextualize the event, but in suggesting educators then ask, “What do you think the Spanish did as a result of this?”, the resource forecloses discussion of the Kumeyaay’s choice to attack the mission in the first place and instead pedagogically centers the experiences of the Spanish missionaries.

It is a historical rendering prevalent throughout the pedagogical artifact, even in its treatment of seemingly contextualizing material. For instance, when referring to the ‘free

¹⁴ See Chapter Two for examples of historical and commercial resources which cite the Mission’s lack of ideal water supply as the primary reason for the Mission’s relocation.

¹⁵ See Chapter Two for a detailed accounting of the Spanish colonial system’s treatment of Natives, *peninsulares* (Spanish-born colonists), *criollos* (New Spain born colonists who attained no more than ¼ non-Spanish ‘blood’), and *Californios* (New Spain born colonists of mixed descent who spoke Spanish and culturally identified as Hispanic).

¹⁶ See Chapter Two for a more detailed accounting of the Spanish presidial forces’ regular onslaughts of sexual violence, theft, and abuse upon the Kumeyaay people, including mission leader Father Jayme’s formal petition to Church leadership to remove the mission from the presidio site (Castaneda, 1993; Bokovoy, 2005).

¹⁷ See Chapter Two for an accounting of this particular account and the Kumeyaay’s planning and reasoning for the attack including the desire to return to ways of life before the arrival of the Spanish missionaries.

papers' of Allen B. Light (a black resident of Old Town) whose vital documents were hidden for nearly 100 years within the bricks of a local adobe (papers this chapter will later address as well), the teaching guide suggests asking student visitors, "What kind of papers do we carry today to help identify who we are?" (San Diego, Chamber of Commerce, unpaginated, Allen B. Light Papers and the Silvas House section). It is a question that not only *normalizes* the social condition of having to actively prove one's status as an un-owned individual (in comparing it to contemporary practices of keeping identifying materials in our possession--which additionally ignores the complex nature of many extant practices of identification). But in many ways, this discussion question also *naturalizes* the state of slavery, collapsing it with identifying "who" an individual 'is' or 'is not' as opposed to a social condition designed to mark certain individuals as outsiders. Given these few examples, it soon becomes evident that despite the park's progressive outlook towards promoting and exposing local students to a 'diverse' historical account of the region, one which is intended to help them "develop a better understanding of our shared history," this forward-looking philosophy is often impeded by entrenched historical narratives and cultural beliefs surrounding the region.

These particular pedagogical practices, in conjunction with a wide array of adult-based learning resources including international 'sightseeing' outfits and self-guided tours, illustrate the park's deep embeddedness within the educational fabric of the region in ways that often seem self-evident. These traditional and readily legible channels of the park's pedagogical focus are certainly important and merit further critical examination than I briefly paid them (especially as they relate to systemic forms of state-based and state adjacent power/knowledge structures). However, my major inquisitive focus regarding the park's pedagogical practices is

on the broader ‘hidden curriculum’ within the park, especially in its treatment of notions of Mexican ‘culture,’ American ‘order,’ and *Pioneer Democracy*.

7.3 Celebrating Mexican ‘Culture’

Upon entering Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, its celebration of Mexican culture becomes immediately evident to even the most casual observer. The park is awash in sights, sounds, tastes, and imagery that all gesture to curated takes on cultural aspects of the Mexican diaspora from the hanging of papel picado to colorfully draped serapes. Such a highly visible incorporation represents a distinct turn from previous forms of early California remembrance in the region which marginalized and erased Mexican culture. Thus, it is a significant commemorative incorporation which pays homage to a distinct set of historical facts. Specifically, as we have seen, when American California became the 31st U.S. state in 1850, it did not emerge from an infrastructural vacuum. Instead the territory that now encompasses the American state of California had been intricately influenced by a complex Indigenous and colonial history, including its previous instantiation as part of the Mexican province of Alta California. This nearly three decades long influence included many “cultural transmissions” including architectural forms and dietary customs (Gibb, 2018, p. 10).

Therefore the park’s celebration of Mexican culture not only makes these aspects of the Mexican diaspora ‘visible.’ It also acts as a critical commemorative intervention that provides previously overlooked features of California public history with important visual and narrative representation. One of the most readily legible and ‘obvious’ Mexican cultural emphases is the park’s concessions. Two of the park’s three large-scale restaurants are Mexican-themed. Casa de Reyes, for example, offers “traditional Mexican food” in an indoor/outdoor setting featuring “lush gardens...and vibrant artwork” (Old Town Family Hospitality Corp, 2019). Placed within

the Fiesta de los Reyes shopping center (which until 2005 was Powers' Bazaar del Mundo) the restaurant features an open air stage which regularly hosts "folklorico dancers and plays" (Weisberg, 2009, p. 4; See Figure 7.2). The second Mexican-themed restaurant, Barra Barra Saloon, whose sprawling outdoor entrance sits adjacent to the Plaza in full view of park visitors offering a designed sight replete with Mexican decor and costumed waitstaff, "specializes in flatbread tacos [and] food from Oaxaca and San Felipe" (ibid, See Figure 7.3). The park additionally offers various other Mexican concessions in the forms of stands and small shops which sell Mexican candies and baked goods including *churros* along with specialty retail stores which market Mexican art, ceramics, clothing, and household decor (See Figures 7.4 and 7.5). Taken together, these concession offerings help foster an environment that broadly celebrates aspects of Mexican culture--especially its cuisine.

However, Mexican California was more than a collection of cultural practices. Likewise, when Alta California ceased to politically exist, in addition to its culture, its various social, economic, and political structures and policies did not completely vanish into a historical ether--remnants of these infrastructures remained in America California (e.g. the transfer of Californio oligarchy and influences from Mexico's Hispanic liberal tradition) (Gibb, 2018; Osio, 1996; Rodríguez O., 2007). Yet the California origin story told within Old Town San Diego State Historic Park often fails to fully present this complexity, instead relegating Mexico's regional contributions to a general 'cultural' flair characterized by a sense of Hispanic festivity. In other words, the aspects of Mexican life that distinctly emerge as naturally self-evident within the park's visual design schema are elements largely 'cultural' in nature (e.g. food, music, and dress). It is a casting that I argue carries specific pedagogical and political implications within the park's (re)telling of the California origin story. Specifically, this acute focus on the cultural



Figure 7.2: A festively decorated Fiesta de Reyes stage featuring papel picado and other embellishments; beyond the courtyard lies the entrance to the park's Casa de Reyes Mexican-themed restaurant. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.3: The visibly prominent Mexican themed Barra Barra Saloon, which faces the main Plaza and is adjacent to the park's Visitor Information Center features a draped serape at the reception desk along with other cultural embellishments. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.4: Vendor cart near the southwest entrance of the park bearing Mexican inspired wares. From KPBS, 2019, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park [Webpage], retrieved March 31, 2019, from <https://www.kpbs.org/places/old-town-san-diego-state-historic-park/> Copyright 2019 by KPBS Public Media. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 7.5: Mexico Candy Shop which offers Mexican candies, textiles, and other goods. Photo by author, 2019.

(among other things): (1) *naturalizes* Mexican culture, often collapsing notions of ‘Mexicanness’ with a particular sense of Indigeneity as Mexican culture emerges within the park as the overarching and visible cultural representative of ‘early’ connections to California land and life upon it, despite the ongoing presence and influence of Native people--even during California’s ‘Mexican period,’ and (2) this cultural focus *depoliticizes* Mexico as a distinct geopolitical unit helping to cast the ‘transformation’ of the Mexican North into the American Southwest as a natural occupational ‘merger’ as opposed to an act of conquest by one democratic nation over another. This depoliticization also narratively divorces the park’s historical representations of Mexico from its emerging--yet often fledgling--liberal tradition in a manner that allows the park’s presentation of U.S. forms of democratic ‘order’ to emerge as distinctly *American* and particularly innovative in nature. Though the park provides a rich visual environment and a plethora of ancillary artifacts and practices through which to explore these implications, two spheres of representation emerge as particularly significant to notions of the park’s careful celebration of Mexican ‘culture’: (1) the park’s presentation of its “Mexican period” historic adobes, and (2) its broader treatment of Mexican state symbols and public cultural practices.

7.3-1 A Domestic Focus: The Park’s Presentation of Historic Mexican Adobes

Aside from various ‘obvious’ Mexican-themed establishments which dominate much of the park’s concessions options, also of note is the park’s presentation of its “Mexican period” and/or “Mexican style” historic adobes. The 1977 General Development Plan identified over fifty possible sites of Mexican and American period reconstruction (from previous archeological reviews) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977). Of these structures, “seven...original to the ‘Old Town’ area [still] remain[ed]” in 1977 (ibid; See Figure 7.6). By the time of the Plan’s preparation, most of these surviving sites were in the process of some form of

1977 *GDP Site Name	Contemporary Site Name	Year Built (Current & 1977 Estimates)	Restoration History	Interpretative Period (1977 & Current)
Estudillo House	La Casa de Estudillo	Current: 1830 1977: 1827 - 1830	Restored in 1910 (as 'Ramona's Marriage Place') and in 1972 Recently renovated (2014-2018)	Mexican Period (both)
Bandini House	Albert Seeley's Cosmopolitan Hotel & Restaurant <i>Casa de Bandini 1972-2005</i> <i>Bicentennial Headquarters 1969</i>	Current: ~1829 1977: 1827 - 1830	1968: state acquired 1972 - 2005: managed by Bazaar del Mundo as Casa de Bandini Restaurant 2005 - 2009: Delaware North management 2010: Relaunched in current form by new proprietor (Chuck Ross of Old Town Family Hospitality Corp)	1977: Mexican Period Current: Not an official park 'museum.' Current focus of "1870s splendor," represents the American Period (CA Parks & Rec, 2019)
Stewart House	La Casa de Machado y Stewart	Current: ~1829 1977: ~1838	Restored in 1968	Mexican Period (both)
Machado y Silvas House	La Casa de Machado y Silvas / Commercial Restaurant Museum	Current: 1829 1977: ~1843	Restored in 1968	1977: Mexican Period Current: Transitional Period
Pedrorena House	Pedrorena - Altamirano House	Current: 1869 1977: ~1850	Restored in 1968	American Period (but listed as adobe)
Altamirano House	Pedrorena - Altamirano House	Current: 1869 1977: 1851-1852	Restored in 1968	American Period (but listed as adobe)
Mason Street School	The Schoolhouse Museum/Mason Street School	Current: 1865 1977: ~1865	Restored in 1952	American Period (both)

Figure 7.6: Compilation of the seven origin structures identified in the 1977 General Development Plan (*GDP).

restoration (or had undergone initial renovations), however they were not necessarily in their current configurations or positions within the park. Additionally, there was not yet a consistently executed visual design schema which organized the presentation of these restored and reconstructed sites until the development of the 1977 Plan which offered a particular vision of their position around the Plaza and a planned commingling of Mexican and American architectural styles to engender a seeming “flow of history” (CA State Parks, 2005; CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, p. 18).

The presentation of these historic Mexican *casas* generally highlights, through detailed visual artifacts (including written materials), particular ways of living during the “Mexican period.” For example, site exhibits often include staged displays of food preparation, weaving and other domestic trades with occasional references to broader communal life--but generally as defined via culturally knit communities and not representing systematized infrastructural ties. In other words, these designed spaces primarily focus on the domestic patterns of the homes’ inhabitants, and when they do gesture to their exterior lives, it is often in passing and not in the context of a robust accounting or visual display of the systematic structure of their broader social, civic, and/or political affiliations. La Casa de Machado y Stewart adobe, for example, represents such a visual focus upon the role of the adobes within the domestic fabric of Mexican life (See Figures 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, and 7.11). Constructed *circa* 1829 by a prominent local military family, the Machados, the site primarily offers a curated view of nineteenth-century Mexican *casa* life. In fact, other than contextualization offered via the site’s physical placard and the adobe’s park brochure, no other visual guidance or facilitation within designed space offers park visitors insights into the exterior lives of the home’s inhabitants or their military and social embeddedness within the region. This pattern differs from the park’s presentation of



Figure 7.7: Exterior of La Casa de Machado y Stewart Museum within Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.8: A view of the curated interior which offers visitors a glimpse into the domestic lives of adobe inhabitants during the park's interpretive "Mexican period" including means of food preparation. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.9: The sleeping space within the two-room La Casa de Machado y Stewart displays an interpretation of the home's multigenerational nature. Park visitors visually engage with this room through two small slatted windows (See Figure 7.7), thus in many ways figuratively and physically '*peering into*' the inner life of the home. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.10: Spinning wheels and yarn within the adobe's re-created *sala* (living area) illustrates the site's emphasis on domestic tasks and the intricacies of the residents' cultural and interior lives. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.11: Rear exterior of the *casa* displaying the restored outdoor kitchen area featuring an open-air cooking capacity in the far left of the frame as well as outdoor seating (not visible) underneath the *casa*'s built-in pergola (right side), illustrating another aspect of domestic life. Photo by author, 2019.

'American period' structures which primarily represent exterior forms of living (e.g. governance, banking, etc. associated with *order* and organized social life post-social contract)--a contrast latter portions of this chapter will address at length.

In addition to this material display, the site's brochure mentions the many "hidden stories" of other previous residents of the home including the Kumeyaay women who helped to labor within it (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-b). Yet ironically, these stories remain largely invisible within the site's curated optic field which trains the eye upon the domestic life of what is primarily presented as representative of nineteenth-century *Mexican*

culture. Such a move gestures to previous colonial practices within the region in which Mexican--and especially Californio--culture in many ways usurped regional notions of Indigeneity. For example, early Spanish colonial practices originally collapsed particular apprehensions of the land with understandings of Indigeneity. This framework spurred Spanish classification of Indigenous women as “daughters of the land” given their early abilities to bring land into interethnic marriages during early waves of eighteenth-century conquest (Casas, 2009, p. 8). This positioning “momentarily privileged” Indigenous women over lower-class Spanish women in the region who at the time could not “conceivably bring land or property into a marriage” (ibid, p. 8). By the nineteenth-century, however, this moniker eventually transferred to *Californianas* whose Spanish-Mexican families were using the term ‘daughters of the land’ to refer to their own “California-born” daughters (in the same way that Californio families *physically* transferred ownership of recently released Mission land from Mission Indians to their own emerging Californio *rancho* elite) (ibid, p. 8; Pitt, 1998; Weber, 2005). María Raquel Casas (2009) in her revealing work *Married to a Daughter of the Land: Spanish-Mexican Women and Interethnic Marriage in California, 1820-1880* notes the significance of this linguistic shift in California, claiming:

It is not unimportant that the Spanish-Mexican settlers appropriated and employed the term they originally used for indigenous women and remade it to suit their changing social and cultural ideals. By supplanting the primordial, powerful association that indigenous people had with the land, Spanish-Mexicans continued the language of conquest, manipulating historical processes to assert their continued presence on the land by claiming a more “natural” relationship like the ones they had erased when they conquered other peoples. Becoming children of the land implied a timeless and natural association with the land, legitimizing their acts of violence, conquest, and eventual development of the land for their own economic and social advantage (p. 9).

It was a rhetorical shift that was not only significant for Californio/Native relations. It would also eventually help to foster the often mobilized ‘merger’ myth between America and

Mexico--one which depicted an effective 'marriage' between American 'order' and Mexican land and 'culture'--helping to justify and *naturalize* America's ultimate conquest of Mexico. Specifically, during the 1820s when Mexico loosened its reins on previous prohibitions against foreign settlement, regions like Alta California, including San Diego, experienced an influx of Anglo-American settlement (especially by single men). This trend also influenced an uptick in interethnic marriage. And while the majority of Mexicans generally married one another, and most white American men, when married, found white American wives, a significant minority of Anglo men did marry Californianas during this time. In some of these cases, Anglo men married into land, grafting into established and well connected Californio families like the San Diego Bandinis and Estudillos, learning Spanish, and at times even adopting Mexican dress and customs (Pitt, 1998; Engstrand, 2005; Limerick, 1988). For a time, historical and cultural depictions of the period often focused on these mixed marriages, portraying them as largely tension free, highly successful mergers between enterprising and often powerful Anglo American men and Californianas who were inevitably physically, culturally, and even morally drawn to their white husbands as opposed to their own 'deficient' and "savage" Californio men (Bancroft, 1888, in Casas, 2009, p. 10). These portrayals would serve as a powerful metaphor helping to cast the broader project of the re-conquest of northern Mexico by America as a seemingly mutually beneficial and relatively peaceful venture, long after many of the marriages themselves fell out of public memory (*ibid*). In other words, though often faded from national memory, when remembered or commemorated, what would ultimately come to be emblematic of California's Mexican period would be the complex collision of reality, myth, and nostalgia of a seemingly fruitful commingling between American 'order' and Mexican 'culture'

as individuals and families forged new starts and new identities to ‘transform’ the Mexican North into the American Southwest.

Given this historical and rhetorical background, we can view the park’s consistent portrayals of Mexican ‘culture’ and seemingly *natural* access to the land and the supposedly ‘unaffected’ lives lived upon it, as effectively tapping into a particular metanarrative of the region embedded into the fabric of cultural memory. Specifically, the park’s focus upon Mexican culture as a critical narrative tool both alleviates and obscures particular realities of colonialism and conquest. Experiencing such a curation then becomes, in many ways, not offensive or off-putting for the park visitor but instead revives a vaguely familiar and reassuring narrative. Presenting Mexican culture as a quasi ‘native’ connection to the land, for example, helps to obscure the *ongoing* project of settler colonialism. In other words, positioning *Mexican* culture as inherently tied to the land helps to remove Indigenous peoples and cultures from the narrative and instead frames America’s current possession and occupation of California as gained through a cooperative ‘merger’ and not “settler crimes” (or the consistent reassertion of settler practices on Indigenous lands) (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 14). Furthermore, the park’s overt celebration of Mexican culture through its presentation of ‘Mexican-period’ adobes also helps to *depoliticize* Mexico as a distinct geopolitical unit. Such a reshaping recasts nineteenth-century Mexican Californians as a *culturally* connected group of people eventually ‘merged’ into the broader and ethnically pluralistic American project by logical transition and evolution--as opposed to active citizens of a sovereign state which was eradicated by another’s nation-building conquest.

Additionally, often under-examined or rendered opaque within these sites are the historically complex roles of the *casas* themselves as particular multi-use spaces. For example,

historically many of these homes, especially larger *casas* of the elite, were more than physical family domiciles, often also serving as built environments for the facilitation of key Mexican social and political functions (including religious chapels and political engagements [Walsh, 2005]). This is not to say that no attention is paid at all to this variance of space within park presentations of Mexican *casas*. However, even in sites that gesture to multiple uses of these spaces, an overwhelming focus upon the cultural often eclipses civically or politically significant histories of particular inhabitants and/or their homes during the “Mexican period.”

For example, the contemporary rendering of the Commercial Restaurant Museum/ La Casa de Machado y Silvas does emphasize an additional use of the adobe (as two Gold Rush era restaurants--though curation efforts present this emphasis as more of a spatial ‘transformation’ rather than an example of a ‘shared’ use of space). As such, the *casa* is overtly positioned within the park as “[h]ighlighting an early commercial venture of the 1850s” (State of California, 2019) (See Figure 7.12). However, despite this site’s supposed economic focus, a critical reading of the adobe’s visual layout and supplemental materials begins to reveal the emergence of a largely *cultural* narrative, one that also downplays a significant local political action by one of the home’s major occupants.

According to the park, this adobe was also built in 1829 by Corporal José Manuel Machado Jr. and Maria Serafina Valdez, this time for one of their elder daughters, María Antonia and her husband, José Antonio Nicasio Silvas (a San Diego Native and soldier who served under his father-in-law in the San Diego Company) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a; Hughes, 2015). Like many prominent families, the Machados-Silvases also owned and operated a *rancho* (Rancho El Rosario in Baja California) and thus this home at the base of the *presidio* served as the couple’s townhouse--an alternative which the park asserts that María Antonia



Figure 7.12: Exterior of Commercial Restaurant / Machado y Silvas Museum. Photo by author, 2019.

actually preferred to remote country life, while José Antonio often stayed for extended periods at the rancho. (Emerging historical sources claim, however, that the marriage was in fact strained and that by 1854/5 María Antonia filed for divorce accusing José Antonio of “wilful (sic) desertion [since 1842/3] & failure to provide for his family” [Hughes, 2015, p. 44]).

Nonetheless, according to the park’s narrative, the couple lived in the residence from 1843-1854 with their six children (while the San Diego History Center claims they lived in the home through the 1840s, and emerging scholarship suggests it was actually María Antonia and a new partner who built the home in the 1840s [see footnote #19]) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a; San Diego History Center, 2019; Hughes, 2015). Likewise, the park contends that their “properties” remained in the family’s possession until about 1933 (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a). However the San Diego History Center documents that the

Machado-Silvas sold the home and it was “new owners” who renovated the space, while recent scholarship (undertaken on behalf of California Department of Parks and Recreation’s San Diego Coast District) actually places the home within the Machado family until *1921* (Hughes, 2015, p. 97; San Diego History Center, 2019). Thus, this general murkiness regarding particular historical details regarding the structure itself may explain the park’s use of passive-voiced descriptions regarding the home’s renovations in both the site’s brochure and its physical marker on the premises (e.g. “[b]etween 1852–1855...a west wing *was added*...[d]oors and windows *were also “modernized,”* and the *casa “was adapted* for use as Commercial Restaurant; later renamed Antonia Restaurant” (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a; park marker, 2016, italics added).

However, what *is* clear is that it is this 1850s transformation of the home into a business operation that is a major thematic focus of the park site. Additionally, as the historical record is not distinctly definite whether this renovation occurred under the direction of the Machado-Silvas family or under new ownership, its visual presentation also remains oblique. In fact, the Machado-Silvas are relatively absent within the visual representation of the space while curated quotes and written summaries from mostly Anglo residents involved in commercial enterprises at the time instead line portions of the site’s walls. Furthermore, though economic and commercial aspects are certainly given attention within the curation of the site (such as contextualizing the growing need for such business establishments during the Gold Rush), particular cultural emphases remain a consistent subtext, and at times a central focus of the space. For example, the site primarily offers curated displays of the restaurant’s kitchen and dining area, portraying period specific cooking utensils, sundries, cooked dishes, and typical tablescapes and decor of a Gold Rush era dining establishment (See Figure 7.13).



Figure 7.13: Interior view of the park's re-created Commercial Restaurant displaying a laid table for restaurant patrons including food and drink that may have been served in such an establishment during the time of its operation and an area for cards, drinking, and entertainment practices representative of the Gold Rush era. Photo by author, 2019.

Additionally, given this particular focus, the majority of the entire first page of the site's accompanying brochure also concentrates on this use of the house as a commercial enterprise, despite its written admission that "little is known about either of these short-lived businesses" (i.e. both the Commercial, and then the Antonia Restaurants) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a). Given this lack of site specific details regarding the actual restaurants themselves, the brochure's front-page encapsulation of the *casa's* "story" instead evolves into a largely cultural narrative regarding nineteenth-century dietary practices. Specifically, this "story" section of the brochure chronicles the types of meals that *might* have been prepared for hungry miners, describes food preservation techniques, lists the local herbs and spices that

“added zest to savory stews popular in *Californio* cuisine” (including featuring a drawing of “a string of chili peppers¹⁸”), speculates on the beverages of choice that may have been served including a brandy-based “Pisco Punch,” and concludes with an appreciation of how Mexican flavors and dishes have continued to influence the region’s palette (See Figures 7.14 and 7.15).

THE STORY.

The United States victory in the U.S.-Mexico war occurred the same year that gold was discovered at Sutter’s Mill at Coloma, on January 28, 1848. News of the gold strike traveled across the United States and to other countries. By 1849, enthusiastic gold seekers, immigrants, soldiers, and other settlers flooded into California.

San Diego was the first U.S. port of call for passengers arriving by ship via Cape Horn or the jungles of Panama and Nicaragua. Many structures around Old Town plaza were turned into saloons, restaurants, retail stores, boarding houses, and other commercial enterprises to capture their trade.

By 1854, the Machado-Silvas home was altered and became “The Commercial Restaurant.” Three years later, the establishment operated as “Antonia’s Restaurant.”

Little is known about either of these short-lived businesses. At some point a bowling alley was in operation. However, both restaurants had more dining tables than are currently displayed, and the tables may have been covered with oilcloth.

The restaurants would have offered simple, everyday fare, dominated by meat. Such offerings might have included beef, pork, mutton, and goat, as well as wild game such as quail, duck, rabbit, and deer. Fish and shellfish were also abundant



along San Diego’s coast. Refrigeration was not widely available in the 19th century, so perishables needed to be cooked and eaten before spoilage occurred. To preserve food for later use, it was pickled, salted, or dried.

Some vegetables and fruits would have been grown on the property or purchased from farms in Mission Valley or from what is now Orange County. Corn, beans, peppers, cabbage, squash, garlic, grapes, oranges, and limes would have been available in season. Herbs such as rosemary, thyme, and oregano were also likely grown and used. Imported spices such as cinnamon, cloves and saffron added zest to the savory stews popular in *Californio* cuisine. Imported food might include flour from Chile, fruit and vegetables from Hawaii and all sorts of foodstuffs and goods from the Eastern United States.

Refreshments offered might have included *aguardiente* (brandy), wine, rum, whiskey, chocolate, and coffee. Brandy from Chile and pineapple from Hawaii were combined to make a popular cocktail called “Pisco Punch.”

Descendants of the Machado Family have preserved recipes for dishes they have prepared for more than 150 years. Spanish and Mexican tastes and cooking styles have been part of San Diego for centuries. Early San Diegans left records of the appreciation for good butter (when not rancid from long transportation), fiery pepper-flavored sauces, bread, tortillas and crackers, and sweet or savory tamales. These food preferences can still be found at many of the local restaurants.

Figure 7.14: The site brochure’s “story” of the *casa* featuring an illustrated chili pepper stalk. This “story” emerges as a largely cultural cataloguing of dietary practices of the era. From CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a., La Casa de Machado y Silvas (The Machado-Silvas House): The Commercial Restaurant Museum [Information sheet], retrieved April 15, 2019, from https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/663/files/MachadoSilvas_CS6_5.7.2013.pdf Copyright by State of California. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

¹⁸ The second page of the brochure refers to the illustration as a “string of chili peppers” and notes peppers’ native origins in the Americas. However, these strings were also considered *ristras*, or a symbol of hospitality and welcoming.



Figure 7.15: Built in shelves within the re-created restaurant display earthenware, glasses, and libations for the venture's customers. Photo by author, 2019.

However, it is not until the end of the second and final page of the brochure that these supplemental materials also reveal a *politically* significant account of the home's resident, María Antonia Machado de Silvas, stating:

A story told about María Antonia is of her patriotism during the U.S. invasion of 1846. Seeing the Americans about to take down the Mexican flag from the Plaza, she dashed out, cut the ropes on the flagpole, and rescued her country's flag. Because she pulled down the halyards an American, Albert B. Smith, had to climb the pole and nail the American flag to the top. Four years later, Smith married María Antonia's sister, Guadalupe Machado de Wilder. Because of María's rescue of the Mexican flag, some people call the house "La Casa de la Bandera" (the House of the Flag). (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a).

Thus, while the park does reveal this politically significant story, it is in many ways ‘hidden.’ It is buried within the brochure beneath previous emphases on cultural references to dietary practices. The story is also narratively crowded by an allusion to American Albert Smith and *his* heroic story of raising the U.S. flag upon the Plaza. Furthermore, the additional and immediate invoking of Smith’s eventual marriage to Silvas’s sister in some ways rhetorically neutralizes Silvas’s nationalistic act, a rhetorical move which adds to the broader ‘merger’ metaphor and ‘integration’ narrative often mobilized within the park. And most significantly, the story is not visually represented within the actual physical designed space.

Also of note is the overall design choice of positioning the historic Machado-Silvas *casa* as the ‘Commercial Restaurant Museum’ within the park. Granted, such a decision is certainly educational in many respects (e.g. it illustrates another use of the *casa*, it highlights particular business opportunities within the Gold Rush era economy, and as the site makes overwhelmingly visible, it displays relevant cultural dietary practices including period specific methods of food preservation and preparation). However, this particular focus also presents distinct sets of logistical, thematic, and pedagogical challenges. For example, choosing the Commercial Restaurant as a design theme meant re-creating a “short-lived” business venture which park planners admittedly knew “little” about. To be sure, such a challenge is not insurmountable. Educational curated spaces including museums and exhibitions often take as their starting point an “object” or subject that they actively work to “interpret--” and make sense of *for* the viewer (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999, p. 12; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Black, 2005; Dean, 2002). However, this particular “object” choice ultimately falls back on and reiterates a largely familiar cultural narrative already prominently displayed within the park (i.e. cultural customs regarding Mexican cuisine). Additionally, in emphasizing an 1850s time frame, the site gravitates away from

representing the space as it was during Mexican rule. And though park planners designate the site as representing a “Transitional Period,” this mobilization of the visual design schema’s ‘transitional’¹⁹ rhetoric engenders a *seamless* view of nation-building which is especially incongruent given the political and military history of the home’s (proposed) builders and residents.

Thus, through this commercial thematic focus, park planners foreclose critical examinations and representations of “Mexican period” social and political elements, effectively leaving the *casa*’s inhabitants particularly under examined. For instance, had park planners decided to narratively focus upon the site’s role as “La Casa de la Bandera” (or the House of the Flag) (as opposed to presenting it as a narrative footnote), such a curatorial choice could have offered a more expounding pedagogical, albeit overtly political, thematic design. And though emerging scholarship questions certain aspects of María Antonia’s daring escapade (including whether or not the *casa* was truly built at the time of the flag rescue), contemporary sources contend that local oral histories all concur that the event itself actually took place (Hughes, 2015). Additionally, the historical record also reveals that not only were María Antonia’s father and husband soldiers, but so too were her uncle, and her maternal *and* paternal grandfathers. In fact, her grandfathers were presidial soldiers who originally came to the region as members of the Spanish military detachment that accompanied the 1781 Rivera y Moncada Expedition which eventually founded the *pueblo* of Los Angeles and the *presidio* at Santa Barbara (ibid). Furthermore, historical accounts also indicate that María Antonia’s sense of patriotism and respect of her nation’s flag was seemingly a family tradition. Specifically, her own father

¹⁹ See Chapter Six for a detailed accounting of the park’s planned use of particular “*transitional* styles” and historical “*transitions*,” choices which I argue engenders a *seamless* and *cooperative* view of nation-building as opposed to conflict-based paradigms of conquest, invasion, and occupation (CA Department of Parks and Recreation (GDP), 1977, pp. 42, 46, italics added).

(who had once been a Spanish officer) apparently struggled with watching the Spanish colors descend within the San Diego *presidio* for the final time upon Mexican independence (ibid). Thus, when historically chronicling the lives of the Machado-Silvas family what emerges is a rich and robust history of military service, patriotism, and nationalism that at times conflicted and contrasted across generations. It is a riveting story that goes largely untold within the curated experience of the Commercial Restaurant Museum.

Additionally, it is not only the military history of one family that remains under examined. The site misses an opportunity to more broadly focus on often untold aspects of nineteenth-century Mexican nationalism at large--a national history that despite its often tenuous hold on the region was in place for more than half of the park's 'interpretative period'. For instance, given the Machado-Silvas family history, they are ideal candidates to serve at least rhetorically as 'real-life' narrative anchors for the further curation of artifacts related to the Mexico's distinct political history including its active liberation from Spanish rule, the emergence of its own liberal tradition, its secularization of the mission system, the creation of various Constitutions, its bouts with conservatism and downright despotism, its rising oligarchy, and the young country's 1823 abolition of slavery forty two years before the U.S. accomplished the same.

In fact, such an emphasis on Mexican political practices would have dovetailed nicely with two noteworthy artifacts associated with the site: (1) The aforementioned freedom papers of 1830s Old Town resident Allen B. Light who was a black mariner and an otter hunter from Philadelphia who eventually "gained Mexican citizenship and guarded the California coastline against American and Native American poachers" (San Diego History Journal, 2019, unpaginated; See Figure 7.16). Found in 1948 by construction workers, Light's freedom papers

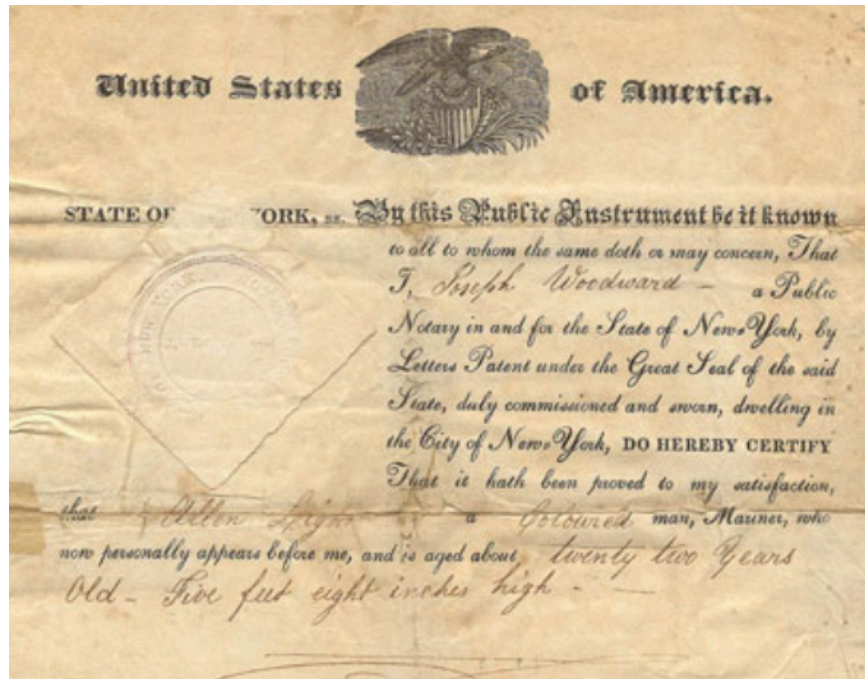


Figure 7.16: San Diego History Center’s digital copy of Allen B. Light’s notarized proof of freedom. “issued by a notary public in New York on November 27, 1827 [which] described Light as ‘...a Coloured man...aged about twenty-two years old...born in Philadelphia.’ Popularly known as sailor protection papers, such a certificate could substitute for the ‘free papers’ that states required African-Americans to carry” (San Diego History Center, 2019). From San Diego History Center, 2019, Allen Light (c.1805-?) [Webpage], retrieved March 31, 2019, from <https://sandiegohistory.org/archives/biographysubject/allenlight/> Copyright 2019 by San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

had been hidden away behind two blocks of the adobe’s walls (along with his commission from the Alta California Governor to monitor the coast). The papers are presented as a peculiar unsolved “mystery²⁰” of the site, as their further contextualization is not a primary narrative

²⁰ The papers are presented as a “mystery” within the site’s brochure. Additionally, the San Diego History’s Center analysis of them contends, “[n]o one knows when or why Light hid his sailor protection and Mexican appointment papers in the wall of his neighbor’s house. Historian David J. Weber speculates that Light might have helped build the Machado-Silvas house in 1843, but there are no records describing Light’s relationship with his neighbors, Jose Antonio Nicosia Silvas and Maria Antonia Juliana Machado” (San Diego History Center, 2019). However recent scholarship regarding the Machado-Silvas house reveals intriguing facts that I believe may shed light on the papers’ placement within the walls of the adobe. First, after María Antonia’s separation from her husband Jose Antonio in 1843, she “cohabitated” with an Enos “Jack” Wall, a New England mariner, bearing him one or two daughters during their 12-15 years together (1845 - 1860) (Hughes, 2015, p. 23). In fact, this new research claims (based off of historical records and early drawings of the Plaza) that it was most likely María Antonia and Enos who built the adobe between 1847-1848, claiming a historically accurate name for the adobe should be *La Casa Machado de Silvas y Wall*, [ibid, p. 7]) In 1846, as the hide trade slowed, Enos quit his job managing hide houses and joined a “group of men on a sea otter hunting expedition in Baja California” a trade he continued at least for the year (ibid, p. 50). It was an occupation where he may have likely crossed paths with his neighbor Allen Light who was a regional otter gaming patroller who also continued to hunt through the 1840s, often in Baja (San Diego History Center,

focus of the site's commercial theme, thus relegating them to an interesting 'side-bar' fact (both metaphorically and literally within the site's official brochure) (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, n.d.-a). Additionally, similar to Machado-Silvas's flag rescue, this narrative is not displayed within the museum itself, living only within the park brochure. And (2) A painting within the museum of a Kumeyaay woman grinding maize with an accompanying curated caption regarding the dietary influences within the region from the "Mission system's" "captive labor force" (See Figure 7.17). Thus, had the site explicitly focused on Mexico's national history and its albeit short-lived democratic traditions, it could have added nuance to these artifacts' presentation (i.e. relating them to broader notions of abolition, mission secularization, and the promises *and* shortcomings of both liberating practices during the Mexican era). Instead, much of the site reassuringly treads familiar narrative waters, focusing on a Mexican cultural "appreciation for good butter...fiery pepper-flavored sauces...tortillas...and sweet or savory tamales" (ibid). They are design choices, I argue, that carry significant weight within the park's

2019). Additionally, the two may have known each other previously as multiple records indicate that they both arrived in San Diego in or around 1835 (though only Light's method of arrival is recorded--via a vessel named *Pilgrim*), and they are both listed among a list of a recollected 18 "foreign settlers living in San Diego in 1845" (Smythe, 1908, p. 90; Hughes, 2015; San Diego History Center, 2019). Thus, while it may have been true that Allen Light did not have a relationship with María's *husband* Jose Antonio, he very well may have known her subsequent partner Enos. Secondly, sources indicate that Light seemed to disappear from the area after the death of Richard Freeman in 1851, (his business partner and co-habitant in the adobe they owned together) (San Diego History Center, 2019). As such he was absent from the 1851 census and was never heard from again in San Diego (ibid). In 1857, the Freeman/Light home was leased by a George Smith (Hughes, 2015). Smith had previously been a boarder just next door in the home of María Antonia and Enos, and he had also tended the bar in their new business venture, the Commercial Restaurant (previously Antonia's) (ibid). However, he eventually moved out to start his own saloon and hotel in the previous Freeman/Light home (ibid). In 1860, George Smith married María Antonia's daughter Lorenza, though he died some years later (ibid). Upon his death, possession of the Freeman/Light property passed to Lorenza who later renovated the hotel with a new husband--an operation that was successful until the late 1880s and photographic evidence places María Antonia outside the building (ibid). Thus, given these various details we can speculate that María Antonia, Enos, George, and/or Lorenza may have discovered Light's freedom documents at some point and hid them away within the walls of the Machado adobe in the chance that their neighbor returned to San Diego. This extended exercise illustrates the pedagogical influence of the "interpretative" work of museums in determining which stories will or will not be told and how within their designed spaces and supplemental material (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999).

broadier celebration of nineteenth-century Mexican *culture* and its decided downplaying of Mexico's social and political history and its comprehensive influence upon the region.



Figure 7.17: Illustrated rendering of a Kumeyaay woman grinding maize into meal which hangs upon a wall in the designed space as a gesture to Native influences upon the region's dietary practices and the systems relied upon for many forms of food production. Photo by author, 2019.

7.3-2 A Fiesta Focus: Mexican State Symbols and Public Cultural Practices Within the Park

This celebration of Mexican culture also extends beyond the historic *casas* themselves into the park's general designed atmosphere in two meaningful ways: (1) the decided lack of attention to Mexico's political traditions in visually public forms (e.g., overt state symbols, etc.), and (2) the park's overwhelming visible embrace and large-scale celebration of festive Mexican public cultural practices (e.g. the practice of *fiesta*). In terms of the lack of public imagery of

Mexican nationalism, one of the most significant instances of this trend is found upon the park's Plaza. The main Plaza, also referred to as *Plaza de las Armas* (Weapons Plaza), Washington Square, and within some park materials as the Historic Plaza, is a central visual and historical focus of the park. Emphasized by park designers as the "town center," "core," and major "open space," they claimed that this space was central to creating the park's desired "Old Town Image" (1977 General Development Plan, p. 41). In fact, because of this centrality, designers contended that its full view was paramount and such "plantings²¹ should not *block the visitor's overall view of the Plaza*" (p. 47, italics added).

Historically, its presence dates back to San Diego's Spanish colony. Though Spanish colonists established the San Diego mission and *presidio* in 1769, it was not until the early nineteenth century that a small, relatively self-sufficient²² community (now known as Old Town) arose at the base of the *presidio* hill (Bokovoy, 2005). Initially, the area primarily acted as a hub of trading and commerce for Indians and Spaniards alike though some homes may have occupied the area (with most settlers living within or near the *presidio*, and most Natives either inhabiting the Mission or their own tribal communities further east) (ibid). However, after winning its independence from Spain, Mexicans, including many prominent Californios, in 1827 laid a dirt Plaza and began to build adobes near or around it (Hughes, 2015). These construction efforts featured the homes of local families including the Machados, Bandinis, and the Estudillos. And while not as dominantly featured in the historical record, the area also included more modest homes of local *ranchero* laborers, foremen, artisans, and other community members.

²¹ Large trees still inhabit the green space of the Plaza, though its focal point, the looming flag pole, is still visible despite the presence of the trees.

²² The settlement was 'self-sufficient' in the eyes of the Spanish metropole. However, this categorization was built upon a colonial regime which was powered in part by Native labor provided in an array of formats tied to particular forms of forced and socially and culturally coerced labor (see Chapter Two for a further detailed accounting).

According to historical texts, the Plaza itself often featured as a cultural, social, and political nucleus within the region. Academic literature generally refers to various offerings within the Plaza during Mexican rule as events primarily organized around amusement including games, bull-and-bear fights, horse races, cockfights, and *fiestas* (Walsh, 2004; Smith, 1892; Mills, 1968; California State Parks, 2009). Though the Plaza was often fenced off during these occasions, enclosing it from entering streets, the events were communal in nature and often highly participatory (including the bullfights which featured no professional matadors, but instead willing community participants) (Mills, 1968). However, the Plaza was also a critical site of visual and symbolic social and political power. Aside from the social and political nuances of the previously mentioned cultural practices, the Plaza was often the site of more readily legible forms of social and political activity. Not only was it a desired destination for social promenading, Catholic processions, and ritualized Sunday feasting, but it was also the site of civic and criminal trials (ibid; CA State Parks, 2009). Furthermore, during Mexican rule, it was a visual place of prominence for military activity and where the Mexican flag flew (a flag that was rescued in 1846 by María Antonia Machado de Silvas when U.S. forces invaded the San Diego settlement) (Hughes, 2015). Upon U.S. conquest, it was the American flag which was subsequently raised above the Plaza.

As the American flag replaced the Mexican colors so too did the structures near and around the Plaza began to change. In the late 1840s and early 1850s many Americans began to build homes and businesses in the area (which formally became a U.S. city in 1850) (See Figure 7.18). Generally using ‘American style’ architectural forms inspired by Eastern U.S. wood-framed structures, these new Americans included: Lt. Cave Johnson Couets, who married Juan Bandini’s daughter Isodora Bandini and built the Colorado Hotel upon the Plaza and Sheriff



Figure 7.18: “What is believed to be the first photograph ever made of Old Town San Diego by J. Henfield in 1858” (Mills, 1985, Part 4). Though inspired by the structures’ general arrangement around the Plaza and the central feature of the prominent white flag pole, park designers ultimately re-created the Plaza in manners that enlivened their “interpretative period,” including rearranging structural configurations and placing buildings next to each other which historically were never adjacent to one another or in some cases ever even existed during the same historical period (CA State Parks, 2005 report). From J. R. Mills, 1985, *San Diego: Where California began* (San Diego, CA: San Diego Historical Society), Part 4: Yankees move in. Copyright 1985 by the San Diego History Center. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

James McCoy who constructed a Greek Revival home upon the site of a former adobe (which mostly likely belonged to Maria Eugenia Silvas, the descendant of a Spanish Colonial soldier who came to Alta California in the 1700s) (CA State Parks, 2009; Felton & George, 1998). However, some new residents purchased and moved into existing adobes including two black residents, American Richard Freeman and the aforementioned Allen B. Light (who also had Mexican citizenship), former fur traders who operated a saloon out of the adobe that was later remodeled after more traditionally American architectural tastes (San Diego History Center, 2019; Engstrand, 2005).

During this period the Plaza continued to display a significant cultural and social embeddedness within the community. Newly named “Washington Square,” and categorized by

historical texts as “the heart of [American] San Diego,” the American era Plaza still offered its residents “bullfighting, gambling, and drinking” along with raucous evening diversions on Saturday nights as “in those days the town’s best saloons and billiard parlors faced the square,” and as such the occasional “two or three fatalities over a weekend, from gunfights, were not unknown” (Engstrand, 2005, p. 76; Mills, 1968, unpaginated). However local historian Iris Engstrand²³ also tempers such descriptions. She writes: “[a]lthough such activities no doubt took place, life around the plaza consisted generally of children playing, families gathering, and *normal* socializing,” (ibid, p. 76, italics added). This particular contextualization, which in many ways works to distance and normalize American social and cultural practices upon the Plaza from the vestiges of what is perceived as decidedly Mexican customs, foregrounds this section’s analysis of the park’s strategic treatment of Mexican cultural practices within the designed space.

Finally, the Plaza also continued to symbolize political power during the American era. In addition to the newly raised American flag, it also became the grounds for “Judas hangings” and the public whippings of “naughty Indians” (Mills, 1968, u/p; Smythe, 1908, u/p). Given this historical context, the Plaza, the structures that emerged near and around it, and the cultural, social, and political practices and meanings that were forged in its general area emerge as not only significant to the regional history of San Diego. They also present a generative opportunity to examine the pedagogical work of the park through its re-creation of the Plaza and the political renderings of Mexico and the United States which emerge through this particular presentation (See Figures 7.19 and 7.20).

Given its historical and narrative significance, the park’s limited representation of highly visible forms of Mexican political infrastructure upon its focal Plaza is telling. For example,

²³ Engstrand was a member of the University of San Diego academic team whose research informed the 1977 General Development Plan.

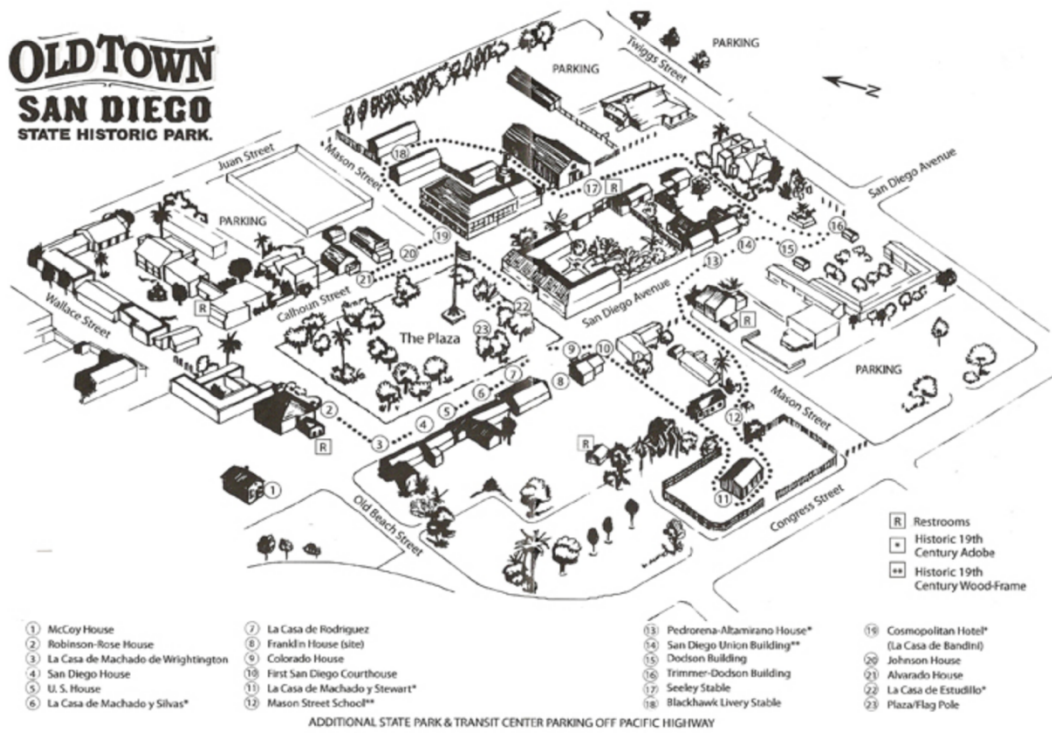


Figure 7.19: Park rendering offering a visually significant view of the Plaza and its looming flag pole. From Boosters of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, 2010, Map of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park [Webpage], retrieved April 30, 2019, from <http://boostersofoldtown.com/Map.htm> Copyright 2010 by Boosters of Old Town State Historic Park. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

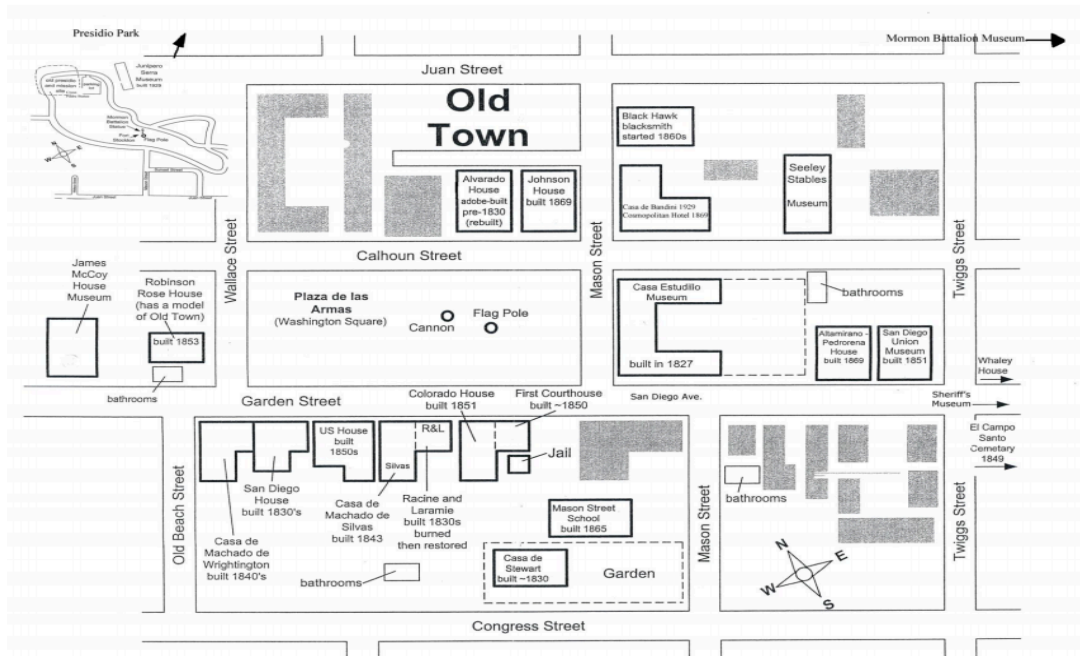


Figure 7.20: Park map utilized within the Teacher Resource Guide, which presents multiple names of the Plaza and positions key artifacts within the space. From Old Town San Diego Chamber of Commerce, September 17, 2013, September 17, *Draft Old Town San Diego teacher resource guide*, retrieved from http://www.oldtownsandiegofoundation.org/images/FourthGradeProgram/teachers_complete_guide.pdf Copyright 2013 by Old Town San Diego Foundation. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

there is a decided dearth of Mexican flags on around the Plaza--even on Plaza adjacent buildings, including those featuring other Mexican ‘cultural’ artifacts and imagery (See Figure 7.21). This limited--and at times concealed--use of Mexican military imagery and symbols, continues even into the park’s brochure materials, See Figure 7.22).

Perhaps the most significant instance of the park’s nebulous ‘visibility’ of Mexican state symbols, and in this instance its historical military presence within the region, takes place upon the Plaza itself where a Mexican military artifact is particularly eclipsed in meaningful manners. Specifically, adjacent to the flag on the main Plaza sits a Mexican military cannon which originally occupied the Spanish *presidio*. After the revolution, the new Mexican government kept four *presidios* in operation, one of which was San Diego’s (Weber, 1982; Ruhlen, 1959). However, as troop levels continually waned, by the late 1830s the San Diego fort

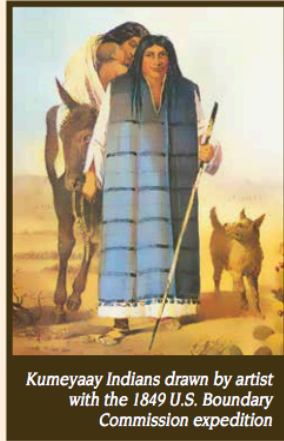


Figure 7.21: A plaza adjacent pottery and art shop bearing various forms of artwork including Mexican *calavera* (i.e. skull) genres displayed upon a serape covered table. However, despite this incorporation of Mexican culture, it is the U.S. flag that flies in front of this shop. Photo by author, 2019.

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park pays tribute to the cultural influences that make California special. Restored and reconstructed buildings in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park are now museums, shops, and restaurants that capture the energy of the community between 1821 and 1872. The central plaza is lined with buildings—some dating back to the 1820s—that offer a glimpse of the lifestyles of both ordinary residents and the most wealthy and influential.

Native Americans

The Kumeyaay lived on the San Diego River at a village they called *Kosa'aay*. For thousands of years, the people migrated between ocean and mountains—gathering seafood, acorns, and the necessities of life. Today a native-plant landscape marks part of the territory of that early settlement before arrival of the Spaniards. At first, the Spanish settlers were welcomed by the Kumeyaay, but challenges to traditional ways increasingly affected their lives. Kumeyaay culture proved resilient, and today many Kumeyaay proudly continue their traditions with modern adaptations.



Kumeyaay Indians drawn by artist with the 1849 U.S. Boundary Commission expedition

A BRIEF HISTORY Spanish Settlement

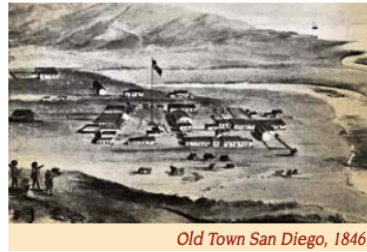
In 1769 Spanish colonization of Alta California began in San Diego with construction of a military outpost called *El Presidio Real* and of *Mission San Diego del Alcalá*, the first in a chain of 21 California missions. Directed by the Franciscan padres, mission

Indians cultivated crops, manufactured blankets and clothing, provided construction labor, and raised livestock.

Despite Spain's orders severely restricting trade with other countries, the Spanish padres exchanged otter skins, cowhides, and tallow for manufactured goods and luxury items from the United States, Europe, and China.

The Mexican Period

In 1822 a Mexican military command arrived in San Diego. Mexico had gained its independence from Spain the previous year.



Old Town San Diego, 1846

The small settlement initially consisted of the nearby presidio housing a military garrison, the mission six miles inland with its labor force of Kumeyaay

Indians, and the port where ships stopped to trade for supplies.

Spanish soldiers began building residences below Presidio Hill in the early 1820s. Sun-dried adobe brick was their traditional building material, since wood was scarce. Soon five houses belonging to the Carrillo (and later Fitch), Ruiz, Ybañez, Serrano, and Marron families became the nucleus of the community. By 1825, the adobes formed a rough but orderly street pattern around an open plaza. Two of the finest structures, begun in 1827 and



Living History participants

Figure 7.22: Old Town San Diego State Historic Park’s Park Brochure’s revealing of the “cultural influences that make California special” (CA State Parks, 2016). This brochure page includes the first paragraph of the park’s summary of the history of “The Mexican Period.” Though this paragraph refers to a Mexican military presence in the region and the country’s winning of its independence from Spain, the image featured next to this text regarding Mexico’s military is a visually familiar *cultural* display of gallant *dons* and *donas* and happy and welcoming Californianas. Additionally of note to the previously discussed claim that the park obscures the ongoing project of settler colonialism and casts Indigenous life and culture as elements of a distant past is the brochure’s boxed summary of Native American history. Its visual and graphic design, as contained and apart, underscores the park’s broader treatment of Indigenous history as primarily a separate and removed ‘distant past’ from the park’s ‘interpretative period,’ except for a “Native-plant landscape” that “today...marks part of the territory of [their] early settlement before the arrival of the Spaniards” (ibid). Furthermore, the insert’s verbiage also continues to display the 1977 General Development Plan’s sanitization of early colonial history, stating, “At first, the Spanish settlers were welcomed by the Kumeyaay, but challenges to traditional ways increasingly affected their lives.” This phrasing suggests the inability of ‘endemic man’ to navigate and adapt to modern ways of life (as opposed to contextualizing the consequences of their exposure to systemic structures of violence and forced labor). This reading becomes especially apparent when immediately followed by the observation that the “resilient” Kumeyaay culture which *has* survived has done so by “continu[ing]...traditions with modern adaptations.” From CA State Parks, 2016, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park [Brochure with map], retrieved from <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/663/files/OldTownSanDiegoSHPFinalWebFile100516.pdf> Copyright 2002 (rev. 2016) by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

had fallen into disrepair (ibid). By this point, only two serviceable cannons remained within the *presidio* walls (Ruhlen, 1959). One of those cannons was “El Capitan,” a powder propelled artillery forged in Manila in 1783 and brought to San Diego in 1800 (Smyth, 1908). In 1838, (before Juan Machado of the prominent Machado family purchased the remnants of the *presidio*) “El Capitan” was removed to the Plaza, where it may have eventually been used during the Mexican-American War (Hardwick, 2006; Smythe, 1908). By 1850, however, the cannon was repurposed within what had become an American Plaza, or Washington Square, where it “was set in the ground muzzle down for use as a whipping post for Indians who misbehaved,” a position in which it remained until 1876, four years after Old Town’s devastating fire (Mills, 1968; See Figure 7.23). By 1907, the cannon was housed within the San Diego Chamber of Commerce (Smythe, 1907).

In 1977, the Old Town General Development Plan inventories the “wheeled cannon” as part of the “street furniture” to be “incorporated [within the park] in an authentic and sensitive manner,” though it does not appear to be rendered in the designed illustration of the Plaza (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, p. 51; See Figure 6.4 from Chapter Six). The cannon, in its current presentation upon the Plaza, does not immediately register as an overtly *Mexican* symbol. Specifically, in its present arrangement (sitting upon a different wooden cart than within the ~1870s photo) it is not clearly marked by any nearby plaque, monument, or park signage. Although this design choice could be viewed as enacting the 1977 Plan which specified that all Plaza monuments and plaques be removed and placed within the Visitor’s Center, in its current design layout this measure is not evenly applied (See Figure 6.1 in Chapter Six). For instance, the park’s Plaza *does* feature two plaques, one enacted by the San Diego Chapter of the



Figure 7.23: Image of El Capitan (date unknown) upon the Old Town Plaza. However, we can speculate an early to mid 1870s timeframe for this photo as the Cosmopolitan Hotel can be seen in the background (and it was established in the early 1870s) and since the historical record indicates that the cannon was removed from the Plaza in 1876. SOHO (Save Our Heritage Organisation), 2010, Celebration of the Cosmopolitan Hotel & Restaurant restoration [Webpage], retrieved from http://sohosandiego.org/main/event_cosmo10.htm Copyright 2010 by SOHO. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

Daughters of the Revolution in 1920 which reads, “THE END OF THE KEARNY TRAIL²⁴, DECEMBER 12, 1846,” and the other which proclaims that “ON THIS SPOT THE UNITED STATES FLAG WAS RAISED IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BY LT. STEPHEN C. ROWAN U.S.N. COMMANDING SAILORS AND MARINES, JULY 29, 1846” (See Figures 7.24 and 7.25). Thus, given the placement of the two monuments, the cannon’s lack of contextualization is conspicuous. Additionally, the weapon’s placement near the looming flagpole which bears the American and California state flags also minimizes its significance as an explicitly exterior symbol of Mexican militarism (See Figure 7.26). In fact, in this physical configuration, in concert with its decided lack of contextualization, the cannon in many ways becomes appropriated and visually *consumed* within the broader optic field of the waving American flag. In other words, the ‘ordinary’ uniformed park viewer could very well mistake the artifact for an *American* weapon--in some ways once again re-appropriating “El Capitan” within America’s larger project of power as when it served as a Washington Square whipping post.

Although the park’s ‘economy of looking’ does not completely neglect public forms of Mexican life, the park’s visually consumable Mexican cultural practices which *do* represent a more public nature are often characterized by a general sense of Hispanic festivity. In fact, it is this broader sense of festivity that is a cornerstone of the park’s celebration of Mexican culture. For instance, the park’s main brochure concludes its brief historical summary of “The Mexican Period” with the observation that during this era, “Residents and visitors often enjoyed the *customs* and *festivities* of San Diego,” adding, “The open plaza hosted fiestas, bullfights, games of chance, and other *amusements* that offered the opportunity for betting” (CA State

²⁴ At the onset of the Mexican-American War, commanding officers directed General Stephen Watts Kearny to lead the Army of the West on a trek from Kansas to Alta California (Weber, 1982).



Figure 7.24: The Plaza's Kearney Trail Monument honoring the end of the military trek of the Army of the West from Kansas to Alta California (San Diego). Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.25: The U.S. Flag Raising Plaque sits upon the Plaza with the former home of María Antonia Machado de Silvas (i.e. The Commercial Restaurant) in its background. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.26: Positioned below the towering American flag without contextualization other than plaques which all honor American military victory, the cannon in many ways seems to represent a particular American strength, as it sits before, and in seeming defense of, the American and California State flags. Photo by author, 2019.

Parks, 2016; italics added; See Figure 7.27). Apart from the brochure, since its earliest days the park itself has mobilized the visual and linguistic rhetoric of particular forms of Hispanic festivity, most notably the *fiesta*. The Bicentennial which largely inspired the park was themed “Fiesta 200” (Engstrand, 2005). And in its latest renovation, Governor Pío Pico’s San Diego home for his mother (which was the Bazaar del Mundo²⁵ for thirty-four years) is now the festive Fiesta de Reyes (or Feast of Kings), featuring a marketing tagline that claims it is a place “where history lives and the Fiesta lasts forever!” (See Figures 7.28 and 7.29). However, despite its predominant visibility within the park, the cultural emphasis on the ‘amusement’ experienced within these activities still effectively marginalizes understandings of Mexican culture. Specifically, these mobilizations reduce nineteenth-century Mexican cultural practices to simple forms of pleasure without contextualizing their complex social and political significance within Mexican, and specifically Californio, life (Gibb, 2018; Brandes, 1988; Monaghan, 1990; Field et al, 2012).

Given their lack of overt contextualization within the park, it is important to note that ‘festive’ Mexican public cultural practices of the time actually performed significant social and political work. In other words, nineteenth-century Californio public spectacles of elite weddings,

²⁵ In 2005, the park finally decided not to renew Power’s Bazaar del Mundo lease (a move which resulted in public disputes and lawsuits) (Department of Parks and Recreation for the State of California v. Bazaar del Mundo Inc., 2006). Instead, state officials brought in Delaware North, an east coast company with experience managing large-scale concessions at venues including Qualcomm Stadium and Petco Park (Harrison, 2016). Delaware North’s scaled-back more ‘authentically’ driven Plaza del Pasado (Plaza of the Past) was a public and economic disaster as attendance plummeted and within four years state profits had decreased by 66% (Wesiberg, 2009; Harrison, 2018). In 2008, Delaware North turned over their lease early to the locally operated Old Town Family Hospitality Corp. (a decision roundly endorsed by state officials) (Wesiberg, 2009). Citing a “lack of color, lack of quality and lack of excitement,” the new management’s owner, Chuck Ross, returned “color and excitement,” and introduced a new name: Fiesta de Reyes (Feast of Kings), claiming, “we didn’t try to preach, but we did try to make available the historic aspect if people wanted to go that route,” instead focusing on creating an “aesthetically pleasing, high-quality operation encompassing food and retail that people can gravitate to” (Wesiberg, 2009). It is a rich sequence of events which merges visual culture concepts including the public spectacle, representation, and the political uses of ‘color’ in imperialistic work (Taussig, 2006; Eaton, 2013; Beyes, 2017).



Figure 7.27: Page Two of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park's Park Brochure. This page continues the brochure's summary of the history of "The Mexican Period." This summary, which is only two paragraphs in length and nestled between longer treatments of the "Spanish Settlement" and "The American Period" concludes with a highlighting of the "customs," "festivities" and "amusements" enjoyed by residents and visitors alike during the Mexican period, including "fiestas, bullfights, [and] games of chance." This cultural emphasis on these 'amusement' activities reduces them to simple forms of pleasure without contextualizing their complex social and political significance within nineteenth-century Mexican life (Gibb, 2018; Brandes, 1988; Monaghan, 1990; Field et al, 2012). Additionally, the brochure's treatment of "The American Period" includes a prominent visual image of Commodore Robert F. Stockton, who captured San Diego during the Mexican-American War, along with explicitly referencing the "political transformation" that took place after American conquest (including the drafting of "a new State Constitution" and the implementation of "new American laws"--political developments left unmentioned within the brochure regarding Mexico's ascension to political independence). Finally, the brochure also includes American era imagery of particular forms of infrastructure and order (e.g. methods of transportation [mud wagon] and energy [windmill]) and visually familiar forms of women's domestication practices (e.g. quilting)--visual elements examined at the end of this chapter. From CA State Parks, 2016, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park [Brochure with map], retrieved from <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/663/files/OldTownSanDiegoSHPFinalWebFile100516.pdf> Copyright 2002 (rev. 2016) by California State Parks. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association's *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

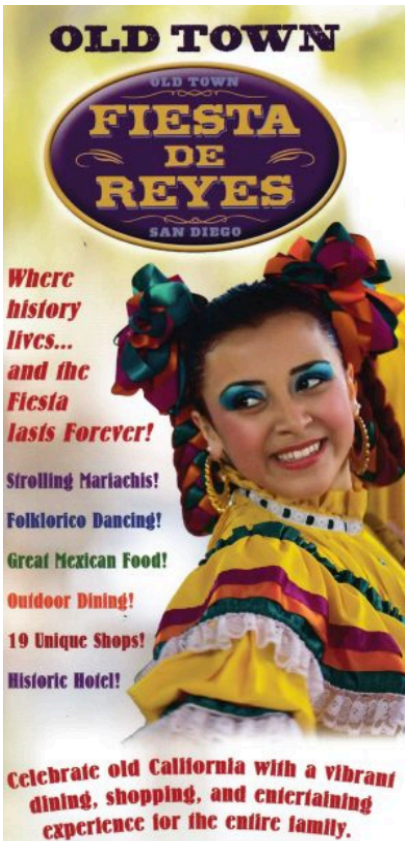


Figure 7.28: Brochure cover for the Fiesta de Reyes shops and restaurants collection which features a smiling woman in Mexican folklorico attire and captions listing the associated festivity of a *fiesta* including “vibrant” strolling mariachis, folklorico dancing, and Mexican food. Old Town Family Hospitality Corp., n.d., [Brochure for Fiesta de Reyes, Old Town San Diego], copy in possession of author. Copyright by Old Town Family Hospitality Corp. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 7.29: A decorated cart featuring sculpted Mexican musicians and lush greenery greets park visitors at the entrance of the Fiesta de Reyes complex. Photo by author, 2019.

fiestas, and community dances (or “*bailas*”), among other significant public events, represented more than simply occasions for communal festivity. In fact, they were critical technologies of power that “constituted and perpetuated” the region’s “unique power relations...through [situated, specific, and systemic] public performances” (Smith, 1892, p. 50; Gibb, 2018, p. xx). These particular public events then not only *celebrated* but publicly “*proclaim[ed]* the power of local oligarchs” within Californio society (Gibb, 2018, p. 12, italics added). Thus, they were critical communicative and meaning-making tools. Involving multiple tiers of society, and including not only elites but also “dependent laborers or foreign observers,” these public performances and their “culturally codified personal exchange were [in fact] primary media by which social hierarchy was [not only] constituted [but also] maintained in California” (ibid, p. 12). These performances, however, were more complex than simple and overt public displays of wealth and power. Specifically, during Mexico’s early stages of independence, as the young government established its political infrastructure, regions such as Alta California had court

systems but often limited access to military and police resources to enforce court decrees as most frontier military and police forces were occupied fending off Indigenous strikes. Thus, as Californio oligarchs could not rely upon a robust ensemble of “coercive governmental structures” by which to maintain their social power and economic control upon specific labor relations, they instead enacted a “seigneurial culture” of dependency (Monroy, 1990; Gibb, 2018, p. 41).

Originally apprehended as ‘feudal’ in nature by classical bodies of history literature, more recent scholarship describes “seigneurial culture” as a system that was “neither a chattel nor a market arrangement...but a *relationship* of mutual and personal dependency...[which] attached [elites] to laborers of the ranchos” (Moroy, 1990 in Gibb, 2018, p. 41, italics added). This mutually dependent relationship revolved around agreed-upon expectations and performed behaviors often most publicly mobilized in “large celebrations connected to agricultural seasonal events” (e.g. cattle slaughters or “*matanzas*”) and significant elite family rituals (e.g. weddings and baptisms) (Gibb, 2018, p. 41; Smith, 1892, p. 47). The large-scale, often days long, *fiestas* surrounding these events included socially structured dancing and feasting which was open to all (though often engaged through particularly socially-tiered practices²⁶) and paid for at the elite’s expense. As such, these events provided a participatory environment in which all “performed their proper place in [the] social hierarchy” as critically “witnessed and validated by all” (ibid). And perhaps most importantly, this system effectively established a particular form of a deeply-rooted “kinship network” that continually bound all in attendance (as elite families often served as godparents or *padrinos* to laborers’ children [but not

²⁶ Nineteenth-century Mexican and Californio societal customs and practices often dictated who could dance when and how, including “separate categories of dance that corresponded to class divisions in society” (Gibb, 2018, p. 46). For example, the hosting elite often entered last, dancing after laborers had already performed particular specified dances (ibid).

the other way around] and even intervened on laborers' behalf in social, political, or bureaucratic disputes and/or challenges--a critical duty of the seigneurial elite) (Gibb, 2018, p. 66; Nutini, 2004).

These intricate cultural systems then not only grounded social practices and protected an economic labor system through creative coercive measures that did not rely upon overt force, these performances also wielded particular forms of political influence. For example, just as the eighteenth-century salons of France provided spaces for the particular training and performance of nobility required for social mobility (Gillespie, 2004; Chartier, 1991; Kale & Kale, 2004; Whale, 1922; Rosenblatt, 2018), so too did these public spectacles of weddings, baptisms, and *fiestas* act as particular political stages. A central example of these cultural practices' political capacity was the fact that racial categories within Californio (and previous Spanish colonial) society were overwhelmingly *performance-based*. In other words, apprehensions of race often “depended on primarily correctly-performed behavior, as opposed to individual ethnic heritage...afford[ing] those of mixed heritage an opportunity for social and political advancement in Spanish and later Mexican California” (Gibb, 2018, p. 19). Thus the festive environment of a *fiesta* could in fact provide the critical backdrop for executing pivotal performances which could significantly (re)shape the social and political future of an attendee and their family.

Ultimately, this performance-based paradigm of racial categorization would in part lead to the economic, social, and political demise of the Californio oligarchy who trusted in particular modes of performance to ensure their elite status after American conquest (ibid). This miscalculation ironically came on the heels of the abdication of their seigneurial duties to their more disenfranchised dependent classes (including Natives and those most 'visibly' considered black by Anglos). During critical negotiations within the 1849 California constitutional

conference held in Monterrey, which brought together various “power blocs” from across the territory in preparation for impending U.S. statehood, Californios eventually neglected the supposed deeply-rooted bonds of their performance-based ‘kinship network’ (ibid, p. 156). Specifically, Californio elites ultimately abandoned their advocacy of these populations in a strategic move to better align with Anglo mores, hoping to ensure their own social and political survival and status quo in the process. In the end, it was a calculation carried out in vain as the negotiating Californio elite ultimately underestimated the entrenched nature of Anglo American *ethnic-based* paradigms of racial categorization, and the Californios’ decidedly ‘non-white’ status within that hierarchy, thus precipitating the subsequent racial and ethnic transfer of California’s oligarchy to an Anglo elite in the mid nineteenth century (ibid).

However, these complex sets of social and political dynamics regarding Californio public cultural practices go largely uncontextualized within the park as they are not explicitly addressed via prominent visual placards, regular ‘live’ performance explanation, or within written materials including print brochures and web-based information. Instead, the park’s treatment of these cultural practices follows a long established Anglo American academic and popular dismissal of these events, which rarely considers the “depth and social meaning” attached to pervasive forms of Mexican “social activity” that provided both “entertainment” *and* “accomplished...serious social work” (Gibb, 2018, p. 42). Therefore, the park’s celebration of Mexican culture, while highlighting and making visible a once marginalized and erased aspect of California’s public history, still relegates Mexico’s regional influence to a general ‘cultural’ flair. It is a relegation that in many ways *naturalizes* Mexican culture within the region helping to obscure the ongoing project of settler colonialism. And it also *depoliticizes* Mexico--not only helping to cast the ‘transformation’ of Mexican to American California as the result of a beneficial ‘merger’ and not

nation-building conquest. But, as the next section will further explore, this depoliticization also helps to foster the park's presentation of U.S. forms of democratic 'order' as a distinctly *American* conception.

7.4 Celebrating 'Order': The Park's Veneration of Notions of American Democracy

Just as the park enthusiastically celebrates a particular festive take on Mexican culture within the region so too does it rigorously venerate notions of American democracy. This veneration in many ways executes the broader charge of the General Development Plan, which suggested that the built environment of the park be (re)constructed, "acquired, developed, and interpreted so as to depict the *character* of a Mexican plaza with early American period *influence*" (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, p. 18, italics added). As we have seen, through the park's celebration of Mexican culture it gestures to a particular Mexican '*character*'. This American '*influence*' is not only portrayed through American symbols of nation, strength, and unity (e.g. the Plaza's towering American flag, and the multitude of other American flags and red, white, and blue bunting within the park, See Figure 7. 30). Many of the park's "American period" (re)constructed buildings also present what I call a visual 'ensemble of order.' In other words, as visitors visually take in and experience the park they are presented with a set of "American period" physical structures which highlight modern democratic institutions. In fact, of the park's eight restored and/or reconstructed "American period" buildings, only two are homes--neither of which are presented simply in a domestic capacity. The Robinson-Rose house, for example, serves as the park's Visitor Center, while one portion of The McCoy house presents domestic life (and namely a *study* and not sleeping or eating quarters) while the rest of the home acts as a regional history museum space. It is the buildings of an *institutional* nature, however, which are the focal point of this section. Each of



Figure 7.30: A park cigar shop (which is adjacent to La Casa Machado y Silvas / Commercial Restaurant Museum) featuring a ‘cigar store Indian’ and a waving American flag. Photo by author, 2019.

these buildings represents at least one of the following liberal democratic institutions and/or infrastructural forms of order: Education, the Free Press, Transportation, the Market Economy, Technology, and the Legal System. These representational spaces, while displaying the mechanics and intricacies of these various institutions, are also often imbued with an overarching American symbolism which weaves a connecting patriotic thread throughout their viewing--one that in many ways venerates notions of democracy as a distinctly American phenomenon (See Figure 7.31).

For example, the park’s restored Mason Street School, or The Schoolhouse Museum, recreates an 1865 American schoolhouse replete with blackboards, primers, and a handheld school

Site Name	Restored or Reconstructed	Site Description	Institution Represented
The Schoolhouse Museum/Mason Street School	Restored	Built in 1865 was the first publicly owned school in the county. Moved in 1873 and reconstructed in 1952. Operated by the San Diego Historical Days Association until 2013, then given to the park.	Education
San Diego Union Building	Restored	Reassembled in 1851 as a prefabricated wood frame delivered via ship and home of second newspaper. Restored in 1967.	Free Press
Blackhawk Livery Stables (aka The Seeley Stable)	Reconstructed	Built ~1868 these stables most likely represent the first structure raised for the eventual stage line which ran from Old Town to Los Angeles. Reconstructed in 1974.	Transportation
Colorado House / Wells Fargo Museum	Reconstructed	Originally built in 1851 as The Colorado House Hotel. Destroyed in the 1872 Fire. Reconstructed by California State Parks in 1992. Now operated by Wells Fargo.	Market Economy / Communication Technology
First San Diego Courthouse	Reconstructed	Built in 1849 by the Mormon Battalion as the first brick structure in San Diego. Used by Mexican and US members of Boundary Commission and served as city and county courthouse. Burned in 1872 fire. In 1992 reconstructed and operated by The First San Diego Courthouse Association.	Legal System
Jail	Reconstructed	Built in 1850 at original courthouse site.	Legal System

Figure 7.31: Compilation of what I call the park’s “American period” ‘ensemble of order’ (i.e. its collection of structures of a decidedly institutional and/or infrastructural nature).

bell. However, what also immediately draws the eye is the prominent display of the classroom’s American flag which sits on the right-hand side of the schoolteacher’s desk--as a particular visual counselor of sorts (See Figure 7.32). Adding to this American imagery is red, white, and blue bunting along the schoolhouse windows and framed portraits of American Presidents including George Washington who abides above the teacher’s desk. This symbolism seeps even into the museum’s brochure which opens with a quote from Horace Mann which reads, “Schoolhouses are the republican line of fortifications,” a statement which makes clear the park’s embrace of a particularly *patriotic* casting of the institution of Education (CA State Parks, n.d.-d). In fact, the brochure’s verbiage continues this rhetoric, proclaiming, “[t]he story of the



Figure 7.32: The teacher’s desk of the restored Mason Street School within Old Town San Diego State Historic Park as framed by the American flag, patriotic bunting, and an overseeing Founding Father. Photo by author, 2019.

Mason Street School is part of the uniquely American story of progress and democracy. A solid republic can only stand on the foundation of literate and educated citizens” (ibid). By presenting The Schoolhouse as “part of the *uniquely American* story of progress and democracy,” the site joins a broader ‘ensemble of order’ within the park which positions these democratic institutions of the republic as distinctly *American* conceptions (ibid, italics added).

In addition to the institution of Education, the park materially represents another infrastructural form of knowledge dissemination closely related to notions of democracy: The Free Press. As the Free Press is often heralded as a cornerstone of any true democratic state given its capacity to ‘speak truth to power,’ the presence of The San Diego Union Building is significant to the park’s ‘ensemble of order’ (Overholser & Jamieson, 2005; Steel, 2013; Carey, 1995). Commissioned for restoration in 1967 by James S. Copley who at the time was the publisher of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, the building is designed to look as it did when it produced the first edition of The San Diego Union in 1868. The museum offers re-created displays of clerical desks, machinery, and technical blueprints describing influences of American modernization--representations which venerate notions of American order, mechanical know-how, and innovation (Figure 7.33).

Also gesturing to forms of American mechanical and technological innovation is the park’s collection of stables/yards referred to as The Blackhawk Livery Stables, the Seeley Stables, and the Seeley Yard. These designed spaces valorize a sense of American progress as experienced through the infrastructure of Transportation (in addition to mechanical forms of smithing). Capitalizing on its high-roof, the re-created stables mobilize a panoramic optic frame through large-scale imagery to gesture to the considerable scope of the project of moving people and things across the West (See Figure 7.34). Similarly, in venerating a modern capacity to



Figure 7.33: Curated display of organizational and printing equipment including blocks, press, and drying racks within The San Diego Union Building in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. Photo by author, 2019.

transport, carry, and convey, The Wells Fargo Museum (which occupies the reconstructed Colorado House Hotel) showcases the bank's involvement in nineteenth-century American forms of stagecoaching, telegraph technology, and finance (See Figures 7.35 and 7.36). Not only offering a discreetly disguised ATM machine (given the park's visual design schema), the site also *overtly* tethers forms of American symbolism and rhetoric to the aspects of a Market Economy featured within the museum. For example, the museum displays a 15 minute video presentation of the bank's history within the West, which includes a quote from former bank president Frank Lipman (who began with the bank in 1883 and steered it through the Depression during his tenure as president) in which he states, "During these ups and downs it is the *duty of*



Figure 7.34: The Seeley Stables' panoramic view of the institution of Transportation as punctuated by large-scale imagery. Photo by author, 2019.



Figure 7.35: The Wells Fargo Museum (housed within the Colorado House) and the adjacent First San Diego Courthouse Museum represent two critical structures within the park's 'ensemble of order.'



Figure 7.36: Display of a re-created telegraph office within the Wells Fargo Museum. Wells Fargo's operation of the site may explain its inclusion of the tableau's stuffed horses--a decidedly more whimsical approach to curation than many other museum spaces within the park. Photo by author, 2019.

banking to exert a stabilizing influence. In boom times a restraining conservatism. In panic years the balanced judgement warranted by the basic wealth of our country and the *character of its citizens*" (field notes and screen photo, March 31, 2019). It is a statement that identifies a particular moral imperative for the nation's economic structures while also connecting this morality to a broader national character.

Finally, one of the park's most overt references to this particular 'ensemble of order' lies within its reconstructed First San Diego Courthouse. Though the space presents various aspects of legal order including a re-created sheriff's office, Grand Jury Room, and a reconstruction of the Courthouse's original 1850 iron jail cell, it is a curated articulation of 'order' in the region

that is particularly telling for my purposes (See Figure 7.37). Embedded within a wall mounted description of the impact of the “tidal wave of humanity” that descended upon the state at the discovery of gold, the statement reads, “The task of bringing a sense of moral, legal and ethical *order* to the former land of the Dons, still stands today as one of the major accomplishments of *our country’s* legal system” (The First San Diego Courthouse “Gold” Placard, 2019, italics added). Thus, it is a claim that in many ways articulates the park’s broader rhetorical vision of America’s seemingly *unique* democratic nature represented not only within this particular site, but within many of the park’s “American period” buildings.



Figure 7.37: Re-created Grand Jury Room within The First San Diego Courthouse featuring desks, legal tomes, a scale of justice, a casually slung noose upon the brick wall and prominent placements of the American flag and the first Judge of the San Diego-Los Angeles judicial district, Oliver S. Witherby as framed by portraits of Presidents Washington, Lincoln, and Grant. Photo by author, 2019.

Therefore, this American ‘ensemble of order’ presents democratic forms of order as a distinctly American conception--a move that, as this chapter has discussed, helps to resuscitate a dormant ‘merger’ metaphor. However, this particular presentation of order also brings to bear another significant facet of the park’s casting of America. Though park planners could have concentrated on overt displays of American strength within the park, it is often through particular nuanced practices such as the mobilization of a reasonable ‘merger,’ orderly institutions, and more *tacit* gestures to military strength that the park (re)affirms the national project. It is a particular rhetorical balance that I claim helps to underscore the narrative effectiveness of the park. Specifically, I argue that the park’s balancing and co-constituting of pioneer and liberal imagery ultimately helps to facilitate some of the park’s most significant work: (re)affirming the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy*.

7.5 (Re)Affirming America’s Pioneer Democracy

In his influential observation of American political culture, *Democracy in America* (1835), Alexis de Tocqueville claims that “[t]he first duty imposed on those who now direct society is to *educate* democracy” (Rosenblatt, 2018, p. 156²⁷; Tocqueville, 1835/2012, p. 7, italics added). And in many ways, particular mobilizations of the California origin story do just that. This chapter interrogated one way in which we learn what it means to be American. In addition to celebrating aspects of Mexican culture which casts Mexico as a particular narrative foil to America and venerating forms of American order, I argue that Old Town San Diego State Historic Park also provides a commemorative space for the critical (re)affirming of allegiance to the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy*--an often unarticulated but nevertheless critical

²⁷ This translation of Tocqueville’s quote is from Rosenblatt’s 2018 *The Lost History of Liberalism*. In Zunz’s 2012 translation of *Democracy in America* this passage reads, “To educate democracy...this is the primary duty imposed on the leaders of society today” (p. 7).

component of American political thought and practice. Specifically, Tocqueville also believed that the modern world was entangled in an ongoing “struggle between *liberty* and *equality*” (Tocqueville, 1835/2012, p. xii, italics added). And in American democracy, he saw the hopes for a possible balance between the two. I argue that what makes *Pioneer Democracy* such a powerful belief system is that it relies on both the ‘pioneer identity’ and the ‘liberal subject’-- aspects of our national character that each mobilize one of these critical tenets (i.e. liberty and equality). Therefore, while the pioneer identity and liberal subject may often seem to be at odds with one another within America’s national consciousness, I argue there is a productive quality to this tension. In other words, both represent core ideological tenets which not only contend with one another, but in many ways also support, scaffold, and fill in narrative and rhetorical gaps for one another when one reaches an ideological limit towards upholding and justifying a particular national project at hand. In fact, it is this co-constitution towards a unique amalgamation of the two (depending on the nation’s current sociocultural, political, and economic conditions) that I argue defines *Pioneer Democracy* (See Figure 7.38). And I contend that it is our nation’s ongoing engagement in *Pioneer Democracy* that represents the balance at the heart of many of the nation’s *seeming* perplexing paradoxes as a supposed ‘liberal democracy’ (e.g. slavery, conquest, and various forms of disenfranchisement).

What also makes Old Town San Diego State Historic Park such a compelling site of cultural memory maintenance and repair is its productive facilitation of these two aspects of our national character. In other words, it is a place where both the pioneer identity and liberal subject converge (and not to simply contend with or subsume the other) but to scaffold, co-constitute, and at times repair one another’s rhetoric. As such the park presents a designed space which capitalizes on culturally embedded notions of Western ‘adventure’ and ‘opportunity’ as

	<p>Pioneer Identity (Liberty-Frame)</p> <p><i>Self-reliant, Self-willed, Rugged, Choleric, Impetuous, Tenacious, Vehement, Forward-looking, Individualistic</i></p>	<p>Liberal Subject (Equality-Frame)</p> <p><i>Acquisitive, Consenting, Rational, Calculating, Competitive, Self-Interested, Industrious, Autonomous, Informed by Past</i></p>
Liberty	<p>RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual-based • Goes <i>into</i> nature • (Positive) liberty <p><i>The self-reliant freedom to go out in the world and subdue it to one's will.</i></p>	<p>SOCIAL CONTRACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based (Body Politic) • Insulates <i>from</i> nature • Tempers individual freedoms <p><i>Certain individual freedoms are forfeited for mutual security and peace.</i></p>
Equality	<p>SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political consequences to differences (Frontier Justice) • No inalienable rights (as outside the social contract) <p><i>A lesser man's inability to defend himself will give way to a stronger man's ability to dominate him.</i></p>	<p>INALIENABLE RIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences are politically irrelevant • Where once equal before God, equal before the law <p><i>Despite differences individuals can petition the State should inalienable rights be encumbered upon.</i></p>

Figure 7.38: A grid illustrating the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy* as represented by the ways in which the Pioneer Identity and Liberal Subject balance and co-constitute one another within the national character, imagination, and political judgement in ways often at the center of our political theory and practice.

reinforced by the prolific mythology of the West (See Figure 7.39). Yet it also acts as a place which venerates staid eighteenth-century Founding Fathers from the Eastern seaboard who were often mythologized by the actions of their pens not muskets. Additionally, the park casts not the ‘rip snortin,’ ‘rootin tootin,’ ‘lawless’ frontier often re-created in popular spaces of Western (edu)tourism and entertainment (e.g. Disneyland’s Frontierland, or San Diego County’s Julian which features re-created high noon shootouts)--a portrayal that in some ways actually aligns with aspects of the region’s historical record featuring saloon skirmishes upon Washington Square. Nor does the park mythologize the isolated Western frontier of lone rugged individuals,



Figure 7.39: Children visiting the park play upon the cannon in the main Plaza. Given its lack of contextualization (or designation as the site of former Indian corporal punishment, humiliation, and abuse) it is instead presented as an open-ended experiential artifact and thus in this instance as a backdrop to Western-themed imaginative play. Photo by author, 2019.

instead embracing the emergence of a particular American body politic which, through a tenacious pioneer spirit, brought “a sense of moral, legal and ethical *order* to the former land of the Dons,” and carved out a ‘*true*’ nation where there was none (The First San Diego Courthouse “Gold” Placard, 2019, italics added; Figure 7.40). And finally, the park also circumvents prevalent monocultural representations of the ‘birth’ of American liberalism in Philadelphia, celebrating instead the ‘cultural’ flair and influences of a ‘passionate’ and ‘lively’ people also rendered politically inconsequential in our wake.

Given this broader framework, and after moving through this three-part case study, we can appreciate the comprehensiveness of the recalibration of the California origin story told within Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. This recalibration is not only a specific commemorative response to change, though this response is certainly significant. Nor is it



Figure 7.40: Re-constructed iron jail cell which stands behind the Courthouse (with The Schoolhouse and costumed docents in the background). The cell is not highly visible within the park as no signage accompanies its direct presentation (further information is provided however within the Courthouse). This visual design choice aligns with the park's general tendency to grant significant visual and narrative primacy to American forms of order that relay a broader sense of edification, progress, and betterment as opposed to overt shows of force. Photo by author, 2019.

simply a celebration of the seeming 'merger' of Mexican 'culture' and American 'order' within the region's 'multicultural' nature--a critical (post)modern narrative in itself. I argue that this story is *also* a celebration of an amalgamation of two of the most significant aspects of our national character: our pioneer identity and our liberal subject. And as such it is also a public (re)telling of '*how it came to be*' that these elements of our character harnessed *liberty* and *equality* to make not only a region but a nation. As such, another major 'public spectacle' at play within the park is the public viewing, acknowledging, and assertion of the seeming entangled nature of the pioneer identity and the liberal subject within the fabric of our nation. Therefore the park, and the viewing experience it provides, acts as a public declaration to the commitment to political conditions in which critiquing one aspect of the *Pioneer Democracy* amalgamation is often to be cast as 'unpatriotic,' and where the attempt to disengage one strand of its

hybridization threatens to untangle not only its complex knot, but in many ways to undo *America* itself.

7.6 Concluding Thoughts

The Old Town park planners were in fact quite astute when they claimed that “History is the cumulative record of constantly changing situations,” as time and change inform, (re)shape, and at times strengthen the stories we tell about ourselves (CA Department of Parks and Recreation, 1977, p. 4). This three-part case study then in many ways represents my formalized entrance into examining this space. Thus, I intend to hone and continue to develop this project. Areas within the park which present further opportunities for study (among others) are: (1) archaeological findings at the McCoy House which have spurred a broader conversation regarding ‘representation’ in the park; (2) the Park’s developing partnership with local Kumeyaay nations to create a Native-inspired trail on the park’s premises that will include Indigenous stories, Native plants, and will help to make visible Indigeneity within the park’s ‘interpretative period;’ and (3) the recent renovation of La Casa de Estudillo which debuted as I was completing this dissertation. This new renovation makes particular interventions often missing in other areas of the park (e.g. contextualizing multiple uses of the *casa*’s space and offering limited explanations of the social nuances of seeming cultural events which took place within the adobe’s *sala*). However, its renovation also adheres to other entrenched practices of dominant forms of meaning-making and remembrance. For instance, the same group which facilitated its 1972 renovation (when they updated its rendering as ‘Ramona’s Marriage Place’) once again spearheaded this endeavor: The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, a lineage-based women’s organization whose membership is “composed entirely of”:

women who are lineal bloodline descendants from an ancestor of worthy life who, residing in an American colony, rendered efficient service to our country during the Colonial period, either in the founding of a State or Commonwealth, or of an institution which has survived and developed into importance, or who shall have held an important position in a Colonial government, or who by distinguished services, shall have contributed to the founding of our nation (The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, 2019, italics not added).

Also calling themselves “History’s Keepers” as they operate like-projects across the nation, their long-standing relationship with Old Town San Diego State Historic Park brings to bear the critical hegemonic knowledge (re)production practices which inform the ‘hidden curriculum’ within the park (The National Society of Colonial Dames of America, 2019). These are the memorial webs which continue to entangle and ensnare our mobilizations of the past and as such they compel and support my desire to continue not only this study but others which chart the political work of cultural remembrance.

Chapter 7 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.

Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

Memory's Webs: Concluding Thoughts on the Significance of Remembering and Forgetting in America

8.1 Introduction

On June 2, 2017 the annual San Diego County Fair opened for its 26 day run. Celebrated as a cultural institution, the largest county fair in the U.S. has been operating annually in some form or another since 1880 minus a few lapses, including a few missed years during the Great Depression, and during World War II when the fairgrounds halted festivities to serve as housing and training facilities for American soldiers (Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2018). The 2017 season of the 'Del Mar Fair' (as many locals still call it due to its location at the Del Mar race tracks) saw 1,565,933 visitors pass through its gates--the second largest draw in fair history (Garke, 2017). Fairgoers enjoyed carnival rides, agricultural displays, exhibits, shopping halls, and consumed copious amounts of fried foods including 30,000 pounds of bacon and nearly 7,000 doughnut fried chicken ice cream sandwiches (ibid).

Upon arriving at the fair's main entrance, visitors were welcomed by a 16-foot bronze statue of Don Diego, a gallant looking caballero and the fair's symbolic host¹. With a sombrero

¹ After its World War II interruption fair organizers looked for ways to reinvigorate public interest and in the once-ritualized tradition and re-prime their imagination for such festivity after war. According to the fair's historical account: "[t]o get the fair-going public back into its old habit, the promotion department pulled out all the stops in publicizing that year's Fair. One of their ideas was to have their artist draw a symbol of hospitality for the fair. The picture the artist came up with was a dashing caballero, smiling and welcoming all with hat in hand — 'Bienvenidos, Amigos.' Don Diego was born, and he would remain the most-recognized symbol of the County Fair for four decades to come. The character was based on a real-life Don Diego, Don Diego Alvarado...The image was used in all Fair promotions. But the publicity people wanted more than a picture, so they hired an actor to play the part. In 1947, the actor hired to fill the role was a young Spaniard by the name of Tom Hernandez. His Don Diego was to be the longest-lasting role in show business history at that time. He was not available for the 1948 fair, but

in one hand and his other arm outstretched, he bears the message “Bienvenidos Amigos.” Unveiled in 1985, the statute pays homage to both the actor-portrayed fictional ‘Don Diego’ who personally greeted fairgoers from 1947-1984, and the real-life Don Diego Alvarado on which the character was based. The ‘real’ Alvarado, on whose land grant the fairgrounds and racetrack now reside, was a prominent Mexican landowner and descendent of Juan B. Alvarado, a Spanish settler within the original 1769 San Diego settlement (Brandes, 1965; Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2018). According to the Del Mar Fairgrounds History, Don Diego “was known for his grand parties, and was regarded as a local symbol and gracious host”--a gallant and festive portrayal that certainly aligned with mid to late twentieth-century regional commemorative practices (Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2018).

Accompanying the Don, 2017 visitors were also greeted by a more recent piece of cultural iconography--the annual fair theme. Since 1998, the fair has adopted a theme that often exhibits a particular aspect of San Diego (e.g. Dr. Seuss [2004], American Veterans [2007]) and/or a characteristic of summer fun (e.g. baseball [1999], surfing [2001]) (San Diego County Fair, 2019). 2017’s theme, “Where The West Is Fun,” joined together San Diego history and festivity. The ‘Wild West’ inspired design celebrated the period’s romanticized sense of gaiety and adventure along with its historical ties to San Diego--a seemingly perfect thematic marriage of ‘fun’ and ‘place’ which are the basic building blocks of any county fair. So as 2017 visitors flocked through the main gate and took in the brightly colored tents and displays, heard the shrill shrieks of ride-goers, and inhaled the mingling aroma of kettle corn, fried foods, sunblock, and the not too distant Pacific Ocean--the theme’s looming image of a hat wearing, bandana-clad

returned in 1949. He portrayed the living Don Diego every year after until his untimely death in 1984. For 37 years he made Don Diego come alive two months of the year, as he traveled the county in advance of the Fair to promote it, and then maintained a prominent presence during it” (Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2018).

cowboy astride a nearly bucking bronco was most likely a fitting display for the ‘All-American’ adventure many hoped awaited them. And more than likely, as they passed through the gates ready to take on the fair, most visitors were not thinking of the outcry that had originally accompanied the theme--nor the scrambling efforts to salvage it.

The original advertising campaign for the 2017 Fair featured the theme, “How The West Was Fun” (Tash, 2016; See Figure 8.1). This theme capitalized on culturally significant wordplay, gesturing to the popular idiom and classic Hollywood movie, *How The West Was Won* (1962). As such, it makes sense to briefly contextualize this film. Spanning fifty years between 1839-1889, this epic Western (directed by John Ford and Henry Hathaway and starring a blockbuster cast including James Stewart, John Wayne, Gregory Peck, and Debbie Reynolds)



Figure 8.1: The original advertising campaign for the 2017 Fair featured the theme, “How The West Was Fun.” After protests from local American Indian tribes, the fair organizers agreed that the theme implied “that the winning of the American West from Native Americans had been ‘fun’” and amended the theme to the more culturally sensitive, “Where The West Is Fun” (see Figure 8.2). From J. Tash, December 27, 2016, Fair changes 2017 theme after local tribe complains [Internet news article], *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. Copyright 2017 by San Diego County Fair. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).

chronicles a family saga that unfolds along with and through Western expansion, including hallmarks such as the Gold Rush, the Civil War, and the construction of the railroad. And continuing this display of cultural iconography, the film's epilogue features contemporary footage of early 1960s Los Angeles and San Francisco, highlighting icons of modernity including a four-level freeway interchange and the Golden Gate Bridge. These images visually underscore a broad theme of the film: we owe the marvel of today and the promise of tomorrow to our winning of the nineteenth-century American West.

The movie was a massive critical and commercial success. It was the second highest grossing film of 1963; it won three Academy Awards (writing, editing, and sound), and was nominated for five more including Best Picture (IMDB, 2019). It was also technologically significant as it was one of only two dramatic films shot in Cinerama, a widescreen process popularized in the 1950s that requires three projectors and a curved screen for viewing, a technique considered a pioneer of contemporary immersive virtual reality entertainment (Chesher, 1994; Biocca et al., 1995; Biocca, 1992). Thus, viewing the movie became a cultural event. And in 1997, thirty-five years after its release, the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress selected it for preservation, a distinction only extended to films considered "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" (Library of Congress, n.d.).

This all being said, the 2017 San Diego County Fair organizers may not have necessarily been thinking of the minutiae of this film or its novel Cinerama significance in both film history and media studies when they came up with their original theme. However, we can safely presume that they were most certainly gesturing to the film's broader culturally embedded narrative that extends beyond a simple movie plot and memorializes a particular origin story of the American West and our nation. This is an origin story where white American settlers,

through tenacity and grit, took on the wild and won--completing the expansion of a great nation in the process. And more than likely, they were celebrating the general 'feelings' that both this mythology and the widely used idiom '*How the West was won*' often evokes--not simply of national pride or idealism, but also adventure, daring enterprise, and more simply: fun.

Except, for many, the 'winning' of the West was not so amusing. Upon the launch of the original "How The West Was Fun" theme, American Indian tribes across the San Diego region publicly protested the theme. They drafted and sent a letter to the fair board that was also copied to then California Governor Jerry Brown's tribal adviser, calling the logo and theme, "extremely offensive in light of the history and experience of genocide for the Kumeyaay Nation and other Native nations during the so-called settling of the west" (Tash, 2016). The letter prompted a round of discussions and after meeting with a consortium of nineteen local tribes, fair organizers agreed that the theme implied "that the winning of the American West from Native Americans had been 'fun'" and amended the theme to the more culturally sensitive and contemporary minded, "*Where The West Is Fun*" (ibid, italics added, See Figure 8.2). Additionally, the fair board sought to include Native American history and culture into the fair's Theme Exhibition Hall--a move they claimed was well underway before their receipt of the protest letter (See Figure 8.3). And with these maneuvers, local news outlets proclaimed "the theme issue ha[d] been resolved" (ibid).

While certainly offensive and myopic in many ways, the fair board's original theme is far from surprising. In fact, it was the explicit letter of protest from local tribes that helped to make plain often taken-for-granted and widely adopted narratives that imply that winning the West *was* fun, an ethos that grounds many Hollywood Westerns, 'Cowboys and Indians' make-believe play, and the sense of revelry that permeates much of nineteenth-century American West themed



Figure 8.2: The revised theme for the 2017 San Diego County Fair which attempts to foreground a *contemporary* focus on nineteenth-century cultural remembrance by changing the theme’s tense to present-day (i.e. “is”) and granting primacy to a celebration of the current region (i.e. “where”) as opposed to the acts of conquests that led to today’s political, cultural, and social infrastructure and climate (i.e. “how”). From Del Mar Village Association, n.d., San Diego County Fair [2017], retrieved April 30, 2019, from <https://visitdelmarvillage.com/event/san-diego-county-fair-6/> Copyright 2019 by Visit Del Mar Village. Reproduced under Fair Use in accordance with the Visual Resources Association’s *Statement on the Fair Use of Images for Teaching, Research, and Study* (2013, pp. 11-12).



Figure 8.3: Native American performers, including some of the author’s InterTribal Youth students, birdsing on the ‘Pioneer Theater’ stage within the Theme Exhibition Hall of the 2017 San Diego County Fair beneath the steely gaze of John Wayne. Fair organizers sought an inclusion of Native American history and culture within the themed exhibit. Photo by Nalini Asha Biggs, 2017. Reproduced with permission of Nalini Asha Biggs.

tourist attractions. Contemporary scholars of the American West often marvel at this phenomena and the ways in which ‘fun’ has been added to the list of things that describe Western settlement. In the Introduction of her exhaustively researched *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, historian Patricia Limerick (1988) observes that while both slavery and conquest “tested the ideals of America,” they each traversed very differing paths into national memory (p. 18). While the legacy of slavery became “serious business” and the domain of national reflection as Southern historians staved off attempts to completely romanticize the antebellum period--she notes that conquest became the stuff of nostalgia, popular entertainment, and national escape (ibid, p. 18).

This seeming omnipotence of the Western Myth has proved challenging for many Western historians. In the recently updated preface of the aforementioned text, Limerick chronicles her protracted and unsuccessful struggles to unseat the romanticized and commercialized Myth of the West, noting she finally changed tactics--deciding why not “co-opt the myth and enlist its endless energy for good causes...[as]...even the devil can quote Scripture” (ibid, pp. 9-10). In the introduction of this dissertation I share my reflections regarding a meeting I had with Limerick in her Boulder, Colorado home (nearly one year after the 2017 San Diego County Fair), a conversation in which we questioned this very phenomena of Western ‘fun’ as well as the often entrenched divide between American Western ‘history’ and ‘myth’. It proved to be a pivotal conversation as Limerick advised me to pursue my narrative interests in my own analysis of the West. Ultimately, this inquisitive stance not only helped me to follow a long held personal interest in storytelling, and particularly national narratives, but it also allowed me to utilize my academic training as an emerging communication scholar.

Specifically, early in my research process when attempting to articulate my particular interests in the West, my Advisor and Dissertation Chair Valerie Hartouni told me that what it seemed I was trying to describe was a potential *cultural memory* project. It was a significant observation within my research trajectory, ultimately providing me with a theoretical vocabulary to utilize and a body of literature on which to draw and frame my work. Therefore in concert with Limerick's advice to lean into my interest in storytelling, I was able to craft a stance that firmly viewed cultural memory as a particular kind of narrative product and activity. Such a move became critical in positioning my dissertation as a narrative examination of cultural remembrances of the origins of California--an examination, however, very much rooted in an underlying interest in the broader mythology of the American West, its cultural embeddedness, and its political implications. Adding texture to my analysis were other relevant theoretical frameworks often shared or introduced to me by my Dissertation Committee, including but not limited to: Cultural Studies and Political Theory (Valerie Hartouni); Performance Studies and Psychoanalysis (Patrick Anderson); Learning Sciences and Situated Practices (Angela Booker); Film Theory and Media Practices (Zeinabu Davis); Material Culture and Popular Culture (Chandra Mukerji); and Education and Storytelling (Alison Wishard-Guerra).

Thus, as I reach the conclusion of this dissertation, I realize that, in many ways, I have been gesturing to the San Diego County Fair's original 2017 theme. While my project did not necessarily interrogate 'How The West *Was* Fun', I began to lay the groundwork to ask and examine at length 'How The West *Was Made* Fun'. As such, I hope to build upon this dissertation by writing a more detailed genealogy which uses Old Town San Diego State Historic Park as an extensive case study to not only chart how remembering the American West became a festive national pastime but how it helps to (re)affirm our allegiance to a notion of *Pioneer*

Democracy. Focusing on the ‘making’ of this narrative will allow me to continue to gesture to the cultural *production* of memory, while embarking upon a genealogy should help me to question *how* this came to be instead of being constricted by *why* (Foucault, 1977b; Nietzsche (1887 [1989])).

However, before leaping off to my next scholarly endeavor, it makes sense for me to first pause and take stock of this dissertation. As such, it seems to me the best way to draw to a close is to look upon my project and consider how I may contextualize its broader relevance and what I hope it imparted. Therefore, this conclusion specifically addresses: (1) the contemporary relevance of my project, and (2) four core themes of this dissertation related to cultural memory and its broader significance, including: cultural memory’s *presentness*, *embeddedness*, *usefulness*, and its *politics*.

8.2 Contemporary Relevance of My Work

Embarking on a study that examines how cultures remember, or more specifically how we represent the past in America and how that remembrance informs notions of Americanness, can at times seem particularly esoteric. In fact, early in its development when I would discuss my project, especially in non-academic settings, I often worried that my research would be considered a theoretical exercise, far removed from the realities of everyday life. However, in the course of thinking about and crafting this dissertation two national incidents, among others, helped to contextualize the contemporary relevance of such a project: deadly protests in Charlottesville, Virginia and the Presidential campaign and election of Donald Trump. As such, it makes sense to unpack these incidents in relation to my work and to illustrate the broader significance of continued examinations of this kind.

On August 12, 2017 our nation experienced a pivotal event that soon came to be defined by a single word: Charlottesville. It was there, in the small college town of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the pending removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee sparked deadly white nationalist protest (Fortin, 2017). Almost immediately, an explicit national debate emerged within everyday circles, news outlets, and social media regarding how we approach public commemoration of the past and the political fallout of such decisions (ibid). In the wake of Charlottesville our national imagination and vocabulary appeared to expand (or better yet to *recall* what was already known on some level). As such we began to explicitly *talk* about that which is often unacknowledged or obscured within everyday life. Meaning, not only was the nation discussing the perceived voracity, value, or offensiveness of particular objects of remembrance, in some cases we were explicitly discussing the *production* and *persistence* of entrenched cultural facts and the sociocultural and political structures that support their (re)production--including particular forms of violence. Thus we were corporately fleshing out the stakes of cultural flashpoints like hashtags of #RepresentationMatters or the well-intended, but certainly misguided, calls to ‘decolonize²’ history. And in doing so, we were publicly dissecting the complexities of a body of “tacit knowledge” that, while generally left unspoken, “constitute[s] the heart of daily existence” (Mukerji, 2014, p. 348). In other words, we seemed to be articulating the often inarticulable (Mukerji, 2014).

At the core of this seeming inarticulability is the fact that products and practices of cultural memory are often taken for granted and enshrined as common sense. And in their

² Eve Tuck, a Critical Race and Indigenous Studies scholar, and K. Wayne Yang, a scholar of Ethnic Studies, offer in their pivotal work “Decolonization is not a metaphor” (2012), a critique against the pervasive adoption of the term ‘decolonization’ within various forms of social justice rhetoric. It is an appropriation that they argue effectively reduces its use to a general metaphor for equity as opposed to an explicit call for the repatriation of Indigenous land and life (ibid).

maintenance they are generally enveloped in a sheen of banality. In other words, *objects* of public memory may be heralded as exceptional or unique (e.g. war heroes, athletes, battles, national tragedies, etc.). Yet the *forms* of their remembrance (e.g. statues, monuments, films, museums, ‘retired’ jerseys, books, etc.) and the *implications* of their commemoration (e.g. regarded as significant, as ‘history,’ as cultural ‘fact,’ as ‘loathsome,’ ‘tragic,’ or ‘honorable,’ as how something ‘came to be,’ etc.) are often taken for granted as *everyday* ritualized practices that produce *logical* commemorative results. And when we view this phenomena through an infrastructural lens, we can recognize that maintenance projects, including their “subtle arts of repair,” are frequently rendered mundane, often to the point of seeming invisibility, until or unless an infrastructure becomes so broken that it fundamentally disrupts patterns of everyday life (Star, 1999; Graham & Thrift, 2007; Jackson, 2014, p. 222; Graham & Marvin, 2002). I argue that Charlottesville constituted such a national breaking, and its fallout our disruption. Specifically, the events that unfolded in Charlottesville in August 2017 helped to shine a glaring spotlight on the usually obscured yet deeply *embedded* nature of the stories we tell about ourselves, including the *political* implications of these narratives, and the lengths we will go to both protect and dismantle them--two critical concepts I will circle back to in the next section of this conclusion.

Also emerging before and around Charlottesville was the second national experience which seemed to further contextualize my work and its everyday significance: the 2016 campaign and ultimate Presidential election of Donald J. Trump. Officially beginning in June of 2015 the Trump campaign became a spectacle of sorts. It not only resuscitated various forms of print and TV news media, but it also mobilized the role of online and social media platforms in politics to degrees that historians, media and communication scholars, political scientists, and

other researchers are still attempting to articulate and in some cases quantify (Enli, 2017; Wells et al., 2016; Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Ott, 2017). Like most Presidential bids, the campaign explicitly tethered practices of cultural memory to notions of ‘Americanness.’ However, the particular ‘America’ the Trump campaign evoked became a catalyst for national debate.

Running on a tagline to “*Make America Great Again*,” the Trump campaign channeled particular forms of remembrance that hearkened to a past America, one of opportunity, order, security, and purity which could be reached again should their candidate ascend to the Presidency.

Furthermore, during his campaign two additional rhetorical phrases came to define his national platform: “*Lock Her Up!*” and “*Build That Wall!*” (Stevenson, 2016; Martin, 2017). Like “*Make America Great Again*” these two phrases also tapped into renderings of the past to reconcile contemporary anxieties, desires, and tensions. Specifically the first phrase, “*Lock Her Up!*,” gestured to Trump’s threats to, as President, call for the formal investigation of his fellow candidate, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, for many reasons, but centrally for her alleged role in the speculated ‘acid washing’ of a computer purported to contain classified information (Bordo, 2018; Shane & Schmidt, 2015). It was a rhetorical device that, in addition to providing his supporters an easily adopted catchphrase and rallying cry, performed critical work: (1) it ramped up animosity between Trump and his political foe; (2) it acted as a show of force, illustrating both Candidate Trump’s supposed strengths as well as the vigor, authority, and respect he could allegedly restore to the nation as President; (3) it played upon gender politics, signaling to voters who viewed Clinton as ‘shrill’ at best and a ‘feminazi’ at worst, and who were eager to not only ‘lock *her* up’ but to properly corral emerging sociocultural mores and a contemporary ‘tyranny of political correctness’ seemingly run amok in the nation (Lee & Lim, 2016); and (4) most importantly, it symbolized one of the two core tenets of the Trump

campaign: *Anger*. Courting a base from at times seemingly disparate swaths of the nation, Trump's campaign was able to effectively mobilize, politicize, and activate growing anger and resentment towards, among other things, ever-increasing systems of economic inequities, stagnation and loss of opportunity, entrenched status quos which produced 'career politicians' and seemingly 'rigged systems,' and a narrowing of white male entitlement that while still prevalent was increasingly challenged (Smith et al., 2018; Moody, 2017; Bouie, 2016). Given these conditions, many of his supporters were ready to 'blow the whole system up' by voting for an unorthodox, seeming 'straight-talking' candidate who in their view did not need the office of the Presidency, but was seeking it to help 'the little guy' set things 'right'.

Trump's second campaign phrase was just as critical. Like "*Lock Her Up!*" the rhetorical lightning rod "*Build That Wall!*," which referred to building a massive concrete structure along the nation's Southern border, also accomplished pivotal work beyond its easy digestibility and use: (1) it provided a critical scapegoat to many of the frustrations previously listed by positioning Hispanic migrant laborers as a major cause of the nation's economic inequities--a move that linked brown bodies to the 'stealing' of American jobs (as opposed to other systemic structures including automation, decades of deregulation, creative tax codes which favored the wealthy and often the hiring of foreign labor, and the ongoing dismantling of American labor organizing and protections); (2) it illustrated decisive action, which not only gestured to the 'show of force' rhetoric previously discussed but also helped to alleviate national anxieties by identifying a tangible and clear *solution* to much of the nation's problems; (3) it weaponized racialized rhetoric by providing a catchphrase that encapsulated the racial bigotry at the root of much of Trump's campaign (including comments made during his campaign announcement in which he now infamously cast Mexican immigrants as "rapists" and people "bringing drugs

[and] crime” [Johnson, 2017]); and (4) most importantly, it symbolized the second core tenet of the Trump campaign: *Fear*. Just as Trump’s campaign was able to effectively mobilize, politicize, and activate growing anger and resentment towards a national status quo, so too was his campaign able to marshal and harness fear at the ballot box. In other words, the Trump campaign effectively articulated many Americans’ reverence and longing for particular ‘days gone by’ as well as their anxieties towards ever-changing social conditions which seemed to everyday chip away at the security of once seemingly entrenched ideologies of white privilege, patriarchy, nationalism, and American exceptionalism, and these dogmas’ ancillary moral tools including religion, education, and other forms of hegemonic social and cultural (re)production. Thus, for many Americans, to “*Make America Great Again*” was to also restore the vitality and futurity of all or some of these institutions.

And just as Charlottesville helped to illustrate the *embedded* practices and *political* implications of various forms of cultural memory, so did Trump’s continued signaling to the nation’s Southern border not only exemplify those traits, but also bring to bear two other critical aspects of cultural memory: its relationship to the *present* and its *usefulness*. Specifically, Trump’s border wall rhetoric was in many ways a commemorative exercise as it relied upon a particular origin story of both America and Mexico--a story that drew upon generations old renderings of the U.S. as a nation ‘made great’ not only by individualism and democracy but also by particular forms of order, security, and purity. And acting as a narrative foil in this story, Mexico then represented disorder, peril, and an impure and foreign Other (as well as a gateway to an even murkier unknown as a thoroughfare carrying migrants from a more distant Central America). However, though this border wall rhetoric depends on a certain rendering of the past, the commemorative act itself is decidedly a project of the *present*. And it was therefore able to

emerge as effective due to its cultural, social, and political *usefulness* during the “dialogic moment of [its] telling” and subsequent (re)tellings (Radstone, 2000, p. 11). As such, if extant conditions were to radically change, then perhaps so too would the border wall rhetoric’s serviceability evolve.

Thus, when a questioning media, combined with social pressures, compelled a then President Trump to finally remark on the public tragedy in Charlottesville, these two national events merged in significant ways (i.e. Charlottesville and Trump). Though Trump also provided prepared remarks, it was his unscripted comments which were especially telling. Specifically, his lukewarm rejection of white nationalism in concert with another entry into the Trump lexicon: his assessment that there were “very fine people on both sides” of the protests between white supremacists and anti-fascist protestors ignited further rounds of public debate regarding the incidents in Charlottesville (Gray, 2017). And though there are a myriad of relevant ways to unpack this debate, for my purposes one particular reading of this media firestorm emerged as especially fascinating. As this public dialogue ensued, we seemed to be witnessing--in real time--a “break with recognized discourse” *and* the active work of a “discursive regime” attempting to reign in such activity (Mukerji, 2014, p. 348). In other words, we were witnessing (albeit perhaps for a limited moment) a reckoning of a particular “limit of common sense” as performed on the public stage, one which seemed to transcend an “unspoken logic” in order to “force a change in *linguistic* common sense” (ibid, pp. 348, 354, 352, italics added). As such, this convergence of Charlottesville and Trump helped to make plain the contemporary significance of interrogating how we represent the past and how such practices continue to inform notions of identity, belonging, legitimacy and ‘Americanness’ in our nation. Therefore, the final section of this conclusion takes up my own project’s interrogation of

these very inquiries including four overarching themes that emerged as particularly significant in the process.

8.3 Four Core Themes of My Project

My dissertation focused on a particular (re)telling of the American West: the ‘birth’ of California as historically and culturally located in San Diego, the site of Europe's first permanent settlement in California. In doing so, it traced how a particular cultural remembrance of the West persists and remains culturally entrenched not only because it has been reiterated over and over, which is often how such persistence is generally discussed (Limerick, 1988; Brown, 2007 [1970]; Smith, 1950), but also on the important ways in which this origin story adapts and shifts over time. As such I charted this evolution through specific cultural, historical, and civic projects of cultural remembrance, a move which allowed me to examine what falls in and out of this narrative in the face of sociocultural, economic, and political change. This analysis revealed how this origin story’s recalibrations not only ensure its survival and keep the past relevant, but how--despite these repairs--the story itself continues to retain its overarching cohesiveness. In other words, we were able to see how the overall cultural work of the story, over time and across change, still remains intact: reaffirming notions of American exceptionalism. Thus, this examination interrogated one way in which we learn what it means to be American and how this particular cultural instruction persists. In order to complete this dissertation I deployed and utilized historical, archival, and textual analysis, media archaeology practices, and visual ethnography methods, ultimately bridging insights and approaches from Media & Cultural Studies, Performance Studies, and the Learning Sciences to create new knowledge about the ways in which we make meaning, imagine a nation, and shape adjacent notions of identity, power, and belonging in the process. Additionally, in the course of this work, four core concepts

(among others) emerged as particularly significant: cultural memory's *presentness*, *embeddedness*, *usefulness*, and its *politics*. This section briefly unpacks these concepts in relation to my work as well as gestures to a broader significance in apprehending these concepts.

8.3-1 Cultural Memory as a Project of the Present

Twentieth-century French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, perhaps the most influential architect of what came to be known as the contemporary field of cultural memory, not only explicitly connected memory to the social group and was the first theorist to use the term 'collective memory' systematically (Olick, 1999; Confino, 1997). Halbwachs *also* acknowledged the significance of *presentness* within cultural memory (or collective memory as he referred to his mainly social theory). According to Halbwachs collective memory is an enterprise of the *present*; or specifically, collective memory is not a phenomena in which the past imposes itself on the present; instead for Halbwachs, collective memory is the process by which present conditions influence what is remembered and how (Novick, 2000). This framework also applies to cultural modes of memory production. Keeping in mind that cultural memory is a project of the present allows us to gain valuable insight into the contemporary conditions of a society or culture. In other words, cultural memory products and practices make compelling objects of inquiry not because they inform us of a particular remembered *past* but because they are critical tools by which to understand a group's *current* desires, tensions, anxieties, and values. Cultural memory can act as a particular barometer of sorts measuring shifts and changes in the character of a group, or in the case of my research, a region or nation. Within this framework, then, we can surmise that if we want to learn about a particular moment in the nation's history, an insightful (though perhaps not a particularly obvious) place to begin is how, at that time, it treated its complex past.

For example, a present-minded view of cultural memory allowed me to examine California's development of its 'Spanish Fantasy' heritage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and not become consumed with its historical inaccuracies, fabrications, or embellishments. Instead, treating this version of the California origin story as a bellwether of sorts, I was able to inquire what contemporary conditions allowed for such an emergence and what could the creation of this narrative tell us about the people, time, and place that produced it? Specifically, what problems in the present were being addressed and resolved? And how was the past (re)shaped to negotiate present contests over social and cultural meanings? As such, this line of questioning helped me to interrogate logistical conditions including increased train travel and demographic changes, economic concerns including growing monopolies and banking crises, ideological shifts including the perception of a 'closed' frontier, and sociocultural desires including a longing for a deeply-rooted shared identity for a newly arrived Anglo majority.

However, it is important to note that such a critical focus upon the present does not negate the significance of the past. Part One of this dissertation, for example, provides a historical analysis that allows us to better apprehend future representations of California's colonial history. Yet, by honing in on the contemporary conditions that allowed various recalibrations of the California origin story to emerge across time and change, I was able to chart larger trends which informed my study. Therefore, keeping in mind the *presentness* of cultural memory can provide scholars interrogating representations of the past with a productive guide of possible places to begin such investigations.

8.3-2 Cultural Memory's Embeddedness

Throughout this dissertation I have often referred to the ways in which practices and products of cultural memory are generally taken-for-granted, enshrined as common sense, and

seemingly self-evident. These descriptions all coalesce around the ways in which cultural memory is often *embedded* into everyday ways of knowing, doing, and being. Thus, we ‘do’ cultural memory in all kinds of manners, in the ways we create and consume popular culture to how we design, move through, and experience space. Through these practices cultural memory becomes a part of the fabric of what constitutes cultural ‘facts’ or “tacit knowledge,” influencing both individuals and groups (Mukerji, 2014, p. 348). Chandra Mukerji (2014) discusses the ways in which tacit knowledge “is exercised in dull and repetitive activities...[and] seems without much character or importance,” before adding, “but this is precisely why tacit culture can be the unruly trickster in culture” (ibid). This framework helped inform my project, especially in my particular analyses of ‘fun.’ While not necessarily “dull” in its most obvious sense, I was still very much concerned with a certain *mundaneness* of particular forms and practices of fun. In other words, central to much of my project was the various ways in which seemingly *innocent* and *familiar* practices of amusement and play often carried various social and political implications--positioning these activities as particular kinds of “serious games” that consisted of more than simple entertainment, but which were also intended to educate, train, and inform (Abt, 1987, p. 9; Michael & Chen, 2005; Susi & Backlund, 2007; Ritterfeld & Vorderer, 2009; Mukerji, 2012).

For example, the sites examined in this dissertation were primarily spaces of (edu)tourism and/or cultural heritage destinations that presented complex blends of education and cultural celebration in various mixtures of ‘high’ and ‘low’ visual cultural forms (Jenks, 1995; Freedman, 2000; Efland, 2005; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). While the public’s active engagement in these critical ‘places’ and ‘pedagogical sites’ (including “Ramona’s Marriage Place,” Balboa Park, and Old Town San Diego State Historic Park) was certainly ‘fun’ and

‘enjoyable,’ I argued in this dissertation that public visitation within these spaces also represented larger visual and political performances which accomplished cultural and social work (Massey, 1991; Mukerji, 2012; Kosasa, 1998). Specifically, these examinations illustrated entertainment’s capacity to act as a powerful vehicle for (re)producing cultural meaning. As such, my examination built off of scholarship that investigates various popular cultural spaces and the ways visitors make meaning through them (Crang, 1997; Edensor, 2000; Goss, 1999; Rojek & Urry, 2002), and *specifically* spaces where visitors actively engage in transformative practices that mutually constitute various commemorative constructions allowing them to invent social traditions to accommodate rapidly changing times (DeLyser, 2003; Walsh, 2004; Sagarena, 2002; Phillips, 2003; Mukerji, 2012).

Thus, this dissertation illustrated how these pedagogical sites within San Diego not only mobilized the power of archival memory in the presentation of their built environments, but how they also tapped into an *entrenched* repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge where visitors, through their performative interaction within these curated spaces, enacted seemingly routine and indoctrinated practices in which they would, “focus on the given-to-be-seen and ignore the...given-to-be-invisible” (Taylor, 1997, p. 119, 2003). Examining the political implications of these types of ‘fun’ spaces allowed me to join scholarship which finds it “necessary to trace the links between the seemingly innocent cultural works of a society (e.g., our visual images and pedagogical practices) and the more objectionable acts of oppression they sanction (e.g., imperial conquest)” (Kosasa, 1998, p. 48; Said, 2000). In other words, by bringing to bear the *embedded* nature of the cultural memory practices and products I examined in this dissertation, I was able to interrogate the “hidden curriculum” of these ‘serious games’--curriculum which was often

'hiding in plain sight/site' (Anyon, 1980; Margolis, 2002; Freire, 2005; Hafferty & Castellani, 2009; Hafferty, 1998).

8.3-3 The Usefulness of Cultural Memory

The previous section regarding the embeddedness of cultural memory provides a relevant segue into a discussion of its *usefulness*. Cultural memory is often deeply entrenched in everyday practices and ways of life because it accomplishes various forms of critical work. Also positioned as “serviceable myths,” certain cultural memory narratives “shape and limit our understanding” of complex realities and histories, and are generally “tied to” and “reinforced by” particular mobilizations of rhetoric and imagery (Hartouni, 2012; p. 21; Rodgers, 2000; Sideris, 2013; Slotkin, 1973/2000). For example, in terms of cultural memory’s *usefulness* this dissertation joins work which examines the significance of space and built environments in everyday life, including their capacity to (re)shape political imaginations and social practices (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2002; Alexander, Bartmański, & Giesen, 2012; Joyce & Joyce, 2003; Mukerji, 2002, 2012, 2014, 2018; Kosasa, 1998; Said, 2000; Massey, 1991). In many ways then, this project in its examination of the tactical (re)shaping of past narratives also gestured to the concept of “percepticide” which was coined by performance scholar Diana Taylor (1997), and alludes to the willful “self-blinding of the general population” which can act a particular kind of useful survival tactic (p. 123).

Also central to apprehending the useful nature of cultural memory is its critically *productive* quality. In other words, these narratives actively *do*--and at times *produce*--something for us. Understanding this significant element of commemorative practices can help us to avoid the temptation to heedlessly critique representations of the past for their seeming inadequacies. As Susannah Radstone (2000) reminds us when describing our postmodern

understanding of cultural memory, memories are “complex productions shaped by diverse narratives and genres and replete with absences, silences, condensations and displacements” (Radstone, 2000, p. 11). Therefore, such a nuanced framework helped me to ask what critical product might cultural memory be creating despite, or many times *because of*, seeming ‘absences,’ ‘condensations,’ or ‘displacements’?

Additionally, keeping the useful and productive quality of cultural memory in mind allowed for an examination of its *persistence*. Specifically, this dissertation explored the persistence of a particular cultural narrative of the West and the shared identity it produces. In doing so, I argued that the California origin story illustrates that it is not only reiteration and reproduction that maintains cultural remembrance, but also critical practices of recalibration and repair. One notable recalibration within the San Diego-based California origin story that I continually brought to bear within this dissertation is the narrative’s various representations of Mexico and its relationship to the United States--with Mexico often serving as a particular kind of narrative foil to the U.S. depending upon evolving conditions within the United States. This analysis provided me key insights into the *usefulness* of this cultural memory narrative, and as such an understanding into why it continues to persist. Specifically, examining the ways in which Mexico is at times vilified, diminished, erased, re-incorporated, and even to a degree celebrated within dominant versions of the California origin story, all while maintaining the overarching cohesion of the narrative project, underscored a key element of the origin story’s persistence. This narrative persists because it performs vital cultural work: it consistently scaffolds notions of American exceptionalism in the face of changing anxieties. In other words, its specific tactics may alter (for example its evolving representations of Mexico) but its broader rhetorical strategy remains in place (i.e. to reaffirm America’s exceptionality). Therefore,

keeping in mind the *usefulness* of cultural memory can help us to better understand both its productive quality and its persistence.

8.3-4 The Politics of Cultural Memory

Though an investigation of cultural memory, my dissertation is in many ways a political project. Specifically, much of my work focuses on the political implications of cultural remembrances of California's origins and ancillary notions of 'Americanness.' In this dissertation's Introduction, I explained that some scholars are wary of particular deployments of political discourse within memory studies (Confino, 1997). For example, Sturken (1997) argues that cultural memory is not axiomatically the site of cultural resistance, stating "there is nothing politically prescribed about cultural memory" (p. 7). However, I argued that cultural memory can, and should, allow for an exploration of both the political and the cultural. And while I contended that cultural memory may not be organically political, politics are pervasive within it. Additionally, I claimed that memories may be culturally produced, but they carry political implications which exist both ideologically and materially. As such, I staked a specific claim, contending that whether or not cultural memory is actually the sanctioned space for politics, politics have firmly settled and taken up residence within it and as such I believed this process merited critical examination. At the core of this stance was the belief that such an approach does not reduce memory to the political, sacrifice the cultural, or naturalize the presence of politics within memory. Instead, I claimed, it recognizes, and in some ways foregrounds, the entangled relationship between memory and politics that lies at the core of the memorial practices that shape our national imagination.

After writing this dissertation, I still firmly believe that political examinations of cultural memory are both merited and valid. Given the *usefulness* and the often serviceable nature of

cultural memory, it only makes sense to also ask: How are these narratives useful and serviceable--and specifically for who and/or what? What mechanisms and people may be at the mercy of these narratives' service? What power structures are at play in their (re)production and maintenance? And what sets of conditions allow for these relations to take place? As such, this framework proved generative and allowed me to examine the political implications of various recalibrations of the California origin story, including the ways in which it helped to justify America's conquest of Mexico, *depoliticize* Mexico as a distinct and sovereign political unit in manners that helped to obscure the ongoing project of colonialism and support a casting of conquest as a mutually beneficial 'merger', and venerate forms of American democracy--including the ideology and practice of *Pioneer Democracy*. Therefore, while I still contend that cultural memory may not be organically political, I believe my dissertation, in tandem with other like projects, has provided enough preliminary evidence to merit continued examination of not only the tacit, but the often *explicit* politicization of cultural memory in projects of nation-building, identity construction, and power.

Chapter 8 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material.

Collins, C. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this material.

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