

War and the Making of History

The Case of Mexican California, 1821–1846

BY MICHAEL GONZALEZ

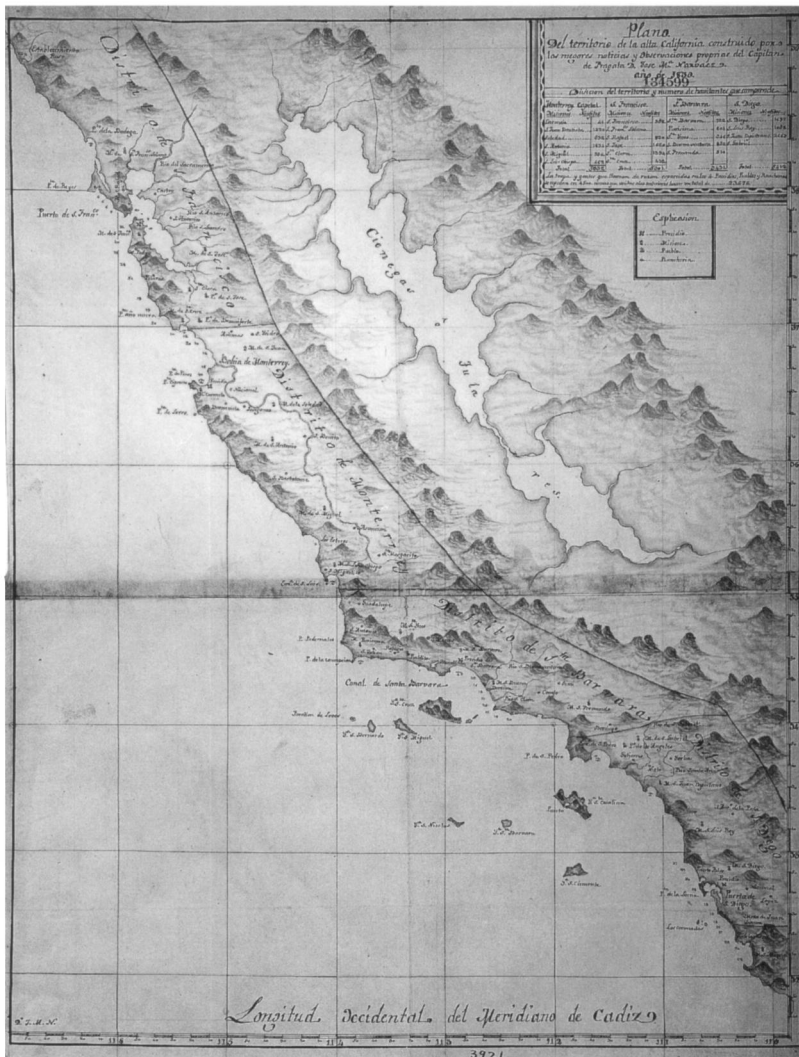
At times, the historian of Mexican California, as would the scholar of any other historical subject, must play the philosopher and contemplate the riddles that comprise humanity's existence. What seems accurate often is not, the historian discovers; and what is not accurate sometimes is. To compound matters, what is and what is not accurate, or what only seems to be accurate, depends on circumstance. Where dwells the historian—and how income, education, race, and sex shape his or her faculties—can determine the reach and limits of perception. All the more, the historian's sensibilities may reflect the time and era in which he or she resides; the past—the thing contemplated by the historian—becomes a site of contemporary yearning and angst rather than an accounting of what occurred years before.¹

Such is the case with Mexican California. Indeed, the *ranchero*—the proprietor of landed estates in the nineteenth century—embodies why the pursuit of accuracy presents challenges. For some time, the *ranchero* has figured prominently in many histories about Mexican California. But the question arises whether the *ranchero* deserves so much attention. The evidence shows otherwise and suggests that war, with the soldier at arms, may offer a better way to interpret life in Mexican California.



*The image of a serene, regal *ranchero* astride his mount may give the false impression that all was tranquil in Mexican California. Appearances could prove deceiving. Between 1821 and 1846, the years that Mexico governed California, the Californios, the province's Spanish-speaking populace, rebelled against the provincial government at least twelve times.*

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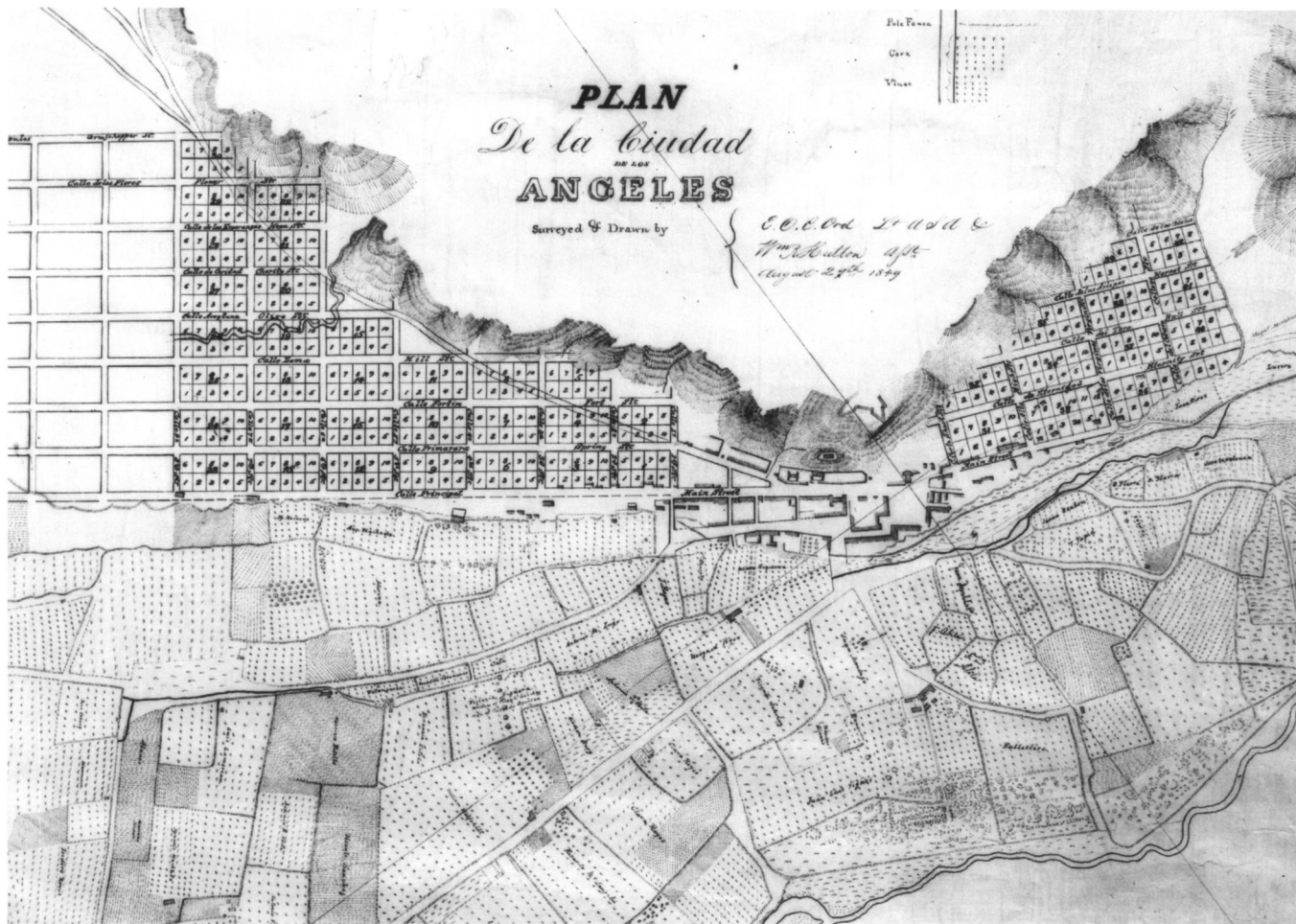
El Plano del Territorio de la Alta California, 1830. José Mariá Narvaez's map of Mexican California shows the division of the territory into four districts: the presidios of San Francisco, Monterey, Santa Barbara, and San Diego. The province also featured three civil settlements: Branciforte (site of present-day Santa Cruz), San José, and Los Angeles. Of the three, Los Angeles, the most heavily populated, was at the center of many of the province's upheavals.

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WAR IN MEXICAN CALIFORNIA

Before girding for the fight, as would suit any person going to war, we must first address the rancho's shortcomings. Many scholars argue that the rancho dominated the economic and political life of Mexican California. The rancho was "the 'big man' [who controlled] family, labor and land," declares one scholar, summarizing at one stroke what other historians have long argued.² The rancho's herds provided food. Indians and non-Indians found employment on the rancho's property. At appropriate times, the rancho staged fiestas to show his generosity and share the land's bounty with workers and neighbors.³ Scholars apparently have good reason to say that matters unfolded as they did. The Mexican Californians who helped produce the *recuerdos*—the oral histories compiled in the late nineteenth century by the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft and his staff—speak often of the rancho's influence. And scholars, who remain true to the sources, draw their conclusions accordingly.

Some rancho owners certainly had great influence, but was it always thus? Did they all command as much power as scholars say? The example of Los Angeles, the most populous settlement in Mexican California, suggests not. If by "rancho" we mean the individual who held title to his property, there were few such people to begin with. According to the Mexican census of 1844, sixteen people in the Los Angeles area meet our definition of rancho. The number is significant, but hardly the figure one would imagine. Moreover, the men who did own landed estates, or at least toiled on a rancho, often failed to impress the citizenry of Los Angeles come Election Day. Of the sixty-two men who served in municipal government between 1821 and 1848, the year that Mexico formally ceded California to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, fifteen men—nearly one-fourth of the total number of men who sat in office—had some connection to the cattle business. Of these, only five owned



Plan De la Ciudad de Los Angeles, 1849. Following Mexico's cession of California to the United States with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, Lieutenant Edward O. C. Ord (1818–1883) surveyed Los Angeles. The resulting map recorded the city's street pattern for the purpose of selling land. Although it was rendered after the Mexican period, the map suggests how farmers cultivated the land beyond the city center.

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ranchos.⁴ The other ten men worked in ranching but did not have title to the property; they worked for the proprietors, or apparently leased a portion of the estate for their own purposes. Four of the fifteen sat as *alcalde*, the chief magistrate and mayor. Another four served as *síndicos*, a position that required the occupant to press charges against delinquent residents or collect fees. The largest number, seven, were *regidores*, aldermen of sorts who represented a particular district.

Farmers, on the other hand, seemingly earned more respect from compatriots. Of the sixty-two men who held municipal office in Los Angeles, twenty-nine claimed farming as their principal occupation. Another twelve tilled the land and supplemented their incomes by working as mer-

chants or craftsmen. Even the five rancheros who won elections recognized the farmer's appeal. Four preferred to call themselves *labradores propietarios*, or farmers. The remaining man preferred the title *campista*, an individual who used his property to grow crops and raise livestock.⁵

When the inhabitants of Los Angeles wished to speak of serious matters they referred to farming. Farming could include raising cattle, but if so the speakers would have referred directly to ranchos or livestock. But by mentioning crops, or cultivation, the speakers knew what images appealed to listeners. After word came that smallpox threatened Los Angeles in 1844, two citizens warned the municipal council that an epidemic "would decimate the population of laborers who work in

agriculture—the only industry in the country.”⁶ Another inhabitant added that the scourge was a “destructive power . . . that . . . preys upon agriculture.”⁷ Californios in the northern parts of the province also used agrarian imagery. After the death of Governor José María Figueroa in 1835, his secretary, Juan Bautista Alvarado, described the governor as “one who planted the olive branch of peace and cultivated it in all manner of virtues which are progressively unfolding in the loyal breasts of these inhabitants; he to whom our agriculture owes its security and our commerce its protection.”⁸

Nonetheless, when Bancroft’s interlocutors praised the *rancheros*, they did not intend to mislead. Instead, as the observers, and performers, of history, they allowed sentiment to shape their recollections. The literary critic Genaro Padilla argues that the individuals who cooperated with Bancroft used the *recuerdos* to express their grief. They produced their testimonies in the late nineteenth century, when the Anglo Americans challenged, and in some cases undermined, the political and economic positions of the Spanish-speaking populace. To compensate for their loss, says Padilla, the Mexican Californians suffused the past with “a glow of the ideal and idyllic.”⁹ Thus, the *ranchero* embodied the stability coveted by a besieged and defeated people. As Padilla implies, by describing and even praising the *ranchero*, the Mexican Californians suggested that the harmony of bygone days had disappeared under Anglo American rule. They invoked the *ranchero*’s image to lament their predicament and denounce their tormentors.

If the *ranchero*’s status is open to question, perhaps it would work best to select an image, and by association the methodology, that would displace the assumptions that have long governed the interpretation of Mexican California. As a consequence, the idea of war—an activity that stands opposed in every way to the bucolic, pleasant images of *rancheros* at their labors—may

promise a better way to evaluate how the inhabitants of Mexican California conducted their lives. Of course, as noted above, farming might qualify as a category of analysis. Perhaps so, but cultivation remained the livelihood of a small—though significant—group of men. Indians and women, not to mention non-Indians, comprised a landless majority more numerous than farmers. If any from this group did hoe or plant seed, they toiled in a farmer’s employ. Love and marriage would appeal to many in Mexican California, as would be following the strictures of Roman Catholicism. But passion and affairs of the heart would excite the populace in different ways. Not all would fall in love, and if love did conquer, in time, as some in any age know all too well, love’s flame would dim. (And passion, too, no matter how earnest, does not always translate into love.) As for religious obligation, reverence may be heartfelt for some, but for others it would be feigned, or spurned altogether.

Only war, with its threat of destruction and slaughter, could command the people’s attention as nothing else would. Men and women, Indians and non-Indians, the young and old answered the call to arms or at least heeded the warnings that an enemy was on the march. In contrast, other activities like raising cattle, while important and certainly drawing upon the energies of many, rarely matched the attention the populace devoted to war. The Mexican Californians spoke about war in their writings. They warned of the consequences if an enemy emerged triumphant. They prepared for battle, primed their weapons, and waited for the onslaught. But if war seemed a certainty, there is some question about who, or what, was the enemy, and why some foes deserved death and some did not.

In the intersections of what we know and do not know about war, we bridge gaps or supply the missing detail, ever mindful that what seems to be often is not. For as in battle, surprises await. If all we have is a record of battles fought, or not

fought, but lack explanation about the reasons why, we seek the rationale for the combatants' wish to wage war as they did. Their thinking may not always accord with ours, a modern people accustomed to the exigencies of nuclear conflict or the war on terror. War in Mexican California must be addressed on its own terms, with the participants' peculiarities figuring in any evaluation of strategy and tactics. As we will see, the political ideals of the era, just as much as the orders to shoulder arms, determined when and at whom the combatants aimed their weapons. By understanding war in the appropriate context, we can appreciate how the inhabitants of Mexican California saw themselves and their world.

THE CALIFORNIO APPROACH TO WAR

Off to battle we go! Between 1821 and 1846, the years that Mexico ruled the province of California, the *Californios*, the Spanish-speaking inhabitants, tried at least twelve times (see page 10) to dislodge a governor, defy a governor, or ensure that their favorite sat in the governor's chair. One would think that these encounters devastated the province. They did not. On some occasions, when the governor resided in town (he often lived in Monterey or Los Angeles), the Californios refrained from forming ranks and rebelled in other ways. In 1835, for example, some vaqueros, or cowboys, in Los Angeles seized the town hall to challenge Governor José María Figueroa but rode off after listing their demands. Eight years later, disgruntled Los Angeles residents planned to capture "the person" of Governor Pío Pico. The conspirators, though, bungled the plot and landed in jail for their troubles.¹⁰ (They apparently gained their release in short order.)

In other episodes, the Californios at least prepared for war. When the time for battle approached, Californio men responded to a bell calling on members of the militia to assemble in the plaza where they heard fiery proclamations from officers or listened to town notables read

appeals from loved ones.¹¹ In one instance, the women of Los Angeles, worried about the resolve of their fathers, brothers, and sweethearts, composed a declaration that urged the men to return victorious.¹² If triumph proved elusive, the women wrote, the men should die a heroic death. Presumably heartened by these calls to act bravely, the troops went off to battle. On at least four occasions, they and their rivals camped within sight of each other. They waited for the command to fight, waited, waited some more—and did nothing. If the sources can be believed, the commanders of each side rode out to parley and settled matters without shedding blood.¹³

If the command did come to fight—which happened at least four times—the opposing sides let loose with a fusillade but frequently missed and killed no one.¹⁴ The contests, if that is the word, varied in tactics and intensity, but they often followed a general pattern. Each force, sometimes numbering as few as fifty regulars and volunteers but other times featuring more than two hundred men on horseback or foot, opened the fray with cannon fire. After a few salvos—each side usually possessed one or two, sometimes three artillery pieces—the opposing factions advanced on one another. Officers dispatched the cavalry to break their opponent's line and then ordered the infantry to exploit any breach in the enemy's defenses. But an infantry or cavalry charge was often unnecessary. The battle ended once one side bombarded the other with cannon and grape shot. After shells hit unlucky horses or mules, the force with the fewest men waved a white flag to discuss surrender.¹⁵

Sometimes the opposing sides did not even reach the battlefield or, if they did, refused to engage their foes. One witness claimed that Captain José Antonio Estudillo of San Diego, on the march to topple Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado in 1838, cringed at the thought of killing and slowed his advance rather than put his men in harm's way. Estudillo's son explained years later that his

The Twelve Rebellions of Mexican California

One could say that there were more than twelve revolts against the constituted authorities of Mexican California. In his *History of California*, Hubert Howe Bancroft writes there “was a kind of revolt in October 1828” by cavalry soldiers posted in Monterey, but he adds he has “very little information extant respecting the movement.” Because Bancroft and other sources are unclear about what transpired, we do not add the 1828 rebellion to our list. Things become more muddled for the other upheavals. Juan Bautista Alvarado’s two-year battle for the governor’s seat comprised a series of conflicts, and thus could increase the number of rebellions. To reduce confusion and uncertainty, we aim for a more conservative estimate.

1. November–January 1829. Joaquin Solís convinces soldiers of the Monterey presidio to oust Governor José María Echeandía and put Californios in charge of the provincial government. No shots are fired.

2. November–January 1831. Californios and recent Mexican émigrés rise against Governor Manuel Victoria. Two men die in battle.

3. January–May 1832. Agustín Zamorano and José María Echeandía, the first in Monterey, the other in Los Angeles and San Diego, argue, to the point of conflict, who is the rightful governor of California. Echeandía, to the horror of the Californios, contemplates liberating mission Indians to fight on his side. Bancroft says that contrary to tales of Indian depredations, there is no evidence of looting and pillaging by the native Californians.

4. March 1835. Sonoran vaqueros in Los Angeles complain about Governor José María Figueroa and seize the town hall. The vaqueros quickly abandon their cause. No shots are fired.

5. June–July 1836. Juan Bautista Alvarado, among others, ousts Governor Mariano Chico. When Chico called for reinforcements from Sonoma and San Diego, the commanders declined to obey on account of “Indian ravages” in each locale.

6. October–November 1836. Juan Bautista Alvarado and his supporters oust Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez. No combatants die.

7. January–July 1837. Alvarado faces discontent in Los Angeles, along with grumblings in Santa Barbara and San Diego. Los Angeles, in particular, continued to show defiance until acquiescing in May. But peace is brief. Los Angeles once more becomes the site of unrest. Alvarado confronts the inhabitants of Los Angeles and other southerners who contest his authority. No shots are fired.

8. July 1837. Mexican troops in Monterey challenge Alvarado’s authority. Mariano Vallejo, at the head of a militia comprised of northerners and foreign residents, convinces the rebels to put down their weapons.

9. January–April 1838. Alvarado marches south and confronts the disgruntled residents of Los Angeles and later San Diego. Reports claim that up to thirteen men died in the struggle near Los Angeles, but the information is sketchy at best.

10. January 1845. John Sutter organizes a force comprised of Americans, Indians, and some Mexicans to defend Governor Manuel Micheltona from rebellious inhabitants. No one dies in the struggles, but, Bancroft says, at Mission San José “many” of Sutter’s men “get drunk.”

11. January–February 1845. Governor Manuel Micheltona faces opposition. Los Angeles joins other settlements as a site of unrest. Micheltona is expelled from California and Pío Pico becomes governor. Bancroft calls Micheltona’s ouster “bloodless.”

12. November–December 1845. Santa Barbara and Los Angeles residents, joined by army garrisons, revolt against Governor Pío Pico. There are no casualties.

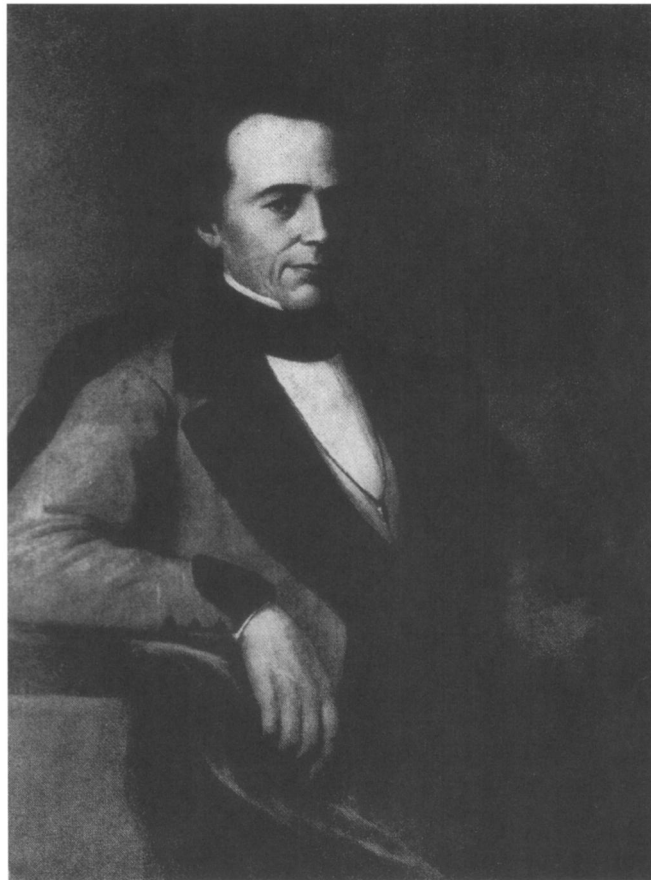
Sources (see pp. 65–68 for complete citations): For the Monterey episode of 1828 see Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The History of California*, vol. 3, 66–67. For the other rebellions, consult: Bancroft, *The History of California*, vols. 3 and 4; Rosaura Sánchez, *Telling Identities*; Leonard Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*; David Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*; Woodrow Hansen, *The Search for Authority in California*; Jesse Davis Francis, *An Economic and Social History of Mexican California*; and George Tays, “Revolutionary California.” Bancroft, though, remains the best guide for all the details about the provincial disputes.

father had no heart for combat.¹⁶ The reluctance to make war proved infectious. Individuals from outside of California, and who because of fate or fortune now resided in the province, followed the local custom to avoid combat. In 1845, the Swiss émigré John Sutter organized a troop of Americans and Indians—a smattering of Mexicans joined as well—to defend Governor Manuel Micheltoarena from rebellious Californios. Sutter did not confront the enemy. But Bancroft says Sutter’s men did raid the liquor stores at Mission San José “to get drunk.” Micheltoarena seemed especially averse to battle. When he confronted his opponents for the first time, he let the enemy escape.¹⁷ Some men under his command sensed the governor’s timidity and treated the campaign as a lark. American mercenaries in his employ, as well as the Americans who sided with his opponent, removed themselves from the field to enjoy a picnic.¹⁸

By refusing to fight, the combatants in each upheaval inflicted, and suffered, few casualties. In all the occasions where opposing forces took up arms, only two men died in combat—each in 1831 during the same fight. There are reports that as many as fifteen more men fell in battle through the years. But even if these accounts are true, during two decades of fighting fewer than twenty men died for their cause.¹⁹ As for the wounded, the sources fall silent. Of the descriptions that exist, witnesses do not provide specifics about the numbers of wounded men and the severity of their injuries.²⁰

THE MYSTERIES OF CALIFORNIO BELLIGERENCE

The Californio approach to war deserves explanation. Some scholars suggest that the Californios’ culture—the habits and beliefs they employed to regulate daily life—restrained the desire to blast or bayonet foes. One historian explains that the rebellions qualified as “internal conflicts.” The



Manuel Micheltoarena (d. 1853) served as governor of Alta California from December 1842 until February 1845, when he was expelled from the province following the battle of Providencia. The Californios accused Micheltoarena of incompetence.

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combatants saw the appeals to fight as ways to promote “group identity” and prove their loyalty to their leaders. War, or the attempt to make war, had no value other than to give Californios a chance to affirm their personal ties. The urge to kill enemies or seize territory, often the object of war, was absent.²¹ Another scholar sounds the same theme, saying that the “squabbles” erupted when Californios in the northern or southern portions of the province rallied to the side of a leader who had suffered a personal affront. The Californios shouldered arms only to prove their loyalty and uphold the leader’s honor.²² They had no interest in settling matters on the battlefield. At least one historian implies that something else

*In A. F. Harmer's painting *Traveling in the Coast Range in the 40's*, a Californio man on horseback traverses the mountains. Californio forces would have crossed similar terrain in their battles to oppose, or defend, the provincial governors.*

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was afoot. In reviewing the struggles for the governor's seat, she finds that political grievances, not the allegiance to a leader or group, convinced disputants to shoulder weapons. Unfortunately, as do other scholars, she does not say why the Californios often refused to attack one another.²³

The point is not to browbeat scholars for failing to ponder the mysteries of Californio belligerence. Rather the topic is so rich it is a wonder no one has bothered to explore the matter further. Despite the tendency of some combatants to treat campaigns as a frolic—recall that during the effort to oust Governor Micheltorena, some troopers enjoyed a picnic—the very act of preparing for war was a serious enterprise. For example, the Mexican Californians met most of the criteria the military historian Robert O'Connell uses to define a state of war.²⁴ There must be premeditation and planning. This the Californios did. To march from Monterey to Los Angeles—a distance Californio troopers traversed on at least four occasions—required some forethought. The route to take, where to camp, and any other detail that would concern how to manage troopers on

the march compelled leaders to make the necessary preparations.

Any sort of planning, O'Connell adds, required "some form of governmental structure" and "military organization." Again, the Californios did their part. It bears repeating that in all instances, the governmental structure they honored or defied revolved around the man who held office in the provincial capital. As for military organization, when they went off to fight, even if their struggles proved bloodless, the Californio troopers followed the orders of generals, colonels, and other persons of rank. Prominent rancheros served as officers—remember, not all cattlemen were ignored by contemporaries—but others also issued commands. In 1835, Antonio Apalátegui, a clerk from Los Angeles, led a revolt against Governor Figueroa.²⁵ Serbulo Varelas, a shoe cobbler, was even more intrepid. He was one of the men who tried to capture Governor Pío Pico in 1845. A year later, when the Americans took Los Angeles, Varelas penned an appeal that called on compatriots to "defend the great Mexican nation" and slipped into the countryside to prepare an assault.²⁶ The evidence is not always clear if

these men led troops into battle, but they exercised authority during political confrontations and others complied.

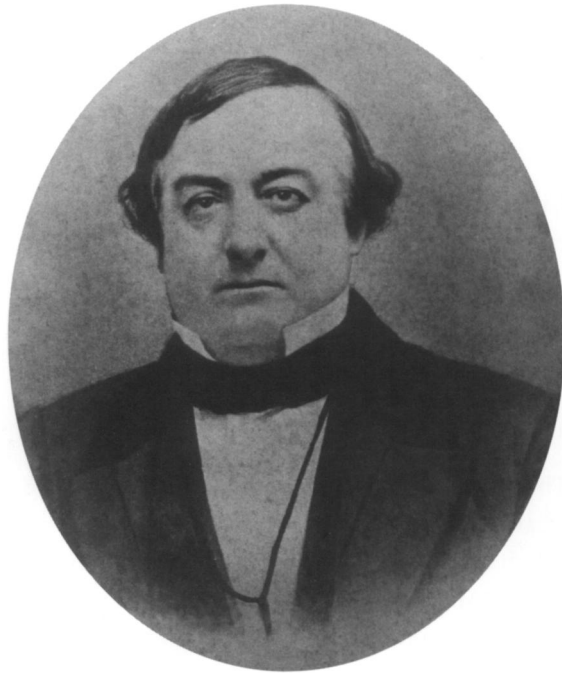
O'Connell also notes that war involves "protracted campaigns" with "palpable political goals." The Californios did not disappoint on this score. The marches from Monterey to Los Angeles often took weeks to accomplish. The Monterey forces sometimes lingered in southern California for three to four months. Their rivals from Los Angeles and other southern settlements obviously did not march up and down the province—they were closer to home—but they would spend several days, sometimes weeks, out in the field. Needless to say, the effort to prepare for an attack, or mount a defense, involved the combatants' goal to seat their man as governor. Any mention of goals refers to what O'Connell calls the "understanding . . . that the results of [conflict] will be . . . more lasting than momentary." Once more the Californios measure up. Even though the frequent struggles suggest that the disputants knew quite well that any governor they installed, or defended, could be ousted in due time, they no doubt hoped their man would finish his term in office.

If the Californios are found wanting on any criterion, more explanation is required. O'Connell states that combatants must use "the resources of the group," a point rarely mentioned in the record about the Californios' campaigns. Though no witness from the period explains how California's combatants survived during a campaign, we can reach reasonable conclusions. Mexican troops, for example—that is, individuals recruited from Mexico's interior and posted in California—apparently had little difficulty with provisions. In the instances where regulars in the Mexican army participated in provincial fights—as happened at least three times—they possibly relied on food and weapons provided by the national and even provincial government. If they robbed residents, one can imagine the howls of protest.

Given the animosity toward Mexican regulars, especially in the late 1840s, the slightest indiscretion would receive ample discussion in any contemporary record or testimony. But commentators from the era say little, if anything, about the requests made by Mexican soldiers, implying, at least in this regard, that they behaved.

This is not to say that the soldiers always treated local residents well. On at least one occasion—which admittedly did not involve preparation for battle—Mexican regulars who marched through California on their way to Monterey pestered farmers and ranchers for supplies.²⁷ Californio troopers, meanwhile, who most likely would be members of the provincial militia and not army regulars, somehow managed to procure supplies. In 1837, when Juan Bautista Alvarado and his forces descended from Monterey, the defenders of Los Angeles had their wives and daughters prepare food for camp. As for Alvarado's men—a mixture of provincial militia and Anglo American adventurers—they found ways to obtain their own provisions. The Monterey combatants apparently relied on a quartermaster to provide what they needed, or even bought supplies from the towns they passed on their march southward.

The only criterion the Californios do not fulfill seemingly involved what O'Connell calls the chance of "risking injury and death in pursuit of [their] objectives." But the Californios did take risks. They jeopardized the family's welfare when they left home to go on campaign, or endangered their livelihoods by neglecting their farms or businesses for weeks and months at a time.²⁸ The Californios acknowledged the risks they faced by marching at favorable times. Of the twelve struggles for the governorship, only two occurred during the summer months (see page 10). The lengthy days of summertime afforded residents the opportunity to harvest crops or slaughter their herds. No cause, save for the 1837 episode, proved urgent enough for the Californios to abandon their responsibilities. They knew



The participation of Juan Bautista Alvarado (1809–1882) in revolts against previous governors brought him to power in 1838. He served as governor until 1842. During his tenure, he had to contend with unhappy constituents in Los Angeles and other settlements.

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it was prudent to prepare for war when they had few chores at home. Making war in Mexican California was not a suicide pact.

War, too, or the pretense of war, risked the way the Californios recognized rank and privilege. True enough, the Californios were not as hierarchical as some scholars assume, but even so, war could level society more than the comfortable and well-born desired.²⁹ If the son of a prominent family, or a clan's patriarch, used war to increase or restore his reputation, neither man might welcome the thought that marching to battle could improve the prospects of humbler citizens. No matter how remote the possibility of bloodshed, when cobblers and clerks marched off to fight, they had as much chance as anyone else to acquire a bit of glory or impress onlookers that they were men worthy of respect. Thus, war in Mexican California threatened serious consequences. The Californios could preserve their life but they endangered their prosperity and family's welfare when they gathered for battle.

THE CALIFORNIOS' REAL ENEMIES

But on they marched. The Californios assembled for war, went out in the field for long periods of time, and obeyed their commanders. They fulfilled the criteria for war in every aspect save one: they often proved reluctant to kill one another during battle. Thus it is worth understanding why they went through the trouble to fall into formation when they knew that combat accomplished little.

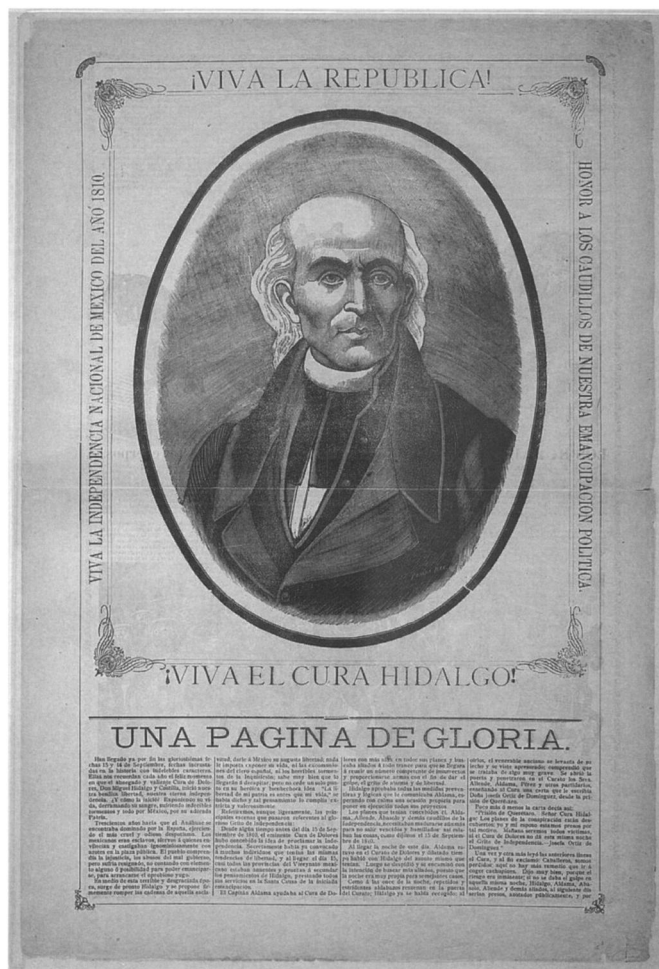
The reluctance to make war may suggest that personal ties dissipated Californio belligerence. In a province whose non-Indian population numbered only in the thousands, many inhabitants either knew or knew of each other, and their acquaintance inhibited the wish to go on the attack. It is also likely that family feeling quelled the urge to lay waste to rivals. Marriage or kinship bonds like *compadrazgo*—the practice of naming friends and relatives to serve as godparents for a child's baptism—created a familial spirit that discouraged bloodletting. Still, intimate feelings would not always deter violence. The historical record reveals that family feeling may increase, not limit, the urge to strike down friends and foes on the battlefield. The American Civil War, the Spanish civil war, and any other conflict that could turn friends against one another or divide households show that personal feelings often failed to stay the hands of the participants. Like so many other peoples throughout history, the inhabitants of Mexican California were no less inclined to attack loved ones if the need arose.

As it was, sentiment rarely discouraged any Californio who preferred to fight an acquaintance or neighbor off the battlefield. In Los Angeles, for example, the cases heard by provincial magistrates show that the inhabitants often bared knives and employed pistols to settle disputes. In 1835, two Mexicans cheated an Englishman out of a barrel of brandy. The pair beat their

victim and before riding off shouted at trailing authorities: “If you are men . . . come and get us.”³⁰ Around the same time, the Yankee trader Abel Stearns fought over a shipment of alcohol and took a knife to the face. Stearns recovered, but the gash on his cheek did nothing to relieve him of his nickname—*cara de caballo*, horse face.³¹ A year later, José Sepúlveda, a judge in Los Angeles, burst into a neighbor’s home spoiling for a fight and lost an eye in the struggle.³² Juan Warner reported soon after that he received a cut to the head and a broken arm when attacked by Agustín Martínez.³³ And the list goes on and on. Of course, a personal encounter in a street or residence is different from war. The Californio who bore a grudge could seize the advantage by choosing when and where to attack his rival. But things change when soldiers confront the enemy in battle. They often have to fight at a time or place not of their choosing.³⁴ Nonetheless, if the inhabitants of Los Angeles attacked one another, it is likely that their compatriots in other California settlements also had no qualms about turning on their neighbors. Only on the battlefield did the Californios turn meek.

Thus, something else besides timidity or a lack of resolve discouraged the Californios from making war on each other. It could be that the Californios have been misunderstood. The question should be not why they wished to avoid war, but rather whom they preferred to battle. The Californios refused to slaughter one another in order to keep their numbers strong for fighting Indians. They were not alone in worrying about Indians. Many individuals throughout Mexico feared that Indians would go on the march. Prior to Mexican independence in 1821, Manuel Abad y Quiépo, archbishop of Michoacán, spoke for many compatriots when he warned of a coming upheaval. He believed that if the Spaniards did not abolish tribute and other indignities of the caste system, the Indians would rebel and produce the horrors that marked Toussaint L’Ouverture’s uprising

in Haiti.³⁵ These fears were confirmed in 1810, when Father Miguel Hidalgo raised an army of Indians to begin the fight for Mexico’s independence.³⁶ The rebels sacked the countryside



Known as the Father of Mexico for beginning the long struggle for independence from Spain, Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753–1811) raised an army largely composed of Indians in 1810 to challenge Spanish authority. His forces massacred many of the white inhabitants of Guanajuato. According to one historian, the event proved so disturbing that many Mexicans in the early years of independence feared “the scenes of 1810.” The Californios shared similar misgivings. They, too, dreaded to think of Indians on the march.

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and attacked the city of Guanajuato, slaughtering many of the white inhabitants who found refuge in the royal granary. For decades thereafter, according to the historian Toricuato S. Di Tella, “Mexico lived under the fear of the scenes of 1810.”³⁷

To date, no Californio source mentions Father Hidalgo or the carnage in Guanajuato. But the warnings about Hidalgo and Indian war could ring forth in other ways. In the years before the secularization of the missions, some provincial inhabitants eased their demands for church land and praised the missionaries for controlling restive Indians. Carlos Antonio Carrillo, California’s delegate to the Mexican Congress in 1831, told his colleagues that the national government should think carefully about secularizing the missions. Before the missions came, he explained, the province was an “uncultivated land inhabited by savages.” But with the arrival of the priests, the Indians learned how to become “useful workers in agriculture and the arts.” He reminded his congressional colleagues that the provincial inhabitants were a “weak population” who had “no other protection than the missionaries.” If the national government closed down the missions, the act “would mean nothing but the province’s political death.” Weakened, California would fall prey “to a foreign nation,” or, in a possible reference to Indian war, return “to its primitive, savage state.”³⁸

Three years later, California’s governor, José María Figueroa, criticized the national government’s plan to secularize the missions all at once.³⁹ Figueroa had little love for priests, however. He only thought the effort should proceed more gradually. If all Indians ran free, Figueroa feared, devastation would follow. “Legal equality,” he insisted, the idea that convinced some Mexicans to propose secularization, “would unhinge society.” Figueroa, warning of war, concluded that the individuals who supported unconditional secularization would see their names entered “in the

annals of fratricidal strife, in civil disorders, in the farcical notions of the anarchists—that ominous sect abominated in America and Europe.”⁴⁰

At other times, the prospect of Indian war warned the Californios of a world gone mad. The Californios, who accorded themselves the title *gente de razón*—“people of reason”—used, among other things, religious feeling and respect for law to define their humanity. A person who honored all his obligations, and thus confirmed his human connection to others, seemed rational to compatriots. The Indians, though, especially those who threatened to make war, challenged the order and regulation that the Californios treasured.

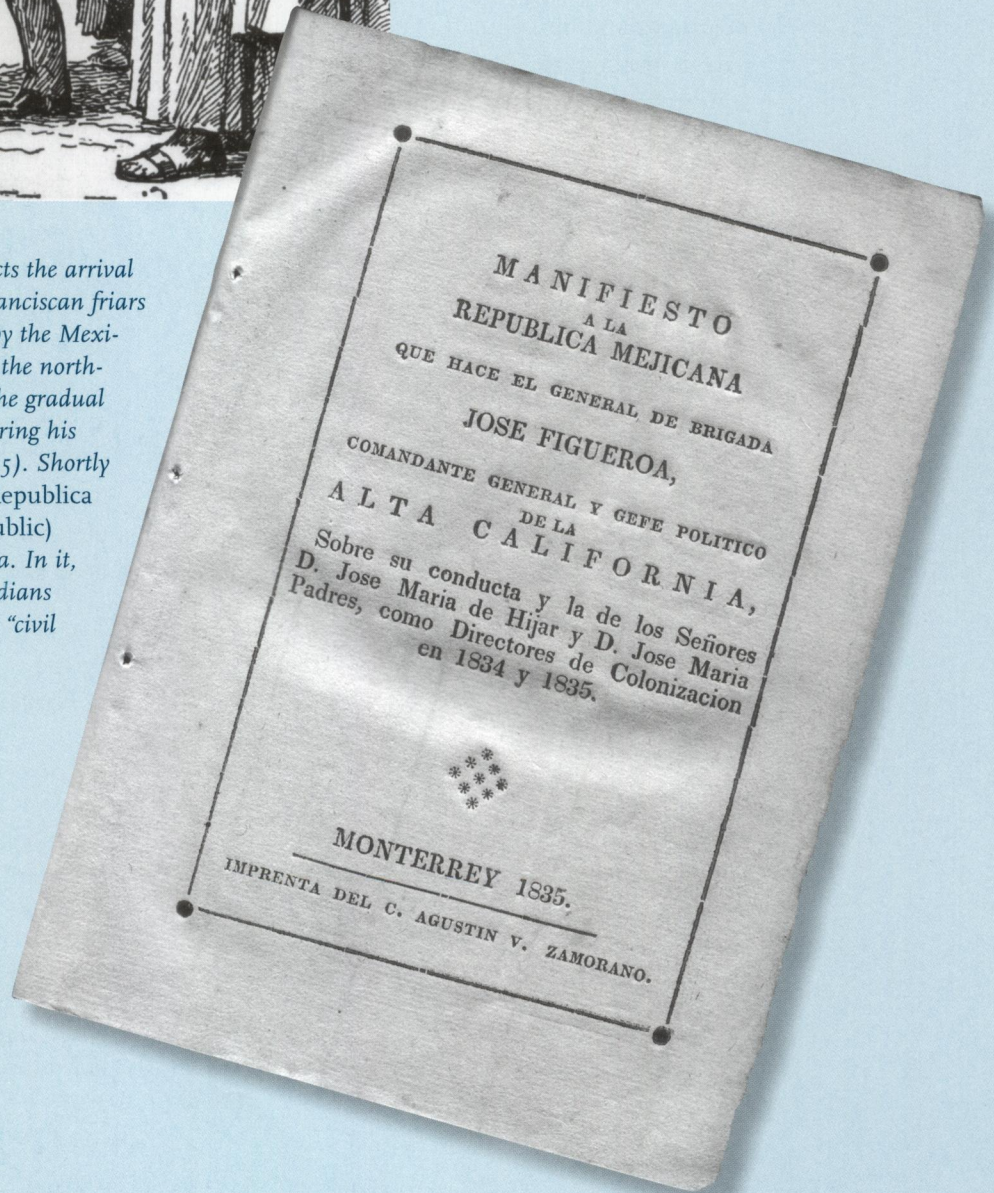
Nothing, apparently—much less appeals to reason or moderation—constrained the Indians’ appetite. José Palomares, a San José resident, recalled that Indians supposedly roasted soldiers alive and later dined on their charred limbs.⁴¹ Salvador Vallejo, who lived north of San José, said “astrologers” (perhaps a reference to shamans) could with “impunity . . . take the maidens . . . who suited them best.” If the girl or woman “offered any resistance, the astrologers appealed to the mothers, fathers, and brothers who restrained the victim while the deceiving hypocrite violated her.”⁴² In Los Angeles, residents complained to the governor that Indians held celebrations on Saturday “and become intoxicated to an unbearable degree, thereby resulting in venereal disease.”⁴³

At times, the Indians assumed the fantastic proportions of a nightmare. They haunted the space between fear and reality, distorting all they encountered. Some Indians seemed like giants. The Indian chief Solano, who held sway north of San Francisco, supposedly reached the height of six feet seven inches. He towered over Californios who would be, on average, at least a foot shorter.⁴⁴ Other Indians possessed gruesome features. “Joaquin,” an Indian raider who plied his trade along



A much-after-the-fact drawing (above) depicts the arrival of José María Figueroa (1792–1835) and Franciscan friars at Monterey on January 15, 1833. Charged by the Mexican government initially with commanding the northern California missions, Figueroa oversaw the gradual secularization of the California missions during his years as governor of Alta California (1833–35). Shortly before his death, he wrote *Manifiesto a la Republica Mejicana* (Manifesto to the Mexican Republic) (right), the first book published in California. In it, he argued that emancipating all mission Indians at once would “unhinge society” and lead to “civil disorders.”

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



MANIFIESTO
A LA
REPUBLICA MEJICANA
QUE HACE EL GENERAL DE BRIGADA
JOSE FIGUEROA,
COMANDANTE GENERAL Y GEFÉ POLITICO
DE LA
ALTA CALIFORNIA,
Sobre su conducta y la de los Señores
D. Jose Maria de Hjar y D. Jose Maria
Padres, como Directores de Colonizacion
en 1834 y 1835.
MONTERREY 1835.
IMPRENTA DEL C. AGUSTIN V. ZAMORANO.

the Mojave Trail, possessed “a branded lip and severed ear.” The *mayordomo* of San Gabriel Mission had supposedly inflicted the wounds, and like some wraith seeking revenge, Joaquin swore death on all Mexicans he encountered.⁴⁵

Other Indians confounded the distinctions the Californios used to separate the two groups. Juan Bojórquez remembered in 1877 that Estanislao, an Indian rebel from northern California, “was a man of about six feet in height, of skin more pale than bronze, of slender figure, with a head of heavy hair and a heavy beard on his face.”⁴⁶ He possibly looked more like a Californio than Bojórquez and his compatriots. Indeed, that may have been the case in some instances. In 1842, a Mexican officer described Mariano Silvas of Los Angeles as “five feet in height, with gray eyes, and stooped shoulders.” Silvas possessed a Roman nose, and a “dark” complexion, the officer added.⁴⁷ Remove the gray eyes, straighten the shoulders, and Silvas might invite the thought he was an Indian.

Yet still more Indians seemed so beguiling that they inspired affection or feelings of camaraderie in provincial leaders. One witness claimed Governor Figueroa emboldened Indians “to steal horses without fear of being punished” after he boasted he had indigenous blood.⁴⁸ In 1832, during his fight for the governor’s seat, José María Echeandía supposedly led “one thousand Indian warriors”(!) into Los Angeles to intimidate his foes. Antonio María Osio, who saw Echeandía and his Indian allies ride into town, remembered that if hostilities commenced “general chaos would follow.”⁴⁹ Two years later, two Mexican army officers reportedly convinced Indians to rebel against provincial authorities.⁵⁰ Even if the above accusations amounted to exaggeration—and most, like the charge about Figueroa’s sympathy for Indian raiders, seem far-fetched—their currency reveals that any word of attack could inflame the Californio imagination.

Californio worries took on a more lurid cast when the Indians did make war. For some Californios, any word of Indians astride their mounts no doubt approximated what they thought transpired when Hidalgo assembled his rebel forces in 1810. Like Hidalgo, who at the outset of his rebellion attracted thousands of supporters, the California Indians apparently could summon forth a multitude if they so desired. In 1830, the year with the best population estimates for all inhabitants, the Indians—from neophytes, or converts, who resided in Franciscan missions, to non-Christian groups who lived in towns or inland valleys—totaled nearly 98,000 people. The settlers, meanwhile, numbered no more than 10,000, with some estimates suggesting significantly less.⁵¹ The disparity in population convinced some Californios that they could be overwhelmed. Juan Bautista Alvarado, a frequent contestant for the governor’s office, recalled as an old man that in 1824 the rebellious Chumash who lived around Santa Barbara wanted to “destroy all the missions, cities, towns, estates and ranchos of” the province. Estanislao, who led an Indian upheaval in 1829, posed even greater dangers. Alvarado speculated if “these barbarians [under Estanislao’s command] had greater prudence in going into battle, they would have easily been able to conquer California.”⁵²

The populace of southern California would have agreed with Alvarado. In his *History of California*, Bancroft explains that the violence in the lower

Raphael Solares, a Santa Inez Chumash man (Hayward & Muzzall studio, Santa Barbara, 1878). *The Chumash and other tribes often resorted to violence to express their displeasure with Californio mistreatment. During the Mexican period, Christian Indians and their non-Christian counterparts harassed rancheros who inhabited inland valleys or threatened to attack Californio settlements.*

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portions of California “resembled that of the Apache frontier in Sonora and Chihuahua.”⁵³ The inhabitants of San Diego often confronted Indian attackers. In 1833, Tajocho, a Quechan chief, wanted to organize gentiles and ex-neophytes who had fled into the desert. The provincial militia captured the chief, however, and the threat died.⁵⁴ Four years later, according to the municipal records of Los Angeles, an Indian force threatened San Diego in May. The residents of Los Angeles decided to help their beleaguered neighbors and sent defenders south.⁵⁵ In 1838, the threat of war took a more intimate turn. Indian servants planned to unlock doors at night and let in raiders to murder Californio families in their beds. The authorities uncovered the plot and the attack never came.⁵⁶ A year later, three hundred Indians occupying the Otay Mesa some ten miles east of San Diego threatened to recover “lost territory” and drive all *gente de razón* to the sea. But the Indians did not think the assault worth the effort and retreated to the interior.⁵⁷

The inhabitants of Los Angeles also prepared for war. In 1834, two hundred Mohave warriors advanced on Mission San Gabriel. A force from Los Angeles drove off the attackers.⁵⁸ That same year, the residents mounted up again after receiving word that Colorado River Indians planned to invade “the Los Angeles District.” The Indians fell upon San Bernardino some sixty miles to the east and killed thirteen people, but advanced no farther.⁵⁹ Eight years later, defenders grabbed their weapons once more after hearing reports that Indians plotted to attack the city. Nothing happened, but the thought of Indians on the move could prove disturbing.⁶⁰

Californios in the north were not spared the ravages of war. Throughout the 1830s, Indian marauders raided the ranchos in the San José area. They stole horses, “outraged several women,” as Bancroft delicately puts it, and destroyed everything they could “get their hands on.”⁶¹ The attacks continued through the end of

the decade and grew in intensity. The inhabitants of San José retaliated with equal vigor. In 1839 alone they organized three expeditions to punish the raiders. The troopers attacked any Indian they encountered—they were in no mood to distinguish between the innocent and guilty—and returned home bearing the spoils of war. One expedition marched into town brandishing the head of Yozcolo, an Indian chief who had proven particularly difficult.⁶² The Californios put his head on a pole and placed their prize in front of Mission San José.⁶³

The threat of Indian war encouraged the provincials to hold their fire during struggles for the governor’s chair, wishing, no doubt, to save men and ammunition for fights against the Indians. In 1832, when José María Echeandía supposedly commanded a thousand Indians, the Californios on both sides of the dispute exercised discretion. A witness intimates that the Californios refused to fire on one another for fear of what would ensue if Indians sensed the time had come to strike.⁶⁴ Four years later, Californio trepidation apparently doomed Governor Mariano Chico’s chances to remain in office. When he summoned reinforcements from Sonoma and San Diego to help him confront a recalcitrant populace in Monterey, no help came. The commanders in each locale, who admittedly may not have wanted to render assistance in the first place, explained that “Indian ravages” compelled them to stay close to home.⁶⁵ That same year, when Juan Bautista Alvarado claimed the governor’s seat and marched into southern California to quell a rebellion, Alvarado’s opponents at San Diego suspended hostilities to battle Indians.⁶⁶

THE SUSPICION OF AUTHORITY

If provincials dreaded Indian attack—so much so that one Californio would think twice about killing his rival in battle—some other threat convinced troops to take the field. One scholar



Between 1832 and 1833, Agustín Vicente Zamorano (1798–1842) claimed the governor's seat. He eventually yielded to the authority of José María Figueroa. Zamorano acquired greater distinction when he brought the first printing press to California. He published school primers, government pronouncements, and Figueroa's Manifesto to the Mexican Republic.

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says the Californios worried that an army officer would don the governor's sash and become a despot.⁶⁷ Initially, the explanation makes sense. Military men, usually from Mexico but on occasion from California, sat in office and at times became enraged when constituents did not heed commands. In 1836, to use an extreme case, Governor Mariano Chico stormed into Los Angeles at the head of a troop and demanded the surrender of dissidents. When no one materialized, Chico raged that he would hang his enemies, a threat he failed to carry out.⁶⁸

On closer examination, however, the fear of military despotism may be overstated. Among the generals and colonels who took turns in the governor's chair, even if briefly, a good number behaved admirably. José María Echeandía, a general in the Mexican army, taught Rousseau, Montesquieu, and Bentham to the boys of Monterey's finest families.⁶⁹ The youngsters used primers published by Colonel Agustín Zamorano, governor for a short duration in 1832 and, at one time, Echeandía's rival.⁷⁰ General José María Figueroa, the governor who secularized the missions in the 1830s, proved so popular that when he died in office, some Californios mourned him as the

"father of the country."⁷¹ While not a governor, Lieutenant Guadalupe Medina lived up to the example established by his senior officers. When assigned to Los Angeles, Medina instructed children, explained a witness, in "writing, arithmetic, analytical thinking, the pronunciation of language, the rules of writing, whole numbers and fractions."⁷²

Another scholar proposes that the residents of northern and southern California formed ranks because they disagreed on how much loyalty they should show Mexico.⁷³ In Monterey, the populace apparently favored more autonomy and at times wanted the province to be independent. To the south, the inhabitants of Los Angeles and San Diego had greater affection for the home republic and resented any talk of secession. Matters grew more complicated when the people of one region supposedly distrusted attempts by their rivals in another to direct provincial affairs. Monterey, for example, capital of Alta California for a good part of the Mexican period, controlled the provincial treasury. The residents of Los Angeles, however, at times joined by their neighbors in San Diego and Santa Barbara, complained that the northerners supposedly used the seat of government

to fill their pockets with provincial revenue. On two occasions, once in 1835 and again ten years later, the inhabitants of the south sought to correct matters by declaring Los Angeles the capital of California, an insult to those in Monterey who believed they were the most “moral and cultured” citizens of the province.⁷⁴

But regional disagreements sometimes possessed more complexity than we think. In 1832, when Agustín Zamorano in Monterey and José María Echeandía in Los Angeles each wanted to be governor, the two men and their supporters made surprising demands.⁷⁵ Zamorano in the north—traditionally the home of those who favored independence—pledged loyalty to Mexico and promised to keep the governor’s seat until the Mexican Congress named a suitable replacement. Echeandía, meanwhile, though not clamoring for secession, briefly convinced the southerners to defy Mexico and support his claims to office. Regional disagreements over Mexico seemed quite common, but at least in 1832, rivals picked up and discarded each other’s arguments without complication.

Still, as some historians imply, it was the provincial treasury, not necessarily the governor’s office, that loomed as the reward the Californios coveted most.⁷⁶ The thought is intriguing but may not stand up to scrutiny. In the latter part of the Mexican period, a revenue officer resided at each settlement and collected duties from merchantmen sailing along the coast or the pack trains that came overland from New Mexico. It is not clear how the revenue officers exacted payment, but after collecting the amounts due, they kept a portion as commission and dispatched the rest to the provincial capital, where the governor, or an aide designated to handle financial matters, divided the funds once more. One sum went to the provincial account, while the supreme government in Mexico City received the rest.⁷⁷ Even if unscrupulous Californios stole public funds, which was possible, it seems that after the

division of revenue there would not be enough money in the treasury to fight over in the first place.⁷⁸ The province was often in arrears. Before 1821, the year Spain yielded control of California to Mexico, missionaries often lent money to provincial administrators. After independence from Spain, Californio officials continued to plead poverty and turned to Mexico City for funds.⁷⁹ If gold and silver did not fill the provincial treasury, it may be unlikely that the Californios mustered forces at least twelve times to battle over pennies.

In fairness, the above critiques are not entirely wrong. They only need to say more about the Californio approach to politics. The fear of despots, or the desire to host the capital and lay hands on revenue, implies that the Californios, like their Mexican compatriots, distrusted governors and presidents—in short, the men who wielded executive authority. Such animosity suggests that all the residents of Mexico, from the interior to the nation’s fringes, had little experience in handling their political affairs. Lacking the knowledge of how governance worked, they suspected the motives of any person who commanded power. The explanation has some merit. It is true that the viceroy who ruled New Spain—Mexico’s name before independence in 1821—sometimes governed without soliciting the opinion or support of constituents. There was, for example, no colonial legislature that would advise the viceroy on political matters. Lacking a say in governance, and perhaps resentful they could not contest the regime’s decisions, some Mexicans believed that authority figures cared little for their constituents’ concerns, an attitude that persisted after independence. However true the assessment, it is probably more accurate to say that the political culture of the Spanish-speaking world spread greater doubt about a leader’s intentions.⁸⁰

As a point in contrast, we examine the beliefs that inspired Anglo Americans and their English contemporaries in the eighteenth century. According to John Locke, the prominent English

philosopher whose teachings touched many on both sides of the Atlantic, each individual at birth has a chance to own property and speak freely. The government could expand these privileges, and, on occasion, with the citizen's consent, even limit them, but no lord or elected official could deny the rights without good cause.⁸¹ But, in colonial Mexico, as elsewhere in the Spanish empire, rights and privileges extended from the king or his agents. Many royal councilors, philosophers, and perhaps even the king might insist that each subject possessed inalienable rights, but in theory such privileges could be denied at the monarch's pleasure.⁸²

The crown's defenders had no trouble upholding the royal prerogative. They argued that the sovereign ruled with the grace of heaven, and with wisdom, along with God's favor resting upon him, he would protect the rights of his subjects. The ruler, therefore, governed in the kingdom's best interests. Factions or competing lords, on occasion, would vie for the royal ear, but the monarch supposedly would be beyond the persuasion of ambitious parties.

When the king's authority disappeared in Mexico, trouble ensued. After 1821, the Mexican Congress and the public confronted a dilemma. Under Spanish rule, rights and privileges had come from the king, or at least had emanated from the king's representative, the viceroy. But after independence, the man who served as president took on the responsibilities once assumed by the monarch. To the distress of many, however, unlike the king, he did not possess the blessings of heaven. The president could be, as many feared, a creature of a particular faction's self-interests and ignore the rights of his other constituents. He might only favor his supporters or allies from a particular region. A president could quell doubt by promising prosperity and a bright future for all. But from their perspective, opposing factions would only see trouble.⁸³ Partisan concerns, not necessarily the wisdom of the Almighty, guided

the president's policy. The members of the powerless side, anxious they had no say in the nation's affairs, believed they had good reason to supplant the president with their own leader. Meanwhile, the deposed group, resenting the loss of power, plotted a new upheaval.

Thus, in Mexico, as in California, a parade of men claimed the position of executive, whether as president or governor, only to be ousted. In California, many men competed for the governorship, while in Mexico at least forty-nine individuals sat as president or interim political chief between 1821 and 1857.⁸⁴ In 1836, during one of the disputes for the governor's seat, a Californio explained why the men who claimed executive power deserved suspicion. Using words any person in California, or Mexico, would employ, he wrote: "You [the citizens of California] have been the victims of servile factions, whose chiefs, content with a passing triumph, taxed to the utmost your long-suffering patience."⁸⁵

With an eye on the political traditions Mexico inherited from Spain, California's upheavals seem not so confusing or contradictory.⁸⁶ The fear that a despot ruled as governor had little to do with the character of the incumbent. Admittedly, a few scoundrels held the position, but it often made no difference what sort of man governed. For example, between 1835 and 1837, the populace of Los Angeles, at times joined by their neighbors in Santa Barbara and San Diego, rebelled against Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado at least four times. Though we have no solid proof, Alvarado and some of the men of Los Angeles could have been *yorkinos*, members of the York Rite Masons who favored radical change in Mexico.⁸⁷ Even if not *yorkinos*, they at least had *yorkino* sympathies. As a young man, Alvarado had received instruction from Mexican officers who belonged to the *yorkino* lodge. In Los Angeles, some *yorkinos* found residence after being banished to California for angering conservative regimes in Mexico.⁸⁸ In time, the

exiles gained the respect of local inhabitants. Still, the common political beliefs shared by Alvarado and his southern compatriots failed to dispel animosity. The capable Governor Figueroa also stood accused of despotism. When vaqueros seized the town hall of Los Angeles in 1835 to show their discontent, they complained that Figueroa—who, as noted above, inspired an outpouring of affection from constituents when he died—plundered the province to serve his own ends, a charge that had no basis.⁸⁹

During these upheavals, and others like them, political factions possibly sensed that among their own supporters they could count on fair treatment. But they feared that the opposite side, if in power, might only pursue its own interests. The conflict over the site of the capital followed the same pattern. Residents of Los Angeles, Monterey, or even San Diego suspected that their foes elsewhere wanted the capital only for political and economic advantage, even if any benefit, at least in regard to money, sometimes seemed illusory. Those beyond the capital believed that their interests would be neglected or, worse, subverted. To show their discontent, they sometimes staged what can only be called a protest. The Californios marched to and fro. They issued pronouncements. They even fired their weapons if circumstances warranted. After expressing their anger, they went home. But at all times, they preserved their numbers for fighting Indians, a more dangerous foe than their political rivals.

WAR AS RITUAL

The foregoing argument returns us to the question about finding accuracy in California history. But searching for accuracy need not be an imprecise exercise. It would do well to remember that the word *history* ultimately comes from the Greek *eidēnai*, which means “to know.” Of course, what we seek “to know” about the Californios is how they used war to understand and even regulate their existence. Still, if we only learn that the

Californios made war in unique fashion and say nothing more, then any conclusion we draw may have little worth. Thus, when understanding why the Californios conducted war as they did, we fulfill every sense of the term *to know*, for in learning about the past, we may see something about the present that has escaped our attention.

The Californio approach to war, then, may provide perspectives beyond those of the nineteenth century. The Californios saw war as a ritual. When at arms, they followed particular patterns and abided by a strict protocol. They knew how to mete out violence and in what proportion. If they faced each other, they showed restraint. If they faced Indians, they knew no mercy. The routines and habits they employed during wartime illuminate modern custom. At present, in California—and elsewhere in the United States—we moderns also see war as a ritual. Of course, war is sometimes all too real, and there is no need to list the conflicts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. But in other instances, war, or better some aspect of war, possesses a ritualistic quality that compares with Californio practice.

During presidential campaigns, for example, the candidates speak of “battleground states” or rely on “hatchet men” who “attack” an opponent’s weaknesses. They call upon “ground troops” to “mobilize” voters and supporters. At other times, separate and removed from campaigns, political leaders have addressed the “war on poverty” or the “culture wars.”⁹⁰ In every instance, the participants, as did the Californios, speak of war, gather supporters behind them—as a commander summons troops—and take the field, whether in the imagination or in actuality. They do not kill foes, but their display of will and massing of forces, again like the Californios, supposedly will decide matters. One can only wonder if the present emphasis on war would seem as odd to observers two centuries hence as Californio habits may now seem to some of us.



Californios and U.S. cavalrymen clash in W. Francis's painting The Charge of the Caballeros, depicting the Battle of San Pasqual near San Diego on December 6, 1846, during the Mexican-American War. The Californios (Francis's "Caballeros"), led by General Don Andrés Pico, used their long lances—visible in the painting—to confront American forces commanded by General Stephen Kearney. The Californios, though, were not so fierce when they fought each other over the governor's seat. Perhaps two, and certainly no more than fifteen, men died in the upheavals.

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In any event, understanding what the Californios and modern Californians have in common has some practical application. At present, nearly one-third of California's populace bears a Spanish surname, a proportion that may well increase to more than 40 percent of the population by 2020. The growing numbers could cause anxiety in some quarters. But in the effort to see history as a connection between past and present, the Californio ideas about war and their relation to modern ways may ease some distress. True enough, war is hardly a pleasant undertaking. But war, even if only an abstraction, can establish common ground. (And if war serves as a link between past and present, other activities may do so as well.) After all, the Californios were the predecessors to the Spanish-surnamed populace now filling the state. If they, and by association their Spanish-surnamed compatriots of today,

share some trait with other California groups, be it war or some other pursuit, then there is benefit. By recognizing any bond, we fulfill what it means "to know." We know of others and know more of ourselves. But how we use this knowledge, and for what ends, we must leave for another day.

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¹ For more on the perils of determining what is accurate and inaccurate in the telling of history, see Arthur Schlesinger, “History and National Stupidity,” *The New York Review of Books*, April 27, 2006, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/18913>.

² Douglas Monroy, “The Creation and Re-creation of Californio Society,” in *Contested Eden, California Before the Gold Rush*, eds. Richard Orsi and Ramón Gutiérrez (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 184–85. For more views of the ranchero’s dominance, see Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850–1890: A Social History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 13, and Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769–1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 49.

³ Monroy is quite clear about the ranchero’s influence. See “Creation and Re-creation,” 187–88.

⁴ After Mexican forces in California surrendered in January 1847 to the Americans, the Californios, in Los Angeles and elsewhere in the province, continued to follow Mexican law and practice to regulate their daily affairs. When Mexico formally ceded California to the United States on February 2, 1848, with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, American law began to take precedence. All information about the men who served on the municipal council comes from Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The History of California*, 7 vols. (San Francisco: The History Company, 1883–1886) and the 1836 and 1844 censuses for Los Angeles area. For the 1836 census, see the reproduction in *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (1936): 1–61. We use the pagination of the original. For the 1844 census, see *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (1960): 360–422.

⁵ In fairness, Francisco Santamaría, a scholar of Mexican Spanish, explains that *campista*, or its variation *campirano*, describes someone who worked with livestock. See Francisco Santamaría, *Diccionario de mejicanismos* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa S.A., 1959), 195. But to look at the Los Angeles City Archives—hereafter cited as LACA—campistas used their property to tend crops and raise cattle. See the *padrones*,

or rosters, for municipal elections in which the secretary for the municipal council described the occupations of voters; LACA, vol. 3 (Dec. 1838): 552. The proceedings of the municipal council, or *ayuntamiento*, sit in the Los Angeles city clerks’ office. There are two versions, one in the original Spanish and the other translated into English. We use the Spanish original, but if the text is difficult to read, we consult the translation.

⁶ Los Angeles Ayuntamiento Archives, vol. 5, n.d., 1844, 7–11, Sp., The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁷ J. W. Guinn, “Muy Ilustre Ayuntamiento,” *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (1899): 220.

⁸ José María Figueroa, *Manifiesto to the Mexican Republic which Brigadier José Figueroa Commandant and Political Chief of Upper California Presents on His Conduct and on that José María de Híjar and José María Padrés as Directors of Colonization in 1834 and 1835*, ed. and tr. C. Alan Hutchinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 76.

⁹ Genaro Padilla, “Recovering Mexican-American Autobiography” in *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage*, eds. Ramón Gutiérrez and Genaro Padilla (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1993), 173.

¹⁰ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 540–41.

¹¹ For an example of a bell calling men to arms or summoning voters on election day, see LACA vol. 2 (June 20, 1837): 428 and vol. 2 (Jan. 18, 1838): 514–15.

¹² Antonio Maria Osio, *The History of Alta California*, trans. and ed. Rose Marie Beebe and Robert Senkewicz (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 161–62.

¹³ See, for example, the struggle of 1838 when Carlos Carrillo claimed the governor’s seat and challenged the authority of the incumbent, Juan Bautista Alvarado. Alvarado marched south from Monterey to assert his authority and met Carrillo in between Los Angeles and San Diego. Carrillo and Alvarado agreed to “parley” rather than fight. (Antonio Coronel, a resident of Los Angeles, called Carrillo a “coward.”) Carrillo eventually surrendered without firing a shot. Antonio Coronel, *Tales of Mexican California*, ed. Doyce Nunis and tr. Diane de Avalle-Arce (Santa Barbara, CA: Bellerophon Press, 1995), 17.

¹⁴ For more on the causes of provincial fights, see David Weber, *The Mexican Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), esp. 1–14 and 242–72; George Tays, “Revolutionary California,” PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1932; Woodrow Hansen, *The Search for Authority in California* (Oakland, CA: Biopress Books, 1961); and Bancroft, *The History*. Vols. 3 and 4 recount the provincial fights in great detail.

¹⁵ José del Carmen Lugo, a resident of Los Angeles, remembers that during the struggle to depose Governor Manuel Micheltoarena in early 1845, a cannonball killed a horse. See José del Carmen Lugo, “Life of a Rancher,” ed. and trans. Helen Pruitt Beatie, *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Sept. 1950): 198.

¹⁶ Osio adds that many individuals lacked the enthusiasm to fight during the 1838 struggle. In one instance, Alvarado surrounded a rebel redoubt at Las Flores, a rancho in what is now Orange County. He did not press the issue and accepted the rebels’ surrender in short order. Alvarado addressed the rebels soon thereafter and “spoke to them in a friendly manner and advised them to keep busy with work.” He then released them. In fairness, it must be said there may have been one casualty before Alvarado reached Las Flores. Near Santa Barbara, Osio claims, one of the rebels, a “sharpshooter,” killed an artilleryman fighting for Alvarado. See Osio, *History of California, 189–91*. For the remark on Estudillo’s reluctance, see Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 578 n. 68.

¹⁷ Angustias de la Ord says that Micheltoarena “was not suited to be [governor].” He was incapable of asserting his authority because, “of the goodness which dominated him.” She also adds he was “indolent.” Micheltoarena “arose at noon and business was abandoned.” See Angustias de la Ord, *Occurrences in Hispanic California*, ed. and trans. Francis Price and William H. Ellison (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1956), 54–55. Agustín Janssens, another resident of southern California, explains in his memoir that Micheltoarena “seemed to dread” the thought of overtaking his foe. See Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 491 n. 11.

¹⁸ José del Carmen Lugo suggests that Micheltoarena and his opponents did not wish to engage one another in battle. The rival forces bombarded one another “with

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lively artillery fire, but without harm to either side, owing to the great distance between them." See "Life of a Rancher," 197–99. Bancroft has an extensive discussion about the picnic and other displays of passivity in his footnotes. See *The History*, vol. 4, 507–8 n. 34.

¹⁹ George Tays, "Revolutionary California," 110. It is difficult to count the number of battlefield fatalities. Scholars, and even the witnesses they cite, have trouble reaching definite conclusions. Bancroft, for example writes that two, maybe as many as thirteen, men died in 1845 during the fight to unseat Governor Manuel Micheltorena. The evidence, though, is inconclusive and Bancroft confines his discussion to two footnotes. Consult *The History*, vol. 4, 492 n. 14, and 504–6 n. 33. It is possible that in 1845 no one died in battle. Mariano Vallejo, the prominent Californio from the north, adds that the battles against Micheltorena amounted to a "sham." See Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 506 n. 33.

²⁰ For an example of the lack of specificity, see Osio's account about the struggle to depose Micheltorena. Osio speaks about "the havoc of grapeshot," sharpshooters hiding in ravines, and the firing of artillery, but the only casualty seems to be a horse struck dead by a cannonball. Osio says nothing about how many Californios, if any, suffered death or injury. See Osio, *The History of California*, 220–2. For more discussion on the difficulty of determining the number of Californio casualties, see Bancroft's remarks about the battle to depose Micheltorena. *The History*, vol. 4, 492–93 and 506.

²¹ Del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio*, 20–21.

²² Monroy, "Creation and Re-creation," 189–90.

²³ Rosaura Sánchez, *Telling Identities, The Californio Testimonios* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), esp. 144–87.

²⁴ Robert L. O'Connell, *The Ride of the Second Horseman, The Birth and Death of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), esp. 5–6. I thank Steven Wilson, a master's student in history at the University of San Diego, for providing me with this reference.

²⁵ For Apalátegui, see Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 2, 699. For Varelas, see Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 5, 308, 760.

²⁶ See the *Pronunciamiento de Varela y otros Californios contra los Americanos*, 24 de Set.

1846 in Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 5, 310 n. 22. For Varelas's occupation, see the 1844 census Los Angeles, 396. I follow the pagination of the facsimile, not the pagination of the census.

²⁷ De la Ord, *Occurrences in Hispanic California*, 52–54.

²⁸ They could do little to reduce the pain of family separation. Other than the cases of women preparing food for the defenders of Los Angeles and other settlements, there is no other mention in the record of families following husbands and sons into battle.

²⁹ To see how the Californios were more democratic than many assume, peruse Michael González, *This Small City Will Be a Mexican Paradise, 1821–1846* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), esp. 22–25.

³⁰ Archives of the Prefecture, Book A, 1825–1850, Part One, May 11, 1832, 32, tr. Los Angeles city clerk's office.

³¹ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 5, 732.

³² Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 632 n. 12.

³³ For the Martinez assault, see LACA, vol. 1, June 30, 1836, 100, tr. Of the 138 cases court cases involving non-Indians in Los Angeles between 1835 and 1846, twenty-seven involved Californios assaulting each other. Eight more cases featured one Californio murdering another. Alcalde Court Records, 1830–1850, 7 vols., Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Seaver Center for Western History.

³⁴ For more on the differences between personal violence and making war, see Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 1–57.

³⁵ D. A. Brading, *The First America, The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State, 1492–1867* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. 570, 646–47.

³⁶ We should add that poor mestizos also joined Hidalgo's army.

³⁷ Toricuato S. Di Tella, "The Dangerous Classes in Early Nineteenth Century Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 5, no. 1 (1973): 79–105.

³⁸ Carlos Carrillo, *Exposition Addressed to the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union by Señor Don Carlos Antonio Carrillo, Deputy for Alta California Concerning the Regulation and Administration of the Pious*

Fund, 1831, tr. and ed. Herbert Priestley (San Francisco: John Henry Nash, 1938), 3. All quotations come from Carrillo's speech to the Mexican Congress. See the *Exposition*, 4–7. For more on Carrillo's career—he was also a soldier—see Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 2, 743.

³⁹ The controversy of 1834 involved the Híjar-Padrés expedition and the government's plan to secularize the missions. Figueroa suspected that the expedition and the national government conspired against him. He was wrong, but the dispute consumed a great amount of his energy and may have figured in his death a year later. For more information, see C. Alan Hutchinson, *Mexican Frontier Settlement: The Híjar-Padrés Colony and Its Origins* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969). Also see Figueroa, *Manifiesto to the Mexican Republic*.

⁴⁰ Figueroa, *Manifiesto*. The "unhinge society" remark is on p. 92. The "ominous sect" statement appears on p. 95.

⁴¹ José Francisco Palomares, "Memoria," in Sherburne Friend Cook, *Expedition to the Interior of California, 1820–1840* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 203.

⁴² Salvador Vallejo, "The Origin of the Californian Aborigines," 1874 (?), tr. 1–2, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁴³ LACA, vol. 1 (Feb. 19, 1846): 527–31, Sp.

⁴⁴ Arthur Quinn, *Broken Shore, The Marin Peninsula in California History* (Inverness, CA: Redwood Press, 1987), 73–74.

⁴⁵ Gerald Smith and Clifford Walker, *Indian Slave Trade Along the Mojave Trail* (San Bernardino, CA: San Bernardino County Museum, 1965), 10–11.

⁴⁶ Cook, *Expeditions*, 166.

⁴⁷ Archives of the Prefecture of Los Angeles, vol. 1 (June 30, 1842): 688, tr. City Clerk's Office of Los Angeles.

⁴⁸ Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 133–35.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 116–17.

⁵⁰ See Figueroa, *Manifiesto*, 65 n. 120–21, 64–65; also see the original text, 106–8.

⁵¹ Population estimates come from several sources. For the *gente de razón*, see Leonard Pitt, *Decline of the Californios, A Social History of the Spanish-speaking Californians, 1846–1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 4–5. Pitt, however, makes

a rough guess. The figures for the Indians may be more exact. See Sherburne Cook, "The Indian Versus the Spanish Mission," in *The Conflict Between the Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 4, table 1. James Sandos, though, while not necessarily discussing the period in question, says that the non-Indians—what he calls "the mixed blood" populace—totaled 3,400 people in 1820, a figure that would not significantly increase by 1830. See James Sandos, "Social Control within Missionary Frontier Society, Alta California, 1769–1821," in *Choice, Persuasion, and Coercion, Social Control on Spain's North American Frontiers*, eds. Jesús F. de la Teja and Ross Frank (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 253.

⁵² Both quotations on the Chumash rebellion and Estanislao's attacks come from Juan Bautista Alvarado, "Historia de California," tr. and ed. Earl Hewitt, vol. 2, 42, 52, The Bancroft Library.

⁵³ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 70. Bancroft argues that the loss of life in California was not as great as that along the Apache frontier. Bancroft adds that Mariano Vallejo, who lived north of San Francisco Bay, was more effective in maintaining the peace. He used negotiation and, when need be, a firm hand to reduce the possibility of Indian war. *Ibid.*, 70–74.

⁵⁴ George Harwood Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 40.

⁵⁵ LACA, vol. 2 (May 31, 1837): 422–23, Sp.

⁵⁶ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 68.

⁵⁷ Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers*, 41–42.

⁵⁸ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 630–31 n. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 208 n. 6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 74–77.

⁶² Jack Holtermann, "The Revolt of Yozcolo," *The Indian Historian* 3, no. 2 (1970): 22–23.

⁶³ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 4, 76.

⁶⁴ Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 116–17.

⁶⁵ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 436–44.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 516 n. 1.

⁶⁷ See Cecil Alan Hutchinson, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California: The Hijar-*

Padrés Colony and its Origins, 1769–1835 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 394–99.

⁶⁸ Antonio Coronel remembers that Mariano Chico was "an impetuous" man who had a "lack of judgment." Coronel, *Tales of Mexican California*, 17. Also see Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 432–35.

⁶⁹ Pitt says that Echeandía instructed his students in "radicalismo." See *The Decline of the Californios*, 3. But what precisely did he teach? Michael Costeloe writes that by 1825, booksellers in Mexico City offered the works of Bentham, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, and the *Esprit de l'Encyclopédie* in fifteen volumes. If Echeandía read the same titles as his brethren in Mexico City, the students of Monterey received an interesting education indeed. See Michael Costeloe, *Church and State in Independent Mexico* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978), 11 n. 1.

⁷⁰ Zamorano, who brought the first printing press to California, published primers of high quality. In the Antonio Coronel collection at the Seaver Center for Western History, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, one can find primers that Zamorano published. Look, for example, at the primer numbered 510B in the Coronel collection.

⁷¹ Figueroa, *Manifiesto*, 96. Juan Bautista Alvarado, a man who had a tumultuous tenure as governor, served as Figueroa's secretary and was among many Californios who lamented the provincial chief's passing.

⁷² California Archives Department State Papers, vol. 33, July 18, 1844, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁷³ Sánchez, *Telling Identities*, 229–67. Sánchez does a thorough job in discussing the various disputes dividing the settlers of California. For another view, see Jesse Davis Francis, *An Economic and Social History of Mexican California*, 2 vols., PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1939. Reprinted by Arno Press (New York), 1976.

⁷⁴ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 293 n. 34.

⁷⁵ Echeandía also lived in San Diego. In fact, when he was governor, he resided in San Diego but let Monterey remain the capital.

⁷⁶ See Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*, 3–10, and Hansen, *The Search for Authority*, 12–13.

⁷⁷ For more on how the revenue officers worked, consult Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 375–78.

⁷⁸ Osio describes how the revenue officers divided up the funds, but he is not clear about the procedure. Osio, *The History*, 193–94.

⁷⁹ Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 378–79 n. 19.

⁸⁰ For a different, and more positive, view of the viceroy's approach to governance in colonial Mexico, see Alfredo Jiménez, "Who Controls the King?" in De la Teja and Frank, eds., *Choice, Persuasion, and Coercion*, 1–21.

⁸¹ For more on the Anglo-American notion of rights, see Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition* (New York: Vintage Books, 1948), 3–18; Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 43–82; Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1975), 293–388 and *Inventing the People* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1988).

⁸² Enrique Florescano, *Memory, Myth, and Time in Mexico: From the Aztecs to Independence*, trans. Albert Bork and Kathryn Bork (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 221–27. Also consult Brading, *The First America*, esp. 590–601.

⁸³ Many Mexicans distrusted the president's commitment to law and order. The framers of the 1836 constitution, aiming to replace the 1824 document, even created a fourth branch of government known as the Supreme Conservative Power, which would convene to "declare what is the will of the nation" during times of conflict. Michael Costeloe, *The Central Republic in Mexico, 1835–1846, Hombres de Bien in the Age of Santa Anna* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 23.

⁸⁴ Costeloe, *The Central Republic in Mexico*, 2–3.

⁸⁵ No title, but the proclamation is composed by either José Castro, Juan B. Alvarado, Antonio Buena, or José Antonio Noriega. All sign the document. Monterey, Nov. 6, 1838, in Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 469–70 n. 27.

⁸⁶ For a slightly different view on provincial politics, see Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*, 32–33. Weber notes that the settlers throughout Mexico's northern territories missed "the strong, well organized colonial administration system" instituted by Spain. He adds in another work that in the decades before Mexican independence, Spain

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lacked the resources to manage its territories stretching from Florida to California. See *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 271–301.

⁸⁷ For more on the yorquinas and their foes, the *escocés*, practitioners of the Scottish Rite, see Stanley Green, *The Mexican Republic: The First Decade 1823–1832* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987) 52–111. Also consult the following scholars for different interpretations on *Californio* disputes: Sánchez, *Telling Identities*, esp. 110–13; Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*, 4–5; and Hansen, *The Search for Authority in California*, 10–15.

⁸⁸ The yorquinas in Los Angeles make an intriguing topic. See Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 2, 793; vol. 3, 263 n. 42; vol. 4, 741; Sánchez, *Telling Identities*, 110; and González, *This Small City*, 44–46.

⁸⁹ Figueroa, *Manifiesto*, 76, and Bancroft, *The History*, vol. 3, 282–87.

⁹⁰ For an example of war metaphors in American politics, see “Dispatches from the culture wars,” and “The unhappy warrior,” *The Economist*, Nov. 6, 2008, <http://www.economist.com>.

PLAYING WITH POLITICS: CRISIS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT, BY LETA E. MILLER AND CATHERINE PARSONS SMITH, PP 26–47

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Caption sources: Alfred Metzger, “Bacon Conducts WPA Concert,” *The Argonaut*, Jan 10, 1936; Ernst Bacon, unpublished biography, courtesy of Ellen Bacon; Antonio Sotomayor, “They Wrote the Words and Music,” *Chronicle*, Dec. 13, 1936; John Hobart, “‘Take Your Choice’ Replete with Talent and Ginger,” *Chronicle*, Dec. 4, 1936; San Francisco *News*, December 3, 1936; “The Works of Ernst Bacon,” <http://www.ernstbacon.org/works.htm>.

¹ Alexander Fried, “Bacon Is Ousted as Music Project Chief,” *Examiner*, May 27, 1937.

² *Chronicle*, May 27, 1937; *San Francisco News*, May 27, 1937.

³ “The Dismissal of Ernst Bacon,” *Argonaut*, June 18, 1937, 4. Bacon’s music column for the *Argonaut* appeared from Jan. 26, 1934 through Apr. 5, 1935.

⁴ Fried, “Bacon Is Ousted.”

⁵ For example, Woodward to Albert Elkus, June 16, 1937 (Jonathan Elkus Papers, Archives Elkus 3, University of California, Berkeley, Music Library [hereafter cited as Elkus Papers, UCB], box 11.) For a summary of the chain of command, see Cornelius Canon, “The Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration: Music in a Democracy” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1963), 44–46. On Woodward, see Martha H. Swain, *Ellen S. Woodward: New Deal Advocate for Women* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995).

⁶ Elizabeth Calhoun to Sokoloff, telegram dated Oct. 30, 1935, National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Work Projects Administration (WPA), Record Group 69 (hereafter cited as NARA RG69).

⁷ For another discussion of the goals of the FMP and a comparison with the Federal Theatre Project, see Catherine Parsons Smith, *Making Music in Los Angeles: Transforming the Popular* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), Chapter 15.

⁸ On SERA, see John A. Emerson, “The WPA Federal Music Project in San Francisco: A Guide to Events and Sources,” in *California’s Musical Wealth: Sources for the Study of Music in California*, papers presented at the joint conference of the Northern and Southern California Chapters of the Music Library Association, May 17–18, 1985 (n. p.: Southern California Chapter Music Library Association 1988), 7–19. The WPA itself was established on May 6, 1935, by Executive Order 7034. On Sept. 7, more than \$27 million was allocated to Federal One (“Roosevelt Grants \$27,315,217 to Arts,” *New York Times*, Sept. 8, 1935).

⁹ See *San Francisco News*, Jan. 12, 1934; *Musical News* 17, no. 1 (Jan. 1934): 26; and Alexander Fried, “The Sounding Board,” *Chronicle*, May 27, 1934.

¹⁰ Walter Weber (president of Local 6) to Joseph Weber (president, American Federation of Musicians), Jan. 19, 1934, published in *Musical News* 17, no. 2 (Feb. 1934): 1, 10.

¹¹ On the employment numbers, see “Sera Will Aid Needy Artists,” *Chronicle*, May 18, 1934; *Musical News* 17, no. 6 (June 1934): 5 and 17, no. 10 (Oct. 1934): 1–2; and Fried, “Sounding Board.” On the types of ensembles and the directors, see “Relief Chorus Work Planned to Aid Singers,” *San Francisco News*, July 27, 1934. The novelty orchestra included harmonica, accordion, violin, trumpet, trombone, saxophone, guitar, drums, and a vocalist.

¹² Copy in the Ernst Bacon Papers, Stanford University, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, M906 (hereafter cited as Bacon Papers, Stanford), box 1, folder 35.

¹³ Bacon to Roy C. Pilling, July 10, 1934, Bacon Papers, Stanford, box 1.

¹⁴ Maxine Cushing, “What Women Are Thinking: Relief Roll and the Artistic [sic],” *Chronicle*, June 6, 1935. The Conservatory, an outgrowth of the Ada Clement Piano School (1917ff), was formally established in 1923.

¹⁵ Alexander Fried, “Music Wins SERA Aid,” *Examiner*, Jan. 27, 1935.

¹⁶ “Federal Music Project Chief Arrives in S. F.,” *Chronicle*, Sept. 6, 1935.

¹⁷ San Francisco Musical Association board minutes, San Francisco Symphony archives, June 23, 1915.

¹⁸ Redfern Mason, “Symphony Is Given by Sokoloff,” *Examiner*, Sept. 4, 1916. Casserly seems to have been behind this unfriendly stance. Sokoloff assumed the directorship of the People’s Philharmonic upon the sudden death of its conductor Herman Perlet in Jan. 1916 (Redfern Mason, “Sokoloff Wins Directorship,” *Examiner*, Feb. 29, 1916). Sokoloff tells the story of his audition and appointment in his *Reminiscences*, ed. Eleanor Reynolds Sokoloff (La Jolla, CA: n.p., 1978), 128–35, with colorful detail but many date errors. On the People’s Philharmonic, see Jason Gibbs, “The Best Music at the Lowest Price: People’s Music in San Francisco,” *MLA NCC Newsletter* 17, no. 1 (Fall 2002), <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MUSI/mlancc/fao2nl.htm>.

¹⁹ For the complete roster, see “Music World Joins in WPA’s Job Drive,” *New York Times*, Oct. 26, 1935.