

Ethnicity and Chronology at Metini, Fort Ross State Historic Park, California

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Introduction

This article presents the results of an analysis of collections from Metini¹ (CA-SON-190), a contact period site located in Fort Ross State Historic Park on the northern California coast. This research is a component of the Fort Ross Archaeological Project (FRAP) which, under the direction of Kent G. Lightfoot, endeavors to understand the effects of mercantile colonialism on Native peoples (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; in press). As a part of FRAP, researchers employ the direct historical approach which combines ethnographic, ethnohistorical, and archaeological information to track long term change among Native peoples prior to, during and following the contact period (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). In this article, I use this evidence to investigate 1) which ethnic group or groups were the occupants of Metini, 2) which artifacts can be used to identify ethnic groups at Fort Ross, 3) the dates and length of site occupation, and 4) the ways in which this site elaborates on the impact of Europeans (Russians, Mexican, and Americans) upon Native peoples (particularly Native Californians).

To orient the reader, I begin with a brief discussion of the prehistory and history of the Fort Ross Region. Then, through a comparison of the collections from Metini with the nearby Native Alaskan Village Site (NAVS), I will explore the question of which ethnic group(s) lived at Metini. This comparison is useful because in addition to being in similar proximity to the Fort Ross Stockade as Metini, the ethnic composition and time of formation of NAVS is already understood. As a result of this comparison, I show that Native Californians were the most likely occupants of Metini and suggest several ethnic markers for Native Californians and Native Alaskans. Having established, *who* is at the site, I proceed to address *when* the site was occupied. I discuss the chronology of Metini by focusing on the probability of a Native Californian occupation of the site from Prehistory through History. I explore the Native Californian presence during different periods through ethnohistorical documents and dates of European and Asian materials that have been modified by Native peoples. Finally, I address the nature of the Native Californian presence at Metini, thus elaborating on the ways in which the lives of Native Californians were altered by the presence of Europeans.

The Fort Ross region (Figure 1) has undergone several periods of occupation: Prehistory (pre-A.D. 1500), Protohistory (A.D. 1500-1812), and History (1812-1903). History is comprised of the Russian (A.D. 1812-1841), Mexican (A.D. 1841-1846), and American (A.D. 1846-1903) Periods (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; Haase 1952; Glenn Farris, personal communication

1. Following the convention employed in my Honor's Thesis (Ballard, 1995), I use "Metini" to refer to the archaeological site (CA-SON-190) and "Metini" to refer to the Kashaya Pomo name for the Fort Ross region.

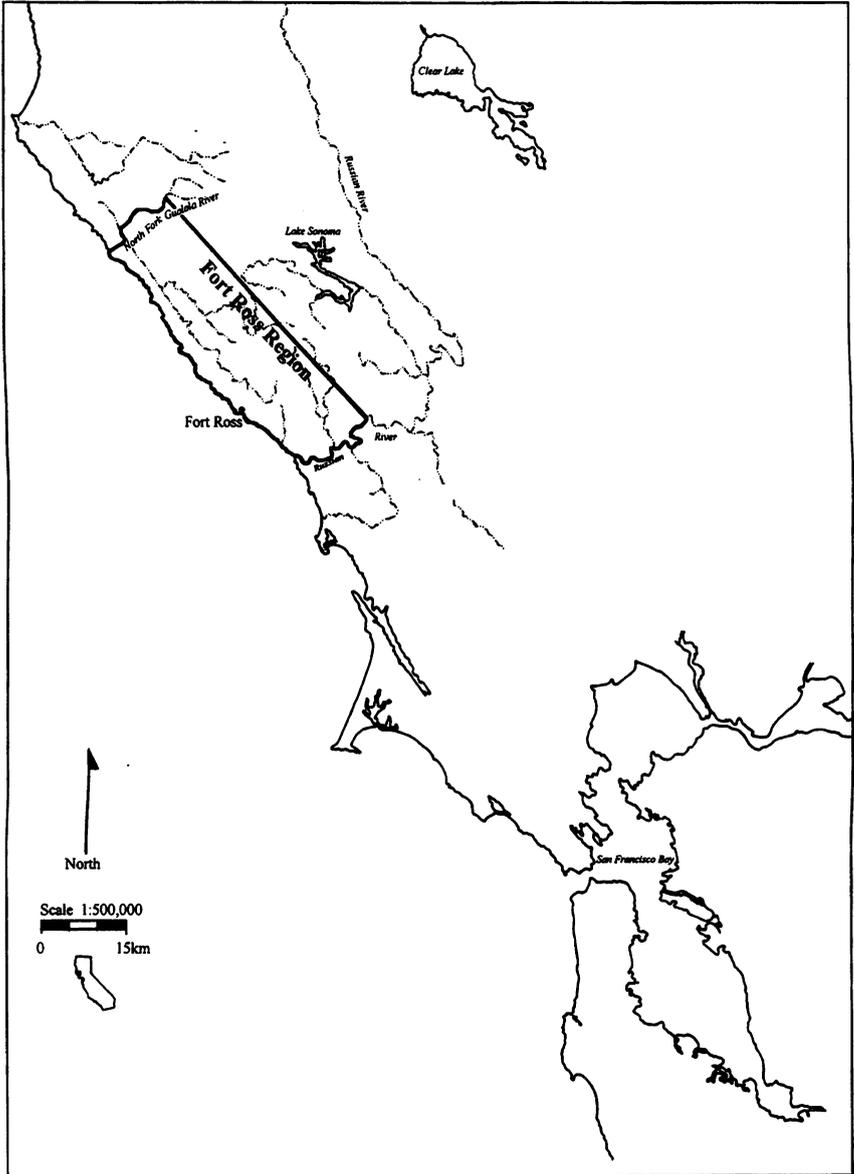


Figure 1. The Fort Ross Region

1995). The Mexican and American Periods consist of eras defined by the ownership of the Fort Ross region: Sutter-Benitz (1841-1846), Benitz (1846-1867), Fairfax and Dixon (1867-1873), and Call (1873-1903). All of these occupations have the potential to be expressed at Metini.

Though Fort Ross has been archaeologically explored for many years, only recently has the emphasis shifted away from the stockade and the elite ethnic Russian minority, to the surrounding Native workers' villages with the research at the Native Alaskan Village Site (NAVS) (CA-SON-1897/H) and the Fort Ross Beach Site (FRBS) (CA-SON-1898/H) (Figure 2) by archaeologists from the University of California, Berkeley and California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). This fieldwork now involves the investigation of Kashaya Pomo villages in the hinterland (See Martinez, this volume) and Metini (Figure 2)).

Metini has been excavated six times since the 1950's (Figure 3 John McKenzie in 1952, Adan E. Treganza in 1953 (1954), Donald Wood in 1970 (1971), Eric Ritter in 1972 (1972), Karl Gurke in 1975 (1975), and Glenn J. Farris and Waltrand Taugher in 1983 (1983). Of these only Treganza's excavations are organized into a published site report. Thus, despite a relatively large amount of archaeological investigation, with the exception of two specialized ceramic studies (O'Conner 1984; Wood 1971), there has been little data-backed research from the site. Perhaps this lack of reporting is due in part to the emphasis on stockade reconstruction and the elite Russian minority by Fort Ross archaeologists prior to FRAP (e.g. McKenzie 1975; Thomas 1976; Tryner 1975). Metini would not have been of much interest to early investigators as it holds little information about the structure of the stockade and the Russian elite and much more information about the people who lived outside the stockade. The material from the excavations by Wood, Gurke, and Farris and Taugher are the basis for this article.

Prehistory, Protohistory and History in the Fort Ross Region

The following is an account of the history of the Fort Ross region related by Herman James, a Kashaya Pomo (Kashaya), as it was told to him by his grandmother Lucaria Aipau Myers. Though there are conflicting reports, James suggests that Lucaria Aipau Myers was born at Fort Ross around 1808 and lived there until late in her life (James 1972:1). She lived through the Russian, Mexican, and American Periods and witnessed, through her Kashaya eyes, many important events which took place in the Fort Ross region.

Tales of Fort Ross

(told by Herman James)

This, too, my grandmother told me. She also really saw this herself. I am going to tell about the land at Metini. They lived there. Where they originated, where our ancestors originated, at Metini, is the place where they first lived. They lived there for a long time....Then, unexpectedly, they detected something white sailing on the water. It later proved to be a boat, but they didn't know what it was--the Indians hadn't seen anything like that before. Then it came closer and closer, and unexpectedly it landed, and it proved to be a boat. They turned out to be the undersea people--we Indians named those people that...Having landed, they built their houses close to where the Indians

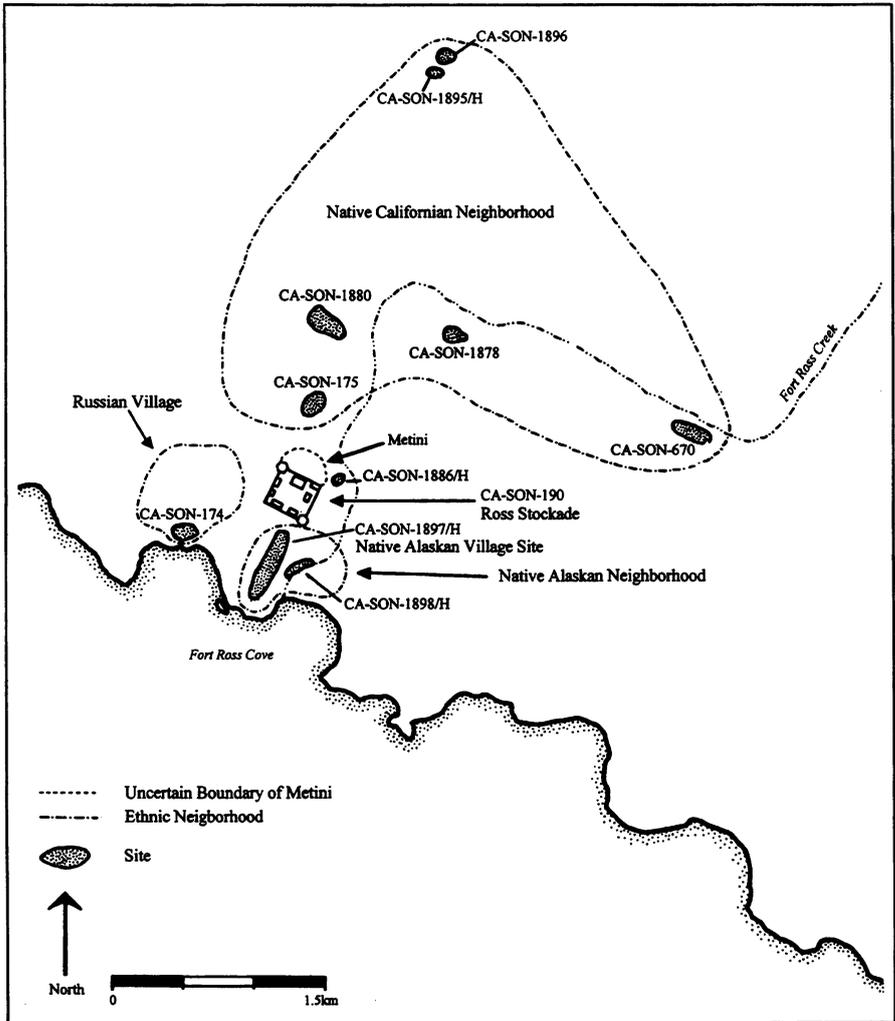


Figure 2. Archaeological Sites and Ethnic Neighborhoods in the Immediate Vicinity of Fort Ross

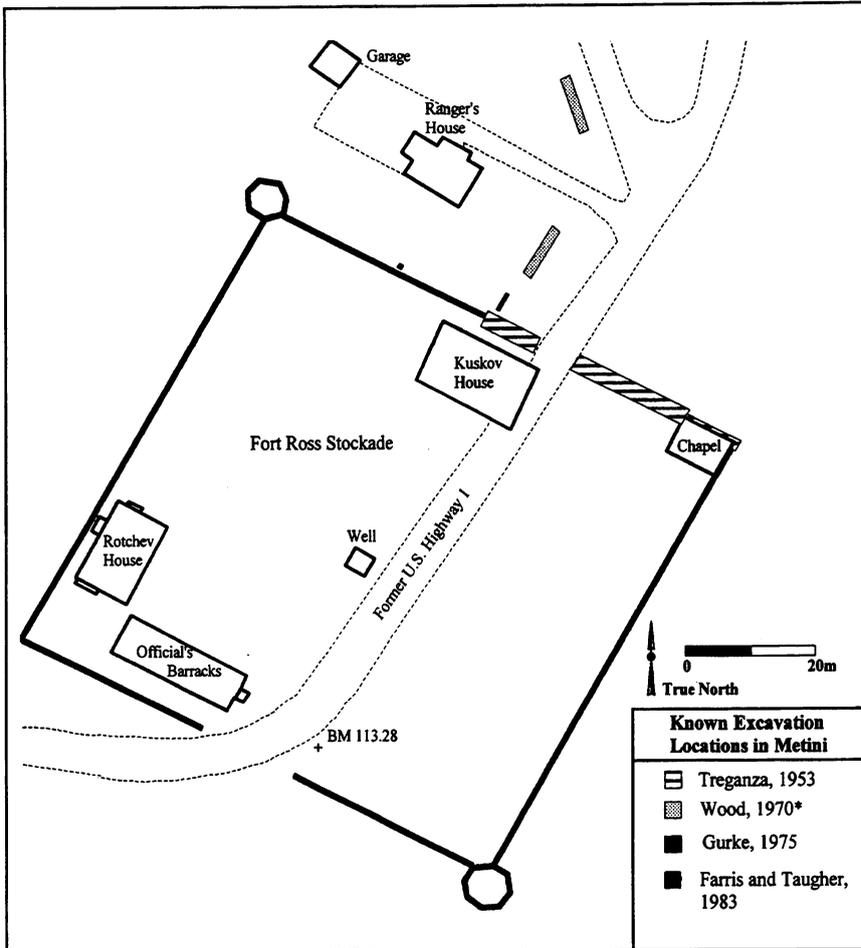


Figure 3. Known Excavation Locations in Metini. The exact locations of the trenches excavated by Wood in 1970 are unknown. The placement of these trenches is approximate based on existing maps on file at DPR Archaeology Laboratory, Sacramento, California.

were. After staying for a while, they got acquainted with them. They stayed with them. The Indians started to work for them. They lived there quite a while; having lived there for thirty years they returned home.... Then they the white people [literally 'miracles'] arrived. They, the white people, took over the land where all the Indians had been living. But the Indians still stayed.... Then they put them [the Indians] to work. The womenfolk, too, worked for the wives of the white men. My grandmother washed clothes for a white woman there in her house. They lived there a long time.... Then my mother and grandmother [moved] from there and lived at a place named Much Gravel. I was there too. I grew up there. We lived there.... This is a story she told me of the old days. It, too, is a true happening that she saw herself. This is all. (Oswalt 1964:277)

James asserts that the Kashaya were at *Metini* (the Kashaya name for the Fort Ross region) for a long time before the arrival of the "undersea people," the Kashaya name for the Russians (Farris 1989b:471). He mentions that the Kashaya worked for the "undersea people" for the thirty years that they lived at Fort Ross (1812-1841). Following the departure of the Russians, James discusses the arrival of "white people." This probably refers to the Mexican and American Periods (Kennedy 1955; Farris 1989b:47; Thomas 1976) when Fort Ross was managed and later owned by William Benitz (1843-1867) (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:121-122). The Kashaya worked for these new inhabitants of their land until some of the Kashaya moved to "Much Gravel" which is located just south of Horseshoe Point on the coast north of Fort Ross (Oswalt 1964:340).

Archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest use of the Fort Ross region occurred along the coast during the Upper Archaic (1000 B.C. - A.D. 500) and the Lower Emergent (A.D. 500 - 1500) (Fredrickson 1974). This early coastal occupation is represented by broadly distributed low density lithic scatters located on the coastal terrace (Bramlette and Dowdall 1989; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:110, 1993:166). These sites may have resulted from the foraging and terrestrial hunting activities of Native Californians (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:112, 1993:166). Early extensive use of marine and tidal resources in the Fort Ross Region is evidenced by the midden site CA-SON-1885 (Figure 2), which dates to the Lower Emergent (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:112). This late date may be the result of changes in the California coastline which may have submerged or eroded many of the early coastal sites (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:112; 1993:166).

Intensive use of the Fort Ross Region appears to have begun around A.D. 1500, at the end of the Lower Emergent and the beginning of the Upper Emergent/Protohistory (A.D. 1500-1812) (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:111-112). A central-based village model has been proposed for this time period. This model, which is derived from ethnographic and archaeological evidence, suggests that Native Californians in the Fort Ross region lived in large and relatively permanent villages centrally located on the first ridge system during the winter. During the summer, they occupied "special purpose camps" from which they exploited available resources (Stewart 1943; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). According to this model, *Metini* would be a "special purpose camp" which was occupied to take advantage of tidal and marine resources.

Ethnographic evidence suggests that *Metini* was at the heart of the prehistoric territory of the Kashaya Pomo. This territory encompassed "30 miles of coast of northwest Sonoma

County and extended inland for 5 to 13 miles" (McLendon and Oswalt 1978:278; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). The exact time of their arrival to this part of California is unknown but linguistic and archaeological data suggests that the ancestral Kashaya moved to the Fort Ross region some time between 1,000 and 500 B.C. (Moratto 1984:557-558; Basgall 1982:17; Layton 1990:140).² Robert Oswalt hypothesizes that the ancestors of the Kashaya Pomo migrated along the Russian River from Clear Lake. Their movement into the Fort Ross region may have displaced the Yukian speaking inhabitants of the area (Oswalt 1964; Bean and Theodoratus 1978; Layton 1990; Basgall 1982) (see also Barrett 1908, 1916, 1952, 1975; Gifford 1967; Gifford and Kroeber 1937; Kennedy 1955; Kunkel 1962, 1974; Kniffen 1939; Loeb 1926; Powers 1976; and Stewart 1943 for further ethnographic information on the Kashaya Pomo).

Protohistory (ca. A.D. 1500-1812) for the Fort Ross Region is defined as the "Upper Emergent" (Fredrickson 1974). Results from the survey conducted by Lightfoot *et al.* (1991) suggest that the central-based village settlement system may have developed at this time (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:110). Sites from this time period indicate that the Pomo intensified their subsistence activities and became more specialized through greater tool kit diversity (Layton 1990; Basgall 1982). The appearance of bipointed chert drills at sites in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties suggest increased craft specialization by the Pomo, in this case shell bead manufacture (Layton 1990; Basgall 1982).

Europeans were present in northern California as early as 1579, when Sir Francis Drake landed on what is today the Marin County coast (Meighan 1981; Bean and Theodoratus 1978; Barrett 1908:36-37 note 7). Despite European--particularly Spanish Missionary--activity in San Francisco and Marin County (Cook 1943:77; Wagner 1931) it appears that the first direct contact between Europeans and the Kashaya was by a Russian-American Company employee, *Promyshlennik* Timofei Tarakanov, sometime between 1807 and 1811 (Farris 1993).

The Russian Period (1812-1841) commenced with the establishment of Fort Ross on the northern California coast. It was the hope of RAC officials that the Ross Colony would be a base for sea otter hunting in California and provide food for colonies in the north Pacific (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). As the California sea otter were hunted to extinction, Ross turned to other commercial endeavors. These economic activities included agriculture, ship building, and other ventures (such as brick production, black smithing, and timber harvest).

Fort Ross was the first multi-ethnic community in northern California (Lightfoot *et al.* 1993:161). The socio-economic hierarchy of the RAC and the Ross Colony was based on ethnicity, education, job skills and motivation (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:21). A few ethnic Russians (consisting of elite and lower ranking hunters or *promyshlenniki*) occupied the apex of the socio-economic hierarchy. The remaining ethnic groups were ranked in descending order as follows: Creoles (mixed Russian and Native Alaskan heritage); Native Alaskans (including Aleuts, Alutiiqs or Kodiak Islanders, and Athabascans from the Cook Inlet); and local Native Californians (Kashaya Pomo, Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo).³

2. See Basgall (1982:12) for problems with time depth estimates for linguistic differentiation.

3. See Farris 1989a:489; Istomin 1992:9-11; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:22 for more detailed census information.

The Native peoples at Fort Ross were critical to the "success" of its various economic endeavors. The Native Alaskans hunted sea mammals with a specialized, highly developed hunting technology which was essential to the RAC sea mammal harvest (Gibson 1987; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991). Native Californians were employed in most of the other RAC economic activities, most commonly as agricultural laborers (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; Dmytryshyn *et al.* 1989; Gibson 1976, 1969; Khlebnikov 1976; Oswalt 1964).

The Russians, unlike their Spanish neighbors, were not interested in the conversion or the enculturation of the Kashaya Pomo (Farris 1989a:488-489; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:150). The Kashaya apparently "welcomed" the RAC as a buffer against the northward movement of the Spanish (Farris 1989a:488). Initially, a group of Native Californians lived near the stockade (Gibson 1969:210-211) while the majority of the Kashaya continued their traditional seasonal rounds, which were altered to include agricultural work for the RAC (Oswalt 1964:4). This changed in the late 1820s and 1830s when the RAC attempted to step up their agricultural production and demanded increased Kashaya labor (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:24). Possibly as a result of the increased demand for labor, the Kashaya settlement near the stockade grew towards the end of the Russian Period (La Place 1988; Oswalt 1964).

Fort Ross did not live up to the hopes of the RAC and by 1841 it had become an economic liability (Farris 1990:476). Thus, the RAC sold the stockade and surrounding lands to John Sutter ushering in the Sutter-Benitz era (1841-1846) and the Mexican Period (1841-1846).

Sutter stripped the stockade, taking virtually all of the removable items to Hock Farm in Marysville and Sutter's Fort in Sacramento (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; Farris 1990). Despite his Mexican citizenship, Mexico did not recognize Sutter's claim to the Fort Ross region. Consequently, Manuel Torres was awarded the Rancho Muniz land grant which extended from the Russian River to Timber Cove, including Fort Ross (Tomlin n.d.:25). In 1843, William Benitz (Sutter's employee) became the caretaker of Fort Ross. The period of Benitz' tenure at Fort Ross straddles the Mexican and American Periods.

The American Period (A.D. 1846-1903) begins with the Benitz era (1846-1867). Benitz gained title to the Fort Ross region in 1859 by paying off William Muldrow who had filed claim to the land a year before Benitz (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; Glenn Farris, personal communication 1995). During the period of Benitz's caretakership/ownership, the Fort Ross region was run similarly to a Mexican *rancho*. He raised livestock, agricultural products, established a brewery and opened his land to mining and timber harvest (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991; Tomlin n.d.). The largest Kashaya *Rancheria* was on his land (Oswalt 1964:4). The Kashaya, like many Native Californians at the time, worked in a state of "semi-peonage" for Benitz (Bean and Theodoratus 1978). In exchange for cheap labor, the Kashaya were allowed to live on Benitz's land. In addition to his "Pomo Indian work force," Benitz employed Mexican cowboys to help run his *rancho* (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:122).

Benitz sold the Fort Ross region to Charles Fairfax and James Dixon, the owners of Fairfax and Dixon Lumbering Company, in 1867. This ushered in the short Fairfax and Dixon era (1867-1873). Around 1870, Fairfax and Dixon forced the Kashaya off the *rancheria*, and many of the families moved to the Haupt Ranch (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:122).

In 1873, George W. Call purchased the Fort Ross region, commencing the Call era (1873-1903). In addition to farming and ranching, the Call family transformed the structures of the Fort Ross stockade into a small "town": the Rotchev House became the Fort Ross Hotel; the Officials Quarters were used as a saloon, office and outhouse; a dance hall was made of the Warehouse; the Blockhouses held chickens or pigs; and the sheds along the eastern side of the stockade became a blacksmith's shop, a wagon shed, horse stalls and a store (McKenzie 1975). Two Kashaya individuals, Lucari (possibly Lucaria [Glenn Farris, personal communication 1995]) and Mary, stayed on the Call Ranch into the early 20th century (McKenzie 1963:1-2; Farris 1986:17).

The stockade was sold to the State Landmark League in 1903 who held it for three years and then deeded it to the State of California (Thomas 1976). Thus began a period of restoration and archaeological investigation.

Ethnicity: A Comparison of Metini and the Native Alaskan Village Site

Establishing ethnicity at pluralistic contact period sites using archaeological materials is difficult. The identification of clearly defined ethnic boundaries is problematic as material cultures in multi-ethnic communities tend to merge (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995). The interactions of ethnic groups has the potential to produce a unique material culture (e.g. artifacts, spatial organization etc.) resulting from the incorporation or adaptation of new ideas (e.g. Quimby and Spoehr 1951). Consequently, given the complexity of inter-ethnic interactions at Fort Ross, it is impossible to firmly establish the ethnicity of the occupants of Metini solely from its archaeological record. Thus I look outside of Metini at the Native Alaskan Village Site (NAVS) (CA-SON-1897/H) and compare the two assemblages. NAVS provides a fruitful comparison for several reasons: because it was formed under the same general conditions at Metini; it is situated on the opposite side of the stockade and; it was known to have been occupied during the Russian Period and was utilized in some form during the Mexican and American Periods.

The comparison of the NAVS and Metini assemblages showed that the shellfish, chipped stone lithics, ceramics and some of the worked glass components were similar. These similarities may be the result of several factors: 1) people of the same ethnic background occupying both sites; 2) acculturation; 3) limited variation in available goods and natural resources and/or the presence of a prehistoric deposit across the Fort Ross terrace (Ballard 1995:143-159). The similarities between the sites do not definitively show the ethnic composition of Metini; ethnicity is better understood through the differences.

The most distinctive differences between NAVS and Metini were found in the amount and types of worked shell, worked bone, faunal remains, lithics (specifically chert drills and ground slate), worked ceramics, worked glass and glass trade beads. These artifactual differences can be explained by variation in: 1) ethnicity, 2) gender; 3) status; 4) site use patterns, 5) temporal variation, 6) post-depositional factors, and 7) recovery techniques at each site. In particular, the worked shell, fauna remains, worked bone, lithics, worked ceramics and possibly worked glass are strongly indicative of ethnic variation.

Worked Shell

A striking difference between the two sites is the greater number of worked shell artifacts at Metini and their virtual absence at NAVS (Ballard 1995:145-146; Schiff in press a). If Metini was occupied protohistorically or during the Russian or Mexican Periods, it could have been a site of abalone cutting and drilling, and possibly pendant production (Ballard 1995:145), well-documented for Native Californians. (Merriam 1967:297-298).

Faunal Remains

The primary difference in the faunal assemblages of the two sites is the paucity of sea mammal remains at Metini and their abundance at NAVS (Ballard 1995; Wake in press). The consumption of sea mammals is well documented for Native Alaskans whereas it is less characteristic of northern coastal Native Californians between San Francisco Bay and coastal Mendocino (Hildebrandt and Jones 1992). The absence of sea mammal remains strongly suggests that Native Alaskans did not occupy Metini. In further support of this, the identifiable mammal remains found at Metini are primarily composed of deer (*O. hemionus*), a well documented Native Californian food (Barrett 1952; Loeb 1926). Some of the deer remains show evidence of marrow extraction, which is typical of traditional Native Californian foodways or patterns of consumption (Wake 1994:28).

Worked Bone

The worked bone at the two sites is also strikingly different. Items associated with Native Alaskan hunting, such as sea otter darts and whale bone harpoon shafts, are notably absent from Metini, whereas they have been found at NAVS. The only worked bone artifact found at Metini which may be of Native Alaskan origin, appears to be a socket-piece lashing tang. This artifact is unique in that it has a drilled hole. Most Native Alaskan socket-piece tangs do not have drilled holes, which may suggest that this artifact was modified for use as an ornament, most likely by someone other than a Native Alaskan (Tom Wake, personal communication 1995). Also absent from Metini are the "hand holds" that have been identified by Wake (1995; in press, this volume) as debitage from the production of Native Alaskan bone points and other tools. These hand holds have been found in abundance at NAVS (Wake 1995; in press, this volume).

Lithics

One distinctive difference in the chipped stone from these sites is the presence of bipointed chert drills at Metini and their absence from NAVS (Schiff in press b). Similar drills have been found at Pomo sites in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties (Layton 1990:136; Basgall 1982:8,15). According to Layton's and Basgall's work, it appears that these drills show up in late prehistory. Given the difficulty of distinguishing between late prehistoric and contact period deposits, their findings do not rule out drill use during the contact period. The drills at Metini may be associated with the abalone, and could represent a specialized activity area or for abalone pendant or shell bead production.

The ground slate assemblages from both sites offer another example of ethnic difference. Though not present in great abundance at NAVS, ground slate was more widely distributed across that site than at Metini (Ballard 1995: 149; Mills in press). The ground slate

found at Metini does not appear to be linked with the site's occupation (Ballard 1995:149). Ground slate was commonly used by Native Alaskans on Kodiak Island and in Southern Coastal Alaska, whereas little or no use of ground slate has been recorded for the Native Californians from the North Coast Ranges (Mills 1995). As such, the ground slate may be a Native Alaskan ethnic marker that is notably absent from the habitation related area of Metini.

Worked Ceramics

The worked ceramics from NAVS and Metini are distinctly different. The collection from Metini contains numerous ground ceramics and one drilled sherd (Ballard 1995:154-155). Conversely, NAVS has few ground ceramics and a small number of flaked and notched sherds (Silliman in press). Ground ceramics have been found at other Native Californian sites (Von der Porten 1973; Smith 1974) and at Kolmakovskiy Redoubt, a RAC fort in southern Alaska (Oswalt 1980:Plate 37s). Thus ground ceramics could be the product of either Native Alaskans or Native Californians. The virtual absence of ground ceramics at NAVS, however, suggests that the Native Alaskans at Fort Ross were not producing them.

Worked Glass

The worked glass artifacts from Metini consist of green vessel glass and flat glass projectile points, bifaces, and edge modified sherds (Ballard 1995: 157). In contrast, the NAVS worked glass artifacts are comprised of dark green glass projectile points; flat glass and colorless edge modified sherds; and dark green and colorless cores (Silliman in press). Two obvious differences are the amount of flat glass and the variety of vessel glass types modified at each site. The greater amount of worked flat glass at Metini cannot be accounted for by differential availability since the flat glass density of the two sites is similar (Ballard 1995:156). This difference may be an indicator of ethnic preferences or of a difference in the time when flat glass was used in buildings or deposited at the sites. The glass types of the projectile points do not preclude contemporaneous use of the sites. That the glass working episodes at the sites may be contemporaneous increases strength of an ethnic explanation for the differences. Worked glass has been found both at Native Alaskan sites (e.g. Crowell 1994) and Native Californian sites (e.g. Layton 1990:207), thus it is difficult to determine who produced the worked glass at NAVS. A comparison of traditional prehistoric Native Californian and Native Alaskan point types with the glass points might help to clarify this issue.

In conclusion, there appear to be qualitative differences between NAVS and Metini. These differences have a variety of explanations that involve ethnicity, time and site function. Several of these differences, such as the worked bone, sea mammal remains and ground slate, are less dependant on temporal explanations as these artifacts at NAVS date to the Russian Period. The virtual absence of Native Alaskan-style worked bone, ground slate, and sea mammal remains at Metini suggest that Native Alaskans were not occupying or using this site during the Russian Period. The chipped stone, sandstone groundstone, worked shell, and ground ceramics at Metini are more typically Native Californian. These artifacts, however, are not firmly established as belonging to the Russian Period, but they appear to be Native Californian (Ballard 1995).

Chronology

Native Californians at Metini during Prehistory and Protohistory

What are the most likely time periods for a Native Californian occupation of Metini? Ethnohistorical documents clearly demonstrate that Metini was occupied during the Russian Period (Alekseev 1987; Tomlin and Watrous 1993; Carter 1929) and the Call era (1873-1903) in the American Period (Haase 1952). Production dates for ceramics, glass and nails found at Metini support this evidence. Additionally, obsidian hydration dates from other sites (Purser *et al.* 1990; Lightfoot *et al.* in press) on the Fort Ross terrace further support prehistoric use of the general area. I discuss the ethnohistorical and archaeological evidence for the chronology of CA-SON-190 and the most likely time for Native Californian occupation of the site.

One of the topics of the greatest speculation regarding Metini is whether or not it was the site of the prehistoric Kashaya village that was displaced by the construction of the stockade (Smith 1974:2, 4; McKenzie 1957:1, 1963:2; Glenn Farris, personal communication 1995). The comparison of the Metini and NAVS assemblages support the inference that Metini was occupied by Native Californians in prehistory and history. The ethnographic documentation indicates prehistoric use of Metini (Oswalt 1964:1), however, I have not found any references to the prehistoric occupation of Metini (CA-SON-190).

The strongest evidence for occupation of Metini during this time period comes from its proximity to a prehistoric lithic scatter recorded near the eastern stockade wall (Purser *et al.* 1990). Obsidian hydration dates place the deposit in the early Middle Archaic and the Upper Archaic through the early Upper Emergent (Purser *et al.* 1990:45; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:80). Hydration dates from NAVS support the findings of Purser, Beard and Praetzelis (1990; Lightfoot *et al.* in press), thus pointing to a widely distributed prehistoric deposit on the terrace.

The projectile point types found at Metini are indicative of an Upper Archaic and Upper Emergent and historical occupation (Ballard 1995:161-162; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:67-68). Additionally, the presence of exhausted, obsidian bipolar cores contrasts with large obsidian flakes also found at the site. This suggests temporal variation in the availability of obsidian and may indicate long term prehistoric occupation (Ballard 1995:162).

Occupation at Metini during the Upper Emergent or protohistoric period (A.D. 1500-1812) (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:66) is supported by the obsidian hydration readings from the eastern stockade wall and by the point types found at Metini (Ballard 1995:161-163). Additionally, the bipointed or hafted drills found at Metini suggest a possible late prehistoric, protohistoric early historic date (Ballard 1995:163; Layton 1990:138; Basgall 1982). This is not enough evidence, however, to support or discredit the notion that the Kashaya village was displaced by the construction of the stockade.

Ethnohistorical documents do not specifically discuss a Kashaya village at Metini. In "Tales of Fort Ross," Herman James states "having landed, they [the Russians] built their houses close to where the Indians were" (Oswalt 1964:277). This statement suggests that the stockade was not built in the Kashaya village, but rather close to it. In 1817, a "treaty" between the Russian-American Company and the Kashaya was signed, establishing the right of the Russians to maintain a colony in Kashaya territory (Haase 1952:27; Farris 1989a:48; Dmytryshyn *et al.*

1989:296-298; Spencer-Hancock 1978:11). Though this does not deal directly with Metini (the site), it does show recognition on the part of the Russians of Kashaya presence in the area.

The datable European and Asian materials provide some insight into the timing of site use. Production dates for ceramics, glass and nails can be used to suggest the earliest date which an artifact could have been deposited on a site. These artifacts suggest that Metini was actively or passively used from the Russian Period through modern times.

Native Californians at Metini during History

Russian Period accounts, by visitors to Fort Ross, refer to a Native Californian village located near the stockade (Vasilii Golovnin 1979 [1818]; Ferdinand Petrovich von Wrangell [1833] in Gibson 1969:210-211; Peter Kostromitinov [1830-1838] 1974; Cyrille LaPlace [1839] in Farris 1988). In 1839, Cyrille LaPlace visited "a hamlet which the Natives and their families, employed in agricultural work, had established near the fort." He described "huts formed of branches" (Farris 1988:66) which suggests that he was not referring to the buildings at Metini which were pictured by Duhaut-Cilly in 1828 (Carter 1929; Tomlin and Watrous 1993:20) and Voznesenskii in 1841 (Alekseev 1987; Tomlin and Watrous 1993: 12b-12c). The Duhaut-Cilly and the Voznesenskii drawings show plank structures with fenced areas at Metini (Khlebnikov 1990:138, 142). Thus, it is unlikely that a traditional Native Californian village was present at Metini during or after 1828 (see discussion of the later periods). LaPlace may have visited a settlement associated with the large dance house circle (CA-SON-175) (Figure 2) north of the highway, also referred to as *Metini* (Smith 1974). Similarly, Golovnin refers to the Native Californian village as a "collection of huts" (1979:160). Golovnin's observation predates the Duhaut-Cilly drawing, therefore it is possible that Golovnin is referring to a Native Californian settlement at Metini (CA-SON-190). However, the earliest Russian map of Fort Ross (1817) does not show structures at Metini (Fedorova 1973; Tomlin and Watrous 1993:12a). This map contains great detail of the hinterland structures, therefore the lack of buildings or "village" at Metini is strong evidence that there was not a settlement, native or otherwise, there in 1817.

The key to addressing the question of a Native Californian historical occupation at Metini lies in those artifacts that are most clearly the result of native use of non-native materials, such as worked ceramics and glass. I will focus upon the artifacts that are European or Asian materials that appear to have been modified by Native Californians, in order to better understand the time frame of a Native Californian historical occupation of Metini.

The worked glass and worked ceramic artifacts support a possible Russian Period Native Californian presence at Metini. The worked glass artifacts are fashioned from materials that may have been available during the Russian Period. The dark green projectile points, in particular, could date to the Russian period, since dark green (black) bottle glass has been shown to have been available during this time (Ballard 1995). The window glass projectile points and edge modified sherds are not as easily dated (Ballard 1995:168), therefore it is not certain when the glass, which was later modified, was available. The ground ceramics are also made from ceramic types that could have been available during the Russian Period (Ballard 1995:164-165,221). Though all of these ceramics may have been in use during this time, their modification could have occurred at a later date.

Much evidence, however, supports a Russian Period Native Californian occupation at Metini: 1) the small amount of variability in the types of worked glass, 2) the lack of modified ceramics that were manufactured exclusively after the Russian Period, and 3) the absence of ground ironstone. Though establishing dates based on the absence of particular artifacts (*terminus ante quem*) is somewhat tenuous (Noël Hume 1970; Deetz 1977:16), it may provide some insight. Green glass is the only unequivocally worked vessel glass in the Metini assemblage. Due to its thickness the dark green glass is generally the most appropriate for knapping; however, the fact that so much flat glass is modified suggests that thickness of glass was not always the most important factor for choosing which glass to work. The lack of worked glass artifacts from other types of vessel glass (e.g. brown and blue) suggests that the glass modification took place during or just after the Russian Period (i.e. Mexican Period or Benitz era). All of the modified earthenware sherds have dates of manufacture that fall within the Russian Period (Ballard 1995:164-165, 221). Only earthenware and porcelain sherds were ground which may suggest an earlier date for ceramic modification. There is a notable lack of ground ironstone and stoneware sherds, which post date the Russian and Mexican Periods. Their absence cannot be attributed to the hardness of their body, since porcelain, the hardest of the ceramic classes, was ground. Thus, the absence of ground stoneware and ironstone suggests that they were not available during the period in which ceramics were being worked, namely the Russian Period and/or Mexican Period.

Ethnohistorical documentation of Native Californian *rancherías* in the Fort Ross Region during the post-Russian periods is scant (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:123; Benitz 1852). G.M. Waseurtz af Sandels visited the Fort Ross stockade in 1843, during the Sutter/Benitz era of the Mexican Period, at which time he noted that two Native Californian women were living inside the stockade (Sandels 1926:58; Farris 1986). Two years later, in 1845, Ernest Rufus (Benitz's partner) noted that twenty-five small dwelling houses were located on the northern side of the stockade. According to Rufus, these houses were constructed of rough hewn redwood slabs and measured 12 ft. to 14 ft. (Munro-Fraser in Haase 1952:33). He does not refer to the presence of Native Californians in or near these houses. The structures noted by Rufus may be the remnants of the Russian village that was located to the northwest of the stockade rather than the buildings that were at Metini (Glenn Farris, personal communication 1995). From these accounts it is evident that in the middle of the Mexican Period at least a small number of Native Californians were living inside or close to the stockade. Rufus's observations seems to rule out Native Californians living in traditional style houses at Metini, though they could have occupied the redwood dwellings.

The four years of the Mexican period is too short to be clearly distinguished from the Russian. The archaeological evidence for a Native Californian occupation of Metini during the Mexican Period is thus the same as for the Russian Period.

During the Benitz era of the American Period, William Benitz was reported to have a "large group of well trained Indians working for him" (Haase 1952:61). In an 1852 letter, Benitz stated that he was employing one hundred Indian families, who were living in the vicinity of Fort Ross (Benitz 1852). A census taken in January 1848 recorded 161 Native Californians (Ross Census 1848), in addition to the Benitz family and Ernest Rufus living near the stockade (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:122). A photograph taken *ca.* 1865, looking at Metini from the northwest shows, two large barn-like buildings and a possible third structure, all located on the eastern side

of Metini (on file Department of Parks and Recreation photo - negative no.21 in Thomas 1976:18). The angle of the photograph does not allow a view of the western portion of Metini. Therefore, though it is unlikely that a Native Californian village would have been situated in such close proximity to the "barns," it cannot be ruled out.

The archaeological evidence for Native Californian occupation of Metini during the Benitz era is less solid than for the Russian and Mexican Periods. All of the worked ceramic and glass materials have the potential to predate the Benitz era. Though their primary use during the Russian or Mexican Periods does not preclude their modification during the Benitz era, the absence of variety in the color of the worked glass and ground ironstone suggests pre-Benitz modification.

Historical accounts, from the Fairfax and Dixon era, indicate that Fairfax and Dixon forcibly expelled the Native Californians from their *rancheria* located at CA-SON-175 (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:122). Therefore it is unlikely that Native Californians were residing at Metini during this era. The archaeological evidence for Native Californian occupation of Metini during this time period is as ambiguous as that for the Benitz era.

During the Call era, the last two Pomo persons in residence at Fort Ross reportedly lived adjacent to the stockade until the early 1900s (McKenzie 1963:1-2; Farris 1986:17; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:99). Their residence (CA-SON-1886/H, Figure 2) is located east of Metini, on the hillside of the west bank of Fort Ross Creek (McKenzie 1963; map; Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:99). A drawing published in the 1877 edition of Thompson and West's *History of Sonoma County* (Spencer-Hancock 1978:23-24), depicts a road running through Metini as well as a fenced area enclosing the seven-sided blockhouse. Similarly, a photograph from 1875 looking southwest at Metini shows one fenced house-like structure (Haase 1952:Plate V photo 2). Neither the drawing nor the photograph give any indication of a Native Californian settlement at Metini.

There is little archaeological evidence for a Native Californian occupation of Metini during this era. As with the Benitz, and Fairfax and Dixon eras, the worked glass and ceramics could have been modified during the Call era. As previously stated, however, the absence of variously colored glass projectile points and unequivocally edge-modified sherds, as well as the lack of ground ironstone, suggests that the worked glass and ceramics were not made during this period. Additionally, the 1989 U. C. Berkeley survey of the reported residence of Lucari and Mary (CA-SON-1886/H), did not recover worked glass or ceramics (Lightfoot *et al.* 1991:96-99). Thus, though the worked ceramics and glass from Metini may be related to the presence of Lucari and Mary, it is unlikely.

The Nature of the Native Californian Occupation

I have established that Native Californians probably contributed to the accumulation of cultural materials at Metini, most likely during the Russian and/or Mexican Periods. I will proceed to discuss several hypotheses for their presence during the different periods at Fort Ross.

As I have noted, the graphic evidence beginning with Duhaut-Cilly, rule out a traditional Native Californian style village at Metini after 1828. Though it is possible that some time between 1812 and 1828 there was a Native Californian village at Metini, the 1817 map

makes this scenario less likely. Smith (1974) contends that the Kashaya would have relocated soon after the construction of the stockade because "[i]t would have been impossible for them to continue living at the old village of Mad-shui-nui [Metini] after the construction of the fort, as the north wall of the stockade cuts through a portion of the aboriginal settlement" (Smith 1974:4). It is possible that the Kashaya, if they were at Metini in the first place, rather than being completely displaced, could have continued to reside outside of the stockade wall despite the fact that the wall cut through their village. However, the deposit that lead Treganza to conclude that the wall cut through the village is most likely part of the ubiquitous prehistoric deposit recorded by Purser *et al* (1990) and Lightfoot *et al.* (in press).

It is uncertain whether or not the Russian-American Company would have wanted a settlement of potentially unfriendly Natives adjacent to the stockade. Alternatively, this location might have been viewed as a safe place for the Natives, that kept them within sight of the blockhouse and guns. This strategy for controlling the native populations, has been hypothesized as partial justification for the location of NAVS on the southern side of the stockade (Tom Wake, personal communication 1995). The relationship between the Native Californians and the Russian-American Company changed over time. It began relatively friendly, as evidenced by the signing of the 1817 "treaty," but in the 1820's it turned sour as the demands on the Native Californians for labor increased. This changing relationship between the RAC and Native Californians allows for the possibility of a Native Californian village at Metini, during the early Russian Period (1812-early 1820's), when relations were good. Alternatively, there may have been a settlement at Metini subsequent to 1820, when the Native Californians were forced to work and possibly forced to live where they could be closely watched.

The drawings by Duhaut-Cilly (1828) and Voznesenskii (1841) portray what appear to be small dwelling structures at Metini. The Duhaut-Cilly drawing shows several of the structures with adjacent fenced areas, one of which appears to contain a garden. A few of the structures in the Voznesenskii painting have fenced areas as well, though, the painting provides no indication as to the purpose of these enclosures. An inventory of Fort Ross taken at the time of the sale to Sutter (1841) gives some insight into the Voznesenskii painting:

In addition there are 24 dwellings around the fort:...

4 dwellings, 5 *sazhens* long by 2

5 dwellings, 4 $\frac{1}{3}$ *sazhens* long by 2

9 dwellings, 3 $\frac{1}{3}$ *sazhens* by 2 wide.

3 dwellings, 2 *sazhens* long by 2 wide.

At almost every dwelling there is an orchard enclosed by palings and there are 8 sheds and 8 bathhouses and 10 kitchens.

All these houses are covered with double planking; they have glazed windows and each has a floor and a ceiling. (Dmytryshyn *et al.* 1989:432)

This inventory of the dwellings matches the structures that were portrayed by Voznesenskii. All appear to be no more than 5 *sazhens* long, most have a fenced area and some sort of smaller outbuilding(s).

Voznesenskii depicted the buildings at Metini as few in number and well spaced. This is particularly striking when compared to the areas to the west and south of the stockade where there are many buildings in closer proximity. The layout of the buildings at Metini suggests that its inhabitants were near the top of the social hierarchy, though not esteemed enough to live inside of the stockade, such as Creoles or *promyshlenniki*. This relatively high level of status is further supported by the presence of large decorated beads at Metini (Glenn Farris, personal communication 1995). If the ground ceramics and worked glass found at Metini date from this time, they may be the result of Native Californian women cohabiting with Creole or *promyshlenniki* men. Such cohabitation was documented by Kuskov in 1820-1821 (Istomin 1992:6-7, 20-21, 34-35). The extended families of the women may have stayed with them, contributing to the deposition of worked ceramics and glass.

Evidence suggests that Native Californians may also have been residing at Metini during the Mexican Period (Sutter-Benitz era) and the early American Period (Benitz era). Waseurtz af Sandels observed that Native Californians were residing in the stockade in 1843, and Rufus noted many extra-stockade structures from the Russian Period were still present in 1845. Thus it is possible that a group of Native Californians were living in some of the structures at Metini.

Finally, a third possibility, is that Lucari and Mary spent time at Metini while they lived adjacent to it at (CA-SON-1886/H). The modified ceramics and glass may be related to their presence at Fort Ross. However, as I have already discussed the absence of modified later period ceramics, the limited variety of modified glass types, and the lack of worked glass and ceramics at their residence makes this the least probable explanation.

Conclusion

One recurring theme in this article is the question of the ethnicity of the of the occupants of Metini. In order to begin to address this complex issue, I compared the collections from Metini and the Native Alaskan Village Site, a site where the ethnic composition is better understood. This comparison exemplifies the difficulty with identifying the ethnicity of the occupants of sites in a multi-ethnic community. The similarities between the two sites could be the result of: 1) ethnicity, 2) limited availability of goods and natural resources, 3) acculturation and/or, 4) underlying prehistoric deposits. The differences between the sites could be due to: 1) ethnicity, 2) gender, 3) status, 4) site use patterns, and/or 5) time of occupation. It is clear from these explanations of the similarities and differences between the two sites, that there are many issues that obscure the question of ethnicity.

Though we cannot be absolutely sure that Native Californians were occupying Metini during the historical period, it is clear that some person(s) was modifying glass and ceramics. Those materials that were virtually absent from Metini, but were present at NAVS--such as Native Alaskan style worked bone, abundant sea mammal remains and ground slate--suggest that the occupants of Metini were probably not Native Alaskan and thus were most likely Native

Californian. However, the nature of culture contact does not rule out the possibility that the Native occupants of Metini were Native Alaskans who adopted many Native Californian practices.

Based on the inference that Native Californians created a significant amount of the archaeological deposits at Metini, I presented the ethnographic and archaeological evidence for the site's use in different time periods. There is strong evidence for prehistoric occupation based on findings from other sites on the terrace. Ethnographic documents suggest that the Kashaya had a protohistoric village on the terrace, which Herman James referred to as *Metini*, though it was not necessarily at the site Metini (CA-SON-190). The archaeological evidence for protohistoric occupation is slim, based mainly on analogy between the presence of bipoined "hafted" chert drills at Metini and the late prehistoric to contact period Pomo sites in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties (Layton 1990; Basgall 1982). Though there is abundant ethnohistorical data for the Russian Period, none refer directly to a Native Californian occupation of Metini. Many accounts describe Native Californian village(s) within the vicinity of the stockade; however, the descriptions of dwelling structures in these villages are incongruous with the graphic depictions of buildings at Metini during this time period. The archaeological evidence for a Native Californian presence during the Russian Period is based on modified ceramics and glass (e.g. glass projectile points, edge modified glass sherds and ground ceramics) which are made from materials that could have been available during the Russian Period, Mexican Period (Sutter-Benitz era), and American Period (Benitz era). Similar materials that were only available in later periods but were not modified (e.g. ironstone and clear vessel glass) lend support for Russian Period, Mexican Period, or Benitz-era use of the site. The plausibility of Native Californian occupation during later periods is valued through various accounts of a Kashaya presence in the vicinity of the stockade, photographs, and drawings of Metini subsequent to the Russian Period, as well as the nature of the worked ceramics and glass. These lines of evidence suggest a possible Native Californian presence during the Sutter-Benitz and Benitz eras, and a less probable presence after the Benitz era.

Finally, I dealt with the nature of the Native Californian presence at Metini by addressing the notion of Metini as the site of a prehistoric, protohistoric, or historical Native Californian "village." Though there may have been a village at Metini prior to 1817, the Native Californian presence at Metini after 1817 was not in the form of a traditional village. Drawings of Metini from the Russian Period depict European style structures that may be dwellings of Creole or *promyshlenniki* men. If the Native Californian element at Metini dates to the Russian Period, it may be related to Pomo women cohabiting with the Creole or *promyshlenniki* men.

In the end, the search for Metini has shown it to be more than a traditional Native Californian village. Though there may have been a traditional village at Metini during prehistory or protohistory, the graphic depictions of the area during and after the Russian Period suggest that any Native Californian occupation was not traditional in form. It should be considered that there was a Native Californian presence here rather than a traditional style village. The ground ceramics may be a Native Californian ethnic marker since they have been documented at other Native Californian sites and so few have been found at NAVS. However, until they are documented at other Native Californian sites in the Fort Ross region, this association is tentative. The Native Californian presence at Metini could have taken many forms. Native Californian women and their extended families may have been cohabiting with Creole or

promyshlenniki men in European style dwellings. Another possibility is that Native Californian laborers stayed here during the Russian Period, Mexican Period or Benitz era. The greatest source of information on the nature of the occupation at Metini will come from detailed comparisons with other ethnic neighborhoods at Fort Ross, such as I have attempted with NAVS. These comparisons have the potential to reveal a great deal about ethnic interactions in the Fort Ross region.

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