

Serafin Moreno

September 17, 2013

Serra Letter

VPA 313

Serra Letter Summary

The Father Junipero Serra letter has an informative purpose; it seeks to inform the king of Spain of the accomplishments on the expedition. The main purpose of the letter is to give Father Serra's superiors a well-detailed illustration of the endeavors and triumphs undertaken and that have been successfully achieved. Father Serra informs Father Guardian Fray Juan Andres Venerable of a subsequent land expedition disembarking, lead by Father Preacher Fray Juan Crespi, with the same goal of reaching Monterey Bay. Upon arrival Father Serra goes on to explain how the land expedition had arrived at Carmel eight days prior to the arrival of the sea expedition. After learning that the land expedition had arrived, they proceeded to set up a mass for the upcoming Sunday, with the purpose of rejoicing the achievements of the expeditions. He also mentions in the letter that after mass on that Sunday they would erect a cross in remembrance of the sacred mass that was held upon their arrival. Father Serra informs his superior that he and the congregation prayed and paid tribute to the saints that accompanied them on their voyage. It is important to acknowledge that Father Serra mentions the importance of the ceremony and the meaning it held behind it. The embarkment of this land and sea voyage would mark the introduction of Christianity into the New World. Also, it is very important that we understand the significance of the

arrival of Junipero Serra on society, he introduced not only the mission but also brought with him the notion of a governed society.

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Critique: Junipero Serra Letter

Throughout the course of history we have seen a reoccurring phenomenon take place time-and-time again. It is apparent to see that history is written by the victors, which gives us, ^{readers} the lectors a biased, one-sided, understanding of the events. Father Junipero Serra mentions the ^{arrival?} embankment of his two expeditions in Monterey Bay. He goes on to depict the triumphant arrival of the two great land and sea expeditions on this unclaimed land. Regional history allows us to understand that there was more to this on-sided account of the events of that day that Father Junipero Serra and his two expeditions made landfall. Father Junipero's perspective is an objective European influenced perspective, which disallows him from seeing past his goal of Christianizing the New World. John Walton writes in the preface of *Storied Land*, "*...contributions of Native Americans to the history of the United States have been excluded from the official transcript...*" this shows how the dominant power tells history from the perspective of the victor. We must understand that history is more often than not, a one-sided recollection of the events that took place. In order to gain a more well-rounded understanding of history one must venture outside of the books and gather information from both sides of the conflict. Father Junipero Serra neglects to mention any kind of information about the Native Americans that called Monterey Bay home, by doing this he ultimately disregards any importance to them in a regional context.

good critique!

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