the Promontory Culture, and the Paleoindian/archaic manifestations in northwestern Utah and southwestern California. Yes, the book is unambiguously a study of the prehistoric peoples of the Great Basin, but given that Nevada covers half or more of the Great Basin, and is at its center, it is curious just how inappropriate it would be if it were entitled the *Prehistory of Nevada*. This observation is not meant to detract from Simms' wonderful overview. Rather, it underscores one of his main points, which is that the history of humans in the Great Basin is an exquisite tapestry that becomes more splendid as the decades roll by and new evidence comes to light.

This is a must-read for those with an appreciation of and an interest in the prehistory of the West. It succeeds in being a rewarding read for the general public as well as for the serious student of Great Basin archaeology.

The Chumash World at European Contact: Power, Trade and Feasting Among Complex Hunter-Gatherers

Lynn H. Gamble
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In a state renowned for the complexity, sophistication, and elaboration of its hunter-gatherer cultures before the time of European contact, no California tribe has seen more attention from archaeologists and anthropologists than the Chumash, especially those coastal groups who lived in the larger Santa Barbara Channel area. Since the early 1900s, in fact, it seems likely that more ink has been applied to pages dedicated to the ethnohistory and archaeology of the maritime Chumash than almost any other tribe in North America (e.g., Arnold 2001, 2004; Benson 1997; Blackburn 1975; Braje 2009; Erlandson et al. 2008; Glassow 1996; Heye 1921; Hudson and Blackburn 1982, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1987; Hudson et al. 1978; Kennett 2005; King 1990; Landberg 1965; Librado 1979, 1981; Orr 1968; Rick 2007; Rogers 1929; Walker and Hudson 1993). Numerous other books, theses and dissertations, journal articles, and book chapters have also been dedicated to the Chumash (see Holmes and Johnson 1998), many of them focused on the development of cultural complexity among the Chumash.

To this monumental literature, we can add a fine new book—*The Chumash World at European Contact: Power, Trade and Feasting Among Complex Hunter-Gatherers*—written by Lynn Gamble and published in a smart hard-cover format by the University of California Press in 2008. By now, some readers both inside and outside of California might wonder what could possibly be new about this intensely studied tribe and area. However, this remarkable region and those who study the people who lived here for over 13,000 years continue to produce important new discoveries and interpretations, raising fundamental questions about notions of sampling and redundancy that permeated the "new" (now old) archaeology of the 1960s and many of the basic tenets of cultural resource management and historic preservation practices that grew out of them. Virtually every time I go to the Channel Islands with students and colleagues, we find something that amazes me, often something completely unexpected, despite my 30 years of research in the area.

In this book, my old U.C. Santa Barbara (UCSB) graduate school compatriot takes aim at the dominance of the northern Channel Islands in recent literature discussing the evolution of sociopolitical and economic complexity among the Chumash. Gamble does this by reviewing the archaeology of the historic Chumash who occupied the mainland coast of the Santa Barbara

Channel just before and after Spanish settlement in the late 1700s A.D. In this area, extending from roughly Point Arguello to the Malibu (*Humaliwo*) area, thousands of coastal Chumash people lived in numerous large villages and towns, including the especially densely-populated Goleta Slough and Santa Barbara areas that were almost certainly the demographic and sociopolitical center of Chumash territory.

In what I found the most concise summary of the purpose of her book, Gamble (2008:284) states that:

> Modeling political elaboration on the islands, with little consideration given to the role played by the mainland Chumash in that elaboration, can only lead to an incomplete and imperfect picture of the nature of Chumash social complexity. One goal of this book has been to develop a more complete understanding of Chumash society by analyzing the sociopolitical and economic practices of the people who lived along the mainland coast, and to then suggest how those practices were relevant to the entire Chumash region. I believe that the data presented here strongly support the view that island Chumash political complexity did not develop in isolation, but in fact was integrally related to (and perhaps dependent upon) the emergence of political complexity on the mainland.

Some readers may see this passage as a salvo in an ongoing debate with one of my other graduate school colleagues, Jeanne Arnold, whose work has focused on the development of complexity among the Island Chumash. The research and many publications of Arnold and her students have contributed enormously to our knowledge concerning the development of complex Island Chumash society during the past 1,000 to 1,500 years, including craft specialization, seafaring and other technologies, intensive trade and a monetary economy, social and economic inequality, and the control of wealth and power by elite members of society. Arnold's publications have also generated considerable debate and stimulated further research, including work by several scholars who believe the development of Chumash complexity has deeper roots. Dr. Arnold may take issue with some of the arguments in Dr. Gamble's book, but it is hard to disagree with the substance of the passage quoted above.

Gamble is fundamentally correct that the archaeological record of the northern Channel Islands has dominated recent discussions about the origins and development of Chumash society. Chester King's (1990) classic, *The Evolution of Chumash Society*, relied on a combination of data from mainland and island sites, but it was only minimally updated from his 1981 dissertation. Consequently, the published archaeological literature of the last 25 years has been dominated by Channel Islands data (for some exceptions, see Erlandson et al. 2008; Gamble and Russell 2002; Glassow 1996). This is not inherently a bad thing, as the well-stratified nature of island archaeological sites (along with the unusual preservation of the artifacts and faunal remains they contain) makes them especially useful for high-resolution studies of cultural changes and their relationship to shifts in climate and paleoecology.

Nonetheless, the recent focus on the Island Chumash makes Gamble's book-length treatment of the archaeology of the mainland coast a particularly welcome addition to the literature, since it helps restore some geographic balance to recent discussions about the archaeology of the Chumash in the Santa Barbara Channel area. It also helps remind those readers who do not work in this area of California that the Chumash—from the islands, the mainland coast, and interior valleys—varied considerably in their demography, economy, technology, and other adaptations.

The book is organized into ten chapters. The first three provide background information on Gamble's theoretical approach, the nature of the local environment, and the cultural background that contextualizes the chapters that follow. For those familiar with the literature on the Chumash, the introductory chapters cover a lot of familiar ground, including numerous quotes from ethnohistoric sources that are often repeated in books on the Chumash. Although I found these first three chapters quite readable and relevant to the data presented later, I noted that information presented in Chapter 2 on the spatial availability of certain key resources was not completely current, omitting a major source of Monterey chert (p. 31) recently documented on San Miguel Island and a fused shale (p. 32) source discovered over a decade ago in the Santa Ynez Valley. Gamble can hardly be faulted for these small omissions, which are widespread in the literature on the Chumash region, where after more than a century of archaeological research there has been no comprehensive survey of the key economic resources used by the Chumash. The Santa Ynez Valley fused shale source, discovered by Larry Wilcoxon during

a CRM survey, remains unpublished—one of those unfortunate chimeras of archaeological oral history.

Chapters 4 through 9 examine the nature of Chumash society around the time of European contact, beginning with a review of what is known about the archaeology of various historic villages along the mainland coast of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and northern Los Angeles counties. This is followed by a series of topical summaries of data on village and household organization (Chapter 5), subsistence and feasting (Chapter 6), rank, ritual, and power (Chapter 7), economics and exchange (Chapter 8), and conflict and social integration (Chapter 9). These chapters are full of valuable data gleaned from archaeological reports and ethnohistoric accounts, with especially rich descriptions for historic sites such as Mescalitan Island (CA-SBA-46) and Pitas Point (CA-VEN-27), where Gamble (1983, 1991) conducted detailed research for her graduate degrees.

In these chapters, I was occasionally distracted by summary data that were not completely current or accurate. Chapter 4 lacked reference to published accounts of my work at the historic village of Estait (CA-SBA-1491; see Erlandson and Rick 2002), for instance, and such gaps made me wonder about the thoroughness of summaries for those sites or areas I was less familiar with. I was also surprised to read on page 100 that manos and metates are not found in late prehistoric or historic sites in the area, a statement inconsistent with my personal experience. Finally, I cannot help but worry about the reproduction of several detailed maps originally published by Rogers, Yarrow, and other antiquarians that depict the precise locations of important village sites, some with cemeteries, graves, temescals, and other sensitive features clearly identified. Many of these sites have been destroyed by development or are not now vulnerable to vandalism, but I hope the publication of these maps does not contribute to looting of any site remnants that remain accessible.

Chapter 10 is devoted to a comparative discussion of the Chumash with the Pomo and Patwin, two other California tribes with relatively large population densities and sociopolitical complexity at the time of European contact. I felt this chapter contributed little to the larger book, although this may reflect my own fascination with the Chumash and the Santa Barbara Channel region where I was born and raised. Such comparisons seem to be virtually required in most archaeological studies of complexity, however, and many readers may find them useful. In my view, the focus on feasting in Chapter 6 was also largely unnecessary, a nod to a trendy topic in the archaeology of complex societies.

Despite these minor criticisms, I found Gamble's book to be a fine piece of work that synthesizes an impressive array of archaeological, historical, ethnographic, and ecological data to explore the nature of Chumash society along the mainland coast at the time of European contact. In my opinion the stated goal of the book is well met: refocusing scholarly attention in discussions of the development of sociopolitical complexity in Native California on the maritime Chumash people who occupied the mainland coast of the Santa Barbara Channel. In keeping with a long tradition of excellence at the University of California Press, moreover, the book is well written and edited, and impeccably produced. I found it nicely (not lavishly) illustrated and rich in data, but refreshingly free of ponderous data tables. This balance will make the book useful to scholars, but also make it reasonably accessible to a general audience. For those who work in the Chumash area, Gamble's book is a must read and an important resource. For those who do not, it is a valuable addition to the literature on the Chumash, California Indians, and complex hunter-gatherers in general.

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