

SOURCE C

Paseo: A Way to Connect to Homeland

Name: _____

Vocabulary

baptized: Converted to a Christian religion through a ceremony or ritual; for Spanish missionaries, baptism meant Native people accepted the Catholic Church and were required to become part of the mission system

ancestral homelands: Places of origin or the historical lands that a group of people belong to

expedition: A journey or voyage by a group of people for a certain purpose

Introduction:

Paseo was a Spanish system at multiple missions that allowed **baptized** Native people to leave the missions for around two weeks at a time, for a maximum of ten weeks per year. The paseo system changed depending on the missionaries in charge. Some Spanish priests were strict about the rules of paseo and did not allow visits as often or at all. In comparison, other priests were less strict and allowed Native people to visit their home villages more regularly. Native families and communities separated into different missions may not have been allowed to visit their villages at the same time or as frequently. Some Native people were taken to missions over a hundred miles from their home villages and were not able to use paseo to visit their **ancestral homelands**.

Despite these challenges, historians have found hundreds of examples of Native people who left the missions to die in their ancestral villages. Some baptized Native Californians also timed their paseos with childbirth and marriage ceremonies. In 1816, German navigator Otto



von Kotzebue was on a scientific **expedition** around the world on the Russian ship *Rurik*. While stopped in San Francisco, he recorded observations in his diary and included an eye-witness account of Native peoples leaving on paseo from Mission Dolores.

Source:

*Twice in the year they receive permission to return to their native homes. This short time is the happiest period of their existence; and I myself have seen them going home in crowds, with loud rejoicings.*¹

—Otto von Kotzebue, German navigator

1. Otto Von Kotzebue, “Extract from Kotzebue’s Diary,” in *The Visit of the “Rurik” to San Francisco in 1816*, ed. and trans. August Mahr (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1932), 329.