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## *Comment on Anderson's Review of Nava and Berger*

HOMER ASCHMANN

In his review of *California: Five Centuries of Cultural Contrast* by Julian Nava and Bob Berger (*Journal of California Anthropology*, Winter, 1976, pp. 100-103), E.N. Anderson makes some relevant points concerning their "whitewashing" of the Spanish missionaries' treatment of the Indians. The reasons for this whitewash perhaps do not need to be expressed. While I generally agree with and like the tone of the review, in his correction of Nava's and Berger's gross errors concerning mission history Dr. Anderson has introduced another set of errors concerning mission history that require comment. He notes:

At a more remote level, why did the Colonial government give California to the harsh Franciscans rather than the more tolerant Dominicans and Jesuits, who had more success in keeping their charges alive? The Dominicans had been put out of (Lower) California, and the Jesuits out of all missionary activity, to a great extent

because they were too successful at protecting their charges from Spanish land-grabbers.

The following points may be considered:

1. The suppression of the Jesuit Order, first in the Portuguese Empire, then in the Spanish Empire, and a few years later completely, was a big event no doubt with complex causes. After 1740 the Jesuits were no longer fully controlling Baja California and excluding outsiders. The cause of the suppression is better sought in the efforts of Carlos III to establish secular authority in his realm. In any event, the Order was suppressed by 1769 and not available to missionize California.

2. The Jesuit record in Baja California shows greater efficiency than that of the Franciscans farther north. They accomplished their work with half the number of missionaries and far fewer soldiers in a harsher environment. Their record of protecting the Indians of the peninsula, however, is hardly better. In the 70 years up to the time of their expulsion (1767) the population of the Cape region had been exterminated and the Indian population of the rest of the missionized area reduced to one-fourth of its original number (actually to one-eighth except for the new northern missions founded after 1751). In the unpublished Venegas<sup>1</sup> there is an extended discussion explaining how the death of Indians shortly after their baptism was one of God's blessings since they could go directly to heaven in the full fervor of their faith and before they had a chance to backslide.

3. The Dominicans were not put out of Lower California but remained there as long as the Franciscans did in Upper California, that is until all missions were secularized by Mexican Law.

4. My reading of the record suggests that the Dominicans were considerably harsher toward their Indian charges than the Franciscans. Their free use of the whip was remembered by descendants of Frontier Indians into the 1920's.<sup>2</sup> The Dominican president

Father Mora's initial directives on operating the missions of Baja California required swift and certain punishment for delinquencies such as the failure to attend religious services and also required the elimination of all forms of recreation, however innocent, that they had practiced as gentiles.<sup>3</sup> Even the fanatic Father Serra never went that far.

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### NOTES

1. Miguel Venegas, "Empresas Apostolicas. . . ." Paragraphs 1135-1136 in the fine manuscript copy in the Bancroft Library.
2. Peveril Meigs, "The Dominican Mission Frontier of Lower California," University of California Publications in Geography 7:59 (1935).
3. Manuscript in the California Transcripts of the Bancroft Library dated November 4, 1773, and Archivo General de la Nación, Hacienda Ser. II, Vol. 3, pp. 127-134. A microfilm copy is also in the Bancroft Library.



## *Reply to Aschmann*

E.N. ANDERSON

I am very grateful to Professor Aschmann for correcting my more speculative flights. It is, of course, true that the Jesuit and Dominican missions killed off the native populations as fast as the Franciscans did, and that the Jesuits were out of the field by 1769. My impression is still that overall Jesuit policy was relatively mild—cf. the well-known experiment with Utopian planning among the Indians in Paraguay, for instance—and that this relatively mild policy was one of the reasons for their downfall in the New World. Their record in Baja California was certainly a sad one, however. As to the Dominicans, my memory seems to have simply played me false. It appears that

things were even worse than I thought for the unfortunate missionized Indians of the Californias!

*University of California, Riverside*



## *On Kroeberian and Post-Kroeberian California Ethnology*

PETER H. KUNKEL

I have just read Albert Elsasser's (1976) review of *Native Californians: A Theoretical Retrospective*, edited by Lowell Bean and Thomas Blackburn. As author of one of the articles in this collection, I am puzzled by Elsasser's reference to "certain authors" in the collection (including me) as "post-Kroeberian." Furthermore, I wish to protest the out-of-context, fragmental quotation from my article, by which Elsasser misrepresented my attitude toward Kroeber and the basic "older" data on California ethnography.

The quote involves a rhetorical question as to why California scholars "failed to come forward with data relevant to the nature of food collecting peoples." The full context of this phrase clearly shows that I was speaking of participation in the recent intensive symposia on the subject, such as that which generated the Lee and DeVore (1968) collection of articles on hunting peoples. In context, I was expressing a pride in the accomplishment of the "older" California ethnology and regretting that it was not represented in such symposia. Elsasser seems to have read on the run. Otherwise he is simply twisting my meaning to infer some kind of criticism of the basic California ethnologists, for whom I actually have great respect.

My article in the Bean and Blackburn collection is essentially the same article that appeared in Vol. 1, No. 1 of this journal