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**Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians.** By Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995. 213 pages. \$32.50 cloth.

Between 1769 and 1823, Franciscans of the Apostolic College of San Fernando, led by Junípero Serra, OFM, established twenty-one missions along the coast of Alta California. These missions were constructed by forced Indian labor on the traditional homelands of the different Indian groups of the area, including the Kumeyaay, Luiseño, Gabrielino, Chumash, Ohlone, and Coast Miwok people. The fundamental ideas that shaped the Alta California missions were not developed in the 1700s or 1800s; rather, they were developed in the early sixteenth century as Spanish civil and religious officials sought ways to create a colonial society in central Mexico using the labor and subsistence economy of the Indian population of that area. The Spanish Franciscans had established the mission system in Baja, California as a way to support the church and soldiers there and to convert the Indians of central Mexico into a disciplined labor force to support Spanish goals.

Authors Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo present the mission system of present-day California as the key institution employed by the Spanish colonial government in Mexico City to recreate the colonial social and political order that already existed in central Mexico. In so doing, the authors break new and important ground in the analysis of labor in the mission system. Indian peoples indigenous to the areas in which new missions were to be established were taken (forced) into the mission system and kept there against their will in order to provide a disciplined work force in agriculture, ranching, and the production of textiles, leather products, and other goods. This included a sufficient level of production not only to sustain the local mission community but, in an agreement worked out between Serra and government officials in Mexico City, to supply surplus grain and clothing to the military garrisons stationed in the Alta California mission region. As the productive capacity of the missions was expanded utilizing Indian labor, the military and the settlers in Alta California received supplies of foodstuffs and clothing produced by Indian people confined within the mission system.

The research of authors Jackson and Castillo makes it possible for us to envision the conversations that must have taken place

among the members of the Franciscan order as Spanish exploration continued northward: "Use the indigenous work force, just as they had done, dominate, acculturate, incorporate—make productive workers—modify existing social, political, and economic structures to duplicate the success in the South." The history of the development of the Alta California missions, as presented by Jackson and Castillo, then, is the story of a directed effort on the part of the Franciscan missionaries to modify the social, political, and economic organization of the California Indians, as well as to restructure their beliefs and religious practices.

*Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization* offers a new interpretation of the history of Alta California missions that draws upon the existing literature and also incorporates different perspectives, specifically an expanded analysis of the use of Indian labor. This included a labor program designed to produce an excess of goods above and beyond those needed to sustain the mission community. As the authors state, "[T]he book is not a study of the successes of saintly missionaries and brave colonial soldiers, but rather is an analysis of the Alta California mission system as an example of a Spanish acculturation program that attempted to modify Indian society and religion, along with the Indian response to that effort." The authors place their research in its proper position, compared to that of H.H. Bancroft's seven-volume study *History of California*, Zephyrin Engelhard's four-volume study *Missions and Missionaries in California*, and Sherburne F. Cook's *The Conflict between the California Indian and White Civilization*. While these studies provide important contributions to the understanding of the history of the mission system and its effect on the California Indians, both Bancroft and Engelhard present Indian people who lived in the missions as only supporting actors in a drama that was defined by Spanish soldiers, bureaucrats, and clerics. Cook, on the other hand, uses the missions to explore the impact of introduced diseases on Native American populations as a cause of demographic collapse. Authors Jackson and Castillo state that, although significant scholarly advances have been made in the last half-century and although these studies make important contributions to our understanding of the history of the missions and the fate of the California Indians, many of the studies are guilty of perpetuating the parochialism that has characterized a century of writing on the mission system.

In chapter 1, Jackson's and Castillo's analysis of the political economy of the missions challenges many scholarly assumptions.

The use of Indian labor was key not only to the functioning of the mission economies but also to development of the ranches and farms at different locations within the mission district. This included considerable improvements, such as the construction of living quarters, extensive irrigation systems, buildings, chapels, and granaries. These facilities were not only for the mission community but for the presidios and pueblos that accompanied or grew up around the missions. Records presented by the authors indicate that the various missions themselves operated ranches and farms in the mission territory, utilizing mission Indian laborers to construct and maintain those facilities. In order to "harness" the required Indian labor, the viceregal government conceded to the Franciscans complete control over Indian people forced into the missions. This included men and women who labored in mission farming, ranching, building construction, irrigation construction, and artisan production.

Contrary to the paternalistic picture generally presented of "happy" Indian neophytes living in harmony within the mission system, the evidence uncovered by the authors indicates that the Franciscans were constantly concerned that the large-scale flight from the missions by Indian converts would deplete the labor force. One misguided belief held by the Franciscans was that a stable supply of European-style food would serve to attract Indian converts to the missions. As a result of this belief, agriculture became the mainstay of the mission economies. Indian people, involuntarily held within the mission system, provided the crucial labor to produce the agricultural crops as well as to construct and maintain the critical irrigation networks. As the production capacity expanded, the military community and civilian settlers in Alta California received supplies of foodstuffs and clothing from the Franciscans. The Franciscans also developed ranches at various sites within the mission territory where thousands of head of cattle and horses, as well as flocks of sheep, were kept at pasture. The profit from farm production and ranching subsidized the mission system and the military establishment and supported the colonization of Alta California. The authors present records that indicate that, while the Franciscans indoctrinated the Indians brought into the missions into Catholicism, they also categorized Indian people based on their capacity as laborers and their ability to perform specific types of work.

In addition to creating a controlled labor force, one of the primary objectives of the mission program in Alta California was

the congregation of the indigenous people into the missions and, through Franciscan instruction, transformation of the culture and worldview of the Indian people. The authors' research strongly suggests that, while the Franciscans failed in their efforts to completely transform Indian culture, significant change did occur in Indian material culture. Gradual changes took place in the food, clothing, and economy of the Indians living at the missions as a result of the Franciscans' substitution of European and central Mexican cultigens for plant foods traditionally collected by the Indian groups in California, and meat from domesticated animals replaced meat from wild animals. Additionally, the Franciscans introduced the use of European-style clothing and gradually replaced traditional Indian housing with permanent adobe dormitories for single women of child-bearing age and apartments for Indian families.

A second objective of the acculturation program in the missions was the conversion of the Indians to Catholicism. The authors are correct in pointing out that the Franciscans had difficulty even in describing Indian religion or connecting ritual practices to religious belief. As a result, traditional religious practices such as funerals and healing persisted in the missions, and shamans continued to have considerable influence. Dancing, which formed an important link to religion, survived as well. The mission Indian people, according to the authors, were successful in constructing a "wall of silence" around the true nature of their religious practices and beliefs. As a result, Indian religious practices and beliefs survived the mission conversion experience. New Indian religions may have emerged as well. The authors identified one such religion as a "crisis cult" that emerged in response to the introduced diseases within the mission system. The new Chingichngish religion, which first appeared at Pubunga, a Kumi.vit rancheria near modern-day Long Beach, California, may also have been influenced by runaway mission Indian converts who introduced basic concepts of Christianity into the new religion. The authors break new ground in their analysis of demographic decline as a factor in the survival of traditional religious beliefs and practices. Jackson and Castillo point out that the high death rates in the mission communities meant that continuous replacement of mission Indians was necessary. The replacements were unacculturated Indian people still steeped in traditional Indian religions; thus, rather than Indian religions disappearing, they received constant reinforcement from within the mission system itself.

Another change forced upon the California Indian people by the mission system was the alteration of gender roles. Pre-Hispanic Indian society was dominated by men, and a clearly defined division of labor existed along gender lines. Men engaged in hunting and fishing. Women processed plant foods, were responsible for household duties, wove baskets, made clothing, fetched water and wood, and provided the bulk of the child-rearing. The Franciscans achieved considerable success in altering these traditional work patterns. Within the mission system, men and women worked at a variety of tasks. Men, not women, provided the bulk of the work in the mission grain fields and the mills that processed the grain. As the authors point out, however, "despite the efforts of the Franciscans, there was considerable Indian cultural retention."

Addressing the issue of demographic collapse in the Alta California mission system, Jackson and Castillo support the earlier findings of Sherburne Cook that, although epidemics attacked the missions about once a generation, disease alone cannot account for the high death rates in the mission communities. The question then arises, If the majority of the deaths were not caused by Spanish-introduced diseases, then what was the cause? To answer the question, the authors reconstruct the quality of life in the missions. Women and young children were the most vulnerable segment of the population, with women of child-bearing age being most at risk. Prenatal care and sanitation were totally lacking for the Indian prisoners. As a result, the annual death rate of the Indians regularly exceeded the birth rate by more than two-to-one. The death rate for children in the missions was even higher. One of every six to one of every three Indian children who were locked up in the missions perished. In addition to disease and poor sanitation, dehydration caused by diarrhea also claimed many children in the first year or two of life. The authors also point out what is becoming more commonly known: "[Q]uantitative evidence . . . suggests that abortion was commonly practiced in the mission communities." This should not be a shocking revelation, since the soldiers who lived in the presidios and were assigned to prevent escapes and to conduct raiding parties to replenish the mission population also regularly raped the young Indian women prisoners, who were separated from their families and thus had little protection against the Spanish soldiers. Pregnancies resulting from rape were probably terminated by some form of abortion.

Demographic decline (death) also occurred as the result of forced labor accompanied by inadequate food provisions. The mission economies depended on a continuous labor supply in order to sustain the system and to produce the surpluses that subsidized the colonization of the Alta California region. The Franciscans, supported by the soldiers from the presidios, imposed a system of coerced and disciplined labor, with corporal punishment for those who refused to work or attempted to escape. As a result of the poor diet provided by the Franciscans, the Indians were simultaneously starved and worked to death. Jackson and Castillo demonstrate that a constant replenishment of the work force was required to maintain adequate numbers and that the missionaries had to expand their recruitment greater distances from the mission communities and use different degrees of force to pull more Indian people into the mission system.

Certainly one cannot discount the number of deaths brought about by the introduction of Spanish diseases such as measles, smallpox, typhoid, influenza, syphilis, and tuberculosis. The cramped and unsanitary quarters in which the mission Indians were forced to live contributed to the spread of these diseases. Additionally, the authors point out that the "missionaries generally believed that epidemics were a punishment sent by God. This fatalistic acceptance of the inevitability of disease and God's will led to a passivity in the face of epidemics." The enormous death rate, then, is a combination of these factors, all of which resulted in even more Indian people being forced into the Franciscan missions.

The authors next provide an important description of California Indian resistance to the acculturation program of the Spanish invaders. Contrary to the most common portrayal of mission Indian people as friendly, subservient, and docile neophytes, gratefully accepting the uplifting message of the Franciscans, Jackson and Castillo show that "the Indian people did not passively accept the arrival of the Spanish, but resisted the mission acculturation program." Rather than accepting confinement and the forced labor system, Indian people participated in "rebellion, flight from the missions, the murder of missionaries, refusal to carry out orders given by the Franciscans, and the theft or destruction of mission property." The authors categorize the Indian resistance as either active or passive, or primary or secondary. Primary resistance, according to the authors, was the first

method attempted by the Indian people to repel the Spaniards. "Primary resistance was generally organized along the lines of traditional Indian warfare; village chiefs and influential shamans led attacks on the Spanish soldiers and Franciscan missionaries." One example given is an attack on a Spanish encampment as the Spanish attempted to establish a permanent colony in Alta California in 1769. The local Kumeyaay warriors living between Velicata and San Diego attacked the camp on 15 August 1769 and only halted their resistance when they encountered the overwhelming technology (firearms) of the soldiers. Secondary resistance, as identified by the authors, "occurred a generation or two following the establishment of the missions and involved Indians born in the missions and Indian converts who had lived at the missions for varying periods of time. Because the Franciscans were forced to continue to bring Indians to live at the missions until the 1820s and in some instances the 1830s, there was generally no clear discontinuity between the two forms of resistance."

Active resistance, such as a direct attack against a particular mission, was generally violent and resulted from an atrocity such as the sexual abuse of Indian women. In one instance, Kumi.vit women attacked the San Gabriel Mission twice in response to the rape of Kumi.vit women by Spanish soldiers. More common, however, were individual and group escapes, raids on mission herds of livestock, and isolated attempts to murder missionaries. Passive resistance, while more difficult to document, took the form of noncooperation, work slowdowns, and the theft or destruction of equipment.

In the final chapter, the authors outline the impact of secularization and the conversion of the missions from Franciscan missionary communities into theoretically independent municipalities. The authors state that legislation enacted in the late 1820s and 1830s profoundly modified and, in a number of instances, destroyed functioning missions in northern Mexico. One of the laws passed in 1833 mandated the secularization of the frontier missions, including the emancipation of Indian converts living under the control of the missionaries, and the distribution of lands, livestock, buildings, and other communal property among the surviving Indian converts under the supervision of state-appointed administrations. The changing fortunes of liberal reformers in Spain and Mexico, however, led to the suspension of the efforts to close the missions. Pro-clerical conservative politi-



cians dominated Mexico during much of the first federal republic (1824–25) and prevented the secularization of the frontier missions in Mexico, including the Alta California missions. Beginning in 1834, however, local government in Alta California dismantled the paternalistic authority the Franciscans had exercised over the mission converts and appointed secular administrators.

Secularization did not bring about an instant change in the legal status of the converts living in the missions; their emancipation was gradual rather than immediate. Moreover, much of the land, buildings, and other property of the missions did not pass into the hands of the converts as intended. Most of the Indians living in the missions in 1834 simply used the breakdown of the Franciscan regime as an opportunity to flee. Many of the emancipated Indians migrated to the emerging towns in the province and settled there or on nearby ranches. Others returned to their traditional homelands, only to find that entire cultures had been wiped out as a result of the Spanish mission system and traditional subsistence patterns had been destroyed. Remnant groups moved inland and combined with other Indian groups that had survived the Spanish invasion.

*Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization* is an excellent example of the new research and continuing analysis of the Spanish contact in California, generally called the California Mission Period. The authors build upon the groundbreaking research of Sherburne Cook by analyzing the labor in the mission system. In addition to their excellent narrative presentation, the authors provide more than fifty tables to support their analysis and thesis. These tables include information reflecting demography, mission livestock, grain production, and construction of mission buildings, military barracks, dormitories, irrigation networks, and Indian family housing. I strongly recommend *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* as required reading in all college courses dealing with American Indian history, Spanish contact in the "New World," and, specifically, in courses dealing with the history of the present-day state of California.

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