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The California Missions Source Book: Key Information, Dramatic Images, and Fascinating Anecdotes Covering All 21 Missions. By David J. McLaughlin with Rubén Mendoza.

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diverse and interdisciplinary ways to think about a variety of topics. Blue Jay Girl is warned, "It will take a long time for the Yaudanchi people to see that your nature has changed. You must be patient." In a world of fast food and instant gratification, this is a message worthy of all readers.

Eventually, Blue Jay Girl modifies her behavior and accepts her nature. The story ends with a postscript telling how she became a well-known healer and turned her adventurous ways into travels in each of the four directions, sometimes far from where she grew up. Yet, "however far she went she always returned to Pawhawwuh Tin, her home and original community." Blue Jay Girl took and learned to give some fine advice: "Keep your own spirit. It is a good one" (31).

*Margaret Noori*  
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**The California Missions Source Book: Key Information, Dramatic Images, and Fascinating Anecdotes Covering All 21 Missions.** By David J. McLaughlin with Rubén Mendoza. Scottsdale, AZ: Pentacle Press, 2009. 68 pages. \$24.95 paper.

David McLaughlin and Rubén Mendoza have produced a remarkably travel-friendly book about the California missions. With an introductory historical overview, the book features individual profiles of each mission that are designed as site guides. Aimed at a popular audience, the book succeeds in presenting salient and interesting facts about each mission in an attractive and accessible format. Small enough for traveling, it is printed on heavy-duty glossy paper made to withstand dirty fingers and road dust, unavoidable on a trip up and down the Camino Real. The spiral binding also allows the pages to be folded back, a thoughtful feature handy for using the "Key Facts" pages while visiting a mission.

The first four pages offer the credentials of the authors—McLaughlin, an established travel writer and photographer, and Mendoza, an archaeologist and mission scholar—along with discussions about why and how the book was written. The summary history recounts the Spanish settlement and development of Alta California including exploratory expeditions, problems of financing and supply, the politics of the religious orders, founding of presidios and missions, and the development of civilian pueblos. The concluding historical chapter is awkwardly placed at the end of the book as an afterword. Here the results of secularization are presented along with the American takeover and the eventual return of some mission properties to the Catholic Church.

The heart of the book is the “Key Facts” section in which each mission is highlighted on a two-page spread (the explanation for the “Key Facts” section is oddly placed under the heading “Some Final Thoughts” at the end of the historical foreword (21). The “Key Facts” pages about each mission are nicely presented and full of interesting information as well as relevant data and statistics. Illustrations include historic drawings, paintings, and photographs, which are sometimes supplemented with informative 1850s survey plat maps and Historic American Building Survey architectural drawings. The modern photos—mostly attributed to the author—are notable assets. Most information headings are the same for each mission, allowing the reader to become familiar with topics and thereby compare institutions. Subjects include founding missionaries, associated Native tribes, mission locations, church buildings, notable art and artifacts, population, livestock production, bells, and (admirably) the mission’s water source—a critical and often-overlooked aspect of each establishment. The text also provides space for “Special Attractions,” “Significant Events,” and “Interesting Facts,” all adding spice and lore to the otherwise somewhat dry information. Readers learn that Alfred Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* (1958) was filmed in part at Mission San Francisco de Asis (Dolores) and Mission San Juan Bautista, and that William Henry Dana’s *Two Years before the Mast* (1840) includes vivid accounts of processing hides and tallow near San Juan Capistrano.

Particularly impressive is the back cover with its reproduction of a section of José Navárez’s 1823 map—a fascinating cartographic view of historical Alta California. One of the very useful presentations of the book—for those who want data at their fingertips—are the population tables inside the front cover dealing with the twenty-one missions, four presidios, and three pueblos. The use of mission drawings and paintings throughout the “Key Facts” section provides color and interest, although it would be useful to include the date of the work in the caption so those drawn from life (by Henry Miller and Edward Vischer, for example) could be distinguished from later artists’ interpretations.

In any work containing this magnitude of detail, there will be unavoidable mistakes that find their way into print. Editing oversights include the attribution of several drawings in the foreword by A. B. Dodge to Alexander Harmer, the repetition of “was founded” on the back flyleaf, and inconsistent formatting in the “Key Facts” pages. The implication that the famous Native-painted *Via Crucis* was produced at San Gabriel is certainly unintended, when the series originated at San Fernando Rey. Also, the current reconstruction of Mission San Antonio de Padua dates to the early 1950s, replacing the earlier efforts by the Landmark League credited in the book. The Chumash-made tabernacle with abalone inlay at the Santa Barbara Mission is misidentified as an altar. These and other errors can easily be fixed in a second printing.

Although *The California Missions Source Book* succeeds as a travel guide, it regrettably fails as a story of human drama. The text faithfully chronicles the founding and growth of the mission system with well-researched dates and statistics but fails to grapple with the uncomfortable counterpart to this colonization: the heartbreaking but inevitable crushing of traditional cultures under the wheels of European global expansion.

Reluctance to address the realities that the policy of *reducción* (enforced mission residency) and other policies imposed on Native populations is understandable, particularly in a sixty-four-page mission guidebook, but it should not be avoided in the twenty-first century. Polarized mission histories of the past described the California missions as, for example, either bringing enlightenment to the heathens or slavery and death to the resisting Native tribes. More laudable histories strive to describe a past in which the viewpoints of all the participants are honored. The historical summary of *The California Missions Source Book* reflects, almost exclusively, the point of view of the Spaniards (and later Mexicans). To be fair, efforts were made to include Native Americans in the text: the names of prominent associated tribes are identified for each mission, and the Native place name for the founding mission location is given when known. But overall, the Native Americans remain largely background players in this unfolding drama. The protagonists are clearly the Spanish, and the reader is encouraged to lament their struggles and setbacks and be gratified when the livestock herds increase and Native recruitment rises.

The author points out that the introduction of European plants and animals “created insurmountable challenges to the pre-existing Indian way of life. Consequently, the missions became havens where tribal peoples could find food, shelter, and clothing, thereby increasing their [the missions’] appeal” (15). Here the causes of the environmental disruption—the missions—are ironically presented as the salvation of the dispossessed tribes, while the staggering increase in Native American death rates at these institutions is only mentioned four pages later (19). Randall Milliken in his *Time of Little Choice* (1995) provides a more balanced view in which he chronicles the gradual drawing in of tribes and villages to the San Francisco Bay–area missions. These institutions are depicted not as havens but as last and desperate options for survival in a vastly altered world.

The Spanish-sympathizing tone of the introductory history is reinforced by the selection of Harmer’s and Dodge’s works as the nearly exclusive illustrations. Harmer was a favorite artist of Franciscan historian Father Zephyr Engelhardt, and his and Dodge’s mission drawings evoke the romantic nostalgia of mission life typical of the “Ramona Era” during which they were drawn.

Admittedly, it is difficult to address complex topics in a short narrative. Although the author candidly states that when Mexico won its War of Independence in 1821, “many mission Indian neophytes rejoiced in the mistaken belief that a country that fought for freedom would in turn grant them liberty,” he did not describe just how the Indians came to lose their liberty to begin with or what this life-without-liberty looked like (20). For all the fine attributes of this book, I wish the author had trusted his readers to appreciate not only the political, economic, and logistical aspects of the Spanish colonization of California but also the sweeping devastation of Native cultures that accompanied this endeavor.

*Julia G. Costello*

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**Explorations in Navajo Poetry and Poetics.** By Anthony K. Webster. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. 288 pages. \$34.95 paper.

*Explorations in Navajo Poetry and Poetics* has much to offer the general reader, along with those more focused on the Navajo community, with its potential for influence in the wider literary sphere. Readers generally interested in Native American studies will find this volume interesting in its own right, especially specialists in ethnopoetics concerned with the relationship between written, or what I call alphabetical poetry, and public performance. All told, this volume helps to demonstrate that poetry remains a vibrant force for asserting identity on and off the reservation.

It should also be useful in any classroom dealing with oral traditions ranging from classical and medieval studies to courses more focused on the contemporary literary scene in which the language of poetry has undergone a shift from the formal to the colloquial as the awareness of ethnic diversity expands. It should be especially useful in a tribal college setting in which aspiring students are encouraged to apply their own tribal heritage to poetry. Thus I would encourage anyone interested in poetry for its own sake to explore this volume in order to recognize how art can function in a Native American community in order to help resist eclipse from the dominant culture.

The author's goals are clearly stated and generally well met. He sets out to argue on behalf of “the need to understand literature from its ethnographic and linguistic perspectives,” “show the value in applying ethnopoetic, discourse-centered approaches to contemporary poetry,” and make a special claim for the importance of poetry as a way of exploring and applying those issues in today's Navajo world (vii–viii).