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Symposium

Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850

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OPENING REMARKS BY STEVEN W. HACKEL

Let me begin by thanking the California Mission Studies Association, the Academy of American Franciscan History, The Bancroft Library, Heyday Books, and the California Historical Society for bringing us all together this morning. In particular, I would like to thank Bob Senkewicz and Jeffrey Burns for all of their hard work in organizing this symposium. Bob Senkewicz asked me to offer a few observations about why I wrote this book, how I got interested in this project, and what I hoped to accomplish with *Children of Coyote*. I began the dissertation that became this book a while ago when I was a graduate student at Cornell, pondering what I took to be an American colonial history that ignored the West and a history of the West that ignored the colonial. What do I mean? I began to write my dissertation and then this book out of a frustration with the narrow focus of early American history and California's absence from it.

Early American history to me is the study of European colonization in the Americas and Indians' responses to it. Too often though, early American history has been construed as the history of British North America and the coming of the American Revolution. That was certainly my experience at Cornell where my own advisor worked on the Lower Mississippi Valley, but the other more senior colonialists taught English colonization, the origins of American civilization, and the coming of the Revolution. I remember very well after my second year at Cornell that I told one of my advisors that I was going to work on colonial California. He replied that it was a good idea but that people would think that it was nutty. My two years as a post-doctoral fellow at the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture in Williamsburg, Virginia served to reinforce my sense that for most historians, the main narrative of Early American History was the coming of the Revolution.

In recognition of the gradual shift in the schol-

arly construction of the field of early American history since my graduate school days, I should say that this anglocentricism has begun to wane. The writings of Alan Taylor, Colin Calloway, Karen Kupperman, John Kicza, and new forums for the presentation of work on colonial American history, such as *Commonplace* and *History Compass*, and the relative openness of established journals such as *The William and Mary Quarterly*, suggest that more scholars are indeed discovering that Spain, France, and Russia played significant roles in the history of early America.[1] Also, of course, the work of David Weber has made the history of the Spanish Borderlands more available to a wider group of scholars.[2] Nevertheless, and despite the work of Jim Sandos, Beth Haas, Bob Senkewicz, Al Hurtado, myself, and many other historians who have worked for years on the history of this region, I still think it is fair to say that the history of colonial California has not been written into our national history.[3] In writing *Children of Coyote* I hoped to suggest meaningful ways that the history of early California could find a place in our national narrative.

I also wrote this book out of a frustration with the new western history that was emerging in the 1990s. Patty Limerick and others seemed newly fascinated with what they saw as the defining feature of the west. In their words it was a "legacy of conquest."[4] These historians were interested in how the west of today somehow was shaped by the conquering of Indians and then Mexicans, and by the persistence of these conquered peoples in the west. But historians seemed far less interested in the actual conquest of the west, or to put it more clearly, in the history of the American west as it unfolded centuries ago. In other words, the new western history did not look so new.

So to return to where I began a few moments ago, there I was at Cornell, pondering a colonial history that ignored the west and a history of the west that ignored the colonial, and I settled on writing a history of Alta California, because it was surely colonial and it was surely a part of the west. Furthermore, California as a subject of inquiry was attractive to me since I was raised here in the Bay Area. The personal and the intellectual are always intertwined, yet this is something that we as scholars, who are trained as intellectuals, are perhaps slow or even reluctant to admit.

When I settled into writing this book, I had several goals in mind. Here, I am not talking about specific revisions that I wanted to make in our understanding of particular aspects of early California history but rather the type of history I wanted to write.

First Goal: I wanted to place Alta California more firmly within Latin American history. It seemed to me that too many histories of colonial California treated California as if it were an island,

[1] Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York: Viking Press, 2001); Colin G. Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); John E. Kicza, *Resilient Cultures: America's Native Peoples Confront European Colonization, 1500–1800* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 2003). See also Kent G. Lightfoot, *Indians Missionaries, and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[2] David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821–1846: The American Southwest under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[3] James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769–1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, *Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535–1846* (Santa Clara and Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2001); Albert L. Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

[4] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987).

far removed from developments in Mexico and Spain.

Second Goal: I wanted to open up new sources for the study of Alta California. Again, it seemed to me that too many histories of California relied on the same sources, namely English translations of Franciscan correspondence or the pages of the Archives of California. The Archives of California consist of sixty-three volumes of transcripts made from original documents that were the principal archive of Spanish California. Tragically, this archive of several hundred bound volumes was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire. Before the quake and fire, Hubert H. Bancroft had sent his scribes to examine these documents for use in his great *History of California*, and the scribes produced those sixty-three volumes of transcripts.[5] The problem is that the scribes copied fully only what interested them which meant that letters by governors and viceroys were copied in full. However, correspondence and reports of lesser officials, those who most often handled Indian affairs, generally were extracted or simply noted. One can write a decent history of the governors of colonial California from the Archives of California, but these volumes are not by themselves an adequate source for an understanding of Indian life in Spanish California. So, I searched for alternate sources at The Bancroft Library, and I was happy to spend lots of time scouring archives throughout California, most notably in Monterey, Santa Bárbara, and Los Angeles. I also spent a considerable amount of time in Mexico. Over the years I have put together a decent collection of microfilm from the Archivo General de la Nación. Searching for a wide evidentiary base also meant immersing myself in the mission sacramental records to learn as much as I could about the Indians and the communities of Alta California, and here Randy Milliken's work and methods were particularly influential.[6]

Third Goal: Beyond situating my work within Latin American history and opening up new sources, I wanted to put Indians as much at the center of my story as I could. I also wanted to make sure that they were not portrayed as "mission Indians," the faceless and anonymous neophytes who are so often the subject of studies of colonial California. I hoped to be able to write a history that told stories about Indians as they sought to wrestle with Spanish colonization.

Fourth goal: In addition, I wanted to write a history of colonization in California that would try to capture how Indians experienced Spanish rule, even though I knew that doing so was an impossibility given the distances of time and culture that separate us today from the Indians who lived in California two centuries ago. Since it is my contention that the colonization Indians experienced in California came from many directions and flowed into most aspects of their lives, I felt obliged to talk about a range of issues: the ecological and demographic revolutions—what I term the Dual Revolutions—and religion, marriage, sexuality, politics, labor, crime, and punishment. I did not want to write a book that explained one aspect of the past while ignoring other topics that are equally crucial, even though to some extent that is inevitable.

Fifth Goal: Finally, much of the history of early

[5] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, 7 vols. (San Francisco: The History Company, 1884–1890).

[6] Randall Milliken, "An Ethnohistory of the Indian People of the San Francisco Bay Area from 1770 to 1810" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1991); Randall Milliken, *A Time of Little Choice: The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1769–1810* (Menlo Park: Ballena Press, 1995); Randall Milliken and Laurence H. Shoup, *Iñigo of Rancho Posolmi: The Life and Times of a Mission Indian* (Menlo Park: Ballena Press, 1999). Also of importance is John R. Johnson, "Chumash Social Interaction: An Ethnohistoric Perspective" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Santa Bárbara, 1988).

California concerns Indian population decline and implies that Indians were wiped out in the colonial period, or perhaps that here or there they lived on in small groups until the early twentieth century when they finally gave way to extinction. That was certainly the conclusion of many historians and anthropologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Furthermore, so many of the books in our field take their cue not from Indians but from missions, and thus they conclude in the 1830s with secularization or its aftermath. Because Indians did live through Spanish colonization, beyond Mexican rule and beyond the onset of U.S. rule, I wanted my narrative of Indians in California to run up to the present in one way or another. That is why I end my book and the Epilogue with Isabel Meadows and members of her extended family. I do so to underscore a reality—California Indians are here shaping the California of today. They are recovering and rebuilding their cultures in response to present opportunities and with an awareness of their past.

I doubt that I have accomplished all that I set out to do, but I appreciate the opportunity to come here today and discuss with you my book and our common interests.

COMMENTS ON *CHILDREN OF COYOTE*

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Universidad de Guadalajara

Skepticism, I must confess, was my first reaction to *Children of Coyote*. Like many readers who come across a new work on Spanish or Mexican California, I expected to find a good reason to read another book on California. The first page offered a work based on "a new inquiry." It promised "a reinterpretation of Indian-Spanish relations" within missions and presidios which seemed too familiar to generate hopes for a rewarding reading. However, in the four hundred thirty-nine pages that comprise this work (not including the appendices), Steven Hackel fulfilled such promises through a compelling and intelligent argument that explores the multiple dimension of mission life through models of cultural interaction and listens carefully to the correspondence, divergence, and conflict between the agendas of Indians and Spaniards (and later Mexicans and Americans).

This book addresses specialists of California and other colonial regions alike, aiming to engage as many scholars as possible in a comparative and interdisciplinary dialogue. In response to Hackel's invitation, my comments will focus on what I think the significance of this book is for Borderlands studies and mission history in general.

The structure of the book successively presents the social actors under study, the ways in which their worlds come together, and the transformation of their institutional ties. Part one describes the Indian and Spanish worlds and peoples that lived in close proximity in what came to be known as California, and also explains the dual revolutions that drastically eroded the society of the Children of Coyote. Chapters one and two are devoted to Indians and Spaniards respectively, and reveal Hackel's command of classic and recent works on the archaeology and ethnography of the region as well as his familiarity with the primary sources of colonial California. The patterns of ecological change and the population trends of the Monterey region are reconstructed by Hackel in chapter three applying the long-neglected methodology of family reconstitution.

Part two (chapters four to eight) analyzes how the transformation of California's ecology and demography led to forms of interaction that at times weakened and at times reinforced California Indians' native lifeways. Here, extensive archival research documents the changes in the Indian-Indian relationships as well as those

between Indians and other groups. Finally, part three briefly explains the implications of the end of the mission period and the transformation of indigenous communities under Mexican and American rule. This structure can be read as a suggestive statement that is congruent with one of the main ideas permeating Hackel's work: the dual revolutions that altered the societies of California Indians set in motion forms of interaction that, contested or accepted, occurred within the boundaries of mission life and were renovated after the dissolution of the mission regime.

Beyond Hackel's original goal of reframing the ways of understanding the nature and implications of Indian-Spanish relations in California, *Children of Coyote* engages the literature on cultural change in general in the discussion of at least four important topics: a) the use of the concept of "dual revolutions" as a hermeneutical tool in the study of the transformation of indigenous societies, b) the potential of family reconstitution techniques for Latin American studies in general, c) the shift from collision-oriented models to the interaction-minded model and, d) the relation between local histories and broader histories.

Beginning with the opening chapters, Hackel addresses the coincidence of the transformation of California's landscape and natural resources and the decline of the Indian population, calling such processes the "dual revolutions" of California's colonial society. Indeed, the acute environmental degradation, the displacement of native plants, the introduction of new animals and cultigens, the disruption of indigenous cycles of production and gathering of food, as well as the sharp decline of Indian population, were true revolutions for indigenous communities in the Monterey region. As a result, Hackel's argument is that local Indians migrated to the missions in search of shelter and food and as a means to reorganize their communities. In the process, the Children of Coyote had to endure the missionaries' intrusion in the intimate spheres of marriage, religiosity, sexuality, and ceremonialism while at the same time contributing their personal labor to mission economy.

As Hackel demonstrates, understanding these biological and ecological developments as hand in hand processes accounts for a better comprehension of the responses of California Indians to the Spanish socio-religious projects. These dual revolutions, not the institutional constraints of mission life or Spanish society, limited the self-sufficiency of Indian communities and their ability to recover from epidemic diseases, and led the Indians to engage in new relationships that ultimately conditioned the ways in which they reformulated their traditions and religious practices. Conventional narratives of the Indian-Spanish relations in New Spain's northern frontier, on the contrary, emphasized the oppressive, compulsory ways in which the Indians were incorporated into the colonial system, and looked for symptoms of internal crisis within the mission regime to explain the disintegration of Indian societies.

While it is true that the breakdown of the colonial system in northern New Spain was characterized by the collapse of most of the institutions that had upheld the Spanish dominion there, it should not be assumed that the changes in the societies of that frontier resulted from the realignment of those institutional structures. Instead, what Hackel's dual revolutions invite us to consider is that the evolution of the forms of social organization preceded structural changes.

Hackel states that *Children of Coyote* is a study "about individuals, families, and communities." Accordingly, chapter three undertakes the analysis of population decline at Mission San Carlos from 1770 to 1831, providing a clear explanation of why mission populations failed to replenish their numbers through time. Annual aggregate totals of births and deaths recorded in the sacramental

books of the mission confirm the observations of previous studies and help to situate California missions in the context of New Spain's frontier societies. In California as in other regions of northern New Spain, mission population rose at the beginning of the congregation period and then dropped because of high mortality and low fertility rates. Up to that point, Hackel's work is based on the interpretation of annual statistics. However, one of his major contributions to historical demography is the use of the technique of family reconstitution, a methodology which allowed him to determine the significance of high infant mortality rates, adult mortality rates by age and sex groups, fertility rates, and seasonality of births and deaths at Mission San Carlos. Once these rates have been established, Hackel's work is rich in inferences about the cumulative effect that lower fertility rates, infectious and congenital diseases like gonorrhea or syphilis, epidemic disease, and the incidence of miscarriages had over mission Indians.

Besides these results, family reconstitution methodology has enabled Hackel to link population changes to other processes. The data thus gathered allows Hackel to explore intimate aspects like marriage patterns, social mobility, and migration in the remaining chapters of *Children of Coyote*.

Hackel's use of this methodology is informed by a number of demographic studies focusing on European populations. With regard to the use of family reconstitution in other areas of Latin America, Hackel correctly states that it has not been successfully applied as yet. It is necessary to say, however, that in the case of demographic studies in Mexico, not only has family reconstitution been rarely applied but it has been discarded by scholars like Claude Morin, Cecilia Rabell, and Elsa Malvido. In recent years, this position has been challenged in Mexico. As a matter of fact, a doctoral dissertation presented in December of 2004 at El Colegio de Michoacán successfully applied the methodology of family reconstitution and reconstructed the histories of three thousand families from the mining town of Bolaños using a database consisting of seventy thousand registers. In that case, family reconstitution allowed the author to question previous ideas about the process of *mestizaje* and to suggest that phenotypes, not economic or cultural issues, were most likely to establish racial designations. In this context, Hackel's work constitutes a watershed in Latin American studies in the sense that it demonstrates that it is not only possible but desirable to test this methodology in different scenarios.

The shift from collision-oriented models to the interaction-minded perspective in mission studies is also an important contribution of *Children of Coyote*. Chapters four to eight focus on the ways in which Indian communities managed to make Spanish society compatible with their own understandings of family, tradition, religious practices, reciprocity, communal hierarchies, justice, labor, and gender roles. In this part, Hackel portrays the Indian-Spanish relations as a fluid two-way process that brought together almost every aspect of each group's life. Especially rewarding in this respect is the analysis of the religious practices of Monterey Indians within mission communities. Religious change is explored not in terms of the irrational imposition of new beliefs, but rather upon the basis of the participation of Indians in the Franciscan program of indoctrination in their own terms, and through the evaluation of what Hackel calls "symbols of conflation" or testimonies of the congruence Indians found between Christian and native symbols.

Finally, the dialogue among local, regional, and national history is essential in Hackel's narrative as well. On the one hand, *Children of Coyote* aimed to extend the notion of colonial American history to encompass the experience of Alta Califor-

books of the mission confirm the observations of previous studies and help to situate California missions in the context of New Spain's frontier societies. In California as in other regions of northern New Spain, mission population rose at the beginning of the congregation period and then dropped because of high mortality and low fertility rates. Up to that point, Hackel's work is based on the interpretation of annual statistics. However, one of his major contributions to historical demography is the use of the technique of family reconstitution, a methodology which allowed him to determine the significance of high infant mortality rates, adult mortality rates by age and sex groups, fertility rates, and seasonality of births and deaths at Mission San Carlos. Once these rates have been established, Hackel's work is rich in inferences about the cumulative effect that lower fertility rates, infectious and congenital diseases like gonorrhea or syphilis, epidemic disease, and the incidence of miscarriages had over mission Indians.

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nia and thus calls for a redefinition of the temporal and spatial boundaries of the field. On the other hand, Hackel's work shows the potential of the insertion of local history in broader frameworks. This is not the history of one mission community alone. It is an analysis of the ways in which local developments at Mission San Carlos affected and were influenced by contemporary processes in the Monterey region, the mission regime in California, and Spanish society at large. Part three adopts a different perspective and shows how episodes like Mexican Independence, secularization of the missions, the epidemic of 1844, and the Mexican-American War threatened the then exiguous Indian communities in the Monterey area.

Notwithstanding these achievements and despite Hackel's aim to fill various gaps in California's mission history, the recent literature published in Mexico or Spain on California, the Spanish Borderlands, and missions and indigenous societies is not well represented in *Children of Coyote*. Ironically, this attempt to put California's past in a broader context could not fully incorporate the perceptions of modern specialists of New Spain's history about this far-off frontier. Except for this personal and recurrent demand regarding the literature on California, this is a work that must be widely discussed. I have enjoyed reading some books and I still keep thinking about some of those writings. *Children of Coyote* is a remarkable work that inspires both those feelings in me.

COMMENTS ON CHILDREN OF COYOTE

Janet Fireman
Curator, Los Angeles Museum of Natural History
Editor, California History

Immaculately constructed. Exhaustively researched. Elegantly written. Brilliantly conceived. Totally convincing.

These phrases sound like the hyperbolic marketing blurbs on the back covers of *some* books, though not this one. Three laudatory, respectful, and congratulatory endorsements appear—as you would expect—on *Children of Coyote*, but they are all restrained. I think the book is much, much better than the back cover scholars' quotations would indicate. And also, I think that the book is marvelously true to and expansive of the illustration on the front cover: a painting of the Archangel Raphael from Mission Santa Inés, portrayed by a Chumash as a Chumash, replete with Spanish Catholic regalia and iconography, demonstrating a rare moment of spiritual conflation. As Hackel writes,

> ... For California Indians, the conflation of their beliefs with Catholicism occurred in the fleeting realm of ideas and thoughts, as they sought to understand and assimilate new images and concepts. Rarely was such an emotional and spiritual act crystallized as in this painting of Raphael as a young Chumash man. The image blends native and Catholic images and represents a previously unappreciated melding of Indians beliefs with Catholicism that was common elsewhere in New Spain (p. 168).

I confess that my heart skipped three beats when I came to the passage in the middle of the book about the marvelously strong cover image. A perfect choice—"the guardian angel of humanity" with "muscular and realistic (wings that) may represent those of the California condor," who is "stand(ing) his ground . . . interpret(ing) Catholicism and mission life through (Chumash) cultural conventions (with) elements of Catholic belief . . . assimilated into a Chumash worldview" (p. 168). This was a salve for sadness, an indication to match twenty-first century sentiment of how we would like things to have been for Indians in the missions.

But this reader's slightly sloppy sentiment was

corrected quickly by the author, who characteristically turned the issue to the other side, questioning the Franciscans reaction to this image, and supposing them to be gratified by the symbolism of Saint Raphael wearing a cross on his crown or headband, symbolizing the triumph of the faith. But just as quickly, Hackel flips the interpretation again, suggesting that Chumash viewers might have seen that little cross as one of their prayer poles, "as one more affirmation that the mission could be a place where their spirituality, just like their foods and structures, could coexist alongside Catholicism and Spanish lifeways" (p. 170).

"O ye gods! ye gods! Must [we] endure all this?" (Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act IV, Scene III) The sadness of what we have done by bringing on the dual revolutions to the native peoples of California. By we, I mean all of us who are non-Indians. Steve Hackel thinks and writes so convincingly that he makes the reader feel responsible for "the convulsions of the dual revolutions" (p. 170) that rattled the California Indian world. Hackel's Chapter Three, "Dual Revolutions and the Missions: Ecological Change and Demographic Collapse," is literally breathtaking. That is, it left me breathless, saddened, and suffocating with anguish and heartache; it brought home the real meaning of *shock and awe*; it stained me with a sorrow I cannot shed. I believe that in a book of much interpretive strength, Steve Hackel's treatment in *Children of Coyote* of the dual revolutions is the most valuable player. Strongest of the strong it is, but the arc of the story of the dual revolutions leads to weakness, disease, hunger, and death. A few previews or highlights of the low-down so that you will know what I mean by my reading of Hackel:

> . . . Just as European diseases radiated from Spanish centers of settlement into remote Indian villages in the years after 1770, so too did environmental degradation, as Spanish livestock invaded and then exhausted ecological niches farther and farther from the mission and presidio. Into this disturbed environment came a host of weeds and plants that Europeans had inadvertently brought with them. These Old World plants had shown themselves adept at coexisting alongside European grazing animals elsewhere. They were hardier than native grasses and bushes and more suited to dry, compacted soil, and, as a result, they succeeded many indigenous food sources. The near-complete displacement of native plants by European weeds has been made abundantly clear through analysis of adobe bricks manufactured in the Monterey region. . . . The awful, if accidental, genius of Spanish colonization in California, then, was not just in creating a subsistence crisis among Indian communities through introduced diseases, plants, and animals; it was in offering what appeared to be a solution in the form of food Indians raised at the mission (p. 71–72).

Cattle thrived and dominated the land and the Indians' traditional food sources disappeared; "the natural landscape had been transformed into one more hospitable to livestock than Indians" (p. 95).

> Flight was in general an option taken by only a minority of Indians, and it only slightly reduced the size of mission communities. The majority of Indians who went to the missions stayed at the missions and tried to continue as before where possible; thus most looked back but did not go back, and they remained at places like San Carlos, where they died of disease or suffered drastically reduced fertility long before they could replenish their numbers and reestablish their communities. Mission populations were to prove incapable of surviving in California, as they struggled everywhere in northern New Spain, perhaps even less viable than the deteriorating village communities Indians had left behind. At Mission San Carlos, for example, the population rose for a quarter of a century after 1770—swelled as it was by a stream of adults and children from neighboring villages—but then dropped, steadily and seemingly irreversibly, once high mortality and low fertility under-

> mined natural increases and the mission had drained its pool of local gentile Indians. There, in a nutshell, is a short history of all the California missions. They offered the promise of individual and community salvation, but they destroyed nearly all those they intended to save (p. 96–97).

In addition, "in the mission communities of Alta California, the decline of the Indians was documented in greater detail and with greater accuracy than nearly anywhere else in North America during the colonial period" (p. 97). And, guess what? Professor Hackel, the king of demographic data through his Early California Population Project, a database consisting of ethnographic, genealogical, and demographic records from all the sacramental registers kept in the missions—has provided the data in tables and texts to illustrate mission population growth, decline, birth rates, mortality rates and so on, drawing a tragic

> picture of population collapse . . . that shows in detail only one of twenty-one missions in California. But what happened at Mission San Carlos was representative of what occurred at twenty other Alta California missions and in countless villages throughout the countryside. And it is suggestive of the demographic processes set in motion whenever and wherever Europeans attempted to colonize the native peoples of the Americas . . . California missions by the end of the Spanish period had become places of grief for Indians and missionaries (p. 122).

An innovation and fabulous contribution to California studies—and all early American studies for that matter—is Hackel's ability to get into the minds (if you will) of Indians. On many subjects, he postulates what they "must have" thought based on the known evidence of what they believed on another subject, and on their practices and environment. This supposition—or interpretation—or analysis—or critical thinking—is just superb throughout the book. And also superb is Steve Hackel's masterful, exhaustive, and ingenious use of sources—numerous sources, many of which are known primary documents (published and unpublished) that have been utilized by other scholars. Many other sources ingeniously utilized are in fact the interpretations published by other scholars; and still many more sources are archival records that have NOT been used at all before! That ingenious use of sources together with his very convincing critical analysis constitute Hackel hallmarks now indelibly impressed on my mind.

There are examples in every chapter, but I have chosen from more-or-less the center of the book, for no special reason except perhaps that the pull of gravity on four hundred seventy-six pages splayed the contents to open approximately to these passages. In addressing the *precepto anual*, the responsibility of baptized Indians to confess annually, Hackel writes:

> Few neophytes . . . submitted to the confession voluntarily, and missionaries ascribed this resistance to primitiveness. But Indians must have found distasteful the Franciscans' intrusiveness into their personal beliefs and private behaviors, and they might not have had any experience with a religion that promised reconciliation through prayer to an Almighty rather than through gifts to the injured or aggrieved. Moreover, Indians might have found alienating a religion that purported to judge them as individuals, not as members of a family, clan, or village. Most Indians . . . ultimately were compelled to confess by the Franciscans (p. 157).

A table follows with the San Carlos statistics to illustrate the point, and a juicy, value-added footnote extrapolates from the demographics to explain that . . .

> Children under the age of reason—age nine in the missions—were considered too young to

> understand sin and therefore too young for confession. When the population is reduced by those too young to confess, it becomes clear that the Franciscans at San Carlos were successful in compelling nearly all adult Indians to confess (n. 57, p. 157).

In writing about a statement composed by Father Juan Cortés that was read to many Indians prior to baptism, in a most perceptive way, Hackel draws out the interpretation from his source—in this case a primary document prepared by a Franciscan and read to Indians "to be sure that adult Indians had a basic understanding of the fundamental beliefs of Catholicism." Hackel delves into the intent of the Franciscans—and this is the purpose for which they came to our fair shores—and he delves into the perception of the resident Indians taking religious instruction from them:

> ...it is likely that Indians under Cortés's tutelage as well as those at other California missions attained baptism with only a scant understanding or weak commitment to Catholicism. Cortés's prebaptismal exhortation is written in Spanish only, which raises the probability that his catechumens neither understood the statement nor held the beliefs that it required them to affirm. This declaration may reveal the Franciscans' hope of what Indians knew at baptism—or more likely what the very best-prepared Indian catechumens knew at baptism—but it yields nothing about most Indians' actual comprehension of or commitment to Catholicism.

Let me repeat the last phrase: "but it yields nothing about most Indians' actual comprehension of or commitment to Catholicism" (p. 140–41). And at the end of that section, the capping sentence expresses complexities of research and interpretation so very well that the reader not only understands completely and recognizes absolutely the fact of the matter but is also astonished and taken aback by the chasm between the Franciscans' intent and the Indians' perception. The powerful words in that sentence are these:

> The continual baptism of Indians testified to both the superficiality of prebaptismal instruction and the limited choices available to Indians in colonial California (p. 143).

And there you have my comments in a nutshell—the word Steve Hackel used to characterize his short-history description of population decline in the missions—comments tailored more or less to fit the allotted time this morning. The nut meat within the shell is this: *Children of Coyote* is a rich and challenging read. The book is also a magnificent read, a great work of scholarship and interpretation—it marks and transfigures California mission historiography.

COMMENTS ON *CHILDREN OF COYOTE*

Steven M. Karr
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It is far from cliché-ish to refer to the author's work as a truly exhaustive study on Indian-Spanish relations in colonial California. Grounded in the type of archival research not often found in any study, let alone one on Hispanic-era California, Hackel has shed new light on the events and occurrences that determined Indian-Spanish relations in this one-time colonial outpost. More importantly, I believe the author provides great detail into *how* and nuanced insight into *why* many of California's Native peoples responded to, and in some circumstances helped to create, the "successive tidal waves of change" experienced within their homeland. As my area of expertise regarding Native cultures in California lies primarily in the American period, my comments may appear limited in their scope. Never-

theless, I would like to discuss several points that are related and in my opinion important to the broader ideas Hackel posits.

Hackel's discussion of pre-contact California is the only one I can recall that discusses the topic that Native Californians appeared to have had, in some areas, high adult mortality rates. Specifically, he notes that California Indians "had a long history of disease well before colonization," dispelling, in part, the notion that the region's Edenesque condition was not without maladies similar to those that wreaked such havoc upon the indigenous population after Europeans arrived (p. 22). Further, Hackel provides compelling reasons why the Indians may logically have been inclined to avoid these sickly interlopers, not solely out of fear of Europeans as spirits but because of their poor physical state (p. 48). Once sustained contact had been established, however, the impact was severe and lasting. These "fragmented and frayed" Indian communities, as the author correctly states, were the result of countless deaths—"one less parent, one less son or daughter, one less member of a ritual society or clan," all lending to, arguably, irreparable social disruption (p. 66).

Significant too, Hackel discusses, were the ecological changes brought on by the introduction of hoofed species by the Spanish. The unchecked growth of these herds, coupled with the elimination of predatory animals and the introduction of alien grasses, did much to eliminate virtually all native plant species. While this information is not new to scholars, Hackel's use of two specific sources—the illustration of overgrazing by animals at the Monterey presidio, and the use of archaeological data providing an analysis of adobe bricks manufactured in Monterey during the 1820s to 1840s, was new to this respondent (p. 71). This effect on traditional subsistence areas, coupled with the greater availability of food at the mission, persuaded many Indians to leave their villages, increasingly from more remote regions, and impacted the Indians' economic and social orders, even among those who chose to remain within their traditional orientation (p. 74).

Hackel's discussion of "Linguistic Barriers" (Chapter 4) brings to light similar circumstances which remained a part of Indian-Euroamerican interaction in California for generations. The "linguistic divide," which he notes, "continued to separate Franciscans and Indians long into the colonial period." In fact, it continued well into the American period. Strangely, scholars have often ignored the fact that Indians throughout California, particularly those associated with the missions, were compelled to bridge these divides throughout their lives. For many, Spanish became their second language. For others still, English became their third language. Significantly, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Indians living in California were in fact tri-lingual, speaking their indigenous languages, Spanish, and English throughout their lives. One late example of this circumstance is Rosinda Nolasquez, the last native speaker of the Cupeño language, who spoke both Cupeño and Spanish in her early childhood, but did not learn English until she attended federal boarding school after her people's removal from Warner's Hot Springs to Pala in 1903. Of course, we should remind ourselves, too, of the divide which existed among Native peoples prior to the arrival of Europeans due to the tremendous linguistic diversity among Indians throughout this geographic region which, while vast, was widely traversed by Indians for centuries.

In Chapter 6, "Social Control, Political Accommodation, and Indian Rebellion," Hackel demonstrates the seeming paradox created through the utilization of Indian officials, noting how indirect rule, while enabling the Spanish to influence, if not alter, components of Indian life-ways, also created provisions for the Indians "to retain control over

certain aspects of their communities, in some areas long after the collapse of colonial rule" (p. 229). An example of this took place among some mission groups in Southern California in the late 1850s, in part, because the Indians and Americans participated in similar accommodations. First described by historian George Harwood Phillips, this event occurred at Pala in 1858. On September 19, an affidavit was made before a judge in the town of San Diego stating that three Indians were about to be hanged at Pala for the crime of being *hechiceras* or witches. The county sheriff, dispatched by the judge to halt the execution and take the Indians into custody, arrived at Pala to find a large group of Indians awaiting the hanging. Surprisingly, perhaps, the Indian subagent was aware of the situation and had previously agreed to abide by the Indian court's decision over which their headman, Manuelito Cota, presided.[7] Conspicuously absent among the Indians, however, was Cota who fled after receiving word that American authorities were on their way to Pala. While evidently choosing to avoid a direct confrontation with the sheriff, Cota, through one of his captains, expressed his severe indignation at the interference of the American civil authorities, as the three accused were tried and found guilty by an Indian jury at Temécula. According to the sheriff, the accused were a mother, son, and daughter. All three had been confined to the jail for several weeks and received little food or water during that time. It was also reported that the three had long been suspected of witchcraft at Pala. Cota had been ill for a short and believed he was bewitched so he ordered them arrested.[8] After the incident, Cota later asked the Indian agent what good was it to have Indian officials if their authority was continually undermined by local lawmen. Fearful of further erosion to his authority among the Luiseño people, Cota resigned as headman to the dismay of the Indian subagent.[9] Here Phillips has provided an interesting event that speaks directly to Hackel's assertion, which, in order to further his own claim, requires additional evaluation.

Clearly Cota's frustration was not unwarranted, particularly concerning the issue of witchcraft and retaliatory killings. Fear of falling under the spell of a witch, shaman, or Indian doctor was long a part of indigenous beliefs among virtually every group in southern California and continues to this day. Further, if a family member died as a result of perceived witchcraft or ineffective shamanry, it would not be uncommon for a family member to seek to kill the accused.[10] It appears that the Indians' acceptance of trial by jury and hangings were merely contemporary manifestations (or accommodations) of an older custom. Cota's objection to the white authorities' intervention in this incident is supported, in part, by the writings of Judge Benjamin Hayes who served as an unofficial Indian subagent to the region just prior to the appointment of the ranchero, Cave J. Couts. Hayes noted that on a visit to Pala shortly before the Garra uprising in 1851, a white storekeeper in the area had told him an Indian, who allegedly confessed to killing seven others by his own spell, was hanged by order of the village captain.[11] If true, as Hayes believed it was, the execution occurred without any intervention from American authorities. Although this incident allegedly occurred some

[7] George Harwood Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers: Indian Resistance and Cooperation in Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 148.

[8] Alexander S. Taylor, "The Indianology of California," *California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences*, February 15, 1861, 34. Consulted at The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[9] Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers*, 149.

[10] Philip Stedman Sparkman, *The Culture of the Luiseño Indians*, University of California Publications in Archaeology and Ethnology, 8. 4 (1908): 215–18. This respondent can further attest that today at Pala and other near-by reservations, many tribal members believe strongly in the notion of "witching" or curses.

[11] Benjamin Ignatius Hayes, "Emigrant Notes" 1875. 4 vols. Part 2, 384. The Bancroft Library, C-E 62.

seven years before the incident in 1858, Cota, particularly with the support of the federal Indian agent, reasonably could have expected no intervention from local law enforcement officials regarding what he surely considered to be Indian affairs. Similar circumstances were experienced by other American Indian groups who, due to increasing contact with whites, were, to varying degrees, willing to accommodate American laws and customs within their own belief systems—a circumstance that, as Hackel correctly states, began with the Spanish and continued on for some time, perhaps longer than many expected or understood.

Also in Chapter 6, Hackel concludes that one event in particular, the disputed Indian election of 1831, demonstrated "a continuity with premission times, . . . [and] signaled that some of the Children of Coyote had grown accustomed to the representative system that the Franciscans had overseen," noting further that "protesters implicitly accepted the annual elections as a means of generating and legitimating Indian authority; they denounced the procedures of one election, not the practice of electing officials" (p. 269–70). Here I agree with the author's point concerning political accommodation which brings me to the broader question concerning traditional and non-traditional forms of social control, politics, religion, and even art. Specifically, when does the "non-traditional" become traditional? When, if ever, does (or should) the act of "accommodation" become subordinate to Native interpretations of the "traditional"?[12]

Hackel's Chapter 8 discussion of punishment, the administration of justice, and social hierarchy, touches upon several interesting circumstances which paralleled those in the United States during the same period. Like the Spanish, the United States during this same period also employed military courts to administer justice among Native peoples along frontier regions. Present, too, were the same inequities Hackel argues Indians experienced in Spanish courts. There were, however, examples among Native peoples administered by the United States where punishments were meted out equally among both Indian and Anglo specifically with regard to corporal punishment.[13] Utilized as the primary means of punishment among military courts for non-capital offenses, many Native groups were urged by federal Indian agents, then most often military officers, to adopt flogging as a "humane" form of punishment, and some cultures readily adopted it as a means for social control. Unlike the Spanish, though, who in most cases did not subject the *gente de razón* to flogging based upon a deeply entrenched racial and social hierarchy (p. 363), U.S. officials were consistent in their application of the same punishment among both Indians and whites, and in some cases even supported Indian officials flogging whites for offenses carried out in Indian Territory.[14]

In Chapter 8 Hackel also reaffirms the contention that many Franciscans *did* severely abuse Indians, but more importantly, perhaps, establishes the notion that the abuse was far from isolated and was, in fact, institutionalized. Increasingly it appears that those who dispute these findings must embrace the historical record, or provide a more compelling example of their own. While the Franciscans were clearly fallible, even well-intentioned "men of their times" and, as a result perhaps, less culpable in the view of some, it appears that the denial of these

[12] Luke Eric Lassiter, Clyde Ellis, and Ralph Kotay, *The Jesus Road: Kiowas, Christianity, and Indian Hymns* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); Margaret Dubin, *Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001).

[13] Steven M. Karr, "Now We Have Forgotten the Old Indian Law: Choctaw Culture and the Evolution of Corporal Punishment," *American Indian Law Review*, 23.2 (1999): 409–23.

[14] Ibid., 417.

abuses has become just as institutionalized and, arguably, more irrational than the abuses evidenced by this author's work. As a result, a more forthright acceptance of these historic facts ought to be acknowledged.

In Chapter 9 Hackel furthers the understanding that after secularization, Indians did regain a great deal of their personal autonomy which was lost during the mission era. Much of this autonomy was gained through the Indians' accommodation, if not outright adoption, of certain Hispanic cultural traditions. One of the author's better examples of this is his reference to the letter written by Pacífico, the Ventureño Chumash neophyte, to José María Echeandía, Mexico's governor of Alta California. In the letter, Pacífico is seeking freedom for himself and other Indians from Franciscan administration (p. 377–78). While the letter clearly demonstrates a submissive tone and posture as expected from an Indian, it also appears contrived and to a degree, pragmatic. Although Pacífico and the other Ventureño did not achieve all of their aspirations, they did, nevertheless, demonstrate an incredible adeptness within evolving cultural circumstances. There is, of course, ample evidence to suggest that many, many Indians discarded much of this culture of accommodation. Instead, they chose to incorporate only the most necessary of Hispanic traditions (mainly European-style agriculture), and lived very much according to traditional indigenous beliefs and customs. Still, others certainly rejected outright these new traditions and simply moved to the interior beyond the reach of colonial influence.[15]

[15] Steven M. Karr, "Culture and Continuity: Mission Indian Land Tenure and Traditional Orientation after Secularization," 55th California History Institute Conference, John Muir Center for Environmental Studies, University of the Pacific, April 23–24, 2004, Stockton, CA. In this paper I argue that these circumstances took place among mission cultures primarily in Southern California.

The final "tidal wave of change" experienced by the Children of Coyote and other Native people throughout California occurred during the Anglo-American period. "Motivated by racism and exclusionism," as the author states, many Indians fared worse than they had during the previous decades. By the 1850s only a few families remained living within close proximity to Mission San Carlos. And by the 1870s most of the Indians had been displaced from the Carmel Valley. Nevertheless, many survived, as Hackel reminds us, with a vivid understanding of their culture and strong sense of identity. Surely others, undetected or unnoticed by townspeople, ranchers, or the pryings of ethnologists and historians, survived as well. As their people had done before them, some moved to towns or cities accepting, perhaps, a new identity. Others certainly chose to identify more closely with the region's reemerging Hispanic culture. While others, still, likely moved to more defined Indian communities throughout the state.

Hackel's work is filled with sound evidence and insight. His impressive use of both archival sources and the written ethnographic record have created what can easily be characterized as one of the most important studies on Indian-white relations during the Hispanic colonial period in California and beyond. My chief complaint (really my only complaint), is not with content, but with the book's layout and structure. For someone who is as devoted to footnotes as the author, I realize now why endnotes and a complete bibliography are the preferred method of citation among editors and publishers. Searching through pages of small print for a single-referenced full citation was nothing short of tedious and may hinder the opportunity for some readers to more fully appreciate your assertions by addressing the sources on their own.

COMMENTS ON *CHILDREN OF COYOTE*

Robert M. Senkewicz
Santa Clara University

I would first like to thank Steve Hackel for writing this book. I learned an immense amount from reading it, and I have no doubt that I will learn even more when I go back to it, as I know I will, time and again, in the future. Among its many noteworthy aspects, let me point to three.

First, the sheer amount of primary sources on which the volume is based is remarkable. No one who has plowed through *expediente* after *expediente* at The Bancroft Library or the Huntington Library or the archives in Mexico City or Seville can be anything other than awed at the way in which Steve has creatively extracted new material from the documentary record. In doing so, he has also forced us to look at even familiar material, such as the letters of Junípero Serra and Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, in new and challenging ways.

Second, close attention to the mission records and the patient construction of his own database allow Steve to tell us a very great deal about the lives of ordinary native people. Their experiences, achievements, and struggles become more alive, more real, and more affecting in the pages of *Children of Coyote*. I am sure that I am not the only reader who was profoundly moved by the heroism and survival which Steve reconstructs and presents to us in the book's last chapter.

Third, as one who teaches the American Colonial and Revolutionary history in a university on the Pacific slope, I appreciate Steve's ability consciously to relate the story of Alta California's colonial past—and the methods used in telling that story—to the stories of the eastern British colonies which dominate our national narrative—and the methods used to tell those stories. He has deepened, complicated, and enriched our understanding of origins of the United States as whole.

I would like to structure my comments around three themes in the history of Alta California which I think Steve's book invites us to pursue more intentionally They are Baja California, the missionaries, and the indigenous communities at the missions.

First: Baja California. As Steve makes clear, Baja and Alta California were one political entity before 1804. They continued to be joined in important ways throughout the period. I think that *Children of Coyote* challenges us to integrate the history of Baja California more fully into the story. For instance, Steve points out that as late as the 1840s, there was a group of Indians living as far north as Monterey who had been born on the Baja California peninsula (p. 422). They were symbolic, I think, of a continuing closeness.

At times, the experience of Baja California can give us perspective on its northern counterpart. At one point Steve describes the petition of three Indians, Pacífico, Gervasio, and Peregrino María to Governor José María de Echeandía in 1826. They asked for their freedom, for their mission to be turned into a pueblo, and for a particular Spanish soldier to be placed over them. Steve interprets that last request as demonstrating "the limits of their vision, or the limits of what they thought attainable" (p. 379–80). That makes sense. But at the same time, Baja California might offer us a fuller view into what these three people were attempting.

The two major Mexican officials to visit Alta California in the 1820s, Agustín Fernández de San Vicente in 1822 and José María de Echeandía in 1825, both came to Alta California by way of Baja California. While they were in the peninsula they issued various decrees there. Fernández de San Vicente divided the peninsula into four *municip-*

ios or townships. He also issued a decree in Loreto in 1822 in which he ordered that there be a *comisionado* at each mission to investigate the complaints of the neophytes.[16] A few years later, on his way to Alta California, Echeandía issued his own "Reglamento." In it he ordered the beginning of the process of distributing some of the mission lands to Indians.[17] Given these events, the petition of Pacífico and his colleagues may also have been a shrewd attempt to position themselves and their people to benefit from the broader California developments which were already starting in Baja California.

Secularization was not the only thing which affected both Californias. At the same time that Felipe de Neve was struggling with Serra, for instance, he was also engaged in a similar struggle with the head of the Dominican missions in Baja California, Vicente Mora. Mora at one point composed a long denunciation of Neve and sent it to the *comandante* of the *Provincias Internas*.[18] This relativizes the struggles between Serra and Neve, to which Alta California historians are at times too apt to accord a singular importance. Unfortunately, the Dominican period in Baja California has not been as well studied as have other periods in the history of the peninsula. But I suspect that the more we learn about it, the more we will understand Alta California.

Second: the missionaries. At one point, Steve characterizes them as "a homogenous group, sharing a common ideology, training, and upbringing. Of course they distinguished themselves through temperament and talent, but their strict vows, particularly that of obedience, worked to mute conflict within the order, and, by design, to thwart individuality" (p. 55). And at another point, he makes the point that most of them did not have previous missionary experience before they arrived in Alta California: "[they] in effect learned to be missionaries just as they were teaching Indians how to become Catholic" (p. 55).

While both of these statements are accurate, they also tend, I think, to obscure some important issues which can help us understand what was going on among the missionaries who came. Mission San Carlos was headed, for almost half the time it was a mission, by two men who in fact had learned to be missionaries elsewhere. Both Serra and Lasuén had worked in the Sierra Gorda and in Baja California before they arrived in Alta California. The experiences of the men of the *Colegio de San Fernando* in the Sierra Gorda profoundly affected the way in which they tried to shape their later efforts in the Californias. The *Fernandinos* struggled for two decades against José de Escandón and his settler/soldier-oriented policies in the Sierra Gorda, and they knew that at the same time they were working in Alta California, other Franciscans were also struggling against the heirs of Escandón during the Spanish expansion into the internal frontier of Nuevo Santander. Unfortunately, much *Fernandino* correspondence from the Sierra Gorda has not survived. But the bits that do exist portray a group genuinely and reasonably convinced that soldiers and setters wanted to appropriate land for them-

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[16] Agustín Fernández de San Vicente, "Reglamento provisional que debe regir por ahora en las misiones de la Baja California, hasta la resolución del Soberano Congreso Constituyente del Imperio mexicano," in Ulises Urbano Lassépas, *Historia de la colonización de la Baja California y decreto del 10 de marzo de 1857*, prólogo David Piñera Ramírez (Mexicali: Secretaría de Educación Pública; Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, 1995), 325–27.

[17] Lassépas, 330–34; Marco Antonio Landavazo Arias, *Baja California durante la Primera República Federal* (La Paz: Secretaría de Educación Pública, Baja California Sur; Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur, 1994), 10–11, 20–21; Ignacio del Río y María Eugenia Altable Fernández, *Breve historia de Baja California Sur* (México: El Colegio de México; Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas; Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2000), 104.

[18] María Luisa Rodríguez-Sala, *Los gobernadores de las Californias, 1767–1804* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales; El Colegio de Jalisco; Gobierno del Estado de Baja California; Instituto de Cultura de Baja California; Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, 2003), 171–73.

selves at the expense of the Indians. For instance, a 1762 Franciscan document complained with irritation that a settlement that Escandón had organized, the Villa de Herrera, was "practically right in the middle of the five [Sierra Gorda] missions."[19] Palóu's biography of Serra is generally read as a religious document, which of course it is. But the biography also had a political aim, which was to draw an implicit contrast between the two great colonization efforts in New Spain at the end of the eighteenth century. Palóu was arguing that the missionary method was greatly preferable to the "war of fire and blood" against the indigenous peoples which was an integral part of the expansion into Nuevo Santander.[20]

Also, the disputes among the missionaries themselves could radically affect the missionary enterprise. The best known example was the letter to the viceroy composed by Antonio de la Concepción Horra, who had been expelled by Lasuén from Alta California. Concepción Horra denounced his brothers for cruelty in their work (p. 329–30), but he was not alone. The efforts of the *Colegio de San Fernando* to recruit a second generation of missionaries to replace the generation of Serra, Crespí, and Palóu were filled with difficulties that exposed some serious rifts in the missionary community, both in California and in Mexico City. A few missionaries were expelled and at least one other in addition to Concepción Horra, denounced his brothers' treatment of the Indians to the governor. The missionary personnel situation was chaotic through much of the 1790s. This had a direct effect on the mission communities at San Francisco and a few other places.[21]

These controversies did not revolve only around personalities. Underlying many of them seemed to be a genuine dispute among the friars about whether, given the emphasis on poverty in their Rule and tradition, it was legitimate for them to be acting as managers of such huge landed estates as the missions were becoming. Integrating these sorts of items into the overall history of Alta California will, I think, enrich our understanding of the entire province.

Third: the communities. I think that Steve's compelling reconstruction of the rhythms of life and death in these communities, and his careful demographic examination of Mission San Carlos, sets the gold standard for future efforts along these lines. My own sense is that future efforts might attempt to complement this demographic richness with attention to language.

Steve's account is filled with incidents of Indian activity, Indian agency, and Indian use of Spanish forms to continue to embody their own identities and traditions in new ways. This made me wonder what was actually going on in one of the central rituals in which the neophytes engaged, one which Steve argues was an important part of the missionaries attempts to control native sexuality: confession. Steve does an excellent job in analyzing the *confesionarios* that have survived, and these documents tell us much about what the missionaries wanted to do (p. 157–51;

[19] Fray Joseph García, Fray Francisco Palóu, Fray Pedro Pérez de Mezquía, Fray Junípero Serra, "Estado de las misiones de la Sierra Gorda en 1761," San Fernando de México, January 11, 1762, in Lino Gómez Canedo, *Sierra Gorda, un típico enclave misional en el centro de México (siglos XVII–XVIII)* (Querétaro: Ediciones del Gobierno del Estado de Querétaro, 1988), 240.

[20] Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, "Constructing California: Francisco Palóu's Life of Junípero Serra," paper presented at a conference "The Franciscan Presence in the Borderlands of North America," Amarillo, Texas, September 2004.

[21] Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, "Uncertainty on the Mission Frontier: Missionary Recruitment and Institutional Stability in Alta California in the 1780s," in John F. Schwaller, ed., *Francis in America* (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 2005), 301–28. We published translations of some of the Franciscan correspondence from this period, including the entire letter of Concepción Horra to the Viceroy, in Beebe and Senkewicz, *Tensions Among the Missionaries in the 1790s* (Bakersfield: California Mission Studies Association, 1996).

199–203). But confession was an oral experience, not a written one. I will never forget the look of absolute incomprehension on the face of a clerk at a store in Guadalajara some fifteen years ago as I asked for something in what I thought was a Spanish that was perfectly grammatical and perfectly pronounced! And there is no reason to think that the typical missionary was that much of a better linguist than I was. The point is that we have no way of knowing what the individual neophyte actually heard in the confessional. I mean this in two ways. Was the priest pronouncing the native words in an intelligible fashion? And, even if the word could be understood, where did the actual word come from?

The work of Lamin Sanneh can be helpful here.[22] At some point early in the process of encounter, someone had to decide which Luiseño or Gabrielino or Chumash word was going to be used for "baptism" or "sin." That "someone" was not the missionary. It was, instead, the native community, through a mechanism which probably involved elders, Indians who spoke more than one language, translators, and, in the early days of Alta California, Indians from Baja California, who were brought by the missionaries to serve as interpreters. Whichever word or phrase was chosen would come with its own history, its own connotations, its own grammar. When the Indian heard that word, he or she would naturally understand it in terms of these items. The group being "missionized" was thus, in a sense, creating its own unique version of Christianity. However, when the missionary used that word, he would have no idea of these socio-linguistic nuances.

My sense is that we do not know much yet about these matters in Alta California. Probably the most important source we have on this is the Pablo Tac manuscript. Its historical sections have been translated and used extensively. But it also contains linguistic and grammatical sections, which up to now have not received much attention on the part of California historians. Karl Kottman has done some work on it.[23] Also, Lisbeth Haas recently gave a seminar on these parts of the Tac manuscript at the Academy of American Franciscan History. Her forthcoming work promises to shed significant light on this issue and, in doing so, to shed significant light on the mission communities in general.

These three areas seem to me to be ones where future scholars might be able to build on the impressive achievement that is *Children of Coyote*. But let me conclude as I began, by thanking Steve for this creative, challenging, and wonderful book.

REPLY TO COMMENTATORS

Steven W. Hackel

At the outset of my remarks I would like to thank José Refugio de la Torre, Steven Karr, Bob Senkewicz, and Janet Fireman for their perceptive and generous thoughts. It is an honor to have four leading scholars of California discuss my work, and their comments are rich and suggestive.

Before I turn to the commentaries more specifically, I would like to say a few more words about an aspect of the book that all of the commentators found useful: my attempt to add greater complexity and power to our understanding of Indian population decline in California under Spanish rule. Debates over the meaning and magnitude of this tragedy are as old as the Spanish conquest of the Americas. As I see it, there are two main ways to measure Indian depopulation in early California. One is to work with the Franciscans' end-of-

[22] Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989). I thank Jeffrey Burns for bringing this work to my attention.

[23] Karl A. Kottman, "Islands of Time Before: The Miraculous Translation of Californian," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 23.4 (1999): 115–26.

year statistical reports for each mission. These reports state the number of baptisms, marriages, and burials performed annually. From these statistics, researchers have generated crude birth and death rates for the missions, and through them they have observed gross population trends. The results are what we would expect: for most years, deaths outnumber births.[24]

Family reconstitution—what I practice in this book—is a different technique and it employs records that refer to individuals by name to study the internal dynamics and mechanics of population change. This method is more laborious and is based on the missions' birth, marriage, and burial records. It requires you to link an individual's baptism record with the same person's marriage record and burial record. This gives you for that individual a date of birth, a date of marriage, and a date of death. And it also gives you the individual's bride or groom, and the spouse's vital information. Once you have reconstituted the married couple, you link to that couple their children's birth and burial records to see when in the life of the couple children were born and how long they lived. You have to do this for all of the people born, married, and buried in the mission if you want to understand the inner workings of population change.

When you are not at the microfilm reader or entering data into the computer, the payoff for all of this work can be rich, for you can determine how mortality was distributed across the population and whether it was concentrated among the young or the old. This is important. Those sorts of calculations are not possible with year-end statistics because aggregate data does not indicate who died in any given year. More specifically, using family reconstitution one can measure mortality during infancy and childhood, the periods of early life when death is most likely. One can also estimate rates of fertility—or the number of live births per woman—across different age groups. So, for example, one can determine the degree to which a relatively low number of births in a population was related to a) women having few children, or b) a low number of women of reproductive age.

Now, if this method is so useful why wasn't it used earlier to study Spanish California?

Berkeley's own Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah worked with mission registers. Yet, they never fully linked records.[25] More recently Randy Milliken, John Johnson, and others have created complex databases of linked mission records, but for the most part they have used their databases to answer different questions about the Indian communities of early California.[26]

As De la Torre suggested, early attempts to apply family reconstitution to communities of colonial Latin America failed. Why? Because some scholars concluded that high rates of illegitimacy, an underregistration of births and deaths, and the lack of Indian family names created too much confusion in the records.[27] I also

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[24] Robert H. Jackson, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), and Robert H. Jackson, *Indian Population Decline: The Missions of Northwestern New Spain, 1687–1840* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).

[25] Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History: Vol. 3. Mexico and California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

[26] Milliken, *Time of Little Choice*; Phillip L. Walker and John R. Johnson, "For Everything There is a Season: Chumash Indian Births, Marriages, and Deaths at the Alta California Missions," in D. Ann Herring and Alan C. Swedlund, eds., *Human Biologists in the Archives: Demography, Health, Nutrition and Genetics in Historical Populations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 53–77.

[27] On why historians have not successfully applied the technique of family reconstitution to colonial Latin America, see Robert McCaa, "The Peopling of Mexico from Origins to Revolution," in Michael R. Haines and Richard H. Steckel, eds., *A Population History of North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 241–304, at 269. See also Claude Morin, "Los libros parroquiales como fuente para la historia demográfica y social novohispana," *Historia mexicana*, 21 (1972): 160–87; Cecilia Andrea Rabell, *La población novohispana a la luz de registros parroquiales (avances y perspectivas de investigación)*, (México,

think that many demographers unjustly concluded that Indians were a people too different to be studied with conventional methodologies. Yet, the mission records of California meet the general criteria for analysis through family reconstitution and they invite research anchored in this method.

This research method helps us to understand that California Indians suffered terrible mortality not because they were Indians, which is an argument put forward by Cook who maintained that Indians simply were not able to adapt to the new environment of the missions. Rather it is now clear that Indians declined in numbers—not because they were culturally deficient—but because they suffered from a host of diseases that became endemic and for which there was no adequate cure or therapy. Moreover, the infant mortality Indians suffered in California was not unique to them or to others in similar circumstances. It was roughly comparable to that experienced by many early modern European communities in times of plague or great poverty. What is stunning about the missions, though, is the persistence of tremendously high childhood and adult mortality as well as very low fertility—all of which made population recovery next to impossible.

Before I leave my discussion of historical demography, let me say I do not consider *Children of Coyote* to be a work of quantitative history. Nor do I consider myself a quantitative historian. To me the technique of family reconstitution is a translation device that allowed me to answer important questions about Indians in colonial California. It is essentially a language or a skill that I acquired to get closer to the reality of life in the missions, just like one needs Spanish to interpret the primary documents of early California.

❁

Let me now turn to a few of the most pressing points raised by the discussants. All four have been fair and more generous than I had any right to expect, but I would like to refine and expand some of their characterizations of my book's main arguments. De la Torre makes the good point that in *Children of Coyote* I shift from collision-oriented models of Indian-Spanish relations towards what he terms an "interactive-minded perspective in mission studies." To a great degree he is correct, for I demonstrate that long into the colonial period, Indians affiliated with the missions continued to inhabit familiar dwellings, consume customary foods, recognize existing leaders, frequent native villages, and perform customary dances and rituals. I argue that Indians did so openly with the grudging acceptance of missionaries. Franciscans believed that Indians would not, could not, give up overnight everything they held dear, that baptism did not equal conversion, and that it might take many years, if not many generations, before California Indians behaved as Catholics and Spaniards.

So, I do embrace an interactive-model or at least a model of accommodation, but I do so only selectively. In my introduction I specifically reject the conclusion that one model—be it one that posits interaction, collision, or something in between—"can encompass the range of Indian-Spanish relations in colonial California" (p. 2). To quote myself, "around matters of sexuality, marriage, and religion, Indians and Spanish cultural practices proved deeply antithetical, and the ensuing conflicts created upheaval and threatened to

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D.F.: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1990), esp. 7–10, 27–30. Only two family reconstitution studies have been published for Mexico, and these are for the most part studies on non-Indians: Tomás Calvo, "Familles mexicaines au XVIIe siècle: une tentative de reconstitution," *Annales de Démographie Historique* (1984): 149–74, and Herbert S. Klein, "Familia y fertilidad en Amatenango, Chiapas (1785–1816)," in Elsa Malvido and Miguel Angel Cuenya, comp., *Demografía histórica de México: siglos XVI–XIX* (México, D.F.: Instituto Mora, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1993), 112–22.

undo the Spanish colonial project. In many ways, Indian autonomy and Spanish coercion warred within an increasingly confining colonial order" (p. 2). We see evidence of this "warring" in the violence Franciscans directed at Indians' bodies, in Indians' revolts against the missions, and, most poignantly, in the violence Indians sometimes directed at each other.

De la Torre also makes a very telling observation. He concludes that for all of the book's strengths, it does not adequately reflect the latest scholarship produced in Mexico and Spain on the colonial encounter in Alta California. I find that humbling, and I want to know more about what I missed and how this additional literature might have forced me to rethink my conclusions. I recognize that he has called to our attention an enormous structural problem bedeviling our profession, one that needs to be addressed for the good of Spanish Borderlands' studies. Today, it is very difficult for most of us based in the U.S. to keep up with dissertations, articles, and books published beyond our own borders, especially when this scholarship often is not reviewed in mainstream journals, and when many of our own university libraries shy away from purchasing anything not written in English. At most universities this problem is only going to get worse as funding declines and priorities shift. Institutions such as the Academy of American Franciscan History, through the journal *Americas* and gatherings like this, and the California Mission Studies Association through its journal and its annual meetings, are helping us come together and share our knowledge.

The necessity of incorporating Spanish and Mexican studies into our work takes me to Bob Senkewicz's valuable illustration of the need to see the inter-relatedness of Alta California with Baja California and the rest of the northern borderlands. As I discuss in *Children of Coyote*, Baja California provided Indians, livestock, missionaries, and religious items necessary for the creation of Alta California. But Senkewicz is correct to call to our attention the fact that long after the 1760s and 1770s, the two Californias shared more than a governor—they shared a history, a people, and they continued to shape one another. By my count, which is almost certainly low, at least eighty Baja California Indians settled in and were buried in Alta California. Most came in the 1770s. But as the life of Delfina Cuero shows, long into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Indians continued to move back and forth across what became an international boundary.[28]

It is true, as Senkewicz states, and as I argue and then demonstrate on Table 1 [p. 54] of my book, that Junípero Serra and Fermín Francisco de Lasuén were seasoned missionaries before they came to Alta California. And Senkewicz is right that the Franciscans' political struggles in the Sierra Gorda and elsewhere shaped their views of the Spanish state and its governors. All Franciscans who came to California, whether they had any real missionary experience or not, were deeply suspicious of state authority and they were extremely protective of their roles as apostolic missionaries. But my point is that eight of the thirteen Franciscans who did so much of the baptizing, marrying, and burying of Indians at San Carlos did so with no previous experience on the frontier.[29]

Was this typical of the California missions? Was this typical of most frontier missions? And to follow Senkewicz's line of inquiry, how do Baja and Alta California compare in this regard? My sense

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[28] *Delfina Cuero: Her Autobiography, An Account of Her Last Years, and Her Ethnobotanic Contributions*, by Florence Connolly Shipek (Menlo Park: Ballena Press, 1991).

[29] See the careers of Francisco Dumetz, José Francisco de Paula Señán, Pascual Martínez de Arenaza, Mariano Payeras, Francisco Pujol, José Viñals, Juan Amorós, and Vicente Francisco de Sarría.

is that the relative inexperience of many California missionaries increased their dependence upon the basic manuals and guidebooks that Franciscans in New Spain carried with them, the most important of which was the one authored by Alonso de la Peña Montenegro and first published in 1668.[30] In Alta California, when Franciscans approached Indians and when they administered the sacraments, most largely did so as one. Most were literally reading from the same page of Montenegro.

The missionaries' close adherence to Montenegro's guidelines helps us to understand the degree to which the Franciscans were aware of the very problem that Senkewicz poses: When Franciscans spoke, what did Indians hear? Janet Fireman has alluded to my writing on this point, so I will be brief. To quote Montenegro, as quoted by a California missionary in 1818, who was himself quoting a pastoral letter from the Bishop of Sonora in 1790, teaching Indians in their own idioms was so important that all missionaries must make every effort to learn the Indians' languages, even though doing so may cost them "sleepless nights and much sweat." To Montenegro, missionaries who did so would "merit the highest rewards in heaven" (*Children of Coyote*, p. 136). Neither Serra nor Lasuén were able to devote every effort to gaining a command of Indian languages. But other missionaries did, most notably Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta, who, working with Indians from Mission San Juan Bautista composed a written guide to nearly three thousand Mutsun phrases. Missionaries such as Serra, who were not skilled linguists, had to hew closely to written confessionals in the Indians' languages. Men like Arroyo de la Cuesta probably had attained such conversational fluency that they were fine on their own.

[30] For a modern printing of this text, see Alonso de la Peña Montenegro, *Itinerario para párrocos de indios*, ed. C. Baciero et al., (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1995).

If Bob Senkewicz reminds us of the difficulties inherent in any communication across cultures, and of the importance of looking beyond the borders of Alta California to places like Baja California, Steven Karr's commentary calls to our attention the need to rethink the chronological boundaries of our work. Karr skillfully carries into the twentieth century the point that Indians were able to use to their own advantage elements of Spanish and Mexican political systems. Through the Cupeño headman Manuelito Cota, Karr shows us that "Indian groups . . . were, to varying degrees, willing to accommodate American laws and customs with their own belief system . . . a circumstance that . . . began with the Spanish and continued on for some time, perhaps longer than many expected or understood." Karr is implicitly inviting us to carry our stories forward into the twentieth century and to root our understanding of the twentieth century in earlier periods and processes. This is important because for those of us interested in Indians, the missions, and Alta California, the century after 1830 cries out for additional and careful study. In *Children of Coyote*, I do trace the remarkable survival of the descendants of one family who lived through and after Mission San Carlos, but we need more work that illuminates more Indians' lives after the missions. Along those lines, I think that the work of Beth Haas is very significant as are the publications of Randy Milliken and Laurence Shoup and John Johnson.[31]

[31] Milliken and Shoup, *Iñigo of Rancho Posolmi*; John R. Johnson, "The Chumash Indians after Secularization," in Howard Benoist and María Carolina Flores, eds., *The Spanish Missionary Heritage of the United States: Selected Papers and Commentaries from the November 1990 Quincentenary Symposium* (San Antonio: Los Compadres de San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and U.S. Dept. of the Interior/National Park Service, 1993), 143–64.

In many ways Janet Fireman has posed for us the most difficult and profound of questions: How should we feel about what happened in this land between Indians and Spaniards two centuries ago? And what should we make of our feelings? In writing this book, I do not think that specific answers to these questions were at the forefront of my mind—even though I can easily conjure them up—but certainly my hope is that *Children of Coyote* might provide readers with the knowledge they need to approach these questions thoughtfully. My intent has been to understand and describe Indians, Franciscans, soldiers, and settlers within the contexts and constraints of their own times. If my rendering of Indians' struggles during the mission period provokes "sadness," then I hope that my rendering of the heroism of Indian survival provokes equally strong and countervailing emotions. Writing about the grief of others and writing to provoke sadness in one's readers are distinctly different endeavors. At this point, all I can do is thank Janet Fireman for encouraging us to think more deliberately about these matters.

In conclusion, I would like to offer some thoughts about what all of this means and how we might try to craft an agenda for future work in our field. What I have written and what I have heard today suggest that we need to question the spatial, temporal, and linguistic boundaries that define our field. We need to transcend national, disciplinary, and cultural boundaries in our own scholarship, and we need to look beyond today's international boundaries when we study regions of the past. If we are to grasp the meaning of the California missions for Indians—what Indians made of the missions, and what the missions made of Indians—we need to begin our histories long before the missions began and we need to end them long after the missions were gone. We need to recognize the key dates and turning points in the history of early California: 1769, 1810, 1821, 1833, 1846, 1848, and 1850 to name but a few. At those moments the larger political structures within which Indians lived changed dramatically. In some instances the structures collapsed while in others they were modified or created. The challenge for us is to see the import of those dates and then to look beyond them to find the inner rhythms of native communities and individuals as they continued to make sense of themselves and the world around them. That is a difficult charge, for it requires us as students and scholars to leave the paths of the known and the familiar and it may lead us to even more daunting forms of inquiry. Doing this may require from us a new set of organizing principles, questions, and structures upon which we will base our work. Along those lines, I hope that at the heart of the next generation of scholarship on early California is a study of individual identity—how Indians, Franciscans, soldiers, and settlers in California understood themselves, not how they were understood by others. Perhaps, what we need now is a new body of work that studies the self and selfhood in Alta California. How we might research and write that history is not so clear, but I hope that many of us in some way or another are part of the enterprise. Perhaps you already are.

Thank you.

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