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FRANCISCAN MISSIONS OF NEW MEXICO 1740-1760

By HENRY W. KELLY

## INTRODUCTION

SEVERAL INCENTIVES have urged me to make this somewhat full study of the missions in mid-eighteenth century New Mexico. In the first place, I must admit that I am a victim of the contagious past of my locality. As a native of New Mexico I am intensely interested in the long, varied and dramatic history of my state. It is a history that began before that of most states in the union, and the fact that this year of 1940 marks the four hundredth anniversary of that beginning—the entrance of Francisco Vásquez de Coronado—serves as an added incentive.

Personal associations with the scene of my research; the fact that I live in Santa Fé, the center of historical activity of that Spanish kingdom; that I have visited the majority of the Indian missions in question, all combine to make the study much more vital and meaningful.

I feel that my work is not merely of antiquarian interest; not merely the resurrection of a dead past, that has no longer any connection with the present. The Pueblo Indians of today are as numerous as they were in 1750, and essentially they lead the same existence as they did in those far-off times. The brown robe of the Franciscan *padre* is still a prominent feature in New Mexico, and, with certain modifications, he has to cope with many of the problems that faced him two centuries ago. Living in the many isolated

villages in the mountains and valleys, the descendants of the *Conquistadores* mirror the lives of their ancestors, scarcely touched by our dizzy twentieth century. These modern *vecinos* still speak Spanish; still lead the predominately agricultural life of their forefathers, economically self-sufficient; still run their sheep, goats and cattle over the rocky piñon-covered hills; still sow their fields by the age-old broadcast method; irrigate with *acequias* dug in colonial times; harvesting by hand, threshing with horses and goats, and settling down for a winter of inertia and isolation as the heavy snows clog up their narrow valleys.

A study of this nature should have real, historical significance. Mr. France Scholes of the Carnegie Institute of Washington has made the only careful study of ecclesiastical history in seventeenth century New Mexico. A similar one has not been made for the eighteenth century. The very fact that I am to some extent entering unknown territory, and that I have the chance of shedding some light on one of the numerous, shadowy corners in Spanish American history, is indeed an incentive and justification for my work.

I had the good fortune to have placed at my disposal, through the kindness of Mr. Scholes, a generous stock of photostatic copies of manuscripts dealing with this period of New Mexican history. These copies were made by him from the original manuscripts in the National Archives of Mexico City, and from what I understand a good number of them have never been subjected to historical scrutiny. After a careful study of the manuscripts, I am forced to admit that I was somewhat disappointed to find nothing that would revolutionize present, historical concepts concerning this period of mission history. However, I am confident that these documents have enabled me to add a number of new pieces to the still incomplete picture puzzle of that period.

## CHAPTER I

THE ROLE OF THE MISSION IN SPAIN'S COLONIAL POLICY<sup>1</sup>

For all time to come the foundation of the Spanish Empire in the New World will remain a marvelous and breathtaking accomplishment. Out of a hitherto obscure, introspective, Iberian nation, Spain, most of whose blood and money were at the same time being expended in profitless, non-Spanish entanglements in Europe, a handful of men sailed westward over the Atlantic, and with amazing rapidity conquered the world's most extensive empire. Over more than half the western hemisphere these men spread the religion, language, laws and culture of Spain. Today millions of people in South, Central, and North America, tinged with the blood of the Conquistadores, still speak the Castilian tongue, have the same religion, govern themselves by laws essentially Spanish, and are in possession of a culture, to a great extent, inherited from Spain. These results certainly speak for the energy and virility of Spanish frontier institutions, and should give pause to the many who smugly pronounce Spain's colonial policy a failure.

Each of the colonizing powers in America adopted its own peculiar classes of society and institutions to extend and hold the limits of its dominions. The French gnawed away at the frontier with the aid of the fur trader and the missionary; the backwoodsman extended the English frontier, leveling the forest and driving back the Indian, with whom he did not peaceably mingle. Spain gave this gigantic task to the conquistador, the presidial soldier and the missionary. All these three made important contributions, but we are chiefly concerned with the latter two in their collaboration as a pioneering agency.

From the very outset of the conquest, the policy of the Crown of Spain was characterized by deep, religious and

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1. The material for the chapter is borrowed to a great extent from H. E. Bolton, "The Missions as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish American Colonies," *American Historical Review*, (October 1917), 42-61.

humanitarian motives. In 1493 the papal seal of approval was placed on Spain's western claims with the understanding that the peoples conquered were to be converted and civilized. From that time on, all through the colonial period, the high ideals of the Spanish kings found expression in innumerable laws and decrees intended for the welfare of the Indian. It is true that these ideals failed to a large extent to materialize, but the guilt lies with the colonials, who were eager and able to ignore and violate the royal commands, doing so with impunity because of the great distance that separated Spain from her colonies and the slowness of communications.

It was the crown's consistent policy to convert, civilize and exploit the Indians, who were considered as having the potentialities of valuable subjects, and these potentialities had to be developed. The mission and the *encomienda* began this task together, but the former soon drew away from the latter. The *encomienda* could only exist where the Indians were already reduced to a sedentary existence, and it was therefore confined to the older more settled, regions of the Indies. The *encomendero* quickly forgot his duties, remembering only those of the Indians, and the institution degenerated into a black spot in Spain's colonial system, not erased until the *encomienda's* gradual extinction was completed in the early part of the eighteenth century.

But the mission, on the contrary, lived up to its ideals, and played a role of ever increasing importance. The missionaries "became a veritable corps of Indian agents, serving both the church and state," the close union of the two and the royal control of patronage making this double capacity more natural and easy.<sup>2</sup>

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the mission became a universal institution on the expanding frontiers of Spanish America. On all fronts, the missions mushroomed. In South America, the Jesuit "reductions" in Paraguay are the most famous. In North America, missions sprang

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2. Bolton, *The Mission*, 45.

up all along the northern and eastern frontier of New Spain, a result mainly of the efforts of the Jesuits, the Franciscans, and the Dominicans. The northeastern portion was the scene of the Franciscan activities. They worked in Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, Nuevo Santander, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida. The Jesuits, after withdrawing from Florida, concentrated in the Northwest; in Sinaloa, Sonora, Chihuahua, Baja California and Arizona. In 1767 the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish America, and their places were taken by the other orders, in Baja California by the Dominicans and in Alta California by the Franciscans.

The mission as a frontier institution was intended to be a temporary force. The missionary was the vanguard of a civilization; he was to convert and domesticate the savage; to draw the fangs of the wilderness; after this was done, he was to give place to the ordinary settler, and move on to new fields. In theory, after ten years of mission life the Indians were considered to have progressed sufficiently in the art of civilized living to permit division of the mission lands into individual holdings, and the introduction of secular parish priests, who would live among the Indians as they would among regular Spanish subjects.<sup>3</sup> This law was based on experience of the progress made among the more civilized tribes of Mexico, Central America and Perú.

Among the cruder tribes on the northern frontier of New Spain, the padres insisted that a much longer period of transition was needed to enable the Indians to lead a life of equality with the Spanish settlers. As a result of this conviction, there developed a long and bitter struggle between the missionaries and the forces of secularization. The aboriginal mission areas felt the encroachments of the squatter and landgrabber, just as the lands "set aside in perpetuity" for the Indian in the United States disappeared under the wave of the Western Movement. The missionary, whether he liked it or not, had to keep one jump ahead of the line of advancing settlement.

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3. Bolton, *The Mission*, 46.

The missionary came primarily as a religious agency. He was a harvester of souls, but, incidentally on his part and designedly on the part of the government, he became a school teacher, geographer, scientist and practical philanthropist. The missionary served both the church and the state by not only Christianizing the frontier but in extending, holding and civilizing it. The Indian, to become a worthy, practical Christian and a desirable subject, had to be schooled in the rudiments of civilized conduct. The missions thus served not only as seminaries, but as practical training schools in the art of European living.

The missions, being a powerful political and social agency of the state, were naturally supported by the state. The Franciscan missions in New Spain in the eighteenth century had four principal means of support.<sup>4</sup>

1. The annual stipend or salary paid by the government was called a *sínodo*, varied in amount according to the remoteness of the mission, reaching the high point of four hundred pesos for each missionary on the northernmost frontier. In 1758 the treasury of New Spain was supporting with *sínodos*, averaging three hundred fifty pesos, one hundred and twenty-three friars on the northern frontier.

2. Besides the *sínodos*, the government regularly supplied the missions with military protection, detaching from two to six soldiers from the nearest *presidio* to serve in each mission. In addition, the government usually made an initial grant, a sort of birthday gift called the *ayuda de costa*, of one thousand pesos to each new mission to pay for bells, vestments, tools, construction and other costs of founding.

3. In addition to financial aid from the *real hacienda*, some missions were supported by private donations. Old missions aided in the foundation of new ones. Padre Kino aided the struggling missions of his partner, Father Salvatierra in Baja California, with supplies from his flourishing

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4. Bolton, *The Mission*, 47-48.

missions in Pimería Alta, on one occasion sending across seven hundred head of cattle to the peninsula.<sup>5</sup> The famous Jesuit Pious Fund, which supported the missions of Baja California and later those of Alta California was formed of the gifts of devout Catholics, mostly laymen.<sup>6</sup>

4. The missions were expected to become self-supporting, and in many cases the Indians did acquire considerable wealth through stock raising and other agricultural pursuits. None of the wealth earned by the missions belonged to the missionaries, who continued to receive their salaries from the government or from private benefactors.

From what has been said it is evident that the government to a large degree financed the missions, but the amount of governmental aid, and the ease with which it was gained depended very much on the extent to which political ends and religious purposes could be combined. The royal purse strings were not easily loosened to found new missions, unless an important political advantage was to be gained along with the religious, for the impoverished government had to stretch every *real*. The missionaries were fully aware of the factors motivating royal aid, and, in their continual appeals, stressed the political advantages to be gained.

The establishment of the missions in Texas and Alta California came after years of agitation by the missionaries, and even then the royal hand was forced more by external political pressure—the desire to ensure the territorial integrity of Spain's dominions from foreign encroachments, the French in the first case, the Russians in the latter,—than by a desire to satisfy the religious aspirations of the padres.

As a significant commentary on the crown's association of the mission with frontier defense, it is interesting to note that the expenses of the missions and the presidios were

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5. Herbert E. Bolton, *The Spanish Borderlands; A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest* (New Haven 1921), 199.

6. Bolton, *Spanish Borderlands*, 202.



entered under the account of the War Fund (*Ramo de Guerra*) in the records of the real hacienda.<sup>7</sup>

The political importance of the missionaries manifested itself in several ways. The friars counteracted foreign influence among their neophytes, deterred them from molesting the interior settlements, and secured their aid in restraining the hostile tribes farther on. Father Kino trained his Pima wards to be effective fighters against the terrible Apache. His influence over the natives was considered more valuable as a protective force than a whole company of soldiers.<sup>8</sup>

The mission plants were built designedly as fortresses for the protection of the padres, the neophytes, and the nearby Spanish settlers. Some even boasted of a formidable array of artillery pieces, which the predatory nomads held in great dread.

The missionaries were utilized not only as political agents to hold a frontier district, but, on their own initiative and in coöperation with the secular authority, they were factors in promoting the settlement of the region. They stimulated the interest of the prospective settler by their reports, which described the natural wealth and potentialities of the region and the nature of its inhabitants. When official colonizing expeditions were projected, the missionaries were often called to Mexico to give their expert advice.

The greatest contribution of the missionaries lay not in the extending, holding and promoting of the frontier but in its civilization. Spain entertained high ideals, and found herself faced with serious practical difficulties. She laid claim to a lion's share of the western hemisphere, yet the mother country had no restless, excess population to pour into the American wilderness. Her colonial policy, perhaps equalled in humanitarian idealism by no other country, looked to the preservation of the Indians and their eventual elevation to the status of full fledged subjects. The fact

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7. Bolton, *The Mission*, 51.

8. Bolton, *The Mission*, 51.

that this idealism may have been partially motivated by the necessity of supplying a substitute for the lack of Spanish colonists should not detract from its reality.

This role of civilizer of the Indians fell also on the shoulders of the friars. The degree to which the frontier would be peopled with civilized natives, making up for the lack of Spanish colonists, depended upon the success in reducing and disciplining the aboriginals. The royal desire harmonized with the religious aims of the friars, who recognized that temporal discipline and a changed way of living were indispensable in the formation of thorough converts.

The essence of the mission was discipline; discipline in all the experiences of life, religious, moral, social and industrial. The very physical arrangement of the mission, built according to a carefully preconceived plan, was designed to further discipline. Wherever nomadic tribes were encountered it was necessary to "reduce" them to a sedentary existence in the mission pueblos. The task of the missionary was already partially accomplished when he encountered settled tribes like the Pimas of Arizona and the Pueblos of New Mexico, for he merely moved into the village, making it into a mission. Although there were many exceptions to the rule the missionaries lived in pairs, which made the enforcement of mission discipline easier.

The presidios served as a symbol of force, and to provide protection for the missionaries and the mission Indians from the enemy, whether aboriginal or European. Across the continent from Atlantic to Pacific stretched a long irregular line of presidios from San Agustín to San Francisco, "a line more than twice as long as the Danube frontier held by the Romans,"<sup>9</sup> from whom Spain borrowed this idea in border defense.

Each mission was usually provided with two or more soldiers, detached from the nearest presidio whose duty it was to help the missionaries in disciplining and instruct-

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9. Bolton, *The Mission*, 53.

ing the Indians. In the event that a neophyte found the regimented life distasteful, and struck out for the wilderness, it was the soldier's job to return the runaway. There is a widespread impression that the missionaries objected to the presence of the soldiers, whom they found demoralizing to the Indians. This is certainly true in the case of the Jesuits in Paraguay. They established their missions in complete isolation from the virus of the Spanish and Portuguese settlers, whether civilian or military, for these crude colonists emphasized many of the vices and few of the virtues of the higher civilization that the fathers were trying to bestow upon the Guarani.<sup>10</sup> However, with this and other exceptions, it is nearer the truth to say that the missionaries objected only to unsuitable, immoral soldiers, for the presidials were often drafted from among the mestizo-mulatto-jailbird class. In general, and this is specifically true of the Franciscans in New Mexico, the padres wanted military aid, and the complaint of its inadequacy was constantly heard from them.

That protection was needed for the missions was an indisputable fact. The list of martyred missionaries is eloquent testimony of that need. In the Pueblo revolt of New Mexico in 1680, twenty-one padres lost their lives.<sup>11</sup> But martyrdom was the exception, and the main concern of the soldier was to aid the missionaries in disciplining and civilizing the Indians.

Discipline and elements of European civilization were imparted at the missions through religious instruction, industrial training, and, among the more advanced natives, by means of elementary teaching in arts and letters. Religious instruction came first. Aside from the fundamental cultural concepts implied in Christianity, this religious training in itself contained a most important means of assimilation. In accordance with "*La Nueva Recopilación*", the missionaries were ordered to instruct the neophytes in

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10. Robert Southey, *History of Brazil* (London 1817), II, 240.

11. Bolton, *The Mission*, 53.

the native dialects. However, they often were characterized by an inadequate vocabulary, making them inserviceable for the needs of the missionaries. In addition to this, there was frequently a bewildering number of dialects prevalent in a comparatively small geographical area, which made it impossible for the padres to learn them all. For these reasons, on the northern frontier the padres to a large extent ignored the royal law and instruction was usually given in Spanish, at first by means of interpreters and later directly, when the Indians had mastered Spanish, the children being especially quick to learn it. Thus, religious training was an important step in cultural assimilation, for it brought about linguistic affinity between the teacher and the pupil.

The Jesuits of Paraguay could boast of the closest approach to their Indian wards. They mastered the Guaraní tongue making it the official language of that whole mission area, Spanish being of minor importance. While giving the Jesuits all the credit due them, it must be remembered that they were not confronted with a tangle of native dialects, for the Guaraní language was universal over a wide area, even among non-Guaraní Indians, which simplified their task considerably.<sup>12</sup>

In the daily routine of religious instruction the padre was aided by two Indians called *fiscales*, usually old men, who had the trying job of rounding up the children and unmarried Indians for the daily Mass and instruction. On Sundays the whole mission population attended services, combed, washed and neatly dressed. The *fiestas*, celebrating the days of importance in the ecclesiastical calendar, were marked with elaborate religious ceremonies indicating the Church's recognition of the value of sensuous appeal as an aid to religion. In addition, the day was filled with innocent entertainments, games and other forms of recreation.

The mission, besides being a Christian seminary, was also an industrial training school. The missionaries were not farmers, mechanics, or stock raisers, all of which was

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12. Southey, *Brazil*, II, 249.

foreign to their education, but they undertook these often disagreeable extra curricular activities because they realized the importance of altering the physical environment of the Indians to enable them to lead civilized, Christian lives. In spite of the fact that the missionaries came primarily as religious ministers they were often well fitted to instruct the Indians in the industrial arts, for, many of the lay brothers and fathers before joining such cosmopolitan orders as the Franciscans and Jesuits, had been experienced craftsmen, mechanics, musicians, and farmers.

The Californian and Paraguayan missions were large industrial communities. The size of the Paraguayan reductions averaged three thousand Indians, reaching in some cases to eight thousand inhabitants,<sup>13</sup> those of Alta California averaging about two thousand Indians. The Indians worked in the weaving rooms, blacksmith shop, tannery, wine press and warehouses, employing an intricate network of irrigation ditches for their vegetable gardens and grain fields, and herding thousands of horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs on the mission pastures. Training of this nature developed responsibility in the Indians, made them self supporting in a more advanced economy, and afforded the discipline required for the attainment of the rudiments of civilization.

In Baja and Alta California, Primería Alta and Paraguay the missionaries were in charge of both the temporal and spiritual welfare of the missions. In New Mexico the missionaries had no charge over temporalities, for the first padres found the natives already leading settled, agricultural lives, yet they offered instruction in arts and crafts, and introduced a great variety of European plants and animals.

Some statistics as to the temporal possessions of these missions should prove enlightening. The four Queréteran missions of Texas in 1745 were grazing 4,897 head of cattle, 12,000 sheep and goats and 1,600 horses. Even more stu-

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13. Southey, *Brazil*, II, 255.

pendous figures are given for the Franciscan missions of Alta California in 1834 where "on the eve of the destruction of the missions, 31,000 mission Indians herded 396,000 cattle, 62,000 horses, 321,000 hogs, sheep and goats, and harvested 123,000 bushels of grain . . ." <sup>14</sup>

The missions were provided by law with elementary and limited self government. Each pueblo had a body of civil and military officers modelled on Spanish municipal administration. The democratic reality and power of this government was more apparent than real, for the officers were merely figure heads. The missionary, with the nearby presidio, was the directing and restraining force behind the pueblo governments.

Thus, in many ways did the missions serve as Spain's frontier agency. The first concern of the missionaries was to spread the gospel, but, incidentally or designedly, they served in other capacities, holding, extending and promoting the frontiers, instructing the natives, giving them the veneer at least of European Civilization. While the English colonial policy permitted and fostered the extermination of the red man, the missions worked for his preservation, for his temporal and spiritual welfare. All this we must recognize whether or not we agree that the ideal of the missions meets present day standards, and in spite of their obvious failures and blemishes, something accompanying every human endeavor.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CUSTODIA OF SAINT PAUL

Turning from a generalized appreciation of the role and significance of the mission throughout Spain's far flung frontiers, we will now focus out attention on a relatively small, insignificant and neglected corner of that huge empire. The Spanish intrusion into New Mexico, if one will glance at an historical atlas for the middle eighteenth

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14. Bolton, *The Mission*, 59-60.

century, appears like a cautious, tentative, finger-push into the unknown; a solitary, narrow, colored band projecting naked and self-conscious into the wilderness. On the north, east and west there is nothing Spanish to keep it company; to the south its connection with Mexico is slender and fitful.

In 1540 the Spanish Crown sent an expedition into the vague North chasing illusive baubles—the “Seven Cities of Cíbola,” the *Gran Quivira* and other variations upon the *El Dorado* theme. There was also hope of finding the Straits of Anián, the long sought Northwest Passage to the Orient. But the elaborately equipped expedition of Coronado returned, having drunk to the dregs from the cup of disillusionment. Instead of rich cities, gold and silver bearing ores, a land flowing in milk and honey, the Spaniards found nothing but Indians living in small, prosaic, mud-stone villages and a rude, rocky, unproductive land where life was supported only in the narrow creek bottoms.

The crown, in spite of its disappointment, retained hold of this “lemon” chiefly for one reason—the missions. The Franciscans, who accompanied this and later expeditions—those of Rodríguez-Chamuscado and Oñate—found a fairly dense population of mild, sedentary, agricultural aborigines, living in villages, along the banks of the *Río del Norte* and its tributaries. The missions thrived, and the small Spanish population was really only incidental.<sup>1</sup>

The work of eighty years seemed destroyed when the missionaries and Spanish colonists were driven south to El Paso del Norte in 1680 by the united efforts of the revolted Pueblos. After an interregnum of a dozen years, the Spaniards and missionaries returned in the baggage train of the *reconquistador*, Don Diego de Vargas. After a few years most of the lost ground was regained, and by 1750 the missions with some exceptions were reestablished on their former basis.

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1. The Spaniards consistently referred to what is now called the Río Grande as the Río del Norte; effective and permanent occupation and evangelization of New Mexico did not begin until 1598 with the expedition of Juan de Oñate.

The missions of middle eighteenth century New Mexico were, speaking in terms of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, part of the *Custodia de San Pablo*, which in turn was a subdivision of the very much larger ecclesiastical province of *El Santo Evangelio* (The Holy Gospel).<sup>2</sup> This Custodia of San Pablo was itself divided into three parts.<sup>3</sup> The first was the interior region, which included the missions in the northernmost part of the Río del Norte valley, which may be called for convenience, the Santa Fé region. The second part was the El Paso region, almost four hundred miles directly south of Santa Fé. The last part of the Custodia consisted of those missions grouped about the lower reaches and the mouth of the Conchos river, which empties into the Río del Norte about two hundred and fifty miles south and east of El Paso. This third region was very appropriately known as La Junta de los Ríos.<sup>4</sup> Thus, we may think of this mission area as a tapeline Custodia, the majority of whose missions were arranged in three widely separated groups along the banks of a serpentine stream, there being a distance of about seven hundred miles between the northern and southern limits.

Before I enter into a further description of the Custodia in the middle eighteenth century, I want to make it clear that most of the attention will be given to the Santa Fé division. I have reasons for confining myself to this area to the relative exclusion of the other two. In the first place, my personal associations are all in the north; secondly, it would be impossible to give a full treatment to all three regions in a report of this nature; thirdly, it will be clear

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2. Charles W. Hackett, *Historical Documents relating to New Mexico, Nueva Viscaya and approaches thereto, to 1773* (Washington, 1937), III, 398.

3. Consult map next page.

4. My authorities for this and many future statements are photostatic copies of unpublished manuscripts, which are in the Archives of the Biblioteca Nacional of Mexico City. The copies were made by Mr. France V. Scholes of the Carnegie Institute of Washington and deposited by him in the Library of Congress. Through his kindness and that of Prof. C. H. Haring, my tutor, these documents were made available to me. In the future I shall refer to them as B.N., Leg. —, Doc —, Folio —; this particular footnote is B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 3.



upon further analysis that the missions of the Santa Fé region were more important, populous and numerous than those of the other two combined, which further justifies my emphasis on the northern part of the Custodia.

The padres of the Custodia every few years sent complete reports of mission conditions to their superiors in Mexico. These surveys included a great many items; census lists; the geographical distribution of the missions with the respective distances; descriptions of the mission life; of the relations with the secular authorities; with the raiding nomads; accounts of the successes and disappointments in missionary work, in fact every phase of the life in that narrow, fluvial kingdom, secular or religious, is vividly brought to light in these reports. Our information about the Custodia around the middle of the century is derived principally from three reports written within a decade. The first, chronologically speaking, was written by Padre Miguel de Menchero, at the time *procurador general* of the province of El Santo Evangelio, in 1744;<sup>5</sup> the second by Padre Andrés Varo written in 1749;<sup>6</sup> and the third by Padre Manuel de San Juan Nepomuceno y Trigo in 1754.<sup>7</sup> I rely mainly on that of Father Varo, recurring to the other two only when necessary.

The missions around Santa Fé were concentrated in an area extending in a north-south direction, corresponding to the immediate drainage of the Río del Norte, from Taos to Isleta. In an east-west direction the missions branched out at right angles from the river, Zuñi being the westernmost outpost and Pecos the easternmost.<sup>8</sup>

At Santa Fé resided the governor, the presidial garrison of eighty soldiers and about 900 Spanish settlers. The other concentrations of Spaniards were at Albuquerque<sup>9</sup> to the south and Santa Cruz de la Cañada to the north. These

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5. Hackett, *Historical Documents*, III, 395-412.

6. B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 2-20.

7. Hackett, *Historical Documents*, III, 459-468.

8. Consult Map.

9. The modern spelling of this city has dropped the first "r"—Albuquerque.



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settlements were not considered as missions, for the Indians living there were, for the most part *Indios sirvientes*, slaves belonging to the Spaniards. A slight sprinkling of Spanish *vecinos* was scattered up and down the valley on isolated *ranchos*, which were under the religious jurisdiction of the nearest mission. At Santa Fé there were two padres assisted by a lay brother; one padre at Cañada and two at Albuquerque.

Exclusive of these three Spanish villas the missions proper numbered twenty, there being one resident minister in each mission, with the exception of Galisteo, that was visited periodically by the minister of Pecos. The average number of Indians inhabiting each mission was about five hundred; Zuñi topped the list with two thousand, followed by Pecos with one thousand; the little mission Tesuque just north of Santa Fé was at the bottom with only one hundred and seventy-one Indians. Thus, twenty-five religious had in their hands the spiritual welfare of some twelve thousand mission Indians and four thousand Spanish distributed over a large area.<sup>10</sup>

The second group of missions in the Custodia, those of the El Paso region, lay about one hundred and forty leagues<sup>11</sup> south of Santa Fé on the Río del Norte. The journey between Santa Fé and El Paso was very perilous, for after leaving Isleta, the southernmost mission in the Santa Fé district, there intervened about one hundred leagues of uninhabited country, safely passable only with an escort of soldiers to ward off the marauding nomads. There were five missions, including Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Paso, which was really a Spanish villa, having a population of over one thousand whites, and a presidio of fifty soldiers, under the command of a captain. The other four missions were located below El Paso on the river, the most distant being Socorro, five leagues away. Five padres and a lay brother served this area. At the time Fray Andrés Varo

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10. Consult census table below.

11. About three miles to a league.

was minister at the mission of Senecú.<sup>12</sup> The Spaniards in this area, those living at El Paso and on ranchos within the jurisdictions of the missions, slightly outnumbered the reduced Indians of whom there were only about fifteen hundred.

The waters of the Conchos River joined with those of the Río del Norte about eighty leagues southeast of El Paso, where the mission San Francisco de la Junta was located. Of the five remaining missions three were located within four leagues of San Francisco, and the fourth and fifth were twenty-five leagues up the Conchos from the junction. Four padres administered these six missions having a total population of about twenty-three hundred Indians. There were no Spaniards in the vicinity, and Padre Varo stressed the crying need for a presidio to protect these weak missions from the incessant raids of the heathen Indians.<sup>13</sup>

#### CENSUS OF SPANISH VILLAS AND INDIAN MISSIONS OF THE CUSTODIA OF SAN PABLO IN 1749

According to Custodian Andrés Varo, based chiefly on a consolidation made in 1750 by Padre Rosas y Figueroa, Secretary of O.F.M. in Mexico.<sup>14</sup>

	Whites	Indians	Language Group	Resident Padres	
1. Santa Fé	965	570 (slaves)		Manuel Zambrano, Juan Lezaún, Martínez (lay brother)	3
2. Pecos		1,000	Pecos	Joseph Urquijo	1
3. Galisteo		350	Tanos	Juan de Lavora	1
4. Tesuque		171	Tewa	Antonio Zamora	1
5. Nambé	100	350	Tewa	Juan de Ercisa	1
6. San Ildefonso	68	354	Tewa	Antonio Gabaldón	1
7. Santa Cruz	1,205	580 (slaves)	Tewa	Manuel Zopeña	1
8. Santa Clara	21	272	Tewa	Juan Mirabel (custodian)	1
9. San Juan	300	500	Tewa		

12. Varo Report 1749, Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio IIV—12v; Padre Varo said that the mission of El Paso was founded in 1680 after the Spaniards had been driven out of the north by the revolted pueblos. Shortly after this date the other missions in the vicinity were founded. (Actually, however, their founding began in 1659.—Ed.)

13. Varo Report, 1749, Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 13-14; see accompanying table.

14. B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 81, Folio 1; with the exception of Pecos and Galisteo, which are completely deserted, these pueblo-missions survive today very little changed by the passage of two centuries. Only a handful of the once numerous inhabitants of Pecos survive, living at Jémez.

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10. Pecuries	90	400	Pecuries	Fernando de Estrada	1
11. Taos	125	540	Tewa*	Juan Oronzoro	1
12. Cochití	35	521	Queres	Agustín de Yniesta	1
13. Santo Domingo		300	Queres	Juan del Pino	1
14. San Felipe	70	400	Queres	Angel García	1
15. Santa Ana	100	600	Queres	Miguel Calluela	1
16. Zía	100	600	Queres	Pedro Montaña	1
17. Jémez		574	Jémez	Juan Toledo	1
18. Laguna		528	Queres	Juan Padilla	1
19. Ácoma		960	Queres	Ignacio Pino	1
20. Zuñi		2,000		Juan Hernández	1
21. Sandía		400	Moqui-Tewa*	Juan Fernández	1
22. Alburquerque	900	200 (slaves)		Joseph Irigoyen, Andrés Zaballos	2
23. Isleta	100	500	Tewa*	Carlos Delgado	1
	4,170	12,670			25

### EL PASO REGION

<i>Missions</i>	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Indians</i>	<i>Language Group</i>	<i>Resident Padres</i>	
1. El Paso	1,090	200	Tewa-Piro*	Joseph Blanco Francisco Guzmán	
2. San Lorenzo	150	150	Zuma	Gregorio Escureta	3
3. Senecú	102	384	Piro	(lay brother) Andrés Varo	1
4. Isleta	54	500	Tewa*	Mariano López	1
5. Socorro	250	250		Joseph Tello	1
	1,646	1,484			6

### JUNTA DE LOS RIOS

1. San Francisco	182			Lorenzo de Saavedra	1
2. Guadalupe	221				
3. San Juan	433			Francisco Gonzáles	1
4. San Cristóbal	500				
5. San Pedro	810	Cholomes		Pedro Esquier	1
6. Santiago	200	Zuma- Cholomes		Joseph Paez	1
	2,346				4

### GRAND TOTAL FOR CUSTODIA

Indians -----	17,176
Spaniards and Mestizos -----	5,825
	23,001

\*Some inaccuracy appears in the "Language Group" column for Padre Varo made the common error of using interchangeably—as one and the same thing—the designations "tewa" and "tigua." For instance Sandia was settled by Moqui-Tiguas and not by Moqui-tewas.

In the previous chapter I attempted to portray the workings of the missions in general outline, everywhere on Spain's colonial frontiers. However true that portrayal may be, the general rules were naturally modified in special locations. It is important to remember that the New Mexico missions were, in one respect, radically different from those of California or of Paraguay. The padres of New Mexico managed no mission estates. They were almost parish priests with the exception that they were paid by the crown and directed by their provincial, instead of being under episcopal control and supported by parish fees.<sup>15</sup> At each pueblo the padre had a church where he preached, taught, said Mass and administered the sacraments. The padre's influence and power were confined to religious matters, the temporal supervision of the pueblos being in the hands of subordinates appointed by the governor called *alcaldes mayores*. Each of these secular officials had political supervision over an *alcaldía*, which contained one or several pueblos. These *alcaldes mayores* were expected to inspect the missions, administer local justice, and cooperate with the padres in the mission work.

The missionaries had several sources of support. In the first place, those Spaniards (*Gente de Razón*) in the villas and on ranches within the jurisdiction of a mission paid regular obventions or fees for marriages, baptisms, burials, and masses. These fees were paid in kind, for money was very scarce in the Kingdom.<sup>16</sup> The relation therefore of the Spaniards in New Mexico to the padres was that of parishioners to parish priests of the secular type prevalent in the more urban regions of New Spain.

In the second place, the missionaries received support in the way of food and service from the mission Indians. It was the custom for the Indians to set aside a field for the support of the minister, where they planted enough wheat,

15. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico, 1530-1888* (San Francisco, 1889), 270; Bolton, *The Mission*, 58.

16. Varo Report, 1749, B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 4v.

corn and beans to supply his needs. The padre often used the yield from this planting to support destitute Indians in his mission, or, in special cases, to aid a neighboring missionary. The Indians did not pay obventions, and were glad to sow this plot for their minister.<sup>17</sup> From all reports it seems that the missionaries were well supplied with household servants. In weekly shifts these *semaneros* worked about the church and cloister, assisting in the religious services, preparing food and keeping house for the minister. In Father Trigo's report of 1754 he devoted most of his time to a description of how well or badly the missionary in each pueblo was faring in a worldly way, and said little about, what should have been of prime concern, the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Indians. His description of Nambé mission, six leagues north of Santa Fé, is a typical illustration of the temporal support gained by the padre from his charges.

... On its spacious fields the Indians sow for the father, their poor minister, since they pay no obventions at all, three fanegas of wheat and one almud of corn. By means of these crops the father passes his year in reasonable comfort. They give the minister one boy for the cell, a porter, a bell ringer, two sacristans, three women servants and three men servants each week with wood enough for the ovens.<sup>18</sup>

The women servants were mainly employed in grinding the hard corn kernels and the wheat into flour, for the *tortillas* and bread, bending over their stone *metates* as their great-great-granddaughters do today. It is interesting to note that, in order to conform strictly with social conventions, and prevent any scandal, the women servants were accompanied by their husbands.

Not in all the missions did the padres enjoy such docility and willing service from their charges. The mission

17. Varo Report, 1749, B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 4v.

18. Hackett, *Historical Documents*, III, 466.

1.58 bushels=1 fanega; an almud is a unit of dry measure varying from 1/12 to 1/2 a fanega.

of Zuñi was the most remote and troublesome. Separated from Santa Fé by seventy leagues of desert and sandstone, forty leagues from Ácoma, its nearest neighbor, the Zuñi Indians, influenced by the apostate Moqui (Hopi) tribes to the west were "certainly very independent." They exhibited their independence by refusing to sow the padre's *milpa*. Their only crop being maize, they, from time to time, from their own stocks, gave the padre a sack filled with ears of corn with which the women made tortillas. However, the minister at Zuñi enjoyed the luxury, not within reach of all the missionaries, of having fresh meat, for the Zuñis raised many sheep and goats.<sup>19</sup>

The third means of support of the missionaries and the principal one was the annual, royal sínodos without which the missionaries could not have survived on account of "the extreme poverty and misery of the land."<sup>20</sup> The annual salary of each minister of the Custodia amounted to three hundred and thirty pesos. The lay brother (lego escolero) who served as an infirmarian at Santa Fé, received one hundred pesos less. These sínodos were paid in supplies of all kinds that were sent from Mexico including chocolate, sugar, spices, vestments, tools, wax, wine, oil, ornaments, and notions such as rosaries and medals.<sup>21</sup> Although I have been unable to find any positive statements concerning a mission supply train in this period, such as the one that came triennially during most of the seventeenth century, it must have been in operation, for these shipments of goods arrived with regularity.<sup>22</sup>

The Crown in 1749 therefore was supporting thirty-seven ministers in the Custodia of San Pablo including the procurador, the lay brother and four missionaries who were

19. Hackett, *Historical Documents*, III, 462-463, Trigo Report, 1754.

20. Varo Report, 1749, Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 4v.

21. Varo Report, 1749, B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 6.

22. Mr. France V. Scholes has made a careful study of the Mission supply train in seventeenth century New Mexico. His "The Supply Service of New Mexico Missions in the Seventeenth Century," appearing in three parts, in the January, April, and October, 1930, issues of the *New Mexico Historical Review*, covers the subject very fully.



destined for the projected missions in the province of Navajo. This number was always constant except when decreased temporarily by deaths, by leaves of absence to go to the provincial headquarters of Santa Bárbara in Mexico for medical care or for absence on official business of the Custodia.<sup>23</sup> These hard-working men (in addition to three more lay brothers, unpaid by the crown, bringing the total to forty) had the difficult task of satisfying the spiritual needs of seventeen thousand Indians and five thousand Spaniards who were scattered in uneven groups along seven hundred miles of river.

Unlike the missions of Baja and Alta California the missions of the Custodia of San Pablo received no support from private alms like the famous Pious Fund.

The hardships endured by the padres in the New Mexico missions were certainly more severe than in many other mission areas. It was the usual policy elsewhere, to station the padres in pairs, aided by several soldiers detached from the nearest presidio. The scarcity of both missionaries and soldiers in New Mexico made this impossible. According to Varo's census in 1749 only at Santa Fé, Albuquerque and El Paso did the missionaries enjoy the association of another missionary.<sup>24</sup> That these men were fitted by calling, training, and temperament for work of this kind is true, but, in isolated missions like those of Taos, Pecos, Ácoma and Zuñi, the unutterable solitude must have been trying even to the most zealous. The lone padre had no companion of kindred outlook and intellectual status; no one to comfort him in his discouragements and encourage him in his work. Padre Varo was convinced of the need of more missionaries in the Custodia, especially in the missions that lay far removed from others. In the northern part of the Custodia especially in such mountain-valley missions as Pecuries and Nambé, the heavy snows isolated the missions for months, the padre being unable to get out until spring. In case

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23. Varo Report, Jan., 1749, B.N., Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 6.

24. See the census table above.

of sickness or death the minister of such a mission had no one to administer him the sacraments. A more important reason for the increase of missionaries was the work of conversion to be done among the heathen Indians bordering the Custodia—the work of extending and civilizing the frontier, a never ending push *más allá*.<sup>25</sup>

The presidio at Santa Fé mustered only eighty men. This handful had to protect the entire northern part of the kingdom, for the presidio at El Paso had its hands full in its own locality. The whole of New Mexico at this time was suffering from the continual and terrible raids of the Comanches, Apaches, Utes (Yutas) and other predatory nomads. The little garrison had to be kept together in order to be ready for immediate action, making Santa Fé the base for lightning thrusts against the enemy. For this reason the presidials were not distributed among the widely scattered missions.

The unique thing to remember about the Spanish occupation of New Mexico is that the missions were the principal factors that prompted the Crown to retain hold of this region. Economically, the province was a white elephant, and there was no encroaching foreigner, as in Texas and California, to make its retention a political necessity. The importance of New Mexico lay in its missions; in the royal and ecclesiastical aspirations for the conversion of the Indian. It is for this reason that the brown-robed Franciscan exercised a great deal of influence in this remote, river province. He shared his monopoly with no rival religious order; he resented and combated every violation of his jurisdiction by secular authorities.

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25. Varo Report, Jan. 1749, B.N.. Leg. 8, Doc. 57, Folio 15v.

(To be continued)