

# Jesuit Missions in Spanish America: The Aftermath of the Expulsion

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## **ABSTRACT**

When the Jesuits were expelled from Spanish America in 1767 they were administering over 250,000 Indians in over 200 missions. The fate of the missions varied. Some were secularized, others were encharged to other religious orders, while others collapsed. Missions continued to be supported by the Crown where they were the most economic means of defending the frontier against foreign encroachment.

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the colonial period Jesuit missions acted as primary institutions of colonization. They were employed by the Spanish Crown to undertake the preliminary Christianization and "civilization" of native peoples, thus paving the way for Spanish settlement and thereby extending and safeguarding its dominion. However, between 1759 and 1768 the Jesuits were expelled from the main European Catholic countries and their respective colonies, and in 1773 Pope Clement XIV promulgated the official suppression of the Society of Jesus. These moves were the culmination of anti-Jesuit propaganda that had been fueled by Enlightenment ideas and growing religious nationalism; the allegiance of the Jesuits to the Pope and their material wealth and autonomy, most visibly demonstrated in the Paraguayan missions, were seen as a threat to state power (Lynch 1989: 280-84; Marner 1966: 17-24). On 27th February 1767 Charles III ordered the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Spain and her dominions (Hernández 1908: 335-37); Jesuit buildings were to be searched and their property and assets placed under the administration of *juntas de temporalidades*. As for the Jesuit missions, their temporal and spiritual administration was to be clearly separated. The former was to be entrusted to civil administrators of proved integrity; their spiritual welfare, which would henceforth be under the direct control of bishops, was to be handed over to secular priests or friars from other religious orders (Aranda 1908: 351-55).

The fate of Jesuit missions in Spanish America after the expulsion varied. Some were secularized, others were entrusted to other missionary orders, while others collapsed. Numerous studies exist of the process of Jesuit expulsion for individual areas, but no overview exists of the varied fates of the missions. This paper is a preliminary attempt to fill this gap. It will analyze the pattern of post-Jesuit administration, examining the implications of the form of control for the future of mission communities. Since the aftermath of expulsion was [end p. 133] strongly influenced by the history, context, and problems faced by Jesuits in different areas, the study will review briefly the background to missionary endeavor in areas where they were staffing missions on the eve of expulsion.

## **JESUIT MISSION FIELDS ON THE EVE OF EXPULSION**

The "spiritual conquest" of the densely settled regions of central and southern Mexico, Central America and the Andes was largely the work of Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and Mercedarians. The Society of Jesus was not formally established until 1540 and did not begin work in Peru and Mexico until 1568 and 1572 respectively. This new, vigorous and highly disciplined order was particularly concerned with the conversion of native peoples. Because of their willingness to work in remote areas, their organizational ability, and their connections with persons of high office, despite their late arrival they were able to carve out missionary fields that exceeded those of other religious orders. The Jesuits sought to establish missions in remote areas where they would be free from interference by civil administrators, *encomenderos* and other settlers (Barnadas 1984: 533-34). There they aimed not only to convert Indians through aggressive preaching, often conducted in the native language, but at enhancing the economic and social viability of mission communities as independent entities. Ultimately, however, their isolationist policies ran counter to those of the civil authorities and secular church who viewed the missionary orders' role as one of preparing native peoples for integration

into colonial society.

### ***Viceroyalty of New Spain***

The Jesuits arrived in Mexico in 1572, but it was not until the 1590s that they began working in Sinaloa and Nueva Vizcaya. During the early seventeenth century their efforts extended northward through Tarahumara country and Sonora, and between 1697-1767 they founded a chain of missions in Baja California (Bolton 1935-36: 262, 265-77; Merrill 1993: 131-35). They had also begun work in Nayarit in 1716. In so doing the Jesuits had effectively pushed the frontier northwards allowing silver mining and livestock economies to develop in their wake. By 1767 many Jesuit missions had already been secularized and incorporated into the bishopric of Durango. At that time the Jesuits were still working in the northern Sierra Madre Occidental, the northern Pacific coast, and Baja California, where they possessed over 100 missions and administered a minimum of 90,000 Indians (Table 1).

With few exceptions, Indian societies in this border region were semi-sedentary. The relatively larger communities on the mainland coast and foothills of the Sierra Madre Occidental were more easily brought under Jesuit administration. Elsewhere hostile groups often resisted missionization and native revolts, often stimulated by epidemics (Reff 1991: 271-74) or encouraged by white settlers who sought access to mission labor, resulted in frequent shifts in missionary activity. In Baja California conflict with settlers was mitigated by the absence of mineral wealth, but here the barren soil and shortage of water meant that few missions were self-sufficient and as such had to depend on irregular supplies from the mainland. Even though the legend of California's insularity was dispelled in 1746, it was not until the post-Jesuit period, when the "pacification" of the north-west corridor was finally achieved, that transportation by land from New Spain finally became feasible.

A special feature of the Californian missions was their financing. Early attempts to colonize the region had been costly and fruitless such that the Crown was unwilling to commit further resources. Hence the Jesuits were permitted to work in the Peninsula on the condition that they financed the venture themselves (Dunne 1952: 354). They therefore established the Pious Fund (1697), which not only financed the enterprise through donations, but gave them a degree of autonomy not enjoyed by Jesuits elsewhere (Bolton 1935: 275).

### ***Viceroyalty of New Granada***

COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA: The Jesuits founded their first college in present-day Colombia in 1598. Early attempts to establish missions in the eastern lowlands were thwarted by opposition from the secular clergy and Spanish settlers such that it was not until 1662 that missionary work began in earnest. At that time five missionary orders (Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, and a branch of the last order known as Recoletos) were assigned territories in the eastern lowlands (Rausch 1984:48-68). **[end p. 134]**

TABLE 1. JESUIT MISSIONS IN SPANISH AMERICA

Mission Field	Date of First Mission	Number of Centers (Settlements) in 1767	Number of Indians	Control of Spiritual Affairs after 1767
NEW SPAIN				
Sinaloa	1591	21 (50)	30,000 <sup>1</sup>	secularized
Sonora	1614	29 (60)	15,000 <sup>2</sup>	2 secularized, 27 Franciscans
Chínipas	1621	12	25,000 <sup>3</sup>	} 1 secularized, 11 Franciscans
Tarahumara	1607/1673	19 (60)		
Baja California	1697	14	c.7-8,000 <sup>4</sup>	1768-1773 Franciscans, from 1773 Dominicans
Nayarit	1721	7	c.2,800 <sup>5</sup>	Franciscans
<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>102</i>	<i>c. 80,800</i>	
NEW GRANADA				
Casanare	1661	7	5,420 <sup>6</sup>	5 Dominicans, 2 Franciscans
Meta	1723	4	2,200 <sup>6</sup>	1 Franciscans, 3 Augustinian Recoletos
Upper Orinoco	1684/1732	6	2,320 <sup>6</sup>	Franciscans
Mainas	1638	25 (37) <sup>7</sup>	14,000 <sup>8</sup>	secularized to 1770, Franciscans to 1774, secularized to 1790, Franciscans from 1790
<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>42</i>	<i>23,940</i>	
PERU				
Llanos de Mojos	1668	15	18,535 <sup>9</sup>	secularized
Chiquitos	1690	10	19,981 <sup>10</sup>	secularized
Chaco	1638/1732	15	20,100 <sup>11</sup>	7 secularized, 5 Franciscans, 3 unknown
Paraguay	1609	30	88,864 <sup>12</sup>	10 Franciscans, 10 Mercedarians, 10 Dominicans
Taruma	1746	2	4,317 <sup>13</sup>	collapsed
Chile (Valdivia)	1595	2 (85)	?	Franciscans
Chile (Chiloé)	1617	4 (77)	10,478 <sup>14</sup>	Franciscans
<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>78</i>	<i>162,275+</i>	
<i>GRAND TOTAL</i>		<i>c.222</i>	<i>c.267,015</i>	

<sup>1</sup> Missions 1967: 949; Reff (1991): 211-13, 216-18 provides figures for the missions for 1759 which sum to 35,553, but notes that many were working outside the missions.

<sup>2</sup> Gerhard (1982): 285 estimates 17,370 Indians in Sonora in 1765, but not all would have been under Jesuit administration. Reff (1991): 219-20, 226 includes figures for 1764 which sum to 14,435.

<sup>3</sup> Revilla Gigedo (1966): 43-46.

<sup>4</sup> Revilla Gigedo (1966): 22 gives 8,000 at the time of expulsion; Missions (1967): 950 gives nearly 8,000 in 1768; Gerhard (1982): 294 estimates that there were 14,060 Indians in the whole Peninsula; Engelhardt (1929): 342 gives 6,585 for 13 missions.

<sup>5</sup> Revilla Gigedo (1966): 17; Gerhard (1982): 113.

<sup>6</sup> Alvarado (1893): 125-127.

<sup>7</sup> Velasco (1979) 3: 457-59.

<sup>8</sup> See text.

<sup>9</sup> René-Moreno (1888): 17, 133.

<sup>10</sup> René-Moreno (1888): 311. Metraux (1948) notes a 1766 census which recorded 23,788 Indians and an account by the Intendant of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Francisco de Viedma, in 1788 suggested there were about 22,000 Indians (Larson 1988: 248).

<sup>11</sup> Missions (1967): 954.

<sup>12</sup> González (1942): 290.

<sup>13</sup> Dobrzhoffer (1822): 52-56.

<sup>14</sup> Enrich (1891): 284-85, 433.

[end p. 135]

The Jesuits began work in the Llanos de Casanare, but they hoped to found missions along the Meta River and extend their activities to Guayana in order to control traffic on the Orinoco and open up trade with Europe. Attempts to expand into Guayana were thwarted by hostile Indians, but after 1715 they established missions on the Meta River and in the Middle Orinoco. Expansion further east was prevented by an agreement in 1734 which limited their activities to the west of the Cuchivero River. Even though the Jesuits received official military support as well as some financial backing, their missionary work in this region was financed largely from the profits from their sugar estates and livestock raising enterprises.

Jesuit work in this region faced opposition from settlers, and was threatened by the hostility of the Carib and Guahibo, sometimes abetted by the Dutch. The Indians also failed to adapt to a sedentary life and the relatively late foundation of many missions meant that at the time of the expulsion they had not been consolidated. The Jesuits left seven missions in the Llanos de Casanare with over 5,420 inhabitants, four on the banks of the Meta River with 2,200, and six in the Upper Orinoco with 2,320 (Alvarado 1893: 125-27; Navarro 1960b: 711-12; Pacheco 1968: 353-54; Rausch 1984: 63).



AMAZON HEADWATERS: Jesuits arrived in Lima in 1568 and Quito in 1586, but they did not establish missions in the Amazonian headwaters until 1638. Initial efforts focussed on the Upper Marañón and its main tributaries, but in the eighteenth century they extended their jurisdiction into the Napo and Lower Marañón (Grohs 1974: 124). At the time of their expulsion the Jesuits possessed twenty-five mission centers from which they administered fifteen settlements in the Upper Marañón, twelve in the Lower Marañón and ten in the Napo (Velasco 1979: 457-59). By 1769 four missions had already been secularized and the remaining twenty-one contained 9,163 Indians (Mariano de Echeverría and Aguilar y Saldana 1911: 371-72). Slightly earlier accounts give higher estimates of about 14,000 (Astrain 1925: 432; Chantre y Herrera 1901: 582-83; Jouanen 1941 2: 537; Porras 1987: 51).

Communications in this region, being largely by river, were perhaps the most difficult of all the areas in which the Jesuits worked (Astrain 1925: 405). Shortages of missionaries and the diversity of native languages spoken were additional obstacles to missionary work, while mission stability was undermined by epidemics and the failure of the Indians to adapt easily to a sedentary life (González Suárez 1970: 137-47; Vargas Ugarte 19603: 289). Finally these missions effectively held the frontier against the Portuguese advance upriver and were constantly subject to slave raids from Pará, which were sometimes aided and abetted by Carmelite missionaries who disputed Jesuit jurisdiction along the Marañón as far as the Napo River (Astrain 1925: 423; González Suárez 1970: 165). [end p. 136]

### *Viceroyalty of Peru* **LLANOS DE MOJOS**

Between 1539 and 1631 numerous expeditions in search of a land of "fabulous wealth" were conducted through the extensive rainforest at the foot of the Andes to the Llanos de Mojos. However Jesuit work did not begin among the chiefdoms of this region until 1668 and during the following century over twenty missions were founded, the first in 1682 (Barnadas 1984b: 146-149; Block 1994: 35-54; Denevan 1966: 28-33). Some settlements were abandoned because of revolts, epidemics, or poor locations, but in 1767 fifteen missions remained housing 18,535 Indians (René-Moreno 1888: 17,133). According to a later account by the Governor of Mojos, Lázaro de Ribera, it would appear that just prior to the expulsion there had been 30,000 under Jesuit administration, but as early as 1788 their numbers had fallen rapidly to 20,000 (Denevan 1966: 33; Parejas Moreno 1976: 953). Since the region was remote from any Spanish secular activity, the Jesuits were able to develop the missions as close to the ideal-type they envisaged. Although the Mojos missions never equalled the prosperity of those in Paraguay, economically they were moderately successful producing cotton textiles, cacao, and tallow. They were of added significance because of their strategic location. As with the Guaraní missions, they acted as a barrier to Portuguese advance west, in this case through the Mato Grosso and up the River Madeira. Indeed they played an active role in the frontier dispute with Brazil that in 1771 resulted in the boundary being drawn at the Guaporé River (Denevan 1966: 32-33).

### **CHIQUITOS**

The Chiquito Indian group, who belonged to the Guaraní family, extended from the eastern foothills of the Andes to the frontiers of present-day Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. Jesuit work in this region began in 1690 with the establishment of a college at Tarija, north of Jujuy. The Chiquito were semi-nomadic, cultivating manioc and maize, but being seasonally dependent on hunting and fishing. As with the Guaraní, the need for protection against Brazilian enslavers encouraged them to move into the missions. However, the Chiquito missions failed to thrive like their Paraguayan counterparts: the shortage of pasture, for instance, made livestock raising impossible on the same scale as the southern missions (Caraman 1976: 175). One of the most important industries to develop was the production of wax, which bartered in Potosí and from there distributed throughout Peru financed the purchase of iron for tools that were essential to retain the Indians in the missions. In 1767 the ten Jesuit missions contained about 20,000 Chiquito (René-Moreno 1888: 311; Metraux 1948: 384; Larson 1988: 248).

### **THE CHACO.**

The Chaco was inhabited by a large number of tribes, such as the Toba, Mocabíe, Chiriguano, Abipón, Vilela, Lule. Perhaps the most notable were the warlike Chiriguano against whom the Inka fortified their eastern borders (Caraman 1976: 189; Larson 1988: 249). During the seventeenth century Jesuits, Franciscans, Augustinians, and Dominicans all made intermittent attempts to convert these Indians, but in 1727 a major revolt resulted in the destruction of all the Chiriguano missions (Metraux 1948: 467-48). In 1732 Jesuits from the College of Santa Fé began to establish missions in the southern part of the Chaco and within thirty years had established two strings of missions along its eastern and western boundaries, effectively protecting the Spanish towns they flanked from hostile attack. The stability of the Chaco

missions depended on the ability of the Jesuits to maintain a constant supply of tools and gifts, without which the Indians would resort to raiding. Even so the secular authorities provided little financial support for the purchase of such goods (Caraman 1976: 197-98). Despite official indifference and Indian hostility, which made the Chaco a difficult region for missionary work, in 1767 the Jesuits left fifteen mission stations which, although poor in terms of material prosperity (Hernández 1908: 133; Caraman 1976: 196), housed 20,100 Indians (Missions 1967: 954).

### **PARAGUAY**

Although Jesuits belonging to the province of Paraguay penetrated as far as the Pampas and Patagonia, in 1767 they were only staffing missions among the Guaraní and in the aforementioned Chaco. The Jesuits arrived in Asunción in 1585, but they did not found their first stable reductions until 1609. At the time of their expulsion, they were administering 88,864 souls in thirty missions (Furlong 1962: 630; Gonzalez 1942: 290). They were located in four contiguous geographical areas limited by the basins of the Alto Paraná and Uruguay rivers. Eight were situated in [end p. 137] present-day Paraguay, fourteen in Argentina and seven in Brazil.

In managing the Guaraní reductions, the Jesuits sustained a long struggle on three fronts: against the expansionist designs of the Portuguese, the enslaving raids of the *bandeirantes*, and the labor demands of settlers. The importance of the Guaraní missions was heightened by their location on the border between Spanish and Portuguese territories. Due to a limited Spanish presence in the area and the Crown's lack of financial resources to strengthen its military position, it depended on the Jesuit missions to defend the frontier. Whereas border missions were often supported by military garrisons, the residents of the Guaraní reductions in themselves constituted a military contingent at the disposal of the Spanish state. According to Armani between 1644 and 1766 the Guaraní were employed in up to seventy Spanish military operations (Armani 1987: 113). In return for their military duties from 1649 they were exempted from forced labor and their tribute payments reduced (Mörner 1953: 120). These privileges fostered the image of the Guaraní missions as an enclosed world ---as "a state within a state" --and they were continually opposed by Spanish settlers who sought access to Indian labor. The wealth acquired by the Jesuits through the efficient running of their enterprises, associated in this area with the production of *yerba mate*, cattle raising and textile manufacture, further inspired resentment.

Conflict with the Portuguese also threatened the reductions. Paulista raids were particularly severe during the 1630s when maybe 60,000 neophytes were captured and sold in Brazilian markets, forcing the Jesuits to move the missions further west (Furlong 1962: 120). Later under the Tratado de Limites in 1750, Portugal ceded to Spain the colony of Sacramento in exchange for Spanish territory between the Uruguay and Ubicui rivers (today's Río Grande do Sul), where seven of the reductions were located. These missions were to be transferred to Spanish territory, but the Indians rebelled and had to be subjugated by force of arms. In 1761 Charles III revoked the Treaty and the seven missions were restored, but the war had cost 16,000 Indian lives (Caraman 1976: 235-53; Furlong 1962: 646-74).

The Jesuits also worked among the Tobatine, a branch of the Guaraní, in Taruma in central Paraguay. In 1746, after many failures, a mission was established at San Joaquín, and another was founded at San Estanislao in 1751. Their late foundation and the natives' failure to adapt to a sedentary life, meant that at the time of expulsion they contained only 2,017 and 2,300 Indians respectively (Caraman 1976: 257; Dobrizhoffer 1822: 52-56).

### **CHILE**

Jesuit work in Chile was shaped by wars with the Araucanians and opposition from Spanish settlers. The state of perpetual war with the Indians necessitated a permanent frontier army in which soldiers supplemented their low incomes by slave-raiding. Due to the Indians' refusal to submit to Spanish authority this practice received official sanction, and it was supported by Spanish settlers desirous of Indian labor. Even though Jesuit opposition to slavery ran counter to the vested interests of the soldiers, encomenderos and *estancieros*, it was abolished in 1674. The enslaving raids and Araucanian resistance constituted a difficult environment in which to undertake missionary activity (Valdés Bunster 1985: 37-42). The worst uprisings occurred in 1598, 1655 and 1723 when many missions were destroyed. However, in the archipelago of Chiloé the Jesuits undertook continuous missionary work for more than 160 years. Here they put into practice a system of "circular" or "flying" missions where, from a small number of mission centers, the Jesuits administered the sacraments periodically to scattered populations (Enrich 1891: 262-64; Hanisch Espindola 1974: 65-67). At the time of the expulsion the Jesuits were operating from four mission centers administering 10,478 Indians in 77 mission stations (Enrich 1891: 284-85). Meanwhile, in Arauco Jesuit activity appears to have ceased with a major uprising in 1766 (Hanisch Espindola 1974: 64), but previously they had administered 91 mission stations from 17

centers (Missions 1967: 954). In Valdivia the Jesuits also possessed two mission fields composed of 85 mission stations (Aranguiz 1967: 328).

### **THE FATE OF THE MISSIONS**

Royal instructions stipulated that the temporal and spiritual administration of Jesuit missions was to be clearly separated. The former was to be entrusted to civil administrators, while bishops were called upon to provide replacement clergy, either secular priests or members of other religious orders [end p. 138] (Aranda 1908: 351-55). It was intended that missions established in Spanish America would be transitional institutions entrusted with the preliminary conversion and "civilization" of Indians in frontier regions. In theory they were to last only ten years, after which they were to be handed over to the secular clergy and the Indians made liable for tribute payment and labor service. Secularization was the Crown's ultimate objective and it signified that the process of conversion and "civilization" was reasonably complete. Secularization was advocated by bishops who wished to extend their authority and enhance diocesan income, and it was supported by employers who sought access to mission labor. A major obstacle to secularization was the absolute shortage of secular priests as well as their reluctance to undertake unattractive and less remunerative work in frontier regions. Another impediment was that in some areas mission Indians were considered insufficiently prepared for an independent existence. For these reasons, the majority of missions were taken over by other religious orders.

The fate of the Jesuit missions after the expulsion will be considered under four headings: secularized missions, missions that were taken over by other religious orders, missions that collapsed, and those that may be considered "special cases." Nevertheless, these divisions are not clear-cut. For example, in some areas the shortage of secular clergy meant that missions that were meant to be secularized were entrusted to other religious orders and in others the shortcomings of one group of clergy led to its replacement by another. The section "secularized missions" includes only those missions that were actually transformed into curatos or beneficios. In the long-term most missions declined, but the section devoted to "missions that collapsed" considers only those missions whose demise occurred within several decades following expulsion regardless of whether they were abandoned or entrusted initially to secular or regular clergy (Table 1).

#### ***Secularized Missions***

Secularization was most rapid in New Spain, above all in Sinaloa and southern Sonora. At the time of the expulsion these regions represented the northern limit of secularization. Their mineral wealth had attracted large numbers of settlers who pressed for secularization with a view to exploiting Indian labor and acquiring mission lands. Typical mining centers had developed and the region had lost many of its frontier characteristics. Conditions were therefore ripe for secularization. Indeed the process had already begun in 1755 when over twenty missions were placed under the authority of the bishop of Durango (Chapman 1925: 204). Following the expulsion all Jesuit settlements in Sinaloa were put in the hands of secular clergy. However, only a few became beneficios, many being retained as missions but staffed by secular priests (Gerhard 1982: 23). In Sonora, of the twenty-nine Jesuit missions only two, San Francisco Javier Batuco and San Miguel Oposura, became doctrinas staffed by secular priests; the rest were taken over by Franciscans (Gerhard 1982: 284).

The bishop of Durango had hoped to secularize the Tarahumara missions, but insufficient clergy were available. As a result only nine of the nineteen missions in this area were secularized and not all possessed resident priests (Revilla Gigedo 1966: 43-46). The remaining missions, along with those from Chinipas, became the responsibility of Franciscans from the College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas. In terms of the native population, less than half of the population passed to secular administration, which proved largely a failure because of the economic decline of the missions and the shortage of clergy to staff them on a permanent basis.

Secularization was not as extensive in other regions of Spanish America partly because of the shortage of secular clergy, but also because the capacity of the Indians to live an independent existence following their close supervision by the Jesuits was called into question. This was the case in the Llanos de Mojós and Chiquitos where a unique form of administration was introduced which effectively maintained the mission system run by secular clergy. In the Chaco those missions entrusted to the secular clergy soon collapsed, while in the province of Mainas in the Amazon headwaters the shortcomings of the secular clergy soon led to their replacement by Franciscans.

#### ***Missions Taken Over by Other Religious Orders***

Most Jesuit missions in Spanish America were taken over by the Franciscans, though other religious orders were

involved particularly in New Granada [end p. 139] and Paraguay. Provincials of the religious orders already operating in different regions were called upon to provide substitute clergy. The pattern of replacement therefore reflected in part their distribution at the time of expulsion. However, the Franciscans assumed a particularly prominent role. Not only had they been second to the Jesuits in converting Indians in frontier regions, but starting in 1683 they had established a chain of apostolic colleges to provide training for missionary work in which they incorporated some of the methods employed by the Jesuits (Barnadas 1984a: 535).

Broadly speaking about two-thirds of the Jesuit missions in New Spain were taken over by the Franciscans. Although some missions in southern Sonora and Nueva Vizcaya were sufficiently consolidated to be handed over to diocesan clergy, the shortage of secular priests necessitated the employment of Franciscans. In Sonora those missions that were not secularized were divided between Franciscans from the College of Santiago de Jalisco (8) and the College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro (19) (Gerhard 1982: 284). The former college also took charge of the Jesuit missions in Nayarit. Meanwhile those in Chinipas and Tarahumara country were taken over by Franciscans from the College of Guadalupe de Zacatecas. Initially the Baja California missions were tended by Franciscans from the College of San Fernando de México, but in 1773 some were transferred to the Dominicans to allow the Franciscans to direct their attention to Alta California. The Baja California missions will be analyzed below as a special case.

In the Viceroyalty of Peru shortages of secular clergy and their reluctance to work in remote frontier regions severely restricted secularization. In Paraguay, the Marquis, Francisco de Paula Bucareli y Ursúa, Governor of Buenos Aires, had hoped to secularize the Paraguayan missions, but the local bishop could recruit only ten secular priests. He therefore sought the assistance of the Franciscans, Mercedarians, and Dominicans. These orders were reluctant to fill the posts and they attempted to bargain, unsuccessfully, for a tripartite division of the area and for temporal as well as spiritual authority in the missions (Furlong 1962: 676-77; Hernández 1908: 201-22). Eventually each religious order assumed spiritual responsibility for ten of the thirty Guaraní reductions, while their temporalities were entrusted to civil administrators (González 1942: 295-302). Rather than being assigned as contiguous groups, each group of ten missions was dispersed throughout the region with the likely aim of limiting any independent power that might emerge from a unified territorial base. Despite the involvement of three missionary orders, together they were able to provide only fifty-six priests to replace the eighty Jesuits who had been expelled (Hernández 1908: 271).

The Jesuit missions in Chile were mainly taken over by Franciscans. Native hostility prevented Franciscans from the Apostolic College at Chillan from assuming immediate responsibility for the Araucanian missions and in the interim they took charge of those in the archipelago of Chiloe. About 1771 the latter were replaced by Franciscans from the College of Santa Rosa de Ocopa in central Junín, Peru, because it was considered to have better resources and easier communications with Chiloe by sea (Enrich 1891: 433-34; Missions 1967: 953; Urbina Burgos 1983: 168). The College at Chillan also assumed responsibility for the two missions left in the Valdivia region.

### ***Missions That Collapsed***

All former Jesuit missions eventually declined, but the process was more rapid in areas where mission communities were insufficiently consolidated at the time of the expulsion. Different combinations of factors were responsible in different areas, but included their weak economic base, the failure of mission Indians to adapt to a sedentary life, native hostility, and the advance of the Portuguese. Many of the missions that collapsed were entrusted for brief periods to either secular or regular clergy who failed to maintain them. Included under this heading were the former Jesuit missions in the Amazon headwaters, the Upper Orinoco, and the Chaco.

In the Amazon headwaters, Jesuits in the province of Mainas had been aware of the precarious state of the missions and had clamored for the provision of a good road and for arms for defence against the Portuguese (González Suárez 1970: 255). Neither were provided and in 1806 the President of the Audiencia of Quito reported that the missions that had been won at great cost had collapsed and that the Indians were now subject to enslavement by [end p. 140] the Portuguese (Vargas Ugarte 1961 4: 164). The decline of these missions was hastened by poor management that changed frequently in the years immediately after the expulsion (González Suárez 1970: 189-97; Vargas Ugarte 19614: 89). Initially, they were handed over to the secular clergy, but due to inept management in 1770 they were replaced by Franciscans from the province of Quito. However, the situation did not improve. The Franciscans were unable to maintain resident priests and were charged with ill treating the Indians, such that in 1774 secular priests were put in charge once again. However, their energies were largely spent in trading goods to supplement their poor salaries, so that in 1790 they were again replaced by Franciscans from Quito. Finally, in an attempt to save the region from irremediable



decline, in 1803 the Crown established the bishopric of Mainas under the authority of the archbishop of Peru and from that time onwards the missions were staffed by Franciscans from the College of Santa Rosa de Ocopa.

In present-day Venezuela and Colombia, five of the seven Jesuit missions in the Llanos de Casanare were handed over to the Dominicans, while the other two, together with that of Jiramena on the Meta River, were entrusted to the Franciscans. The other three missions on the Meta River were transferred to the Recoletos (Pacheco 1968: 367; Rausch 1984: 86). Franciscans also assumed responsibility for the missions in the Upper Orinoco, but they were unable to take charge of them until 1785. In the interim they were visited irregularly by Andalucian Capuchins (Rey Fajardo 1974: 56-60; Navarro 1960b: 719). Economic decline, desertion, and the failure to maintain resident priests meant that like missions in the Amazon headwaters they were eventually abandoned.

Likewise, the missions in the Chaco were abandoned soon after the expulsion. Here some missions were entrusted to secular clergy and others to Franciscans, but in both cases the poor quality of the clergy, the lack of resident priests, and economic decline were exacerbated by native hostility and conflicts between neighboring groups such as Mocobí and Abipón (Bruno 1979: 79, 223-49). Meanwhile, the two missions in Taruma were abandoned as soon as the Jesuits left (Hernández 1908: 205, 369).

### ***Special Cases***

The missions in Baja California and those in the Llanos de Mojos and Chiquitos are treated as special cases since the clergy, regardless of whether they were secular or regular, managed to retain control of both spiritual and temporal affairs in the missions after the expulsion.

**BAJA CALIFORNIA:** As already indicated, the Baja California settlements were offered to Franciscans of the College of San Fernando in Mexico City in June 1767, but it was not until April 1768 that friars reached the Peninsula. In the interim, the missions were turned over to military commissioners, whose mismanagement left the settlements in a state of near ruin (Chapman 1925: 184-185; Engelhardt 1929: 346-347). As a result, the royal inspector, José de Gálvez, after a *visita* in late 1768, gave orders for the return of the temporalities to missionary control. At the same time he suppressed two of the fourteen missions (Dolores and San Luis Gonzaga) since there was little hope that they might improve.

Why did the Spanish Crown strengthen the power of the missionaries in Baja California? As products of the Enlightenment royal officials were reluctant to strengthen the mission system. However, they were anxious to protect the region from foreign encroachment at minimal cost. Once the French had lost their colonies in 1763 with their defeat in the Seven Years War, the real threat came from the Russians and the English. As early as 1725 the Russians, with the aim of stimulating the fur trade, initiated expeditions along the Pacific coast. Likewise, the English, who had captured Manila in 1762, threatened to approach California either from the Atlantic coast westward, or by sea from the Pacific itself. Even though Baja California had not proved an ideal ground for missionary activity, support for missionary endeavor was considered the most economic means of holding the frontier (Chapman 1925: 254-68; Aschmann 1959: 250).

In 1773 the Californian mission field was divided between the Franciscans and the Dominicans. Seven of the remaining twelve missions, mainly the older missions in the south of the Peninsula, were transferred to Dominican control (Engelhardt 1929: 456). The aim was to relieve the Franciscans from their duties in Baja California to enable them to occupy Alta California. Not only were the Franciscans more enthusiastic about this task, **[end p. 141]** but by this means the Crown sought to open up an essential supply route from Sonora that could save the Californias from foreign occupation (Dunne 1952: 425-26). During the Dominican period (1773-1868), some of the former Jesuit missions were abandoned: Guadalupe and Santiago in 1795, and San Pedro Martir about 1806 (Gerhard 1982: 295). Like the Franciscans, the Dominicans also controlled the management of the temporalities until the end of the colonial period (Engelhardt 1929: 661).

### ***LLANOS DE MOJOS AND CHIQUITOS:***

Jesuit missions among the Mojo and Chiquito in eastern Bolivia passed through two administrative phases: the so-called *gobierno de los curas* (1767-1790), when the secular clergy assumed the temporal and spiritual power that had been exercised by the Jesuits, and the period from 1790 to 1830, when temporal affairs were placed in the hands of civil administrators.

The expulsion of the Jesuits was particularly difficult to implement in eastern Bolivia since this extensive area was remote, largely unknown, and communications were difficult. The Jesuits had exercised absolute control in this region and the capacity of the Indians to lead an independent life after the expulsion was questioned. At the same time it was judged essential to maintain the mission settlements as a buffer against Portuguese expansion from the east. With these considerations in mind, the archbishop of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Francisco Ramón Herboso, was entrusted by the Audiencia of Charcas to organize a system of government for the former missions. In the event the new system differed little from that which had existed under the Jesuits except that the Indians were permitted to trade and the missions were to be run by secular clergy: one priest was put in charge of temporal matters and the other had responsibility for spiritual affairs. In practice, however, only the most important "missions" were assigned two priests (Parejas Moreno 1976: 950; René-Moreno 1888: 67; Vargas Ugarte 1965: 144).

Major problems with this form of administration were the shortage of clergy and the poor quality of those appointed, most of whom were not versed in native languages and some had not even been ordained (Vargas Ugarte 1965: 144). The so-called *gobierno de los curas* was characterized by moral and economic decline. The priests broke ethical and religious codes, appropriated the greater part of the missions' income, diverted produce from the missions to merchants in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, and encouraged contraband trade with the Portuguese in Mato Grosso (Barnadas 1984b: 161-62; Desdévise de Dezert 1918: 392-93; Larson 1988: 250-51; Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1971: ] 54). In January 1790, the Audiencia accepted a plan drawn up by the governor of Mojos, Lázaro de Ribera, to rectify the twenty-two years of corrupt and inefficient administration by transferring the authority over temporal affairs to civil administrators. Subsequently the missions were run more efficiently, but the increased commercialization it brought undermined the basis of mission culture, provoking social unrest and desertion (Block 1994: 125-141; Larson 1988: 250; Parejas Moreno 1976: 951-53).

## **ANALYSIS OF THE DECLINE OF THE MISSIONS**

Although diverse factors were involved in the collapse of mission settlements in different regions, it is possible to identify some common factors which contributed to their decline, such as the shortage of priests to assume the posts, the lack of financial support, the appointment of civil administrators, depopulation, and political conflicts.

### ***The Shortage of Clergy***

The order for the expulsion of the Jesuits required the secular authorities to provide suitable clergy to replace them. However, not only was there an absolute shortage of priests, but many were reluctant to serve in frontier regions. In addition many were ill-prepared for the task, a particular problem being their lack of knowledge of native languages. Although secularization could be justified in some areas, such as among the Guaraní or in Sonora, shortages of secular clergy made it impossible. Even where secularization occurred, such in the Sierra Madre Occidental, the missions sometimes had no resident priests (Revilla Gigeo 1966: 43-44). In some areas, such in the Llanos de Mojos, Chiquitos, and the Amazon headwaters, priests were precipitately ordained to take over the missions (González Suárez 1970: 190-91). Even so, as in the Upper Orinoco and Chiloe, many posts remained vacant for long periods and those appointed were often too few to attend all the settlements under [end p. 142] their jurisdiction. Furthermore, those appointed were of poor quality and lacked training. This was perhaps most evident in the Llanos de Mojos and Chiquitos during the *gobierno de los curas* when some were prosecuted for scandalous behaviour, seizure of goods and illicit trade with the Portuguese (Barnadas 1984b: 161). These issues will be analysed further below.

### ***The Lack of Financial Support***

Financial support for the missions after expulsion was also a determining factor in their survival (Vargas Ugarte 1961 4: 77). Some reductions, such as those among the Guaraní, had well developed economies that enabled them to survive longer despite the post-Jesuit mismanagement. Meanwhile the persistence of the missions that had failed to develop a self-sufficient economic base, such as those in the Amazon headwaters, Chile and Baja California, depended on external financial support.

In Chile the English threat to territories south of the Bío Bío River persuaded the Spanish Crown to support missionary efforts in this region. It permitted the temporalities of the Jesuits to be used for this purpose so that between 1769 and 1786, Franciscans from the College of Chillán restored those in Valdivia and managed to establish six new missions. By 1806 they had founded a further six, and in the nineteenth century Franciscans from the College of Castro on the island of Chiloé extended missionary activity to the Strait of Magellan (Enrich 1891: 434,437,439-440; Missions 1967: 953). So important was missionary activity in retaining control of this region, that in 1840, after the Society of Jesus had been

restored, the Chilean government even debated whether to allow the Jesuits to return (Hanisch Espindola 1974: 195).

Similarly, the former Jesuit missions in Baja California survived because the Crown was prepared to commit substantial resources to retain control of the region for strategic reasons. It permitted the Franciscans and Dominicans to exercise authority over the temporalities and used part of the Pious Fund, which at the time of expulsion mounted to 800,000 pesos, to support missionary activity (Revilla Gigedo 1966: 26-27; Chapman 1925: 253). Between January 1768 and the end of 1773, the Spanish Crown expended over 570,000 pesos on behalf of the Californias, not counting the cost of supplies and contributions from the Pious Fund. Royal interest in the survival of the Baja California missions is highlighted when it is considered that secular priests in Sinaloa and southern Sonora often failed to receive their salaries (Revilla Gigedo 1966: 27,37).

### ***Mismanagement by the New Administration***

Without exception all former Jesuit missions experienced economic decline. Most authors attribute this to the new administration or the negligence of particular civil administrators. In fact, the economic organization inherited from the Jesuits changed very little, although Indians in the missions were henceforth free to trade (Aranda 1908: 352). Even their communal organization was, in theory, to be preserved. Some potential problems arising from the appointment of civil administrators and the implementation of the "new economic system" were actually foreseen. Thus, instructions concerning the management of the Guaraní reductions issued in 1768 stipulated that Indians were to be paid a salary and that a meeting was to be held every year after the harvest between the corregidor and the administrator of the "mission" to discuss its progress. In addition, the general administrator in Buenos Aires had to deposit a surety of 10,000 pesos to cover damages incurred through his possible mismanagement (Gonzalez 1943-1945: 167-183).

Notwithstanding good intentions and far-sightedness, the new administrative system brought changes which promoted economic decline. First, it introduced civil administrators who were often hastily appointed regardless of their preparedness or suitability to the task. Diego de Alvear, a witness to the plight of the Guaraní reductions in the 1780s, complained that those appointed had no knowledge of financial management and knew nothing of agriculture or manufacturing (Hernández 1908: 274-275). Also, the system could not avoid a pervasive feature of the Spanish colonial bureaucracy: corruption. Administrators held their posts for only short periods during which time they attempted to enhance their poor salaries by profiting from trade, and in some cases the indiscriminate slaughter of mission herds (Lynch 1958: 187-90; Navarro 1960b: 719). Meanwhile lands remained unmanaged and [end p. 143] communal activities were abandoned. These together undermined the economic security of the missions and dissipated any sense of community solidarity.

The right of Indians to trade directly with outside groups, which had not been permitted under Jesuit control, also had detrimental effects (Navarro 1960a: 706). Fearful that unaccustomed to outside trade the Indians might be exploited, some restrictions were imposed. The sale of alcohol was forbidden and trade was limited to certain periods of the year, for instance, to the first three months of the year, in the case of the Guaraní, and to two annual fairs in January-February and July-August, in the case of the Mojos and Chiquito. Yet the Spanish Crown miscalculated both the degree to which the new administrators would respect the law and the consequences that even restricted commerce might bring. During the gobierno de los curas in the Llanos de Mojos and Chiquitos a contraband network was established with the Portuguese in which the missions played a pivotal role. The secular priests often traded products destined for mission stores at Santa Cruz and Charcas with Spaniards or the Portuguese. The Portuguese were particularly interested in obtaining mission cattle to supply their mines, while through the missions Spanish settlers purchased Black slaves and diamonds from Brazil (Bamadas 1984b: 161; Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1973: 129-33).

The economic decline of the missions was accelerated by the high costs of administration which were a constant drain on their resources. Details of the income and expenditure of the Chiquito missions indicates that over eighty per cent of their annual income was used to maintain the administrative apparatus (Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1973: 144). Despite the high costs involved, the new administrative system failed to maintain mission communities. The division between temporal and spiritual matters brought tensions between civil administrators and the clergy, who often tried to meddle in the management of the temporalities, and conflicts arose between them and native leaders (Armani 1987: 207-208; Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1973: 122). Such clashes contributed to the disintegration of mission communities and encouraged desertion.

### ***The Depopulation of Mission Settlements***

Depopulation following the expulsion was both a cause and consequence of the decline of the missions. Mission settlements lost population as a result of epidemics and desertion. The Jesuits themselves had often unwittingly introduced disease and by congregating Indians in missions had encouraged their spread. Opportunities for the introduction and spread of disease were greatly enhanced with the opening up of missions to outside contacts. For example, syphilis did not appear in Baja California until the Jesuit missions were turned over to military commissioners after the expulsion (Engelhardt 1929: 736-737; Revilla Gigedo 1966: 22). However, the main cause of mission depopulation appears to have been desertion encouraged by physical abuse, exploitation by civil administrators, lack of supervision, or, mainly, economic decline. The indiscriminate slaughter of cattle, the abandonment of agricultural tasks and mismanagement by the new administrators undermined the economic viability of the former missions. Populations losses in turn reduced available sources of labor and encouraged Spaniards to seize vacated mission lands, thereby weakening the economy further and providing added stimulus to desertion.

Yet what became of the Indians who abandoned the missions? Some of the literature argues that the Indians, freed from Jesuit control, returned to the forest (Hernández 1908: 135-140, 205, 213-214). This view built around the Guaraní above all, may perhaps be explained by the discovery in the mid-nineteenth century of some isolated Guaraní communities where Christianity was still practised (Caraman 1976: 286). Other historians have shown that most former mission Indians were absorbed into colonial society. Among the Guaraní the more enterprising or skilled sought employment in the cities of Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Paraguay, Santa Fé, Entre Rios and Corrientes, while the less skilled found work as peons on Spanish estancias (Armani 1987: 208; Caraman 1976: 287-288; Mariluz Urquijo 1953: 325). Likewise, those Indians who deserted the missions in the Llanos de Mojos were integrated into the colonial economy, a process which was accelerated by the "rubber boom" of the mid-nineteenth century (Denevan 1966: 33).  
**[end p. 144]**

It is worth noting that Brazil was the destination of many Indians fleeing from missions in Paraguay, the Llanos de Mojos, and Chiquitos. In the case of the Paraguay missions, desertion to Brazil had begun prior to the expulsion as a consequence of the Tratado de Limites in 1750. Until 1761 when the Treaty was revoked, the Portuguese gained the confidence of the Guaraní, who considered themselves betrayed by the Spanish. Their experience encouraged many Guaraní who deserted the missions to flee to Brazil where they were mainly gathered into militia corps (Mariluz Urquijo 1953: 325). Similarly, in 1771 fugitives from the Chiquito missions were settled at Vila María do Paraguay in Portuguese territory. The Portuguese actively encouraged these desertions by considering those who had fled to be free individuals asking for asylum, while the Spanish authorities, not denying their status as free individuals, considered them to be fugitives who owed tribute to the Crown (Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1971: 165-166).

The return to the forest can be considered a myth in the case of the Paraguay missions and those in the Llanos de Mojos and Chiquitos, though even here it was not unknown (Armani 1987: 208 n.80; Denevan 1966: 39). It was more characteristic, however, of areas where for the most part the missions collapsed. In these regions the Indians had proved resistant to sedentary life and the late date of mission foundations had allowed only limited cultural assimilation. This was the experience of missions in Nayarit in New Spain (Gerhard 1982: 114), the Amazon headwaters (González Suárez 1970: 121, the Chaco (Caraman 1976: 293; Hernandez 1908: 277) and the southern Chilean islands (Enrich 1891: 434).

### ***Political Conflicts***

In the longer term conflicts with the Portuguese and the Independence wars also affected the fate of the former Jesuit missions. In the case of the Paraguayan missions, in 1801 the Portuguese seized the whole Banda Oriental where seven reductions were located. When the Spanish attempted to recover them in 1810 a war ensued in which the missions were effectively destroyed (Caraman 1976: 289). At the same time five of the Guaraní reductions in Argentine territory were devastated and their inhabitants dispersed (Armani 1987: 209). The Independence wars were also particularly destructive in the River Plate area, while in Bolivia they were associated with periodic raids on the reductions of the Llanos de Mojos aimed at seizing cattle, horses and silver (Denevan 1966: 33). Remoter areas, such as the Chiquitos, suffered to a much lesser degree (Hernández 1908: 277, see also Caraman 1976: 293).

### ***Structural Problems***

Among the factors that hastened the decline of the missions after the expulsion were structural problems inherited from the Jesuit system. Liberal criticism of the eighteenth century blamed the Jesuits for having imposed (where feasible) a paternalistic regime that did not allow individual development. Indeed, the Indians were kept in a state of "infancy" because decision-making and management were exercised by the friars, whose segregation policy shielded them from

external influence. Nevertheless, those who succeeded the Jesuits often failed to integrate the Indians into colonial society according to the economic principles of Liberalism, but maintained them in a state of "tutelage." This feature of post-Jesuit administration stemmed from doubts about the capacity of the Indians to live an independent existence (Ribeiro de Assis Bastos 1971: 164). As such, the former Jesuit missions retained many of their essential features. However, to function effectively the administrative system required isolation of the missions from outside contacts the organization and discipline of the Jesuits, neither of which pertained after their expulsion.

## CONCLUSION

The expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America in 1767 may be interpreted as one of the Bourbon reforms aimed at modernizing the colonial bureaucracy, rooting out privilege and concentrating power in the hands of the Crown. In the context of conquest the missions had served the State well in Christianizing and "civilizing" the Indians, promoting the colonization of new lands and holding imperial frontiers. Yet, in the context of settled society, the mission was becoming an obsolete device. Moreover, the dependence of the State on the Church clashed with the principles of European Enlightenment.

Even so, the fact that the Crown issued instructions for the continued administration of mission settlements indicates its desire not to see them dismantled. Nevertheless, the measures it [end p. 145] adopted after the expulsion produced this effect. The opening up of the missions to commerce, as the Crown's instructions stated, did not integrate Indians into the colonial economy in the way intended. On the contrary, it exposed the Indians to exploitation by traders, yet continued to exclude them from the management of economic affairs. At the same time the economic viability of the missions was undermined by corrupt military commissioners and newly-appointed civil administrators who misappropriated the Jesuit temporalities. Spiritual affairs also suffered due to shortages of clergy and the poor quality and training of those available. Deteriorating economic conditions in the missions, social disintegration, and the lack of spiritual guidance encouraged many to desert the missions for more viable livelihoods. In certain areas, the advance of the Portuguese or onset of wars accelerated their decline.

With only a few exceptions, the Jesuits missions declined after the expulsion, though their demise was quicker in some areas than others: the stronger their foundations, the longer they survived. Those missions with developed economies and social organization before the suppression, such as those in Paraguay and, to a lesser extent, the Llanos de Mojos, managed to survive after Independence, whereas those whose existence had been precarious in the Jesuit period, such as in the Amazon headwaters, the Chaco or the Upper Orinoco, collapsed sooner.

This generalization does not apply, however, in areas where strategic interests were involved. Jesuit missionary work in Baja California had proved less than successful. Even so, after the expulsion, the Spanish Crown not only invested large sums of money in the maintenance of the former Jesuit settlements, but also encouraged the Franciscans to occupy Alta California. Given the lack of economic incentives to attract white settlers and the chronic scarcity of funds from the Royal Exchequer to undertake the military occupation of the Peninsula, missionary activity was the cheapest and most effective means to save the Californias from foreign encroachment. Similarly, the threat of English occupation in southern Chile boosted missionary endeavors with the Franciscans extending their influence to the Strait of Magellan. Despite the modernizing aims that might have inspired the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spanish America and the reluctance of officials to support missionary endeavor, old devices ---in this case "missionary conquest" ---continued to be used where they were the most economic means of achieving political or strategic objectives.

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## **RESUMEN**

Cuando los jesuitas fueron expulsados de Hispanoamérica en 1767, ellos administraban unos 250,000 indígenas ubicados en mas de 200 misiones. El destino de las misiones fue variado pues mientras algunas fueron secularizadas, otras fueron entregadas a otras órdenes religiosas, y algunas simplemente desaparecieron. La Corona española continuó apoyando las misiones por ser estas la forma más económica de defender las fronteras en contra de la amenaza extranjera. **[end p. 148]**