

Indians, Song, and Dance in the Missions of Northern New Spain

Kristin Dutcher Mann
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

I would like to place California mission music in the context of other Franciscan missions of the late colonial period. My research has focused on song and dance in the Jesuit and Franciscan missions of the northern frontier of New Spain from 1590 until 1810. I study music as a way of understanding processes of cultural change at work in the porous borders between different ethnic groups during the colonial period. In mission communities, music was certainly a tool used by the regular clergy to evangelize and teach Catholic doctrine to natives. It was also a tool of social control that structured elements of daily and yearly life. For Indians, song and dance were integral parts of daily life, and thus the new music introduced by missionaries was generally accepted and quickly learned. However, indigenous musical practices were not simply absorbed by dominant European models. Dance, in particular, provided a necessary “safety valve” that could help alleviate tension. Pantomimed dance-dramas provided a way in which indigenous cultures could continually refashion themselves to adapt to economic, political, and cultural realities.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were periods of great change throughout the Spanish empire. In northwest and north central New Spain, the Bourbon reforms, and the results of a military reorganization of the northern mission-presidio frontier, called for a refocusing of financial and military resources and the consolidation of the northernmost regions into the *Provincias Internas*. In addition, the increasing hegemony of the Apache, Comanche, and Wichita horse cultures in the central plains posed new threats to land and resources, and created the desire for new alliances between Spaniards and Indians. Responding to threats of English and Russian presence in the region, the Spanish moved into Alta California in 1769, and a comprehensive mission system developed in that region in the following century. Further east, the vast territory of Louisiana passed into the hands of the Spanish as a result of the Seven Years’ War, and forays into this territory commenced to enhance trading relationships with the indigenous groups there.

The church also provided new dictates for religious administration as a result of the Fourth Mexican Provincial Council, in 1770, the first major changes since 1585. During this period, mandates issued by civil and religious authorities throughout the Spanish empire emphasized social and religious orthodoxy, and they expressed concern about the nature of popular religious practices. But in the northern frontier of New Spain, as in other rural areas of the Spanish empire, these concerns rarely translated into significant actions. The music and dance of northern mission communities, although not always orthodox, continued to be valuable tools for encouraging acculturation and cooperation with the Spanish project of colonization. Music alone could not make loyal Christian citizens, particularly when it was used by Spaniards and their mestizo and Indian allies to reinforce Christian community, and at the same time used by Indians such as the Apache, Comanche, Seri, and Yuma to gather energy and power with which to

fight the imposition of Spanish hegemony.

The sociopolitical context of late-eighteenth-century northern New Spain caused missionaries to intentionally rely on the power of song, and even dance, to achieve pacification and conversion in many areas. Not only repetition, melody, and the addition of European instruments but also the lyrics of mission music and the co-existence and occasional blending of Indian and Hispanic dance practices came to be important tools of Hispanicization. Spanish and mixed-race settlers and soldiers moved into the region in greater numbers than before, bringing with them secular music and dance and more opportunities for musicians to use their skills to enhance their livelihoods and standing in the larger communities. The musical cultures of late colonial Franciscan missions adapted as they reflected new political, economic, and cultural situations, while reports of demonically inspired *mitotes* and *danzas de caballerías* increased.

Communities in Transition: Baja California and Sonora

After continued conflicts with the crown, the Society of Jesus was expelled from all Spanish territories in 1767. Forty-eight missions in Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Sonora, and Baja California were left without missionary leadership until a reduced Franciscan presence moved into the region. Whether or not the mission routine was successfully implemented by the new Franciscan arrivals, indigenous residents of congregated communities continued to make and play stringed instruments. This frustrated the Franciscans, who were exasperated at their lack of “industriousness” and unwillingness to fulfill missionaries’ requests. Instead, “they only know how to make some musical instruments, which please them very much.”

The departure of the Jesuits affected communities to varying degrees. Largely Hispanicized areas with more diverse populations continued to observe religious rituals, in some cases aided by secular clergy, including reciting doctrine, praying the rosary, ringing church bells, and burying the dead. Although many churches fell into disrepair, inventories from the first Franciscans in the most populated areas of Baja California and Sonora indicated that silver religious ornaments remained in the sacristy of the church, and religious images and statues were not harmed. In northern areas without sizeable Spanish or mestizo presence, however, the initial Franciscan reports described abandoned mission buildings, uncultivated fields, and scattered residents, who spoke little Spanish and were without religious, decorative, and ritual ornaments. At San Francisco Xavier de Cumuripa, once the most important mission in the region, when the fathers rang the bells for instruction or prayers, few came.

Some areas received replacement ministers more quickly than others. The sixteen Jesuits stationed in Baja California left in February of 1768, and by the start of April, Franciscans arrived to replace them, planning to use established missions in Baja California to launch their new endeavor in Alta California. After several years, the Franciscans handed the Baja California missions, in a poor state after Jesuit expulsion, disease and conflicts with civil authorities, to Dominicans, so that they could focus on establishing new missions further north.

The organization and distribution of Franciscans in northern New Spain also changed during this period. A smaller percentage of friars ministered in the Chihuahua and Sonora missions than those who lived a conventual life further south, representing a significant change over the earlier part of the century. Those serving in the missions had difficulty enforcing attendance at mass, doctrinal instruction, and recitation of the prayers and rosary. To punish absences from required religious activities, friars depended on physical punishment, while complaining bitterly about the lack of support from civil authorities. Some of those who staffed the missions failed to observe their vows. In 1792, the Provincial of Zacatecas was charged with depriving the missionaries of his apostolic college necessary funds. As a result, some had engaged in commercial activities to raise funds. Others were reprimanded for allowing women into their friaries, and leaving their missions to go to the Spanish settlements. The instability and turnover in religious administration in these communities did not completely silence religious music, but even in the largest, most stable missions, reports of religious music and dance greatly decreased during this period.

Thus, musical activities continued in the centers with the most Hispanicized populations, after the transition to Franciscan and Dominican administration. However, late colonial reports from the missions of northwestern New Spain do not contain vivid descriptions of daily routines or celebrations of special occasions like those present in the documentary record prior to 1767. In smaller missions, evidence of musical activity is limited or completely absent. Mission Santa Rosalia Mulegé, which under the direction of Jesuit Pedro María Nascimben was well known for its music, possessed only two broken *bajones* and three *chirimías*, used missals and bells for celebrating mass in 1773. Based on the documentary evidence, a similar decline in mission music and ornaments occurred in the long-established Franciscan missions further north and east over the same period.

Music and Dance in Late Colonial Coahuila, Texas and New Mexico

Franciscans had worked among the indigenous populations of northeast and north central New Spain from the late sixteenth century onward, but by the late colonial period, religious and civil officials expressed frustrations about the apparent lack of progress in religious conversions. The changing demographics of these areas, like in the northwestern frontier, were reflected in the music and dance of these regions in the period 1767-1810. Dances and pageantry held to commemorate significant occasions contained Spanish, Mexican, and indigenous elements, bringing communities together to reinforce religious and military goals. These expressions of popular religion were encouraged by the Franciscans, even when they ran counter to the desires of Bourbon reformers within church and state. In the northeastern frontier, where Indians frequently abandoned missions and refused to offer their children for doctrinal instruction, the friars could not afford to be dogmatic about ensuring orthodox religious devotions or learned routines and behavior.

Cultural change and accommodation was prevalent in late colonial Coahuila and Texas. Instead of serving as permanent homes for large populations of Indians, late

colonial missions of the northeastern frontier were meeting sites for extended family networks, only some of whom lived in nuclear families in or around the missions. Migration and intermarriage between groups of Pames, Cocos, Pajalates, Xarames, and other small ethnic groups facilitated the spread of Coahuilteco as a regional language, and the friars used time-tested methods of offering food, clothing, and tools to Indians in exchange for their appearance at worship, doctrinal instruction, and confession. Most of the region's indigenous population lived outside of the missions, but maintained ties and occasionally reconnected with families living on mission lands. A manual written by fray Bartholomé García facilitated the friars' work among both mission and non-mission Indians.

García's manual also reflected the ongoing battle for cultural hegemony, largely fought in the arena of music and dance. While hearing confessions from Indians, friars were reminded to ask whether neophytes had eaten the flesh of others, ingested peyote, or danced *mitotes*. Franciscans struggled with indigenous ritual practices among the new populations they sought to convert in the late colonial period. Fray Diego Jiménez observed that in area around the missions of San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz and Nuestra Señora de Candelaria del Cañon, built on the Nueces River after entreaties by the Lipan Apaches, shamans performed rites including prophecy, sacrificial dances, healings, and blessings upon dwellings. When the Marqués de Rubí toured the region in 1767, Candelaria was abandoned and San Lorenzo claimed no residents except its friars. Increasing hostilities between Apaches, Comanches, and Spanish troops plagued the region and precipitated the military reorganization in the *Reglamento* of 1772. These hostilities coincided with an increase in the mention of *mitotes* in the documentary records, in references to both mission and gentile Indians. Even those most acculturated, the converted population of Mission San José in San Antonio, who spoke Spanish, played the harp, violin, and guitar, and recited the rosary and other prayers, "go off to the woods to dance . . . with the pagans whenever the priests are not watching. Great care is taken to keep them from this wicked practice, and whenever they are found guilty of it, they are punished severely." To combat the strong attraction of these dances, Franciscans not only used corporal punishment. They also encouraged those who were inclined to music to learn to play stringed instruments, even drums, and promoted Spanish dances. Others permitted *mitotes* within the mission community, "when no superstition, no question of celebrating an enemy's death, nor any sinful motive are present . . . because among the Indians it is the same as the fandango among the Spaniards."

Increasing exposure to Spanish and mestizo settlers, who rented land from the missions, was one method conveying outward signs of Christianity and Hispanic life: wearing appropriate dress, marching in processions, praying the rosary, singing devotional songs, dancing appropriately, and responding to the sound of the bell. Witnessing and following these outward signs of Christianity did not signify conversion to Catholicism, however. Fray Juan Agustín Morfi found that the resident neophytes at San Juan Bautista "...confess, they receive the sacraments, they fast, they hear Mass, attend prayers and daily explanations of the doctrine through an interpreter; but all this is as commanded and with a grade of piety so weak as hardly to be recognizable as Christianity." In addition, employing soldiers and settlers as models of Christian life to

new converts was not always a desirable strategy. Gambling, drinking, and playing games were only slightly less offensive than the nighttime idolatrous dances practiced by the non-Christians. Spanish settlers and soldiers could engage with neophytes in appropriate recreation, which could provide a venue in which the pressures of regimented life could be released, but they had to be closely monitored. Some Spaniards only desired “to take from the Indians all that they can, gambling with them, trading trifles for clothing and other utensils, and practicing evil.” Fray Pedro Font was appalled at a fandango held at Presidio San Miguel de Horcasitas in which “a very bold widow who came with the [Anza] expedition sang some verses, which were not at all nice, applauded and cheered by all the crowd.” Mission Indians interacted with soldiers and settlers frequently during this period, as they traded, engaged in labor, defended territory, and worshiped. The most structured interactions occurred during principal feasts of the church year.

Indigenous converts were active participants in the demonstrations of faith hosted by the larger settlements in the region on Christmas or Holy Week and Easter. The ranchers, farmers, and soldiers who populated the small communities in Coahuila and Texas, and the more well-established towns of Nuevo México, punctuated their years with the celebrations of the church year. The friars encouraged these communal fiestas; beginning with the life of St. Francis, Franciscans showed special devotion to the images of Christ in the nativity and the passion. Dancing and *Misa de Gallos*, or mass in the very early hours of Christmas morning, had been a part of nativity celebrations in New Spain from the time of fray Pedro de Gante, and they were also part of Spanish folk Catholicism. Celebrations for Christmas and Easter also included elements that were closely tied to indigenous practices in the regions. Coahuiltecan-speakers in central Texas traditionally gathered during the winter months when food was scarce for large communal dances that served as trading fairs. Their dances lasted for days, were particularly loud at night, and involved large numbers of participants, often around a bonfire. Franciscans at the San Antonio missions encouraged similar gatherings under their watchful eyes, and tied to the Christian calendar. On Christmas at Mission San Juan Capistrano, nocturnal dances were held to celebrate the nativity of Christ. A mission inventory from 1772 included indigenous ankle-rattles, cascabeles, and masks used specifically for these Christmas dances. On Christmas Eve at Mission Purísima Concepción in the same area, Indians danced the *matachines* at the entrance of the friar’s house “as long as the missionary allows it.” The next day, they danced at the governor’s house and the presidio. The traveling dancers provided entertainment for civil and religious crowds alike, and each audience surely received a different message as they watched, just as the meaning must have been vastly different for the dancers themselves. These dances incorporated both European and indigenous meanings, dress, instruments, rhythms, and dance patterns, as they reinvented the history of cultural encounters between Europeans and Indians.

Like the dances of Christmas in the central Texas missions, the mournful practices of the week preceding Easter were particularly resonant in the pueblos of Nuevo México. Holy Week was celebrated in New Mexico, and the later Alta California missions, with solemn processions. In 1776, Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez

reported on a *Via Crucis*, or stations of the cross, procession. The faithful at Abiquiu, including mestizos and settlers, made stops at altars where fray Sebastián Fernández recited prayers, on their way to a stop designated “Calvary.” After the final prayers, processors remained after nightfall to engage in self-flagellation as a form of penance, joining themselves with Christ by re-enacting and participating in his pain. There is no evidence that Franciscans attempted to limit the practices of the *penitentes*, despite the instructions of the Fourth Mexican Provincial Council, which associated them with *castas*, drunkenness, and barbarity.

The late colonial missions of Coahuila, Texas, and New Mexico differed greatly from their Franciscan and Jesuit counterparts in the earlier part of the century. After the reorganization of the northern frontier, most missions were administered by a single friar, and Indians freely entered and left the missions at will. Any troops stationed nearby were dedicated to protecting settlements from Apache and Comanche raids, not used to compel Indians to work and attend instruction. Missionaries relied upon the cooperation of Hispanicized converts to enforce rules, teach and translate doctrine, and encourage attendance at worship services. In 1783, fray Joseph Cardenas, missionary at Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga in Texas, reasoned,

It has appeared to me for now not to impose . . . the obligation of attending that [Sunday] Mass, since they are not much inclined to do it. . . . It has been necessary to proceed with much care, not obligating all of them to the continuous task of instruction outside of the assigned times, because I might push the thing that might make many of them leave. . . . Although many attend the teaching of the doctrine (but not all), some, as soon as the bell is rung, jump the wall and go away, and some stay in their houses. Even though I have tried ways to oblige them to attend, I have not been able to succeed with all of them. . . . Nor can I force them with rigor, so as not to lose all of them to flight because it can be justly feared that they are very warlike Indians, and wicked.

Cardenas blamed the deterioration of the Texas missions on a lack of ornaments and properties, a lack of aid from the troops, and the enormous number of tasks that befell individual missionaries trying to maintain missions alone. While clearly frustrated with the political changes affecting the region in the late colonial period, he offered music as evidence of some progress in conversion. On days when fray Joseph did not say mass, some women still gathered in the church to sing the *alabado* before retiring to their houses.

Music such as the *alabado*, and the use of guitars and violins for mass, is recorded in mission reports of the late eighteenth century, but references to choirs or musical performances other than dances on special occasions are limited. Missionary reports are instead concerned with their limited resources, concerns about Apache and Comanche raids, and required population statistics. On the whole, the friars in the northeastern and northwestern frontiers showed little of their former zeal in directly challenging practices they saw as incompatible with Christianity: idolatry, desertion, polygamy and dancing.

Instead they saw themselves engaged in a war with non-Christians, and to a lesser extent, the Spanish authorities, for the souls of those who lived near the missions. They engaged in battle by using the tools that had served them well for years: repetition of religious routines, devotional songs to emphasize doctrine and moral behavior, and rations of food, clothing, and tools. They added secular and religious dances, as well as other physical reinforcements of Christian doctrine in processions and recreations of Christ's life, to the musical culture of their communities. Friars such as Joseph Cardenas were willing to overlook laxity or dances which previously would have been considered profane in order to keep recent converts on their side.

The Power of Music in the Alta California Missions

In contrast to the new missions founded further east in the last part of the eighteenth century, the Alta California chain of missions was supported by the interests of the Bourbon state, which resulted in a robust military presence, two resident Franciscans per mission, and sufficient material goods. The Franciscan missionary project in Alta California focused on control over the indigenous populations through punitive expeditions, cultural hegemony, and a combination of force and persuasion. In their final mission chain, Franciscans relied on the lessons they had learned in the preceding centuries of evangelization among the native peoples of the Americas. As in other areas, they were aided by disease and ecological change, which vastly changed the context in which Indians chose whether to seek life within the mission communities.

Franciscans exercised greater political authority in Alta California, as Jesuits had earlier in the century in Baja California. The crown depended on the mission chain to claim and provide for settlers and presidios in the province. In contrast, other contemporaries engaged in a larger number of disputes with military and civil authorities in New Mexico, Texas, Sonora, and Chihuahua. The mostly Spanish-born friars, members of the College of San Fernando, used music to impart doctrine, facilitate cultural and linguistic change, and structure daily life. Officials endorsed the use of music in Alta California in an instruction manual written by Fray Mariano Lopez Pimentel, as "one of the most effective methods for congregating the Indians, taming them, civilizing them, and catechizing them, without the expense of troops, nor arms, and without danger to the lives of Hispanic youth, and with utility to the church, and the crown."

From the start, religious song and gestures were an integral part of establishing these communities. Alta California missions, particularly Santa Barbara, Santa Clara de Asís, San José, and San Antonio de Padua, boasted European-style choirs, orchestras, and large music books, some of which remain extant. Indians were taught to produce copies of musical manuscripts at a scriptorium founded by Padre Narciso Durán at Mission San José in the first part of the nineteenth century. The music of these large books, intended for use by a choir, contains plainchant, as well as polyphony for the Ordinary of the Mass, Divine Office, and devotional songs for use in processions, prayers, or recitation of doctrine. A mass for orchestra and double choir by noted composer Ignacio Jerusalem was found in mission archives and likely performed in the region.

Song was part of the daily routine and weekly worship services. Raymundo Carillo informed his superiors that neophytes at Missions Santa Barbara, San Gabriel, San Luis Obispo, San Antonio, and San Carlos attended catechism instruction in Spanish in the mornings. High Mass occurred each Sunday, and on other days, those gathered prayed the rosary and sang the Salve Regina or an *alabado*. At Mission San Juan Bautista, friars

induced the children to sing the prayers as they learnt them. The Our Father was accordingly sung in one loud tone without variation until the end of a sentence, when a stop or inflexion was made. Sometimes this prayer would be sung after one of the psalm tones. Thus in a few days boys and girls would be able to sing the prayer aloud and together. . . . The Hail Mary was acquired in the same way, with the difference that it was sung after a Spanish melody, and then became the most popular hymn. It could be heard at the homes, at work, at the plays of the children, on the march, and above all in the church and in the popular processions. . . . Singing formed part of the morning and evening devotions, and during the Sunday Masses and afternoon exercises.

At San Juan Bautista, one of the most extensive programs of music education was put in place. Melody was used as a mnemonic device, in the liturgical services, and song was part of the daily routine of the neophytes. The mission also included a school for musicians to augment worship elsewhere in the region.

Dance and instrumental melodies enlivened daily life and celebrations of Christian and Indian fiestas, even when the padres tried to prevent or meted out punishment for dances in which men and women, and gentiles and Christians freely mixed. Music rejoiced at the birth of a new church or the baptism of a new convert, and lamented at the incomprehensible number of deaths in the region.

The music of the California missions aided in the acculturation of those who sang and heard it. Doctrinal instruction occurred in Spanish, but also in native languages, because friars had a difficult time mastering the many indigenous languages and dialects. Songs, particularly those in Spanish, and images reinforced the concepts recited as part of the simplified catechism. Common themes of these songs and devotional paintings reflected some of the most persistent struggles of the missionaries. Emphasis on the devotion of Mary and Joseph to each other and God, and the Christ Child belied the friars' difficulty in enforcing monogamous marriage and Hispanic gender roles. One version of the *alabado*, a religious song of praise sung widely in California and Texas, began with a verse dedicated to the divine sacrament, and continued:

Y la limpia Concepción
De la Reina de los cielos,
Que, quedando Virgen pura,
Es madre del Verbo eterno.

Y el glorioso San José
Electo por dios inmenso
Para padre estimativo
De su hijo, Divino Verbo

Mary and Joseph as parents, specially chosen by God to bear and raise Jesus, are the emphasis of these stanzas. By singing this song daily, Indians were reminded not only of Christian doctrine, but also of their duty to follow the example of Santa María and San José. Marian devotion was particularly encouraged in other hymns and songs, perhaps because a female image of god resonated with indigenous spiritual beliefs. Additionally, Mary was an important role model of the selflessness and unquestioning devotion to God that missionaries wanted to cultivate in their churches. Some young women learned to sing the *Salve Regina* not only in Latin but also in their own language. Songs such as the *alabado* also facilitated linguistic acculturation.

The musical landscape of Alta California reflected the dual identities of many of its residents. Mission residents could match the tone, inflection, melodies, and rhythms of European-style plainchant and polyphony, often even learning the music by ear. Like in other areas of the Spanish empire, however, archaeological and documentary evidence points to an abundance of native dances and the use of some indigenous instruments within mission communities. Dance was an important expression of identity in pre-Hispanic California, performed during communal celebrations and as part of rituals to welcome visitors. Most friars in Alta California permitted indigenous dances to continue, during the day, within the mission complex. Vivid descriptions of indigenous dances from early-nineteenth-century visitors to California provide a glimpse of native cultural practices. Costanoans at Mission San José, both men and women, danced for Russian visitors in 1806. Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, the expedition's doctor, interpreted these dances as representing "scenes from war and domestic life," illustrated through bodily decoration, ornaments made of feathers, coral, and clay, and props, such as bows and arrows and feathers. At Mission San Carlos, the native population adorned themselves with body paint and regalia and danced for visitors. The constant movement of new groups into the missions from the countryside, and the frequent interactions of missionized and gentile populations, meant that indigenous cultural practices and goods moved into the Indian villages surrounding the missions. This fluidity allowed for the constant recreation of culture. Indigenous dances might be altered to fit new contexts, and rattles or drums added to European instruments, which accompanied a religious procession. Even the completion of a church building contained elements of Christian and autochthonous sacred music. When the last tile was fixed to the roof of Mission San Buenaventura, Chumash men danced the Blackbird Dance following a mass of thanksgiving in the church.

The musical culture of this region harkened back to that of the sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Jesuit missions of the near north, and the Franciscan missions in New Mexico, where missionaries commanded greater resources and exercised harsher control over neophytes. In comparison with other regions of the Spanish empire,

California mission music most closely resembled the type of music performed in the cathedrals of frontier dioceses, such as Durango, Sonora, and Guatemala. In the Cathedral of the Diocese of Durango, for example, in 1765 the *maestro de capilla* had fifty-seven choral books from which to select music to augment worship. Some contained hymns, others the psalms and masses for different times of the church year. They contained parts for different voices, and some contained music for the use of the cathedral's instrumentalists—among them organists, violinists, and horn players. An inventory of the choral library in 1788 listed music books printed in Spain, Venice and Rome, and the liturgy of the Divine Office, particularly Matins and Lauds, was sung.

What accounts for the differences between the religious music of the Alta California missions and that of late-colonial missions elsewhere in Northern New Spain? A primary reason for the expansive music performed in Alta California was the talent and interest of the inhabitants of the region. Without exception, the friars reported that neophytes were eager to learn, and achieved proficiency quickly, in European-style music. Father José Señán remarked that the Chumash at Mission San Buenaventura were “very much inclined to sing and to play any kind of string or wind instruments.” Neophytes at Mission San Juan Bautista learned to play instruments easily, and even adapted indigenous melodies to the new instruments.

Another explanation of Alta California's rich musical culture lies in the resources, both human and material, available to the Fernandino friars. The California missions were prosperous enough to sustain two friars per mission, which meant that one of the resident friars might devote more attention to music instead of being consumed with other matters of daily administration. Although the guidelines of the *Colegios de Propaganda Fide* stated that at least two friars should work in each mission community, the Tarahumara missions, those in Sonora, and the New Mexican Franciscan missions were generally staffed by only one resident friar in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and some friars were even responsible for several communities simultaneously.

The missionaries themselves also differed from those elsewhere in the northern frontier. The friars of the Colegio de San Fernando, located in Mexico City, administered the province of Alta California. In contrast to those who served in the other missions of northern New Spain, missionaries to Alta California were mostly Spanish-born. Most lived in Mexico City, the capital of the viceroyalty and site of a rich musical culture, for a short period of time before making the journey north. Prominent among the Fernandinos serving in Alta California was Juan Bautista Sancho, who had directed choirs in Spain before coming to the Americas. Between 1795 and 1796, Sancho copied music from the Convento de San Francisco in Palma, Mallorca, for his use in the new mission field. Another musician and former choirmaster in Zaragoza, Ignacio Ibáñez, demonstrated great skill in his notation and illumination of five large choir books from Mission San Antonio de Padua. Ibáñez also composed a *pastorela*, performed at Christmas throughout the Alta California missions. Popular in rural Spain, *pastorelas* involved the community in a recreation of the shepherds' visit to the Holy Family following the birth of Christ. Another composer and musician, fray Narciso Durán, was most remarkable for

a system of musical notation he employed to more easily teach Costanoans at Mission San José. He produced large choirbooks for use with orchestras and singers.

One of the last Franciscans to minister in Alta California was also an ethnographer. Missionary at San Juan Bautista from 1808-33, and afterwards at the northern mission of San Miguel Arcángel, Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta preserved both indigenous language and music. He transcribed melodies sung by the Mutsun into musical notation. Following a tradition of employing familiar tunes to teach doctrine, fray Felipe wrote his own music for use in evangelization. These settings of simple hymn tunes contained texts in Spanish, as well as in the Mutsun dialect. Fray Felipe re-used a book unfinished by a scribe to write plainsong and two-part masses and songs for use at San Miguel after Mexican Independence.

Not every Alta California mission boasted trained choirs and expert instrumentalists, because not all Franciscans in the region had extensive musical training. Fernando Martín and José Sánchez commented that the Ipai and Tipai at Mission San Diego had been supplied with instruments, and “they would become proficient if they had someone to teach them.” Indigenous talent was not enough to drive a mission’s musical program; a friar dedicated and able to teach singing, strings, and wind instruments was also necessary.

Other accomplished singers and instrumentalists, like fray Antonio Margil de Jesús and Jesuit fathers Juan María de Salvatierra and Pedro Nascimben had evangelized elsewhere in the northern frontier using music. But nowhere else in northern New Spain had there been such a systematic and cooperative effort, led by a cluster of expert musicians, to teach music, train choirs and orchestras, and even produce musical manuscripts for replication elsewhere. With the resources and talent, Franciscans in California left fragments of an incredibly rich musical repertoire, performed by indigenous peoples who had long made music part of their daily lives.

In Alta California, the close presence of soldiers and settlers brought secular music into the mission communities, including marches, fandangos, and waltzes. Fray Estevan Tapis stated that “it was the custom of the young Indians at Mission Santa Barbara to gather in the kitchen-court or the main mission patio and dance, sing, or play games to the accompaniment of music.”

Conclusions

It is impossible to overlook the abundance of differences in the music performed in mission communities across this vast geographic region and over a span of over 250 years. However, the musical culture of all but a few missions differed substantially from cathedral music in central Mexico. It was simpler, performed primarily by singers and instrumentalists with informal training, and intended to edify the church. The song and pageantry of mission communities instilled Catholic values and taught indigenous inhabitants not only Catholic doctrine but also how to become productive vassals of the king. Even so, northern-frontier missions were not so disconnected and isolated from the

Mexico City as might be imagined. Musical instruments, including organs, and items such as cloth, strings for violins and guitars, liturgical books, and bells were transported north to supply missionaries with goods for attracting Indians to the missions.

The early Jesuit missions in the near north as well as the early Franciscan missions in New Mexico seem to have possessed more elaborate musical cultures than their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century counterparts elsewhere in northern New Spain. At mission Santa María de las Parras, as in other early missions, Indians sang motets and figured chant as part of the celebration of mass and the divine offices. Liturgical dances and a large variety of musical instruments were also used at Parras. As the resources of the orders and the Spanish crown were spread more thinly and over a larger geographic span, the funds and efforts that could be devoted to music were more limited. The individual musical background and training of the missionaries was also very important in determining the type of music sung at the missions and the types of musical instruments constructed and played.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, music in the missions largely consisted of chant and simple polyphony for masses and vespers as well as simpler songs, such as *alabados*, for teaching and ordering daily schedules. Larger missions with more resources possessed more instruments bought in central Mexico or Europe, but mission residents in many areas, particularly the Jesuit northwest, made stringed instruments. Special occasions were cause for more elaborate performances, including dance and instruments. All communal worship involving music reflected the social, political, and economic conditions at work in the overlapping communities of New Spain's north.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, more military force was used to try to contain and pacify the Indians of the north, particularly in the Pimería Alta, Alta California, and Texas. This resulted in a renewed interest in using music as a hegemonic device. The musical culture of the Alta California missions, established in the late eighteenth century, and not secularized until after the colonial period, was different from that of other northern mission areas. In these missions, Indians were required to maintain residence at the mission pueblos; in some cases this was enforced by physically locking young members of the community in their quarters in the evenings. More consistent and controlled populations in these missions resulted in a great deal of musical training, including very large choirs and orchestras. Franciscans in Alta California also had the benefit of knowledge of evangelization techniques that had proven successful in other parts of Spanish America. Policies for the use of music in worship were more restrictive during the late colonial period; instruments were not commonly used in mass except for special occasions, and plainsong was again the preferred form for liturgical music. However, indigenous influence was still present in the wide variety of native dances and songs, which were performed mostly outside of the missions.

Over time, then, the musical culture of the northern missions experienced little substantial change when compared to the change in Catholic music in Europe and the Latin American cathedrals. Musical form and content, as well as instrumentation, of the mission music was simple. It included forms such as plainsong chant, simple organum,

and instruments such as the organ, strings, and woodwinds— all common in late-Renaissance liturgical music in Europe. The earliest and latest missions seem to have had more resources and musical performances most similar to those of the same period in central Mexico. In the late sixteenth century, motets were sung in the colleges and cathedrals of central New Spain, as well as in the missions of Nueva Vizcaya and New Mexico. In the early nineteenth century, Ignacio de Jerusalem's masses were both performed in the cathedrals of the Spanish empire and found in the library of Mission Santa Barbara. Baroque influences did not filter north from the cathedrals and composers of central Mexico until the nineteenth century in Alta California.

Finally, indigenous peoples were able to affect the type of music performed in their mission communities to a limited extent. Religious dance became part of the mission repertoires for special occasions such as Christmas, Corpus Christi, and Holy Week. Although the dances were not allowed inside the church, and access to costumes and instruments was sometimes controlled by the missionaries, many of the dances retained strong indigenous components. Certainly many indigenous groups continued dancing for their own special occasions (harvest or war, for example), often at night, in a location hidden or far from missionary control.

Indigenous peoples used music to their advantage throughout the northern frontier, quite possibly to avoid other work. Perhaps this is why Jesuits stationed at Cucurpe found the Opatas and Eudeves so eager to learn to sing and play musical instruments. Being a cantor, choir member, or instrumentalist meant avoiding or at least shortening *repartimiento* or other forced labor in the mines or nearby fields. Skilled musicians could also earn wages performing for secular and religious occasions in larger towns, supplementing their incomes and participating in celebrations which shared community values.

Both Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries successfully employed music as a powerful tool for teaching and attracting Indians to the missions. But it is also clear that indigenous peoples were able to engage with these uses of music, in some cases to their advantage.