

Handout 4

After reading the background information, read the passages and complete the appropriate sections of the graphic organizer. Prepare for the class discussion by considering your responses to the questions following the readings.

Background Information

While the presidio and the mission represented two essential components in the colonization of California, the two institutions were sometimes in disagreement. Franciscan friars, led by their father president, saw some of the soldiers as exploitative and corrupting influences upon the newly converted Indians. The friars also raised the issue of their independence from the military and their right to a military guard. The military, in turn, complained that Mass was rarely celebrated for them at the presidio. They also complained of the scarcity of supplies from the missions and asserted their right to have an inventory of mission supplies.

The two letters that follow, written by Fray Junípero Serra, Father President of the Alta California missions, and Governor Don Pedro Fages, reflect these positions.

First Reading

From Antonine Tibesar, O.F.M., ed., *Writings of Junípero Serra*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955-1966), 1:275-77. Reproduced here with permission of the Academy.

September 22, 1772

Hail Jesus, Mary, Joseph!

Captain Don Pedro Fages.

My dear Sir:

Having arrived in your company...at this port and Mission of San Diego...as regards the missions, which, insofar as they belong to our Apostolic College of San Fernando de México, are under my care, I have received a letter from my Superiors in which they order me once more to proceed with great prudence in founding new missions, and not to begin any without the necessary equipment and provisions.

Now seeing that you and I—each of us attending to what belongs to his own office, and, of course, carrying out the repeated injunctions from higher authority are under obligation to set up the Mission of San Buenaventura...; after having carefully gone into every aspect of the question of the foundation, and after consulting with religious who have had years of experience in such matters, I have come to the conclusion that the following points are necessary

First,...the said mission, owing to its being situated on the Santa Barbara Channel, should not be begun with less than twenty-five men, because the great population and the unrest among the gentiles there calls for so large a number, I ask that there be assigned to it at least twenty men, to be made up in the following way: leather jacket soldiers—fifteen, sailors—four, and one muleteer.... Likewise, I ask that it should be agreed upon, with all points determined, and the agreement written down, in order to obviate disputes between the Fathers and the Corporal—that the sailors and muleteers are to remain there as servants of the mission, subject to the orders of the missionary Fathers, in the same way that the soldiers are to their corporal and other superiors....

Likewise, about mules and horses: if those belonging to the King, or to the King's presidio, do not transport from this port to the mission, or the place provided for it, all the equipment and provisions, it is evident that the number of eight transport mules that was given to the other missions is quite insufficient. And if such transportation is not provided, I ask for this mission especially, which, above all others, is the one most removed from every port, that twelve mules should be given to it immediately....

Likewise, with reference to the provisions brought by His Majesty's packet boats, given for the maintenance of the mission and its escort for a period of one year, more or less, I ask that there should be a separate account for what is provided for the mission: I mean for the Fathers, the servants and the Indians. And a separate account for the escort, viz: the corporal, soldiers and couriers. And I ask that this second account, if possible, be handed over to the corporal or anyone else you may prefer, other than the Fathers, so that he may distribute, according to his method and account, the weekly rations. In this way complaints will cease between soldiers and Fathers concerning rations; and you yourself will find it all the easier to examine and verify if there have been losses in the assigned quantities.

Likewise, if it is conceded that the soldiers, who are only for escort, are to have a servant, I ask that the presidio supply one—with salary or not—so that they may not weary the Fathers with requests to provide them for such service with an Indian of the two or less who can work for the mission....

*Kissing your hand, I am
Your most affectionate servant and chaplain,
Hail Jesus, Mary, Joseph! Forever!
Fray Junípero Serra*

Handout 4

Second Reading

From Antonine Tibesar, O.F.M., ed., *Writings of Junípero Serra*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955-1966), 1:399-401. Reproduced here with permission of the Academy.

Very Reverend Father President.

Dear Sir:

In answer to the request Your Reverence makes in the letter before me, I reply that I quite agree with you that I came in your company from the Presidio and Mission of San Carlos de Monterey to this port of San Diego, where lay anchored his Majesty's—whom God keep—two packet boats called the San Antonio, alias El Principe, and the San Carlos, both destined and ordered to Monterey, and carrying the equipment belonging to Your Reverence and other missionary Fathers, as well as loaded with provisions, articles and effects, all destined to help the men in the new establishments of the presidio and the missions.

I likewise concede that in what concerns the illustrious Apostolic College of San Fernando de México, the missions are put in Your Reverence's care—that is, the spiritual care of all, and political governance of all within the enclosure of the missions, the Indians; and of all the lands and cattle belonging to them, you are the administrator. Nor will Your Reverence call into question that political and military authority belongs to me, as well as the foundation of the missions—but this in agreement with Your Reverence, following the orders of the Most Excellent Lord the Marquis de Croix.

And as to the duties assigned to each of us it is true that the place assigned for the foundation of the Mission San Buenaventura is near the village of La Asumpta at the entrance to the Santa Barbara Channel.

1. I point out that, putting on one side the opinions of the man you quote, or of anyone else whatever, my own opinion concerning the establishment of the said mission is that twelve to fifteen leather-jacketed soldiers would be sufficient; of sailors eight could be found, which would mean two for each of the other missions, and three or four for the presidio. One muleteer will be provided for the mission.... And at such times as the service of His Majesty requires it, the soldiers will lend a hand, but always with this well in mind—that when they have fulfilled their assignment, they shall return to their quarters.

2. In case sailors are appointed to work for the mission, the Fathers will be free to direct them in their work without any interference from the Corporal in that regard. The same will apply to the mule driver destined for the same mission....

Very Reverend Father, I want to remind you once more of the request I made of you a few days ago by word of mouth, concerning the provisions that were delivered into the possession of this mission by the Sergeant Ortega, Corporal Mariano Verdugo, and Señor Don Juan Pérez; by knowing the exact amounts of these provisions I will be able to make a division in all fairness between this mission and the others, and the presidio in proportion to the number of the escort soldiers, and the servants of these establishments; such a method of handling the matter seems to me very fitting and necessary for the peace and satisfaction of all concerned.

*In the Mission of San Diego, September 30, 1772.
Kissing the hand of Your Reverence,
Your most devoted, affectionate and loyal servant,
Pedro Fages*

What do you think?

1. What does each writer consider to be of the greatest importance?
2. Who does each believe to be the highest authority?
3. Which words are used to strengthen each argument?
4. Describe the various reasons and/or background experiences that may have caused these two men to have different perceptions about life in early Alta California?
5. Based on the stated expectations and the tone of each selection, what do you infer to have been the relationship between the two men?

Handout 4

Multiple Viewpoints of Presidio Life Graphic Organizer

Source	Location, Date	Brief Description of Situation	Perception/Viewpoint
First Reading: Junípero Serra			
Second Reading: Pedro Fages			