

Chapter 7: Two-Spirit People and the Impact of Colonialism in California

Joyas and Missionaries:

Californian Two-Spirit Indigenous Culture and The Impact of Colonialism

Essential Question: How did the missions and colonialism change gender diversity for Native Californians?

Directions: Close Read the following primary source documents and answer the questions below each one.

Background Text	Indigenous Studies Professor Deborah Miranda [Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen Nation, Chumash], “Extermination of the Joyas Gendercide in Spanish California,” GLQ 16, nos. 1-2 (2010), 277-278.
	“The Chumash ’aqi, or joyas, fulfilled important roles as spiritual community leaders.... This is what comes down to us as Two-Spirit people: the necessity of our roles as keepers of a dual or blended gender that holds male and female energy in various mixtures and keeps the world balanced...”
What are the roles of two-spirit people, according to Deborah Miranda?	

Primary Source #1	Pedro Fages, A Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California by Pedro Fages, Soldier of Spain, trans. Herbert Priestley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1937 [1775]), 33.]
	“I have substantial evidence that those Indian [Coast Miwok] men who, both here and farther inland, are observed in the dress, clothing, and character of women.... They are called <i>joyas</i> [two-spirits], and are held in great esteem [by the But we place our trust in God and expect that these accursed people will disappear with the growth of the missions. The abominable vice will be eliminated to the extent that the Catholic faith and all the other virtues are firmly implanted there, for the glory of God and the benefit of those poor ignorants.”
What were two-spirit people called by the Coast Miwok? How does Pedro Fages describe two-spirit culture? According to Pedro Fages, what will happen to the <i>joyas</i> when the mission system grows?	

Primary Source #2	Francisco Palou, Francisco Palou's Life and Apostolic Labors of the Venerable Father Junípero Serra, trans. George Wharton James (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1913 [1787], 215
	“In the stretch of land along the Channel of Santa Barbara there are to be found many Coias [joyas, or two-spirits], and that it is rarely you can find a [Chumash] village where there are not two or three. But we trust in God that as the country is gradually being filled with the Missions, these detestable people will be eradicated and ... in its stead will be planted the Catholic faith ... for the greater glory of God and for the better welfare of these poor degraded people.”
What is another word for two-spirit that is mentioned in this source? According to Francisco Palou, how common are Coias (joyas, or two-spirits) in Chumash villages? What does he predict will happen to the <i>joyas</i> when the mission system grows?	

Primary Source #3	Francisco Palou, Francisco Palou’s Life and Apostolic Labors of the Venerable Father Junípero Serra, trans. George Wharton James (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1913 [1787], 214-215
“[At the Santa Clara Mission] the Father Missionaries ... noticed that among the gentile [Native] women (who always worked separately and without mixing with the men) there was one who, by the dress ... as well as in the manner of working ... had all the appearances of a woman, but ...they concluded he must be a man, so they asked some of the [Native Catholic] converts. They said it was a man, but that he passed himself off as a woman and always went with them and not the men....They kept him there three days, making him sweep the plaza, but giving him plenty to eat. But he remained very cast down and ashamed. After he had been warned that it was not right for him to go about dressed as a woman ... they let him go. He immediately left ... and never came back..., but from the converts it was learned that he was still in the villages of the gentiles [non-Catholic Native Californians] and going about as before, dressed as a woman.”	
What happened when the missionaries discovered a two-spirit person at the Santa Clara Mission? How did this two-spirit person fight back against colonialism?	

Closing Text	Deborah Miranda, “Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California,” GLQ 16, nos. 1/2 (2010): 265
	“As time went on and escapes ... became less viable, joyas trapped in the missions or brought in by raiding parties suffered from a kind of social dislocation that must have been deeply troubling. Precontact native Californian societies ... generally kept men and women working at separate tasks.... Women had their work areas and were accustomed to withdrawing to them to weave, harvest, process and prepare food, care for children, and so on. Joyas were always a part of this women’s world and did not cross over into the men’s territory. The mission priests ... demanded that joyas spend all their time in ‘masculine’ company, doing ‘masculine’ work, rather than in the company of women and benefiting from the camaraderie, friendships, and sense of worth found there.”
	Deborah Miranda says that the <i>joyas</i> suffered from “social dislocation.” What do you think that means? What did the priests demand that the <i>joyas</i> do?

Essential Question: How did the missions and colonialism change gender diversity for Indigenous Californians?

Answer the questions using EVIDENCE from the sources above.

Answer:

Evidence:

References

Fages, P. (1937). *A historical, political, and natural description of California* by Pedro Fages, Soldier of Spain, trans. Herbert Priestley. University of California Press.

Miranda, D. A. (2010). Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 16(1), 253–284. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2009-023>

Palóu, F. (1955). *Life of Fray Junípero Serra*, Ed. and Trans. Maynard J. Geiger. American Academy of Franciscan History.