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“Bringing Them under Subjection:” California’s Tejón Indian Reservation and Beyond, 1852–1864.

George Harwood Phillips

Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004; xvii + 369 pp., maps, illustrations, tables, endnotes, bibliography, index; clothbound, \$59.95.

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Situated as it is between the Coast Ranges, the Sierra Nevada, and the Mojave Desert, the San Joaquin Valley has long been a region of extensive cultural interaction. Linguistic, ethnographic, genetic, and archaeological data reflect population expansions and interregional exchanges that occurred in the valley long before Europeans arrived. Cultural interactions within this region continued to be important after the colonial settlement of California. *“Bringing Them under Subjection”* is the final volume in George Harwood Phillips’s trilogy documenting the changes occurring among the San Joaquin Valley’s native peoples over nearly a century, from the time of the first Spanish *entrada* in 1769 until the closing of the Tejón Indian Reservation in 1864 (Phillips 1993, 1997).

During the Mission Period, the San Joaquin region was a frontier where native groups existed at the margin of direct colonial control. The subsequent conquest of California by the United States and the discovery of gold led to a greater emphasis on this area as a cultural interface between Europeans and Native Americans. Based on treaties negotiated with California Indians in 1851–52, ten reservations were established in Central California, including one at El Tejón, where one of the treaties had been signed. Edward F. Beale, who played a major role in the conquest of California during the Mexican War and then became a business associate of John C. Frémont, was appointed as the first Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the state. After the U. S. Senate famously failed to ratify the treaties signed in 1851–52, Beale proposed to Congress that military reserves be established where Indians would settle and practice agriculture. An

amendment to an appropriations bill allowed for the implementation of Beale’s plan. Phillips’s book focuses on Beale’s formation of the Sebastian Military Reserve, more commonly known as the Tejón Reservation, as his model experiment for bringing California Indians “under subjection.”

Phillips is not the first author to discuss the history of the Tejón Reservation; one of the best of these previous efforts is Giffen and Woodward’s *The Story of El Tejon* (1942). Phillips’s work is more extensive, though, and is the first to examine the broader historical context of California Indian affairs in the San Joaquin Valley region during this period. *“Bringing Them Under Subjection”* reconstructs the history of the Fresno and Kings River farms, hitherto understudied, as well as of the Tejón Reservation, and takes advantage of a variety of previously unused archival sources. Phillips shows how Beale’s plan had continuity with the mission system of the preceding Spanish and Mexican periods. Most of the Indian leaders of various groups who settled upon the Tejón Reservation had been raised at the missions, so Beale was taking advantage of (and took credit for) a previously trained work force that had considerable prior experience in being self-supporting through agricultural labor. The plan that Beale implemented owed a considerable debt to recommendations contained in a report submitted to him by B. D. Wilson, although it was one mostly composed by Judge Benjamin Hayes (Caughey 1952).

Phillips makes good use of ethnographic studies—especially those written by Kroeber and Merriam—and ethnohistorical studies based on mission documents, to supplement information from government documents and other sources in order to identify the sociopolitical groups and leaders who were the focus of federal attention during this period. Among the strengths of the book are thirteen tables and eleven maps that make accessible information contained in previously unpublished government reports about the leaders and populations associated with the reservation and farms, their agricultural production, and the expenditures associated with the California Indian superintendency. The book’s illustrations include nineteenth-century depictions of the Tejón Indians and their residences, as well as portraits of Beale and others who influenced the history of Indian affairs in the region.

This reviewer noticed very few errors, but as is inevitable when a topic has been the subject of one’s

own research, there will be some facet of the story where contradictory evidence is known to exist. Incorrect biographical information is given twice in the volume. The biographical details in question pertain to Zapatero and Raymundo, both of whom were signatories of the 1851 Tejón Treaty and then subsequently served as chiefs for different groups on Beale's reservation. In his note 15 to Chapter 3 (p. 278), Phillips repeats an erroneous assertion that Zapatero was known by the name Pablo (Latta 1976:128), disregarding other sources that identify him as an individual baptized as Antonio at Mission San Fernando (Johnson 1997:262–263). Phillips in fact had identified Zapatero correctly in his first chapter (p. 3), but his end note to Chapter 3 does not reflect this knowledge. The second instance of inaccurate biographical detail pertains to Raymundo, a Hometwoli Yokuts leader. Raymundo is asserted to have been affiliated with Mission Santa Bárbara (p. 37), but he actually had been baptized at Mission Santa Inés. Phillips cites a genealogy by this reviewer (Johnson 1988:238) that shows Raymundo's relationships to other Hometwoli people at Santa Inés and Santa Bárbara, as well as to his part-Chumash kin, but fails to note his proper mission affiliation. Besides these minor biographical corrections, the only other error noted was a typographic misspelling of the Yokuts village name *Tsuitsau*, which was accurately given on the map on p. 121 but then incorrectly reported as "Tsuitsan" in Tables 5–6 later in the chapter. These few mistakes are unimportant to the overall story, and it is perhaps inevitable that some errors will get past the most careful authors and editors.

The book's final chapter calls for a reassessment of Beale's role in the history of the southern San Joaquin Valley. Beale has often been portrayed as the founder of the reservation system and protector of the Indians. Some of this traditional interpretation is derived from Beale's very active public relations campaign when he was Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California. Phillips pointedly notes that Beale took credit for work accomplished by others; e.g., the prior efforts of the three Indian agents who actually set up the state's first reservation system, and the recommendations formulated by Benjamin Hayes that Beale used as the basis for his own plan. Evidently Beale did establish good relations with the Tejón Indians during his tenure as superintendent; however, it is also clear that he later took

advantage of his knowledge of the region to purchase the land grants upon which the Tejón Reservation had been established, effectively removing the Indians' rights to their aboriginal territory. Later, during his appointment as Surveyor General, Beale used public funds to survey properties that he acquired in the Tejón vicinity and fit these together to form his own private empire.

The theme of the San Joaquin region as a frontier where cultural interactions had significant consequences for native peoples is continued in "*Bringing Them under Subjection*." One of this book's achievements is to link together many facts not previously connected to create a new synthesis of historical information. By so doing, Phillips deserves major credit for shedding considerable light upon a formative period of California Indian history. Descendants of the San Joaquin's native peoples, both those who are members of federally recognized tribes and those who are not, will be helped by this book to better understand the experiences of their forebears and to reconstruct their tribal histories. The story of the Tejón Reservation and of the Indian farms at Fresno and Kings River has not been told as well nor documented as meticulously by any previous writer.

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