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Richard A. Hanks: This War Is For a Whole Life: The Culture of Resistance Among Southern California Indians, 1850 -1966

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uses, and of accompanying issues to consider when doing so. Subsequent chapters detail plant gathering and preparation practices, drying and storing, and the types of medicinal applications used for various ailments or sicknesses. Beverly's detailed descriptions of Josephine's knowledge and experiences with plants provide a deep insight into the importance of plants in everyday life, as well as their having a fundamental role in Indian culture and traditions. Discussions of categories of medicinal plants used as blood purifiers, cleansers, gargles, inhalants, hair rinses, soaks, washes, poultices, pastes, salves, and cough syrups provide a wide range of applications and contexts for healing. Additional information is included on those plants or parts of plants used for food and their various preparation methods. The main part of the book is the chapter entitled "The Plants," in which over 170 different species of native and non-native, wild and cultivated, plants are featured. The Latin or scientific, Karuk (if available), and common name of each plant is given; information on the parts utilized, their uses, dosage, and additional background on use and preparation is then provided. A few of the common names given by Josephine for some plants do not always reflect wider usage or the Latin name, as a result of not having proper field or

specimen identifications. However, many featured plants have accompanying photographs which visually aid the reader. The book ends with a section that includes many valuable references and a good, detailed index of plants, medical conditions, and subjects. These features make the book a very useful and quick guide to "find what you are looking for."

*After the First Full Moon in April* embodies a rich cultural legacy of an extraordinary Indian elder woman's plant knowledge and experiences. Beverly Ortiz's efforts and care to include many details pertaining to Josephine's relationship with plants and people make this book uniquely different from other ethnobotanical guides. The book continues to enrich and provide readers with a source of appreciation and respect for plants and tribal ethnobotanical traditions. It is now widely used and is kept on the coffee tables or kitchen counter tops in many tribal and other community members' homes along the Klamath, Salmon, and Trinity rivers from Yreka to Somes Bar to Hoopa, and in the surrounding Northwestern California region. It is also used by a number of universities and other organizations as a text. Hardcopy versions are hard to find, reprints may be limited, and many people buy several copies for future use or gifts, so be sure to get your own copy today.



***This War Is For a Whole Life:  
The Culture of Resistance  
Among Southern California  
Indians, 1850–1966***

Richard A. Hanks  
Banning, Cal.: Ushkana Press, 2012, 222 pp., \$29

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Drawing its title from the words of nineteenth century leader Antonio Garra, Richard Hank's *This War Is For a Whole Life* is a paean to Southern California

Indian peoples' long struggle for self-determination. A culmination of many years of research, the book is a revision of Hank's 2006 dissertation, and is solidly based on extensive archival work, knowledge of the secondary literature, and many interviews with Indian people. Like many others who have written about Southern California's "rich history of resistance" (p. 189) since George Phillips' pioneering work *Chiefs and Challengers*, Hanks challenges the stereotype of Mission Indian passivity. Hank's central argument is that the region is notable for several important pan-Indian leaders, who inspired and mobilized political action for justice, equality, water, and land, and whose example foreshadowed the rise the pan-Indian organizations in the twentieth century.

“The Mission Indian Federation,” he writes, “continued the war started by Antonio Garra in 1851—a war for a whole life” (p. 189). The book succeeds admirably in confirming the conclusion that Indian political activism was a very pronounced and persistent feature in Southern California Indian culture. It is beautifully embellished by dozens of historic photographs and graphics.

In addition to its coherent thesis, attractive presentation, and engaging writing style, *This War* has several fine features that increase its appeal to multiple audiences as a reference work, a teaching text, or simply a good read. “Resistance ranged from simple obstruction to assassination,” he declares, “but local Indians remained ready to respond to the next Indian leader of passion and conviction” (p. 47). This is a telling phrase, for Hanks is driven by the same passion and conviction, and adheres to a perennially popular “patriot chiefs” narrative. His sympathies for the enslaved, oppressed, and victimized Indians of Southern California consistently shape his viewpoint. Since he has incorporated much recent scholarship in a reasonably comprehensive way, *This War* is an up-to-date overview of Indian-white relations in the region, set against the backdrop of national policy developments and transitions, and demonstrating the important linkages among local and national pan-Indian movements. The book contributes new research—for example, fresh examples of Indian resistance to colonialism, such as a strike by Soboba lace makers in 1914—and new gems of information about well-known historical actors and events.

The book is organized into nine chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 sets the tone with its discussion of the brutality of the mission system as exemplified by the Juañeno of coastal Orange County. Chapters 2 and 3 ground the work thematically by focusing on Antonio Garra’s efforts to organize pan-Indian warfare against the American intruders in 1851, and on Olegario Calac’s leadership during the critical years of the early 1870s. In the early 1850s, a window for keeping native homelands closed, he argues, because Juan Antonio and Garra failed to cooperate. Calac, he persuasively demonstrates, provided a model of pan-Indian leadership that later generations admired and emulated. Chapter 4 digresses into a discussion of the Paiute Wars of the 1860s, but he rebuilds momentum for his thesis in Chapter 5, which deals with a power struggle at Morongo Reservation in

the 1890s. William Pablo (*Wanakik* Cahuilla) is presented as a “traditional” chief: a defender of older political prerogatives and Indian resources against the growing intrusions of white settlers and the Indian Bureau. The book contains numerous photographs and references to Pablo, who utilized pan-Indian networks; because he is a pivotal “transitional” figure in Hanks’ argument. Without providing evidence for this exaggerated claim, Hanks emphasizes the idea that Pablo galvanized “all groups of Native Americans in the region” (pp. 77–78; cf. pp. 105, 187). The following chapter, “The ‘Vanishing Policy,’” reviews the ‘Kill the Indian and Save the Man’ policies of the assimilation era (as famously advanced by reformer Henry Pratt); this is the context for understanding the extreme native responses of suicide and the rape/murder of Pechanga schoolteacher Mary Platt in 1908. The framing of such actions as acts of resistance is mirrored in the following chapter in Hanks’ discussion of the leadership of Leoncio Lugo and the execution of agent William Stanley on the Cahuilla reservation in 1912; here the argument is more convincing. In the final two chapters, the book takes a close look at the Mission Indian Federation between 1919 and 1966. Coming full circle, the last chapter foregrounds Federation activists in the coastal and federally-unrecognized Juaneño and Gabrieleño tribes, insightfully documenting the kin networks that linked the Federationists in its last days. The book meanders somewhat in its last chapters, as Hanks endeavors to integrate major events and historical actors, both nationally and pan-regionally. The stories of the Federation’s white councilors—Jonathan Tibbet and Purl Willis—and Indian leaders Adam Castillo and Clarence Lobo (among many others) are interwoven with the national policy shifts of the Indian New Deal of the early 1930s and the Termination movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The structure nonetheless is sound.

Hanks’ examination in Chapters 8 of the Mission Indian Federation, particularly during the volatile formative period from 1919 to 1923, is one of the most searching to date. Heightened emotions and a cauldron of controversial discourses over Indian citizenship, bolshevism, assimilation, and allotment attended the birth of the pan-regional organization. Native people’s status as non-citizen wards particularly rankled Southern California Indians; Joe Pete, a founding Federation member, resisted the draft in World War I. When several

Federation members were indicted for anti-American activities, the organization responded with flag-waving declarations of Americanism (p. 138). Hanks does not explain how consensus was hammered out, but three goals provided unity in the early years: opposition to “forced” allotment (as a vehicle for termination), the demand for full citizenship (fueled by resentment of unending federal paternalism without statutory authority), and the desire to “abolish the Bureau.” Together, these aims created a platform encapsulated under the Federation banner of “Human Rights and Home Rule.” The Society for the American Indian (SAI) influenced the Federation’s ideology and agenda from its founding, for Carlos Montezuma’s call to “abolish the Bureau” resonated strongly among Southern California Indians who resented the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ growing intrusion into Native politics and lifeways. Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, the Federation rather effectively orchestrated strong opposition to the Bureau’s abuse of power. The 1930s was the finest hour for the Federation, the Cahuilla-centric Hanks argues, for during this decade the Agua Caliente Federationists successfully made a stand to defend their land and water.

The Southern California Indians were resoundingly opposed to the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) and were critical of John Collier, as was the national right-of-center national organization, the American Indian Federation (AIF). Political activists like Rupert Costo saw the IRA as perpetuating both paternalism and Indians’ humiliating second-class status as wards, while also saddling them with the deviant tag of communism. A significant insight to be drawn from Hanks’ evidence is that prominent Federationists like President Adam Castillo held interlocking memberships in the AIF. This linkage explains the persistence of the anti-Bureau/anti-IRA/pro-termination stance of the Federation’s later years, as much as—or more than—the personality and politics of the avid Republican Purl Willis.

What distinguishes Hanks’ book from those of other scholars who have assessed the region’s history is the strong emphasis he places on consensus and continuity. The Federation assumed “primary authority” (p. 142) over Southern California Indians in the 1920s and continued to “spread its control” (p. 148) in the 1930s, thus constructing the Federation as monolithic and hegemonic. Though Hanks notes periodic defections and factionalism, unity

is highlighted, a prime example being the minimization of the differences between pro- and anti-termination groups in the 1960s (p. 188). In terms of historical continuity of pan-Indian goals, Pablo’s opposition to allotment matches the Federation’s anti-allotment stance (p. 142). There is a nice correlation between the Federation’s “Human Rights and Home Rule” and Collier’s anti-allotment/home rule platform, the latter in turn providing a bridge to the pan-Indianism of the 1960s and 1970s. Southern California Indians not only “fought,” they led, he concludes, shaping national policy in “securing or altering the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, the California Indians’ Jurisdictional Act in 1928, the creation of the Claims Commission in 1928 and 1946, and the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934” (pp. 200–201).

His conclusions are partially persuasive. I heartily concur that the Federation had an underappreciated impact on national policy. San Diego Congressman Phil Swing and John Collier co-opted the Federation’s call for “home rule” for their own political purposes. However, it strikes the reader as overly romantic to valorize the Federation as a noble institution reflecting the majority aims of aged traditionalists who constituted its “backbone” and were led by ‘Buffalo Heart’ Tippet, a man called to the people by prophecy (p. 122). The Federation may rightfully claim a dignified place in the genealogy of the now-venerated Indian Reorganization Act, but it parented the politically-incorrect Termination movement in California, as its mid-century alignment with the right-of-center AIF verifies. In part this is a semantic problem—in the twenty-first century “self-determination” suggests tribal sovereignty, whereas in the 1930s “self-determination” more readily evoked a freedom from wardship and paternalism. What “home rule” meant in 1910 was a far cry from what it came to mean in 1960.

Hanks’ enthusiasm for his thesis leads to occasional errors: an uncritical reading of primary documents, overstatements, and assertions unsupported by evidence or contradicted by the existing empirical evidence. Hanks’ focus on resistance and pan-Indian mobilization leaves underdeveloped the complex causes of political mobilization and alliance as they varied across Southern California’s two dozen Indian communities and morphed over time. Allotment as a powerful force underlying political mobilization, for example, is oversimplified.

A great number of Southern California Indian reservations were allotted by the turn of the century; when the push to allot the remaining reservations began after 1917, the Bureau wanted to reassign allotments to the already allotted reservations, a divisive action that split people into Federation and anti-Federation camps.

Such flaws in this otherwise solid book call for further research. Thanks to the work of Heather Ponchetti Daly (2013), a more nuanced reconstruction of the Federation is emerging. What remains debatable is whether the Federation represented a majority will in Southern California after 1935. Current research suggests that political activists among Southern California Indians were generally anti-Bureau and anti-IRA until the mid-1930s, with the Federation strongest in specific communities; to the extent that it held together a constituency, it was due to the organization's promise to secure a positive settlement in the California Claims case. Factionalism arguably was the norm at mid-century, as many became disaffected by the Federationists'

right-wing leanings and the persistent charges of embezzlement. The Great Depression muted criticism of the Bureau as federal paternalism was needed, and not just by Indians. A highly problematic question remains: when did the idea become dominant that the reservation land bases should be preserved? New methodologies will need to be devised to better assess political allegiances and their causes.

This book is a good addition to the library of anyone seriously interested in Southern California Indian history. Search for it on the Ushkana Press website. The photo of William Pablo hamming it up as a Keystone cop (p. 62) is alone worth the price of the book.

#### REFERENCE

- Daly, Heather Ponchetti  
2013 *American Indian Freedom Controversy: Politics and Social Activism by Southern California Mission Indians, 1934–1958*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

