

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AN ISLAND ON THE LAND

by Carey McWilliams



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principal charms of Southern California, as Farnsworth Crowder has pointed out, is that it is not overburdened with historical distractions. "As against any European country, certain parts of the United States and even neighboring Mexico," writes Mr. Crowder, "human culture has left relatively few marks, monuments and haunts over the vast virginal face of the state. Almost any square block of London is more drenched with flavors of the past than the whole of Los Angeles. The desert areas and valleys cannot evoke any such awareness of human antiquity and the genesis of great religions and civilizations as can the borderlands of the Mediterranean. No Wordsworths, no Caesars, no Pharaohs have made their homes here. The Californian simply cannot feed upon the fruits and signs of yesterday as can a Roman, a Parisian, an Oxonian." And yet this is precisely what he attempts to do. The newness of the land itself seems, in fact, to have compelled, to have demanded, the evocation of a mythology which could give people a sense of continuity in a region long characterized by rapid social dislocations. And of course it would be a tourist, a goggle-eyed umbrella-packing tourist, who first discovered the past of Southern California and peopled it with curious creatures of her own invention.

### 1. "H. H."

Some day the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce should erect a great bronze statue of Helen Hunt Jackson at the entrance to Cajon Pass. Beneath the statue should be inscribed no flowery dedication, but the simple inscription: "H. H.—In Gratitude." For little, plump, fair-skinned, blue-eyed Helen Hunt Jackson, "H. H." as she was known to every resident of Southern California, was almost solely responsible for the evocation of its Mission past, and it was she who catapulted the lowly Digger Indian of Southern California into the empyrean.

Born in Amherst on October 15, 1830, Helen Maria Fiske became a successful writer of trite romances and sentimental poems quite unlike those written by her friend and neighbor, Emily Dickinson. She was married in 1852 to Lieutenant Edward Bissell Hunt of the Coast Survey, who died a few years after the marriage. In later years, she married William Sharpless Jackson, a wealthy banker and railroad executive of Colorado Springs. It is rather ironic to note that Mrs. Jackson, who became one of the most ardent free-lance apolo-

Clear ring the silvery Mission bells

Their calls to vesper and to mass;

O'er vineyard slopes, thro' fruited dells,

The long processions pass.

The pale Franciscan lifts in air

The cross above the kneeling throng;

Their simple world how sweet with prayer,

With chant and matin song!

—Ina Coolbrith

## CHAPTER IV

### THE GROWTH OF A LEGEND

CONSIDERING the long dark record of Indian mistreatment in Southern California, it is difficult to account for the curious legend that has developed in the region about the well-being of the natives under Mission rule. According to this legend, the Missions were havens of happiness and contentment for the Indians, places of song, laughter, good food, beautiful languor, and mystical adoration of the Christ. What is still more astonishing is the presence in the legend of an element of masochism, with the Americans, who manufactured the legend, taking upon themselves full responsibility for the criminal mistreatment of the Indian and completely exonerating the Franciscans. "In the old and happy days of Church domination and priestly rule," writes one Protestant historian, "there had been no 'Indian question.' That came only after American 'civilization' took from the red men their lands and gave them nothing in return."

Equally baffling, at first blush, is the intense preoccupation of Southern California with its Mission-Spanish past. Actually one of the

gists for the Catholic Church in America, was a confirmed anti-Papist until she visited California. As might have been expected, she first became interested in Indians while attending a tea party in Boston. At this tea, she met Standing Bear and Bright Eyes, who were lecturing on the grievous wrongs suffered by the Poncas tribe. At the time of this meeting, Mrs. Jackson was forty-nine years of age, bubbling with enthusiasm, full of rhymes. Quick to catch the "aboriginal contagion," which had begun to spread among the writers of American romances, she immediately usurped the position of defender of the Poncas tribe and thereafter no more was heard of Standing Bear and Bright Eyes. In 1881 Harper's published her well-known work, *A Century of Dishonor*, which did much to arouse a new, although essentially spurious, interest in the American Indian.

In the spring of 1872, Mrs. Jackson had made a brief visit, as a tourist, to the northern part of California. Later she made three trips, as a tourist, to Southern California: in the winter of 1881-1882, the spring of 1883, and the winter, spring, and summer of 1884-1885. It scarcely needs to be emphasized that her knowledge of California, and of the Mission Indians, was essentially that of the tourist and casual visitor. Although she did prepare a valuable report on the Mission Indians, based on a field trip that she made with Abbot Kinney of Los Angeles, most of her material about Indians was second-hand and consisted, for the greater part, of odds and ends of gossip, folk tales, and Mission-inspired allegories of one kind or another.

She had originally been sent to Southern California by Century magazine to write some stories about the Missions, which, according to the illustrator who accompanied her, were to be "enveloped in the mystery and poetry of romance." In Southern California she became deliriously enamored of the Missions, then in a state of general disrepair and neglect, infested with countless swallows and pigeons, overrun by sheep and goats, and occasionally inhabited by stray dogs and wandering Indians. "In the sunny, delicious, winterless California air," these crumbling ruins, with their walled gardens and broken bells, their vast cemeteries and caved-in wells, exerted a potent romantic influence on Mrs. Jackson's highly susceptible nature. Out of these brief visits to Southern California came *Ramona*, the first novel written about the region, which became, after its publication in 1884,

one of the most widely read American novels of the time. It was this novel which firmly established the Mission legend in Southern California.

When the book was first published, it provoked a storm of protest in the Southland. Egged on by various civic groups, the local critics denounced it as a tissue of falsehoods, a travesty on history, a damnable libel on Southern California. But the book was perfectly timed, providentially timed, to coincide with the great invasion of home-seekers and tourists to the region. As these hordes of winter tourists began to express a lively interest in visiting "Ramona's land," Southern California experienced an immediate change of attitude and, overnight, became passionately Ramona-conscious. Beginning about 1887, a Ramona promotion, of fantastic proportions, began to be organized in the region.

Picture postcards, by the tens of thousands, were published showing "the school attended by Ramona," "the original of Ramona," "the place where Ramona was married," and various shots of the "Ramona Country." Since the local chambers of commerce could not, or would not, agree upon the locale of the novel—one school of thought insisted that the Camulos rancho was the scene of the more poignant passages while still another school insisted that the Hacienda Guajome was the authentic locale—it was not long before the scenic postcards depicting the Ramona Country had come to embrace all of Southern California. In the 'eighties, the Southern Pacific tourist and excursion trains regularly stopped at Camulos, so that the wide-eyed Bostonians, guidebooks in hand, might detain, visit the rancho, and bounce up and down on "the bed in which Ramona slept." Thousands of Ramona baskets, plaques, pincushions, pillows, and souvenirs of all sorts were sold in every curio shop in California. Few tourists left the region without having purchased a little replica of the "bells that rang when Ramona was married." To keep the tourist interest alive, local press agents for fifty years engaged in a synthetic controversy over the identities of the "originals" for the universally known characters in the novel. Some misguided Indian women began to take the promotion seriously and had themselves photographed—copyright reserved—as "the original Ramona." A bibliography of the newspaper stories, magazine articles, and pamphlets written about some aspect of the Ramona legend would fill a volume. Four husky

volumes of Ramonana appeared in Southern California: *The Real Ramona* (1900), by D. A. Hufford; *Through Ramona's Country* (1908), the official, classic document, by George Wharton James; *Ramona's Homeland* (1914), by Margaret V. Allen; and *The True Story of Ramona* (1914), by C. C. Davis and W. A. Anderson.

From 1884 to date, the Los Angeles Public Library has purchased over a thousand copies of *Ramona*. Thirty years after publication, the same library had a constant waiting list for 105 circulating copies of the book. The sales to date total 601,636 copies, deriving from a Regular Edition, a Monterey Edition (in two volumes), a De Luxe Edition, a Pasadena Edition, a Tourist Edition, a Holiday Art Edition, and a Gift Edition. Hundreds of unoffending Southern California babies have been named Ramona. A townsite was named Ramona. And in San Diego thousands of people make a regular pilgrimage to "Ramona's Marriage Place," where the True Vow Keepers Clubs—made up of couples who have been married fifty years or longer—hold their annual picnics. The Native Daughters of the Golden West have named one of their "parlors," or lodges, after Ramona. The name Ramona appears in the corporate title of fifty or more businesses currently operating in Los Angeles. Two of Mrs. Jackson's articles for *Century*, "Father Junipero and His Work," and "The Present Condition of the Mission Indians of Southern California," were for years required reading in the public schools of California. Reprints of Henry Sandham's illustrations for *Ramona* are familiar items in Southern California homes, hotels, restaurants, and places of business. In 1914 one of the Ramona historians truthfully said that "Mrs. Jackson's name is familiar to almost every human being in Southern California, from the little three-year-old tot, who has her choice juvenile stories read to him, to the aged grandmother who sheds tears of sympathy for Ramona." Two generations of Southern California children could recite from memory the stanzas from Ina Coolbrith's verses to Helen Hunt Jackson, often ornately framed on the walls of Southern California homes:

*There, with her dimpled, lifted hands,  
Parting the mustard's golden plumes,  
The dusky maid, Ramona, stands,  
Amid the sea of blooms.*

*And Alessandro, type of all*

*His broken tribe, for evermore*

*An exile, hears the stranger call*

*Within his father's door.*

Translated into all known languages, *Ramona* has also been dramatized. The play based on the novel was first presented at the Mason Opera House in Los Angeles on February 27, 1905, the dramatization having been written by Miss Virginia Calhoun and General Johnstone Jones. Commenting upon Miss Calhoun's performance, in the role of Ramona, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "in the lighter parts she held a fascination that was tempered with gentleness and playfulness. Her slender figure, graceful and pliant as a willow, swayed with every light touch of feeling, and the deeper tragic climaxes she met in a way to win tears from the eyes of many." Over the years, three motion-picture versions of the novel have appeared. In 1887, George Wharton James, who did much to keep the *Ramona* promotion moving along, "tramped every foot of the territory covered by Mrs. Jackson," interviewing the people she had interviewed, photographing the scenes she had photographed, and "sifting the evidence" she had collected. His thick tome on the *Ramona* country is still a standard item in all Southern California libraries. For twenty-five years, the chambers of commerce of the Southland kept this fantastic promotion alive and flourishing. When interest seemed to be lagging, new stories were concocted. Thus on March 7, 1907, the *Los Angeles Times* featured, as a major news item, a story about "Condino, the newly discovered and only child of Ramona." In 1921 the enterprising Chamber of Commerce of Hemet, California, commissioned Garnet Holme to write a pageant about *Ramona*. Each year since 1921 the pageant has been produced in late April or early May in the heart of the *Ramona* country, by the Chamber of Commerce. At the last count, two hundred thousand people had witnessed the pageant.

The legendary quality of Mrs. Jackson's famous novel came about through the amazing way in which she made elegant pre-Raphaelite characters out of *Ramona* and "the half-breed Alessandro." Such Indians were surely never seen upon this earth. Furthermore, the story extolled the Franciscans in the most extravagant manner and placed the entire onus of the mistreatment of the Indians upon the noisy and vulgar gringos. At the same time, the sad plight of *Ramona* and Ales-

sandro got curiously mixed up, in the telling, with the plight of the "fine old Spanish families." These fine old Spanish families, who were among the most flagrant exploiters of the Indian in Southern California, appeared in the novel as only slightly less considerate of his welfare than the Franciscans. Despite its legendary aspects, however, the Ramona version of the Indians of Southern California is now firmly implanted in the mythology of the region. It is this legend which largely accounts for the "sacred" as distinguished from the "profane" history of the Indian in Southern California.

It should be said to Mrs. Jackson's credit, however, that she did arouse a momentary flurry of interest in the Mission Indians. Her report on these Indians, which appeared in all editions of *A Century of Dishonor* after 1883, is still a valuable document. As a result of her work, Charles Fletcher Lummis founded the Sequoia League in Los Angeles in 1902, "to make better Indians," and, through the activities of the league, the three hundred Indians who were evicted from the Warner Ranch in 1901, were eventually relocated on lands purchased by the government. Aside from the relocation of these Indians, however, nothing much came of Mrs. Jackson's work in Southern California, for the region accepted the charming Ramona, as a folk figure, but completely rejected the Indians still living in the area. A government report of 1920 indicated that 90% of the residents of the sections in which Indians still live in Southern California were wholly ignorant about their Indian neighbors and that deep local prejudice against them still prevailed.

At the sacred level, it is the half-breed Alessandro who best symbolizes the Indian heritage of Southern California. At the secular level, however, one must turn to the local annals to select more appropriate symbols. There is, for example, the character Polonia, an Indian of great stature and strength, whose eyes had been burned out of their sockets. Clad in a tattered blanket, this blind Indian was a familiar figure on the dusty streets of Los Angeles in the 'fifties and 'sixties. And there was Viejo Cholo, or Old Half-Breed, who wore a pair of linen pantaloons and used a sheet for a mantle. His cane was a broom handle; his lunch counter, the swill basket. Viejo Cholo was succeeded, as the principal Indian eccentric of Los Angeles, by another half-breed, Pinikahti. A tiny man, Pinikahti was only four feet in height. Badly pockmarked, he had a flat nose and stubby beard. He was generally attired, notes Harris Newmark, "in a well-worn

straw hat, the top of which was missing, and his long, straight hair stuck out in clumps and snarls. A woolen undershirt and a pair of overalls completed his costume, while his toes, as a rule, protruded from his enormous boots." Playing Indian tunes on a flute made out of reeds from the bed of the Los Angeles River, Pinikahti used to dance in the streets of the town for pennies, nickels, and dimes, or a glass of *aguardiente*. Polonia, Viejo Cholo, and Pinikahti, these are the real symbols of the Indian heritage of Southern California.

## 2. REDISCOVERY OF THE MISSIONS

With the great Anglo invasion of Southern California after 1880, the Spanish background of the region was, for a time, almost wholly forgotten. "For many years," wrote Harry Carr, "the traditions of Los Angeles were junked by the scorn of the conquering gringos. When I was a school boy in Los Angeles, I never heard of Ortega or Gaspar de Portola or Juan Bautista de Anza." And then with the publication of *Ramona*, the Spanish background began to be rediscovered, with the same false emphasis and from the same crass motives, that had characterized the rediscovery of the Indian. Both rediscoveries, that of the Indian and that of the Spaniard, occurred between 1883 and 1888, at precisely the period when the great real-estate promotion of Southern California was being organized.

In so far as the Spanish saga is concerned, it all began in 1888 when, as John A. Berger has written, "the romantic people of Southern California," under the leadership of Charles Fletcher Lummis, formed an Association for the Preservation of the Missions (which later became the Landmarks Club). With the gradual restoration of the Missions, a highly romantic conception of the Spanish period began to be cultivated, primarily for the benefit of the incoming tides of tourists, who were routed to the Missions much as they were routed to the mythical site of Ramona's birthplace. A flood of books began to appear about the Missions, with Mrs. Jackson's *Glimpses of California and the Missions* (1883) being the volume that inspired the whole movement. It was followed, after a few years, by George Wharton James's *In and Out of the Old Missions*, which, for a quarter of a century, was the "classic" in this field. My own guess would be that not a year has passed since 1900 without the publication of some new volume about the Missions. Not only has a library of books been written about the Missions, but each indi-

vidual Mission has had its historians. Books have been written about the architecture of the Missions, about the Mission bells, about the Franciscans (notably Father Junipero Serra, a popular saint in Southern California), and about the wholly synthetic Mission furniture. In fact, the Mission-Spanish background of the region has been so strongly emphasized that, as Max Miller has written, "The past is almost as scrambled as the present, and almost as indefinite . . . the whole thing got mixed up." With each new book about the Missions came a new set of etchings and some new paintings. In 1880, William Keith painted all of the Missions of California. He was followed by the artist Ford, of Santa Barbara, who, in 1890, completed his etchings of the Franciscan establishments. Since 1890, the Missions have been painted by Jorgenson, Edward Deakin, Alexander F. Harmer, William Sparks, Gutzon Borglum, Elmer Wachtel, Minnie Tingle, and a host of other artists.

In 1902, Frank Miller, owner of the Glenwood Cottage Inn at Riverside, with funds provided by Henry Huntington, began to construct the famous Mission Inn. Designed by Myron Hunt, the Mission Inn was built wing by wing around the old adobe Glenwood Cottage, until the new structure covered an entire block. Once completed, the inn gave the initial fillip to Mission architecture, so called, and soon Missionesque and Moorish structures began to dot the Southern California landscape. It was here, in the Mission Inn, that John Steven McCroarty wrote the *Mission Play*, for which he was deservedly decorated by the Pope. The play had its premiere at San Gabriel on a warm spring evening, April 29, 1912, under the sponsorship of the Princess Lazarovic-Hreblanovic of Serbia, with a cast of "one hundred descendants of the Old Spanish families." On the opening night, "Queer chugging noises filled the air and the acid smoke from burnt gasoline floated over the ancient Mission and the little adobes that nestled around it. It was the first big outpouring of automobiles that San Gabriel had ever had." The elite of Southern California turned out, en masse, for the premiere. The play, of course, was an enormous success. McCroarty boasted that it had been seen by 2,500,000 people, a world's record. During the sixteen consecutive seasons that it played at San Gabriel Mission, over 2,600 performances were recorded. Later the play was institutionalized, under official sponsorship, and became an enormous tourist attraction. A tourist who went to California and failed to see Catalina Island, Mt. Wilson,

and the *Mission Play* was considered to have something wrong with his head. In recognition of his great services to Southern California, "Singing John," the songster of the green Verdugo hills, was made poet laureate of California on May 17, 1933. Needless to say, the play perpetuated the Helen Hunt Jackson version of the Indians, the Spanish Dons, and the Franciscans.

As a curious postscript to the growth of this amazing legend, it should be pointed out that the Catholic Church played virtually no role whatever in the Ramona-Mission revival in Southern California, which, from its inception, was a strictly Protestant promotion. As a matter of fact, Abbot Kinney, who took Mrs. Jackson through the Indian country in the 'eighties, later wrote that "the archbishops, bishops, and priests of those days were not, as a rule, much concerned about the condition of the Indians [theoretically still wards of the church] and the old Mission churches. Many of them were Catalans, who had little or no sympathy with the high ideals of the noble Franciscans. We actually found some of these priests, or those in higher authority, selling part of the lands that had originally been held by the Franciscans in trust for the Indians—not one foot of which belonged to the Church." With the exception of a few Irish priests, such as Father Joseph O'Keefe and Father John O'Sullivan, the Catholic Church did not figure prominently in the movement to restore the Missions. Even today the expensively restored Missions, as J. Russell Smith has pointed out, are "little more than carefully preserved historical curiosities and penny-catchers." Since McCroarty was a converted Catholic, however, it can be said that through this faithful son the Church did exert considerable influence on the formation of the Mission legend.

"Why is it," asked James L. Duff some years ago in the *Commonweal*, "that such a distinctly non-Catholic city as Los Angeles should evince such a consistent emotional preoccupation with its Catholic past?" Scrutinizing the local directory, Mr. Duff reported that the word "mission" was to be found as part of the corporate name of over a hundred business enterprises in Los Angeles. He was also surprised to find that such expressions as, "in the days of the Dons," and "in the footsteps of the padres," had become community colloquialisms in Southern California. The dominantly Catholic city of San Francisco, with its Mission Dolores, has never been greatly interested in the Missions. The incongruity is only greater by reason of the fact

that Los Angeles is not merely non-Catholic; it can scarcely be called a California city, except in a geographical sense. It is a "conglomeration" of newcomers and has always had the lowest percentage of native-born Californians of any city in the state. Paradoxically, the less Catholic a community is in Southern California, the more the Mission past has been emphasized. The incongruity, however, is never noticed. Not one of the numerous Pope-baiting fundamentalist pastors of Southern California has ever objected to this community-wide adoration of the Missions. "Here," writes Mr. Duff, "is a city that is almost militantly non-Catholic, audaciously energetic, worshipping Progress, adulating the tinselled world of motion pictures, yet looking with dreaming eyes upon a day and a philosophy of life with which it has neither understanding nor communion, vaguely hoping that the emotion it is evoking is nostalgic."

Not only is Los Angeles a non-Catholic city, but, popular legend to the contrary, it is not a city of churches. Recently, the Los Angeles Times published an editorial under the caption: "What! No Church Bells?" The occasion was the May 13, 1945 celebration of V-E Day when, much to the astonishment of the Times, it was discovered that "church bells are exceedingly scarce in Los Angeles." At the present time, a movement is under way, sponsored by the Times, to bring church bells to Los Angeles, so that "thousands of residents of Los Angeles who formerly lived in Eastern and Midwestern states," may, "on the clear Sabbath mornings," be called to worship by the pealing of bells. "To hear that call again," comments the Times, "in their new home, would tend to keep them in touch with their childhood and with the simple, comforting faith with which childhood is blessed, but which sometimes is neglected and all but forgotten," particularly in Southern California.

With the rediscovery of the Catholic-Mission past, the same split occurred in the Spanish tradition of the region that had occurred in relation to its Indian background. Just as Ramona and Alessandro became the sacred symbols of the Indian past, so the Spanish Dons, rather than the Mexicano paisanos, became the sacred symbols of the Spanish past. A glance at almost any of the popular novels of Stewart Edward White will show, for example, how the romantic side of this tradition has been emphasized to the detriment—in fact, to the total neglect—of its realistic latter-day manifestations. Despite all the restorations, revivals, pageants, plays, paintings, museum collections,

and laboriously gathered materials about this Spanish past, it was not until 1945 that a serious effort was launched to teach Spanish, as a language of the region, in the public schools.

Today there is scarcely a community in Southern California, however, that does not have its annual "Spanish fiesta," of which the Santa Barbara fiesta is the most impressive. Attending one of the early Santa Barbara fiestas, Duncan Aikman reported that "every man, woman, and child who owed any allegiance to Santa Barbara was in costume. . . . Shoe salesmen and grocery clerks served you with a bit of scarlet braid on their trouser seams. Paunchy realtors and insurance solicitors full of mental mastery dashed about town in gaudy sashes. Deacons of the total immersion sects sported, at the least, a bit of crimson frill around their hat bands. High school boys scurried by, their heads gorgeously bound in scarfs and bandanas. . . . The very street-car conductors wore Spanish epaulettes and ear-rings and a look of grievance even more bitter than usual. Women wore mantillas and an apparently official uniform in the way of a waist of yellow, black and scarlet, so universally that you could tell the outland females by their native American costumes. The Mexican population dug up its old finery and musical instruments and paraded the sidewalks with the timid air of reasserting their importance after long abeyance." Once the fiesta is over, however, the Mexicans retreat to their barrios, the costumes are carefully put away for the balance of the year, and the grotesque Spanish spoken in the streets during the fiesta is heard no more. This particular attempt to revive the Mexican "Fiesta de la Primavera," like most similar attempts in Southern California, was first launched in the mid 'twenties, its immediate motivation in Santa Barbara being the popularly sensed need to inject a note of good cheer in the Santa Barbarans after the earthquake of 1924. The Santa Barbara fiesta is often highlighted by some extraordinary antic. Some years ago, for example, Cedric Gibbons and Dolores del Rio, of the motion-picture colony, dressed in fiesta costumes, astride their handsome Palominos, were the first couple to be married on horseback, a type of marriage ceremony now a regular feature of the fiesta.

About the most incongruous ceremonial revival of this sort in Southern California is the annual ride of the *Rancheros Visitadores*. This particular revival is based on the alleged practice of the rancheros, in former years, of making the round of the ranchos in the

area, paying a visit to each in turn. "In May, 1930," to quote from the *Santa Barbara Guide*, "some sixty-five riders assembled for the first cavalcade. Golden Palominos and proud Arabian thoroughbreds, carrying silver-mounted tack, brushed stirrups with shaggy mustangs from the range. Emerging from the heavy gray mist of a reluctant day, they cantered with casual grace down the old familiar trails of the Santa Ynez, to converge in Santa Barbara. . . . Here, amid the tolling of bells, the tinkling of trappings, and the whinnying of horses, the brown-robed friars blessed them and bade them 'Vayan con dios.' . . . This was the start of the first revival of the annual ride of the *Rancheros Visitadores*."

Since this auspicious beginning, the affair has steadily increased in pomp and circumstance. Nowadays it is invariably reported in the Southern California press as a major social event of the year. A careful scrutiny of the names of these fancily dressed *visitadores*—these gaily costumed Rotarians—reveals that Leo Carrillo is about the only rider whose name carries a faint echo of the past and he is about as Mexican as the ceremony is Spanish. Ostensibly a gay affair, the annual ride represents a rather grim and desperate effort to escape from the bonds of a culture that neither satisfies nor pleases. Actually there is something rather pathetic about the spectacle of these frustrated business men cantering forth in search of ersatz week-end romance, evoking a past that never existed to cast some glamour on an equally unreal today.

All attempted revivals of Spanish folkways in Southern California are similarly ceremonial and ritualistic, a part of the sacred rather than the profane life of the region. The 3,279 Mexicans who live in Santa Barbara are doubtless more bewildered by these annual Spanish hijinks than any other group in the community. For here is a community that generously and lavishly supports the "Old Spanish Fiesta"—and the wealth of the *rancheros visitadores* is apparent for all to see—but which consistently rejects proposals to establish a low-cost housing project for its Mexican residents. However, there is really nothing inconsistent about this attitude, for it merely reflects the manner in which the sacred aspects of the romantic past have been completely divorced from their secular connotations. The residents of Santa Barbara firmly believe, of course, that the Spanish past is dead, extinct, vanished. In their thinking, the Mexicans living in Santa Barbara have no connection with this past. They just hap-

pen to be living in Santa Barbara. To be sure, many of them have names, such as Cota or Cutierrez, that should stir memories of the *dolce far niente* period. But these names are no longer important. They belong to the profane, and happily forgotten, side of the tradition. The sacred side of this tradition, as represented in the beautifully restored Mission, is worshipped by all alike without regard to caste, class, or religious affiliation. The restored Mission is a much better, a less embarrassing, symbol of the past than the Mexican field worker or the ragamuffin *pachucos* of Los Angeles.