

Missions of New Spain



Migrating to the Americas
for the “glory of God” was the goal
of the many Spanish missionaries
(priests and monks)
who went to convert the Indians
to Christianity.



(The mission of San Antonio)



*(Mass with
native
converts,
San
Francisco)*



*(Mexican fiesta
on Catholic
“holy day”)*



(El Paso Mission to the Apache people)



(Church of the Alamo, San Antonio)



The Franciscan friars established the mission and trading post of Santa Fe in 1610.

This trading post connected the Spanish empire to the English settlement of St. Louis!



*(Main street,
Santa Fe)*



Every fall, a caravan of hundreds of people and scores of wagons started out from Taos and Santa Fe, moving along the Santa Fe Trail on their way to Missouri.

They carried goods desired by the English colonists east of the Mississippi.



Another function of missions was to teach the Indians to adopt an agricultural way of life.

While they were taught the Catholic faith, they were taught other skills that supported the settlements- such as masonry, blacksmithing, and carpentry.



(Living quarters for the priests and monks within the walls of the mission.)





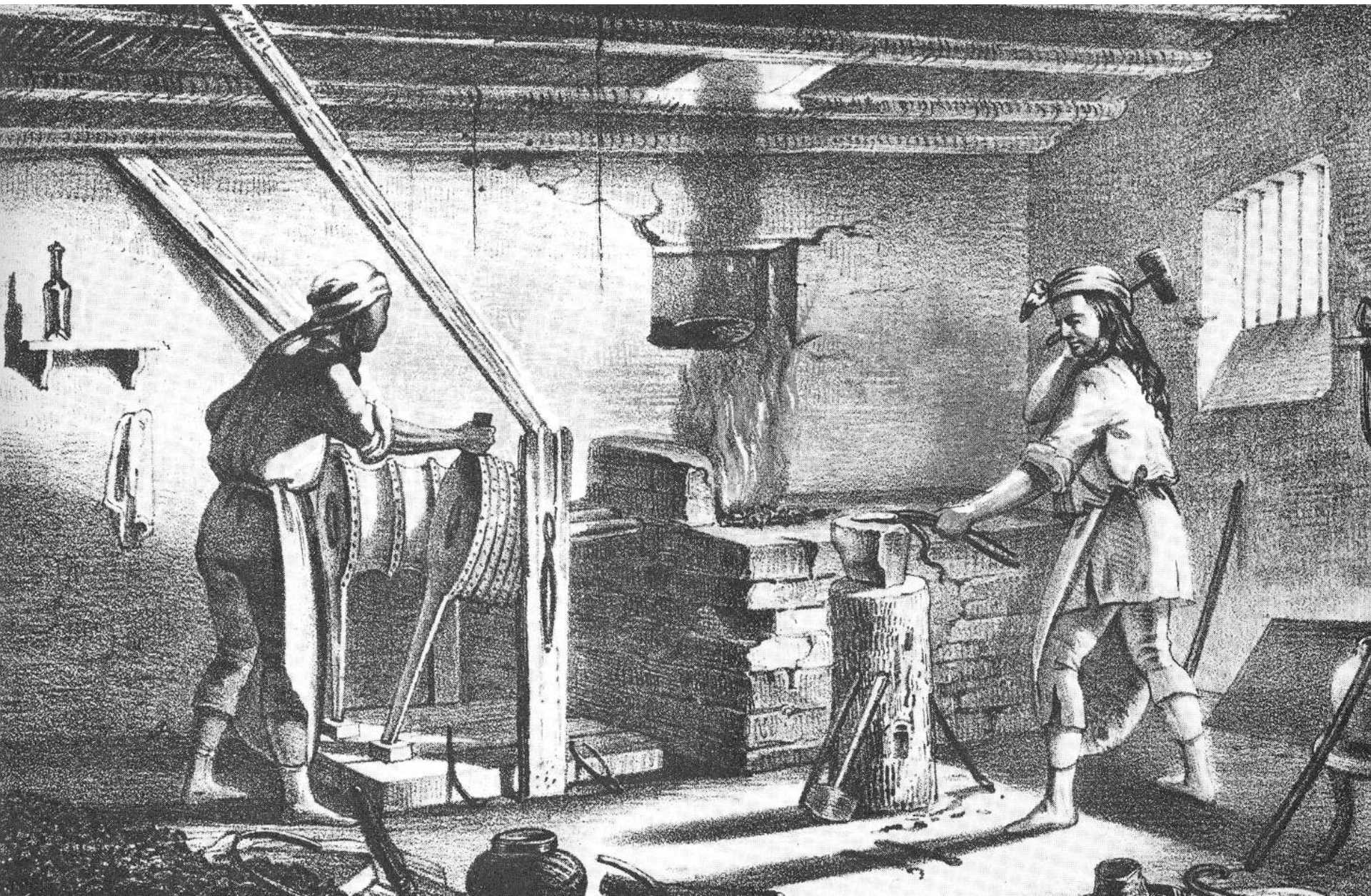
The Indian converts were valuable to the new Spanish missions and settlements. Their labor formed the backbone of the prosperous Spanish colonies.

But the Indians were considered barely above slaves in the Spanish society.





(Indian blacksmiths)



Indians at the missions rounded up horses, tended sheep, worked in the fields, and built magnificent churches out of adobe brick.



*(San Jose Mission,
California)*





(The remaining walls of the El Paso mission show the colorful plaster used to adorn the Catholic churches)



Most missions were protected by a nearby fort or garrison of soldiers, called a “Presidio”.

This protection was greatly needed against Indian attacks, as well as to guard the trade routes to Mexico and the English colonies...





Not all Indian peoples willingly converted to the Spanish religion. The Spaniards put down several rebellions, especially by the pueblo tribes who had burned many Spanish missions and towns in the late 1600s.





The lasting impact of the Spanish missions
in the present-day southwestern region
of the United States are still seen today in
the culture, traditions, and ways of life of
citizens living there.



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Sources:

*Library of Congress,
California and Texas State
Historical Societies*

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