

“Perennially New”

Santa Barbara and the Origins of the California Mission Garden

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In his book *The Old Franciscan Missions of California*, George Wharton James, a prolific chronicler of the California missions, wrote: “The story of the Old Missions of California is perennially new.¹ The interest in the ancient and dilapidated buildings and their history increases with each year. To-day a thousand visit them where ten saw them twenty years ago, and twenty years hence, hundreds of thousands will stand in their sacred precincts, and unconsciously absorb beautiful and unselfish lessons of life as they hear some part of their history recited.”² Writing almost a century ago, James made several prescient observations about the mission landscapes, for just as he predicted, the missions have been “perennially new” because each generation has shaped the spaces and inscribed on them their notions of the past. They have been reinvented by their organic, evolving principles of design and by their changing reception. As much as the mission landscapes have changed over the past two centuries, however, they remain remarkably indelible symbols of a venerable and venerated heritage. James recognized the importance of the sites for informing the public’s notion of the past as they “unconsciously absorb . . . their history recited,” and his allusion to “beautiful and unselfish lessons” underscores their enduring ideological and political meanings.

The missions are central to California’s historical narrative because they were the first outposts of Spanish colonial settlement, beginning with the founding of Mission San Diego in 1769. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the mission buildings and grounds have been perceived as colonial relics that survived the ravages of time. Their iconic tile roofs, white stucco façades, and colorful patio gardens continue to signify the beginnings of the state. That relatively simple genealogy belies, however, a more complicated design sequence and more ideologically complex history.

While the history of the mission buildings is relatively well documented, the associated landscapes have received much less scrutiny.³ Despite this neglect, the “mission gardens” have been a formative part of the public reception of the sites, whose symbolism and meaning must be considered in the broader contexts of California historical and visual practices. Among these iconic landscapes, Mission Santa Barbara exerted a seminal influence and was the archetypal mission garden. The garden’s design and reception were framed by contests for social and political hegemony, out of which it emerged as a central symbol of California’s valorized colonial past.

Just as reception theory examines the reader’s role in literature, the examination of the “afterlife of gardens” considers the relationship between space and its occupants, that is, “how they are absorbed into the experiences of generations.”⁴ The scholarship of W. J. T. Mitchell, John Dixon Hunt, and other theorists and landscape historians inspires



Figure 1 The Mission San Juan Capistrano garden and the ruined church as seen today (author's photo)

an exploration of the hermeneutics of the mission landscapes—how they were known and understood over time and how they have become woven into the tapestry of California memory.⁵ The mission gardens were social and political spaces, and their study entails the bringing together of subject and object, space and performance, production and consumption to illuminate broader patterns of social and historical signification.

The mission garden was an invention of the late nineteenth century. From the initial vision and intent of the creators who planted ornamental gardens in formerly utilitarian courtyards, beginning with Father José Maria Romo at the Santa Barbara Mission in 1872, the social meanings of mission gardens have been constituted by the performance of the space by those who lived, worked, and visited them, including the resident Franciscans, visiting dignitaries, pilgrims, parishioners, artists, and tourists. These meanings have been made tangible and communicated to a broader audience through text, image, and other material culture, and these representations have codified the constructed image of the sites as historic relics and beautiful, sacred spaces.

The power and paradox of the mission landscapes reside in their reception as historic relics and beautiful, sacred spaces, a characterization that resonates with the California narrative but contradicts the colonial history of the sites. These luxuriant gardens sit where thousands of Native Americans once lived under the new Spanish regime. The mission courtyards, today filled with fountains, paths, and flower beds, were once dusty, bustling work spaces (Figure 1). The creation of ornamental Colonial Revival gardens in

these originally utilitarian courtyards not only masks their historical functions but deters recognition of them as places where indigenous lifeways were profoundly changed and millennia-old cultures destroyed. Historian Steven W. Hackel's compelling history of the missions from 1769 to 1850 summarizes the tragedy:

Mission populations were to prove incapable of surviving in California . . . At Mission San Carlos, for example, the population rose for a quarter of a century after 1770 . . . but then dropped steadily and seemingly irreversibly once high mortality and low fertility undermined natural increases and the mission drained its pool of local gentile Indians. There, in a nutshell, is a short history of all the California missions. They offered the promise of individual and community salvation, but they destroyed nearly all those they intended to save.⁶

The transformation of mission patios from utilitarian courtyards to ornamental gardens began at the Mission Santa Barbara forty years after its secularization in 1833. It influenced every other California mission, was replicated through the twentieth century, and still resonates with visitors today. This conflation of colonial mission and garden maintains an enduring influence on California cultural memory.⁷

Historical Background

California landscapes have a deep history as the homeland of richly diverse native peoples.⁸ Indigenous peoples actively managed the natural resources of this abundant habitat



Figure 2 Map of mission locations, Alta California (published by Carl I Wheat in a book or sheet published in Lahainaluna, Hawaii: Lahainaluna Mission Press, 1839, courtesy of the Library of Congress)

through controlled burning, selective harvesting, and seed scattering.⁹ It was this traditional homeland that the Spanish crown claimed as “Alta California” with the founding in 1769 of Mission San Diego, the first of what became by 1822

a chain of twenty-one missions stretched along the coast and inland valleys (Figure 2). Established in the name of Spain by Franciscans under the leadership of Junípero Serra to Christianize the indigenous peoples of California, the

missions varied in size and prosperity, but grew to house some 13,500 “neophytes” (as the baptized Native Americans were called) by 1800.¹⁰ They became part of the Mexican territory in 1822, following Mexico’s War of Independence, and they were secularized in 1833.¹¹ Between 1769 and 1833 the missions were run by Franciscans with the assistance of a small number of soldiers at each mission and larger forces housed in garrisons or presidios that could be called upon when needed.¹² The missions were intended to be self-sufficient plantations, often providing food and labor for the nearby presidios as well the mission residents, and the larger missions eventually produced enough grain, hemp, olive oil, tallow, and hides to export.¹³

The functions of the missions as productive farms and ranches and as institutions intended to convert and civilize the native populations were reflected in the design of their landscapes. A visitor to a mission in the early nineteenth century would find a central compound with a church, cemetery, and attached buildings, often arranged in a quadrangle, which housed the priests, craftsmen, and, in some missions, the unmarried native women.¹⁴ The arrangement of the adobe structures in a quadrangle with an interior arcade followed a centuries-old pattern of Franciscan monasteries. The mission landscape was structured for efficiency and control—both in the production of crops and goods and the oversight of neophytes.¹⁵ The area within the quadrangle, sometimes called the *patio* or courtyard, provided protected and easily monitored areas for crafts, cooking, and other work. The neophytes lived near the quadrangle in rows of adobe dwellings or in clusters of traditional circular bent pole and bark dwellings. Outbuildings for food processing and light industry were built around the central mission complex

with features such as tanning vats, soap and tallow making facilities, bake ovens, iron forges, kilns, weaveries, threshing floors, and laundries. At several missions extensive water systems supplied water for irrigating gardens, washing laundry, and tanning hides.¹⁶ The largest missions established satellite ranches to oversee the herds on distant grazing lands.¹⁷ In addition to the extensive field systems and pastures, there were vegetable gardens, fruit orchards, and olive groves closer to the central mission buildings. The forecourts and patios had scattered shade trees and possibly other informal plantings, but they were primarily utilitarian work spaces with scrubby grass or bare dirt, particularly in drier locales.

Secularization removed the missions from church control, and much of the mission land was subsequently leased or granted to well-placed Mexican settlers for private ranching and farming.¹⁸ In 1848 the missions were part of the treaty transfer of Alta California to the United States following the Mexican-American war, and just two years later, with the surging population of the Gold Rush boom, California became the thirty-first state. The U.S. courts granted petitions during the 1850s and 60s restoring the missions to the Catholic Church.¹⁹ These mid-nineteenth century events had a dramatic impact on the mission sites. The land that was returned to the church was a small remnant of the extensive agricultural holdings of the mission days. A few of the missions became seminaries or schools, but most became parishes serving local communities. The properties that were conveyed back to the church had deteriorated while in private hands. The groves and orchards had gone to ruin, and many of the adobe buildings had begun to erode from exposure to rain, wind, vandals, or even earthquakes and floods (Figure 3).²⁰ Most of the Native American residents had



Figure 3 San Juan Capistrano courtyard, ca. 1900 (Huntington Library, San Marino, California)



Figure 4 Mission San Jose garden, following the basic template of intersecting paths and beds cited on a fountain (author's photo)

dispersed, becoming free landholders, tradesmen in towns, laborers on ranches, or domestics.²¹

While local priests and parishioners did their best to stabilize the buildings, many of the missions were at risk of disappearing altogether when in the 1880s and 90s the missions attracted the attention of preservationists, artists, civic leaders, promoters of California's burgeoning industries, and many others interested in constructing an historical narrative for the origins of the state.²² California was seeing growing Anglo-American political and social influence, and the efforts to cast the missions as relics of a halcyon Hispanic era romanticized and distanced that past.²³ Helen Hunt Jackson, Tessa Kelso, St. John O'Sullivan, Charles Loomis, and preservation groups such as the Landmarks Club (incorporated in 1895) in southern California and the California Landmarks League (established in 1902) in the north helped fund the restoration of buildings deemed to be in the most jeopardy, but these architectural projects generally ignored the mission grounds, whose cactus hedges and olive groves were sometimes noted as quaint reminders of an earlier time.²⁴ Reviving an old orchard did not merit preservationists' attention, and it required a long-term, continuous presence at the site to water and tend the plants. Only by the 1910s and 1920s were the landscapes, then overseen by parish priests or other administrators, given significant attention. By that time Santa Barbara was the well-established model of a mission garden.

The fact that all of the missions standing today have some form of mission garden is an enduring testimony to

Santa Barbara's influence. Most are now owned by the Roman Catholic Church and continue to be active centers of worship, pastoral care, and outreach, with schools, retreat centers, and archives offering educational, spiritual development, and research opportunities.²⁵ While only the two California State Park-owned missions are managed exclusively as secular historic sites, all are open to the public and marketed as tourist destinations where California history is interpreted.

The gardens of the twenty-one missions that today range up the California coast from San Diego to Sonoma are varied in layout and plant material, but are recognizable as a cohesive garden type. The typical mission garden is laid out in a courtyard, either in the center of the quadrangle or in front of the mission. The design is centered on a fountain surrounded by geometric beds and intersecting paths, often edged with clipped hedges (Figure 4). The vegetation varies but usually includes semitropical succulents, palms, and cacti. A mix of flowering annuals, perennials, vines, and roses provide bright accents. In stark contrast to the utilitarian work spaces of mission days, the *patios* are now colorful, lush, and peaceful places for visitors to stroll, take pictures, and contemplate the beauty of nature and charm of the historic setting.

Historiography

The scholarship of California architecture and landscape architecture history has influenced the popular reception of the mission garden.²⁶ Throughout much of the last century

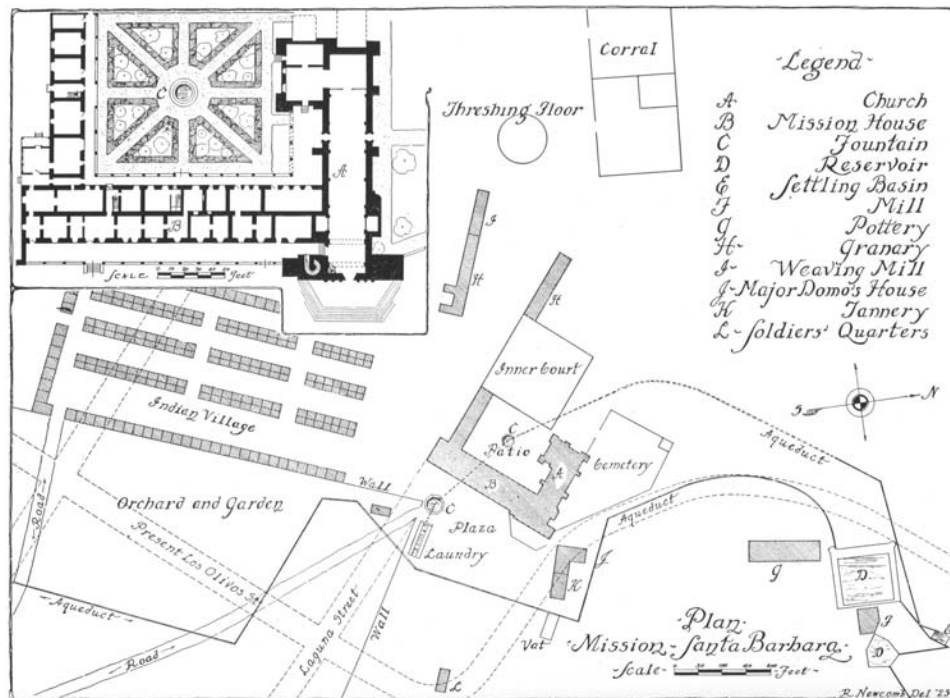


Figure 5 Plan of Mission Santa Barbara with a detail of the central quadrangle and garden (from Rexford Newcomb, *The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California* [Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1925], 219)

authors celebrated and romanticized the Spanish colonial past and obfuscated the basic chronology of the gardens. While today the ornamental gardens bear little resemblance to their utilitarian colonial forebears, the two have been continually conflated. Scholars such as Charles Adams, George Hendry, Rexford Newcomb, Tom Brown, and Charles Hosmer have rightly cited the post-mission-period origins of the gardens, yet others have persisted in projecting these modern gardens onto the colonial past.²⁷ For example, Victoria Padilla's 1961 history of southern California gardens describes the mission fathers as "men of tender sensibilities and they endeavored to recreate in this faraway and lonesome country the gardens of their homeland A tinkling fountain was a part of each garden, as were shaded walks for periods of meditation and prayer, plantings of lilies to be used for the altar, hedges of the Rose of Castile, and always a palm or two."²⁸ Typical also of this projection is Pauline Jacobus's description of the Mission Santa Clara garden: "The Spanish constructed their missions from memories of the Andalusian cloister. . . . The aesthetic elements were privacy, shade, fragrance, and repose. A glad garden was devised, which was essentially a series of outdoor rooms walled apart by masonry and open to the sky. . . . In the center, almost invariably, was a fountain. Plants grown in the patios were low-growing, bedded, orange trees, palms, box, and cypress planted in pairs."²⁹ More recently, David Streatfield, David Gebhard,

Nancy Power, and Allison Lake have similarly associated the colonial agrarian landscape with the *patio* gardens created in postcolonial times.³⁰

The enduring misattribution of the mission gardens reflects two vexing deficiencies in landscape scholarship. First, illustrations of landscapes frequently record subtle and profound information that is, however, contradicted by accompanying texts. Second, in many architectural histories, different standards are applied to documenting and researching landscapes and buildings. One reason the modern mission gardens continue to be projected onto the colonial past is the ongoing practice of reprinting twentieth-century plans and other images of courtyard gardens to illustrate discussions of the colonial era. Even when the gardens are correctly dated in the text, architectural plans depicting twentieth-century gardens in the mission courtyards perpetuate the confusion. For example, Rexford Newcomb's *Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California* (1925) included a plan of Mission Santa Barbara showing the layout of the *patio* with geometric beds arranged around the central fountain (Figure 5).³¹ His work was cited in Historic American Building Survey (HABS) in the 1930s, which also depicted gardens in several of the mission courtyards. Selected California HABS records were published in 1988, with an introduction that continued the confusion of the colonial workspace with more modern gardens, stating "Tanning

leather, making soap, and other such activities took place in the courtyard where herbal and flower gardens were also planted.” It also reprinted HABS plans and perspective views showing modern gardens, such as the 1936 plan of San Juan Capistrano that depicted the extensive gardens and paths that had been created in the 1910s and 1920s.³² Antoinette Lee’s 1990 overview of Spanish missions, spurred by a US/ICOMOS commissioned study to identify mission sites eligible for nomination to the World Heritage list, focused on the architecture with exacting detail, but she included Newcomb’s 1925 plan of Santa Barbara and captioned it, “This drawing of a typical mission in California shows the church and other buildings surrounding the patio.”³³ In each example the architecture was documented rigorously while the landscapes were treated as stylized graphic infill. Photographs of mission gardens illustrating discussions of landscape history similarly imply their colonial origins. For example, Charles Francis Saunders’s entry for California in the Garden Club of America’s massive compilation of American colonial garden history (1934) accurately noted that “the gardens about the Missions as we see them today must be accepted as of comparatively recent planting, though an old-time flavor is given by the setting.” In the same essay, however, Saunders wistfully imagined that “in sunny corners and against sheltering walls the padres would plant their roses of Castille and lilies of Mary, their hollyhocks and malva rosas, their oleanders and many another dear flower of that far-off Mediterranean home which most of them were destined never to see again.”³⁴ Saunders’s inclusion of contemporary photographs of lushly planted mission gardens and a plan of Mission Santa Barbara’s ornate planting pattern further reinforced the notion these were colonial era gardens.³⁵

Not only have the mission gardens often been misrepresented in architectural histories of the missions, but the broader scholarship of the Mission Revival architecture has yet to account fully for the influence of the mission sites on the revival style.³⁶ David Gebhard, for example, argued that the Mission Revival began primarily as a literary movement, launched by Helen Hunt’s 1883 essay “Glimpses of California and the Missions” and her hugely popular novel *Ramona* (1884). Gebhard locates this start of the Mission Revival at about 1890 and describes it as “one of the state’s first great exports to the rest of the country.”³⁷ However, the replanting of Santa Barbara Mission’s courtyard garden predates Gebhard’s starting date for the Mission Revival by almost two decades, and it shaped the ideas of appropriate landscapes for both Mission- and Mediterranean Revival-style residential architecture, as well framed notions of a nostalgic colonial past.

The Mission Santa Barbara Garden

The history of the California Mission Revival garden begins at Mission Santa Barbara. Often called the “Queen of the Missions,” it was the tenth in the mission chain, founded in December 1786 along California’s central coast near the Santa Barbara presidio, which had been established four years earlier, and close to several Chumash Indian settlements.³⁸ Its architectural history is well documented thanks to the meticulous archival work of Father Maynard Geiger.³⁹ The first simple wooden structures have been described as wattle and daub or log cabins chinked with mud and small stones and thatched with earth and zacate grass.⁴⁰ Adobe brick and tile soon replaced the wooden huts, as labor and resources became available, and the first adobe church was built in 1789 with the first quadrangle completed in 1796. The mission continued to expand with the addition of outbuildings supporting agricultural and husbandry activities and, from 1798 to 1807, the construction of an “Indian village” that was home to more than 1,700 neophytes or baptized Indians. By the 1820s Santa Barbara had become one of the most intensively developed missions, with a blacksmith shop, soap factory, weavers rooms, tannery, and pottery. An extensive system of reservoirs, aqueducts, and cisterns were constructed to supply both the daily water needs of the residents and the processing and manufacturing activities of the mission’s light industry. One of the best-known surviving elements of this hydraulic system is the 1808 two-tiered “Moorish” fountain and adjoining rectangular basin or *lavendaría* in front of the mission (Figure 6).⁴¹ Visitors to the mission before its secularization in 1833 describe a rich agrarian landscape of fruit orchards, olive groves, fields of grain, and vegetable gardens, as well as grazing land for sheep, cattle, and horses. The central *patio*, which is today occupied by the quintessential “mission garden,” was a work space where, as visitor in 1829 described, “carpenters, saddlers, and shoemakers were at work, and young girls spinning and preparing wool for the loom.”⁴²

As at other missions, the years following secularization at Santa Barbara were turbulent. Although it was continuously occupied and did not suffer the deterioration that missions Santa Cruz, San Juan Capistrano, and others saw, the instability of the 1830s through the 1860s is significant for understanding the genesis of the mission garden. The mid-nineteenth century witnessed a fundamental shift in the organization and purpose of the mission. A combination of factors—disrupted trade, transitions in state and ecclesiastical authority, declining Native American labor force, title disputes, and dwindling income—severely eroded the mission’s productivity and infrastructure. At one point only four



Figure 6 Santa Barbara Mission fountain, built 1808 (Huntington Library, San Marino, California)

friars remained at Santa Barbara, and visitors commented on the dilapidated state of the orchards and fields. George Simpson, superintendent of the Hudson Bay Company, visited the mission in January of 1842 and observed, “In the [earlier] days of the priests, fruits were to be obtained here at every season. . . . But, ever since 1836, not only had the branches been left unpruned, but even their very produce had been allowed to fall to the ground; so that now most of the trees were in a deteriorated condition.”⁴³ Following the Franciscan’s loss of title to the mission in 1846, conditions worsened.⁴⁴ With neither a productive agricultural enterprise nor a parish for income (a separate parish church served Santa Barbara’s Catholics), the Franciscans were left with high-maintenance aging buildings and few resources.⁴⁵ A member of the first geological survey of California visited Santa Barbara in 1861 and found the church and monastery “in good preservation” but noted that “all else is ruined.” The neophyte residences were vacant shells, the corrals empty, and “the palm trees are dead, and the olive and fig trees are dilapidated and broken.”⁴⁶

The Franciscan’s prospects began to brighten following the return of title to the mission property in 1861, and in 1868 they opened the Colegio Franciscano or Boy’s College for day students and borders. The ambitious plan to teach primary grades through junior college brought in tuition and was intended to return the mission to prosperity. While student enrollment did not live up to expectations and the college was closed in 1877, it marked a critical moment in the history of the mission garden.⁴⁷ To lead the mission and this fledgling school, the Franciscans called upon Mexican-born

Father José Maria Romo, who was then serving in Egypt trying to establish a hospice for Mexicans visiting the Holy Land. Upon receiving his orders in 1871 to go to Santa Barbara to be guardian of the college and superior of the mission, Romo began his journey, traveling by way of Sicily, Naples, Rome, Marseilles, and Paris. Fortunately, his handwritten diary survives, and in it he recounts, albeit in general terms, some of the sites he visited in each city, including monasteries, palaces, churches, convents, cemeteries, and seminaries. He tantalizingly notes several “magnificent gardens” but regrettably does not offer further details.⁴⁸

Upon arriving at Santa Barbara in 1872, Romo assessed the Bishop’s paltry support and the limited income the school was generating and concluded that they needed to attract more students. Rather than training postulants with a vocation to serve the church, the Colegio offered a secular classical education to students who had other choices.⁴⁹ To enhance the Colegio’s appeal, Romo set about creating a more attractive setting and began an ambitious architectural project, including a \$1,455 renovation of the church interior, upgrades to the dormitory rooms, and a cloister garden in the main mission quadrangle.⁵⁰ The timing of the garden plans may have also been spurred by Bishop Amat’s negotiations with the town of Santa Barbara to purchase rights to the mission’s extensive water system while guaranteeing the provision of free water to the mission. Correspondence documents Bishop Amat’s approval of Romo’s request to pipe water into the interior patio, and in January 1873 Romo’s diary proudly reports the successful operation of the fountain.⁵¹

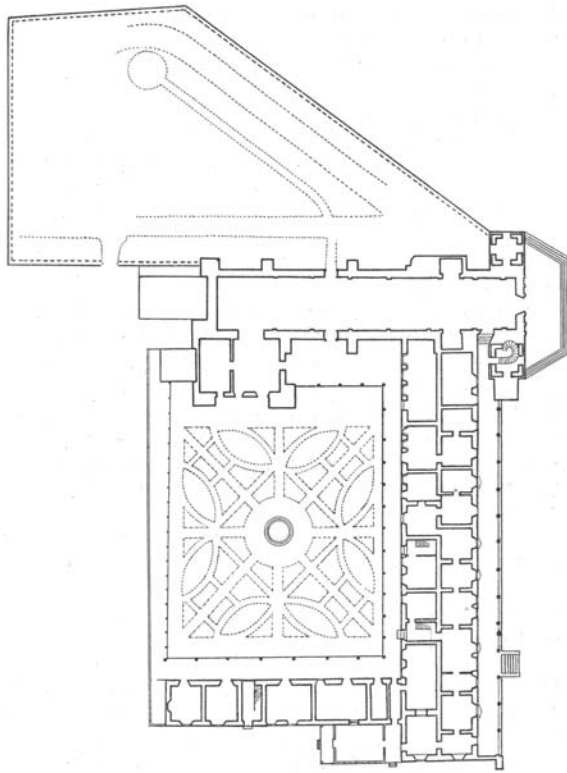


Figure 7 William Henry Jackson, Mission Santa Barbara garden, ca. 1885 (from *Ancient Missions and Churches of America* [Chicago: White City Art Company 1894], Huntington Library, San Marino, California)

Given the influence that the Santa Barbara Mission garden was to exert on California landscape architecture, its original design and possible models are significant. The circumstances suggest the garden was part of Romo's campaign to improve the general appearance and creature comforts of the mission and its Colegio. Although no plan or construction drawings of his 1872 design survive (and as a vernacular garden they may never have existed) and there is no evidence that it was modeled on a specific site, the basic layout of Romo's garden is consistent with what he might have seen traveling around the Mediterranean in the early 1870s, particularly in the *conventos* where he lodged.⁵² The garden was centered on a circular basin from which issued a single jet of water, propelled by the gravity-fed water system of the mission (Figure 7).⁵³ Paths radiated from the central basin both axially and diagonally, creating a symmetrical pattern of parterre beds that looked particularly striking when viewed from the bell tower

or the upper-story windows of the surrounding cloister (Figure 8). Those strolling the paths could admire new trees and garden beds planted with tropical plants, ground covers, bulbs, roses, perennials, and annuals. A 1903 planting plan is the best evidence of the species used in the early garden, listing ninety-one plants. These include flowering cultivars that were popular in gardens of the day, such as althea, bougainvillea, dianthus, geranium, heliotrope, pansies, and violets.⁵⁴ Shade was provided by grapevines trained on a wooden trellis that ran along the church wall and by a stately cedar that had been planted by Bishop Garcia Diego in 1842.⁵⁵ Photographs from the mid-1880s onward show increasingly dense plantings, maturing trees, and more precise geometric patterning, as edging and later low hedges were added to outline the beds and paths more distinctly (Figure 9).⁵⁶

The design evolved over time with the addition of a circle of palms around the central fountain in 1908 and the



GROUND PLAN OF THE MISSION BUILDINGS, CHURCH, AND CEMETERY.

Figure 8 S. Newsom, ground plan of the Santa Barbara mission complex, 1903 (from Zephyrin Engelhardt, *Santa Barbara Mission* [San Francisco: James H. Barry Company, 1923], 103)

loss of the cedar in 1909 (Figure 10).⁵⁷ The design was simplified in the 1930s, when the central flower beds were replaced by lawn.⁵⁸ Today the garden is dominated by a towering ring of palms, but the borders are still cultivated in geometric beds planted with a mix of flowering annuals, succulents, bulbs, and trees (Figure 11). A colorful bed of roses and a cactus garden have been planted along the corridor by the church from which, not coincidentally, tourists are allowed a view into the garden. The plant material today is largely modern, but a few historic specimens survive, including an early lemon species that is being propagated nearby in the Huerta Project.⁵⁹

Romo's Legacy

The planting of a small interior courtyard garden in 1872 would have little significance were it not for its subsequent role in shaping perceptions of missions and their history. Romo's idiosyncratic garden in the monastery of a small, backwater town on the California coast became the iconic model for twentieth-century Mission Revival gardens and an influence on Mediterranean Revival landscape architecture as well. After more than forty years, Santa Barbara's model of geometric beds and paths centered on a fountain would still inspire mission fathers elsewhere who, with help from parishioners and other volunteers, belatedly rebuilt the other mission gardens. The delay between Santa Barbara's



Figure 9 Santa Barbara Mission garden, ca. 1888 (Huntington Library, San Marino, California)



Figure 10 Santa Barbara Mission Garden stereograph view, ca. 1925 (Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography, University of California, Riverside)

garden and the start of work at other mission gardens was in large part due to the fact that while Romo and his fellow Franciscans were striving for economic stability in the 1870s, other missions were facing threats to their very existence. It was not until preservation efforts in the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stabilized the deteriorating buildings that other mission administrators could begin to think seriously about landscaping. Father St. John O'Sullivan began renovating San Juan Capistrano in the 1910s and planted a garden that was expanded by



Figure 11 Santa Barbara Mission Garden, looking toward the church (author's photo)

nurseryman Roger B. Sherman in 1930.⁶⁰ The Capuchins at Santa Ines planted a courtyard garden around a central fountain in 1924. Gardens were planted by the mid-1930s at Mission San Juan Bautista and Mission San Carlos in Carmel (Figure 12). The Comboni Fathers planted a garden in the central courtyard at San Antonio de Pala in the early 1950s, and other mission parishes continue to develop their mission gardens today.⁶¹

Like the parishes, mission properties under civil authority modeled their landscape designs on Santa Barbara and on the growing number of gardens at other mission sites. Martha McCann led the efforts to create a mission garden, later called a “Memory Garden,” in a public park in front of Mission San Fernando in 1921–23.⁶² La Purisima’s garden was constructed 1935–37 by Civilian Conservation Corps workers supervised by the National Park Service and California State Parks Department working from a collaborative design developed by a team including Harry Shepherd, Emerson Knight, Daniel R. Hull, and E. D. Rowe.⁶³

The perception that the Santa Barbara garden of the 1870s was an appropriate model for these mission landscapes was not a simple anachronism or misattribution. The garden reinforced an image of the past, the missions, and the Franciscans that served multiple interests. The production of that image was systematic and intentional, and it resonated with central themes in the dominant historical narrative of the 1880s to 1930s, which romanticized a “Spanish Fantasy



Figure 12 Postcard of San Carlos de Borromeo, Mission Carmel, 1939

Past.”⁶⁴ The Santa Barbara Mission garden symbolized a past that was civilized, sacred, and peaceful. It reinforced the image of a sophisticated Spanish origin, in marked contrast to a Mexican heritage, reading “white” rather than “brown.” The garden also left no room on the narrow paths, bordered by intricate beds, to imagine groups of neophytes working or eating or dancing or being punished. The garden that Romo created in 1872 was designed to attract students and present a more comely face to the community. That outward appearance became even more important to the mission administrators who succeeded Romo.

With growing debt at the mission and increasing conflict between Romo and Bishop Amat, leaders of the order and the Catholic diocese decided in 1885 that the Santa Barbara friars should give up their identity as a separate Apostolic College and join the American province as a monastery.⁶⁵ The new stewards of the mission belonged to the Province of the Sacred Heart, an order of Franciscans with Germanic origins, who wore brown rather than gray robes. They brought a different sensibility and notion of order. Not only did they immediately embark on improvements to the mission, such as landscaping the dilapidated cemetery and plastering the façade, but they also reached out to the public in new ways. Particularly significant for the legacy of Romo’s patio garden, these shrewd administrators managed to maintain both the mystique of a closed monastic community and publicly promote the “sacred garden.” In their first year the brothers inaugurated a formal guide program to lead visitors through the open parts of the mission.⁶⁶ 1886 was the centennial of the mission, and the friars partnered with the Santa Barbara Go-Ahead Club to organize festivities. They permitted professional photographers access to the mission and posed in the garden in various contemplative stances: gazing into the reflective surface of the fountain basin, tending potted plants, or reading.

While the Sacred Heart Franciscans continued to develop the mission as a monastic community and a seat of worship and learning in the late nineteenth century, they also recognized the value of the mission for promoting the town as well as their own interests in the contest between the Hispanic elite, who had long dominated Santa Barbara politics, and the growing Anglo presence. Following secularization and the resulting redistribution of land and political power, the town of Santa Barbara had become a highly stratified community of powerful and wealthy ranchers, small-scale ranchers and subsistence farmers, and laborers and artisans. After statehood, Santa Barbara continued to be one of the largest Spanish-speaking settlements in the state, but that started to change during the 1860s as the slumping pastoral economy led to financial ruin for many Mexican ranchers,

while a real estate speculative bubble attracted an influx of Anglos. By 1870 Santa Barbara’s population had become majority Anglo, and the 1873 local elections marked the transfer of political power, when Californios lost all city and county offices except the county sheriff to Anglo candidates. The political change was accompanied by a parallel shift in the socio-economic structure of the town as Anglos accumulated property and established themselves at higher occupational levels while the Mexican (both California- and Mexico-born) population experienced a downward economic trend.⁶⁷ These rising and fading fortunes were part of a broader increase in racial inequality. Historian Albert Camarillo has described this “*barrioization*” in Santa Barbara as the “loss of land, decline of the pastoral economy . . . the continuation of racial antagonism . . . [and] the onset of political powerlessness began to create a new reality for Mexican people in Santa Barbara,” which included the “formation of residentially and socially segregated Chicano barrios or neighborhoods.”⁶⁸

Within this political context, the Santa Barbara Mission’s growing prominence as a heritage site was well served by its association with a European gardening tradition. Romo’s design, whether it was influenced by his Mediterranean travels or his astute reading of the local politics, was received as a beautiful sacred space descending from the long European tradition of courtyard gardens. At a time when status was inextricably tied to race and the fortunes of Santa Barbara’s Mexican community were declining, Romo’s design rendered the space as an Iberian courtyard garden and tellingly avoided explicit references to Mexican design and even Catholicism. While its setting in a Franciscan mission implicitly linked it to the contemplative religious tradition of monastic gardens, unlike later twentieth century mission gardens, Santa Barbara’s garden contained no crosses, statuary, or other religious iconography. The allusions to a secular European garden tradition served the interests of the mission administrators who were struggling to keep the mission going in the 1870s, and it attached their project to more prestigious Spanish historical origins rather than Native American or Mexican heritage.

Garden Visual Culture and the Construction of Memory

The role of the Santa Barbara Mission garden in the construction of the California past after the turn of the twentieth century is an example of the historical practices and patterns of production and consumption through which cultural memory is woven. The image of the mission garden as an icon of the colonial era was perpetuated in varied visual formats that were circulated through a variety of exchange systems.

Photographs of the Santa Barbara Mission pasted in personal albums, postcards mailed by the thousands, paintings hung in galleries and at expositions, glass slides projected by travelling lecturers to packed houses, magazine illustrations, and promotional literature all helped to embed the mission garden in California's historical narrative.

The history of the Mission Revival garden recapitulates a set of circumstances familiar to students of Orientalism, but in the California context it is a pan-Mediterranean heritage that is constructed and made the mythical origin of a distinctive regional identity. The creation of the mission garden encompassed a set of historical, narrative, and visual practices that established a shared identity by naturalizing certain interests and marginalizing others. Just as Said, Mackenzie, Gregory, and others have analyzed the connections of power, space, and visibility mobilized in the construction of "Orientalism," California's regional identity has invoked a construction of "Mediterranean" heritage.⁶⁹ Turn-of-the-century Californians, many of whom were recent transplants from the Midwest and East Coast of the United States, were familiar with the discourses of Anglo-American heritage that predominated in the eastern portions of the country, where the anglocentric Colonial Revival had taken root. For a West Coast parallel they looked to the traditions of southern Europe, particularly Italy and Spain. The expression of this heritage in landscape design was an amalgamation of Iberian, Moorish, and classical influences, percolated through tours, travel literature, and treatises, and embraced by those who perceived a kinship of climate, topography, and culture. Its fullest expression was the Mediterranean Revival architecture and landscape architecture movements, but it was embedded in a broader complex of cultural expressions including literature, history, folklore, and visual culture. Like Orientalism, this Mediterranean construct was both aesthetic and ideological. It was most visible in the exuberant state-sponsored fairs, such as San Diego's California-Panama Exposition and San Francisco's Panama-Pacific Exposition, both in 1915, but its authenticity derived from California's Spanish colonial past and therefore resonated with particular potency in the missions themselves.⁷⁰ The missions were thus charged loci for the performance of this constructed identity, whether as tourist destinations, artists' subjects, or literary settings. The expectations and conventions that established ways of seeing were produced and consumed both at the mission sites and in the reception of their visual culture.

The missions were represented in visual media since their founding, when artists such as George Heinrich von Langsdorff, Louis Choris, and Alfred Robinson captured scenes of life at the missions under Spanish and Mexican rule.

Following secularization the deteriorating missions became popular subjects for artists such as Alexander Harmer, William Rich Hutton, Edwin Deakin, Edward Vischer, Chris Jorgensen, Will Sparks, and Henry Chapman Ford, who traveled to the missions to paint and sketch their ruins.⁷¹ As California's economy and transportation infrastructure grew during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, travel increased rapidly. One of the most popular destinations was Mission Santa Barbara, due in large part to its location along the coastal roadway and rail lines. The Southern Pacific Railroad, linking San Francisco and Los Angeles, was completed in 1876, and Santa Barbara became a convenient intermediate stop for rail travelers, as it had been by those who made the trip by steamship.⁷² With the growing popularity of automobiles, traffic to the mission increased even more. Easy access combined with what was seen as the finest surviving remnant of colonial California's mission days put the site on the map, literally and figuratively. A visit to the mission began to be seen as part of the Santa Barbara experience, and the mission began to be marketed and commoditized as a destination. Nineteenth-century portrayals disseminated the image of the garden as a heritage destination and embedded it in an authentic, sacred, and peaceful past.

In many ways, artists' depictions of the Santa Barbara Mission in the last quarter of the nineteenth century continued the conventions of their predecessors. The images focused on the distinctive façades of the mission, setting them within a broader, seemingly ahistorical pastoral landscape with no visual reference to the growing town that lay to the southeast. For the first time, however, artists depicted the courtyard garden and other interior scenes of the mission. For example, Henry Chapman Ford (1828–1894), who settled in Santa Barbara in 1875, made extensive sketches and paintings, and from these he produced a series of etchings featuring all twenty-one mission sites, including an engraving of the Mission Santa Barbara garden that was published in 1888 (Figure 13).⁷³ The Santa Barbara garden was also captured by Chris Jorgensen (1858–1935), who completed a series of mission paintings while traveling by horse and buggy with his wife. Like the broader landscape views, the Santa Barbara garden images presented the site as a timeless monastic garden, implicitly associating the garden design with the colonial-era architecture.⁷⁴ Ford's images, in particular, have been credited with kindling an interest in California's Spanish heritage, yet they were only a small but significant part of the rich and varied mission visual culture of the late nineteenth century.⁷⁵

A more pervasive factor in the dissemination of the mission image was the growth of personal and professional photography around the turn of the twentieth century, which

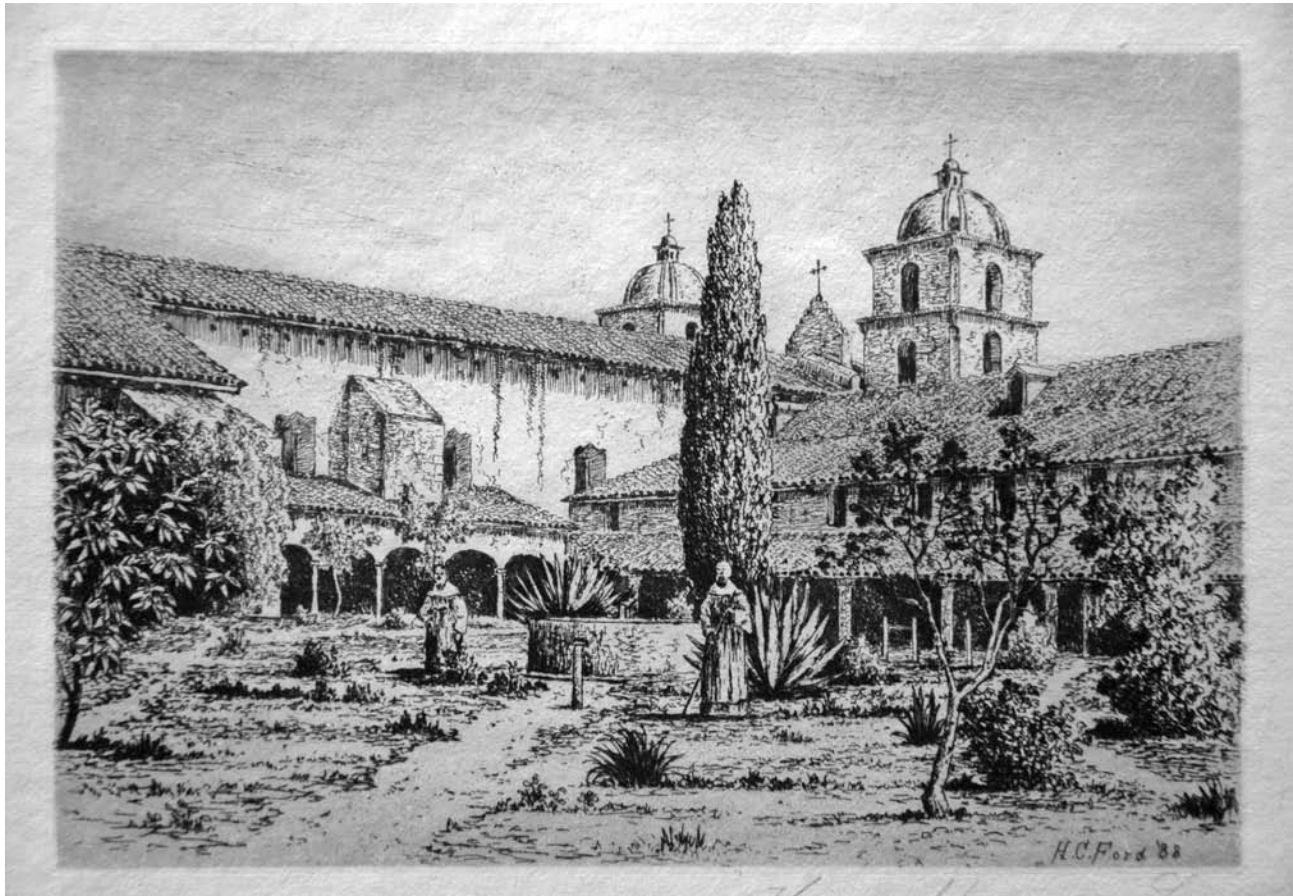


Figure 13 Henry Chapman Ford, etching of the Santa Barbara courtyard garden, 1888 (courtesy of Sullivan Goss)

supplied a burgeoning market for images of the missions in many formats and with wide circulation.⁷⁶ The Santa Barbara Mission garden, in particular, became an icon of California's constructed past in part because photography directed "the tourist gaze" toward it and framed it as a symbolic space and in part because it served the mission administrators' purposes to promote the mission and embed it as part of California heritage.⁷⁷

When the new order of Franciscan caretakers opened Santa Barbara Mission's doors to professional photographers in 1885, Isaiah West Taber (1830–1912) was one of the first to offer pictures of the mission commercially. Until it was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire, Taber's San Francisco studio dealt largely in portraits and scenic views, and he published his own work as well as images purchased from other photographers (often unattributed), including Carleton Watkins, whose stock was acquired by Taber in 1881 following Watkins's bankruptcy.⁷⁸ In about 1885 Taber published an image of the Santa Barbara garden in *California Scenery*, a collection of forty-one photographic prints bound in a small album.⁷⁹ Photographs of the mission also appeared in the

illustrated lectures of speakers—notably John L. Stoddard, who traveled the lecture circuit from 1879 to 1897, offering to packed auditoriums his dramatic accounts of the topography, history, and local cultures of exotic locales. Stoddard drew on a broad range of media, including photographs, and his presentations on the American West contained several images of the Santa Barbara Mission, including views of the cemetery (which the Sacred Heart Brothers also landscaped and often called a garden) and the front of the mission.⁸⁰

Photographs of the garden were also disseminated through the popular press, in coverage devoted to the celebrities and dignitaries who toured the garden. The mission became a requisite stop for celebrity visitors, including Princess Louise (daughter of Queen Victoria) and her husband the Governor General of Canada in 1882, First Lady Mrs. Benjamin Harrison in 1891, President William McKinley in 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903, and King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium in 1919.⁸¹ The storyline of these reports was usually a glowing account of the visitors' enjoyment of the historic atmosphere and beauty of the site. A reporter covering President McKinley's visit noted,

“The trip to the mission was indeed a thing in which Santa Barbara will have no rivals. It is the fortune of this city to possess a Mission equaled by none on the coast or elsewhere and it was the pleasure of a *News* representative as he went through the old church building to see the delight that overspread the President’s face at every turn.”⁸² The Belgian king and queen’s visit was reported nationally, including in the *New York Times*, which noted, “After mass, the party filed into the mission church yard, where the king planted a cypress and an orange tree to memorialize his visit there.”⁸³ The news coverage and photographs not only spread the reputation of the mission garden, but reinforced its value as a destination while the dignitaries modeled ideal tourist behavior.

Those who were not able to visit the mission in person could journey vicariously with the guidance of publications that reproduced large format photographs along with brief texts highlighting the significance of the sites. Photographer William Henry Jackson (1843–1942), who specialized in Western scenes, included an image of the garden in his monumental photographic survey *Ancient Missions and Churches of America* (1894). The depiction of the garden alongside other “ancient” settings registered it as a historic landscape, and if it even occurred to the reader to question its date, they were reassured by Jackson’s accompanying statement that “The sub-tropical loviliness [sic] of the Santa Barbara Mission garden has always been an object of admiration. The Mission was founded only ten years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and its founder

died in 1793. . . . The Mission Garden was, and still is, a place of peculiar beauty.”⁸⁴

While books and photographic prints helped spread the reputation of the garden, its image was even more widely disseminated by turn-of-the-century postcards. The postcard was copyrighted in the United States as early as 1861, but it was not until the approval of privately produced postcards and the introduction of a lower postal rate in 1898 that their use became widespread.⁸⁵ Their popularity exploded between 1905 and 1915, when as many as 677 million postcards were mailed in a single year, an astonishing figure given that the United States population was only 88 million.⁸⁶ Santa Barbara Mission garden photographs were reproduced as stereographic photos, hand-tinted postcards, and eventually “real photographs” by Keystone View Company, Adolph Selige Publishers (St Louis), Edward H. Mitchell (San Francisco), Osborne’s (Santa Barbara), M. Rieder (Los Angeles), Newman (Los Angeles), Souvenir Publishing Co. (San Francisco), and the Southern Pacific Railroad (Figure 14). One of the most prolific was the Detroit Photographic Company, whose repository of images was greatly increased in 1897 when Jackson joined William A. Livingstone at the company, bringing with him an estimated 10,000 negatives, which became the core of their stock.⁸⁷

As important as the production and dissemination of the Santa Barbara mission images are for understanding the site’s place in American cultural memory, the nature of the reception of the images is equally significant, and it is useful to



Figure 14 Postcard of the Forbidden Garden, Mission Santa Barbara, ca. 1906

examine how these images were collected and consumed. Personal photograph albums from this period included both purchased photos and, with the advent of amateur photography, images taken by visitors to commemorate their own mission visits.⁸⁸ For example, Anthony Wayne Vodges, a career army officer, author, and fellow of the American Geological Society, created an album to record his California travels (1888–92) and selected nine photographs of the Santa Barbara Mission, including two views of the garden taken in 1888.⁸⁹ Private albums were both personal memory markers and mechanisms for sharing travels with friends and family.⁹⁰ The albums themselves became tangible spaces of memory and experience, capturing the mission visit at a specific moment and extending it through time, as the pages were turned, the images viewed, and stories told. Postcards mailed or pasted in an album similarly concretized the visit with a visual memento that connected place, experience, and sentiment. The images of the mission garden, whether it was perceived as shared heritage or as an exotic destination, fixed the public historic site as private memory.

Part of the power of these images was the parallel between narratives that registered the meaning of the spaces and the visual conventions used to signify that the gardens were historic, peaceful, sacred spaces. For example, Jackson's introduction to *Ancient Missions* praised the missions as places where "the padres planted the cross of Christian faith, where they taught the gentle arts to wild and savage men; there we may see the shrines they built, and there can be learned the legends of a past filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice tinged with the romantic color which time bestows on all things that emanate from the heart or hand of man."⁹¹ One of the most common visual conventions was to pose a solitary robed friar, usually standing next to the fountain and often gazing contemplatively into the reflective surface of the water or holding a potted plant. Images that presented the monks as nurturers and the garden as a place of meditation and prayer reinforced the characterization of the missions as cradles of civilization where husbandry and horticulture transformed the wild landscape and the brothers converted the heathen people. For example, Jorgensen's view of the mission garden depicts a brown-robed monk standing beside the fountain, and Ford includes a friar holding a hoe or staff. These are the only human figures to appear in either artist's mission series. Similarly, photographers of the garden consistently posed a solitary robed figure in the landscape, and the visual vocabulary is replicated across numerous postcard views as well (Figure 15). The relation of word and image is evident even on postcards where the simplest captions labeled scenes as sacred and cloistered. Postcard titles such as



2970 Father Onesimus at Fountain. Santa Barbara, Cal.

Figure 15 Postcard of Father Onesimus in the Mission Santa Barbara Garden, ca. 1905

"Sacred Garden," "Holy Garden," "Flowers for the Altar," and "Forbidden Garden," presented the gardens as historic and hallowed ground. The monks within the gardens were depicted as living in consecrated places with associations both ancient and eternal. One commercial postcard of a brother reading in the cemetery beneath a flowering datura tree is captioned "Waiting for the Angel's Trumpet." While the brothers themselves called this space the "private garden," the visual vocabulary gives credence to the publisher's descriptive text.⁹² The poses of the priests contemplating bunches of lilies and reading scripture convey their faithful service while their robes, little changed for centuries, and the "historic" garden setting invokes a colonial past of similarly peaceful, holy lives. These are places simultaneously timeless and historic, connected to the past by the continuity of their faithful Franciscan stewards.

Illustrated works of fiction that employed the Santa Barbara Mission as their setting are another rich body of evidence for exploring the connections between text and image. For example, in 1887 the widely read *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* published the story "A Santa Barbara Holiday"



Figure 16 Harry Fenn, “The Mission Fountain” (from *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, Nov. 1887)

about a group of easterners who winter in Santa Barbara.⁹³ In the story, Edith, the serious, thoughtful sister, goes daily to the mission where she sits “on the rim of the fountain basin dreamily gazing.”⁹⁴ One day she is invited by one of the frocked fathers to tour the mission. Although as a woman she is not permitted to enter the garden, Edith looks at it through the sacristy doorway. “In speaking of it afterward she said she could not well describe it. ‘There was perfect quiet, and the sunlight made beautiful shadow patches on the walks. There is a deep corridor. . . . Some of the fathers were seated in its shade. I wish I could have painted it, but fear I couldn’t give the true coloring, it was so varied and deep.’”⁹⁵ This description of the garden’s mystique and romance is echoed by three accompanying engravings of the mission by Harry Fenn.⁹⁶ Fenn employed the same conventions of depicting the “mission garden” typically seen in photographs (which may have been his model), but he invented an oft-repeated composition of the front of the mission. Fenn’s “The Mission Fountain” shows water cascading down the tiers of the 1808 fountain into a pool that reflects the white façade of the church (Figure 16). The arched colonnade on the left is balanced with the dusky trees on the right, over which hangs a crescent moon. On the side of the fountain sits Edith, in a stylish striped dress, gazing toward the mission. The image accentuates the contrasts of the scene—the light, geometrically regular architecture against and dark, organic forms of the woods; the reflective, shiny surfaces of the water and dress fabric against the rustic masonry of the fountain and the rough ground. Just as early photographs of Egypt established expectations for the touristic gaze, so too did Fenn and other early photographers and illustrators establish ways of seeing or “picturing place” that persisted in mission visual culture ever since.⁹⁷ A hand-tinted postcard from about 1903

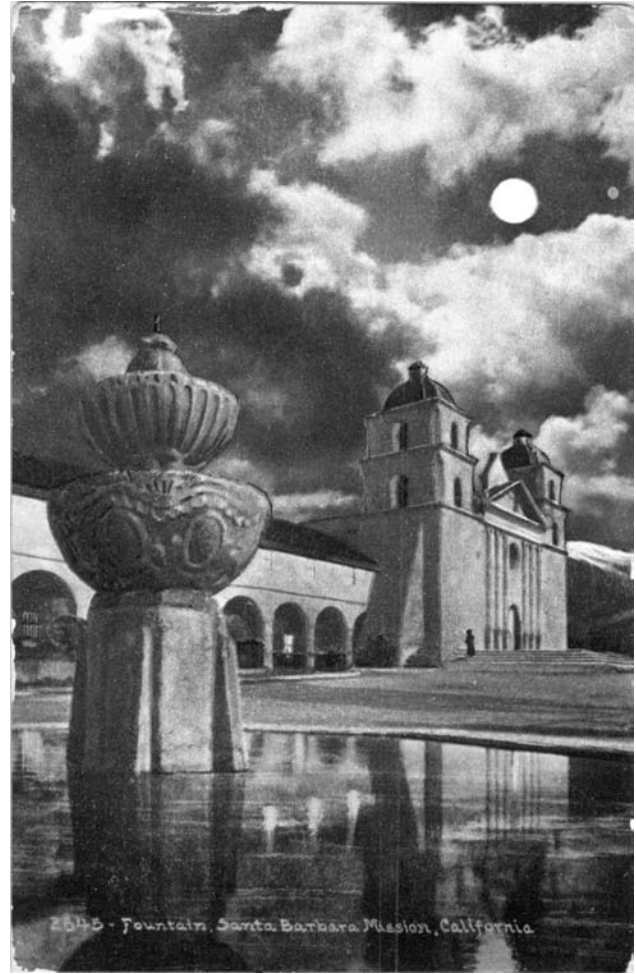


Figure 17 Postcard of Mission Santa Barbara’s façade, ca. 1902

shows a similarly moonlit mission façade reflected in the calm pool of the fountain basin (Figure 17). Another example, by photographer Carleton Watkins, framed a view of the mission with the fountain in the foreground, and a Google image search today reveals numerous modern photographs of that same façade reflected in that same fountain.⁹⁸ While it is unlikely that today’s photographers have read the 1887 *Harper’s* story, the conventions established one hundred years ago and repeated in myriad postcards, calendars, and guidebooks have constructed widespread credence in this staged authenticity. The fountain scene, with its interplay of light and shadow, patina and palm, its erasure of the Native American past, and its capture of the quintessential mission architectural forms has become what MacCannell has called “constructed recognition.”⁹⁹

Fenn’s illustration of the inner garden, entitled “Garden of the Mission,” is a similar representational convention that has endured for generations (Figure 18). Like the early photographers, Fenn frames the garden looking toward the



Figure 18 Harry Fenn, illustration of the Santa Barbara Mission garden (from *Harp-er's New Monthly Magazine*, Nov. 1887)

northeast with the mission towers in the background. The central fountain anchors the foreground and two friars working in the garden offer both scale and human interest. Mirroring Edith's account, the engraving highlights the contrasts of light and dark played out in shadow and direct light, foliage and architectural textures. The repeated rhythms of the arcade, piers, and windows provide the backdrop for the plane of walks and geometric beds. The textures of the plantings—the dense cedar evergreen, spiky tropical succulents, delicate leaved fruit trees, and thick mats of groundcover—are accentuated even in the monochrome engraving.¹⁰⁰

The wide circulation of early images of the Santa Barbara Mission garden, with its resident monks and historic architecture, cemented the association of the garden with a colonial origin and sense of sacred space. The visual culture of the missions was in part the byproduct of a burgeoning tourist industry and other practices of producing and viewing images in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century. These practices multiplied as images and narratives were reproduced across media, embedding the Santa Barbara garden in a broader narrative of colonial hegemony.

Mission Gardens and the Mediterranean Revival

The Colonial Revival gardens that were connected with the historic mission buildings also have significance for the broader history of California landscape design, specifically the Mediterranean Revival of the early twentieth century. In the standard telling of the history of the Mediterranean Revival style garden, California's elites, planning horticultural counterparts for their new Mediterranean-style estates, followed the fashion for Mediterranean gardens seen elsewhere in America. Such was their passion that the style has been described as "almost obligatory in California."¹⁰¹ The taste was fueled in part by the similarity of the coastal climates of the Mediterranean and California, which allowed groups such as the Southern California Acclimatizing Association to import from southern Europe, Australia, and other semi-tropical locales a wide range of plants that expanded California gardeners' palettes.¹⁰²

In addition to this climatic parallel, many estate owners had toured the gardens of Italy, Spain, and Persia, and even those who had not were familiar with the pan-Mediterranean garden aesthetic through publications such as Edith Wharton's *Italian Gardens and Their Villas* (1903), Charles Latham's

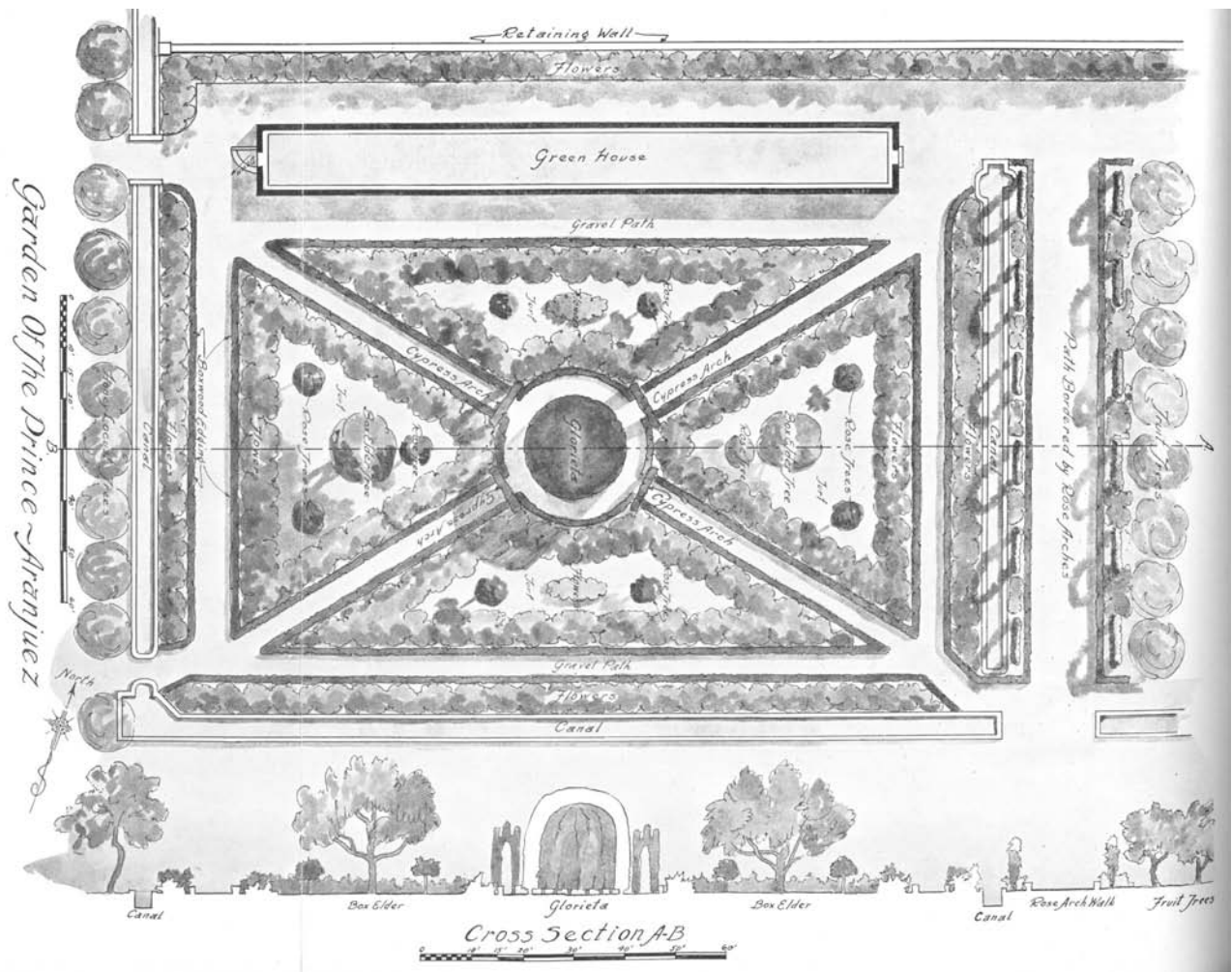


Figure 19 Ralph L. Reaser, illustrator, plan of the Garden of the Prince, Aranjuez (from Helen Morgenthau Fox, *Patio Gardens* [New York: Macmillan, 1929])

The Gardens of Italy (1905), Constance Villiers-Stuart's *Spanish Gardens* (1929), Helen Fox's *Patio Gardens* (1929), and Arthur and Mildred Byne's series on Spanish gardens and patios. These books were filled with romantic descriptions and richly illustrated with photographs of sites, and they included details, plans, and other elements that informed residential garden design (Figure 19).¹⁰³ The images in these books reinforced the Mediterranean design aesthetic, while the texts argued for its suitability for California. Villiers-Stuart, for example, reproduced plans, sketches, and photographs of iconic Spanish sites such as the Alhambra and the Alcázar. Her illustrations, such as views down a garden axis and oblique perspectives into a courtyard gardens through arches, employed conventions like those familiar in representations of the missions (Figure 20). Prolific editor and journalist Charles Dudley Warner wrote an account of the climate and resources of Southern California, signaling its Mediterranean parallels explicitly with the title *Our Italy*

(1891). He not only noted the climatic and topographical similarities, but promoted California as a garden "in perpetual bloom and fruitage, where semi-tropical fruits mature in perfection, and the most delicate flowers dazzle the eye with color the winter through."¹⁰⁴ He included an illustration, "In the Garden at Santa Barbara," showing the classic pose of the monk beside the fountain with the mission towers looming in the background (Figure 21). The Santa Barbara garden was the embodiment of Old World heritage transplanted in the new Eden.

These connections between the Santa Barbara Mission and the garden traditions of the Mediterranean were appreciated by those crafting landscapes for California elites, particularly in the Santa Barbara area. Designers such as Lockwood de Forest, Jr., and Bertram Goodhue gave their clients exotic oases with playing water and intricate colored tile work that echoed both the European gardens shown in travel books and the similar, nearby garden at one of the most



Figure 20 View of the Court of Daraxa, the Alhambra (from Constance M. Villiers-Stuart, *Spanish Gardens*, [New York : Charles Scribner's Sons 1929])

prominent historic sites in the state. Many clients were not only readers of garden literature and veteran travelers, but fervent Californians who built houses in the Santa Barbara hills, where a view of the mission was highly valued. A 1908 *Sunset* article noted with some humor, “If a property owner here can not build his house so that he may see the mission towers he considers life a failure and moves away. Neighbors quarrel over which has the view. . . . Oak trees are felled, rocks are blasted, houses are razed, that a new vision of those two towers and their bells may be secured as part of one’s realty holding.”¹⁰⁵ For owners of Santa Barbara estates, a “Mediterranean” garden style offered not only the allure of European antecedents, but an association with a prominent local historical site and the charm of its romanticized past.¹⁰⁶ Although created as recently as 1872, the garden at Mission Santa Barbara was popularly perceived as a colonial relic that referenced European garden traditions in a uniquely Californian idiom. For California’s recent immigrants, looking for a distinctive garden style that was adapted to the climate and sympathetic to their idea of living in a “land of sunshine,” the appeal of the Santa Barbara Mission garden



IN THE GARDEN AT SANTA BARBARA MISSION.

Figure 21 “In the Garden at Santa Barbara Mission” (from Charles Dudley Warner, *Our Italy* [New York: Harper and Brothers 1891])

in its historic, authentic setting was compelling. It was a historical precedent for modern landscapes that celebrated California as a beautiful and cultured “new Eden.”

From the turn of the twentieth century onward, those responsible for caring for the missions, including preservationists, Franciscans, Catholic parish administrators, and state parks employees, capitalized on the synergy between the new residential gardens of the elite and the reconstructed gardens of the missions. Allegedly created by the learned and noble founding mission fathers who came to save heathens and tame the wilderness, the gardens stood as an enduring legitimation of “civilization” and “progress.” In sum, the Santa Barbara Mission garden could be “read” conveniently as both the legacy of colonial victors and the heritage of elite white society. The layers of romanticized and racialized meaning accrued over time as other missions added their own gardens and wealthy clients called on designers to construct Mission and Mediterranean style estates. The understanding that



Figure 22 Mission Santa Inez Garden (author's photo)

Romo's Santa Barbara garden design directly referenced Spain or Italy, rather than the Mexican or Native American landscapes, was added incentive to replicate it at other missions and California county estates.

Landscape design and its visual representations are critical media in the production and reception of cultural memory and meaning, and the history of the Santa Barbara Mission garden reveals the complex, recursive relationships between the site and its broadly circulated images and narratives. The ongoing presentation and reception of the postcolonial garden as a peaceful, sacred, historic landscape also raises issues for the contemporary stewardship and interpretation of the missions.¹⁰⁷ The themes that resonated across the narratives and images in the late nineteenth century continue to influence the reception of the mission sites today, and James's prediction of "perennially new" missions where "hundreds of thousands will stand in their sacred precincts, and unconsciously absorb beautiful and unselfish lessons of life as they hear some part of their history recited" has come to pass. At the missions, museum exhibits, memorial markers, and text panels convey with varying

degrees of specificity the devastating cultural transformations wrought by the imposition of Spanish rule, and yet the gardens continue to influence the reception of the sites profoundly, as visitors stroll the garden paths, gazing at the flower beds and cascading fountains (Figure 22). Photographs posted by the thousands on-line and mission models crafted each year by fourth graders exemplify the enduring conflation of the mission gardens with a colonial history and the continued reception of the gardens as sacred, peaceful, and beautiful historic spaces. The gardens continue to inform the public memory California's past, and their contested history continues to matter deeply to diverse constituencies with interests in how the sites are managed and interpreted.¹⁰⁸

While the politics of race and power have been and continue to be inscribed in the mission gardens, their popularity also offers an intellectually accessible and physically tangible opportunity for spurring dialogue about the historiography of the sites. The gardens offer an opportunity to expand the concept of historic preservation to include cultural landscapes. While a number of the missions are on the National Register, none lists the gardens as contributing resources, despite the fact that they are some of the oldest gardens in

the state. Caring for the gardens is generally the responsibility of volunteers or the general maintenance staff, or the work is contracted out to landscaping companies with little or no consideration of the historic plant material or the multivalent histories of the spaces. By developing stewardship programs that address the historic significance of the gardens and interpretive programs that reveal the social relationships and ideologies encoded in the landscapes, the sites have the potential to become a locus for dialogue about the history of the missions and allow us to reexamine accepted notions of California history.¹⁰⁹

Notes

1. I am indebted to the many colleagues and friends who have spurred my thinking and improved this essay with their suggestions. Paul Mullins, Dede Ruggles, David Brownlee, and the anonymous reviewers offered comments that strengthened and focused the argument. I also wish to thank the many archivists, site administrators, librarians, and curators who so generously responded to my questions and assisted in my research. Finally, I thank those whose grants allowed me the time to pursue this investigation during my sabbatical: the American Association of University Women and the IU School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI.
2. George Wharton James, *The Old Franciscan Missions of California* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1913), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13854/13854-h/13854-h.htm> (accessed 3 March 2008).
3. Edna E. Kimbro and Julia Costello with Tevvy Ball, *The California Missions: History, Art, and Preservation* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2009).
4. John Dixon Hunt, *The Afterlife of Gardens* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 11.
5. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); John Dixon Hunt, *The Afterlife of Gardens*; James Corner, "Introduction: Recovering Landscape as Critical Cultural Practice," in *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, ed. James Corner (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 1–26.
6. Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 96–97.
7. For operations of the landscapes at cultural heritage sites with their connection to broader discourses of historical knowledge and codified practices of heritage tourism and the role of authenticity and authority and the social responsibility of public museums and cultural sites in post-colonial settings, see Edward A. Chappell, "Social Responsibility and the American History Museum," *Winterthur Portfolio* 24, no. 4 (Winter 1989), 247–65; Susan A. Crane, "Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum" *History and Theory* 36, no. 4 (Dec. 1997), 44–63; Margaret Dubin, *Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001) (see esp. chap. 5, "Museums and the Politics of Cultural Authority"); Paul A. Shackel, "Public Memory and the Search for Power in American Historical Archaeology," *American Anthropologist* 103, no. 3 (Sept. 2001), 655–70. For an overview and the introduction of the term "heritagescape," see Mary-Catherine E. Garden, "The Heritagescape: Looking at Landscapes of the Past," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12, no. 5 (Sept. 2006), 394–411. For an example of the dynamic relationship of landscapes and the practices of tourists, see Dell Upton, "'Authentic' Anxieties," in *Consuming*

Tradition, Manufacturing Heritage: Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism, ed. Nezar Al Sayyad (London: Routledge, 2001), 298–306; Claudio Minca, "The Tourist Landscape Paradox," *Social and Cultural Geography* 8, no. 3 (June 2007), 433–53; and a case study from California, Martha K. Norkunas, *The Politics of Public Memory: Tourism, History, and Ethnicity in Monterey, California* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).

8. William S. Simmons, "Indian Peoples of California," in *Contested Eden: California before the Gold Rush*, ed. Ramón Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 48–77; M. Kat Anderson, Michael G. Barbour, and Valerie Whitworth, "A World of Balance and Plenty: Land, Plants, Animals, and Humans in Pre-European California," in *ibid.*, 12–47. For more specific analysis of the lifeways and worldview of the Chumash, native peoples of the Santa Barbara area, see Johny Preston Flynn, "From Three Worlds to One: An Analysis of Chumash Religious History" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1991); Travis Hudson and Ernest Underhay, *Crystals in the Sky: An Intellectual Odyssey Involving Chumash Astronomy, Cosmology, and Rock Art*. Socorro, N.M.: Ballena Press, 1978; Sandra E. Holliman, "Archaeology of the 'Aqi: Gender, Sexuality in Prehistoric Chumash Society," in *Archaeologies of Sexuality*, ed. Robert A. Schmidt (Florence, Ky.: Routledge, 2000), 179–96; and John Richard Johnson, *Chumash Social Organization: An Ethnohistorical Perspective* (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1988).

9. M. Kat Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California Natural Resources* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

10. David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 124.

11. While California was officially under Spanish rule until 1822, revolutionary movements in Spain and Mexico in the 1810s meant that Alta California became increasingly isolated and the region's ties to Spain and central Mexico became tenuous (Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 2005, 370–71).

12. In colonial times 127 Franciscans served in Alta California, nearly all of whom were born and educated in Spain. A relatively small number of missionaries were posted at each mission and, as members of their religious order, served under a President of the California missions. Indian officials, called *alcaldes* and *mayordomos*, who helped oversee the social control and labor at the missions, were selected by the padres and elected by the neophytes. Steven W. Hackel, "The Staff of Leadership: Indian Authority in the Missions of Alta California," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 54, no. 2 (April 1997), 347–76.

13. For a more complete analysis of the missions' agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade, see Robert Archibald, *The Economic Aspects of the California Missions* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1978).

14. In addition to site-specific studies and the HABS records, key sources for the architecture of the California missions includes, Kurt Baer, *Architecture of the California Missions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958); *California Mission Buildings*, The Brochure Series of Architectural Illustration 4, no. 7 (July 1898), 110–20; Catherine R. Ettinger, "Spaces of Change: Architecture and the Creation of a New Society in the California Missions," *Boletín: Journal of the California Mission Studies Association* 21, no. 1 (2004), 23–44; Donald R. Hannaford and Revel Edwards, *Spanish Colonial or Adobe Architecture of California, 1800–1850* (Stamford, Conn.: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1931 [rpt. 1990]); William L. Judson, "The Architecture of the Mission," *Historical Society of Southern California Publications* 7, nos. 2–3 (1909), 114–18; Rexford Newcomb, *The Franciscan Mission Architecture of Alta California* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co. 1916, reprinted New York: Dover, 1988). For the interior decoration of the missions, see Norman Neuerburg, *The Decoration of the California Missions*, 2nd

ed. (Santa Barbara: Bellerophon Books, 1991) and Kimbro and Costello, *The California Missions*.

15. The relationship between the mission architecture and the control of vision, including surveillance, is argued more fully in Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, "Sites of Power and the Power of Sight: Vision in the California Mission Landscapes," in *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*, ed. Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), 181–212. The function of the architecture as a strategy to influence native behaviors, including sexual practices, is argued in Barbara L. Voss, "Colonial Sex: Archaeology, Structured Space, and Sexuality in Alta California's Spanish-Colonial Missions," in *Archaeologies of Sexuality* ed. Robert A. Schmidt (Florence, Ky.: Routledge, 2000), 35–61.

16. John G. Ressler, "Indian and Spanish Water-Control on New Spain's Northwest Frontier," *Journal of the West* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1968), 10–17; Julia G. Costello and David Hornbeck, "Alta California: An Overview," in *Columbian Consequences*, vol. 3, *The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 311; R. Louis Gentileore, "Missions and Mission Lands of Alta California," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51, no. 1 (March 1961), 53–55. One of the most thoroughly excavated water systems is found at Mission San Luis Rey: Anita G. Cohen-Williams, "Archaeological Excavations of the Sunken Gardens of Mission San Luis Rey, California," in *Architecture, Physical Environment and Society in Alta California*, ed. Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Conferences of the California Mission Studies Association (California Mission Studies Association, 2005), 13–64.

17. Julia G. Costello, *The Ranches and Ranchos of Mission San Antonio de Padua* (California Mission Studies Association, 1994), 1.

18. The Franciscans claimed the land as trustees on behalf of the neophytes to whom title was eventually to be given. The boundaries of the mission lands were, in many cases, never formally established, and with secularization most of the lands were deeded to private citizens (Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 387).

19. This simplistic summary necessarily condenses the complex sequence of legal maneuvers and political dynamics of the 1830s through 1850s. For a fuller treatment of the mission land history, see *ibid.*, 369–419.

20. Some missions have been entirely rebuilt, including San Rafael, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz, which was reconstructed on a reduced scale (Edna E. Kimbro, "Construction Chronology of the Site of Holy Cross Church, Santa Cruz, California," n.d., Santa Cruz Public Libraries web site, <http://www.santacruzpl.org/history/spanish/kimholys.html> (accessed 4–10–2008)). Others, such as Santa Barbara and San Antonio de Pala, are remarkably well preserved and even retain remnants of interior decoration painted by the native residents.

21. Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 369–70; For a fuller discussion of the impact of the dissolution of the missions, changing property ownership, and labor relations, see Douglas Monroy, *Thrown among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in Frontier California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

22. The missions were featured in Helen Hunt Jackson's hugely popular novel *Ramona* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1884) and were regularly highlighted during the 1880s and 1890s in *Land of Sunshine, Out West*, and other magazines that celebrated California. For an overview of the period, see Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850–1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) and *Inventing the Dream; California through the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). California's preservation movement paralleled similar efforts in other parts of the country, such as the founding of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England) and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association.

23. The rise of Anglo-American political and social power is chronicled in histories such as Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846–1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848–1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Monroy, *Thrown among Strangers*; and Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). How those shifting power relations were inscribed in architecture, landscape, and other cultural forms has been a rich area of inquiry whose seminal works include William Alexander McClung, *Landscapes of Desire: Anglo Mythologies of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). Chris Wilson has analyzed a similar process in New Mexico, in *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

24. The history of the early mission restorations has yet to be fully explored, but is covered in several unpublished theses: Nathan Weinberg, "Historic Preservation and Tradition in California: Restoration of the Missions and the Spanish-Colonial Revival" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 1974); Joan Helen Hackling, "Authenticity in Preservation Thought: The Reconstruction of Mission La Purisima Concepcion" (master's thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989); and August Mark Vaz, "The Northern Missions: A History of Their Preservation and Reconstruction" (master's thesis, University of California, 1949).

25. Many are local parishes or missions, one is a seminary, another is the University chapel on the campus of Santa Clara University. Two missions, Sonoma and La Purísima, are state parks. All the missions are open to the public and have varying organizational structures for staffing and managing tourist experiences. Some, such as San Juan Capistrano and San José, are run by private not-for-profits, while others are operated by the parish with volunteer docents. The two California State Park properties have professional staff as well as affiliated friends groups. With the exception of these two Park Service sites, the missions are not supported by the government, although in 2004 the United States Congress passed the California Missions Preservation Act, a bill to establish the California Missions Foundation to raise funds for mission preservation. A group called Americans United for Separation of Church and State has filed suit to block the bill, citing violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. While the \$10 million in matching funding remains blocked until the resolution of the suit, the foundation has launched a campaign to raise \$50 million for mission preservation projects.

26. The broader context of Spanish colonial historiography is surveyed in David J. Weber, "The Spanish Legacy in North America and the Historical Imagination," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (Feb. 1992), 5–24. Among the studies of the imagery of the missions are James J. Rawls "The California Mission as Symbol and Myth," *California History* 71, no. 3 (Fall 1992), 342–61; Roberto Lint Sagarena, "Building California's Past: Mission Revival Architecture and Regional Identity," *Journal of Urban History* 28, no. 4 (2002), 429–44. David Hurst Thomas, "Harvesting Ramona's Garden: Life in California's Mythical Mission Past," in *Columbian Consequences*, vol. 3, *The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 119–57. David Gebhard, "Architectural Imagery, the Mission and California," *Harvard Architecture Review* 1 (1980), 137–45; Blaine P. Lamb, "Marketing the Mission Revival: Commercial Art and the Image of Hispanic California," *Boletín: Journal of the California Mission Studies Association* 22, no. 2 (2005), 94–112;

Lisa Riggin Walden, "The Spanish Missions: The Death and Resurrection of a California Institution" (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2006). Two recent studies have begun what promises to be a productive line of inquiry into the role of landscape broadly construed in practices of colonial power relations: Stephen W. Silliman, "Theoretical Perspectives on Labor and Colonialism: Reconsidering the California Missions" *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 20, no. 4 (Dec. 2001), 379–407 and Barbara Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race, Sexuality, and Identity in Colonial San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Mission gardens have received little scholarly treatment, except by garden historians. Similarly, the extensive historical scholarship on the missions as institutions has paid little attention to the significance of the colonial landscapes or the role of the later mission gardens in the production and consumption of mission heritage sites; mission garden scholarship has not been helped by often biased and inaccurate interpretations for the general public. For example, Judith Taylor's extensively edited posthumous publication of Harry Morton Butterfield's history of California gardens mistakenly attributes the 1872 Santa Barbara Mission garden to E. Denys Rowe (1881–1954) (Judith M. Taylor and Harry Morton Butterfield, *Tangible Memories: Californians and Their Gardens, 1800–1950* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Press, 2003), 298.

27. Charles Gibbs Adams, "Gardens of the Spanish Days of California," *Annual Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California* 45 (1932), 354; G. H. Hendry, "Spanish Mission Gardens of California" *California Arts and Architecture*, 46 (1934), 3; Tom Brown, "California Mission Gardens," *Pacific Horticulture* 49, no. 1 (Spring 1988), 3–11; Rexford Newcomb to Wallace C. Penfield, Chairman, La Purísima Advisory Committee, 17 Sept. 1936. Reprinted in Fred C. Hageman and Russell C. Ewing, *An Archaeological and Restoration Study of Mission La Purísima Concepción* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, 1991), 207. Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., "The Colonial Revival in the Public Eye: Williamsburg and Early Garden Restoration," in *The Colonial Revival in America*, ed. Alan Axelrod (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. for The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1985), 52–70.

28. Victoria Padilla, *Southern California Gardens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 24–25.

29. Pauline Jacobus, "The Mission Santa Clara Garden," *Pacific Horticulture* 37 no. 3 (1976), 3.

30. It should be noted that Streatfield has stated, "No patio is known to have been planted as a pleasure garden prior to secularization, in 1834" and yet he perpetuates the garden's colonial origins: "The garden at Mission La Purísima . . . which was restored in the 1930s, provides a good idea of how simple these gardens actually were." David C. Streatfield, *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 25. Streatfield's more recent publication expands his analysis of the romanticized constructions of the California past, but still misrepresents the colonial mission courtyard spaces. For example, he describes the "re-created" garden at Mission La Purísima and the "restored" gardens at San Juan Capistrano. He also ignores the significance of efforts during the 1870s and 1880s with the rather broad characterization that "at the end of the nineteenth century the missions were crumbling ruins." David C. Streatfield, "'Californio' Culture and Landscapes, 1894–1942," in *Design with Culture: Claiming America's Landscape History*, ed. Charles A. Birnbaum and Mary V. Hughes (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 104–5; David Gebhard, "Introduction," in *An Arcadian Landscape: The California Gardens of A. E. Hansen, 1920–1932*, ed. David Gebhard and Sheila Lynds (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1985), ix.; Nancy Goslee Power, *California Gardens: Four Centuries of Design from Mission to Modern* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1995), 2. Like Streatfield, Power is inconsistent in the chronology of the mission gardens as she elsewhere in her book acknowledges quite clearly that the courtyards were

utilitarian workplaces (15); Allison Lake, *Colonial Rosary* (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 2006), 129.

31. Rexford Newcomb, *The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California; Their History, Architecture, Art and Lore* (Philadelphia, London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1925). He similarly inked in a generalized central fountain and radiating paths in other missions courtyards, even where gardens had not yet been built.

32. Sally B. Woodbridge, "The History of California Architecture," *California Architecture: Historic American Buildings Survey* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988), 17. The plan reproduced is by George Hodgkinson as part of the Works Project Administration official project. and the original HABS catalogue cards dated 1937 cite Newcomb's two works on the missions which themselves reproduce garden plans in the mission courtyards.

33. Antoinette J. Lee, "Spanish Missions," *APT Bulletin* 22, no. 3 (1990), 44. Lee was a historian at the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service.

34. Charles Francis Saunders, "Historic Gardens in California" In *Gardens of Colony and State*, ed. Alice B. Lockwood (New York: Garden Club of America, 1934), 391, 394. Most of the entries are not credited to individual garden club member's contributions, but in this case a footnote records "By Charles Francis Saunders, Honorary Member of the Pasadena Garden Club."

35. Of the nineteen illustrations in Saunders's eleven-page chapter, nine are twentieth-century photos of mission gardens, and Zephyrin Englehardt's sketch of the garden design which in his 1923 publication Engelhardt credits as a 1903 plan by S. Newton (Newsome) (Zephyrin Engelhardt, *Santa Barbara Mission* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Company, 1923), 103.

36. Most work on Mission Revival architecture in California has similarly paid little attention to landscape design. See for example, Arthur Burnett Benton, "The California Mission and its Influence upon Pacific Coast Architecture," *The Architect and Engineer* 24, no. 1 (Feb. 1911), 35–75; David Gebhard, "The Spanish Colonial Revival in Southern California (1895–1930)," *JSAH* 26, no. 2 (May, 1967), 131–147; Karen J. Weitze, *California's Mission Revival* (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, 1984); and Harold Kirker, *California's Architectural Frontier: Style and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1986). Histories of mission landscapes have also tended to privilege the contributions of preservationists and designers and to ignore the role of the mission priests and parish volunteers in the development of a regional garden design.

37. Gebhard, "Architectural Imagery," 137–8.

38. The Chumash are one of the most well-known examples of indigenous peoples who were able to support relatively high population levels without agriculture. They lived off the abundant resources of their coastal and island homes, harvesting fish, shellfish, and marine mammals from the ocean, hunting animals in the upland/mountain ranges, gathering berries, nuts, and wild grasses, and processing acorns as a staple crop. The Chumash lived in large villages, maintained extensive trade networks, and organized themselves in complex chiefdoms with hereditary leaders, religious leaders, and specialized craftspeople. Eighty-six separate Chumash villages are mentioned in the baptismal registers for the current Santa Barbara County region (Johnson, "Chumash Social Organization," 83).

39. Maynard Geiger, *A Pictorial History of the Physical Development of Mission Santa Barbara from Brush Hut to Institutional Greatness, 1786–1963* (San Francisco: Franciscan Fathers of California, 1963), 26.

40. Geiger describes the first structures as log cabins (Maynard Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara, 1782–1965* [Santa Barbara: Franciscan Fathers of California, 1965], 41) while they are identified as wattle and daub by Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 157. Catherine R. Ettinger has

argued that these early wood, reed, and mud mission structures relied on traditional indigenous construction methods as well as the Native Americans' skilled labor "Hybrid Spaces, Indigenous Contributions to Mission Architecture," in *Architecture, Physical Environment, and Society in Alta California*, Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Conference of the California Mission Studies Association (Santa Clara California Mission Studies Association, 2005), 88–89.

41. Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly, who visited Santa Barbara in 1827, described: "In front of the building, in the middle of a large square, is a playing fountain, whose workmanship, quite imperfect as it was, surprised us the more, the less we expected to find in this country, so far from European refinement, that kind of luxury reserved with us for the dwellings of the wealthiest. After rising to a height of more than eight feet above the ground, the clear and sparkling water of this fountain fell again in broad sheets upon a descending series of stone basins forming altogether an octagonal pyramid; it filled a reservoir of the same shape to the brim, whence, issuing from the jaws of a bear, also in stone, it fell into a line laver in stucco, around which some Indian women and Californian girls were busy washing (Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly, "Duhaut-Cilly's Account of California in the Years 1827–1828," ed. and trans. Charles Franklin Carter, *The California Historical Society Quarterly* 8, nos. 2–4 (1929), 158.

42. Alfred Robinson, *Life in California: During a Residence of Several Years in that Territory, Comprising a Description of the Country and the Missionary Establishments* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846), 44–45.

43. George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World, during the Years 1841 and 1842* (London: H. Colburn, 1847), 396.

44. The mission was sold to Don Richard Den on June 10, 1846 for 7,500 pesos (Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara*, 139). An Apostolic College was originally founded in town, but moved to the mission buildings itself in 1856. The title was restored to the Franciscans in 1861; *ibid.*, 155–56.

45. In 1857 Father Jimeno pleaded to Bishop Aleneny, "The lands . . . ceded to us are in such a deteriorated state that the yield in the past year does not amount to \$100.00 worth. . . without a parish of white persons (what we have are Indians and everything is done for them gratis), . . . how can this college maintain itself? . . . The alms which we collect each month from the houses of the presidio are not sufficient to buy the bread we eat." Document 106, Santa Barbara Mission Archives, cited in *ibid.*, 164.

46. Brewer, William Henry, *Up and Down California in 1860–1864; the Journal of William H. Brewer*, ed. Francis P. Farquhar, 1st ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 56, electronic book on line at http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/up_and_down_california/ (accessed 4 March 2008). William Henry Brewer (1828–1910) was a professor of chemistry at Washington College in Pennsylvania when he joined the staff of California's first State Geologist, Josiah Dwight Whitney (1860–1864) and later became professor of agriculture at Yale University.

47. The college was closed with loan debt of more than \$16,000. Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara*, 187–189.

48. Father Maria José Romo, Diary of the Very Rev. José Maria Romo, O.F.M., from Port Said, Egypt to Santa Barbara, California, 1871–1875, Santa Barbara Mission Archives. The archives have the original diary and a typescript translation from the Spanish by Maynard Geiger, O.F.M. [n.p.].

49. The college, which had been the brainchild of Bishop Amat of Los Angeles, was intended to provide an English-based classical education at a time when California's educational system was still developing. The courses of instruction included mathematics, classical and modern languages, as well as various courses in history, geography, rhetoric, moral and natural philosophy, and religion; *ibid.*, 187.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Romo, Diary of the Very Rev. José Maria Romo, n.p.

52. The term *convento* referred to the house of any religious community, male or female.

53. A 1901 photograph taken during President McKinley's visit shows the effect of the fountain's jet rising several feet. Although the 1903 plan was not drawn until thirty years after the garden was planted, its record of species appears consistent with the earliest photos, suggesting it is a fairly accurate representation of the plants in the garden from at least 1885 on. The dating of specific garden features in this study is based on the photographic evidence in the Santa Barbara Mission Archives and published in Geiger (1965). The photographs' dates are, in turn, based on the documentary record of changing roof lines, conversions of doors to windows, and other architectural changes that were recorded in the mission records which document changes to the buildings more meticulously than improvements to the landscape.

54. A photograph of a plan dated 1903 is in the Santa Barbara Mission Archives with the attribution "Drawn from measurements taken with the assistance of the Padres by Samuel Newsom of the firm Newsome and Newsome Archts. S.F., August 1903." The plant names on the plan appear to match pictures from the same period. While species listed on the plan are represented in the current garden, none survives in the same location, suggesting major replantings in the mid-twentieth century. The current patio garden is maintained by a contract with the landscaping company that cares for the whole mission grounds.

55. The tree is useful for dating photographs because we know it blew down in a storm in 1909.

56. While the circular frame around the central basin does not appear to have been planted and was removed between Nov. 1888 and August 1889, the arched wooden arbor along the east side of the garden parallel to the church is visible in photographs until 1890 was planted with climbing grapevines which provided the both shade and color in the garden.

57. Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara*, 210.

58. The garden design has been simplified over time. A circle of palms around the central basin was planted about 1908, and a plan in Rexford Newcomb's 1925 book shows the geometric beds were simplified into just eight triangles. By the early 1950s the palm trees towered over the mission's tiled roofs, and the central beds had been replaced with lawn with flower beds remaining only around the perimeter of the quadrangle. Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara*, 210; Newcomb, *The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California*, 219.

59. Jerry Sortomme, "Restoring Heritage Plants from California's Missions" California Museum Studies Association. <http://www.ca-mission.org/sortomme.html> (accessed 9 May, 2008). The partnership was started by Sortomme and Santa Barbara Mission curator Tina Foss to cultivate plants from the mission era and propagate heirloom plants surviving at mission sites. In 2003 the project was formally named La Huerta Project.

60. Father St. John O'Sullivan at Mission San Juan Capistrano is generally credited with singlehandedly rescuing the mission and planting the gardens when, in fact, visual evidence suggests that there were already modest attempts to landscape the site in the late nineteenth century with plantings along the arcade piers. Tessa Kelso was librarian of the Los Angeles City Library and began the first serious attempt at raising funds to preserve the missions in 1888.

61. William Kregelberg, *Mission San Juan Capistrano: The Fall and Rise of a California Mission* (Orange, Calif.: Paragon Agency for the Diocese of Orange, 2004); Santa Ines Parish Archives, garden file; San Antonio de Pala, parish records.

62. The Brand Park Memory Garden project is documented in the City of Los Angeles, Records Management Division, Recreation and Parks Board, Facilities Files, Brand Park.

63. The La Purisima garden project has been documented in Christine E. Savage, *New Deal Adobe: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Reconstruction of Mission La Purisima, 1934–1942* (Santa Barbara: Fithinan Press, 1991) and Hageman and Ewing, *California's Mission La Purisima Concepción*, and interpreted in Hosmer, "The Colonial Revival in the Public Eye," 52–70, but a closer analysis of the archival record demonstrates a more complex and ideologically charged internal debate among the members of the design team.

64. See Kropp, chap. 2, "The Road: el Camino and Mission Nostalgia," in *California Vieja*, for a more detailed examination of the missions' place in this constructed historical narrative and Starr, chap. 5, "Works, Days, Georgic Beginnings" in *Inventing the Dream* on the broader discourse of California as a garden.

65. Father Romo felt increasingly frustrated at his inability to renegotiate the Archdiocese's stranglehold on the mission's efforts to generate income, and he returned to Egypt, where he died in Alexandria in 1890 (Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara*, 203). In 1915 the mission became a parish serving the people of Santa Barbara.

66. *Ibid.*, 234.

67. Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society*, 41–51.

68. *Ibid.*, 53.

69. Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin Books, 1995; 1st ed., 1978); John Mackenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Derek Gregory, "Orientalism Re-viewed" *History Workshop Journal* 44 (1997), 269–78.

70. California held five world's fairs between 1894 and 1940. For an overview of these promotional extravaganzas, see Carolyn Peter, "California Welcomes the World: International Expositions, 1894–1940, and the Selling of a State," in *Reading California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900–2000*, ed. Stephanie Barron, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene Susan Fort (Berkeley: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, University of California Press, 2000), 68–83.

71. Norman Neuerberg, "The California Missions in Art 1786–1890," in *Romance of the Bells: The California Missions in Art*, ed. David Parry (Irvine, Calif.: The Irvine Museum, 1995), 85–95.

72. There was a major increase in travel which in turn generated promotional literature and its associated myth-making imagery. An example of the entwined practices of tourism, historical sites, and romanticized history is analyzed in Dydia DeLyser, *Ramona Memories; Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

73. Norman Neuerberg, "Biographical Introduction," in *An Artist Records the California Missions: Henry Chapman Ford*, ed. Norman Neuerberg (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1989), xiv–xl.

74. Ford exhibited his mission engravings in 1893 at the Chicago World's Fair and at the mid-winter California Midwinter Exposition the following year in San Francisco. Jorgensen exhibited his mission watercolor series in Washington, D.C. in 1906 as well as in a number of galleries in California including the Bohemian Club in San Francisco.

75. The Fine Arts Dealers Association entry for Henry Chapman Ford credits his exhibition of mission etchings at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 for "sparking real interest in the Spanish heritage of the state of California" http://www.fada.com/browse_by_artist.html?gallery_no=33&artist=4134&bio=1 (accessed 2 May 2009). Other artists who painted or sketched the Santa Barbara Mission garden include views by Amédée Joulin (1862–1917) and Seth C. Jones (1853–1930), both dated 1889.

76. For an excellent overview of the impact of photographic technologies on the representation and reception of landscape, see Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan, "Introduction: Photography and the Geographical Imagination," in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, ed. Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 1–18.

For the practices of photography more specifically in nineteenth-century California, see Jennifer Watts, "Picture Taking in Paradise: Los Angeles and the Creation of Regional Identity, 1880–1920," in *The Nineteenth Century Visual Cultural Reader*, ed. Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (New York: Routledge, 2004), 218–232.

77. John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Productions, 1990).

78. Peter E. Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn, "Carleton Eugene Watkins," in *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West—A Biographical Dictionary, 1840–1865* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 578–579.

79. Isaiah West Taber, "California Scenery," photograph album, Bancroft Library collection, BANC PIC 1982.078—ALB. The photograph shows the well-established garden (then thirteen years old), with frames for climbing vines and with two Franciscans and two unidentified men posed in front of the central fountain.

80. The photographs appear to have been taken in the late 1880s or early 1890s. Stoddard eventually published the images along with an account of his conversations with one of the monks in his 1898 Southern California volume, John L. Stoddard, *John L. Stoddard's Lectures, Vol. 10; Southern California; Southern California: Illustrated and Embellished with Views of the World's Famous Places and People, Being the Identical Discourses Delivered during the Past Eighteen Years under the Title of the Stoddard Lectures* (Boston: Balch Bros. Co, 1900 <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/15526> (accessed 1 March 2008)). According to Rick Altman's study of the beginnings of silent film, Stoddard's books were sold door to door, and the popular series went into several printings. Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 55–57.

81. Princess Beatrice sketched the garden and her drawing, along with the rest of her sketches from the journey, is in the collection of the Santa Barbara Historical Museum.

82. *Santa Barbara Daily News*, May 11, 1901, 4 (clipping on file, Santa Barbara Mission Archives).

83. "Belgian Monarchs at Ancient Mission," *New York Times*, 13 Oct. 1919, New York Times Archive, <http://www.NYTimes.com> (accessed 2 April 2008).

84. William Henry Jackson, *Ancient Missions and Churches of America* (Chicago: White City Art Company, 1894), n.p.

85. Ed Henry, "The History of the Picture Postcard . . . and the Postcard as History," in *Picturing Berkeley: A Postcard History*, ed. Burlington Willes (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2005), 3.

86. Burlington Willes, "Foreword," in *Picturing Berkeley: A Postcard History*, ed. Burlington Willes (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2005), 1.

87. The Detroit Company pioneered the Photochrom process in America and became an industry leader in postcard publishing.

88. Such photo albums are in collections of the Bancroft Library, the Huntington Library, and the California Historical Society. For example, the Bancroft collection includes an album of 106 albumen prints,, 11 x 19 cm.; mounted and compiled in album entitled "Scenic Views in California and the Columbia River Gorge," ca. 1880–90 (BANC PIC 1984.043).

89. Anthony Wayne Vodges, photograph album containing views of the Presidio in San Francisco, Angel Island, Santa Barbara, etc. 1888–92, Huntington Library, Hunt. HM 29204. Details of Vodges's biography are recorded in Edwin Theodore Dumble, "Memorial of Anthony Wayne Vodges," *Geological Society of America Bulletin* 35 (1924), 37–42.

90. This notion of the enduring emotional geography of personal photos is a rich line of inquiry in its own right. Examples include Gillian Rose, "'Everyone's Cuddled up and It Just Looks Really Nice': An Emotional Geography of Some Mums and Their Family Photos," *Social and Cultural Geography* 5, no. 4 (Dec. 2004), 549–64; Deborah Chambers, "Family as Place: Family Photograph Albums and the Domestication of Public and

- Private Space,” in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, ed. Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 96–114.
91. *Ibid.*, 1.
92. Saunders, “Historic Gardens in California,” 394.
93. In addition to glowing descriptions of the mission garden itself, the story embeds its mission garden style in the cottage residence the group rents for the season: “the garden surrounding it [the house] contained a profusion of flowers, vines, and trees. To the right stood a gnarled old pine. . . . Just beyond its shadow was the garden, divided into different beds by a series of walks that radiated from a fountain. By the side of the latter, shading and half hiding it grew a banana-tree; and at different corners of the beds were orange and lemon trees.” Edwards Roberts, “A Santa Barbara Holiday,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 74, no. 450 (Nov. 1887), 816.
94. *Ibid.*, 822.
95. *Ibid.*, 824.
96. When Fenn, a prolific book illustrator, toured the United States in 1870, the Santa Barbara garden had yet not been created, but his view mirrors the perspectives of the 1885 photographs, suggesting he worked from early photos. For more on Fenn, see Henry, “History of the Picture Postcard,” 3–13.
97. For analyses of photography’s role in structuring the visual space of Egypt as a tourist destinations see Derek Gregory, “Emperors of the Gaze: Photographic Practices and Productions of Space in Egypt, 1839–1914” in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, ed. Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 195–225.
98. Watkins’s stereographic images of the Mission Santa Barbara fountain and façade (new series, nos. 4642 and 4643 dated 1873–1890) are in the collections of the California State Library and the Society of California Pioneers and may be viewed online at <http://www.carletonwatkins.org/list-introduction.htm> (accessed 16 June 2009).
99. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. 3rd ed. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999), 123–24.
100. It is interesting to note that the view looking east with the Santa Barbara towers in the background is only possible from a vantage point in the garden or, from the more elevated perspectives from the upper story of the south wing of the quadrangle. The entry into the garden was forbidden to women and access to the second floor would have required special permission, making the postcard a portal for views otherwise not available to everyone in this gender-restricted space.
101. Jere Stuart French, *The California Garden and the Landscape Architects who Shaped It* (Washington, D.C.: Landscape Architecture Foundation, 1993), 75.
102. Elizabeth de Forest, “Old Santa Barbara Gardens,” in *The Pacific Horticulture Book of Western Gardens*, ed. George Waters and Nora Harlow (Boston: David R. Goodwin in Association with the Pacific Horticulture Foundation, 1990), 77; David C. Streatfield, “Where Pine and Palm Meet: The California Garden as Regional Expression,” *Landscape Journal* 4, no. 2 (Fall 1985), 65–66.
103. Edith Wharton, *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (New York: Century Company, 1903); Charles Latham with contributions by E. March Phillips, *The Gardens of Italy*, 2 vols. (London: Offices of Country Life, Ltd., and George Newnes, 1905–9); Helen Morgenthau Fox, *Patio Gardens* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929); Arthur Byne and Mildred Stapley Byne, *Spanish Gardens and Patios* (New York: Architectural Record, 1924). These books, while lavishly illustrated, tended to present the European gardens as timeless remnants of a classical age, when in fact many were influenced by contemporary design trends and international influences in their own right.
104. Charles Dudley Warner, *Our Italy* (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1891), 9.
105. Charles Sedgwick Aiken, “Upon the King’s Highway: Life To-day along the Royal Road of the Californias—Motor Cars and Polo Ponies—Golf, Bridge and Country Clubs by the Pathways of the Padres,” *Sunset* 21, no. 8 (Dec. 1908), 691.
106. Porter Garnett, “Stately Homes of California: El Fureides,” *Sunset* 32 (May 1914), 1060.
107. This argument is developed more fully in Kryder-Reid, “Sites of Power and the Power of Sight.”
108. Just a sampling of the sites’s stakeholders include the missions’ parish priests and congregations, local businesses, educators, volunteers, tourists, preservation professionals (archaeologists, art and architectural historians, museum staff, etc.), Park Service, funders (corporate and philanthropic donors), and the descendent communities who see the missions as everything from ancestral homeland to sites of genocide (The range of perspectives on the missions within diverse native communities was made clear to me by Jerome Nieblas, Mission San Juan Capistrano, personal communication April, 2008).
109. For examples of landscapes and museums as a force for reconciliation, see Barbara Bender and Margot Winer, eds., *Contested Landscapes: Movement Exile and Place* (Oxford, Berg, 2001); Martin E. Sullivan, “Some Thoughts about Museums, Reconciliation, and Healing,” in *Stewards of the Sacred*, ed. Lawrence E. Sullivan and Alison Edwards (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2004), 19–25; Roger I. Simon, *The Touch of the Past: Remembrance, Learning, and Ethics* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); Rhiannon Mason, “Conflict and Complement: An Exploration of the Discourses Informing the Concept of the Socially Inclusive Museum in Contemporary Britain,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 10, no. 1 (March 2004), 49–73; and the indigenous place names project for the state of Victoria, Australia; see <http://www.land.vic.gov.au> (accessed 10 March 2008).