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Archaeology on the Edge of Empire

Rubén Mendoza  
California State University, Monterey Bay, rumendoza@csumb.edu

James C. Moore

Yoni Espinoza Hernandez

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Archaeology
On The Edge Of Empire

The Photography of
Rubén G. Mendoza, PhD, RPA
Acknowledgements

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Since the launch of the Alta California Mission Research Project at San Juan Bautista in 1995, a host of representatives from the Diocese of Monterey, and the communities of San Juan Bautista, Carmel, Soledad, San Miguel, and Monterey, have made possible our efforts in the missions, and sole presidio, of the Monterey Bay. We are particularly grateful to Sir Richard Joseph Menn, Mr. Phillip Hudner of the Botto Law Firm, and Bishops Sylvester Ryan and Richard Garcia for their years of support and encouragement.

Exhibition Development

All photographs edited, printed, matted, and captioned by the author, Rubén G. Mendoza. Special thanks are due Shanna Kinzel (Interim Associate Director, Otter Student Union), Vania Silveira (Schedule Coordinator, Student Center), Brendan Taylor (SBGS Administrative Analyst), and Jennifer A. Lucido (SBS Lecturer, Archaeology). Each of the aforementioned colleagues and staff contributed to the scheduling, coordination, accounting, public relations, and/or transcription of exhibition content.

Exhibition Installation

The installation and dismantling of the exhibition was facilitated by the Archaeology and Service Learning students of SBS 360S/360L (Mission Archaeology), Karlynn Ferris (SBS Student Assistant), Ms. Jennifer Lucido (SBS Lecturer, Archaeology), and the author.

Archaeology Program Development Committee

Dr. Yong Lao (SBGS Chair), Dr. Rubén G. Mendoza (SBGS Faculty, Grant Co-Author), Ms. Jennifer A. Lucido (SBS Lecturer, Grant Co-Author), and Brendan Taylor (SBGS Administrative Analyst).

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Archaeology
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Rubén G. Mendoza, PhD, RPA
Text & Photography

James C. Moore & Yoni Espinosa Hernandez
Graphic Design & Layout

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Salinas, CA
Rubén G. Mendoza is an archaeologist, writer, photographer, and founding faculty member of the California State University, Monterey Bay. He has directed major archaeological excavations at missions San Juan Bautista, San Carlos Borromeo, and Nuestra Señora de la Soledad. His investigations include the discovery of the original Serra Chapels of 1770 and 1772 at Monterey, since deemed to constitute the earliest Christian houses of worship in California. His Mission Solstice Survey has resulted in the discovery of astronomically significant solar illuminations of mission church altars from throughout California and the Americas. In addition to his recent role as a content expert for the National Park Service UNESCO World Heritage Listing of the San Antonio Missions (2012-15), Mendoza was called to Vatican City in 2015 to serve as one of four North American scholars who testified on behalf of the Canonization of Father Junípero Serra, OFM.

His unique contributions have been honored by the California Preservation Foundation (2009), the California Mission Directors and Curators Conference (2010), and the California Missions Foundation Norman Neuerburg Award (2016). He has published some one-hundred and forty manuscripts and scores of images spanning Pre-Columbian, Colonial, and modern material cultures. His photography, which aligns with his research, has been featured in recent exhibitions from New York to California. To that end, he was recently tapped to serve as a contributing photographer and consultant to the forthcoming Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) production of 1491: The Untold Story of the Americas before Columbus, a docu-drama mini-series based on the New York Times best-selling book by Charles C. Mann. Mendoza is a Literacy Place Mentor for Scholastic, Inc.’s Time Detectives Literacy Place Mentors 3rd grade curriculum distributed internationally.

Thematically, his focus is with the documentation of the "Mexican diaspora,” and as such, he has trekked deep into the heart of Mexico, Central America, the American Southwest, and Europe on lone ventures intended to photo-document the Amerindian, Mexican, and Mexican American, cultural experience. Dr. Mendoza’s photography has appeared in a host of publications, including both academic and popular books, magazines and multimedia. At this time, his photographic collections encompass some 800,000 images in a variety of media formats, including both traditional 35mm and medium format color and black and white, and high resolution digital images. He is the proud father of daughters Natalie Dawn Marie and Maya Nicole Mendoza, and a devoted husband to Linda Marie Mendoza, whose loving support continues to enable his scholarly contributions.
Colosseum, Rome, Italy
Photo by Jennifer A. Lucido, 2015
This exhibition is a special tribute to the many California State University, Monterey Bay, students and volunteers who have worked and sacrificed to contribute to over two decades of scientific discovery and community service learning on the Monterey Bay. CSU Monterey Bay formally opened its doors to students as the 21st campus of the California State University system in the fall of 1995, and it was then that the Alta California Mission Research Project initiated archaeological, ethnohistorical, and historic preservation studies at San Juan Bautista.

This tribute was organized so as to highlight some of the many contributions and discoveries made by our student project teams since 1995. All photo selections were made by Archaeology Program students from images generated through the photography of Professor, Principal Investigator, and Project Archaeologist Rubén G. Mendoza of CSU Monterey Bay. Dr. Mendoza and his student teams have added tremendously to the archaeological, scientific, and historical record of the Monterey Bay.

The contributions in question encompass the Spanish and Indian missions of the Monterey Bay, and include San Juan Bautista, San Carlos Borromeo, Nuestra Señora Dolorosísima de la Soledad, and San Miguel Arcángel. By contrast with the Franciscan missions, that work undertaken at the Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey constitutes a particularly large-scale undertaking that spanned both academic and contract efforts that engaged students at all levels of analysis.

The Royal Presidio Chapel Conservation Project of the San Carlos Cathedral represented the singular instance in which CSU Monterey Bay academic work was conducted on a non-Mission site. Identified with the trinomial CA-MNT-271h, the Royal Presidio Chapel site produced thousands of distinctive artifacts and specimens.

This 19th century Willow Pattern earthenware was recovered from the debris strewn across the floor of the former adobe Sacristy at the Royal Presidio Chapel of Monterey.
Archaeological investigations at Old Mission San Juan Bautista were begun in the fall of 1995, and continued on an intermittent basis through 2010. Said discoveries resulted in the recovery and or discovery of a host of buried building features, and the elucidation of the architectural history of the site spanning the period from the spring of 1797 through 2012.

Key findings centered on the fact that the site once contained two patio-centered distinctive quadrangle enclosures, the first of which was destroyed in the earthquake of October 1800. During the course of archaeological investigations in 2009, the project team recovered the foundations of the original “Mother Church” or Chapel of 1797. Said findings proved a defining moment in the effort to interpret the architectural history of the site for those years spanning the period from 1797 through 1825.

In addition to finalizing the architectural history of the site, primary discoveries include the Chapel of 1797, Granaries of 1798 and 1802, Old Mission Well of 1798, South Tower of 1812, Quadrangle of 1798, Convento of 1798, East Bell Tower of 1812, Victorian Bell Tower of 1865, and the original site of the redwood Cross of 1812. Significantly, it was here that Professor Mendoza first identified and published new revelations regarding the existence of a liturgically and astronomically-inspired solar geometry in the California missions.

One particularly challenging service project, undertaken by CSU Monterey Bay students, was that of the cloning of the sole surviving French Pear in the Mission Orchard of 1805.
Discoveries

Project undertakings at San Carlos Borromeo began in 2003 with an invitation from Sir Richard Joseph Menn, G.C. St.G.G., Curator of the Diocese of Monterey. Project efforts continued through the fall of 2005, and discoveries include the foundations and floor features of the original Serra Library of Circa 1780, and the foundations of the Fifth or Provisional Chapel of Circa 1790.

Discoveries at the Real Presidio de San Carlos de Monterey, or the Royal Presidio and San Carlos Cathedral, between 2006 and 2008 include the earliest Serra Chapels at Monterey, 1770-72, the Baptistery and Sacristy of 1810, Missionaries’ Quarters of 1778, Soldiers Quarters of 1778, Southern Perimeter Defensive Curtain of 1778, massive Southern Terrace of 1778-80, and the exploration and mapping of the Pacheco Crypt of 1858.

Finally, investigations at Mission Nuestra Señora de la Soledad between 2007 and 2015 resulted in the discovery or re-discovery of a host of major buildings and features. Among these, the Neophyte Plaza of 1800, Neophyte Housing—South Block of 1800, Soldiers’ Quarters of 1805, Baptistery of 1805, Church Narthex of 1805, Sanctuary Platform of 1805, Women’s’ Quarters of 1800, and soundings of the West Wing of the Mission Quadrangle of 1795.

Over the course of twenty-one years, the Alta California Mission Research Project saw through the investigation of four early California missions, and the Royal Presidio of Monterey. During the course of that time, community service learning projects, and the contributions of Commander Flavio Silva and the men of the Gabilan Conservation Camp/California Department of Corrections, permitted CSU Monterey Bay students to more fully engage a host of historic preservation and conservation efforts in the California missions.

Finally, we are particularly grateful for the long-term support of Mr. Phillip Hudner of the Botto Law Firm, who supported our efforts at San Juan Bautista from 2005 through 2012.
Earthenware

Ceramics, also referred to as pottery and or earthenware, continues to provide archaeologists with a means by which to produce relative dates for historic sites and features. The pottery shards on this page are among the types recovered on the Monterey Bay.
The Serra Oak Marker, 1905

Page Eight

San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, CA
2013
Discovery of the Granary of 1802

Page Nine

Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
1996
Retablo Mayor, ca. 1820

Page Ten
San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, CA
2006
Recovery of the Serra Chapel

Page Fifteen

San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, CA
2008
San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, CA
2008
Pope Francis’ Serra Mass

Vatican City, Rome, Italy
2015
Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, CA
2010
Presidio of Santa Barbara, CA
2008
Reenactors John and Olga

Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2011
Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2012
Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2012
Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2013
Clones of the French Pear, 1805

Page Forty-Six

Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2009
Old Mission San Juan Bautista, CA
2008
San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, CA
2009
Here June 3, 1770, landed Very Rev. Father Junipero Serra, O.S.F.
and founded the following missions, San Diego, July 16, 1769.
San Carlos Monterey, June 3, 1770, San Antonio de Padua, July 14, 1771,
San Carlos, Sept. 8, 1771, San Luis Obispo, Sept. 1, 1772, San Francisco,
De los Dolores, Oct. 5, 1775, San Juan Capistrano, Nov. 1, 1776,
Santa Clara, Jan. 18, 1777, San Buenaventura, Mar. 21, 1782.
And died Aug. 26, 1784, in San Carlos Mission, Carmel Valley.
As the Lord liveth, even what my Lord saith that will I speak." 2 Chron. 13:19. 1894 Verse.
This monument erected by Jane L. Stanford, in the year 1891.
In memory of Father Junipero Serra, a philanthropist seeking the
welfare of the humblest, a hero daring and ready to sacrifice
himself for the good of his fellow beings, a faithful servant
of his Master.
"The place is now transformed into the Mission dedicated to the Glorious Precursor of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Saint John the Baptist, on his very own day... I blessed with water, the place and the great Cross, which we planted and venerated. I immediately intoned the Litany of All Saints, and sang High Mass during which I preached exhorting all to cooperate for such a holy work."

-Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, OFM

June 24th, 1797
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