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# Marking time in San Gabriel Mission Garden

ELIZABETH KRYDER-REID

## Introduction

Writing in 1924 of her efforts to restore the grounds of Mission San Fernando in Los Angeles, Martha McCan cited the philosophical writings of Count Alfred Korzybski and argued:

We are 'Time Binding' for we are taking the ideas and work of the early padres, developing and preserving things which were built more than a hundred years ago for our use and for the education and pleasure of future generations ... Some day when you feel the urge to get away from the 'roaring town', drive out to the San Fernando Mission, have your luncheon under the pepper trees, wander around the Memory Garden; it will take you back hundreds of years, it will conjure up memories of the wonderful work of the padres who established, as an eastern park expert said, the first civilized gardens in America.<sup>1</sup>

This notion of mission gardens as a connector of past and present persists. Today, visitors to any of the twenty-one missions that stretch along California's coast and inland valley will find some iteration of a mission garden. These gardens planted in the mission courtyards and forecourts are, save one, the product of twentieth-century preservationists and designers, who, like McCan, projected an imagined monastic Mediterranean-style garden onto what was once a utilitarian landscape that had been the primary site of Spanish colonization of California's indigenous people.<sup>2</sup> The mission gardens create a way of knowing and ordering the past, part of the broader cultural production of a romanticized history or what has been called 'Spanish fantasy heritage'.<sup>3</sup> Time markers within these gardens materialize time and proffer connections between contemporary observers and the episodic narrative of mission history.

These time markers take a variety of forms, including artifacts, plants, architectural features, sundials, inscriptions, memorials, and ruins, and they register time in different ways. Some materialize time literally. For example, a plaque at Mission San Jose commemorates the bicentennial of explorer Juan Bautista de Anza's 1775 expedition, while other markers recognize donors and honor seminal figures in the life of a parish. Other time markers are more symbolic. Historic specimens of heritage plants, such as grape vines, olive trees, and pepper trees, are labeled with their dates or signs indicating they were 'planted by the padres'. At several missions architectural features, such as 'the original nineteenth arch' at Santa Inés (figure 1) and the earthquake-damaged nave at San Juan Capistrano, have been stabilized and preserved as ruins in the landscape, visible artifacts of the former life of the missions in frozen testimony to their destruction and loss.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to the authenticity of historic plant material and original architectural elements, some time markers are fabricated. At Mission San Miguel, for example, the patina of age is implied by a failing-stucco-over-adobe treatment not only on the mid-twentieth century fountain (figure 2) and entrance gate, but also on the modern restrooms. Other time markers are explicit about the relationship between past and present. At Mission San Juan Capistrano, for example, the excavated remains of the mission furnace has been commemorated by the American Society for Metals with a plaque designating it 'an historical landmark' and interpreting it as the 'oldest existing metal working structure in California ... introducing the natives living here to the Metal Age'. In other cases, however, the relationship of past and present is more ambiguous. For example, in many of the mission gardens historic artifacts, such as *manos* and *metates* for grinding grain and



FIGURE 1. *The preserved ruins of 'the original nineteenth arch' at Mission Santa Inés, Solvang, CA. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.*



FIGURE 2. *Fountain at Mission San Miguel with a treatment simulating failing stucco over adobe bricks. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.*

steatite mortars and pestles used by native peoples for processing acorns, are placed artfully among the beds of the patio gardens without any interpretation or allusion to their utilitarian functions. In some missions these artifacts are appropriated into the landscape vernacular. At San Juan Capistrano, for example, replica historic carts and wheelbarrows are used as decorative planters (figure 3). This practice of employing artifacts as decorative elements has the effect of historicizing the gardens, implying a time depth far older than their mostly twentieth-century origins, while at the same time transforming the tools of Indian labor into aestheticized garden ornaments. The stone objects and wooden carts are stripped of their original context as part of the missions' means of production and repurposed as curious relics adding visual interest, charm, and an implied sense of deeper time to the gardens.

Examining time markers offers the opportunity to explore complicated relationships of temporality, spatiality, colonization, and heritage performed in the varied renditions of mission garden design across the twenty-one missions. An examination of the interplay of ideology and the materiality of time in the visual



FIGURE 3. *A replica historic cart at Mission San Juan Capistrano used as a decorative planter in the forecourt garden. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.*

and symbolic logic of one site, Mission San Gabriel, offers an entry point into these complex issues. It also provides an opportunity to consider how time is made visible in garden design, literally, metaphorically, and metaphysically.

### Mission San Gabriel

The San Gabriel Mission, near present day Pasadena, was founded in 1771. It was the fourth in the chain of missions established by the Franciscans in the name of Spain between 1769 and 1833 from San Diego to Sonoma. The mission was one of the largest and most profitable, supporting a growing population of 1000–1700 Native American residents or neophytes between 1788 and 1832.<sup>5</sup> This large Indian labor force raised crops on the rich agricultural lands and herded sixteen thousand head of cattle who supplied tallow and hides, as well as beef, for the mission's consumption and for trade. Like the rest of the missions, in 1821 San Gabriel came under the jurisdiction of the

newly independent Mexican government.<sup>6</sup> In 1834 it was secularized and became the private property of a rancher, although the church was maintained as a place of worship for the local congregation. California was ceded by Mexico to the US in 1848, became a state two years later, and the mission lands were eventually restored to the Catholic Church. Mission San Gabriel once again became a Catholic-owned property, administered as a parish church until 1908 when the Claretian Fathers took charge, established a school (run by the Dominican Sisters) and a preparatory seminary, and expanded the parochial ministry to serve the diverse community of San Gabriel.<sup>7</sup>

Given its changing uses and its earthquake-prone location, it is not surprising that the San Gabriel landscape has been evolving since the mission's founding. After secularization, the industrial features fell into disuse and the fields were abandoned. The church and outbuildings deteriorated, suffering damage from neglect and earthquakes. The outbuildings were mainly left to ruin, but the church was the subject of a number of restorations including a Victorian era renovation of the nave. Henry Chapman Ford, an artist who toured and sketched the missions in 1880–1881, noted at San Gabriel that the former mission vineyards and orchards had only 'here and there remnants of the hedge, one large date palm and a few old pear trees'.<sup>8</sup> In the location of the current mission garden, Ford recounted, 'In the angle formed by the chapel and a wall extending from the front are a number of large elder trees under which are a colony of bees. Remains of the structure for rendering the tallow are to be seen north of the old cemetery, with cavities for 5 cauldrons and having two well preserved tanks near'.<sup>9</sup>

In the twentieth century under the Claretians' direction the property was developed for parish and school purposes with the addition of a playground, classrooms, parking lots, and a modern cemetery. Their restorations focused on the buildings, but in clearing the grounds they uncovered the remains of some of the early industrial features of the mission such as tanning vats and tile pipe. A *Los Angeles Times* article reported in 1921 that excavations around a portion of the mission church foundation attempting to correct an area of poor drainage uncovered an unmarked vaulted grave, which the priest identified in the church records as 'the burial of the martyred Padres'.<sup>10</sup> As with other missions across the state, the recognition of San Gabriel as a symbol of California heritage was becoming increasingly common, and in 1921 the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the mission was commemorated with the erection of a Serra statue.<sup>11</sup>

Little attention was paid to the design of the parish grounds, however, until the 1930s when the Los Angeles chapter of the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West sponsored the creation of a mission garden. The identity of the designer is unknown, but a *Los Angeles Times* article reported in 1930 that ‘Many persons have donated all necessary materials and shrubbery, while the architects have provided the plans gratis’.<sup>12</sup> Described as a restoration, the project was essentially an invention of a mission garden in the style becoming popular at mission sites elsewhere in the state.<sup>13</sup>

The project was eventually launched in 1935 with the construction of a grape arbor running parallel to the mission church and the erection of a cross. More intensive gardening efforts followed in the late 1930s, spurred on by Father Raymond Catalan (1906–1987). The first phase of construction excavated up to 60 centimeters of soil, with the exception of the areas around existing grape vines and older trees to protect their root systems. In 1940, the mission fathers partnered again with the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West to install a fountain near the entrance of the garden. The design has continued to evolve over the past 70 years through the efforts of priests, staff, and volunteers who have tended the garden and shaped its design aesthetic.

The contemporary Mission San Gabriel garden stands in a rectangular courtyard created by the stone mission church to the south, the new parish church on the north, the school and priests’ residence to the west, and the parking lot to the east. The design contains elements of the classic mission garden template — edged walks, geometric beds, and splashing fountains — but it is divided into sections or garden rooms, rather than the more common pattern of a patio garden organized around a central fountain. Roughly characterized, these sections are the cemetery and memorial garden on the south third, the fountain and Peace Garden leading to the ‘Court of the Missions’ in the center, and a cactus garden along the north.

The aesthetic is an amalgamation of classic mission garden elements combined with the vernacular traditions of Mexican-influenced gardens such as folk art and specimen cacti and succulents (figure 4). There are also elements of Catholic iconography such as a small shrine to the Virgin of Guadalupe. The eclectic landscape also includes a demonstration kitchen, an old winery, and the ruins of large tanning vats.<sup>14</sup> The San Gabriel Mission garden’s spatial logic and visual aesthetics reflect both the design tradition of California mission gardens and a distinctive expression of its local community and caretakers. Similarly, the



FIGURE 4. Sculpture on a brick pedestal, Mission San Gabriel. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.

underlying ideology implicated in the materiality of time at Mission San Gabriel can be read as participating both in the dominant narrative of California's colonial history and in the unique iteration of the mission's particular story.

### Mission garden ideology and the materiality of time

Examining the materiality of time at the San Gabriel Mission requires first reckoning with its contemporary context. It is owned and administered as a Catholic parish, yet also designed and experienced as a touristic landscape. As such, the production of the past in the garden is distinctly positioned while the reception of the space is far more diverse. Visitors from a wide range of backgrounds and belief systems make the trek to the mission as part of secular and sacred pilgrimages, parish festivals and tribal ceremonies, field trips, coach tours, and casual visits. School groups and tourists, parishioners and members of the local Gabrieleno Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians all bring unique perspectives to their respective experiences of the space. They consume the garden as an embodied experience and engage with its narrative and imagery from their own position.<sup>15</sup> The garden is a multivalent space, performed in a myriad of ways.

The missions are also sites of contested colonial history, and the San Gabriel garden is inherently positioned within the discourse of postcolonialism.<sup>16</sup> This discourse recognizes the constructed heritage inscribed in the landscape and simultaneously seeks to challenge the assumptions, stereotypes, ideologies, and ways of understanding that are the legacy of European colonization of California. Postcolonialism's critique also offers alternatives, challenging the imbalance of power in contemporary cultural heritage practices and opens space for silenced voices and perspectives.<sup>17</sup> Scholars such as David Lowenthal, Richard Handler, and Mark Leone have argued that gardens at heritage sites often serve to hide history, particularly its less seemly aspects.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, what are presented today at the California missions as beautiful, sacred, and peaceful retreats were, in colonial times, the utilitarian work and gathering spaces of the hundreds of Native Americans who provided the labor for the missions' ranching, agricultural, and industrial productivity. In contrast to the functional late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century colonial landscapes, these ornamental mission gardens, first constructed in 1872 at Mission Santa Barbara and subsequently replicated at other missions throughout the

twentieth century, created a picturesque setting for the increasingly popular tourist attractions. They also registered the sites as part of a distinctly European, versus Mexican or indigenous, heritage, and at the same time they marginalized the missions' legacy as sites of oppression, cultural destruction, and death for California's indigenous peoples.<sup>19</sup> But this veneer of a romanticized past laid over the contentious history of colonialism's injustices is neither new nor unique to San Gabriel.<sup>20</sup>

What is interesting, however, are the particular ways time is materialized in the contemporary mission landscape and how these time markers are complicit in the politics of memory. As Maurice Halbwachs has written regarding the social practices of collective memory, for a belief of the past 'to be settled in the memory of a group, it needs to be presented in the concrete form of an event, a personality, or a locality'.<sup>21</sup> The California missions are such a locality, but their place in the state's history is complicated. The crux of the conflict is that the missions are central to the dominant narrative of California history as the state's symbolic origin sites and yet they were the principal instruments of Spanish colonialism that dispossessed the native people of their lands, decimated their communities, and destroyed millennia-old lifeways. As markers at many missions attest, the gardens operate as both shrine and memorial. For example, an engraved stone in the Mission San Diego garden reads 'Memorial to Indians — California's First Cemetery — Mission San Diego' and embedded in the fountain base at Mission San Antonio de Pala is an engraved stone stating 'In this holy place lie the bodies of those who built the mission, May their souls rest in Peace Erected 1924'. At Mission San Francisco a similar commemorative plaque subtly entwines the memorialized and the memorializer in a potent example of time binding. It reads:

Mission Dolores, San Francisco Historical Monument. ... Founded In 1776 by Fray Francisco Palóu, OFM and built by people of the Ohlone Nation in the village of Chutchui 1788–1791. To them we pay honor as founders and the first builders of this community and church. This plaque commemorates the 225th anniversary of the establishment of the Mission and Presidio of San Francisco De Asís. Dedicated by The Native Sons of the Golden West — June 2001, William E. Hargis, Grand President.

The instigators of the 2001 anniversary had their own motives particular to the time and place, but the commemorative plaque that now greets anyone

entering the garden inscribes in the landscape and naturalizes in visitors' minds the association between the founders and restorers, the indigenous and the 'Native Sons'.

The narrative also resolves the potential conflict of acknowledging colonialism's consequences by largely dehumanizing, marginalizing, or erasing altogether the native people who built and populated the missions. For example, Harry Downie, a key figure in the restoration of a number of the missions, wrote in 1940 of the Carmel Mission, '[it] stands today as a monument to the great conquistadore [sic] of the Cross who left his home and the comforts of conventional life to come to our Western wilderness to preach the Gospel of Christ and to teach the better way of life to a pagan race'.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Maude Gunthrop, an artist who sketched the mission chain, acknowledged the loss of life at Mission Santa Barbara, but ignored the causes of the death and its contemporary consequences when she recounted the following legend:

The east garden at Santa Barbara ... covers probably an acre of ground and abounds in beautiful trees, rare plants, and of course roses, lavender, and geraniums sprawling everywhere in tropical profusion ... . This garden covers part of the old burying ground where over four thousand bodies are buried one upon the other ... . According to ... legend, the Indian women used to wash their clothing at the banks of ... Mission Creek, not far from the [cemetery] walls. The California sun beat down upon them as they worked, and one very warm day a friar, from the kindness of his heart, cut some branches from a nearby sycamore and stuck them into the ground to shield the women from the intensity of the sun's rays. In the moist, sandy soil two of these cuttings took root and have grown into large and beautiful trees which stand there today many years after the kindly hands which planted them have turned to dust, and the Indians who rested in their shade have become but a memory out of an irrevocable past.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast to these texts that render colonialism a benevolent act and present Native Americans as a vanished people, the physical sites cannot escape the fact that they are both monuments to the Spanish conquest of California and burial grounds of the conquered. A postcolonial critique of time markers at the missions reveals how they negotiate the tension of representing both the victors and the vanquished. By materializing temporality in literal, metaphorical, and metaphysical constructs of time, the

markers perpetuate an ideology that naturalizes and legitimates California's colonial legacies.

### Time markers at Mission San Gabriel

Mission San Gabriel's time markers at their most literal level inscribe time in the form of dates and other chronological signifiers that historicize and naturalize the twentieth-century garden as part of the mission era. Dedicatory plaques not only record the specific dates, but they also imply that the garden is a restoration of an earlier garden to its former glory. Father Catalan's memorial plaque, for example, calls him a 'Restorer of the mission gardens'. The inscriptions associate the garden space primarily with a distinctly western rather than indigenous heritage, as the 1940 fountain dedication 'in the Memory of the Pioneer Mother and Father' exemplifies (figure 5). These



FIGURE 5. *San Gabriel Mission garden fountain dedicated in 1940 'in the Memory of the Pioneer Mother and Father'. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.*

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markers collapse chronologies so that the colonial past, the restoration history, and the contemporary landscape are fused.

Time is also registered literally through didactic, interpretive panels placed throughout the garden that cite dates and quote historic sources and that marginalize native history and its contemporary consequences while highlighting the agency of the padres.<sup>24</sup> For example, a panel quotes Governor Don Perdro Fages' 1787 report, '... it cannot be denied that the activity and efforts of the mission fathers have equaled the fertility of the field cultivated by them ... . In this way they have been able to provide abundantly for the maintenance of its Indians'.<sup>25</sup> The narrative also presents the Indian labor in a positive light or, by using passive voice, minimizes the arduous and unpleasant nature of tasks such as hide processing. For example, one sign notes that the quadrangle was used for trades taught to the Indians. Another interpretive panel for tallow rendering positions the cauldron as the historic actor and completely avoids mention of those performing the labor (figure 6):



FIGURE 6. *Cauldron used for tallow rendering in the San Gabriel Mission garden. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.*

The enormous cauldron is one of seven used in the early days ... which would receive fat taken from the slaughtered cattle, then wheeled by 'careta' to the fire pits ... to be rendered. Then the hot cauldrons, one by one were lifted out by pulley and wheeled to their respective workshops for candle making and soap making.<sup>26</sup>

This benign description conveys little of the intense heat, noxious smell, arduous labor, and constant risk involved in boiling down cattle for their fat. And nowhere in the interpretive text is there any reference to the systems of coercion and punishment for those who did not comply. As Father Engelhardt's defense of the treatment of the neophytes argues, while Spanish law 'restricted the application of the lash to twenty-five stripes', the missionaries 'like true fathers who love their children ... were loathe to inflict corporal punishments, wherefore the whole dose of twenty-five lashes was seldom applied, save in the cases of concubinage, repeated stealing of valuables, refusal to work, etc.'<sup>27</sup>

These historical sources alongside contemporary presentations of artifacts disrupt connections between past and present not only by marginalizing native peoples and emphasizing the Franciscans' agency, but also by presenting the native peoples as residing in the past only. This representation of Indians as frozen in time is a frequent complaint, particularly in traditional natural history museum exhibits, but the effect of the trope in an *historic* garden that is simultaneously living and growing creates a colonial apologetics narrative that resists critique.<sup>28</sup> The persistence of the exclusionary narratives created by the garden's time markers stands in contrast to the Claretians' social justice commitment and to their inclusion of tribal leaders. For example, in 2008 a traditional Tongva dwelling or *kiiy* was constructed in the garden and dedicated as part of the celebration of the Claretian's 100th anniversary at Mission San Gabriel. Dignitaries, priests, and Tongva people:

joined Andrew Morales, Tribal Leader of the Gabrieleno Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, in the singing of traditional songs and the blessing of the four directions. Anthony Morales continued with the blessing of the *Kiiy* (Tongva home) while Matthew Lovio played a holy tribal song on his flute. All the festivities concluded with a reception in the Mission gardens.<sup>29</sup>

The potency of the materialization of time in the garden, however, is that once the festivities ended and the Gabrieleno Tongva left, the *kiiy* remained



behind with no interpretation sitting in its edged garden bed where it was absorbed into the aesthetic as an ornament in an historic mission garden (figure 7).

Another set of literal time markers are the memorials that reference the presence of untold dead buried around the mission property but identify time in distinctly different ways depending on whose deaths are being commemorated. While the priests' graves are individually identified with birth and death dates marking each lifespan, the native memorials are anonymous and communal. A marker at the base of the 1935 cross, for example, dedicates it 'in memory of the 6000 Shoshone — Gabrieleno Indians buried within the confines of the stone walls R. I. P.' As at other missions, at San Gabriel the

differing circumstances of the deaths of the colonizers and the colonized are generally ignored. There are no oppressors and oppressed, no colonizers and colonized, merely the passive markers indicating their common status of the long-departed.

Another category of time markers registers the passage of time and the relations of past and present metaphorically. A sign at the entrance to the garden, for example, reminds visitors that they are standing on sacred ground where there are 'treasured the riches of two civilizations blended together'. The rhetoric of a valorized mission history infused in the fabric of the sites echoes in the *Los Angeles Times*' account of Father Terrente's 1921 exhumation of the padres at San Gabriel. The reporter evoked the imagery of 'holy men who spilled their life blood on the soil of California'. The reporter continued:

So, stone by stone, Father Terrente built a monument himself, and planted the old wooden cross that was used in the provisional church . . . . And so it stands — a crude, but eloquent tribute to those great souls who have passed beyond, but whose dust and bones have mingled with the soil of San Gabriel where they lived and labored and died that civilizations might come to California and be ours today'.<sup>30</sup>

The metaphor of becoming one with the earth is a common trope, but the metaphor of 'dust and bones . . . mingled with the soil' so that California may 'be ours today' is performed in the garden space in a way that transcends a mere 'ashes to ashes' allusion to mortality. The embodied experience of the San Gabriel garden is tactile and visceral. The dust clings to one's shoes and the scent of roses fills one's senses. The visitor's encounter is with the comingled heritage of colonialism rendered in the lush beauty of a garden, and the seduction of the garden design makes the two not only inseparable, but also indistinguishable.

A third set of time markers mediates the tension of monument and memorial by materializing time in a metaphysical sense. These time markers acknowledge the pain and loss of the native peoples, but at the same time they elide that cost with the existential human questions of mortality and the afterlife. They embed the Native American dead within the context of fleeting human existence, both owning up to the consequences of missionization and also diluting its implications for admission of guilt by framing the issue as a universal one. Some of these metaphysical time markers are literal; for example, the sundial in the center of the Court of



FIGURE 7. A *kiiy* or traditional dwelling built by members of the Gabrieleno Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians in 2008. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.

the Missions bears a Latin inscription '*Horae omnes vulnerant. Ultima Necit*', which translates as, 'Every hour wounds. The last one kills'.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, the scripture passage at the cemetery entrance, crowned with skull and crossbones, literally marries the mortality of the flesh with the promise of eternal life in the risen Lord, quoting Job 19:25 'I know that my Redeemer liveth ... I also am to rise again — from the earth and dust ... and in my flesh I shall see God' (figure 8).

One of the most powerful metaphysical time markers is a mural painted in 1939 at the rear or west of the garden.<sup>32</sup> In the painting titled 'Christ Teaching', three arches frame a triptych in which an angel and the queen of heaven, attended by an acolyte and a choir boy respectively, look toward the center image of nuns teaching school children with the figure of Christ standing over them, his hands raised in a gesture of blessing (figure 9). The entire scene is set in a garden with the distinctive San Gabriel bell tower in the distance. The marriage of the earthly and heavenly worlds invoked obliquely in the rest of the garden is rendered in vivid color. The mural is positioned so that it can be seen through one of the garden's few axial views down the grape arbor in the campo santo.

In the San Gabriel context, the faith-based message of the mural not only resonates with the Claretian Fathers' mission of service, but also creates an image of life and afterlife merged in a mission garden. Past, present, and future are united in the promise of salvation. The mural's fair-skinned figures and contemporary dress are far removed from the neophytes who lived and worked at the mission, but the conflation of time brings their deaths into the same fate we all face and their mortality into the theological realm of eternal life. The colonial conundrum of conquest is resolved in the materialization of eternal salvation, the very promise that drew the Franciscans to baptize the Indians to begin with. In this mural, the materialization of temporality becomes the most profoundly ideological in its allusion to the immaterial.

## Conclusion

The oasis of artillery and foliage in the 'Peace Garden' reveal the conflicts implicit in this valorized post-colonial site, but time markers deployed throughout the garden provide a unifying narrative (figure 10). Markers placed

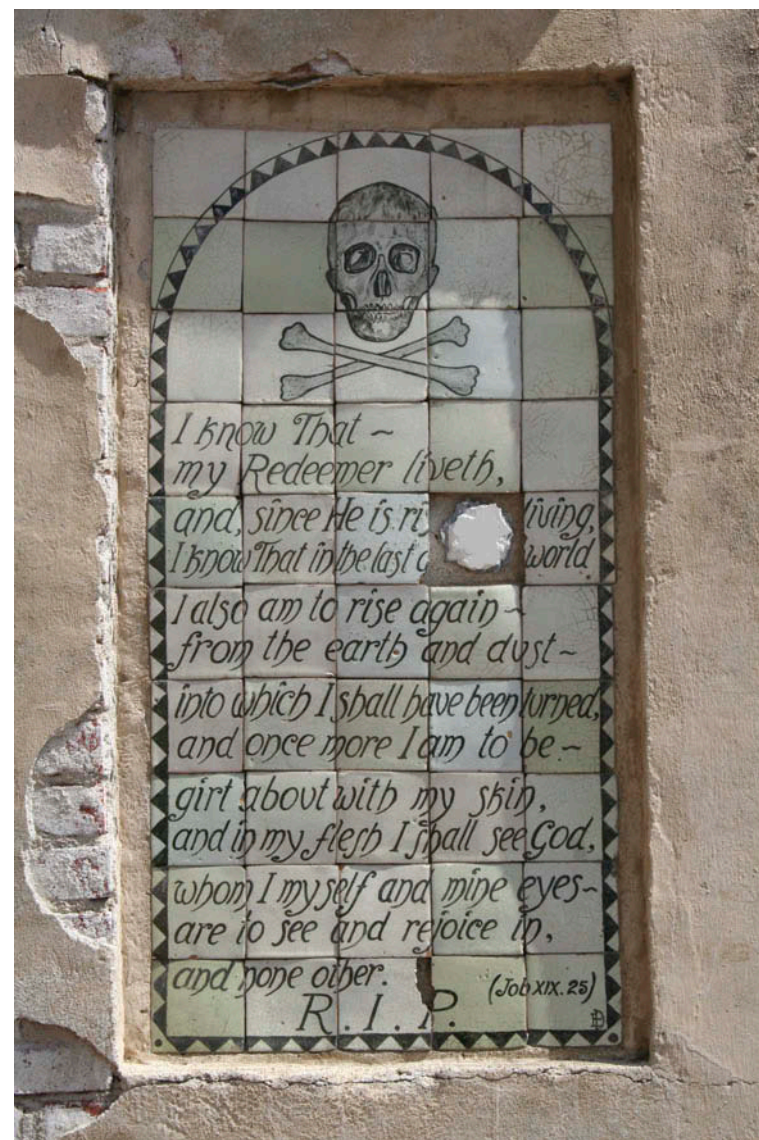


FIGURE 8. Tile mosaic at the entrance to the San Gabriel Mission cemetery of scripture text from Job 19:25. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.



FIGURE 9. 'Christ Teaching' by Buckley McGurrin, 1939, Mission San Gabriel Garden. Source: photograph by B. L. Slantchev. © Branislav L. Slantchev. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.



FIGURE 10. *San Gabriel Mission 'Peace Garden'*. Source: photograph by the author. Permission to reuse must be obtained from the rightsholder.

in commemoration of garden 'restorations' celebrate and naturalize the 1930s transformation of a utilitarian workspace and burial ground into a romanticized Mediterranean Revival garden. Other interpretive markers distance the colonial legacy, privilege the Franciscan padres, and present native peoples as a vanished race. Still other time markers elide past, present, and afterlife so that the culpability of the colonial legacy of San Gabriel is made visible in the acknowledgement of lives lost, but redeemed through the claims of eternal reward.

The contradiction between the public history presented at the missions and the critical historiography elicited in this reading of the materiality of time in

the mission garden reveals not just a lack of reflexive interpretation of California's colonial past, but the continued potency of the missions in the politics of memory. For more than seventy-five years the San Gabriel garden has shaped perceptions of the past. Its literal, metaphorical, and metaphysical time markers incorporated in the gardens' design and registered in the embodied experience of the landscape have presented a relationship of past, present, and future that naturalize and mask the injustices and enduring consequences of colonialism. In a site that claims to spur remembrance, the gardens perpetuate a sense of time that privileges historical amnesia. The thousands of visitors and school children who tour the Mission San Gabriel garden annually are greeted by a welcome text that reads:

### Saludos Amigos

We witness here the beginning of a new civilization wherein Christianity was introduced to a pagan sphere some 190 years ago. For nearly two centuries this garden of peace has been a haven for the weary travelers, adventurous pioneers and builders of the magical dessert. Here trod the daring Redskin, the blithe spirited Mexican, the valiant Spanish soldier, and the venturesome American.

Here you are welcome — forget your cares and troubles as you re-live the early days of the western world.<sup>33</sup>

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### NOTES

1. Martha Nelson McCan, 'Mission Garden Restored', *The Clubwoman*, XVI/4, 1924, p. 10.

2. As I have argued, the mission garden designers took as their model the courtyard garden of Mission Santa

Barbara which had been constructed in 1872. Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, 'Perennially New: Santa

- Barbara and the Origins of the California Mission Garden', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 69/3, 2010, pp. 378–405.
3. Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pierce, 1946). For a critical analysis of the landscapes of California's romanticized history, see Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Dydia De Lyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); and William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
  4. The California mission ruins share many of the same formal and associative aspects of ruins in other designed landscapes. See, for example, John Dixon Hunt, 'Picturesque Mirrors and the Ruins of the Distant Past', in *Gardens and the Picturesque: Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 171–191, and Julia King on fabricated ruins in the nineteenth-century southern Maryland landscape in *Archaeology, Narrative, and the Politics of the Past: The View From Southern Maryland* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012).
  5. Mission records indicate neophyte populations of 452 (in 1780), 843 (in 1785), and a peak of 1701 (in 1817). The growth was due to an increasing number of Indians who came to the mission from an ever widening region, rather than the birth rate among neophytes (Steven Hackel, *Children of the Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian–Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), p. 266).
  6. Edna E. Kimbro and Julia G. Costello, with Tevvy Ball, *The California Missions: History, Art, and Preservation* (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2009), p. 182.
  7. An elementary school was established in 1912, a seminary in 1923, and a high school in 1949. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Gabriel Mission and the Beginnings of Los Angeles* (San Gabriel: San Gabriel Mission, 1927), pp. 317–319. The seminary, designed by A. B. Benton and constructed in 1922, included its own garden. An anonymous account published in the diocesan newspaper *The Tidings* (25 August 1922) describes the brick and cement building as 'of typical Spanish Mission style ... encircled by a large cloister, adorned by heavy arches in typical Mission style. The interior patio and fountain will be enclosed by an adobe wall thus separating the monastery from all worldly affairs. The patio and cloister will be exceedingly beautiful by the "Old Grape Vine", planted by the Franciscan Fathers'. (*Tidings* article reprinted in Francis J. Weber, comp. and ed., *The Pride of the Missions: A Documentary History of San Gabriel Mission* (Los Angeles: F. J. Weber, 1979), p. 198.
  8. Henry Chapman Ford, 'Some Detached Notes by Henry Chapman Ford on the Missions of California', *California Historical Society Quarterly*, 3/3, 1924, pp. 240–241.
  9. Ford, 'Some Detached Notes', p. 240.
  10. Dwinelle Benthold, *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, 6 February 1921, reprinted in Francis J. Weber, *The Pride of the Missions*, p. 187.
  11. Engelhardt, *San Gabriel Mission*, pp. 320–321.
  12. Anonymous, 'Old Mission Will Boast New Garden: Natives of California Plan Restoration and Will Have Benefit at San Gabriel', *Los Angeles Times*, 6 March 1930.
  13. For example, a 'memory garden' was constructed at Mission San Fernando in 1922–23 and a mission garden was laid out in 1936 as part of the CCC restoration of Mission La Purisima in Lompoc.
  14. This description is based on site visits by the author in 1994, 2008, and 2013.
  15. The complex practices associated with touristic spaces are implicated in this study, but not fully explored. For examples of other, closer readings of tourism geographies, see Carolyn Cartier and Alan A. Lew (eds), *Seductions of Place: Geographical Perspectives on Globalization and Touristed Landscapes* (London: Routledge, 2005).
  16. Historian David J. Weber offers an historiography of the mission history and characterizes the range of approaches from the 'Christophalic Triumphalism', of Catholic apologists to activist anthropologists, indigenous scholars, and radicals who frame the missions as sites of genocide. David J. Weber, 'Blood of Martyrs, Blood of Indians: Toward a More Balanced View of Spanish Missions in Seventeenth Century North America', in David Hurst Thomas (ed.), *Columbian Consequences, Vol. 2, Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands East* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), pp. 428–448, and David J. Weber, 'The Spanish Legacy in North America and the Historical Imagination', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 23/1, 1992, pp. 5–24.
  17. The theoretical project of poscolonialism spans disciplines and encompasses a vast literature. See, for example, Alison Blunt and Cheryl McEwan (eds), *Postcolonial Geographies* (London: Continuum, 2002); Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978); Lynn Meskell, 'Ethnographic Interventions', in Jane Lydon and Uzma Z. Rizvi (eds), *Handbook of Postcolonial Archaeology* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), pp. 445–457.
  18. David Lowenthal, 'Past Time, Present Time: Landscape and Memory', *Geographical Review*, 65/1, January 1975, pp. 1–35; David Lowenthal, 'Fabricating Heritage', *History & Memory*, 10/1, 1998, pp. 5–24; Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1997); Mark P. Leone, 'Interpreting Ideology in Historical Archaeology: Using Rules of Perspective in the William Paca Garden in Annapolis, Maryland', in Christopher C. Tilley, C. and Daniel Miller (eds), *Ideology, Representation and Power in Prehistory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 25–35; Mary-Catherine E. Garden, 'The Heritagescape: Looking at Landscapes of the Past', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12/5, 2006, pp. 394–411.

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19. Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, 'Sites of Power and the Power of Sight: Vision in the California Mission Landscapes', in Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles (eds), *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), pp. 181–212. In Kryder-Reid, 'Perennially New' I expand this argument and suggest that the racialized connotations of this Mediterranean Revival history was one reason the missions adopted the mission garden design at a time when California's social and political structures were shifting from an Hispanic to an Anglo-American power base.
20. Recent attention to the public interpretation and ideologies of colonial heritage sites and other sites of conscience includes scholars of tourism, archaeology, heritage, museums, architecture, and cultural geography. For example, Lynne M. Dearborn and John C. Stallmeyer, *Inconvenient Heritage: Erasure and Global Tourism in Luang Prabang* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2010); Derek Alderman and Owen Dwyer, *Civil Rights Memorials and the Geography of Memory* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago, 2008); Daniel J. Walkowitz and Lisa Maya Knauer (eds), *Contested Histories in Public Space: Memory, Race, and Nation*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); Jodi A. Barnes (ed.), *The Materiality of Freedom: Archaeologies of Postemancipation Life* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2011).
21. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 200.
22. Harry Downie, *Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Rio Carmelo* (Carmel: Carmel Press, 1940), pp. 1–2.
23. Maude Robson Gunthorp, *With a Sketch Book Along the Old Mission Trail* (Caldwell, ID: The Caxton Printers, 1940), p. 94.
24. These interpretations of mission history in the San Gabriel Mission garden are consistent with the main messages and underlying ideologies in other mission museums as has been demonstrated by Deanna Dartt-Newton's insightful analysis, 'Negotiating the Master Narrative: Museums and the Indian/California Community of California's Central Coast', PhD diss., Department of Anthropology, University of Oregon, 2009.
25. The plaque is mounted on the wall of the winery to the right of the McGurrin mural.
26. Interpretive signage, Mission San Gabriel, recorded 2008.
27. Engelhardt, *San Gabriel Mission*, p. 354. For a more comprehensive study of the missions' system of punishment and justice, including corporal punishment, see also Hackel, *Children of the Coyote*, pp. 321–366 and Kent G. Lightfoot, *Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 82–113.
28. Richard Hill, 'The Museum Indian: Still Frozen in Time and Mind', *Museum News*, May–June, 2000, pp. 40–44, 58–63, 66–67, 74; Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
29. Anonymous, '100 Years of Claretian Service At San Gabriel Mission' Claretian Web site, available at: <http://www.claretian.com/SanGabrielMissionCentennialCelebration.php> (accessed October 2012).
30. Benthold, in Weber, *The Pride of the Missions*, p. 187.
31. While the San Gabriel sundial is modern, sundials were used in the colonial era as time-keeping devices. Msgr. Francis J. Weber, 'Sundials at the Missions', in *The California Missions* (Strasbourg, France: Editions du Signes, 2005), p. 126.
32. The Label posted next to the mural credits it to Buckley McGurrin, unveiled in 1939 'practically disappeared by 1950; Reconstructed and elaborated mural by Hendrick Keyzer and Vivian Flores (600 hours).'
33. Interpretive signage, Mission San Gabriel, recorded 2008.