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*The Panama-California Exposition:
The Shroud of Glamour Curating an American Macabre*

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*It is the modernized adobe,
of the old Spanish style of architecture, with the beautiful
patio, or court in the center. These romanticized design
associations with old Spain conveniently provided
the invented identity sought by new residents.¹*

Curating a Culture

Deep in the heart of the American Southwestern desert, where the land stretches endlessly beneath a burning sky, stands a sunbaked adobe pueblo emerging from the dust clearing. The structure seems to breathe with the desert itself with its ochre walls glowing fiercely under the relentless heat. Its taupe hues fade into the never-ending fawn-colored soil as if the structure tricked nature into calling it her own. It rejects, absorbs and uses the harsh elements for its advantage as a natural monument of earth and resilience. If it were not for the small community clustered behind, surely a traveler would think his mind is only playing tricks, but as more dust clears, arises a small community of adobe pueblos huddled together. In rhythmic unison their warm walls seem to fade and appear with light as if the community had a single heart pulsing warm blood into each dwelling. The village is alive with laughter, work, and song. Nearby, farmers toil turning adobe blocks one last time before the sun dips below the horizon. The day's work is almost done. Men are putting the final touches on their horno that will soon serve the growing community. Sounds arise from the civilization punctuated with joyful laughter of children sprinting by their mothers who wait in admiration of their newly woven rug. The laughing children dart by their wisdom-etched-faced-grandmothers emerging from their hogans. All are headed to the central courtyard, where the Eagle Dance will soon begin— a celebration of the spirits and the land. The dance brings families together in a vibrant expression of culture

¹ Christine Edstrom O'Hara, "The Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1915: The Olmsted Brothers' Ecological Park Typology." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70, no. 1 (2011), p. 66.

and community. The rhythmic glow of the city seems to flow through the drums and feet of inhabitants; all moving in time with the ancient sounds filling the air as the last craftsman puts his tools down to join the festivities. Pulsing with an eternal energy, the pueblo is more alive than ever. The land is alive, dancing with the desert wind, flowing through time and with ancient rhythm and its echoes of laughter fill the quiet desert; and it ends with a sharp click of a camera.

This is a scene on the Isthmus of the 1917 Panama-California Exposition held in San Diego's Balboa Park. The pueblo is featured in the Painted Desert portion of the exposition to showcase how Native Americans lived. Visitors would *experience* a scene of the "first Americans" recreated in this fashion—a novel idea for a World's fair that instead of showcasing international facets, emphasized Mexican and Native life. But why was this exhibit one of the most popular destinations in the Exposition; and how can buildings and recreations of native and Mexican life re-build not only the visitor's perception of these cultures, but also construct an entirely new culture for these people to imagine themselves into? I hope my following thesis will provide some answers:

The Panama-California Exposition, despite its perceived glamour, had a deeply complex and tainted history, primarily through its role in reshaping the Mexican and Native narrative in America and contributing to the assimilation, colonization, and erasure of native inhabitants in the American Southwest. This project argues that even if colonization wasn't the fair's *forefront* purpose, its popularity stemmed from showcasing aspects of Anglo's favorite pastime...colonization and continues to showcase it today. More broadly, this essay seeks to understand imperialism and colonization in the 20th century. And as I will continue to argue, the complex and tainted history of the 1917 Panama-California Exposition is a cultural crux of what

the 20th century had to offer: imperialism, glamour, and media. To achieve the arguments made above I will begin with an understanding of San Diego's determination and desire to become a world-known city, then an outline of how they would achieve this through the world exposition, after exploring the tactics used to lure masses into San Diego, I will investigate the problematic undertones— at time overtones— built within the architecture, art, and overall aesthetics of the Panama-California Exposition. Once we uncover how the exposition was praising and appropriating an already tainting history from the 15th century, we can further explore the use of media and mystique in the early 20th century as either a colonization tactic, a blind consequence of colonization, or— as my position tends to lean towards—an alluring attraction because of colonization sentiments. And nevertheless, as my thesis states, I will lastly display the consequences of such a culturally cataclysmic event and how the reasons behind the exposition's colonial revival aesthetic are overshadowed by factual consequences.

Though my thesis is re-worked and revised, my initial concern lied in the impact this single world fair had on the entire American Southwest and its control and influence on retelling the Mexican and Native American narrative in the years to follow. This essay is still somewhat concerned with the re-telling of glamour and inventions of the expedition, mostly to showcase how the new-fangled inventions of the exposition were more than techniques to display *the other*, but to propagate a new, Anglo version of *the other* in a safe controlled arena of learning.

Ethnohistory and cultural historiography with an emphasis on geographical, architectural, and ethnic historiography has been a useful lens to see such a multifaceted event with diverse tangential components that all need to be appraised for a compressive evaluation. I will be building off historians like Samuel J. Redman, Molly McClain, Matthew R. Bokovoy, and Phoebe S. Kropp who, as modern historians, have also taken a more critical approach to the

exposition compared to early historical coverage of the event. I will also use writings on Balboa Park by historians like Carolyn Pitts or Tom Grimm from the 1970s— who seemingly still paint the Exposition and Balboa Park as a triumph— to showcase not only the field’s reluctance in accepting a new history on the Exposition, but also to display the long-awaited collective realization that the American Southwest is a hand-written narrative engraved into American history by tarnished hands. Nevertheless, the modern revisionist perspective in the field has come far from the original Exposition reports, magazine coverage, and widely spread ephemera— all of which paint the Exposition as a pristine spectacle and simultaneously author a daunting myth of Mexican American culture and the American Southwest. This exposition is part of a long history and historiography of generating a unique American narrative for the purpose of assimilation and erasure; and this essay will exhibit how the Panama-California Exposition played a large role in the colonization of indigenous inhabitants from the 20th century to present day.

Railroads and Prosperity Come to San Diego

The manufactured myth of the Mexican and Native Southwest arrives in 1880 on the modern railroad.² Chartered to build a railroad from National City to San Bernardino, The California Southern Railroad brought a newfound facilitation of trade and transportation to the San Deigo region which was neglected by the predating Santa Fe Railroad which built to Needles instead of San Deigo in the late 1870s.³ When the transportation officials chose Needles and build on the Colorado River to consolidate the Saint Louis, San Francisco, and the Atlantic and Pacific Railroads, the San Diego-Pacific railroad dream of connection was lost and hope for

² Franklyn Hoyt, “San Diego’s First Railroad: The California Southern,” p. 135.

³ Hoyt, 135.

the long awaited economic boom was put on the backburner until 1979 when the Santa Fe railroad agreed to extend its line to San Diego.⁴ But persistence continued even through multiple failed attempts: The proposal to build a railroad from the Bay of San Diego to Fort Yuma was not accepted; the land grant for the Gila and San Diego line which was supposed to station in National City failed; and the Santa-Fe-El Cajon Pass project did not succeed.⁵

It wasn't until the 1880s until the California Southern Extension Railroad Company's San Bernardino-National City connection was finally accepted, but at a cost. For one, the railroad cost approximately \$7,000,000 and finding the funds was a difficult task especially given the first years of business were not as lucrative as it was thought to be. In 1885, the company lost \$140,000 in operating expenses and another \$68,000 in the following year.⁶

Secondly the acquisition of the needed land also proved challenging and elusive—multiple failed agreements gave cause for donor-trepidation, the Spanish Civil War rerouted the railroad to El Paso, and lawsuits from California taxpayers who disputed paying for the Texas Pacific Railroad all hindered this dream.⁷ But the more important facet is how the railroad caused the boom of San Diego and stands as evidence to the domino effect of economic boom. We have already seen how the people of San Diego are determined to make San Diego flourish, but at what cost. The cost is blatant: the assimilation, colonization and erasure of the land's native inhabitants and the ruin of the once natural frontier of the North American Southwest. This is most evident in the symphony of cries from natives who were forced to assimilate into the fabricated white or Mexican culture to escape utter erasure. But to understand how natives assimilated, a better understanding of the culture they were being forced into is needed. While

⁴ Hoyt, 135.

⁵ Hoyt, 133-135.

⁶ Hoyt, 141, 145.

⁷ Hoyt, 133

San Diego's early success could not have been without technologies like the railroad, the railroad represents a broader concept of San Diego's determination to become a prosperous city. The city faced countless set back and yet continues in perseverance— that perseverance and determination would carry the city through the turn of the century and solidify their spot on the world map with a world exposition that would change the landscape of the American Southwest far more than a railroad.

Establishment of the Spanish Heritage Myth

The phenomenon of what the Panama-California Exposition most evidently showcased is nothing necessarily new. This is to say that what was happening in the American Southwest in the late 1800s and early 1900s with the foundation of an American revival of European architecture, culture, and models was an in-vogue methodology for the American colonizer who looked to previous great colonizing societies to mimic. The idea of the American Southwest taking on a Spanish culture for their imperialist quest is better understood outside the arena of the Southwest in a place like the Philippines. Ten years before Expedition, the American Imperialist machine acquired the Philippines in 1898 with the Treaty of Paris following the Spanish-American War.⁸ The Spanish were in control of the islands for three years before America took control, yet the islands and their inhabitants were still seen as uneducated, savage, and in need of help which produced a unique yet not unfamiliar colonization style. Ian Morley calls the style “Benevolent Assimilation”, in which the American colonial rule framed their jurisdiction as a mission “to uplift and civilize the Filipino people.”⁹ The Spanish had already colonized and

⁸ Ian Morley, "Spanish Colonialism, American Imperialism, and the Philippines," in *Cities and Nationhood: American Imperialism and Urban Design in the Philippines, 1898–1916** (University of Hawai'i Press, 2018), p. 18, 19.

⁹ Morley, 21-23.

united the people under their control, and the American plan was to pick up where they left off as the Filipino's next white saviors. For example, the Americans implemented projects to educate Filipinos for self-governance, modern city infrastructure plans, alliances with local leaders, socializing political elites to become democratic, and other tactics to *modernize* the already well-respected social structure of the Philippines.¹⁰ This tactic is straight out of the colonizer handbook and was utilized by the colonizing empires of the 19th century over-and-over. I use the case of the Philippines because it not only predates the exposition but also because the two main players are the same. Again, we see the American colonization machine taking over where a previous empire left off and it is most evident the creation of the Spanish-American heritage myth.

Journalist Charles Fletcher Lummis was one of the first people who history recognizes as a founder of the Spanish myth which sought to glorify the American-Southwest as a primitive land once ruled by the great Spanish Empire.¹¹ The myth romanticize the history of Spanish control as a period of exploration, rich culture, and the achievements of the conquistador. The Spanish colonizer was the hero who *saved the savage indigenous people from primitivism*. However, the reason for generating this myth is even more telling. People like Charles Fletcher Lummis hoped this myth would lure tourists, migrants, and real estate developers into the southwest and partake in the *rich culture*.¹² It goes without saying the luring story did not include the centuries of cruel colonization tactics, inhumane treatment of natives, or the native culture itself. Instead, the propagated myth only told the story of glory, triumph, and Anglo-heroism. The effects are catastrophic. For one the authentic native and mestizo culture is utterly

¹⁰ Morley, 20 & 25.

¹¹ Joseph A. Rodríguez, "Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest." *Western Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1998): Oxford University Press, p. 167.

¹² *Ibid.*

overshadowed with the new myth that the Southwest was a land of Spanish grandeur, creating great internal conflict in the indigenous community over identity— what is their culture; is it Spanish, American, Mexican, Mexican-American or all of the above? The selective history is not only told and viewed by outsiders, but it started to deeply puncture and cloud the native's perception of themselves.¹³ Secondly, the myth tore the community apart at the seams of accepting or rejecting the pan-Latino idea. Chicanos for example reject the Spanish-American heritage bestowed upon them and choose to emphasize and recognize their roots, history and true home.¹⁴ On the other hand Anglo-City builders and some Mexican American leaders praised the idea and believed the myth could actually unite the Latino population with a supplemented identity that could stand in place of their history which was not widely accepted or acknowledged.¹⁵ They also aimed to use the myth to educate white Americans about the Hispanic heritage of the American Southwest.¹⁶

Cape of Good Luck

Although the Panama-California Exposition was celebrated at the time and for decades to come, the Fair has a far deeper and more problematic force lurking in the background of the fame and glamour of the successful World's Fair. It was celebrated for its significant engineering achievements but even more so stood as a strategic tool to re-shape the regional culture and identity of the American Southwest. We have already seen how determined the Anglo inhabitants of San Diego were for making their city known on the national and world scene, but how? It was not achieved yet by the railroad coming to San Diego or even the development of

¹³ Rodríguez, 184.

¹⁴ Rodríguez, 165 & 183.

¹⁵ Rodríguez, 170.

¹⁶ Rodríguez, 170.

Spanish mission style architecture. I argue the coup d'éclat of San Diego's strides to make their city a player in the growing American empire was the Panama-California Exposition of 1915.

The stage is set for San Diego to finally capitalize on the world scene— the Panama Canal just opened, and San Diego planned to be the major port city on the West Coast for ships after passing through the Canal (Figure 1). San Diego hoped their new port would boost their economy, attract tourists and investors, and establish a strategic military presence— all of which would be shown through the Panama-California Exposition. But the exposition did not just seek to show off the new trade routes and the San Diego port in the conventional World Fair Exposition manner. Unlike the larger Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco, the San Diego exposition choose to incorporate the previously mentioned Southern

California's Spanish heritage myth. But why did they choose to mythicize San Deigo and why was the smaller exposition in San Diego more successful and impactful than the exposition in San Francisco? The answers are tied together in a knot of allure— allure of San Diego's growing placement in the American empire and allure in what the exposition had to offer.



Figure 1: "San Diego California / The Harbor of the Sun / Panama California Exposition City 1915". Board of Supervisors and the Chamber of Commerce of San Diego County, San Diego, California. Created 1913. From David Marshall Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive.

The former comes as no surprise given the previous claims of assimilation in the Southwest. But even more so, San Diego needed to make a name for itself and find a place on the American colonization team.¹⁷ Its opening night for San Diego on the world stage of new exploration of the new world. San Diego, as previously mentioned, is situated on a cape of good luck— access to the new world, the allure of a burgeoning future, and a rich history to build on. The task at hand: prove to investors their bet was prosperous, show the world the illusive treasures of the mysterious unknown world, and decorate the America Southwest with a unique tapestry.

Aesthetics, Architecture and Authority

This tapestry was a re-brand of the decaying structures of the past and instead embraced a romanticized Spanish legacy that aligned with their aspirations for urban growth and development (Figure 2). As previously mentioned, America was using European empires as inspiration for not only their architecture and culture, but also as models for regional aspirations. To better understand this point of cultural borrowing, we can look at New England to see how this phenomenon was not exclusive to San Deigo and to understand that cultural adoption digs deeper in urban identities than mere architecture. Dr. Anthony King discerns how architecture is extremely dependent on the contemporary cultural vernacular discusses how imperialism in particular was a steadfast vessel for spreading culture.¹⁸ Boston for example has great Georgian, Federal, and Victorian style architectural emphasis— congruent with their Puritan and British

¹⁷ Phoebe S. Kropp, "The Fair: Panama-California Exposition and Regional Ambitions." In *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place*, 1st ed., 103–56. University of California Press, 2006. p. 103.

¹⁸Anthony D King, "Internationalism, Imperialism, Postcolonialism, Globalization: Frameworks for Vernacular Architecture." *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006),p. 64–75.

roots but also the corresponding Anglo-European tradition. New England drew upon their roots to model their new cities and viewed these roots as idealistic pillars for their new culture. Yale and Harvard— two American educational institutions— invoked European, particularly British, prototypes for education, governance, and civility. The British and Protestant values of industriousness, liberty, and education translated to American culture and as Dr. Anthony King remarks, the cultural transfer between empire to colony and colony to metropolis is uncanny and



rotary.¹⁹

Figure 2: From "How San Diego's Big Railroad dreams Went off Track" by Randy Dotinga, article found at voiceofsandiego.org.

The building falling on the right is ironically a Victorian style building— representing the new mission style of Spanish Revival remaining grounded in the American Southwest while other style and revivals fail to stand.

This phenomenon is as old as empire and colony itself, even poliosis in ancient Greece who barrowed ideas from neighbors and implemented them as their own. What's different about the scrounge for an American culture is how it was used. Yes, America had ties to England and Europe, but when the turn of the century came, America still did not have anything uniquely their own. Instead, America's vastly diverse vernacular culture continued to be dominated by the high culture of Britian and Europe. In other words, though America actually had culture before imperialism that could establish the *American culture*, the global scene would not recognize indigenous culture as a worthy cultural comediator and consequently America had to continue emphasizing European society in their culture cocktail sense the global L'ordre établi was still

¹⁹ King, 70.

European and definitely not American indigenous or Mexican. Moreover, if an American city wanted to boast and become inducted in the global scene, the culture had to be Americanized through Europeanization. In the case of San Diego, Mexican and indigenous culture was not suitable to showcase on its own—the culture had to be held in the safe hands of Europe to showcase the culture just enough without praising it above European high culture. But even then, not all colonized worlds were suitable to display at home. For example, a debate at the end of the 19th century between architects and British officials surmised a great divide on whether Indian culture and architecture should come home to the empire.²⁰ Some like British architect R.F. Chisholm wanted to revive Indian art and culture in the context of a British-imperial-controlled-style.²¹ Even this extreme appropriative approach to *representation* was not enough for some in the empire given the pronounced disdain for Indian people and culture. The point being, Great Britain's view on India's inferiority, both aesthetically and scientifically, translates to what they took and left from the subcontinent, appropriation-speaking. The compromise of wanting to display what they accomplished in colonization without praising an inferior people was an Indo-Saracenic style where the British blended Islamic and Indian elements which allowed for a connection to India's architectural heritage while still maintaining a sense of colonial authority, European identity, and cultural superiority.²²

Europe discovered, facilitated, and cradled their colonies success, and Europe needed their rightful praise. And like any Empire, America followed suit by not only alluding to their own colonized culture in their own manner, but also by venerating the European empire that came before and colonized the land previously, the Spanish. Like New England and the British

²⁰Thomas R. Metcalf, "Architecture and the Representation of Empire: India, 1860-1910." *Representations*, no. 6 (1984), p. 40-42.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Metcalf, 50.

compromise of Indian culture at home, America conducted the same imperial cultural scheme—acknowledgement of roots, praise-of-empire, belittlement of the colonized, and maintain-of-cultural-superiority. The similarities in assimilation are uncanny and cannot be dimmed down to mere coincidence.

Spanish and American Assimilation

Unlike other examples of colonization, the American presence in the Southwest appears to have qualities of many of the facsimilia of colonization. This is to say that instead of just being a settler colony like Great Britain in the Americas or extractive colonization like the Spanish in South America and Great Britain in India or even the initial Spanish missionary colonization of the American Southwest, the American colonization of the Southwest seemed to be colonization-omnibus. Historian Derek Duncan notes how colonization establishes political, economic, and social hierarchies enforced through coercion and violence but also and more nuanced that colonization is a transnational and transcultural phenomenon.²³ He cites Mary Louise Pratt and her concept of contact zones—social spaces where different cultures meet, interact, and often clash, typically within highly asymmetrical relations of power²⁴—to further his argument that through colonization, assimilation, and erasure may start in a particular area, it transcends state, country, and cultural boundaries.²⁵ Using both Pratt and Duncan's theories, we can see how important the foundation of San Diego was—culturally speaking in the context of first Spanish colonization and the later American continuation. In essence, it would have been illogical for there to be Victorian or Georgian villas in Chihuahuan Desert. But to revive Spanish

²³Derek Duncan. "Colonization." In *Transnational Modern Languages: A Handbook*, edited by Derek Duncan and Jennifer Burns, 41–48. Liverpool University Press, 2022, p. 42.

²⁴ Duncan, p. 41–43.

²⁵ Duncan, p. 42.

Missions from the 1500s at least referred to a familiar time—the time of initial contact and a time of an already unequal power relationship. The latter assimilation process of the 19th and 20th century which I am mostly concerned with, is operating in this already-unequal space. This is why the discussion on the founding of San Deigo and the mission colonization of the Spanish is so vital in understanding why the 20th century colonizers had a relatively easy time perpetuating and propagating their Spanish-heritage myth and American superiority in this area. It is also noteworthy because the American Colonization in the 19th century followed the same parameters of the Spanish three hundred years prior when they first colonized the area. Though the Spanish colonization had religion as its main motivation and catalyst for colonizing while the American scheme was more inadvertent in reasoning other than making an American culture world known, the two processes follow an almost identical template: displacement of natives, settler expansion, use of military, economic exploitation of natural resources, and cultural imposition and assimilation. The similarities or differences between the two imperial colonizations are not of priority concern for this essay, but acknowledging the American process built on the once established colony of Spain is important to note given the emphasis and use of the Spanish colonization inside the American paradigm seen in the Panama-California Exposition. (Figure 3)

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Figure 3: King Cabrillo (Morley Stayton) and his court. Created 1911. Photograph. Panama-California Exposition Digital Archives.

The Spanish colonization of the 1500s was categorized as a mission to spread Christianity via a colonial system to integrate native people into Christianity.²⁶ However the assimilation into Christianity was not just religious, this meant a whole new set of rules, economic guidelines, and societal norms that upheaved the native way of life. John Douglas and William Graves explain colonialism to be a dual process of attempted domination by colonizers and the responses of indigenous peoples, which included resistance and adaptation;²⁷ and the curious aspect of my research has mostly been around how these two processes intersect and mutually use one another—a later portion of this essay. Nevertheless, the Spanish established missions and presidios to accomplish the first portion and native people resisted and collaborated in the form of assimilation to satisfy the latter explanation of colonization. That said, I will continue in describing the similarities between the Spanish and the American colonization of the Southwest. The first facet I will discuss in the Venn diagram of colonization is the displacement of the indigenous people. This was how the Spanish displaced the natives—by forcing them into separating missions for *conversion*, by quashing natives who resisted, and by forcing them into labor work far from their home under the pretext it was for religious purposes.²⁸ Similarly, the American system of displacement consisted of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 which relocated millions of natives to reservations and territories across America. And later reservation systems and laws further separated native nations broke people from homes and placed them in entirely new, hard to work lands. The second similarity is how the settler expanded from the initial contact zone. Santa Fe, established in 1610 only grew in dominance and remained a hub for Anglo-colonizers far into the colonization process.²⁹ These Anglo establishments

²⁶John G. Douglass, and William M. Graves. “New Mexico and the Pimería Alta: A Brief Introduction to the Colonial Period in the American Southwest.” In *New Mexico and the Pimería Alta: The Colonial Period in the American Southwest*, edited by John G. Douglass and William M. Graves, 3–46. University Press of Colorado, 2017, p. 4.

²⁷ Douglass and Graves, p. 9.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Douglass and Graves, p. 17.

were often close to or the exact location of already central hubs for natives, making the dominance of groups easier and harsher given the indigenous centers no longer served their community like it used to be able to. Settlers also integrated further into the native land and expanded Anglo presence via intermarriage or rape. Similarly, the American colonial system deepened their presence via the railroad, as previously discussed, and the Homestead Act of 1862 which provided land to settlers willing to farm it, leading to a flood of Anglo-American settlers into the Southwest. The third similarity lies in the use of military to both colonize and prolong Anglo presence. The Spanish conquistadors led large rampages to subdue native strongholds and founded presidios to fortify their newly claimed territories. The Americans also created forts to keep a watchful eye over the indigenous people and to suppress Native resistance. The United States military also directly engaged in forced removal and assimilation in the Indian Wars of late 1800s to enforce anti-Indian policies. The next parallel is how both the Spanish and America exploited the land and the native people for economic gain. Both empires mined natural resources using natives for labor. Precious metals were found, and natives were forced to mine with no reward.³⁰ And lastly both the Spanish and American colonization machines conducted a colossal cultural imposition and assimilation process that not only tore up the established native culture but also created an entirely new narrative in the American Southwest. This similarity is what I am most concerned with given I argue the Panama-California Exposition of 1915 was the parfait of cultural imposition and assimilation. Most of these features of colonization often fly under the radar especially in the American process. Given the need for inconspicuousness when erasing a population and their culture and the growing awareness of tragedies, by the 1900s, America became quite gifted in stealthily colonizing. This is to say that unlike the Spanish who often blatantly waged war with natives or even the American Indian Removal Act's obvious purpose, the 20th

³⁰ Douglass and Graves, p. 18.

century seems to put more energy into keeping immoral acts under an obscuring sheet of mystery. In a sense, colonization became *more civilized* in appearance as the world became *more civilized*. Instead of violent, openly immoral, and malicious forms of colonialism, the 20th century framed its colonial powers to be helpful, benevolent, modern, and democratizing. Colonialism went from flags, conquest, and forced assimilation to trades, loans, aid, coups, and media. The former is easy to spot, understand and condemn, but the latter is more intricate in deconstructing because the aesthetics are far more attractive. Attractive like the dramatic mosaic tiled California tower shimmering in the beating sun (figure 4), soaring above the San Diego landscape as its bell strikes in the brightly colored intricate dome. Attractive like a lath framed, wood slated Botanical Building with light streaming through the high ceiling, arched sanctuary cascading into the scenic reflecting pool surrounded by precisely-trimmed tropical ferns, lilies, and orchids (Figure 5). Attractive like the remarkable Cabrillo Bridge, stretching in the morning light that blends harmoniously with its pale sandstone low-profile arches that majestically rests over the pond filled canyon where pink and white lilies danced gracefully around the splashing fountains (Figure 6).



Figure 4: California State Building. Taylor, Harold A. , American, 1878-1960, (Photographer). Created c. 1914. Reserved by Cornell University Library Collection



Figure 5: "Vista in Botanical Gardens". Created by The Book Lovers' Shop. c. 1915. Postcard. Credited to John Earl Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive



Figure 6: "Laguna de Cabrillo and west approach" overprinted 1916." Created by the Panama-California Exposition, 1914. Credited to David Marshall Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive.

Colonization is far harder to spot when its covered in beauty but the elements of colonization still lie under the shroud of glamour. And by 1915 San Diego has drastically revised her colonization choreography— this time, covertness, glamour, and beauty take center stage while the traditional voices of colonialism whisper from offstage but can still be noticed from the camouflaged bygone reprised individuals, patterns, and techniques that lurk upstage. Its 1915 and opening night and San Deigo is almost finished staging their world-debut, but they are missing one element— allure. To recap thus far: railroads have connected the small city to already established metropolises; a myth of what the American Southwest was and should be was percolating in native, investor's, and colonizer's minds; the city had rich bounties and heritage that could be easily manipulated; and finding a place on the global colonization stage was nothing short of praising a European empire and generating an American-made culture to either assimilate, combine and erase the indigenous inhabitants. But why would anyone care about what San Diego had to offer in their World's Fair? Why could San Deigo not just continue to exploit, abuse, and assimilate the native population like the Spanish if that was their true goal? Why invest in a massive world exposition instead of just investing in ways to divide and conquer and show off their new city?

The answer has reframed my initial ideas of the purpose of the fair. Though the fair perpetuated and propagated colonialism, it may not have been its purpose. It may have just been the *allure of colonialism* and what it had to offer for Anglo-Americans— prosperity, modernity, romance, and optimism— that brought so many to the fair and reason for why the fair even showcased seemingly problematic exhibits. I question if displays of the Spanish-heritage myth, or praising the redlining railroad, demonstration from exotic people from various countries, or even architecture of a colonial and murderous empire, science that compares races, and

everything else the fair had to offer were mere tools to lure visitors because that is what Anglo-Americans and Europeans liked or were these exhibits purposely put in place for the sole purpose to continue the history of colonization and assimilation. I believe my noted questions shine a light on the fair's true intentions, and I argue that even if colonization and assimilation were not the fair's forefront purpose, it was enough that millions came to visit the fair because it showcased those two qualities of Anglo's favorite pastime...colonization. The fair may have just been to put San Diego on the map and to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal, but it also showcased progress and modernity by using native people to showcase the old. It told the story of the American Southwest, but it also created a Romanticized history of native life under Spanish control. The fair presented a vision of beauty, peace and unity in a time of war, but in a space puppeteered by the Anglo-hand of colonization. So regardless of intention, all the alluring aspects of the fair were already stained with colonization and exploitation which may or may not have been the reason the masses visited and praised the fair. However, we do know that it was a triumph for its time. I want to take a break from scrutinizing the fair for being a vessel of colonization for a short while in order to describe the superficial glamorous allure of the exposition. This is not to undermine the significant colonizing undertone but to place the park its contemporary light that attracted so many.

Patrick Moser notes that "the exposition was part of San Diego's efforts to establish itself as the first U.S. port of call north of the newly opened Panama Canal, competing with San Francisco, which was also celebrating the canal's opening with its own exposition in 1915."³¹ As previously mentioned San Diego needed to promote itself on the global level and opulence attracted millions. However, it was more than glamour that lured the masses to San Diego even

³¹ Patrick Moser, "A New Beginning in San Diego." In *Surf and Rescue: George Freeth and the Birth of California Beach Culture*. University of Illinois Press, 2022, p. 146.

more so than San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915. Before we unpack the enticing facets of the San Deigo Exposition, let's look at the exposition in San Francisco.

The Panama-Pacific Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915 was also celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal in addition to celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the Pacific Ocean. Similar to San Diego, the San Fransico economy desperately needed an influx of wealth to recover from the 1906 earthquake— and an influx came. Over 18 million visitors came to San Francisco to see the latest artist, manufacturing, and industrial achievements.³² This commercial extravaganza featured nighttime electrical displays that lit up the city. The Tower of Jewels stood almost five hundred feet tall and was adorned with over 100,000 glass jewels that dazed in the day and night. Exhibits of aviation, fine arts, machinery, horticulture and a Golden Gate Park showcased state-of-the-art advancements. Even the first steam locomotive purchased by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company was on display. Neo-classical, avant-garde, and innovative describe this International Exposition.³³ The Exposition stood as a pillar of resilience and modernization post-earthquake and though most buildings were torn down, a few still stand along with a grand legacy of modernism on the global level. Though the San Fransico's spectacle attracted more visitors than San Diego's, it should also be noted the duration of the former was longer, allowing more time for more visitors; also, the city was an already established hub of internationalism, and there was a broader range of pavilions, exhibits and palaces for more people to visit. That being said, the San Francisco Exposition should have stolen all the international attention of 1915. Even the idea that the small city of San Diego could

³² "Paper Trail: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915." *Archives of American Art Journal* 43, no. 3/4 (2003), p. 38.

³³ Ansel Adams, "The Panama pacific International Exposition." *The American Experience*.

attract nearly 4 million visitors is a feat in itself. And I go so far to argue the Panama-California Exposition had a far greater legacy and effect on the landscape of the American Southwest than San Francisco's exposition had on its cultural arena. Now that we know the other option to vacation in 1915, lets step into the shoes of European socialites and American sightseers who needed a place to visit instead of the war-torn European cities they would normally visit. San Francisco and the exposition of modernism and neo-classicalism, or San Diego's exposition of glamourizing nativity, the American Southwest, and indigeneity? Why did so many visit San Diego when the seemingly better option was so close? And why did Spanish Revival compete so vigorously with avant-gardism?

For one the Panama Canal was a celebrated for its technological feats and for American pride given the project's completion under the American eye. As previously mentioned, San Diego hoped to be the first stop for ships coming through the Panama Canal. Ships coming from the Philippines going to New York, for example, would in theory sojourn in the San Diego harbor and share their treasures or ideas in the San Diego hub. This facet comes into play when the exposition relied heavily on the attraction of the far east. In a sense, San Diego wanted to show off what the world of exploration had to offer. A benign example of how San Diego hoped to bring home exoticness is in their development of a large exhibit of ecology within the exposition. The initial landscapers for park's landscape, The Olmsted Brothers, sought to create a distinctive yet appropriate landscape design for Southern California. This came in the form an experimental acclimatization process where botanist would test growth and development of plants and agriculture from all over the globe.³⁴ Kate Sessions, known as the "Mother of Balboa Park", for example would personally import hundreds of plant species and experiment their

³⁴ Christine Edstrom O'Hara, "The Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1915: The Olmsted Brothers' Ecological Park Typology." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70, no. 1 (2011), p. 66.

growth in the perfect semi-arid, Mediterranean-like climate. She planted thousands of species like plants like the jacaranda, canary island pine, Italian cypress, and Eucalyptus— all of which are still part of the San Diego landscape today. Tout court, Balboa Park turned into a living lab for plants and agriculture where palms, succulents, bamboo, hibiscus, acacias, and eucalyptus proved to flourish, provide shade to the landscape, and serve as future beautification.³⁵

Media, Merchandising and Mystique

For this next portion I will be using the digital archives which contain primary sourced selections from the exposition itself like ads and promotions, pamphlets and brochures, tickets and newspapers and architectural drawings and maps.³⁶ This source is crucial to my understanding of the media's role in the Exposition's ability to swiftly re-shape a large portion of American culture. This is to say that I am curious— if not primarily concerned— with the effectiveness of the Exposition's ads, promotions, brochures, periodicals, postcards, newspapers etc.— all of which are featured categories with vast subcategories inside the *Digital Archive*. Primary sources like these are incredibly important in not only my essay but also foundational in modern historian's research into how the Exposition was displayed perceived. For example, a brochure with *exotic* hula dancers in front of palm trees was sent to millions (Figure 7); and with just one primary source we see how the fair wanted to present itself as mysteriously strange and outlandish in its display of *exotic worlds* (Figure 8), while also telling us what type of entertainment people liked at the time. The *Panama-California Exposition Digital Archives*

³⁵ "Kate Sessions 1857-1940 - San Diego History Center: San Diego, CA: Our City, Our Story," San Diego History Center. San Diego, CA. Our City, Our Story, May 4, 2016.

³⁶ Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive, May 27, 2020. <https://pancalarchive.org/>.

allows for an unparalleled accessibility to raw primary sources from the Exposition itself and could answer my questions of how and why so many people visited the exposition.



Figure 7: "female Asian dancers on the Isthmus." Photographed by W. E. Averett (1915). black and white photograph. Credited to Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive



Figure 8: "Promotional brochure for 1916 and re-named Panama-California International Exposition (1916). Credited to Darlene Davies Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive

There have been countless retellings of the expositions opulence, and it helps there is a database for which the memory can live on. And many scholars focus their attention on solely this component of the fair and leave out the problematic nuances entirely. It took some time for historians to revisit the status quo of the Panama-California Exposition. Their hesitation was seemingly warranted given the Exposition left a residual Balboa Park— a curious phenomenon given that most world fairs tear down their temporary buildings after the city is done showcasing the exposition, yet San Diego solidified many of their buildings. I will discuss this facet in depth later; but to note that this particular exposition was so prized in its contemporary and generated a colossal, magnificent park, one could imagine the hesitation in finding *or wanting to find* anything problematic past the surface of its beautiful façade. Historians who wrote on Balboa Park and the exposition later into the 20th century had a particular job at hand, to preserve the

park and its buildings. This is to say that many scholarly works from the mid to late twentieth century are not concerned with uncovering the park's deeper, damaging past. Historians were conducting research that sought to do the exact opposite. Carolyn Pitts for example writes a nomination form for Balboa Park to be in the registrar of Historic Places. This text from 1977 gives a glimpse of how and why historians were still trying to bolster Balboa Park's and consequently the Panama-California Exposition's reputation.³⁷ In her opening, she even quotes the park's architect when she says, "The entrance was approached across a long bridge across a canyon up to what appears to be a fortified European town." And continues in awe of the "sense of homogeneity [...] due to the planting materials, for a variety of architectural styles were present, including classical, Spanish colonial, and pueblo." We get a sense of what her duty in writing this history is and has to be. For each building Pitts writes a plead where she essentially upholds Balboa Park's superiority and has to prove and conclude the Park and Exposition "has been the focus of much of San Diego's development," in order to save the buildings. Although their works are not mutually exclusive, modern revisionist historians are looking deeper than the "elaborate Spanish Baroque design of the Electrical Building" and are more concerned with the fair's impact and the park's legacy.

More recent authors use their modern lens to see through the beautiful, superficial, and distracting fascia, and begin asking questions. As I mentioned before, past historians did not have the leisure to uncover murky truths about the park and the exposition, but their primary work in the field helped modern historians reach more progressive conclusions. Historian Matthew R. Bokovoy in his book, *San Diego's World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940*, uses raw data and material buildings, but with a much different goal in mind compared to

³⁷ Carolyn Pitts, "NPGallery NRHP Archive Search," National Parks Service.

Pitts to paint a more genuine picture of what the fair stood for and like many historians who have worked on the world expositions, I will too be using media to showcase the public's opinion on the park and consequently its lasting effects to argue the Panama-California Exposition a considerable cultural force that reshaped the American Southwest.

One primary source for example is a newspaper from the Digital Archives with the title being "Taps Will Be Sounded Tonight for Great Exposition; When Visiting Thousands Will Sing 'Auld Lang Syne'."³⁸ We get not only an advertisement for the fair, but we also get a sense of the public mood towards in and their excitement and love for the fair is bolstered even further in the same newspaper with a section dedicated to thanking the people of California for supporting and loving the fair. Yet this newspaper even hits the third marker— hidden ideology wanting to be propagated— when it refers to Tijuana as "Old Mexico." Asserting the American Southwest is the *new Mexico* while also retrogressing Mexico and reaffirming America's progressive modernity (Figure 9). Nonetheless this newspaper article says a lot about ideologies being pushed to the masses, propaganda regarding the fair, and the public's attitude towards the fair. Another newspaper, again from 1917, showcases large glamorous illustrations the Outdoor Organ Pavilion, the California Building, and the Cabrillo Bridge (Figure 10).³⁹ Although there are many pamphlets and brochures and postcards with depictions of the fair and park plastered to them, I find such illustrations in a newspaper especially noteworthy, because of the vast number of masses reading about and now seeing the exposition. And this newspaper focuses on the opulence and luxury and how the "Exposition Broke All Previous Records." Yet again, this newspaper is not just about showing off the fair to the public, but it also gives us insight to how the public is responding to the fair. This subtitle for example: "Music Appreciated by All People

³⁸ "SD Union 1/1/1917," Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive.

³⁹ Ibid.

in San Diego,” allows historians to get a sense of why this fair was so popular and why its legacy was so impactful. In the same article the author tells his audience that even father time is confused how the “San Diego Exposition is still alive,” and then proceeds to compare the Exposition with all the other renowned fairs of history, and in his conceded praise of San Deigo’s for being the best, he thus writes the Panama-California Exposition into history as the most influential at the time. This is to say the Exposition buttresses its success on making sure the public knows it is *already* influential, modern, and historical. This concept comes more into fruition with my next primary source example. Titled, “The Râja-Yoga Messenger” this journal article from 1914 is devoted to “the higher education of youth,” insomuch that this journal article is an *Aesop Fables-like* story book—or at least attempts to be—for building moral character in youths (Figure 11).⁴⁰ One account tells how Santa Claus was visiting the Râja-Yoga Academy in Point Loma—a place he “had visited many times”—and Santa tells the little boys and girls of all the joy and help you can to for others on this special Christmas in Lomaland. Curious to say the least, and propaganda nevertheless; this storybook goes hand-in-hand with the exposition’s obsession and reliance on *the other world* and the obscure connection between non-Anglo concepts with Anglo-ideology. I say *reliance* because as I mentioned in my previous example, the fair’s popularity, impact and historic record breaking were all reinforced with its notion of bringing something totally out of the ordinary for regular white Americans into a spectacle, and in doing so, distorted what they brought and created something irresistible yet macabre—and the masses flocked to see this American macabre take center stage in the Panama- California Exposition.

⁴⁰ “Yoga Messenger - Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive,” Panama- California Digital Archives.

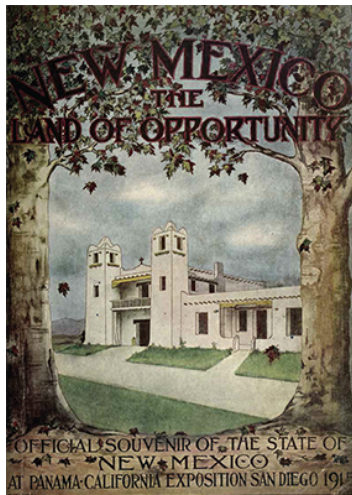


Figure 11: Created by Raja-Yoga College (1914, 1915, 1916). print originals from New York Public Library, scanned by Google. Credited to Raja-Yoga Messenger, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive

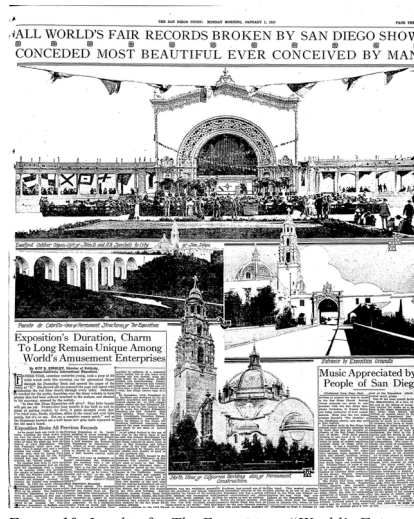


Figure 10: Laudits for The Exposition; "World's Fair Records Broken" (January 1, 1917). Created by The San Diego Union. Newspaper page. Credited to The Committee of One Hundred, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive

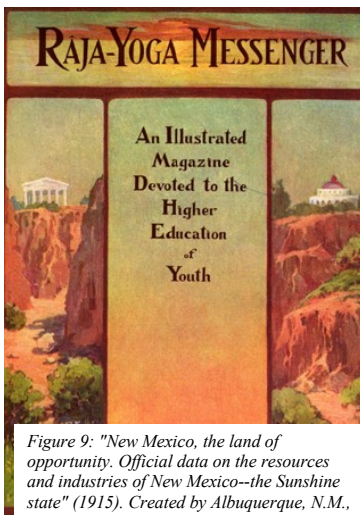


Figure 9: "New Mexico, the land of opportunity. Official data on the resources and industries of New Mexico--the Sunshine state" (1915). Created by Albuquerque, N.M., Press of the Albuquerque Morning Journal. Credited to Internet Archive (original from Cornell University Library).



Figure 12: early multi-page brochure describing the many cities, locations and sites in San Diego County; agriculture and industry (1910). Credited to David Marshall Collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive

Legacy

Dr. Joseph A. Rodríguez's⁴¹ journal article from *Western Historical Quarterly*, "Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest," published in the summer of 1998 features themes of Latinismo identity, the concept of Pan-Latino, cultural celebrations and differences within the culture, and the historical legacy erasing the Mexican culture.⁴² He discusses the combined work of both Mexican Americans and Anglos in the creation of cities in areas like San Jose. Although he does not mention San Diego or the World's Fair, the concepts he brings to the table fall under the same theories I use in my paper. Theories like a conjoined culture of various Latino groups coming together under a common cultural framework to create cities that seem to lie in opposition of Latino-autonomy but nevertheless occurred out of fear, pressure, and an un-fulfilled promise.⁴³ In other words, Rodríguez highlights how the concept of a pan-Latino identity was inevitable given the assimilation process of the American colonization machine and equally necessary to achieve the urbanization of the American Southwest.⁴⁴ Cities grew, Mexican Americans live with other Latino groups, and the development of the pan-Latino identity sprouted.⁴⁵ He situates his argument with the evidence of cultural celebrations like Fiesta de las Rosas where the pan-Latino identity is clear and celebrated. He goes even further and argues how the positive representation

⁴¹ Dr. Joseph A. Rodríguez is currently a Professor of History at the UW-Milwaukee and was previously Director of their Urban Studies Program, an Interim Chair of their Spanish and Portuguese Department and a Fulbright Scholar at the Graduate Institute of the Americas at Tamkang University. He's scholarly work is quite expansive, ranging from books on American Metropolises in San Francisco to Mexican Labor journals. His work seems to focus on California, culture wars, Mexican identities, and urbanization; making him a great scholar to use for my project that incorporates all these facets. [JOSEPH A. RODRIGUEZ Associate Professor of History and Urban Studies University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee](#)

⁴² Joseph A. Rodríguez, "Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest." *Western Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1998): Oxford University Press, p. 166-185.

⁴³ Rodríguez, 184.

⁴⁴ Rodríguez, 185.

⁴⁵ Rodríguez, 171.

of both Spanish and Mexican cultures that cultivated a broad Latino heritage was also a tool for gaining unity to empower and influence the greater Latino community of the Southwest.

Anglo's wanting to combine the diaspora for easier control and erasure and Latino leaders wanting to unite their community under a collective identity to better advocate for their interests and common challenges.⁴⁶ He highlights that not all Latino's support this idea like the Chicano community who rejected and still reject pan-Latinismo on the basis that the communal identity does not accurately represent their unique heritage, identity, and history.⁴⁷ Through researching community responses to events that have in one way or another manipulated or distorted a culture the legacy and effects of these events become very real. This it to say that no matter how large or small a culturally manipulating event or historical era is, like the Panama-California Exposition these occurring have such lasting effects on communities. And unfortunately has historians we only get to voice the wrongdoings, crimes, tragedies after the fact. Testimonies like the one above help share community responses. But through discovering effects of the histories I have presented, I have also uncovered a diverse myriad of legacies. Everyone within a manipulated- is affected differently and although I wish this essay could focus more on contemporary opinions about cataclysmic-culturally-defining events, I chose to analyze the alluring and problematic aspects of one— the Panama-California Exposition as a crux of what the 20th century had to offer: imperialism, glamour, and media. It is difficult to tell consequence on everyone It is difficult to simplify centuries of indigenous oppression and reduce decades of 20th century native subjugation to the limits of one essay. That being said I believe the culmination of what this thesis argues materializes very clearly through the presentation of art at the 1915 Worlds Fair.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Rodríguez, 184.

Art Imitates Life

I choose to conclude this essay with a demonstration of how art truly imitates life, because much of essay has been primarily focused on aesthetics, memory and allure, in attempts to find a place for this history while trying not to neglect or scrutinize its entirety. This is to say one's perception of the exposition or modern-day Balboa Park could be swiftly changed once the historian's grief-tinted glasses are worn, but the following account suggests a somewhat happy median for dealing with the Panama-California Exposition's history and consequences. I began this essay under the guise the exposition was a blatant tool of colonization and the further I researched the more tweaked my thesis into a less harsh stance. It is true, once you take off the rose-colored and put on the grief-tinted glasses, it seems like everything has malintent down to the most benign things. I truly learned how important it is for historians to find the middle ground between viewing history as blissfully flawless and conversely inspecting history as deceitful, devious, and malevolent. Nevertheless, I hope the following example of art imitating life speaks to the equilibrium I am trying to find, the grace I am attempting to give, and the resilience I am trying to pay homage to.

Following their demonstration that the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, the already renown Tewa Pueblo master potters, Maria and Julian Martinez, made their way to San Diego's Panama California Exposition. They were famous "for their black-on-black ware, a remarkably thin handmade pottery— unglazed and hand-burnished— decorated with striking tradition-inspired motifs rendered as highly polished black figures outlined in bands of matte black" (Figure 13).⁴⁸ The two remain famous as emblems of traditional hand craftsmanship and 20th century masters of ancient art and in 1915 were brought to Panama-

⁴⁸ Cody Hartley, "Maria Martinez, Industrial Designer," *The Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* 34, no. 1/2 (2008), p. 73.

California Exposition to demonstrate their expert pottery making. Like most of the topics discussed in this essay, all seemingly benign things carry a caveat. Maria Martinez was able to make a living working at the exposition and once she made enough money, she bought a gas cooking stove, a sewing machine, and she added a room to their house that was used as a store for selling her pottery to visiting tourists.⁴⁹ She made her money through exhibits in expositions like the one in San Deigo, St. louis and Chicago, but her success was situated in a comparison narrative. This is to say their presence at the various world fairs was to illustrate the contrast between primitive traditional pottery making and modern automated methods of ceramic creation.⁵⁰ Exhibits comparing native culture as primal and uncivilized to Anglo modernity were extremely popular and another way to subjugate natives into an historical myth (Figure 14).



Figure 13: Maria Martinez and Julian Martinez, Jar (ca. 1939), Blackware. National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay



Figure 14: "Image of an Indian Quarry Habitat display in the Science & Education Building, 1915. Two male mannequins: one is mining obsidian; the other is making an obsidian blade" (1915). San Diego Museum of Man Photograph Collection

⁴⁹ Hartley, p. 77.

⁵⁰ Hartley, p. 73.

Nevertheless, Maria's skills stood up against the machinery and she perfected "her ability to work on ollas and other larger vessels, while continuing to improve her polishing, decorating, and firing techniques."⁵¹ The Chicago Tribune praises the two, the director of exhibits for the San Deigo Exposition, Edgar Hewett, held them in very high regard, and the country widely accepted their work as gold-standard for Native American work. Yet this success and beautiful triumph in such dire circumstances is yet again plagued with a white hand.

Needless to say, as mentioned above, their work's success was largely based in contrasting itself to modernity. In addition, the effort in making Indian art part of the *Fine Arts* involved Anglo patrons defining what constituted *good, authentic or native-enough* Indian art.⁵² That being said, some grace can be given. As mentioned before, 20th century America was so desperately trying to create an American culture and many patrons and intellectuals sought to define Indian art and culture as the *original American Culture*. For example, newspaper heiress and Bryn Mawr graduate from Manhattan, Amelia Elizabeth White was deeply involved in a campaign to promote *authentic* Indian art and institutionalize standards of evaluation.⁵³ Another Bryn Mawr alumna, Margretta Stewart Dietric amassed substantial collections of Indian art and was particularly successful in influencing exhibits at events like the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial to show more "increasingly Indian character" in the work.⁵⁴ Others like John Sloan, Oliver La Farge Edgar Lee Hewett, Rose Dougan, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lou Henry Hoover, Mary Cabot Wheelwright, Masry Austin, Kenneth Chapman, and Mabel Dodge Luhan were all prominent figures in shaping the market and perception of American India art during the early 20th century.⁵⁵ Whether through organizing

⁵¹ Hartley, p. 75.

⁵² Mullin, p. 404.

⁵³ Molly H. Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art 'Art, Not Ethnology'," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1992), p. 401. While the standards of evaluation being created by a white woman could present problems, I believe initiating Indian Art into fine arts needed a white woman with a system of evaluation to assert this native Art is a real sphere of art that should be given its own criteria and realm within the art world.

⁵⁴ Mullin, p. 402.

⁵⁵ Mullin, 402-412.

large events like the 1931 Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts or simple sentiments of how Indian art was ruined by Anglo presence,⁵⁶ it appears that there was a lot of work promoting native craftsmanship and culture. Though much of the research on creating an indigenous American culture comes a little later in the century with the scholarship's tie to the 1931 Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, these sentiments to protect and showcase authentic indigenous culture don't sprout from thin air. I argue the Panama-California Exposition— looking past all of its blatant references to the Spanish colonization of the American Southwest— could be seen as an early foundation for native representation. Art truly imitates life— Maria Martinez and her native art are showcased but through an Anglo-controlled guise; patrons and intellects support their work and native culture, but for what reasons; and Indian Art is assimilated into the prestige of Fine Arts, but at what cost. The microcosm of Maria Martinez's story can further explain the larger picture and question at hand— at what cost does representation come at. The null creates a more severe outcome; this is to say what if there was no representation at any level of indigenous life. Not to say Anglo patronage and appropriation are goods in themselves, but I believe they were seeking good outcomes using the means in which they had disposable to them.

⁵⁶ Mullin quotes *Dietrich 1936:27*, "but the Indian, uninfluenced by the white man, had taste of such universal appeal that his work is treasured by people of all lands... It is only when ideas of an alien race, our own, are imposed on the Indian that the patterns and colors become garish restless." From Mullin 410.

Conclusion

I subtitled this essay “The Shroud of Glamour Curating an American Macabre,” because as I stated in my initial thesis, the phenomenon of what the Panama-California Exposition represented is not exclusive to this territory or exposition for that matter. Millions upon millions of indigenous lives have been uprooted and forever affected by the colonizing hand of imperialism, but the phenomenon in San Diego appears to be somewhat unique in the unspoken symbiotic relationship that produced a chilling culture. America needed indigenous culture to build a framework for a unique American culture while also using natives within the Spanish colonial narrative to generate a San Diego history. However, it becomes even more interconnected and symbolic of America as a whole given the Native American reliance on Anglo platforms. Not saying they needed Anglo help, but the platforms for native voices to be heard were built and controlled by Anglos. It’s a mess covered in shroud of glamour that ultimately produced a chilling confusing American culture that can be characterized as nothing but macabre.

I hope the Maria Martinez anecdote untangles part of this mess and I hope this essay aids in the modern handling of histories that are inherently messy. Although the Panama-California Exposition had many flaws and characteristics resembling a deeply imperial past— that not only perpetuated the assimilation of native culture in the 20th century but are also perpetuated today given the still-standing aesthetics of the American Southwest— as historians there has to be a compromise when dealing with such polarized topics. Yes, we can demonize the exposition for partaking in the long composition of colonialism and view the impetus, products, and everything the fair had to offer as ethically and historically problematic. Or we could also turn a blind eye and praise the fair for at least letting some native voices come to the forefront while applauding

Anglo's involvement and assistance in creating a space for indigenous culture to be seen. The via media is combining the two polars and as such, my conclusion follows:

The Panama-California Exposition is the crux of what the 20th century had to offer—imperialism, glamour, and media—and even if colonization wasn't the fair's *forefront* purpose, its popularity stemmed from showcasing aspects of colonization and continues to showcase it today. However, grace must be given to avoid absolute presentism. In essence, to place everything we know today, along with our morals and integrities onto the contemporary historical characters of the 20th century would be a fruitless task, a progressive bias, and what C.S Lewis calls “chronological snobbery.” It is not our job as historians to reimagine a past where morals are the same in the present; rather it is our duty to encompass those historical values into the histories we discover. History would be a lackluster long line of events and dates without the ever-shifting moral paradigm attached to and embed within history. That being said, I did not set out to barrage the Panama-California Exposition, rather I found a moral paradigm that I argue actually shifted in the small era I discussed. To put it simply, the exposition can be seen as a mere synthetically-generated contact zone—the social spaces where different cultures meet, interact, and often clash, typically within highly asymmetrical relations of power. The exposition showcases the moral paradigm shifting because even with the synthetic contact zone being located at the initial contact zone of the 15th century and all the imperialistic aesthetics at the forefront of every façade, there was shift in the power relations. Not saying it balanced, but because of a more general moral shift, native voices were heard in an area that was built on doing the exact opposite. If anything, the Panama-California Exposition should be a noteworthy historical event because it displays a curious point on the moral curvature of the Anglo-indigenous-relationship-archetype. The exposition is not the beginning of the relationship, nor

the end; rather I have found it to be a caesura, an interlude, a time where historians should take a reflective pause and evaluate how the relationship changed since the initial contact and then how it should change after this curious, synthetic, watershed, messy circus of an exposition. I believe we need these chronological markers to give our ancestors grace but to also help parcel out the very complex relationships within the American culture. There cannot be one response to all communities affected by the American machine and colonization especially when part of the colonization process was to blur lines, confuse masses, and turn communities against each other. The Panama-California Exposition of 1915 is a testament to those blurred and confusing lines. It is also a testament that evil can lie beneath beauty, modernity does not always mean moral progress, that there is always a time for improvement, and humans for the most part do the best they can with the circumstances they are dealt. The Panama-California Exposition is a small spec in the history of Native and American culture, but it is so epitomic and quintessential of everything native culture was destroyed by, everything America was built on and yet still essential for a modern solution— a solution that acknowledges and scrutinizes the problematic undertones and appropriated aesthetics while also acknowledging and praising the hidden silver linings scattered throughout the still standing Balboa Park.

*How many more mission-style walls must rise before erasure feels complete?
How many more old customs worn like masks to make a culture obsolete?*

*How many more songs unsung, their meanings drowned in tourist cheer?
How many dances frozen still, their rhythm silenced year by year?*

*How many more young tongues must lose the language of their birth?
How many dishes sold as new must bury grandmothers' worth?*

*How many murals lost to whitewash, art replaced by steel and glass?
How many roots ripped from the soil before the people lose their past?*

*How many more bright festivals drained clean of sacred soul?
How many costumes worn for clout, while their history pays the toll?*

*How many elders take their tales, unheard, to the ground?
How many truths are left to die where no one makes a sound?*

*How many more traditional foods will be renamed and sold to the masses as innovation?
How many more displacements to far-away reservations?*

*How much longer must we scream before the world will care?
How long 'til stories, songs, and names dissolve in colonized air?*

*How many roots pulled from the earth, while settlers stand proud?
How many more graves beneath the missions buried deep beneath the shroud?*

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