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THE MISSIONS AND VISITS LOCATED IN BAJA CALIFORNIA: THEIR LOCATION WITHIN THE RECENT TERRITORIAL CONFIGURATION

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to have an accessible and synthesized document that describes the architectural characteristics, the location of the existing missions in Baja California as well as the most recent territorial changes in the entity, which from the perspective of the patrimonial preservation, will imply the governmental reorganization in conservation and safeguarding issues. An extensive bibliographic and cartographic review is carried out and through the support of tools such as GIS, it was possible to process government vectorial information for the recognition of the new municipal limits where the Jesuit, Franciscan and Dominican missions and visits are geographically located. Important moments are established that have shaped the social and cultural changes of the main native and current populations of the Entity and their specific articulation with the missionary architecture. Being an academic instrument, directed in principle to architecture students, a synthesis of the number of visits and missions, antecedents, constructive characteristics and geographic location within the State of Baja California is presented.

INTRODUCTION

As in the rest of New Spain, the mission became the main foundational model to congregate the original dispersed population under the protection of a religious order.¹ The missions carried out evangelization and acculturation tasks, at the same time that they developed productive systems linked mainly to agriculture and cattle raising. The native peoples referred to as ethnic groups were the object of these actions and also a fundamental labor force for the prosperity of the missions.

¹ The presidio and the foundation of indigenous towns were also implemented.

² Of these 30 are missions and six visits, in Baja California Sur there are 15 missions and four visits; in Baja California 13 missions and two visits. The classification may vary due to the fact that some authors give some visitas the category of mission. The visitas used to be intermediate passage sites between missions, close to indigenous rancherías.

³ Some authors cite this establishment as a mission and not as a visita.

⁴ Extinct ethnicity of the Yumana family.

The missionary epic did not have the same effect in the peninsula as in Mesoamerica, even so, its vestiges narrate the great epic enterprise of colonization that was carried out by the religious orders in a rugged environment, where the scarcity of water and the semi-nomadic condition of the inhabitants made the development and prosperity of the missions very difficult.

Throughout the Baja California peninsula a chain of 36 missionary sites was established², which began with the foundation in Baja California Sur of Nuestra Señora de Loreto Conchó in 1697 by the Jesuit order, the first to arrive in the peninsula and who between 1697-1768 founded 23 missionary sites, four of them in the current state of Baja California: Santa Gertrudis la Magna de Cadamán in 1752, San Francisco Borja de Ádac in 1762, Santa María de los Ángeles Cabujakaamung in 1767, in addition to the visit of Santa María de Calamajue (1767)³; the four sites in the central region where the Cochimí inhabited⁴. After the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 decreed by King Charles III (1716-1788), the Franciscans arrived to the peninsula to take charge of the missions, between 1768-1773, where they only established the mission of San Fernando Rey de España de Velicatá in 1769, in a place located 55 km southeast of the town of El Rosario, which functioned as an intermediate link for the establishment of the missions of Alta California.

While the foundational work of the Franciscans was focused to the north of the parallel 32°12'19" N., corresponding to the current Playas de Rosarito, the order of the Dominicans took charge from 1773 of the already existing establishments in the peninsula, and they were even given to the task of founding

nine missions and a visit to the north of San Fernando Velicatá, until the border established by both religious orders⁵. The heritage of the viceregal period in the state of Baja California is recognizable, the mission sites are identified and partially protected, although their architectural structures, mostly built with thick adobe walls⁶, have been eroded by time and isolation, even vandalized; Only the Jesuit missions of Santa Gertrudis la Magna de Cadamán and San Francisco de Borja de Ádac, which were built in stone and wood, have preserved their structure and form more or less intact.

The Dominican sites only have foundations and the starts of some walls generally denote a composition in the form of “L”, integrated by a main bay of elongated rectangular plan, which surely housed the temple, and another smaller perpendicular bay subdivided into several spaces, which would correspond to the various accessories such as rooms, kitchen, workshops, cellar. This disposition, shows a progressive growth of the mission until forming a quadrangular scheme of greater dimensions of inner cloister type surrounded by rooms; exempt from these outlines are the cistern as the cemetery. The scarcity of resources and population, in addition to the lack of construction experience on the part of the indigenous people, were impediments for these architectural works to advance more quickly. The remains of these buildings are nowadays moderately protected by roofs and the walls are stabilized with coverings. Among the mission sites in the state of Baja California, 14 missions and three visitas can be distinguished (Table 1.):

⁵ Both religious orders agreed in 1772 on this border delimitation.

⁶ The vestiges of the walls of the Mission of San Pedro Mártir de Verona are made of stone, it was built in 1794 at 1500 meters above sea level in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir.

⁷ José Joaquín de Arrillaga (1750-1814). Spanish soldier of Basque origin.

During the period from 1752 to 1767, three Jesuit missions and one visita were built in what are today the municipalities of San Quintín and San Felipe (formerly Ensenada). In relation to the Franciscan actions in Baja California, these were established during the period from 1714 to 1769, which gave rise to the San Juan de Dios Visitation and the Mission San Fernando de Velicatá. Finally, under the Dominican order from 1714 to 1834, one visitation (San Telmo) and ten Missions were established in what are today the municipalities of San Quintín, Ensenada and Playas de Rosarito (Figure 1).

From the end of the 17th to the 19th century, 17 missions and visits were founded along the so-called royal road that connected them, including with others located to the north (what is now the State of California) and with the neighboring state of Baja California Sur, covering a route full of native ranches that were dedicated to fishing, hunting and gathering, often reluctant to evangelization actions (Bendimez, 2003).

INDEPENDENCE PERIOD: RANCHES AND REAL DE MINAS (MINING ESTATES)

Taking the year 1834 as the end of the missionary period in the state of Baja California, it can be established that from a couple of decades before Mexico's independence in 1821, the vast missionary properties were gradually distributed among the military of the former presidios, forming mainly cattle ranches; In 1804, Ensign José Manuel Ruiz (1755-1835) obtained from the governor of the territory⁷ a coastal land with an area of approximately 3,500 hectares in what is now Ensenada; in 1829 Santiago Arguello (1791-1862) obtained a 10,000 hectare property from the ranch of

ID	Name	Type	Order	Municipality	Ethnicity	Year
1	Mission Santa Gertrudis la Magna Cadamán	Mission	Jesuit	San Quintín	Cochimí	1752
2	San Fco. Borja de Adac Mission	Mission	Jesuit	San Quintín	Cochimí	1762
3	Mission Sta. Ma. de los Angeles Cabujakaamung	Mission	Jesuit	San Felipe	Cochimí	1767
4	San Fernando de Velicatá Mission	Mission	Franciscans	San Quintín	Cochimí	1769
5	Mission Santo Domingo de la Frontera	Mission	Dominicans	San Quintín	Kiliwa	1775
6	San Vicente Ferrer Mission	Mission	Dominicans	Ensenada	Paipái	1780
7	Mission Santo Tomas de Aquino	Mission	Dominicans	Ensenada	Kumiaí	1791
8	St. Peter Martyr Mission of Verona	Mission	Dominicans	St. Quintín	Kiliwa	1794
9	Santa Catarina Virgin and Martyr Mission	Mission	Dominicans	Ensenada	Kiliwa	1797
10	Our Lady of Guadalupe del Norte Mission	Mission	Dominicans	Ensenada	Kumiaí	1834
11	Mission Lady Most Holy Ro-sary of Viñadaco de Abajo	Mission	Dominicans	San Quintín	Cochimí	1802
12	Señora del Santísimo Rosario de Viñadaco de Arriba Mission	Mission	Dominicos	San Quintín	Cochimí	1774
13	San Miguel Arcángel de la Frontera Mission	Mission	Dominicans	Ensenada	Kumiaí	1787
14	San Miguel El Descanso Mission	Mission	Dominicos	Rosarito Beaches	Kumiaí	1802

ID	Name	Type	Order	Municipality	Ethnicity	Year
A	Santa María de Calamajue	Visit	Jesuits	San Felipe	Cochimí	1766
B	San Juan de Dios	Visit	Franciscans	San Quintín	Cochimí	1714
C	San Telmo	Visit	Dominicos	San Quintín	Kiliwa	1714

Table 1. Missions and visitations in the territory of the State of Baja California

Source: Own elaboration based on information taken from Sectur, 2020.

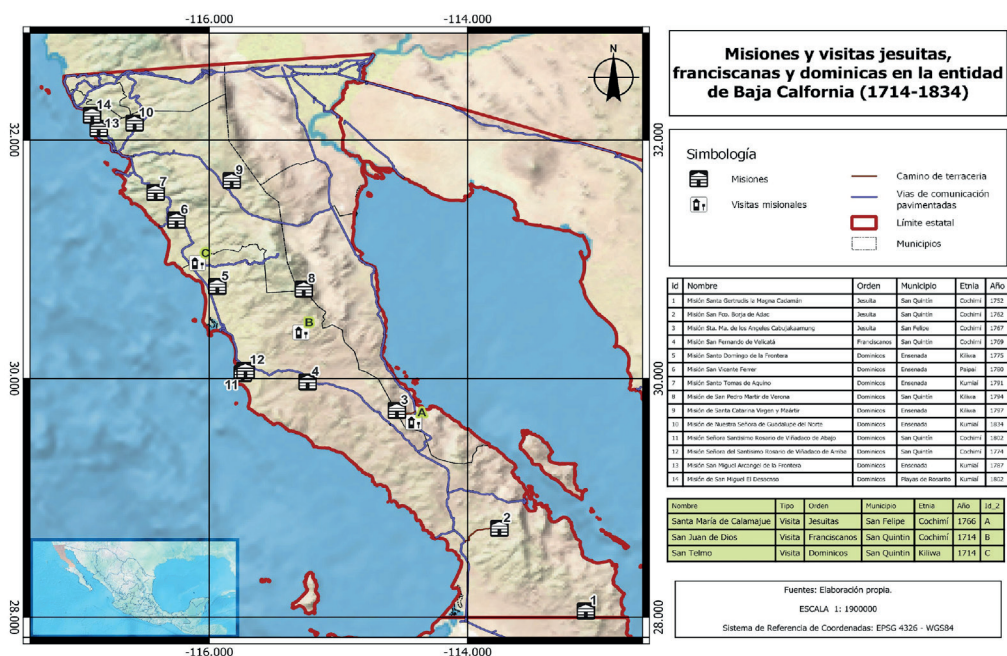


Figure 1. Location of the Missions and Visits in Baja California.

Source: own elaboration

Tía Juana (Tijuana); In 1833 Juan Lorenzo Bandini (1800-1859) took possession of 8,775 hectares of the Tecate ravine and in 1861 Guadalupe Meléndrez (1776-1871) the Santa Clara valley with 1,500 hectares, to mention the largest ones. Ex-soldiers and inhabitants of the presidios of San Diego and San Vicente were the first to benefit from the secularization -disestablishment- of ecclesiastical goods decreed by the Mexican government in 1834⁸, but also from the gradual abandonment of the missions by the Dominicans.

After the war with the United States and the demarcation of the current border in 1849, the Mexican government politically and administratively divided the peninsular territory into two parties: north and south. In April 1855, the Northern Party of Baja California was constituted, with a single municipality and capital in the town of Santo Tomás de la Frontera, located to the east of the site of the old mission of Santo Tomas de Aquino. In 1872, at the height of the gold rush, the capital was moved to Real del Castillo el Viejo, in the valley of San Rafael, in an inland basin in the foothills of the Sierra de Juárez, and a decade later to the town of Ensenada de Todos Santos⁹. The demarcation of the border between the two countries severed the vast holdings allotted to the California ranchers, once the missions succumbed, as well as the indigenous territories, particularly of the Kumiai.

The buildings of the ranches and minerals, both dwellings and public buildings, consisted of rooms with thick adobe walls; the Government Palace of Real del Castillo was a single elongated rectangular bay, with wooden gabled roofs and finished with tejamanil; there was also a printing press, a simple military barracks, a school, the houses of the neighbors and the cemetery. The boom of this real lasted only ten years and its population, which

amounted to 1,500 inhabitants, soon collapsed. Another important mining area was El Álamo located 100 km southeast of Ensenada in the Santa Clara valley, the site was discovered in 1888 and shared a similar architectural physiognomy to that of Real del Castillo. Of this first post missionary period, only a simple, vernacular adobe and wood architecture can be recounted, in addition to the remains of mining machinery, water pools and tombs in cemeteries.

ENSENADA AND SAN QUINTÍN

The territories of Ensenada and more recently San Quintín, are the ones that concentrate the greatest number of Jesuit, Franciscan and Dominican Missions and visits, as a result of the evangelizing process of the Bajacalifornian territory within a period that spanned from 1714 to 1834. This is partly due to the geographic and topographic characteristics, as well as to the great extensions of what today represents its municipal areas. Likewise, in the 14 visitas and missions where they are located, their territories belonged to native cultures associated with the Cochimies, Kiliwas, Paipai and Kumiais (Robles et. al, 2023).

The house of the coastal ranch of Ensenada de Todos Santos that housed the Gastelum Ruiz family was erected in 1824, following the missionary construction tradition because it was an affordable and practical material; moreover, it had been used shortly before in the construction of houses in ranches and mines.

As a spatial and temporal reference, it should be mentioned that the first dwellings of the Mexican towns on the Pacific coast of California, from San Diego -1822- to Monterrey -1821-, were originally whitewashed adobe towns, with simple rectangular plan dwellings and gabled roofs built with rustic pine log poles, sometimes extended over a

⁸ Decree for the Secularization of the Missions of the Californias. 17 August 1833.

⁹ In 1887 the Peninsula established 2 administrative districts: North and South, with Ensenada as the capital of the first one (Jordán, F. 1997).

simple wooden porch¹⁰. Except for the most elaborate cases such as the Estudillo and Bandini houses in San Diego.

The bay of Todos Santos, where the city of Ensenada emerged, began to be populated after the establishment of the port and maritime customs in 1881; the original layout of the town had particular characteristics. A grid made up of quadrangular blocks with dimensions of 100 m per side and lots of 25x50m; it was rotated 45° from the geographic north. Due to its connection with the ports of San Diego and San Francisco, California became the linking point for passengers and merchandise to the ranches and mines in the interior of the territory. In May 1887, the head of the Partido Norte was moved from Real del Castillo to Ensenada, forming the territory as a District (Jordán, 1997), and consequently the military garrison was moved a year later. Ensenada's growth was boosted by the colonization law decreed by President Manuel González Flores (1833-1893)¹¹, which allowed foreigners to establish land delimitation and possession companies in Mexican territory. In 1886 the Compañía Internacional Mexicana Colonizadora de Hartford, Connecticut¹², acquired the land where it developed an urban real estate project called Colonia Carlos Pacheco, which corresponds to the current layout of the city, except for the Historic Center. In 1889 his rights were acquired by the English Company or Compañía Mexicana de Terrenos y Colonización, which located its administrative offices in the port, as well as a bank and a shipping line.

In those years, Ensenada went from being a town of simple dwellings to having some larger buildings, such as the 1886 barracks of

the Compañía Fija, erected in adobe. Prefabricated wooden bungalows were also erected based on a construction system called *Balloon frame*, both for public purposes and for dwelling-houses, these gave the city a diversity of American architectural styles, from the simple wooden bungalows in the *Arts and Craft line*, to those with Victorian allusions.

In January 1920 the Prohibition era came into effect in the U.S., Prohibition 1920-1933, which attracted large numbers of tourists south of the border, and Ensenada was the site of a building representative of the neo-modern California architecture in vogue at the time: The Hotel Playa de Ensenada (1930), later known as Hotel Riviera del Pacífico¹³, located in front of the sea, became a center of entertainment for the Hollywood stars of the twenties and today, without a doubt, due to its dimensions and architectural language, it continues to be the emblematic piece of the city's architecture.

On February 27, 2020, the XXIII Constitutional Legislature of Baja California approved the creation of the municipality of San Quintín¹⁴, which in turn implied the territorial division of the municipality of Ensenada. Thus, 7 missions located in the middle and southern portion of the state: Mission Santo Domingo de la Frontera, Santa Gertrudis la Magna Cadamán, San Francisco Borja de Adac, San Fernando de Velicatá, San Pedro Mártir de Verona, Señora del Santísimo Rosario de Viñadaco de Arriba y de Abajo, and 2 visitas (San Juan de Dios and San Telmo) became part of the political-administrative limits of the new municipality.

¹⁰ Both Old Town San Diego and Monterrey Old Town Historic are protected historic areas with well-preserved examples of this architecture.

¹¹ General Manuel Refugio González Flores (1833-1893) He was president of Mexico during 1880-1884.

¹² Named by Ensenada residents only as the International Company.

¹³ Today it is home to the Riviera del Pacífico Civic Cultural Center.

¹⁴ On February 27, 2020, the Government of Baja California, by means of Decree No. 46 approved the creation of the municipality of San Quintín, which implied the division of the municipality of Ensenada, corresponding to the former a total of 32,883.93 km2 (Periódico Oficial del Estado de Baja California, 2020).



Image 1. San Francisco Borja de Adac Mission.

Source: personal archive



Image 3. Miguel Arcángel de la Frontera Mission

Source: personal archive



Image 2. San Fernando de Velicatá Mission

Source: personal archive



Image 4. Mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe del Norte

Source: personal archive

At present, to access their vestiges, it is mostly by means of the Transpeninsular Highway, although in the cases of Santa Gertrudis la Magna Cadamán, San Francisco Borja de Adac and San Pedro Mártir de Verona or the visit San Juan de Dios present difficulties because they are located between mountains and deserts, which implies long journeys on dirt roads (Figure 1); the first two are located in the Sierra la Libertad and the last two in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir.

Among the five missions located in Ensenada are San Vicente Ferrer, San Miguel Arcangel de la Frontera and Santo Tomas de Aquino, located just off the Rosarito-Ensenada-San Quintín highway. In the case of Mission Santa Catarina Virgen y Mártir, it is located 8 km northeast of the town of Héroes de la Independencia, which is on the Ensenada-San Felipe highway; with respect to Mission Nues-

tra Señora de Guadalupe del Norte, the closest route to access the site is via the Ensenada-Te-cate highway, near the town of El Porvenir.

Although the cities of Ensenada and San Quintín, both municipal capitals of their homonymous municipalities, are fully linked to the missionary history, they are not a direct product of a novo-Hispanic missionary settlement, but in both cases of the development of agricultural cattle ranches founded in the 19th century, once the missionary territories were fragmented and concessioned to private individuals. In both cases, its port enclave was decisive for its development and maritime linkage with other coastal points of the region and California.

TIJUANA

The Kumiai ranchería of Tijuana “Ranchería Tía Juana” was located in the jurisdiction of the Mission of San Diego de Alcalá (1769). The military man Santiago Arguello, originally from Monterrey, California, was the possessor since 1829 of the riverside valley dedicated to grazing, which was segmented with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in February 1848. The new historical-geographical circumstance placed Tijuana right at the western vertex of the border crossing between California and Baja California, which implied the establishment of a customs office in 1874, 40 years after the end of the missionary period. Faced with the growing flow of visitors and the commercial exchange of merchandise between Mexico and the United States of America. In 1889 a litigation between heirs of Argüello was closed and the plan of the urban layout was presented with the name of town of Zaragoza, name that did not work.

The ignored dividing monuments of the border between Mexico and the USA known as the mojoneras, have the value of being not only the oldest constructions of the border, but also the testimony of a transcendental historical fact that was the war between the two countries. Monument 258 in Playas de Tijuana, originally number one, erected in 1851, was the first of the entire border, built in Italian marble by the G.W. Blunt Company of New York, which after a long journey by boat and then by road from San Diego reached its final site.¹⁵

Old photographs of Tijuana show the road leading to the border lined with commercial stores built of wood, arcaded fronts of the same material and unique curved parapet finials or linear cornice finials. The signs are part of the buildings and indicate with recur-

rence the sale of curiosities and postcards, bars and cafeterias, which makes clear the tourist purpose that the city had from its beginnings. The commercial wood from which these buildings were made was surely moved from the port of San Diego by animal-drawn carts, including prefabricated two-story buildings such as the iconic Hotel Saint Francis, erected on the corner of Second and Revolution Streets in the 1920s, after it was moved from Imperial Beach, California, where it had functioned as a hotel since 1906.

In 1915 the Tijuana Fair was inaugurated, a singular pavilion that had a casino, open air theater, palenque, restaurant and sales kiosks, it was recognized from a distance by its singular access formed by an arch flanked by two large and sturdy wooden towers finished with a dome shape and flagpoles at the end; This building marked the beginning of a constructive fervor that in the twenties modified the physiognomy of Tijuana with the construction of the famous Foreign Club and the Hippodrome in 1924; the tourist complex of the Agua Caliente Casino in 1927, which only came to be on a par with the Riviera de Ensenada. These works were designed by American architects.

While entertainment architecture showed a strong influence of the neo-modern Californian style, governmental works resorted to other languages used at that time in the interior of the country, such as the neocolonial style of the Antiguo Palacio Municipal de Tijuana of 1921, today the Instituto Municipal de Arte y Cultura; the Porfirian eclecticism of the building of the Commercial Company of Baja California of 1929, the neoclassical of the Álvaro Obregón Elementary School of 1931, today Casa de la Cultura Tijuana, and the Jai Alai Palace of neo-baroque style with

¹⁵ In the urban zone of Los Algodones, monuments 206, 207 are located; in Mexicali, 218, 219, 220, 220^a and 221; in Tecate, numbers 243, 244, 244A, 244B and 245; in Tijuana, monuments 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257 and 258. Along 3,185 kilometers of border, 258 main obelisks of stone or metal were erected; over time, 18 auxiliary monuments were added. Number one is located on the border between Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua and El Paso, Texas.

neo-Moorish ornamentation. Although they did not generate a trend, the eclecticism of the early twentieth century left in its wake works of great importance in Tijuana. The same phenomenon was repeated in the cities of Ensenada and Mexicali during the first three decades of the 20th century.

In the current territory of the municipality of Tijuana there is no missionary site; its origin dates back to the establishment of the Argüello family ranch at the end of the 19th century, and as explained above, the origin of the city and its subsequent development has been strongly linked to its border location between Mexico and California. Even so, it is important to highlight the development of California neo-modern architecture in the city at the beginning of the 20th century.

MEXICALI

The valley of Mexicali and what is now the territory of the new municipality of Mexicali as of 2021 (Figure 1) remained exempt from the missionary process that occurred in the rest of the state, despite the fact that this region had large agricultural lands and abundant water due to the presence of the Colorado River. although the Cucapa¹⁶ had contact with the first Europeans since the 16th century, they maintained their living environment almost intact until the end of the 19th century. At the end of the 19th century, a series of Mexican ranchos and colonies settled in the northeast of the valley, close to the international line, most of them family settlements: Algodones in 1887, Abasolo in 1892, Ochoa in 1895, Rivera in 1898 and Castro in 1901. In the first decade of the 20th century, the first rural wooden schools were built in these pioneering communities. A second stage of rural school construction in the Mexicali Valley occurred during the agrarian distribution of the 1930s.

The settlement of Mexicali arose at the beginning of the 20th century with migrant settlers from the decaying minerals of Ensenada, most of them South Californians, who, attracted by the wages paid from the canalization works of the Colorado River, arrived at a provisional camp of enramadas set up between the border and the New River, a tributary of the Colorado. The settlement began as a camp of rustic ramadas made of local materials, not very different in appearance from the Cucapa dwelling. In 1902, the land owned by Antony Heber¹⁷ was divided for commercial purposes, the first streets were laid out and the inhabitants of the camp were the first to acquire a lot on which to build their homes.

The ramadas became adobe houses made up of one or two rooms with a wooden gabled roof and a front porch of the same material, in the old photographs you can also see the raised sidewalks of the clay street. This first settlement, made up of about twenty houses along one street, was devastated by the floods that occurred between 1905-1907; later the original polygon was readjusted by modifying the course of the Intercalifornia railroad, which since 1904 crossed the town diagonally; the presence of the railroad was decisive in the growth of the city and in the transformation of the arid valley into a cotton emporium. In the railroad not only Chinese emigrants arrived, but also the first public buildings, today mostly disappeared, and the first prefabricated wooden houses -Bungalows- that populated the first expansion of the city called the Second Section, with its wide rectilinear streets and ample land from street to alley.

To the east of the city arose the neighborhood of the recently emigrated workers, known as Pueblo Nuevo, which was urbanized in 1919. Here a vernacular architecture of flattened adobe walls and wooden roofs was

¹⁶ Original group from the Mexicali Valley, belonging to the Yumana family.

¹⁷ Anthony H. Heber of American nationality, acquired from the Sociedad de Irrigación y Terrenos de la Baja California, one of many foreign colonizing companies, the land where Mexicali was born.

developed; the houses of thick walls and small openings, had an austere character only ornamented in singular parapets. Also in Pueblo Nuevo arose the Cuartería, a Mexican version of the neighborhood of central Mexico. The First and Second Sections of the city were connected by a series of bridges over the Río Nuevo ravine.

In 1915 the transfer of the capital of the Northern District of Baja California from Ensenada to Mexicali meant a growth impulse for the city that was reflected in its architecture (Jordán, 1993), with the creation of three large school buildings: Cuauhtémoc elementary school of 1916, Leona Vicario school of 1924 and Benito Juárez school of 1926 -disappeared-; also in 1922 the building of the Government Palace of the Northern District of Baja California was inaugurated, today Rectory of the Autonomous University of Baja California and in 1924 the Municipal Palace today headquarters of the Faculty of Arts of the UABC. In the Historic Center a commercial and banking architecture emerged, examples of this are the buildings of the Bancaria del Pacífico and the Banco Agrícola Peninsular of 1927. These buildings were built using diverse historicist languages, and their construction primarily used reinforced concrete, which was affordable due to the proximity to California. It should be noted that the use of reinforced concrete on the border occurred at an early stage due to geographical circumstances and the participation of U.S. architects and contractors.

In Mexicali there were no large casino-hotel complexes with neo-modern Californian architecture; however, there is a representative work of this style, which is the Colorado River Land Company office building, located in the Second Section and inaugurated in 1924. This language also had a version in the hou-

ses of Colonia Nueva, founded in the thirties to the east of the Second Section, where large residences surrounded by gardens were built, using the traditional construction system of adobe walls and wooden roofs or wooden frames on walls and pollinia roofs. This architecture of flattened walls, painted in white and light colors, with clay tiles and ironwork in railings, doors and windows, contributed to create a neighborhood with a homogeneous architectural image that unfortunately has been lost with the inclusion of dissonant buildings.

SAN FELIPE

Moving on to the case of San Felipe, on May 19, 2021, it was decreed its creation as a municipality¹⁸, being the main city and head of the homonymous port located on the coast of the Gulf of California, 200 km south of the city of Mexicali. In 1721 the Jesuit missionaries Juan de Ugarte and Everardo Hellen assigned the name to the port, and it is until 1746 that it appeared in the cartography of the peninsula. In 1918 the then president Venustiano Carranza, endowed San Felipe with 100 hectares of legal land for the port. In 1920, fishermen from Guaymas, Topolobampo, La Paz, Santa Rosalía and Mulegé established fishing camps on their beaches. The totoaba fishery attracted transporters dedicated to the fresh fish trade in the United States, who became interested in selling it. As a result, caravans of transporters began to arrive in San Felipe to acquire the product and export it in large quantities.

In 1925, during the administration of General Abelardo L. Rodríguez, the population of the fishing camps: "Campo Uno or Campo Polo and Campo Dos or Campo Estrella", had a population of approximately 100 people. By 1930 there were 287 inhabitants and by 1940: 995 approximately. In 1950 the Port Captaincy

¹⁸ On May 19, 2021, the Commission of Governance, Legislation and Constitutional Points of the State of Baja California approved the creation of the municipality of San Felipe having a total area of 10,808 km² (XXIII Legislature of Baja California, 2021).

was installed, as well as the San Felipe-Mexicali highway was completed, in 1963 the electrical infrastructure appeared and in 1967 the potable water system was installed. The above will help to consolidate the town when the first hotels were opened, such as the Riviera, Arnold's del Mar, Arco Iris and El Pescador.

In 1980, with 6,197 inhabitants, San Felipe officially received the category of Port and by the end of the 1980s there was a considerable increase in the number of tourist camps on the coast, from its southern part to the town of Puertecitos there were 80 camps. With the reform of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution and the Agrarian Law in 1992, the disincorporation of ejido lands to private ownership was facilitated, giving way to the acquisition of the Ejido Plan Nacional Agrario by El Dorado Ranch, which in 2004 created a trust to provide certainty to land buyers, which also set the tone for the continued arrival of residential tourism in San Felipe.

On June 10, 1993, then-President Carlos Salinas decreed the Upper Gulf of California and Colorado River Delta Biosphere Reserve in response to the need for a conservation program that would allow for the adequate use of natural resources and guarantee the protection of endemic species in the area, such as the totoaba and vaquita porpoise. The reserve covers an area of 7,14,556.5 hectares and, as of 2021, includes part of the municipalities of San Felipe and Mexicali in Baja California.

It is important to note that, as of the new territorial delimitation of San Felipe in 2021, the missions Sta. Ma. de los Angeles Cabujakaamung and the visit Santa Maria de Calamajue are geographically located within its new boundaries. Time has dissipated the possible architectural remains of these constructions, and access to the few remaining vestiges of their foundations is via the road that connects San Luis Gonzaga - Laguna Chapala.

TECATE

The settlement of Tecate has its origin in the establishment of the agricultural and cattle ranches mentioned above, after the missionary period in the 19th century. The site of Tecate is located at 540 meters above sea level and was inhabited by the Kumiai, its original owners, until 1833 when the place was granted to the Peruvian Juan Bandini in the twilight of the Mission of San Diego de Alcalá. The place integrated by small valleys, hills and furrowed by a stream, was initially destined for grazing, but in March of 1861 it lived a transcendental change when by decree of President Benito Juárez, an agricultural colony was created, which covered an area of a little more than 25,000 hectares¹⁹. In 1892²⁰ the layout of the town was drawn up based on the division of 21 rectangular blocks destined for the construction of housing, only one of which was reserved for public facilities. The old zone of Tecate²¹ is contained between the line that demarcates the international border to the north and the Tecate -Alamar- creek to the south; the large avenues from east to west are parallel to the border with small topographic variations and the shorter streets, from north to south. In the center, the polygon is crossed longitudinally by Federal Highway 2.

In 1914 a section of the railroad from San Diego to Tucson, coming from Tijuana, crossed the town of Tecate on its south side next to the creek, a fact that meant a boost to its growth with the establishment of industries such as the manufacturing company of Malta, S.A., to supply the brewing companies in the region and in 1943 the Tecate Brewery, S.A., which in 1953 was acquired by the Cuauhtémoc-Moctezuma consortium. The old station is today one of the buildings with patrimonial value of Tecate, it has a functionalist architecture with very pronounced eaves of covers, in the

¹⁹ With the 1892 delineation, the area was increased to 35,000 hectares.

²⁰ October 12, 1892 was declared as the founding date of Tecate. April 2, 1888 is also specified.

²¹ Integrated by a sequence of small valleys between hills: San José, San Valentín, San Javier, Nacho Güero, Tanama and Cañada Verde.

first floor were the station services and in the upper floor the house of the chief of the same one. Towards the back, north side, of the station is the complex of the malt plant and the facilities of the Tecate Brewery, which is part of the industrial heritage of Baja California.

Miguel Hidalgo Park occupies a strategic position in the old layout and besides being a recognizable node, it creates a pleasant environment in the surroundings; towards its south side on Libertad Avenue, between Presidente Lázaro Cárdenas and Presidente Pascual Ortiz Rubio Streets, two relevant buildings from the forties are located, on the west corner the Tecate Hotel building with its characteristic curved corner pediment and on the east portion the Municipal Palace building, with its facades transformed through time. Tecate obtained in 2012 the recognition of "Magical Town" by the Ministry of National Tourism -SECTUR-, this program is based on enhancing the cultural richness of a place and thus diversify the tourist offer of Mexico; Tecate is the only magical town in the state and like Mexicali lacks missionary vestiges.

ROSARITO

The Dominican Mission of El Descanso - San Miguel la Nueva- (1810-1834), is located in the jurisdiction of Playas de Rosarito, 22 kms south of Rosarito on a plateau next to the coast called El Descanso, delimited to the south by a homonymous creek; It was the penultimate of the missions and the one located farthest north, on the dividing line that the Dominican and Franciscan religious orders agreed upon in August 1773, when the Franciscan friar Francisco Palou (1722-1789) placed a cross on a stone mound - the Mojónera de Palou - thus defining the first border between the Californias. This mission had the function of congregating the Kumia population, ancestral inhabitants of the terri-

tory. Because of its proximity to the coast, the inhabitants of the mission traded with ships. The vestiges of the adobe walls are protected with a metallic cover and next to them there is a parochial temple dedicated to San Miguel Arcángel, this building was made following a neomisional language that evokes with fidelity the missionary architecture of the colonial period.

A first example of post-colonial architecture is the adobe house of José Manuel Machado's ranch in El Descanso, Playas de Rosarito. Machado was a soldier of the San Diego presidio and inhabitant of Pueblo Viejo de San Diego, Machado was granted in 1827, by Governor José María Machado, the ranch of El Rosario, today Playas de Rosarito, with an extension of 19,311 hectares²². It is estimated that the house was built in 1840 and after having been in a state of abandonment, it was restored with the support of the INAH-BC center²³. Joaquín Machado Valdez, son, obtained from President Porfirio Díaz the property title of May 14, 1885, considered the founding date of Rosarito.

Machado's succession sold the property in a fractional manner and thus began the development of tourism and the subsequent layout of the city. The road between Tijuana and Ensenada became the axis of development of the area, along which restaurants, motels, mobile home camps and stores were established. In 1922 the Half Way House was inaugurated at kilometer 53 of the Libre Highway with five cabins and two houses; between 1936-1938 it was annexed to the restaurant area. This wooden building with its stone chimney is an example of the early emergence of tourism on the state's coast.

²² https://ensenada.net/noticias/nota_CU.php?id=44687

²³ Architect Carlos Chávez was in charge of the restoration project.

At kilometer 28 south of the city of Tijuana, on the beach of El Rosarito, the well-known Rosarito Beach Hotel²⁴ was established in the 1920's. It began with tents in front of the beach, by 1929 it functioned as a motel with 12 rooms and by 1940 it had consolidated the image of what is considered the original building²⁵. Like other resorts on the Pacific coast of Baja California, foreign tourists were attracted by the beauty and extension of the beaches and the possibility of fishing. Undoubtedly the Rosarito Beach Hotel was the great detonator of this seaside resort and its building is the reference building in the area. In this municipality is located only the Mission of San Miguel el Descanso, built by the Dominicans in 1802, on the stretch of the Rosarito-Ensenada highway.

FINAL NOTES

The missionary process that took place in the territory of the current State of Baja California did not determine the emergence of its main urban centers; its origin comes from the establishment of agricultural and cattle ranches at the end of the 19th century. Except for some minor towns that developed around the mission, such as San Vicente Ferrer. This denotes the failure of the missionary model implemented in the peninsula as a foundational model in the novo-Hispanic period, which can be attributed to multiple factors:

- The scarcity of indigenous population and their semi-nomadic condition, who remained reluctant to live congregated around the mission.
- The predominantly arid condition of the territory with the consequent scarcity of water to develop models based on agricultural and livestock exploitation, as occurred in California.

- The abandonment of the territory and the missionary process by the religious orders after 1767 with the expulsion of the Jesuits and later with the establishment of a new political order and possession of the territories after the independence of Mexico in 1821.

The missions are a significant part of Baja California's identity and history, the preservation of their vestiges must be a priority of the three orders of government, and the new demarcation of the territory with the incorporation of the municipalities of Playas de Rosarito in 1995, San Quintín in 2021 and San Felipe in 2022, is presented like an opportunity to harness its preservation from the recognition of its historical and cultural value, in addition to its tourist potential. The administration for the maintenance, promotion and conservation of these sites of great historical wealth is distributed among secretariats or directorates of different orders of government such as the National Commission of Culture, National Institute of Anthropology and History, Secretariat of Tourism and municipal Directorates or offices of Culture, some of these, not yet established at the date of writing this document due to the recent conformation of municipalities such as San Quintín or San Felipe.

It is also necessary to form and strengthen an inter-institutional network of municipal offices that establish responsibilities for the conservation and maintenance of the missions and visits or their vestiges as historical points in the process of socio-cultural conformation of the peninsula and the State. In addition, they should specify their location within the jurisdictional limits as a result of the territorial reconfiguration of the Entity. It is also very necessary to promote their historical relevance to the general public, as well as to create a geographic information system on their characteristics and architectural attri-

²⁴ Owned by Mr. Manuel Barbachano, who acquired the property from an American company.

²⁵ It houses the lobby, restaurant, bar, event rooms and pool.

butes, which could be available online in order to disseminate and make this knowledge more accessible, since to date this information is difficult to obtain.

Finally, the conservation of these sites of great historical value should correspond equally to the inhabitants of the entity as well

as to tourism in general in order to make them enduring for their enjoyment and knowledge for future generations as foundational bases of the culture and identity of this geographical area of the country.

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