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Archaeology Without Limits: Papers in Honor of Clement W. Meighan

Brian D. Dillon and Matthew A. Boxt (eds.)
Lancaster, California: Labyrinthos, 2005. 492 pp. paperback, illustrations, bibliography. ISBN 0-911437-12-6. \$89.95

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This volume is a Festschrift for Clement W. Meighan, with chapters written by a diverse range of anthropologists and archaeologists whose lives he touched as a scholar, teacher, and field researcher. Beginning with his archaeological studies at U.C. Berkeley in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and continuing as a professor and administrator at U.C.L.A. from 1952 until his retirement in 1991, Meighan has been widely recognized for the significant contributions he made to the developing fields of California and West Mexico archaeology. What is less known about his professional trajectory is the breadth of archaeological work he conducted in other areas of Mexico and in various regions of the world, including Chile, Peru, Nubia, Guam, Costa Rica, and Syria. In organizing and editing the Festschrift, Dillon and Boxt have maintained the far-reaching and somewhat eclectic interests of Meighan by including a diverse assortment of papers that concern archaeological investigations from around the world.

The volume is divided into two primary sections: an introductory segment pertaining to the life and times of Clement Meighan, followed by a much longer section containing the papers written in his honor. The introductory section opens with a touching tribute by Brian Dillon that describes the career, interests, and personality traits of this tireless researcher, from his early school days, through his active duty during World War II,

and on to his years at U.C. Berkeley and U.C.L.A. A brief retrospective by H. B. Nicholson follows, with some insights about Meighan's work in Mexico. The final piece of the introductory material is a complete bibliography that lists the more than 300 published works by Meighan, including his film credits.

The majority of the 492-page volume consists of 28 chapters written specifically for the Festschrift by Meighan's colleagues, friends, and former students working around the world. This section is organized by region, beginning with North America (12 chapters), the Caribbean (1 chapter), South America (3 chapters), Mesoamerica (8 chapters), Europe (1 chapter), Pacific Islands (2 chapters), and the Middle East (1 chapter). Given the areal focus of the *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology*, my comments will pertain to the initial twelve chapters that focus on California, Great Basin, and Baja California archaeology and ethnohistory.

As with most Festschrift volumes, there is no central research question, theoretical theme, or areal focus integrating the various chapters. Most of them are solid, empirically-oriented studies that describe the results of survey and excavation work or the analysis of archaeological materials—the kinds of investigations that would have pleased Meighan. The quality of the papers varies somewhat, ranging from excellent syntheses of recent field work and cutting-edge analyses of artifact types to an original version of a paper submitted in one of Meighan's graduate seminars. While there is no thematic structure to the volume, the twelve North American chapters may be divided into four groupings that reflect Meighan's interests and expertise. These include papers on rock art, the analysis of archaeological materials, regional syntheses, and historical archaeology.

Rock Art Studies. Meighan had a long-term interest in documenting and studying rock art sites, which led to his co-founding (with C. William Clewlow) of the

Rock Art Archives at what is now the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at U.C.L.A. Three chapters carry on Meighan's fascination with rock art. In describing an intriguing petroglyph panel from Washoe County, Nevada that appears to represent an elephant and spear, C. William Clewlow and Sandra K. Uchitel systematically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various interpretations, including the possibility that it may be an example of Paleoindian rock art in the Great Basin. While they conclude that further work needs to be undertaken, they also believe it is time that we address more rigorously the possibility of Pleistocene-age rock art in western North America. Beverly Booth Childers presents the intriguing results of a long-term study involving the removal of lichen from petroglyph figures in Wyoming. Her research is providing new insights into the preservation of rock art panels, as well as some cautionary observations about dating petroglyphs based on the degree of patination and lichen cover. Daniel G. Foster, John Betts, and Linda C. Sandelin detail what is known about abstract representational petroglyphs from the northern Sierra Nevada. Building upon Louis Payen's earlier classification (Style 7: High Sierra Abstract—Representational), they provide a comprehensive review of rock art sites that are characterized by concentric circles, simple circles elaborated by line elements, wavy lines of varying complexity, various kinds of tracks (bear, deer), and anthropomorphic-zoomorphic representations. Foster et. al. build a convincing argument that many of these petroglyphs may be associated with the Martis Archaeological Complex, which dates about 4,000–1,500 BP.

Analysis of Archaeological Materials. Meighan was an advocate for the detailed investigation of archaeological materials throughout his career, particularly in his publications on obsidian hydration, faunal analysis, midden compositional studies, and the analysis of pottery figurines (his doctoral dissertation). He would have been pleased by the two chapters on lithic and effigy artifact types in his *Festschrift*. Richard C. Jenkins authors a comprehensive study of a fluted point base recovered from a lithic scatter during a timber harvest plan in Siskiyou County, California. The Clovis-like point, which had been reworked, was sourced to Buck Mountain in Modoc County and had a moderate hydration reading (5–7 microns), suggesting

it dates to the terminal Pleistocene or Early Holocene. Robert S. Brown and Franklin Fenenga undertook a detailed analysis of two anthropomorphic figurines from the environs of Joshua Tree National Monument, one excavated by Elizabeth Campbell in 1932 and the other collected by park visitors in the 1980s. Both figurines feature coffee-bean eyes, prominent noses, and wholly or partially rounded heads, which—as the authors describe—are part of a broader tradition of clay anthropomorphic artifacts from southern California and northern Baja California.

Regional Syntheses. Well-known for his pioneering syntheses of archaeological work from specific regions in California (e.g., Napa Valley, Mono County, North Coast Ranges, San Clemente Island), Meighan's legacy is well represented in the volume with four chapters devoted to California and Baja California places. It is fitting that William J. Wallace penned one of the chapters, an insightful archaeological overview of Palos Verdes Peninsula in southern California. L. Kyle Napton and Elizabeth E. A. Greathouse present a significant contribution involving recent archaeological finds in Stanislaus, Merced, and San Joaquin counties in the Central Valley that includes a thoughtful discussion of the "Farmington Complex." John W. Verano synthesizes the known archaeology and ethnohistory of Cucamonga, California. The final chapter, by Fermín Reygadas Dahl and Guillermo Velázquez Ramírez, builds upon the earlier work of Meighan and William C. Massey in the Cape region of Baja California Sur by presenting highlights from more than 25 years of survey and excavation. This important work is refining and modifying the chronology and interpretations of shell midden sites for the Cape region.

Historical Archaeology. Meighan maintained an interest throughout his career in the archaeology and ethnohistory of indigenous encounters with early European explorers and the missions in California and Baja California. Three chapters carry on this work in the volume. The first, by Judith F. Porcasi, is an excellent summary of three seasons of field work at the vineyardist's adobe house at Mission San Antonio de Padua. Significantly, she finds that most of the archaeological remains excavated from the structure probably do not pertain to its use and function. The assemblage, which includes prodigious amounts of bovine

bones, instead was probably trash dumped into the structure from the nearby tannery and stock corral after it was abandoned. The second, authored by Nicholas M. Magalousis, represents an important overview of a long-term archaeological project (1979–1993) at Mission San Juan Capistrano by crews from Chapman College, U.C. Irvine, and Santa Ana College, which in its later years focused on the implementation of a conservation program involving extant features and artifacts. This chapter highlights some of the major findings of the project, including the analyses of the ceramics, lithics, and faunal remains, as well as the future directions for the research team. Finally, W. Michael Mathes critically evaluates the size of the mission population in the peninsular region of Baja California, arguing that earlier

demographic estimates proposed by Sherburne Cook and his colleagues are overly exaggerated. In this lively paper, Mathes outlines some of the theoretical and methodological problems involved in making population estimates, and presents his more conservative perspective on the demographic structure of the peninsular Baja California missions.

In sum, the authors of *Archaeology Without Limits* have produced an excellent and heartfelt tribute to the many contributions that Clement W. Meighan made to the fields of archaeology and ethnohistory. The chapters reviewed here exemplify nicely the diverse kinds of archaeology that Meighan undertook in California and Baja California. I think he would have been very honored and pleased with the book.

