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Beers: *Spanish & Mexican Records of the American Southwest*

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lowing sub categories: *Kumeyaay Brown Plain*, *Kumeyaay Brown Incised*, *Kumeyaay Brown Painted*, *Northern Diegueño Brown Plain*, *Northern Diegueño Brown Incised*, etc., with similar categories for the *Cahuilla* and *Luiseno*. The designations, as proposed, are based on "presumed ethnic affiliation" and presumed but not always recognizable intentional surface treatment on the vessels or sherds.

The proposal is of course useless, since no real criteria are presented which serve to differentiate the so-called styles. There is no way, for example, to differentiate *Northern Diegueño Brown Plain* from *Luiseno Brown Plain*, from *Cahuilla Brown Plain*, from *Kumeyaay Brown Plain*.

The bibliography is impressive with over 200 entries, but unfortunately only about 100 of these are actually cited in the text. There are in addition at least 20 other obvious bibliographic errors, which under other circumstances would detract from the usefulness of the paper. There are 15 illustrations. The quality of the photographs and line drawings range from good to excellent, but they serve no real purposes since none of them is keyed to the text and no useful descriptive information is provided.

The printing here is excellent (consistent with the high quality of the series in general), and typos are literally non-existent. The paper used is excellent and the format is attractive. The somewhat optimistic foreword is well written, but the text itself unfortunately leaves a great deal to be desired.

Painting with a large brush, from which most of the bristles are missing, produces an odd lot of streaks, scratches and smears.

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***Spanish & Mexican Records of the American Southwest.*** Henry Putney Beers. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1979, 493 pp., \$8.95 paper, \$18.50 cloth.

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Things are looking up, bibliographically speaking, in the Southwest. On the somewhat distant heels of David Laird's Hopi volume but barely in advance of Stanley Paher's long-awaited Nevada bibliography comes this excellent, important, addition to our reference shelves. The compiler covers private papers—unofficial records in manuscript collections—as well as the more obvious public documents for the pre-Anglo period in the four states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. The result is a veritable bonanza of useful information.

In form, the book is really a bibliographical essay rather than the typical barebones catalogue or research tool (usually as unreadable as the phone book) with which we are accustomed. As a result of Beers' wonderfully rambling, almost gossipy, narrative, we lose something in convenience when using the work strictly as a finding aid. But we more than gain it back in the richness of his descriptions of the sources in this field. And, for a bibliography, his narrative style makes for pretty interesting reading, though the vicissitudes of archives at the vandalizing hands of bureaucrats and Army of Occupation soldiers will make you

weep. Just slightly behind that deadliest of enemies, fire, are inept or crooked politicians who have either discarded or sold off priceless records. Then come the G.I.'s of yesteryear. Partisans in the Monterey comic opera revolt of 1836 used archival records for paper cartridges in their muskets and the American soldiers in the Monterey Customs House in 1846, when it was a temporary hospital, used similar documents for waste paper and, probably, toilet paper. On the other hand, some unusual and important names pop up in the preservation of our records, including such Army officers as Halleck and Canby (perhaps making up for the destruction by the "rankers") and even Edwin M. Stanton, later a cross which both Lincoln and President Johnson had to bear. The names of those who have enhanced our archives by copying, translating, editing, indexing, and cataloguing, etc. are familiar to all of us—Bolton, Hammond, Bloom, Castañeda, Scholes, Barker, Kielman, Streeter, McLean . . .

The basic approach to the coverage of all four states is a simplified map and a sketch of governmental history followed by a listing of provincial, legislative, land, local-jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical records. Nor does Beers forget to survey appropriate manuscript collections, archival reproductions and documentary publications. His is a wide net, catching censuses, inventories of property, baptism and marriage records, etc. An appendix contains a list of repositories, a bibliography and index, and a special section on the fate of originals (many destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906 in San Francisco) and copies of California's Spanish and Mexican landgrant material.

Beers is very good at digging out rarities and important data and properly citing (locating) them for us, including such regionally "mislocated" records, in a technical sense, as Texana in Berkeley's Bancroft Library rather than in Austin. And, of course, he does not

miss the much-strayed material in Library of Congress and in Arch Hanna's somewhat smaller treasure trove in Yale's Beinecke Library.

One minor criticism of this exhaustive and doubtless exhausting labor of love must be made. Every bibliography is out-of-date the moment it is published, of course. Since this one-man operation took so long to compile and grew so huge, some works in preparation were not picked up, later on, as completed. Thus, Bunny Fontana's translation of Fray Bringas is frozen "in process" and only the first of Bob Becker's two books on California landgrant *diseños* is mentioned. Errors of fact seem to be few, though the Drake Nuts will explode at the idea of Cermeño entering the Bay in 1595—when everybody knows that it was/was not Frank Drake of Devon in 1579.

The few sins of commission or omission only serve to remind us that Henry P. Beers is a human like ourselves, and not a giant as the product of his work suggests. We welcome this major key to Southwestern bibliography; it will unlock thousands of documents to scholars of the so-called Sun Belt. Bravo!

## REFERENCES

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