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REVIEWS

Brief Notes on Recent Publications

ALBERT B. ELSASSER

Dover Publications has issued a paperback reprint of A.L. Kroeber's 1925 classic *Handbook of the Indians of California* (\$10.00). The type is slightly smaller than that of the original and all large fold-out maps have been reduced in size and placed on single pages or on two-page spreads. The illustrations are slightly better than those of the two California Book Company's reprints of recent years. This book is certainly a bargain as it is, but the paperback format on such a large work will surely call for rebinding before too many months of hard usage.

The *Journal of New World Archaeology* from the Institute of Archaeology, UCLA, though not expressly devoted to California studies, has some papers which should be of interest to our readers. In Vol. 1, No. 2 (1975), are the following titles: "Typology, Trade, and Trace Analysis: A Test of Local Manufacture of Sacramento Valley Obsidian Tools," by T.J. Jackson and P.D. Schulz; "Baked Clay Figurines of Marin County," by E.B. Goerke and F.A. Davidson; and "The Unusual Burial of a Bear and Child from the Sacramento Delta," by R.A. Cowan et al. Vol. 1, No. 4 (1976) contains "Villa Pacifica (CA-LAN-271)—Theory and Method Applied to the Salvage Excavation of a Site in Long Beach, California," by E.G. Stickel (In "The Archaeological Potential of SYMAP," by P. Langford and E.G. Stickel). Finally, Vol. 1, No. 7 (1976), contains "Two Views of the Manix Lake Lithic Industry," by W.S. Glennan and R.D. Simp-

son; and "The Vandenberg Air Force Base Project," by P. Martz.

J.C. and Sherilee von Werlhof have submitted (1976) "Archaeological Examination of the Sunders Desert Nuclear Plant Site," a publication (limited in print run) from the Imperial Valley College Museum, El Centro. The area surveyed, near Blythe, California, produced a variety of lithic artifacts from San Dieguito ("early man") through Late Yuman.

While going to press, I learned that Hansjakob Seiler's long-awaited *Cahuilla Grammar*, a product of twenty years research, has just been published by Malki Museum Press. A scientific grammar, primarily of interest to the linguist, the work is paperbound, selling for \$12.00.

Finally, Malki Museum Press has again reprinted David Prescott Barrows' *Ethnobotany of the Coahuilla Indians of Southern California* (\$5.95). This classic (originally published in 1900) should be in the library of all serious California anthropologists.

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Holocene Environmental Change in the Great Basin. Robert Elston, ed. Reno: Nevada Archeological Survey *Research Paper* No. 6. 1976.

*Reviewed by M.A. BAUMHOFF
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This collection of papers is largely derived from a symposium held at the 1973 meeting of

the Society for American Archaeology. The avowed purpose was to re-evaluate models of Holocene climate proposed by Antevs and others. The editor concludes (iii-iv):

The consensus of the S.A.A. symposium was that Antevs' model serves well enough as a general statement of long term climatic trends in the Great Basin during the Holocene: it was relatively cool and moist between 10,000 and 7,000 years ago [Anathermal], warmer and dryer between 7,000 and 4,000 years ago [Altithermal] and cool and moist during the last 4,000 years [Medithermal]. However, several factors continue to make it difficult to correlate the effects of these trends.

Of the nine papers here (plus an Introduction by Don Fowler) seven concern Antevs' scheme. Two of these (Fry and Adovasio on western Utah and Grayson on Lower Klamath Lake) attack the notion of an altithermal directly, and one attacks it by indirection (Weide, saying it is a non-problem). Three support it at least in part (Butler on the flora and fauna of southern Idaho; Davis, Elston, and Howard on an altithermal lowstand of Lake Tahoe; and Madsen on vegetational zones of southeastern Nevada). Still another finds it irrelevant to their local problems (Mehring and Warren on marsh formation east of Death Valley).

Grayson's attack is the most direct and also perhaps the most interesting. His analysis of the avifauna from the Nightfire Island site indicates that the deep-diving waterbirds are substantially more abundant in what should be the altithermal time period than they are before or after, leading him to conclude that Lower Klamath Lake was deeper then, rather than shallower, as it should have been according to Antevs. He also attacks Hansen's pollen analysis of the peats there. One wonders why he did not attack Antevs still more directly. Antevs in 1948 believed that Mt. Mazama ash had come before his altithermal and that the eruption occurred between 8500 and 9000

years ago. The 6600 B.P. date noted by Grayson would bring the altithermal up too close in time. Or would it? In any case, since people have long been complaining about the Antevs procrustean bed, starting with Jennings and Aschmann back in the 1950's, I find it odd that they don't take on that tough old Swede directly rather than coming around corners at him.

The critical point so far as archaeology is concerned is whether something substantial happened to the climate about 5000 B.C. and something else about 2000 B.C. The local effect we may suppose will have varied depending on the local situation, and I don't imagine Ernst Antevs would have denied that for a moment. Antevs was convinced that the climatic changes were closely related to glaciation, perhaps in a more-or-less mechanical way. Most people would not agree to this today, but it does still seem that something was happening; the dates 2000 B.C. and 5000 B.C. keep recurring in the archaeological record of the Great Basin and in other parts of the world as well. On the evidence of this volume, it would seem the agreement on the causes of this is not nearly as widespread as the symposium consensus.

It may seem churlish to complain about the editorial quality of a publication like this which is so obviously poorly funded. Nevertheless the inconsistencies of illustrations and referencing constitute a serious annoyance.



Royal Officer in Baja California, 1768-1770: Joaquín Velásquez de León. Iris Wilson Engstrand. Los Angeles: Dawson's Bookshop. 133 pp. 1976. \$24.00.

Reviewed by AUSTIN SULLIVAN
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Though an obscure military figure, Velásquez' tenure in Baja California is of potential