



Peer Reviewed

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Geiger and Meighan: *As The Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by the Franciscan Missionaries, 1813-1815*

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Abstract:

As The Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by the Franciscan Missionaries, 1813-1815. Historical Introduction, Notes, and Translation by *Maynard Geiger*, O.F.M. Anthropological Commentary, Notes, and Appendices by *Clement W. Meighan*. Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, 1976. 170 pp. \$19.95.

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include these why didn't they get them right? Thus there are 50 volumes in the UCPAAE, not 44 as they show; Vol. 2:3 is *Types of Indian Culture in California*, not *Basket Designs of the Indians of Northwestern California*, which is Vol. 2:4; they include Omer Stewart's "Northern Paiute" (UC-AR 4:3) but not Julian Steward's "Nevada Shoshone" (UC-AR 4:2), which has just as much California material; etc. This indicates that these two lists were not considered carefully but simply thrown in, so why include them at all?

Thus although the level of scholarly care in this volume could have been higher I must congratulate the authors for having done it at all.



As The Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by the Franciscan Missionaries, 1813-1815. Historical Introduction, Notes, and Translation by *Maynard Geiger*, O.F.M. Anthropological Commentary, Notes, and Appendices by *Clement W. Meighan*. Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, 1976. 170 pp. \$19.95.

Reviewed by HARRY W. LAWTON
University of California, Riverside

The distinguished historian of the Spanish missions, Father Maynard Geiger, and UCLA anthropologist Clement W. Meighan have collaborated to produce a well-annotated translation of the 1813-1815 original documents in the Santa Barbara Mission Archives known as *Preguntas y Respuestas*, including a brief, yet sufficient, historical introduction and anthropological commentary.

This work is an absolute must for ethnographers, ethnohistorians, collectors of Californiana, and all scholars working in Cali-

fornia Indian studies. A.L. Kroeber (1908) published an annotated abstract of some of these documents, and most of us carrying out research on California Indians have made use of that review or portions of the *Respuestas* published in Father Zephyrin Engelhardt's mission histories or elsewhere (including privately circulated versions). This complete publication with new translations by Father Geiger indeed renders the service he anticipates in his introduction.

The translated text consists of responses from eighteen existing Franciscan missions to a questionnaire sent out to Spanish colonies in the New World in 1812 by Don Ciríaco González Carvajal, Secretary of the Department of Overseas Colonies, Cádiz, Spain. Many of the responses from missionaries constitute virtually the only ethnographic information we have on various California Indian groups. The answers of the Franciscan priests range from those showing incredibly little curiosity about the native peoples with whom they lived and worked to sophisticated observations of aboriginal customs and culture. Some of the responses are extremely naive (or possibly calculated)—as when a priest reports that he knows of no superstitions among the Indians in his area (Mission Soledad). Other responses are alive with factual data—information throwing light on ritual and religion, kinship, social structure, and acculturation under mission influence.

This review could be written at great length, gratuitously commenting on the many significant issues of current relevance in California studies—as well as areas presently ignored and deserving investigation—which will benefit from careful study of this volume. Such an exercise would be indulgently superfluous: the volume is essential to any library on the California Indian, and I should like to express my gratitude to Father Geiger and Professor Meighan for making this research tool available to scholars and all who are interested in California's Native Americans.

REFERENCE

- Kroeber, A.L.
 1908 A Mission Record of the California Indians. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology 8 (1):1-27.



The Eye of the Flute: Chumash Traditional History and Ritual as Told by Fernando Librado Kitsepawit to John P. Harrington. Travis Hudson, Thomas Blackburn, Rosario Curletti, and Janice Timbrook, eds. Illustrated by Campbell Grant. Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara Bicentennial Historical Series iv. 1977. 130 pp., map, 19 illus., 4 appendices, indexed, cloth-bound. No price given.

Reviewed by E.N. ANDERSON
University of California, Riverside

The mining of John P. Harrington's notes continues in spite of the incredible difficulty of making order from the vast and scattered hoard. Among the more impressive discoveries are the materials under review: Harrington's notes on Fernando Librado *Kitsepawit* and the latter's information. Librado, originally from Santa Cruz Island but living around Ventura most of his life, was over 100 years old when he served as Harrington's informant, a mine of information on songs, dances, ceremonies, rituals, cosmology, traditional oratory and advice, and the Chumash/Christian accommodation. With a more sensitive and humane ethnographer, he could have produced a record of experiences that at the very least would be comparable to those of Black Elk or Lame Deer. Unfortunately, Harrington was in search of language, not people. His notes on Librado are summary and disorgan-

ized. The editors of this volume had to use all their efforts and skill to produce a coherent account. Given the inevitable problems Librado had in remembering events of a century or so before, and Harrington's scrappy and summary notes, it is amazing that they did so well—but no one should expect this book to be a totally comprehensive account of the Chumash. It is, instead, a collection of remembered observations and insights on major ceremonies and dances of Santa Cruz Island and the Ventura area.

The amazing thing is that this book was possible at all. A long, detailed, major monograph on Chumash ritual and cosmology as seen through the eyes of a sensitive and expert individual Chumash is a product of obvious importance for American Indian ethnology. In-depth accounts by single informants are all too rare for California, even among tribes who were less shattered, or shattered later, by European contact. Cosmology, ceremonial and social organization, and accounts of individual Chumash and of tribal history are especially well represented in this work.

As in many Harrington materials, there is some problem in deciding what is the Chumash informant's own words, what is Harrington's summary of it, and, in the present case, where the editors have cut or summarized Harrington's notes. The present book also suffers from a more serious and indeed infuriating problem: the editor of the "Bicentennial Historical Series" forced the editors of the book to reduce considerably their annotations, with the intent of making the book a more "popular" effort. This is inexcusable. A few more pages of notes would hardly have reduced the book's popular appeal, but would have made it enormously more valuable to scholars. Much comparative material, detailed parallels with other informants' testimony or with recent archaeological discoveries, and similar invaluable annotation by the editors was sacrificed. I sincerely hope that this review will shame the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History into publishing a