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Kroeber, Elsasser, and Heizer: *Drawn from Life: California Indians in Pen and Brush*

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over 40 line drawings, maps, and diagrams, 17 black-and-white plates, and no less than 16 (often full-page) color plates. Several color reproductions of paintings conceptualizing ancient lifeways add a dramatic touch. The graphics attest to Minshall's skill as a professional artist. Like other outstanding volumes in the Copley series on western history and prehistory, the book is well-bound, printed on high quality paper, and moderately priced.



Drawn from Life: California Indians in Pen and Brush. *Theodora Kroeber, Albert B. Elsasser, and Robert F. Heizer.* Socorro, New Mexico: Ballena Press, 1977, 295 pp., \$8.95 (paper).

Reviewed by WILLIAM C. STURTEVANT
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This is a collection of 326 different illustrations of California Indians and Indian subjects, being all that the authors could find that were done by European and Euro-American artists from the sixteenth century to about 1880. Not only works in pen and brush (and pencil) are here, but also woodcuts, engravings, and lithographs; only the early photographs are excluded. The reproductions are adequate in size (usually only one or two per 9¼" x 6" page) and quite well printed, save for a few over-dark examples; none seems to be cropped. In most cases we are told, or can deduce, where the originals are. Sizes are not given, and occasionally it may be unclear what the original medium is.

The illustrations are arranged geographically, grouped into eight regions of the state. Kroeber provides a short cultural summary for each region and adds comments on a few of the following illustrations. Ethnographic comments, brief but critical, are in end notes.

The first reliable depictions date from

about 1778-1791. Earlier ones can hardly be expected to turn up, unless the drawings apparently done on Drake's voyages, long secreted in a private collection, turn out to include some of California subjects.

This volume, the result of a great amount of work, is sure to become the standard guide to early illustrations of California Indians. Although it is unlikely that very many additions can be made, the implied challenge should be accepted, now that this new area for art history and ethnohistory has been established. Let us begin, using the convenient Kroeber-Elsasser-Heizer figure numbers: the watercolor originals for some of the lithographs should be added — those for 71 (by Wm. Smyth) and 121 (by E.M. Kern) are in the Peabody Museum, Harvard; those for 2, 10, 12 (by Balduin Möllhausen) were destroyed during World War II but photographs survive in Berlin (Hartmann 1963); an excellent oil painting of northern California Indians by Charles Nahl, in the Gilcrease Institute, should be included even though it is mislabeled as showing Shoshonis (Ewers 1967:89). Surviving original photographs of which woodcut reproductions appear here should be mentioned: those by A.W. Chase underlying 208 (right), 212, 213, and 270 are in the National Anthropological Archives, and that for 263, by Carleton E. Watkins, is in the California State Library.

Some of the depictions reproduced are entirely imaginative while others are derived without useful change from better ones, as the authors point out. But many are really "drawn from life," even though the original field sketches have only rarely survived. All the illustrations have some value as ethnographic evidence. Those that are obviously important give reliable data on aspects of Indian culture, although they are usually of little esthetic interest—for example, those by Tomás de Suría, José Cardero, J.G. Bruff, George Gibbs, and Möllhausen. But at least two highly skilled

artists produced works of real artistic as well as ethnographic value: Henry B. Brown's sensitive pencil drawings are fine examples for their period, 1851-1852, while the style of the Louis Choris watercolors seems quite remarkable for 1816.

The most useful ethnographic information here refers to clothing and body decoration, and to houses and other structures. Some other artifacts appear, and occasionally there are depictions of activities, but hardly ever are the postures and body types convincing. Both the illustrations that provide useful data on Indian cultures and those that do not, tell us something about Euro-American ethnography—about attitudes towards California Indians. With few exceptions, this message is not what one expects. Most of the pictures date from after 1849, yet the artists rarely exhibited the usual Anglo disdain for Indians. Perhaps those who were contemptuous of "Diggers" had no

interest in drawing them. If so, why were most contemporaneous depictions of Australian aborigines (Dutton 1974) derisive?

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