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Book Reviews

In Search of Columbus: The Sources for the First Voyage. By David Henige. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991. xiii + 359 pp. Maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.)

Henige, a bibliographer in African Studies at the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, applies his critical expertise to the various versions of the *diario* of Columbus's first voyage, in particular those passages relating his first landfall in the New World. He argues the original wording and intent has been distorted. "Little enough seems certain about the *diario*, but one thing that should be beyond cavil is that its principal author is not Christopher Columbus but Bartolomé de las Casas, aided and abetted by Columbus and any number of intermediate scribes (preface, P. x)." His approach to the study of the *diario* is done comparatively and historiographically. It includes a meticulous examination of the various transcriptions, their transcribers, as well as conclusions drawn by historians, both classic and recent. Henige states his objective to discover those factual elements of the *diario*, separating them from transcription, translation, and historical biases, and to allow readers to be stimulated and drawn into the discussion which has spanned centuries and reach their own conclusions. He approaches the subject, not from the point of view of a historian, but rather from the more mechanistic view of textual accuracy and editorial correctness. However, Henige does not ignore the mythology of the Columbian voyage. He critically examines early views of Columbus, among them the move for his canonization. Henige tests the merit of these views, to sustain an effort in devil's advocacy. (P. 2)

The study is divided into two parts. Part 1 is devoted to comparative analysis of the *diario*, Las Casas's *Historia de las Indias*, and the history attributed to Columbus's son Ferdinand. Part 2 focuses on the varying interpretations of the location of Guanahani, the island where Columbus first set foot in the Americas. No fewer than eleven sites have been presented as the possible location. Henige examines the text for the five critical days, October 11-15, to demonstrate that none can be argued undoubtedly as being the site.

In his examination of questions which have plagued scholars concerning the degree of veracity of the *diario* in its various forms, he employs an analytical technique which includes the use of comparative tables of key word transcription and translation. These tables reveal some of the problems which paleographers as well as translators face in dealing with manuscripts. They also prove helpful in following the critical analysis.

Henige's premise and attempt at such analysis is admirable. In conclusion he states, "But a close and disinterested study of the text of the *diario* not only fails to warrant such flights of fancy, it reveals a text that is a composite of many hands, written and rewritten with many purposes in mind and transcribed far too frequently for comfort. Consequently, the *diario* resembles nothing so much as a kaleidoscope that with each turning glints with a different light and whose essence is inextricably bound up with the perspective of the observer." (Pp. 285-86) As he himself has stated, with each rendering a bit of the copyist, transcriber, and translator is left behind, added for good or ill to the whole. In that case, has not Henige's exposition added to this interposition as well?

However, in sum, this presentation is stimulating and is food for thought in this quincennial year. Included is a bibliography of the various versions of the *diario* and subsequent studies in English, Spanish and other languages, not only of the record of Columbus's first voyage, but also of the mechanics of transcription, translation, and critical analysis. All in all, this makes for a good addition to the library of any serious student of the Columbus voyages.

Rosalind Z. Rock
San Antonio Missions

Literacy, Education, and Society in New Mexico, 1693-1821. By Bernardo P. Gallegos. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992. viii + 119 pp. Map, tables, appendix, references, index. \$27.50 cloth, \$11.95 paper.)

This book will finally put to rest an inaccurate and perpetual myth. The myth, conceived by the likes of Josiah Gregg in *Commerce of the Prairies* and New Mexico's second Territorial governor, William Carr Lane, proclaims that historically the majority of New Mexico's native Hispanic population was, before American occupation, illiterate. This book will also undoubtedly shake up a number of modern academics working in the Southwest today.

Using primary sources from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Archives and the Spanish Archives of New Mexico, Bernardo Gallegos turns the erroneous assumption of native illiteracy in colonial New Mexico a full 360