1996 marks the Sesquicentennial of one of the Southwest’s most controversial events, the Mexican-American War. Lasting from 1846 until 1848, the war resulted in the United States taking approximately 1/3 of northern Mexico comprising most of today’s Southwest. Historians know that the Mexican War was caused in part by the annexation of Texas and the westward movement of Anglo-Americans under the doctrine of “Manifest Destiny.” The Mexican War permanently affected the relationship between the United States and Mexico. One of the legacies of the Mexican War was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which defined the border and ensured certain rights for former citizens of Mexico who now found themselves living in the U.S. Due to errors in mapping, another treaty—The Gadsden Treaty and Purchase—was required to properly set the border in 1853.

Over the years, UTA’s Special Collections has become a primary source of information about the Mexican War. Many scholars believe that the collections at UTA are comparable to those at Yale University. Scholars who seriously study the Mexican War regard UTA’s collections as indispensable, for the collections document many historic aspects of the War, including the military, political, social, and economic. Additionally, UTA’s maps of the battles, and political and boundary changes, make it an important repository of cartographic history. To this end, a new publication entitled *The Mexican-American War of 1846-1848—A Bibliography of the Holdings of the Libraries, The University of Texas at Arlington* by Jenkins Garrett, is an indispensable addition to studying the Mexican War. According to Mr. Garrett, this book was begun more than twenty years ago as an effort to list comprehensively all works available on the Mexican War, but UTA’s collections have grown so strong that this book focusses only on them. Mr. Garrett also noted that this book resulted from the efforts of many people, including Katherine R. Goodwin, who prepared and edited it in her role as Cartographic Archivist at UTA. The book lists and annotates the collections, most of which are unique primary sources written from the perspective of people directly involved in the war. Important secondary sources are also included. Ms. Goodwin adds that “This bibliography is a significant tool for research and study because of its unique format and its helpful appendices: it is organized in general subject categories, such as political histories, military histories and biographies, among others, and the appendices were designed to provide ready reference on military organizations and leaders, and an integration of both political and military events.” UTA’s Director of Special Collections, Gerald Saxon, adds that, “This book introduces our collection to a broad audience, letting people know about the depth and breadth of the library’s holdings in this area.” Additionally, Saxon noted that this publication provides “easier comprehensive access to the collections. Every format of information on the Mexican-American War—whether manuscript collections, newspapers, maps, diaries, military and government reports—is included in this book.” For more information, contact the Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, Texas 77843 or call (409) 845-1436.

Recognizing the significance of the war in our region’s development, UTA will host a major conference entitled “The Mexican War” on October 25-27, 1996. The conference will be jointly sponsored by three organizations—UTA, the Palo Alto Battlefield site of the National Park Service, and the Descendants of the Veterans of the Mexican War. According to Richard Francaviglia of UTA’s Center for Southwestern Studies, “The purpose of this conference is not to ‘celebrate’ United States victory in the war, but rather to recognize the war’s impact on the people who live along both sides of today’s border.” Speakers from both the United States and Mexico will present various viewpoints on the war, including: The Causes of the Mexican War; The Military Perspective; U.S. and Mexican Attitudes Toward the War; The Mexican War in Historical Perspective; The War in Words, Images and Artifacts; The Regional/Cultural Impact of the War; Women in the War; and The Legacy of the War.

This three day conference will also serve to provide a behind-the-scenes look at the preparation of the forthcoming PBS video entitled “The Mexican War,” which is being prepared by KERA-TV in Dallas. KERA will also help by teleconferencing this symposium throughout the region.

Students of southwestern history will not want to miss the Mexican-American War conference at UTA. For more information contact the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19497, Arlington, TX 76019 or call (817) 272-3997.
"Manifest Destiny" Focus of 1996 Webb Lectures

For more than 30 years, the UTA History Department has sponsored a day-long lecture series named in honor of historian Walter Prescott Webb. On Thursday, March 14, 1996, the 31st annual Webb Lectures will address the theme "Manifest Destiny and Empire—American Antebellum Expansionism."

Four lectures will be presented:

- Sam W. Haynes, UTA, "Looking John Bull in the Eye: Anglophobia and American Expansionism"
- Thomas R. Hietala, Grinnel College, "This Splendid Juggernaut: The Compulsion for Conquest in Antebellum America"
- John M. Belohlavek, University of South Florida, "Caleb Cushing and American Expansionism in the Pacific"
- Robert E. May, Purdue University, "American Filibusterism"

As has been the case with Webb Lectures in the past, the Department of History has announced the 1996 Webb-Smith Essay Competition. The winning essay, as well as the four papers by the presenters at the Webb Lectures, will be published in the 31st volume of the Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures (the deadline is February 1, 1996). For more information contact: The Webb Memorial Lectures Committee, Department of History, Box 19529, Arlington, Texas 76019-0497.

Interdisciplinary Summer Institute for Teachers to be Offered

The Center for the Study of the Southwest at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos has announced a short summer institute for college teachers. It is entitled "Integrating Curricula Through Southwestern Studies." The application deadline is March 1, 1996. For additional information, write or call: Mark Busby, Institute Director, Center for the Study of the Southwest, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX 78666; Phone (512) 245-2232, Fax (512) 245-7462, e-mail MB13@SWT.EDU.

Fifth International Conference Planned on Desert Development

A conference entitled "Desert Development: The Endless Frontier" is planned to be held at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas on August 14-21, 1996. Previous conferences of this type have been held in Egypt, China, and Mexico. Topics will include the socioeconomic impacts on development; soil and water conservation; irrigation; watershed management; range management; salt tolerance; animal production; alternative energy sources; environmental protection and desert ecosystems. For more information contact Dr. Idris Rhea Traylor Jr., Executive Director of the Office of International Affairs, Texas Tech University, Box 41036, Lubbock, Texas 79409-1036 or phone (806) 742-2974.

Conference to Feature Western Railroads

The railroads profoundly affected the American West, in some cases helping to create and popularize regional identities. The Santa Fe Railroad, for example, developed and marketed a "Southwestern" identity in the early 1900s. Readers interested in how railroads shaped the West—and how they are likely to continue to shape it in the future—will want to attend a special conference in Arlington and Fort Worth on September 26-28, 1996. "The Railroads and the West" will be jointly sponsored by UTA and the Lexington Group in Transportation History, and will feature sessions on topics including: Railroad Development in Fort Worth, Texas, and the West; Regionalizing the West: Antagonism, Cooperation, and the Development of the Railroads; Railroads and Society in the West; The Railroad and the Environment; Western Railroads, Society, and Economy; Railroad Preservation in the West; and The Future of Western Railroads. A field trip involving the railroads of Fort Worth and north Texas and a reception/special exhibit at UTA entitled "The Western Railroads in Maps" will also be included as part of this conference. For more information contact: The Center for Greater Southwestern Studies, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19497, Arlington, Texas 76019, (817) 272-3997.
New Directions in the History of Cartography
by David Buisseret

The study of the history of mapmaking has progressed enormously during the past few decades. When I was an undergraduate in the 1950s, the standard book to buy, if you were interested in the history of maps, was R.V. Tooley’s Maps and Mapmakers (I still have my copy, bought at Cambridge in 1960 for 50 shillings, or about two dollars). This book gave a good conspectus of the world of maps as many people then knew it, but Tooley’s way of operating was to study, or rather list, printed European maps. There was a note to the Arabs, and a plate showing three manuscript maps, but in general Tooley’s world was confined to the maps in which he largely dealt, and many people’s concept of cartography was formed by this rather limited view.

As I hope to show, these limitations have been swept away in the past few years, and we now see that in order to study mapmaking effectively, we need to range very widely in time and space, by no means confining ourselves to printed maps. Indeed, we have to begin by re-defining what a map is. Historical derivation, usually a good start, is not very helpful here. “Map” in English and “mapa” in Spanish derive only from the Latin word for a cloth, and “carte” (French) or “Karte” (German) are no better, coming from the Latin for a card. Evidently, in the early Western world there was no widely agreed word for what we now call a map.

The various authoritative definitions offered down the years are instructive. About 1900, the Encyclopedia Britannica defined a map as “a representation, on a plane or reduced scale, of part or the whole of the earth’s surface.” By 1980, a leading authority could suggest that a map was “a graphic representation of a milieu,” and in the most recent work, the magisterial History of Cartography edited by J.B. Harley and David Woodward, the authors suggest that it is simply “a representation of a locality.” Here they surely reach the heart of the matter. A map does not have to be graphic, or written; it may be plotted out in the sand, or take the shape of a model, or exist merely in somebody’s brain. Nor does it have to show the earth’s surface; it might show an underground mine, for instance, or some part of the skies. The essential quality that it must have is to represent (to re-present) a place, making it easier for the “reader” to comprehend the nature of the locality thus shown.

Understood in this sense, maps prove to be virtually universal; the mapping impulse seems to be ubiquitous, with no human group failing to make them. The second and third volumes of The History of Cartography strikingly demonstrate our new openness to the universality of maps, for they deal respectively with the traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies, and with the traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies, offering a wealth of material unsuspected by almost all western scholars until now.

Other societies, too, have been yielding their share in the harvest of maps. The stick-charts of the Pacific islanders have been known for some time, but it took the recent work of David Turnbull (Maps are Territories: Science is an Atlas [Chicago, 1993]) to reveal to us the cartographic concepts of the aboriginal peoples of Australia. The peoples of the Americas are also now shown to have been mapmakers. The meso-Americans among whom Cortés arrived in 1519 were long known to have been master cartographers, but we now realize as well that many tribal groups in North America also made maps, and a great inventory of these, eventually number about 500, is presently being prepared for presentation on CD-ROM at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Nor are the Caribbean Amerindians absent from the call; an attentive reading of early texts shows that they were well able to map their island universe, using such devices as sand-drawing or the arrangement of pebbles.

If we are coming better to understand the distribution of maps in space, we also begin to set them more fully into the chronological context of our own society. Whereas in medieval Europe, or in 15th-century Africa, people dealt almost totally with a “reality” unmediated by images (of which maps are one element), the four or five centuries of modern times have seen an ever-accelerating tendency to visualize the world not directly, but through a variety of forms of imagery. The early church world-maps were a form of this, as were the great 16th century printed atlases, or the anatomical drawings of Vesalius, or the city-views of Braun and Hogenberg. As the centuries have gone by, the flow of images has become a torrent, until today some child psychologists fear that our children know the world primarily through the mediation of images, mostly presented...
on some kind of cathode-ray screen. Here we find the weather-maps which guide our daily preparations, and here too (in our cars) we soon will find maps to tell us where we are and how to go where we wish. Other, map-like images are omnipresent, from sketches in markets to CT-scans and gene-charts; we have come to experience the world very largely through imagery, of which maps, conventionally understood, are an important part. One of the tasks of the historian of cartography is to understand how this flood of images fits into our culture as a whole.

“We have come to experience the world very largely through imagery, of which maps ... are an important part.”

Another task is to bring to this study an awareness that all maps are subjective, and need to be replaced into their social and economic context, if we are to make sense of them. The time has long passed, for instance, when we could study nautical charts, without some knowledge of the institutions that brought them into being, or when we could trustfully rely upon any kind of official map. In The Power of Maps (London/New York, 1992), Denis Wood has convincingly deconstructed such icons as the USGS map, and this is a process of which the late, Brian Harley, whose loss is much lamented, was the master. It is impossible to read his analysis of the John Smith map of Virginia, with its huge English cartouches and its vast English ships approaching to take control of an apparently empty land, without realizing that here, as in many other places, we are witnesses of an imagery that is also a step on the way to political mastery. We do not need to be Marxists to believe that maps have, indeed, often been the “tools of the possessing classes,” or of those who wished to extend their power. The Irish peasants of the 17th century knew very well what they were doing, when the menaced (and occasionally even murdered) English surveyors...

However, while constantly aware of the subjectivity of all maps, we also have to use them as effectively as possible in explaining historical phenomena. Here the rationale is blindingly simple, and yet widely misunderstood and neglected. All historical events take place in time and space. The developments in time may be adequately described in words, or sometimes with a time-line. But the development in space can only be adequately described with a map, whether a map specially drawn to set out historical phenomena, or a contemporary map that catches them at the time. Such use of maps has never been more important as a pedagogical tool, for as teachers we are dealing with a generation of students brought up very largely on visual stimuli, and responding particularly well to well-conceived imagery.

As an example of the way in which a sequence of maps can plot historical developments with unrivalled economy, we might take the Historical Atlas of Texas (Norman/London, 1988), compiled by Ray Stephens and William Holmes. Here the extremely complex spatial events associated with the history of the state are plotted on a series of 64 maps, giving us information crucial to our understanding, and yet impossible to convey merely in written form. Ideally, of course, such imagery acts as a heuristic device, inciting us to ask further questions of the texts, to plot increasingly accurate maps, and so to achieve an ever more precise understanding of the problem.

The other type of map crucial to historical understanding is the map drawn at the same time as the events or developments described. Such maps exist for virtually any historical period, whether it be the Tudor countryside in England, or the Paris of the Revolution, or the Midwest of the 19th-century United States. Here again the rationale is simple, yet widely misunderstood and neglected; such maps are a vital resource, just as any relevant text is a vital resource. To neglect them, on the grounds that they are difficult to read, is as foolish as to neglect some manuscript on the grounds that it, too, is in difficult writing; the word and image are inseparable companions, each with its own validity, and each indispensable.

A conjectural map showing the route of Cabeza de Vaca (1528-1536) from the Historical Atlas of Texas by Ray Stephens and William Holmes (1989).

In the end, what we are looking at in the most recent phase of the history of cartography is a stage of our understanding where we realize that maps are in fact simply “locational imagery.” If we can grasp this, we can reintegrate them into the histories that we try to understand, and realize that such locational imagery will be a prime means of understanding not only the past, but whatever the future holds.

[Editor’s note: Dr. David Buisseret is the Jenkins and Virginia Garrett Endowed Chair in Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography at UTA, and formerly served as the Director of the Hermon Dunlop Smith Center for the History of Cartography at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Dr. Buisseret is the author of From Sea Charts to Satellite Images: North American History Through Maps (1990).]
Texas Author A.C. Greene Brings Historic Butterfield Trail to Life

900 Miles on the Butterfield Trail by A.C. Greene

Shortly before the Civil War, a Southern Overland Mail Route was developed to connect St. Louis to the far West. Popularly called the Butterfield Trail, this route traversed parts of Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona and during its short life became one of the legends of the West. Its route is largely neglected but dotted with historic sites and rich in history. Texas author A.C. Greene travelled the entire Butterfield Trail through the Southwest describing and photographing remnants of the route. He also uses original travel accounts and records to help make the Butterfield Trail come to life. 900 Miles on the Butterfield Trail is available from the University of North Texas Press, P.O. Box 13856, Denton, TX 76203, (817) 565-2142.

New Atlas Interprets Sonoran Desert Vegetation

Sonoran Desert Plants: An Ecological Atlas by Raymond Turner, Janice Bowers, and Tony Burgess.

Historians and ecologists in the Southwest agree that the region's landscape is undergoing continuous change as a result of environmental conditions and human use. Sonoran Desert Plants is a major new work on the flora of an important portion of the Southwest, the Sonoran Desert, which extends from extreme eastern southern California to much of southern Arizona and adjacent Sonora, Mexico. This atlas provides descriptions of the plants and maps their distributions. It confirms that the Saguaro cactus, long considered a generic symbol of the entire southwest, is only found in the Sonoran Desert. Authors Raymond Turner, Janice Bowers and Tony Burgess carefully document the factors that affect these distributions and help to confirm that the Sonoran Desert is both a fragile and diverse ecosystem consisting of cactus, woody plants, shrubs, palm trees, and other vegetation. Sonoran Desert Plants is available from the University of Arizona Press, 1230 N. Park Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719; (602) 621-1441.

"Desert Legends" Depicts the Sonoran Borderlands

Ethnobiologist Gary Paul Nabhan and photographer Mark Klett have teamed up to produce a remarkably personal interpretation of the Arizona-Sonora border in Desert Legends: Re-Storying the Sonoran Borderlands. In words and stunning photographs, the authors portray the landscape and peoples in an area that bears the imprint of several cultures, including Seri Indians, Hispanic and Anglo. For more information, contact The Henry Holt Company, 115 West 18th Street, New York, NY 10011; (801) 972-2221.

History of Sonoran Presidio Re-examined

The appropriately-named Presidio of Fronteras is situated in Sonora fairly close to today's border with Arizona. In Captain of the Phantom Presidio Fay Jackson Smith has written an intriguing history of the Presidio of Fronteras, which was marked by political controversy during a substantial portion of its existence. By consulting numerous historic documents, Smith recounts the stormy, adversarial relationship between Don Gregorio Alvarez Tuñón y Quiroz and Juan Matheo Manje. This book sheds light on the daily life and social significance of a presidio during a 50 year period from 1686 to 1735, and should be of interest to students of the borderlands. It is available from The Arthur H. Clark Co., P.O. Box 14707, Spokane, WA 99214, (800) 842-9286.

A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time...

Scholars of the Southwest have long been familiar with the works of J.B. Jackson, who for nearly 40 years, has written insightful essays on the Southwest and, more particularly, New Mexico. Jackson believes that cultural landscapes make statements about deep-seated values. In A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time, Jackson discusses aspects of the landscape that many might overlook—those everyday things in the landscape such as houses, signs, and roads, that give it meaning. Although this book covers more than simply the Southwest, several chapters interpret landscapes in Texas and New Mexico. The chapters on "Seeing New Mexico," "Pueblo Dwellings and Our Own," "Church or Plaza?" and the "Mobile Home on the Range" are purely Southwestern. This book consists of three parts: "Southwest," "Environments," and "Towns, Cars, and Roads," and is available from the Yale University Press, P.O. Box 209040, New Haven, CT 06520-9040; (203) 432-0964.
Meet the Center Faculty

Dr. Elizabeth Ordoñez, a native of California, received her B.A. and M.A. from UCLA and her Ph.D. from UC Irvine. The Southwest has been her home except for five years spent as a professor at Ripon College in Wisconsin. Among Dr. Ordoñez's publications in the field of Chicana literature are “An Annotated Bibliography of Chicana Literature and Related Sources” (Bilingual Review, 1980), “Sexual Politics and the Theme of Sexuality in Chicana Poetry”, 1983; “Body, Spirit and the Text: Alma Vilanueva’s Life Span”, 1991; and “Webs and Interrogations: Post-modernism, Gender, and Ethnicity in the Poetry of Cervantes and Cisneros”, 1995. Dr. Ordoñez’s work in Chicana literature complements her interests and numerous publications in the field of Spanish peninsular literature. Her book, Voices of Their Own: Contemporary Spanish Narrative by Women (1991), promotes connections between narrative texts by Spanish women and international theories of literature and culture. She is currently at work on a project exploring interrelationships between fictional and nonfictional discourses about gender in the late nineteenth-century Spain. Dr. Ordoñez became a Center Fellow in 1995.

Terra Incognitae to be Published at UTA

Readers interested in the history of exploration and discovery may be familiar with the journal Terra Incognitae, which is published by the Society for the History of Discoveries (SHD). With the arrival of Dr. David Buissseret as Endowed Chair, Terra Incognitae will now be published at UTA. According to Dr. Buissseret, UTA is the perfect location for publication of Terra Incognitae because of the University’s strong interest in the history of cartography. In keeping with the UTA history department’s mission to promote history to a wide audience and to involve students in the process, Dr. Buissseret will be assisted in his endeavor to edit Terra Incognitae by Trinette Robichaux, a UTA student pursuing her master’s degree in history. For more information about Terra Incognitae, contact Dr. David Buissseret, History Department, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19529, Arlington, TX 76019.

Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography

Fronteras

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