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Review of *Watering the Valley: Development along the High Plains Arkansas River, 1870-1950*, by James Earl Sherow

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locations of Indian agencies, schools, and hospitals (including recent data for 1988 and 1989), is followed by specific studies of Oklahoma (section 4) and Alaska (section 7). The Alaska section includes a useful map and statistical table detailing the locations and populations of each native village and regional corporation in 1980. In section eight there is a lengthy series of maps showing the army's interaction with the Indians. Section nine, as the title "Aspects of the Indian Frontier" suggests, is a catch-all set of maps displaying such matters as Indian removal and military encounters. The tenth and final section reproduces maps of the cartographer, Rafael Palacios, which originally accompanied Ralph Andrist's (1964) *The Long Death* (New York: McMillan). Visually, these are the most interesting maps in the atlas, but they are more limited in content than Prucha's maps, and have the effect of an afterthought.

As would be expected from Prucha, the maps and accompanying notes are meticulously researched and accurate. One exception is that persistent error, the placement of the Upper Missouri Agency on the east side of the Missouri, near the present town of Council Bluffs, instead of on the west side of the river at Bellevue (Map 47). It must be said, however, that the actual cartography leaves much to be desired. Many maps lack a scale, the lettering is often over-bold, the heavy black proportionate circles assault the eye, and the vertical bar-graphs used to show urban Indian populations give these otherwise bare maps the appearance of a cut-over forest. The use of Erwin Raisz' famous base for the section on the army provides good local detail, but results in a cluttered appearance. These are small complaints, however. After all, Prucha is a historian, not a cartographer, and he does succeed in synthesizing a vast array of information on maps in this extremely useful book. David J. Wishart, *Department of Geography, University of Nebraska*.

Watering the Valley: Development along the High Plains Arkansas River, 1870-1950. James Earl Sherow. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1990. x + 222 pp. Maps, photos, and references. \$29.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7006-0440-5).

Sherow is an environmental historian, one of an active group of scholars who have begun to assess Western development from a larger perspective than simple economic progress. He presents here an intelligent history and critique of water use in the upper Arkansas basin between Pueblo, Colorado, and Garden City, Kansas. In the years before 1950, developers never acknowledged water's place in the natural environment.

Their plans soon required more water than was available but, rather than adjust to limitations, one exploiter blamed another and even more elaborate plans were conceived. It is a story that goes to the heart of the American character.

This book is a reformulation of Sherow's 1987 dissertation at the University of Colorado. It is thoroughly researched and compactly argued, 172 pages of clear narrative that both deserve and require a close reading. Eleven maps and 19 photographs and sketches help to carry the presentation; several statistical tables and charts present in the dissertation were excised here but with no obvious harm.

Sherow's arrangement is largely chronological. Early chapters are devoted to the parallel emergences of irrigation systems in Colorado, urban and industrial water demands in Pueblo and Colorado Springs, and irrigation systems near Garden City. These constitute about half of the book. The remainder of the text assesses consequences of these developments. One chapter focuses on physical alterations to the river channel and to water quality (e.g., sedimentation, salinity, phreatophytes), another on the legal attempts of the Kansas and Colorado governments each to obtain water from the other, and a third one on maneuverings in the 1930s to try to increase the available water by the construction of what became known as the John Martin dam and reservoir.

Although the author argues that each of the various water users in the Arkansas Valley regarded water "solely as a commodity" (1), he also stresses that each group and situation was unique. The Rocky Ford Ditch Company, for example, with excellent soils and an early water decree, was stable and prosperous. Downstream, the Fort Lyon Canal Company, with poorer soils and less water, was constantly in litigation, while even farther downstream, Garden City irrigators were forced to use pump irrigation to supplement scarce river water. Sherow calls each geographical situation a "niche," using a somewhat strained analogy from ecology.

I find much to praise in this book. Sherow makes good use of his sources, especially testimony gathered for various legal hearings. His is one of the few studies to integrate irrigation development not only with the parallel and competing water interests of cities and industry, but with valley ecology as well. Although much more could be done on the environmental consequences of massive water withdrawal, the limited analysis here is competent from this perspective and avoids dangerous oversimplification. A vague opening chapter is the only deficiency of consequence that I observed. There Sherow's attempt to combine a literature review with an outline of his own argument produces a confused introduction to an otherwise outstanding study. James R. Shortridge, *Department of Geography, University of Kansas.*