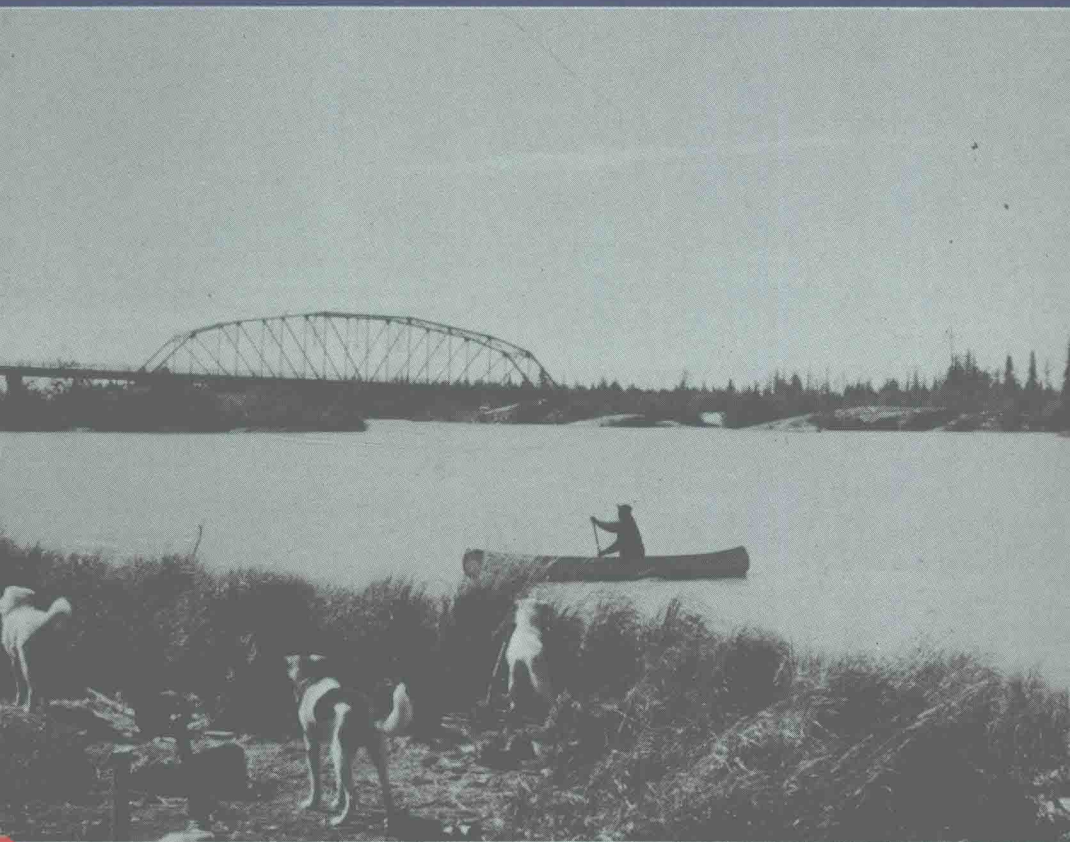


NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



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North American Indians in Historical Perspective

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Cover: Photo taken by June Helm, July, 1968, at Frank Channel on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake, Northwest Territories, Canada. The recently erected bridge completed the highway link from Yellowknife and the Dogrib Indian settlement of Rae to southern Canada. In the foreground the tethered sled dogs watch their Dogrib master as he goes to tend his fish nets.

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Foreword, 1988

North American Indians in Historical Perspective appeared in 1971, but it was not until the 1980s, long after it was out of print, that Eleanor (Happy) Leacock and I began hearing from colleagues who thought the book ought to be re-issued. When we learned that some of the other contributors had been similarly approached, we decided to explore the idea. After some phone conversations and exchanges of letters, we were able to get together for several hours of discussion during the 1986 meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Philadelphia.

We agreed at the outset that we would like to designate some organization devoted to Indian interests as the recipient of any royalties the book might earn. Happy volunteered to follow up on some initial contacts she had made in regard to potential publishers and handle contract arrangements as she had done with the original edition. With those matters settled, the major topic of our 1986 meeting was whether we should try to bring the accounts into the 1980s or otherwise revise the book. Five of the fourteen contributors had died — Julia Averkieva, Edward Dozier, D'Arcy McNickle, Marvin Opler, and Gene Weltfish. Harold Hickerson died in January of 1987, soon after Happy and I had met in Philadelphia. We were reluctant to tamper with their work, and it seemed somehow unfair to the departed if the living contributors revised or even just updated their chapters.

It was when we began assessing why it had taken so long for interest to be expressed in making the book available again that we concluded that we might be worrying unnecessarily about any need for revisions. The book signalled a turning point in Indian studies. We would not claim the book initiated the change but it was a striking indicator of the direction scholarly interests were beginning to take in wrestling with the question why — in the face of prophecies of the Indians' inevitable disappearance and policies designed to fulfill the prophecies — Indian societies persisted. Greatly changed though they are since the inception of European contact, they remain distinctively and ineffably Indian.

The concept of the contributors arrived at and embodied in the term, "Contact Traditional Culture," suggested by June Helm, addressed problems inherent in many previous studies, including acculturational studies that had dominated the literature since the 1930s. Although the Indian lifeways reconstructed by the early ethnographers from the oldest tribal memories were not pristinely aboriginal, they tended to be accepted as a kind of static "real Indian" baseline, European imports notwithstanding, to which later changes were compared. This approach was not without its critics by 1964

when plans for the book got underway, but the volume that finally appeared in 1971 was a corrective approach hammered out by more than a dozen people drawing from a wide variety of cases. It emphasized the dynamic processes at work when Indian societies enjoyed political autonomy during the first phase of contact. Often this was an extended period, but it was far from static. It was an adaptive continuum from ancient times on the part of Indian societies in meeting new challenges and opportunities and dealing with outsiders who eventually included people from outside North America. As political autonomy waned, the entrenched expectation of maintenance of ethnic and cultural identity remained even in the face of radical and forced changes.

The book certainly was influenced by developments in the field of ethnohistory, but it was the first such study that was continent-wide in scope. It traced the recurrent strategies various Indian peoples employed to survive as they were caught up in turn in the course of North American history, and it placed that history in the context of world history.

As to undating, Happy and I concluded, many books had appeared in the meantime detailing more or less current events on the Indian scene for anyone seeking to know what has happened since 1971. From increasing recourse to the courts in seeking respect for treaty rights to Bingo as an Indian initiated means of economic development, there is adaptive continuity.

Admittedly, the volume does not entirely escape the unevenness of any multi-authored anthology. Some of the writers chose to deal in detail about selected groups within geographic regions while others dealt with regions in more general terms. Although we did not think much about it at the time, the book was an interesting departure from standard textbook organization based on culture areas or stages of socio-economic complexity at the time of contact. Since we sought broad geographic coverage and socio-cultural diversity to test our approach, it did not matter that expository formats were not consistently localized or regional.

The book does not follow the familiar pattern of an anthology of essays personally solicited or culled from published sources and put together by the editors according to some *a priori* plan. It evolved as a common enterprise of all the contributors. At the same time, the book reflects the areal specialties and distinctive theoretical orientations of the authors. Colleagues who had suggested the book be reissued tended to stress its value as a representative compendium of the works of a large roster of distinguished scholars.

Although Happy and I discussed a number of possible formats for an updated edition, we concluded that unless the contributors were strenuously opposed, we would simply provide a brief foreword putting the book itself in historical perspective. When we wrote the Preface in 1970, we were pre-occupied with what we considered of special interest and importance about the book at the time: its origin and international character, beginning with our Russian colleagues' intriguing idea of a cooperative venture by North

Americanists from the Soviet Union and the United States and eventually including other European scholars.

In retrospect, we were surprised that while the Preface describes the Burg Wartenstein Conference of 1967 where the major work of developing the book took place, it is only in the brief biographical notes on the contributors at the very end that mention is made of the fact that our group included two American Indians: Dozier from the Pueblo of Santa Clara and strongly identified with Southwestern studies, and McNickle, originally from the Flathead Reservation but primarily an activist in pan-Indian organizations and programs. The Indian presence was as significant as the Russian connection. McNickle's chapter particularly is as Indian as Averkieva's is Russian.

By 1971 when the book appeared, the anthropological community had been considerably shaken by criticisms leveled by Vine Deloria, Jr. in his 1969 publication, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. Dozier and McNickle, however, had already brought special illumination to our discussions from an Indian perspective, as is strongly evident in the final chapter. McNickle, moreover, took explicit note in his chapter, "Americans Called Indians" (in rough draft before *Custer* was published) that the approach of the book was in part an attempt to redress the conceptual isolation of Indian societies from the sweep of history as a whole. McNickle argued that this isolation could be traced in large measure to the anthropologists' employment of the "ethnographic present," the static baseline that Deloria also singled out for special opprobrium.

Because Happy was planning a field trip to Samoa during the early part of 1987, I agreed to start contacting our contributors while she was away to sound them out on the choice between a revised or simply reprinted edition, and whether they would agree to our suggestion as to the disposition of royalties. We thought the most appropriate beneficiary would be the D'Arcy McNickle Center for the Study of American Indian History at the Newberry Library in Chicago. D'Arcy had been instrumental in establishing the Center and still served on its advisory board at the time of his death when it was renamed in his honor.

During the first week of April I got a postcard from Happy in which she expressed the hope that we could get together on the book as soon as possible after her return home later in the spring. Before the card reached me, she had died of a stroke on April 2. Deeply saddened, I did not feel like pursuing our project alone. I also was discouraged by the fact that I had no idea of publishers Happy had begun to investigate or whether our informal sample of colleagues who had expressed interest in the book would be persuasive enough for a publisher to consider. I wrote to the contributors I had reached up to that point and regretfully informed them of my decision.

A year later, in the spring of 1988, Thomas Curtin of Waveland Press called me to see if I would be interested in working on a new printing of the

book. His call had been inspired by the results of Waveland's independent gathering of recommendations of books worth reprinting. The contributors were again contacted and readily agreed to waive their royalties in favor of the McNickle Center. Happy and I had spoken of a new printing as a memorial to our deceased colleagues. Now she has joined them. Though I am left to write the Foreword alone, it is in large part as much her work as mine thanks to our discussions in Philadelphia.

Nancy Oestreich Lurie

Preface

Despite the recent appearance of new books on the Indian peoples of America, none has had quite the same perspective as that which gives direction to the present one. Through her work on the Montagnais-Naskapi people of the Labrador peninsula, Eleanor Leacock has tried to define more clearly the long period of Indian cultural reintegration that followed European encroachments in the New World. Nancy Lurie has long been concerned with documenting that this cultural reintegration is still very much operative and that it has led to a present "Indian Renaissance," despite the popular cliché of the "vanishing American." The writings of Julia Averkieva, who took a lead in initiating the present work, have focussed on the development and change of institutional forms in Indian society. All of the anthropologists who contributed to this book share a general interest in the history of Indian-White relations and in attempting to interpret them from an Indian standpoint. The focus of this book, therefore, is on recent Indian history and its exemplification of constantly emerging ways of dealing with and adapting to new circumstances.

This book began at the Seventh International Congress for Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, held in Moscow in the summer of 1964. There a number of Russian and American specialists in North American Indian studies met each other for the first time, and the easy camaraderie that seems to typify anthropological gatherings promoted enduring international friendships and a desire to further the interaction evoked by the Congress. The formal papers on American Indians and the shoptalk during periods of relaxation led to the suggestion made by Julia Averkieva and Irina Zolotarevskaya of the Soviet Union to Eleanor Leacock that perhaps a good vehicle for continuing international endeavors would be a book to which both Americans and Russians would contribute. As the idea took shape, Leacock and Lurie agreed to coedit the original English version, and Averkieva and Zolotarevskaya planned to handle translation and editing for publication in the Soviet Union. Since many more Americans than Russians are North American specialists, it was obvious that the contributors would be mostly Americans and that the Russian contribution would devolve upon Averkieva and Zolotarevskaya, who have done field work in North America. However, it was the two Russian scholars who broached the idea of the book and who drew up the initial list of contributors.

From the beginning it was clear that the body of the book would consist of case studies that broadly represented America north of Mexico, and as the project developed, the group of contributors was enlarged so that major geographic and cultural areas would be included. In addition, D'Arcy McNickle was asked to set the prehistoric and early historical background, and Lurie was asked to write a final chapter on contemporary Indian attitudes. Zolotarevskaya planned to write on the relationship between colonialism and revitalization movements.

All who agreed to participate had other commitments to fulfill, so it was understood that deadlines would not be too immediate. Liaison with our Russian colleagues was expedited by the fact that Lurie spent 1965-1966 as a Fulbright-Hay Lecturer at the Danish University at Aarhus and, thanks to a grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, was able to spend the Easter holidays of 1966 in the Soviet Union and discuss progress on the book with Averkieva and Zolotarevskaya. She was also able to present them with a draft of her chapter, which was then circulated among the other contributors for comments and suggestions.

During the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association at Pittsburgh in November 1966, a special dinner meeting was arranged and was attended by most of the American contributors. It was then that William Sturtevant brought to our attention that two European ethnohistorians, Theodore Brasser of Leiden and Christian Feest of Vienna, were eminently qualified to provide information on the Atlantic coast, Brasser having also done field work with the remnant tribes of the Northeast.

At the gathering of 1966 the authors of the book discussed the changing patterns of Indian-white contact relations, which seemed to be replicated from place to place, and the possibility of using these sequential changes as a coordinating theme of the book. It was agreed that the subject should be explored further at another meeting of at least several days, where the contributors would have a chance to discuss each other's work in detail. The Wenner-Gren Foundation was approached and agreed to arrange a conference at the foundation's center at Burg Wartenstein, Gloggnitz, Austria, August 7 to 14, 1967. All the contributors were invited, as well as Christian Feest, whose participation in the discussions was most valuable. Other, unexpected, commitments prevented Downs and Averkieva (who was to be in Canada at that time) from joining the group; and to our regret and sorrow, Zolotarevskaya's failing health precluded travel and soon prevented her from taking any active part in the project. However, immediately after the conference, Leacock was able to visit Moscow to consult with our Russian colleagues and to bring them a tape recording of the conference discussions.

The Burg Wartenstein gathering accomplished its purposes of establishing a useful organizational framework for the book and of allowing for full discussion of many questions, both general and specific, about various phases of Indian-white contact from group to group. It also enabled the editors to discuss each individual chapter with its author. In bringing together into one book the work of many people, there are always somewhat arbitrary decisions to be made about the balance between the advantages of authorship based on firsthand acquaintanceship with material and the disadvantages (or so they are generally considered) of resulting inconsistencies in style and emphasis. We are grateful for the good-natured patience of our colleagues in conceding to requests to rewrite or cut portions of their chapters and for bearing with the delays in bringing the book to completion that were occasioned by our other responsibilities.

We also wish to express our gratitude to the Wenner-Gren Foundation and, particularly, to its Research Director, Lita Osmundsen, whose experienced handling of the Burg Wartenstein conference made our meeting so rewarding. We are grateful to the many persons who have read individual chapters and offered suggestions to their authors, and we wish especially to thank Anthony F. C. Wallace for his careful evaluation of, and suggestions for, the book as a whole. For invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscripts, we are indebted to Martha Livingston. Finally, we would like to dedicate our efforts to Irina Zolotarevskaya, whose warm hospitality made the editors' stays in Moscow so pleasant, and who played so important a part in the initiation of this book.

ELEANOR BURKE LEACOCK

NANCY OESTREICH LURIE

1900

Post-World War I: Emergence of Socialist States and of the "New Nations"

c. 1890: Growth of International Finance Capital

After c. 1870: Modern Imperialist Expansion and "Balance of Power"

1800

From 1600: Joint Stock Companies, Mercantilism, and Chartered Companies

c. 1770: Factory System and Industrial Revolution

"Age of the Enlightened Despots" (1740-1796)

1700

"Age of the Enlightenment" (1680-1800)

1648: Beginning of Modern States

1600


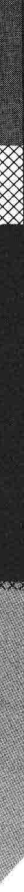

From 1450: Voyages of Discovery and Beginnings of Colonial Expansion


Protestant Revolution and Catholic Reformation (1517-1573)

From 1300: Growth of Banking and Money Economy

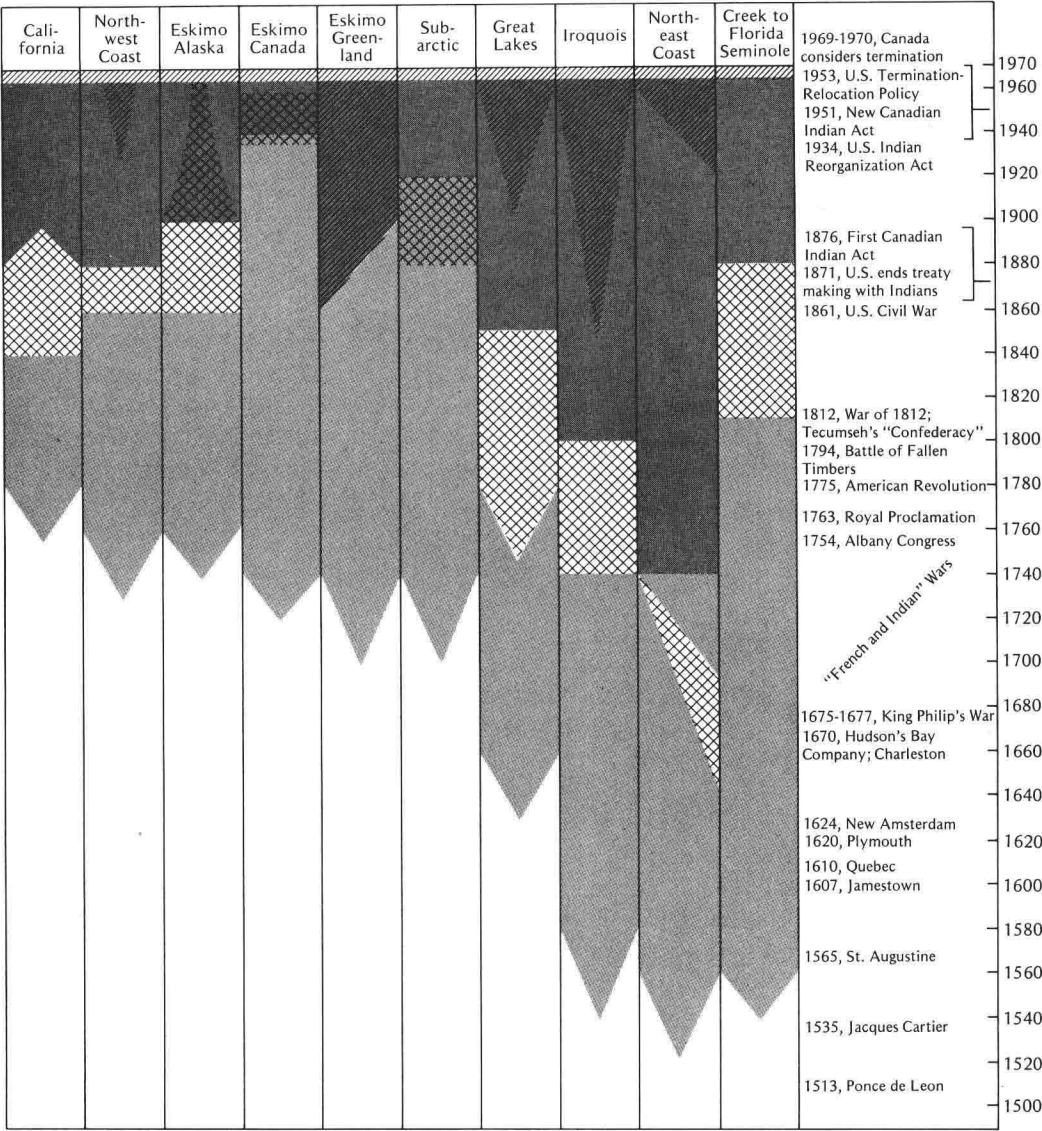
1500

1970	[Intertribal group occupies Alcatraz, 1970
1960		Various land-related incidents, 1969
1940	[N.C.A.I. founded, 1944
1920		World War II, 1941
1900	[All U.S. Indians given right to vote, 1924
1880		Canada's last Indian treaty, 1923
1860	[Wounded Knee, 1890
1840		Dawes Allotment Act, 1887
1820	[Little Big Horn, 1876
1800		U.S. buys Alaska, 1867
1780	[Mexican War, 1846-1848;
1760		U.S. acquires Southwest and California, 1848
1740	[49th parallel set as boundary from Pacific, 1846
1720		Mexican Revolution, 1821
1700		Louisiana Purchase, 1803
1680		Spanish in California, 1776
1660		Russians in Alaska, 1741
1640		Britain gains Northwest to 54°40', 1741
1620		Pueblo Revolt, 1680
1600		Santa Fe, 1609
1580		
1560		
1540		Coronado, 1542
1520		
1500		

South-west	Basin	Plains
		

 Competition and conflict; threat to land base and political autonomy. May be marked by overt hostilities, but not necessarily.

Changes in Indian-White Relationships in North America in Historical Perspective.



Administrative stabilization; reservation or comparable situation. May be marked by continuing threats to Indian land and community identity.

Emergent reintegration; involves "Pan-Indian" or "nationalistic" aspects in terms of Indian interest and self-determination in relation to the encompassing nation.

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North American Indians in Historical Perspective

1

*Introduction*¹

ELEANOR BURKE LEACOCK

The first Americans north of Mexico have figured as little more than a few stereotyped and contradictory images in most accounts of the New World. They are generally regarded as savages with no past and no future, sparsely inhabiting a continent, and childlike both in their generosity—"selling" Manhattan Island for \$24 worth of "trinkets"—and in their ferocity—scalping the victims of battle. In the West they have been seen as a jumble of opposites, as the earlier "only good Indian is a dead Indian" attitude has given way to a latter-day Hollywood "good Indian" peacemaker juxtaposed against the "bad Indian" fighter. Only most recently can a "good" Indian fight for his people's independence. Contemporary Indians are seen as a beaten people on reservations, sharing in a general "culture of poverty," a curiosity for passing tourists, while the notion persists, despite census figures to the contrary, that Indians are "vanishing" as a racial and sociocultural entity.

The "American Indian unit," usually given in the fourth grade in elementary school, may have colorful projects on wigwam-building and firemaking. However, with at best a "noble savage" tinge, it does not do much to improve the picture. Indeed, in elementary and high school, and even in college, it is still the North European, come to these shores to seek freedom and equality for all, who strides almost alone through the pages of American development. The variety and complexity of his relationships with the peoples of other continents are passed over. The other people are presented mainly as difficult and disturbing: people with red-brown skins, impolitely residing here first and unwilling simply to disappear; black-skinned peoples brought to work as slaves under a sun said to be too hot for whites; almond-eyed peoples also supposedly well-suited for long hours of drudgery. Later, too, according to the myth, came other whites from South and East Europe to make their way in the land of peace and plenty. Only recently has Spanish St. Augustine in Florida been granted its priority over Jamestown as the "oldest settlement"; and the further priority of several Southwestern Pueblos is still unrecognized. As the history of the land unfolds, the Anglo-Saxon magnanimously, and with but occasional falterings, draws

on his rational view of the world to move this assembly of other peoples along with him on his onward, upward course.

This historical myth, ever more frayed, has been coming under increasing criticism. However, despite the growing number of scholarly works that aim to reconstruct the actual nature of relationships among many peoples of Europe, America, and Africa in the New World, more effort is needed in order to achieve a rounded perspective of New World history and its intertwined attempts of most men to live and a few to dominate. Some whites came to reap profits from new wealth in land, trade, and slaves; others were escaping from the land hunger of Europe; and many were at least temporarily pressed into servitude. Some blacks were slaves and some were “free,” but both have been ever struggling toward what became a formal commitment of a new nation, that all men have “inalienable rights” to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Meanwhile, the first Americans, red-brown men with a more egalitarian way of life, tried to cope with the instability of strangers who exploded from a few scattered colonies into an engulfing wave of settlements.

The present book is a contribution toward a more balanced understanding of the New World. It is a partial reconstruction of the political and cultural history of the first Americans during the near five centuries in which the face of their lands was being transformed. The coverage is far from complete; necessarily the book is but a sampling of what there is to be written. However, the chapters that follow illustrate the variety of Indian experience in the New World north of Mexico. With the past millennia of Indian history as a background, they document Indian ways of coping with the events of the past 500 years, the basis for a contemporary assessment by Indians of their common position and purpose in the midst of a still alien people.

The Expansion of Europe

Schoolchildren are told of the romance between Pocahontas and John Rolfe, but they are not told of the challenge thrown out to John Smith by Pocahontas' father, Powhatan, or Wahunsonacock. “Why will you take by force what you may have quietly by love?” Wahunsonacock asked. “Why will you destroy us who supply you with food? What can you get by war?” He called on John Smith to have the English put away their guns and swords, saying:

I am not so simple as not to know that it is much better to eat good meat, sleep comfortably, live quietly with my wives and children, laugh and be