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movement - and for comparative indigenous/indigenist studies more generally - is readily apparent with economic globalization and the attendant resurgence of colonialism. (See Martin Khor, *The Nation* 263, No. 3:18) The struggles of indigenous peoples are no longer (if they ever were) solely with, or within, individual nation-states; they are as subject to these international forces as the nation-states themselves. Indigenous resistance must itself be international, and indigenist scholarship, especially in the hands of activists such as Churchill, increasingly reflects and facilitates that.

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Visions of America Since 1492. Edited by Deborah L. Madsen. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 164 pages.

Major historical anniversaries seem to stimulate introspection and academic ambition in equal measure. The hundredth anniversary in 1993 of the presentation of Frederick Jackson Turner's paper on the significance of the frontier in American history left Western historians with a smorgasboard of conferences to attend and special issues and anthologies to contribute to. Of course, Turner's paper was presented at a meeting of the American Historical Association held in Chicago in 1893 to coincide with the World Columbian Exposition celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America. A century later, Turner's thesis, like the Columbian Quincentenary, was in for serious reevaluation. And the conferences, special issues and anthologies followed in predictable order.

Visions of America Since 1492 derives from a lecture series held at the University of Leicester in 1992, and has a slightly different take on the subject at hand. In fact, it features mainly British scholars pondering the issue of American exceptionalism—the cultural assumption that the history of the United States has produced a distinctive national character that sets Anglo-Americans apart from their European forebears. The lectures, marking the establishment of American Studies as a degree program at the University of Leicester, offered an opportunity to probe this premise. Four of the lectures—published here under the heading “Cross-cultural Interactions”—examined early European re-

sponses to Native Americans for perspectives on the New World transformation of Old World culture while testing the modern truism that the colonizer's lens invariably distorts what is before it.

David B. Quinn, Emeritus Professor of Modern History at the University of Liverpool and a renowned specialist in American colonial history, concludes that few Europeans in the period 1492 to 1612 were able to place New World phenomena—people, animals and plants—in a genuinely ecological context, though he notes that in 1526 the Spaniard Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo “after twelve years in the Caribbean Islands and in Central America . . . gave an invaluable description of the native people of Hispaniola” (p. 4), and that the Englishman John White in the 1580s produced a matchless artistic record of natives in the Chesapeake Bay area that approached a “genuine ecological outlook.” Thus Quinn gently chides the postmodernist tendency to deny the possibility of any objective observation by concluding that Europeans “were not all impervious to the character of the new lands they encountered or to the people they found there” (p. 20).

Anthony Pagden, a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge University, who has specialized in the study of imperialism and empire prior to the nineteenth century, deals with “Shifting Antinomies: European Representations of the American Indian Since Columbus,” a huge topic for a short essay, but one he approaches by establishing the categories within which Europeans reasoned. Human control over nature defined progress as they understood it and served to distinguish the civil from the savage. Things grew more complicated after a whiff of cultural relativism ennobled the savage as a means of critiquing civilization's materialism, and broadened the range of European understandings of the Indian. Pagden's own essay grows convoluted in trying to trace these convolutions, but his starting premise remains persuasive.

Luca Codignola's “The French in Early America: Religion and Reality” is essentially descriptive though Codignola, a professor at the University of Genoa, does argue for the reality of some conversions in the “heroic age” of French missionary activity, the first half of the seventeenth century. “For many kind of reasons, but just like Europeans,” he writes, certain natives “consciously chose a new faith, did as much as they could to understand it, and tried hard to make it coincide with their own traditional beliefs,

values and behaviour" (p. 43). He also makes it clear that this openness to new beliefs was a one-way street: the French missionaries regarded the Indian cultures—unlike those of certain Asian societies—as too rude to be attractive. "Their efforts to adapt to the Indian intellectual environment, by learning the native languages and understanding their culture, were simply means to better implement their overall plans" (p. 44).

Finally, David Murray, who lectures on American Studies at the University of Nottingham, closes the section on "Cross-cultural Interactions" with an essay titled "Through Native Eyes?: Indian History/American History." Murray argues, effectively, for rejecting the notion of two utterly incompatible world views—Indian and European—since historical experience belies an assumption that would make "otherness" impermeable. Noting "the recurrent argument over linguistic relativity and the possibilities of translation," Murray observes: "The idea of an unbridgeable gap has all sorts of exotic and intellectual appeal, but translation *does* happen" (p. 63.) This commonsense position informs his conclusion (based on a Northwest Coast example) that the carefully-focused study of first encounters can get us past "large-scale metaphors" (p. 70) of conquest and destruction to the complex adjustments cultures in contact actually make in accommodating new information into their existing world views.

The second section of *Visions of America Since 1492*, "American Introspections," deals more directly with the issue of American exceptionalism. It consists of essays by Christopher Rolfe on *Quebecois* self-perceptions and by Alfred Hornung on America as revealed through the travel writings of two expatriates, a snobbish Henry James and a receptive Gertrude Stein, as well as an art history survey by Andrew Hemingway focused on critical realism and the American modernist tradition. These essays make no general point, though they are not without their particular pleasures—especially Hornung's, which includes this Gertrude Stein gem: "When westward the course of empire no longer took its way, Americans moved 'in' and went east to Paris in order to go west within the mind—a land like their own without time" (p. 104).

The miscellaneous nature of *Visions of America Since 1492* is a quality common to most collections derived from conferences or lecture series. The parts here do not add up to a coherent whole, nor do they collectively shed any sustained light on the larger issue of American exceptionalism. The concluding essay by the

volume's editor, Deborah L. Madsen, a Lecturer at the University of Leicester, is titled "Postmodern Perspectives: Subversions of the American Columbiad." But it makes no attempt to focus what has gone before. Rather, it is a case study in Puritan rhetoric that provides a backhanded confirmation for the exceptionalist premise by arguing that the Puritan "metanarrative" (progress/mission) proved resistant to critics within Massachusetts who, through their protests, only established its dominance. Thus Madsen's essay stands with the others as a discrete entity that can be judged on its own merits. The word "visions" (like "interactions" and "introspections") denies any summarizing finality while suggesting a properly modish pluralism. Still, this collection might more accurately have been titled *Glimpses of America Since 1492*.

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When The Wind Was A River: Aleut evacuation in World War II. By Dean Kohlhoff. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1995. 234 pages.

Dean Kohlhoff's *When The Wind Was A River: Aleut evacuation in World War II* is an exhaustive historical account that tells the story of the Aleuts' compulsory removal during World War II. The book untangles the sometimes contradicting decisions and actions taken by various military branches, the Department of the Interior, and the Territory of Alaska that ultimately resulted in the compulsory evacuation of the Aleuts. It also outlines the Aleuts post-war reactions to the removal and provides a detailed account on their plight for redress and restitution. Kohlhoff sets out two goals: to fill a void in World War II American history, and to incorporate first-hand Aleut perspective on their evacuation. Albeit the author achieves the former and is somewhat weak on the latter, the book merits wide scale of readers in the academic community interested in Aleut, evacuation and relocation issues, Native American government relation, and Alaska.

When The Wind Was A River: Aleut evacuation in World War II takes us through the muddle of Aleut forced evacuation during World War II. It first provides detailed background information on the ten Aleut communities that were subject to removal (chapters one through four). Chapter One provides a brief history of the Aleuts in Alaska. Chapter two then described the military deci-