UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Your Fyre Shall Burn No More: Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701. By Jos6 Ant6nio Brafidao.

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/98d8c6si

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 24(4)

ISSN

0161-6463

Author

Beery, John Richard

Publication Date

2000-09-01

DOI

10.17953

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

the like, as well as for "famous," "city," and "famous city," which cut down on the number of separate items listed in the dictionary. I think the editors may have been tripped up by the desire to "standardize bilingual interpretations" (p. 280), one of the places in the dictionary where the SIL "meaning-based" approach to interpretation is more prominent. In fact, one of the interesting facets of this dictionary is the way in which its entries manifest the various agendas of past translation projects—education, missionization, and the like. There is no one-to-one correspondence between English and Western Apache in that sense, so making the dictionary a first step in that search carries a number of difficulties with it.

The dictionary includes useful prefaces on the organization of the Apachean verb complex, the various forms of handling verbs, pronouns, and particles. A less useful section is the pronunciation guide, which only offers pronunciation assistance for twenty-eight of the forty-six Western Apache phonetic sounds represented, and seems to assert that the International Phonetic Alphabet only has orthographic representations for nineteen of those sounds.

Of course, if this dictionary helps to revive Western Apache in the Fort Apache and San Carlos reservations, it will have contributed value far beyond the technical niceties of presentation, and all these complaints will be just quibbles. I hope its publication will be an event that can spur the development and publication of further works in bilingual education and other pedagogical resources to combat the disappearance of this beautiful language.

David Samuels
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Your Fyre Shall Burn No More: Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701. By José António Brañdao. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. 375 pages. \$60.00 cloth.

In this study, Brandao examines the relationship between the Five Nations Iroquois (they did not become the Six Nations until approximately 1714) and the French and their Native American allies from the mid-1500s until 1701. The author attempts to refute what he refers to as the "old myth" that the Iroquois fought France's Indian allies for economic reasons; that is, for control of the fur trade. To understand why the Five Nations went to war, Brandao argues, one has to examine Iroquois culture.

The author begins with an analysis explaining why old ideas about the so-called Beaver Wars (economic warfare) do not stand up under scrutiny. Francis Parkman, the nineteenth-century historian, established this economic thesis, providing numerous material reasons for Iroquois hostilities against the Algonquins and Hurons particularly. Parkman's greatest mistake lay in the fact that he applied European motives to Iroquois desires to control the fur trade. He failed to look at the tribes' cultures and their effects on warfare. Thus Parkman did not comprehend the context of Iroquois behavior.

Brañdao also attacks Charles McIllwain, who argued that the Iroquois wanted to be middlemen in the trade between Indians and Europeans. George Hunt expanded on this thesis in his 1940 study *The Wars of the Iroquois: A Study in Intertribal Trade Relations*. Scholars outside the United States also held that the Iroquois engaged in hostilities against other Indians for this desired middleman status. Brañdao mentions Leo-Paul Desrosier's work *Iroquoisie, 1534–1645*. Abbe Groulx, Gustave Lanctot, and W. J. Eccles are also included in this discussion.

Finally, the author examines and rejects Daniel K. Richter's revisionist interpretation, which holds that economic warfare gradually became the dominant theme causing Iroquois hostilities with other Native Americans. To Brañdao anyone one who thinks that economics ever became the key factor in warfare is wrong. He praises Conrad Heidenreich, Lucien Campeau, and Dean Snow for their rejection of an economic interpretation of Iroquois warfare.

Brañdao examines Iroquois culture in-depth as it related to warfare. He makes several important points. The Iroquois were never united under one government as European powers were. Chiefs could not, and did not, rule the people. They led by personal charisma and consensus. They could ask warriors to fight but they could not force them into it. The author is, of course, correct that reciprocal arrangements between individuals and clans played a significant role in warfare, and that a person was expected to honor these obligations. For example, if one wished to avenge another's honor it would have divided the community if one refused. Revenge was a key element in warfare. Dreams, very important to all Native Americans, likewise played a part. The quest for personal acclaim had its place, too. Acquiring captives to replace dead Iroquois must not be overlooked. Brañdao remarks that if the Iroquois had not done this they never could have survived the devastation wrought by disease and war, a thesis with which most historians agree.

Finally, Brandao examines the tradition that the League was established to ensure peace with outsiders, and the assertion that the Iroquois fought other Natives and Europeans to force them into peace. He is not sure of the validity of this argument even though it would help him prove his thesis. Brandao, and most recent scholars, agree that economics could never have been the determining factor in all relations with outsiders.

Brañdao fails to place in perspective the overall importance, or lack of importance, of economics in interactions with Europeans and other Native Americans. The author takes issue with the idea held by many scholars that after contact with Europeans the Iroquois changed their reasons for engaging in warfare. Economics became the most important factor for fighting other Native Americans. Brañdao states that the Five Nations continued to fight wars for traditional reasons. They did not become capitalists and lose their aboriginal cultures even though trade goods brought some material advantages.

He makes an essential point: the Iroquois did not become Europeans. While this is not a completely new idea—James Axtell and A. F. C. Wallace made the same statement years ago—the author expands on this theme. By

using statistics he proves that factors other than economic ones remained important. For example, the motives for many so-called fur-stealing raids had their origins in the tribes' traditional cultures; numerous engagements took place to acquire captives to replace dead Iroquois. Several raids did not even result in large catches of furs traded to Europeans.

Brandao also examines the role of the fur trade between Native Americans and Europeans. For a considerable period, the years covered in this study, the fur trade was not very significant. The arrival of Europeans and the subsequent trade did not bring added hostilities—European diseases did. Because of pandemics the Iroquois had to find more captives to replace their dead. Statistics indicate that this is a correct assumption.

The author remarks that the Iroquois engaged in trade to obtain weapons to fight other Natives, and hoped to form political links in their fight against Native foes. Brandao understates this aspect of trade. Richter disagrees (see his *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*), stating that trade did have political implications.

Brandao makes several important points regarding Iroquois relations with France. New France started the conflict because it believed the Huron and Algonquin were more reliable allies than the Iroquois. The French established this anti-Iroquois policy early, leaving the Iroquois to unite to deal with their foes. At times this unity proved difficult because of the loose nature of the confederacy—one tribe might fight the French while another remained aloof. The French, even after negotiating peace, refused to abandon Iroquois enemies. French aid led to conflict with the Iroquois who fought not for furs but for survival. The Iroquois were trapped in a vicious cycle. Added to this were cultural imperatives requiring the Iroquois to wage war.

Brandao has written an excellent study, but, as noted, it is one-sided. The second half of the work consists of over one hundred pages of statistics. The author makes use of numbers to prove his assertion. He has something here—the evidence confirms that factors other than economics caused warfare. It is not clear, however, Brandao notwithstanding, that these statistics prove the utter absence of economic motivation. The work is not for the lay person, but for specialists who should read and consider this fine addition to Iroquoian studies.

John Richard Beery University of Toledo

The Zuni Enigma. By Nancy Yaw Davis. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2000. 318 pages. \$26.05 cloth.

This problematic work seeks to demonstrate the theory that the Pueblo of Zuni, New Mexico is unique in its language, culture, and biology largely due to the influx of thirteenth-century Japanese monks who reached the West Coast of North America, migrated east in search of the middle of the world, and settled in the Zuni Valley. The author, Nancy Yaw Davis, advocates the consideration of her premise based on her belief that "coming to grips with