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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-

sion making process concerning the fate of the Aleuts .

The focus is on a process that begun on December 2, 1941. On that day Secretary Ickes endorsed a policy, which was actually devised by the War Department, that turned the responsibilities over the Aleuts from the Department of the Interior to the military. The policy was a reaction to tensions that escalated after the attack on Pearl Harbor that subsequently found the Aleuts in a most venerable position due to their geographical proximity to Japan. Initial reactions to the war with Japan were limited to the evacuation of military dependents from Alaska and to the removal of non-Aleut women from Unalaska. These evacuations were initiated and executed by the military, and, as Kohlhoff points out, enhanced the military position in Alaska. Simultaneously, the military restricted civilians' freedoms of choice there (Chapter Three). Yet, until June 1942, the Aleuts remained relatively isolated from the outside world. A Japanese attack in early June, that resulted in Japanese occupation of two Aleutian islands, marked a watershed in Aleut history - it was the end of their relative isolation (Chapter Four). The attack also created more problems for the military that now had to address Aleuts' safety and their imminent evacuation.

Aleut cultural attachment to their traditional lands made contemplating their compulsory evacuation ever more difficult. Neither government nor military officials were confident that evacuation will be more beneficial than harmful to the Aleuts. Intertwined in this dilemma were communication and miscommunication problems between the various military branches, the Department of the Interior, and the Territory of Alaska, that dogged Aleut evacuation (chapter five). The eventual decision to evacuate the Aleut was based on two major reasons, both with anti-Aleut prejudice overtones. Military and government officials agreed that letting the Aleut stay on their islands would be risky. Aleut presence would limit supplies and troops movements, they might become a social liability vis-à-vis the troops stationed near their homes, alcohol and sexual activity in Aleut settlements may lure soldiers from their duties, and the outbreak of diseases may effect both Aleut and military personnel. Furthermore, the Interior Department labeled Aleuts, as it did other Native Americans, "ward" or "breed," and in daily life treated them as inferior people. As such, the Interior Department did not deem it necessary to consult the Aleuts regarding their own evacuation (Chapter six).

Detailed description of the Aleut evacuees' experience and their return home is the heart and soul of the book (chapters seven through nine). Except for Aleuts who were captured by the Japanese and spend the war years in Japan, the American government and military evacuated and scattered other Aleuts throughout Alaska. The evacuation was poorly planned. The Aleut evacuees were sent to a number of evacuation camps of wretched living facilities not suitable for human habitat, and they were treated as wards evacuees (chapter seven). While in the camps, they suffered from shortage of clothing, food, and shelter. These shortages were culminated by a real threat to Aleut traditional hunting and fishing subsistence activities, and by not knowing how long their ordeal will last. Nonetheless, the hope of returning one day to their homes helped the evacuees cope with the physical, emotional, and biotic stresses of the evacuation (chapter eight). When Aleuts evacuees eventually were allowed to return to their villages, they found them in shambles. The trauma of evacuation and camp life was replaced by disappointments and frustrations. For the most part, however, they did not succumb to their miseries. Instead, they turned to the drudgery of rebuilding their settlements and their lives (chapter nine).

Evacuation put the lives of the Aleuts in jeopardy and threatened their survival as an ethnic group, but also augmented their sense of ethnic cohesiveness.

"Life in the camps, however, had transformed Aleuts forever. Exposure to influences brought to bear on them while in exile from their Aleutian island homes demonstrated to them their previous isolation from the forces of society at large... They soon wanted to participate in it fully as citizens of the state, not wards. Evacuation has created in them a heightened sense of self-awareness and self worth" (p. 169).

Like many Japanese-Americans who were placed in internment camps during the war years, Aleuts refused to talk about the horrors of their evacuation experience for many years. They chose, following their return, to use the American democratic system as their venue in their fight for restitution. A closure to the Aleut evacuation saga occurred on August 10, 1988, with the passage of Public Law 100-383. The law provided for financial reparation and an apology from Congress and the president on behalf of the United States (chapter 10).

Kohlhof's *When The Wind Was A River* is a thoroughly documented well researched book that sheds light on a complex and

relatively little known subject. Three overriding contributions emerge from the core of this book. First, the book provides an important historical account of the underdocumented compulsory evacuation of Aleuts during World War II. Further, Kohlhoff also brings to light the discrimination that has virtually left Aleuts out of the removal decision making process, limited their options while in the evacuation camps, and which they endured until redress. Finally, the book also demonstrates the importance of in-depth pedantic examination of published and unpublished documents to the reconstruction of historical events and processes.

The compilation of historical and ethnohistorical information on an evacuation that impacted ten scattered Aleut settlements into a worthwhile book is a challenge under the best of circumstances. The quality of data on different Aleut villages is uneven, and gaps and overlaps of coverage on certain subjects that had different effects on each village are sometimes unavoidable. There is also, of course the time lag from the actual evacuation period to the writing of the book. Sean Kohlhoff succeeded for the most part in meeting the challenges before him. The book could have been, nonetheless, enriched by sympathetic in-depth interviews with the people most directly affected - the evacuees and their families. In its entirety, Kohlhoff's *When The Wind Was A River* is a solid concentrated effort to present the complicated forced evacuation ordeal the Aleuts were subjected to during World War II.

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