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new book is very much in the same vein. It is built on a bedrock of hundreds of documents, found mostly in the *Archivo General de Indias* (the imperial archives in Seville), and the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* in Madrid. The way that Patch cooks these ingredients—that is, how he takes documents such as the 1790 investigation into the activities of Brigadier José de Estachería as Governor of Nicaragua—and serves them up transformed into transparent data and clear prose, is a master class in the methodology of empiricist historical writing. Patch is a top chef, and this book is a most satisfying dish.

Matthew Restall

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Indigenous Encounters with Neoliberalism: Place, Women, and the Environment in Canada and Mexico. By Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014. 284 pages. \$37.95 paper; \$99.00 electronic.

Indigenous cultures around the world have experienced drastic and traumatic changes due to contact with other populations, most notably those of European descent, and are continuing to cope with those changes in our modern world. Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez rightly places this in the context of neoliberalism, focusing on a modernistic movement that is evident not only at a multinational level, but also in the choices made by local governments, including those of indigenous heritage. There is a great deal of pressure on indigenous governments to participate in the modern neoliberal world. To become partners at the negotiating table and to protect their rights, in such areas as business, ecology, and gender indigenous peoples are pressed toward outcomes that are recognizable from an outside perspective. As Altamirano-Jiménez well documents, in order to participate at this level—to have a say in geographic locations that are central to their cultural point of view, including ceremonial activities, subsistence processes, and maintenance of their cultures' integrity—at times many indigenous populations have chosen to work in what appears to be a mindset similar to that of neoliberal governments.

In anthropological terms, the book takes a holistic view: a landscape approach that considers how individuals and governments interact in a connected environment, one that the people who are moving through its specific temporal and physical location recognize is important. The author weaves together rich descriptions, gathered from ethnographic interviews of indigenous individuals, with Canadian and Mexican indigenous governments' political decisions, as well as those of neoliberal national governments. While this approach is not new to social science, because indigenous cultures are predicated on intimate knowledge of a specific place through time, the landscape approach is essential in any discussion of these cultures. At the individual level, layers of knowledge are blended together by indigenous governments in order to form a more complete understanding of how their people view the world. This is a long-term process. As argued by Altamirano-Jiménez, this perspective is reminiscent

of Naoise Mac Sweeney's *Community Identity and Archaeology: Dynamic Communities at Aphrodisias and Beycesultan*, which similarly discusses geographic communities in which the people living in a specific environment share a common core of characteristics. Based on long-term interactions that should not be underestimated, these communities serve to guide people as recognized participants in their world. This process sets the stage for the development of a cohesive identity for a culture.

Identity is one of the more problematic issues for indigenous cultures; namely, what is the process by which indigenous people are considered to be either inside or outside the boundaries of their cultures? From a neoliberal perspective, a finite definition is beneficial because it obligates specific government relations when interacting with indigenous populations. For those attempting to come to terms with global and local governmental views of indigeneity, Altamirano-Jiménez does an excellent job of presenting the confusing global issues and perspectives that affect definitions of indigenous identity. The multiple examples of determining who is indigenous are quite useful. However, in the first few chapters long, somewhat repetitive theoretical discussions are problematic and detract from rich descriptions of how indigenous cultures have dealt with neoliberalism.

The highlight of the entire text is the rich discussion of Canadian and Mexican indigenous cultures, especially the examination of the Nisga'a of Canada. The struggle of retaining cultural rights and adapting to the widespread impact and disruption of their cultures' interaction with their usual and accustomed lands and aboriginal areas is common to many indigenous populations of Canada and the United States. They have experienced a confusing and continual erosion of their cultural rights to the lands they specifically identify with and are central to their cultures' continuity. Like many other northwest coast populations, the Nisga'a had a complex system of land ownership that linked with their clans, gender, inheritance practices, subsistence, and politics. This complex system was systematically altered over a few hundred years of contact with colonial governments that did not recognize the complexity of their culture and the explicit roles of men and women in all aspects of the Nisga'a culture. The Nisga'a Nation decided to recognize private land ownership by their people, which is counter to their long-held system of holding land in common. This decision was met with mixed reactions by other Canadian indigenous peoples, but from the point of view of the Nisga'a it was the right one. Individuals within their culture were now recognized as having a say within their governmental process, which was counter to their historical political practices and belief system. Ultimately, it is evident that the Nisga'a decision-making process was, and is, influenced by a complex mix of traditional practices, as well as those of their historical colonial and current national governments.

The neoliberal approach to indigenous populations has a long history in colonial exploitation and manipulation with the goal of gaining control over the environment. This process has produced a myriad of changes to indigenous cultures, which are still trying to come to terms with the exploitation and deliberate manipulation of their cultural belief systems. Altamirano-Jiménez well documents the political changes experienced by indigenous populations through the use of historical documents and

oral histories, which are the highlight of her discussion regarding their interplay with neoliberalism. This discussion is a good fit in any class that is focused on diversity, indigenous populations, gender relations, and global/regional politics.

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The Iroquois and the Athenians, A Political Ontology. By Brian Seitz and Thomas Thorp. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013. 306 pages. \$90.00 cloth; electronic \$89.99.

As the title indicates, this study juxtaposes forays into ancient Greece and Iroquoia, which raises an important question: who is the intended audience? It turns out that the coauthors' audience members are neither Iroquoianists nor classicists, but fellow philosophers. Their goal is to "extend philosophy's rafters toward the Iroquoia," with the hope of showing how Native American political development might reshape the current "direction of philosophy" (62). As stated, then, for this study understanding the Iroquois becomes a means to something else rather than an end unto itself. Still, there are two reasons to read this book. First, the authors challenge existing political philosophical attitudes concerning the "social contract." Second, because they are not specialists in the field, they bring an outsider's eye to their understanding of Sky Woman and Deganawidah stories. The result is an analysis that focuses on a particular aspect of the story that many have commented on, but few have explored.

The authors rely on William Fenton's *The Great Law and the Longhouse* (1998) for their understanding of Iroquois cosmology and the League's creation. Synthesizing a lifetime of scholarship and fieldwork, in many ways Fenton's book is a summary of where Iroquoian studies stood at the end of the twentieth century. The resulting book is a history of the Iroquois over the centuries. Seitz and Thorp have a different focus: how the story of the League shaped Iroquoian understanding of themselves and others. This understanding, we are told, emerges from the shared power structure the League created—between older and younger brothers, or with matrons "raising up" sachems but being excluded from the position themselves—resulting in a democratic society that Europeans misunderstood from the beginning.

By focusing almost exclusively on the years before 1689, or the "classical" period of Iroquoian studies, the authors avoid having to discuss how the post-colonization Confederacy challenged the original League's political discourse. Seitz and Thorp see this challenge as relatively undemocratic, since Confederacy politicians were "village chiefs and war chiefs" and not "League title holders" (130). Interestingly, this political change mirrored another change in Iroquoia. The Iroquoian longhouse, which gave the League its metaphorical girding, was replaced by log structures imitating the Iroquois' European neighbors. Moreover, certain League titles went unfilled in the classical period. Fenton argues that this was due to declining population numbers: the Iroquois League had difficulty transmitting traditions because there were fewer