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Cannibal Encounters: Europeans and Island Caribs, 1492-1763. By Philip P. Boucher.

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and particularly to Russian scholarship of the area. Additionally, the diversity of subjects and approaches makes this a good text for students and may spark their curiosity in a region that is becoming, once again, the crossroads of continents.

William E. Simeone

Cannibal Encounters: Europeans and Island Caribs, 1492–1763. By Philip P. Boucher. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. 217 pages. \$32.95 cloth.

Between first and last chapters that discuss the French and English images of the native people of the Caribbean, Philip P. Boucher describes the history of European dealings with the Carib Indians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He is careful to place his account in the more general story of the European encounter with the native peoples of the New World, and, indeed, this particular encounter turns out to be much the same experience. Although the Spaniards made first contact in the last years of the fifteenth century, they concentrated their settlements on the larger islands, Hispaniola and Cuba, and left the smaller Leeward Islands for later exploitation. It was not until the early seventeenth century that French, English, and Dutch buccaneers and settlers arrived in numbers. The Carib people already had a century's experience of European contact, but they had not been seriously challenged in their island homes. Once the European settlers arrived, the situation changed dramatically. Of course, we know the end. By the last years of the seventeenth century, the Caribs' numbers would be seriously depleted, they would be confined to the least attractive sections of the islands (many had already fled to the mainland), their population would be considerably mixed with captured and escaped Black slaves, and they would be well on the way to extinction.

But the story was not so simple. The Carib Indians had learned quickly how to deal with the Europeans. They traded for European goods and weapons, cleverly played off one power against another, and made the most of island enclaves that could not be easily surprised by the Europeans. The result was two generations of conflict—typical of the New World experience—in which the Europeans fought bitterly for control of the valuable sugar islands and in which the Indians moved from side to side as their interests

and loyalties dictated. But the end was the same: By the close of the seventeenth century, the native people who remained in the islands had ceased to be a serious threat to the European presence.

Boucher addresses a number of the familiar questions. He plays down, as is now conventional and probably justified, the Caribs' putative cannibalism. The Europeans, he claims, thought ill of them and called them cannibals because they resisted. And, true enough, the more tractable Arawak Indians were not so resistant, and they were seen by Europeans as the principal victims of the Carib people. But if resistance was the causative factor, how can we explain Columbus's initial reaction (that the Carib were cannibals) before he had encountered resistance from any of the native groups? In truth, whatever the opinion-forming consequences of the actual experience of Europeans in the New World, they came with a number of views already formed: that they would find in the strange regions of the world savage people, noble and ignoble, and that the most striking evidence of ignobility would be cannibalism. Hence it ought not to be surprising that they encountered people they thought were cannibals.

Boucher treats another familiar theme: that some Europeans were better than others at relations with the American natives. In this case, the French—as on the northern continent—far outstripped the English in their dealings with the Indians. The phenomenon is not easily explained. In North America, the contrast between the two brands of colonialism certainly says a good deal about their relative success and failure with the natives. The English intended to displace the native societies and hence awakened considerable antagonism. The French came with more limited purposes in mind—trade, proselytization, imperial power—that did not require the displacement or even transculturation of the Indians and thus caused less friction. But, in the Caribbean, this contrast did not obtain. There was, after all, little room to spare. As the Europeans came, the Indians either fought, died, or left. But the dénouement took time, and, in the meanwhile, the French proved more adept at handling their relations with the native population.

Many explanations have been offered, and Boucher touches on most of them. The French were more congenial, they were more likely to express a genuine interest in native culture, and they intermarried more often. Indeed, the Caribbean version of the *coureur de bois*, the island roamers, were more likely to be French. The Carib people, of course, fought both invaders, but they held the English in special contempt as cowardly and unworthy oppo-

nents. Although the English government favored conciliation with the Carib, actual relations tended to be carried on by the colonists, who were far less likely to be congenial. French centralization kept policy and relations in the same hands and made for a more successful relationship with the native people.

The English lack of interest in the Indians significantly influenced their conceptualization. They tended to hold the crudest stereotypes. Although the Spanish commentators of the sixteenth century, for example, formulated a rather complex portrayal of the American population, the English ideas remained far less nuanced. Indians, for them, were monsters or saints, but mainly monsters. Part of the problem may have been the lack of missionary zeal. The Catholic religious orders, Spanish and French, devoted their lives to converting the native people. In the process, many of their members made significant contributions to early anthropology. The English reprinted the major travel accounts describing the peoples of the New World, which obviously demonstrated a certain amount of interest, but it never attained the depth of many of the French and Spanish writers. An exception may be John Locke, who wrote in the late seventeenth century. For the time, his anthropology was quite sophisticated. But, of course, he was not interested in the native people for their own sakes. He had other axes to grind.

Yet, as Boucher's account demonstrates, in the long run the differences in attitude, degree of interest, or policy counted for little. With the development of the sugar industry, there was no place for the Carib people on the islands. By the late seventeenth century, the island population was European and African, with no more than a sprinkling of native. The Caribbean Indians survived longer than one might have supposed, but, in the end, their fate was little different from that of many of their brethren to the north.

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Children of Grace: The Nez Perce War of 1877. By Bruce Hampton. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994. 407 pages. \$27.50 cloth.

Since 1878, at least sixteen volumes have appeared concerning General Oliver Otis Howard's 1877 Nez Perce campaign, and