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Reviews

Algonquian Spirit: Contemporary Translations of the Algonquian Literatures of North America. Edited by Brian Swann. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005. 544 pages. $75.00 cloth; $34.95 paper.

With *Algonquian Spirit*, Brian Swann again underscores his reputation for compiling resourceful texts about or consisting of written and oral literatures of indigenous North America. The University of Nebraska Press has rescued this series of tribal narrative compilations in translation from the Smithsonian Institution Press's axe. This volume, which covers an immense geographic territory, presents examples from Algonquian language cultures. *Algonquian Spirit* attests to Swann's tirelessly keeping several balls in the air, completing the three collections he initiated with *Coming to Light* for Random House (1994) and *Voices from Four Directions* for the University of Nebraska Press (2004), both of which share the same subtitle (*Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*); the same organizational format characterizes all three. The structure of the book is interactive and dialogical, and the translations seem to withstand academic scrutiny. Swann's compilations avoid the usual approaches to anthologies. However, as with representations of Native people, materials, and artifacts in museums, Swann appears to be rethinking ways to present Native oral narratives in translation in order to illustrate a process for reinvesting narrative collections with some degree of the original storytellers' cultural integrity. The Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall collaboration of 1908, *Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians*, stimulates discussions of the additional purposes of making translations available: seeking a methodology for saving oral traditions in the indigenous languages and what community and scholars wish to do about the results. With some entries in *Algonquin Spirit* having been written in English orthography a century ago or more, we gain insights about the then new condition of written tribal literacy. For example, Sakihtanonhkweha, Pearl Leaf, and other Meskwakis left stories now translated by Lucy Thomason and Ives Goddard. They are "long nights stories" and are the longest tribal unit in the collection; their ethnopoetic renderings suggest stylistic comparisons with Ray Young Bear's Meskwaki narrative, *Black Eagle Child*.

With Algonquian cultures being so widespread, compiling an anthology of their translated literatures is daunting, considering how these oral narratives constitute the oldest and largest body of examples to be rendered into English, French, Dutch, and possibly German. Algonquian peoples today are struggling to protect and retain their linguistic identity. Language retention and the importance of maintaining and protecting traditional stories in the traditional Algonquian languages face the compromise of translating the stories into English or other languages.

Among the oldest entries is "Fair Warning," whose unknown origin and language creates a highly problematical discussion of authenticity and cultural authority. It is a brief "pan-Algonquian" speech that was posted on the Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas (SSILA) Web site by Dutch scholar Peter Baaker in 2001. Alex MacKenzie Hargrave, editing a protracted Algonquian etymology project, offers a translation of it drawn from speculative eastern Algonquian sources.

Following Swann's introduction (which reveals his early interest in Indians), *Algonquian Spirit* is divided into three large parts corresponding to Algonquian geography: East, Central, and West. Each part is subdivided into tribal groups (for example, Naskapi, Eastern Cree, Miami-Illinois, and Shawnee in the Central section), and each of these groupings contains one or more stories introduced by scholars who provide endnotes and recommend further readings. Individuals, scholars, and Native speakers using original recitations recorded by hand or tape translated these stories. A series of interrelated linguistic communities thus characterizes the structure of this book.

Narratives from Lenape, Munsee, and Wabanaki constitute the eastern Algonquian section; however, Yurok is not included in the western section. Swann privileges storytelling and oral culture material. Except for "Fair Warning," Coastal Algonquian into North Carolina is absent. What could have been considered are European-styled colonial documents such as land transfers, deeds, and wills like those translated by Elizabeth Little from the Wampanoags on Nantucket, bilingual and similar in format to Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon's *Native Writing in Massachusett.* In the Lenape subsection, the five versions of a story about the coming of white people are those recorded by Heckewelder (1819), Trowbridge (1824), Vogelin (1939), Rementer and Pearson (1978), and Dean (2002) in order to illustrate the resilience of the story's core narrative. These would have found suitable companions with Lenape and Shawnee oratories transcribed and translated during the eighteenth-century trans-Appalachian campaigns.

Oestreicher's "The Tale of a Hoax," based upon his articles on the Walam Olum from the 1990s, affirms that Rafinesque's tablets drew upon other Algonquian language sources. Meanwhile, John Bierhorst introduces a narrative of the Lenape creation story by John Armstrong, a nineteenth-century Lenape figure who lived with the Senecas but retained his natal oral traditions. Wabanaki traditions are represented by stories of the culture hero Koluscap, stories of animals and the personification of fire. Pronunciation and song guides in an excellent section that includes other trickster narratives from the Ojibwe, Swampy Cree, Miami-Illinois, and Potawatomi accompany translations of the two Naskapi wolverine stories.

Cheyenne is represented by a translation of Laura Rockroads's 1975 telling of "The Rolling Head" story. Pauline Running Crane writes the one Blackfeet story, "Scarface," using her own translation of her grandfather's tale. Jeffrey D. Anderson revisits an old concern about what can be said for public consumption with several of his translated Ghost Dance songs from the Arapaho. Some traditionalists from Ghost Dance societies take exception even to century-old print and audio representations of this form. The translation and production of story narratives face similar criticism. Other considerations include the following: How can indigenous oral traditions survive amidst the distractions of the modern world? What about persistent interest by white scholars and some tribal people? How are ubiquitous encroachments of the English language to be reconciled?

Robert M. Leavitt, coeditor of a Passamaquoddy-Maliseet dictionary, introduces texts in all three volumes in this contemporary translations series; in the second and third volumes Philip LeSourd, who studies Wabanaki languages, introduces and translates Maliseet stories. For the collection's descriptive information to identify periods and dates of original renderings and translations in a more obvious way would help many readers. But Brian Swann's undertaking otherwise rewards our curiosity and attention for its content and what we learn about the topic.

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Building on a Borrowed Past: Place and Identity in Pipestone, Minnesota. By Sally J. Southwick. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005. 204 pages. $38.95 cloth; $18.95 paper.

The surprisingly well-researched *Building on a Borrowed Past* will be a useful addition to most library collections and historical researchers. Although Sally Southwick is not trained as an historian and does not practice a profession in the academy, her abilities to gather and synthesize a myriad of resource materials ranging from newspaper articles to personal interviews and official government documents is obvious. Although she probably overstates the importance of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* in inspiring interpretations of the pipestone quarries in Minnesota, she does an excellent job of demonstrating how they were conceived and interpreted by the general population. She also deftly demonstrates how they are reinterpreted today.

Building on a Borrowed Past is not without its limitations, however. The book would be of further use to historians if there had been some attempt to integrate Southwick's research with other historiography and writing on images of Indians and the interpretation of sacred sights. Southwick rightly delves into Catlin's writings and their influence on other scholars and government officials. However, an effort to show how a pervasive imaging of Indians