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Parading through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935. By Frederick E. Hoxie.

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such a study was already attempted by anthropologist Gladys Reichard (*Navajo Shepherd and Weaver*, 1963, when she became an apprentice to a Navajo weaver, learned and practiced the art herself, and then wrote about her experience. Rodee also stays away from subjective value judgments such as those of George W. James (*Indian Blankets and Their Makers*, 1920), who imposed his personal taste and aesthetic preferences on many Navajo rugs. Rodee's text examines the technical, material, and graphic makeup of Navajo rugs objectively and expertly. Even an outsider can enjoy the beauty and strength of Navajo rugs, a purely aesthetic pleasure supported by the thirty-eight color plates.

This is a competent, specialized study of the evolution of Navajo textiles from blankets to rugs to wall hangings. It gives well-deserved credit to the weavers who, despite all the changes, have produced, through their flexibility and creativity, "some of the most distinguished and sought after art objects in the New World" (p. 174).

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Parading through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805–1935. By Frederick E. Hoxie. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 395 pages.

Parading through History is an important and thought-provoking work. Frederick Hoxie presents a story of the perseverance and adaptation that led to the construction of a modern Indian community. Throughout the study he examines the Crow people's efforts to meet the challenges of their changing world while maintaining a distinctively Crow society. He never loses sight of Crow agency in meeting these challenges and attempts to insure the visibility of Crow people as active determiners of their own destiny.

Hoxie is critical of history written from above and seeks to provide a Crow voice in a story that has most often been written from a white, elitist perspective. In following historical actors, he hopes to understand better the process by which groups such as the Crow coped with and adapted to the onrush of industrial society while actively creating solutions uniquely their own. The purpose of this work is to illustrate how the Crow, despite

repeated predictions to the contrary, maintained a sense of their own identity through the chaotic change of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In tracing the establishment of a modern Crow nation, Hoxie examines institutional, economic, and, particularly, political development. In the early nineteenth century the Crow had no tradition of centralized leadership. As a loose alliance of independent bands, they functioned without a written language, a bureaucracy, or governing statutes. But with the encroachment of increasingly hostile Indian groups, the advent of the fur trade, the discovery of gold, and growing pressure from white settlers, the Crows gradually lost the power to govern themselves. New institutions of leadership were necessary to meet the unprecedented demands of whites and aggressive Indian neighbors. New religious forms, new business and language skills, new subsistence practices, and the reality of fixed community boundaries required a reorganization of traditional group life.

After describing the creation of the modern Crow Reservation, marked by the 1884 movement of the agency headquarters to the Little Bighorn, Hoxie moves back in time. He considers questions of Crow origins, bonds that united various Crow bands, the identity of Crow leaders, and the circumstances of these leaders' growing power. He notes that increased warfare in the early nineteenth century caused the Crow to rely more heavily on military leadership. Warriors assumed a greater role in the making of tribal decisions that formerly were made by group consensus. Trade and diplomatic efforts, both essential to the group's survival, necessitated and reinforced the leadership roles of a few powerful and respected military leaders. Economic and demographic forces, of necessity, shaped Crow community development, but it was through Crow political leadership, Hoxie maintains, that the essential autonomy of the society was retained. The Crow developed a "broad set of initiatives" by which they sustained their integrity as a society. Hoxie argues that these initiatives originated with men and women of the various reservation communities but that "their principal advocates" were the leaders (p. 168).

In part 2, Hoxie examines the roles of elder statesmen such as Plenty Coup in the changing nature of Crow leadership. He creatively uses reservation records to sketch residential patterns, changing family size, a new religious pluralism, and the economic dilemmas caused by the shift from a subsistence economy.

Part 3 covers the period from 1920 to 1935 when the growing importance of the tribal council "signaled the rise of a more broad based and participatory form of tribal decision making." The council became a "vehicle for the defense of cultural values and the formation of a distinctive group consensus" (pp. 315, 342). Change during the period was also represented by the Crow Act. Enacted by Congress in 1920, this legislation constituted a compromise in which Crow leaders hoped to forestall white settler pressure by transferring reservation land to private Crow ownership. Hoxie describes the Crow Act as a "victory for the leaders who engineered it and for the reservation political system that produced them" (pp. 227, 28). Also pivotal was the 1935 rejection of the Indian Organization Act, which Hoxie sees as yet another expression of the Crow people's growing sense of their own needs and rights. He argues that these events were landmarks in the development of a more democratic, more responsive, and more popular tribal government.

Parading through History is a convincing account of the Crow people's struggle to meet the economic, political, and demographic challenges of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The sections on changing family and religious organization offer important clues to the nature of Crow community development. Hoxie effectively uses sources such as census material and reservation records to illustrate the Crow's efforts to establish the kind of society they wanted, accommodating where necessary but generally resistant to outside pressure.

However, despite his discerning political insights into the shifting nature of Crow leadership, Hoxie's reliance on an examination of the actions and strategies of Crow political leaders contributes to another form of elitist history. Although he demonstrates Crow agency, it is the agency of a few politically powerful men. Ordinary Crow men, and especially women, are mentioned only briefly. One wonders what role these people played in the development of a modern Crow community, what their feelings about the dramatic changes in their lives were, and how these changes affected them.

Additionally, the overall optimistic tone of the work, while emphasizing Crow agency, downplays the destructive aspects of the Crow experience. Disease and economic dislocation are mentioned, but the social and economic marginalization of the Crow people is passed over quickly in preference for an upbeat story of "nation building." Hoxie's presentation of the controversial 1920

Crow Act as a "victory" for the Crow people with little discussion of the loss of land it occasioned is just one example.

The discussion of the fur trade also contains a few controversial aspects. For example, although Hoxie often repeats the presumption that the buffalo trade dramatically altered Crow society, for the Crow this assertion is unsupported by evidence. Hoxie offers Little Face's comment that, before white contact, the Crow "never dressed more robes than they needed for themselves" (p. 54) as proof of the novelty of the fur trade and the changes it brought. This is contradicted by François Antoine Larocque's comment on the large number of "Legging, Robes and dried meat" that the Crow brought to trade at the Hidatsa village in 1805 (p. 31). As Larocque noted, the native buffalo trade was thriving before he arrived. Not only did the native hide trade predate the arrival of whites, but significant Crow buffalo robe trade with non-Indians was also of relatively short duration, roughly from the 1830s to the 1860s (pp. 67–69, 78, 88).

One of the dramatic social changes that many historians attribute to the fur trade was an increase in Crow polygyny. The reasoning given is that, as furs became more valuable, men "took" more wives in order to reap additional profit from this trade (pp. 55, 72). However, there is little evidence of increased polygyny after contact (1805); nor would such an increase necessarily follow a need for additional trade goods. As Hoxie notes, Crow society was relatively egalitarian, and women were not "taken" by their husbands. Furthermore, divorce was comparatively easy for Crow women, and they did not need to stay in polygamous marriages unless they found them to be advantageous. The scenario of increasing, exploitive polygyny rests on the assumption that a woman's husband could control the profits from the hides, dried meat, and clothing that a wife prepared, but my own findings indicate that Crow women maintained control of their production and profits (Foster, "Of Baggage and Bondage," *AICRJ* 17:2 [1993]). Further study is needed to investigate the consequences of the fur trade for Crow women.

Parading through History deepens our understanding of Crow history and answers a long-felt need to examine how this people creatively adapted to changing circumstances while retaining a distinctive Crow identity. It also raises many exciting new questions in Crow history.

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