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## Review of Objects of Change: The Archaeology and History of Arikara Contact with Europeans

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*Objects of Change: The Archaeology and History of Arikara Contact with Europeans.* by J. Daniel Rogers. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990. Figures, tables, appendix, references cited, index. xiv + 317 pp. \$29.95.

J. Daniel Rogers' *Objects of Change* evaluates Arikara Indian contact with Euro-Americans and with Euro-American technology. He uses the Arikara material culture (or archaeological) record to determine the interactive process between the Arikara and the Euro-Americans. This process of interactions or "acculturation" was "neither standardized nor prescribed" among the Native Americans of the Great Plains (p. 1). "In the long run, the interaction strategies used by both Euro-Americans and natives resulted in the transformation of peoples and their material cultures, but the results were often different and the process almost never the same," Rogers writes. "The single overriding fact of all contact situations is that each culture operates according to its own set of expectations and works to maintain a viable system" (p. 4).

The values and expectations of traditional tribal cultures governed how Native Americans met new situations and evaluated new technologies and material goods introduced by Euro-Americans. In this instance, established Arikara perceptions and beliefs determined what utility specific European goods had for the Arikara, and Rogers develops a sophisticated methodology to trace the changing relationship between Arikara cultural change and inclusion of Euro-American goods into Arikara material culture inventories.

Rogers divides Arikara history from the early 1500s until 1862 into six distinct periods, each typified by certain aspects of the Arikara relationship to Euro-Americans. Arikara use of Euro-American items involved the tribe in the complex economic forces of the fur trade. Global fluctuations in the demand for furs, the depletion of fur-bearing animals in given areas, the unstable circumstances on the Missouri River where various tribes succeeded each other as crucial economic middlemen, meant

that the Arikara and other tribes were enmeshed in complex and precarious economic relationships with the Euro-American traders.

To analyze the changing material culture inventories of the Arikara, Rogers uses the technique of Q-Analysis or Polyhedral Dynamics, "a mathematical language used to identify structures in a set of relations." (p. 148) Q-Analysis allows Rogers to track modifications in Arikara artifact inventories, and he then relates these changes to the historic forces confronting the Arikara. *Objects of Change* is a well-argued, clearly written book that historians and ethnohistorians should read.

Rogers' methodology in studying the archaeological record of the Arikara could be applied to other tribes in other contact situations. Moreover, when employed with a study of the business records of the fur traders and with the oral histories of Native Americans, ethnohistorians can gain a more balanced perspective of the complex history of the fur trade, so long the primary avenue of contact between Native Americans and Euro-Americans along the Missouri River. *Objects of Change* allows readers to see the Arikara perspective of the fur trade as they evaluated the newcomers and their new technologies.

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