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## Review of *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors, 1795-1870* By Stephen Warren

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Shawnees and Their Neighbors, 1795-1870.* By Stephen Warren. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005. ix + 217 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$35.00.

In *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors*, historian Stephen Warren skillfully examines the various ways that the Shawnees responded to the expansion of the United States during the nineteenth century. According to Warren, for most of the 1700s the Shawnees lived in small to medium-sized politically autonomous villages governed by hereditary chiefs. After removal in the 1830s from Ohio to a reservation in Kansas, however, Indian agents and other federal officials encouraged the creation of a centralized Shawnee tribal government under a national council. This led to a struggle among the Shawnees between the descendants of the old village chiefs and the leaders of the new national council, some of whom had only marginal Shawnee kinship ties. The debate over political identity continued during and after the American Civil War, when the Shawnees were relocated again to Oklahoma, and led to permanent divisions within the Shawnee people. Ultimately, Warren concludes that “the legacy of the Civil War, and the removal treaties that closely followed the war, continues to shape the contemporary struggles of the Shawnees and their neighbors.”

In constructing his argument, Warren criticizes the way some scholars have previously examined Shawnee history. When analyzing the Native American response to American expansion, Warren contends, historians have often focused on militant leaders, such as the famous Shawnee Tecumseh, who advocated total resistance to white encroachment, while overlooking or disparaging other leaders, such as the less well-known Shawnee leader Black Hoof, who worked with missionaries and other white Americans to try to maintain a peaceful relationship with the United States. According to Warren, “constant attention on militants such as Tecumseh adds to the perception that American Indians were stubborn resisters to change.” Warren challenges scholars to reexamine their fascination with certain Indian leaders in order to incorporate Native Americans into American history accurately.

Warren’s overall exceptional study is not without minor problems. He describes the emergence of a Shawnee tribal government in the nineteenth century but fails to explain thoroughly how that government operated. Also, despite the dates in its title, the book really concludes with the end of the Civil War. The quick summary of the five years after the war, an important time for the Shawnees, seems rushed and could have been more carefully examined. Despite these shortcomings, this is a well-researched study that adds significantly to the historiography of the nineteenth-century Shawnees as well as their neighbors, both white and Indian, in the West.

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