Hushgah Adiish the Badlands Lodge: A Hidatsa Cultural Hub on the Upper-Missouri River in the Late Nineteenth Century

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Publication Date
8-25-2016

Abstract
The way our people, the Hidatsa, begin a narrative about older times is There was smoke in the village. It draws one into this idea that the village was prosperous and that the people had wood to burn and cook fires, with plenty of food for all. This past is viewed longingly by recent generations because of the hardships the people have endured since the introduction of European disease and relocation to lands our people deem undesirable. This very same nostalgia is what fueled an exodus from Like-A-Fishhook Village, driving the Crow-Flies-High Band of Hidatsa and Mandan Indians 120 miles west to confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. They were the survivors of smallpox and the witnesses of land loss. In a single season, in the winter of 1837 and spring of 1838, their lives forever changed when smallpox claimed the lives of 60 percent of the tribe. Their neighbors, the Mandan, suffered a 90 percent loss. A five-hundred-year monopoly on trade goods in the Upper-Missouri region that was held by Mandan and Hidatsa came crashing down, and they became dependent on U.S. government rations and annuities. For many historians, the history of the Mandan and Hidatsa ends in the 1840s. With the loss of our trade capabilities, we lost our voice in the wider history of the northern plains and American West. But we didn't stop making history. The Hidatsa people endured through the nineteenth century and responded through resistance like many tribes to the structuring of the newly imposed reservation system and the arrival of missionaries. The Crow-Flies-High band was in many ways a direct response to these changing life ways. As a group, we have been historically marginalized by our own people the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara on the Fort Berthold reservation. However, we were the last holdouts in a changing world—the last of the buffalo hunters, eagle trappers, and earthlodge dwellers. We desired cultural revitalization in a time when Native culture was being attacked and repressed by the US government. We maintained our culture and our sense of place in a region that had always been ours. Chapter one demonstrates the historical background of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara prior to their consolidation at Mua-truckpke-Hisha-Adiish, Like-A-Fishhook Village. The smallpox epidemics of 1781 and 1837 decimated the tribal populations of all three groups and created a power vacuum in the Upper-Missouri region. Forced from their villages on the Knife River complex, the Mandan and Hidatsa migrated north along the Missouri where they were later joined by the Arikara for mutual defense against the Lakota and Dakota Sioux. Chapter two shows the founding of Mua-truckpke-Hisha-Adiish. The chapter stresses the importance of cultural practice and worldview of the tribes. It is a period of closer relations with the United States Federal Government through treaty making, land cessions and direct government oversight with the creation of Indian Agent posts. The increased tension with the federal government as well as intertribal disagreements on leadership/religious roles led to an eventual split among
the Mandan and Hidatsa. Chapter two closes with disagreements over bundle rights and ration distribution that led to an eventual migration of the group led by Crow-Flies-High. Chapter three argues the migration of the Crow-Flies-High band leads to the establishment of a new village and cultural hub, Hushgah-Adiish, Badlands Lodge/Village. It explores the attempted cultural revitalization by the group and the ability of Native people to live successfully distanced from governmental oversight. This chapter illustrates the importance of the region to Hidatsa-proper people as a hunting territory and sacred region. It also showcases the various cultural practices such as eagle trapping that see a rise in popularity during this time. There is a look back at Fishhook Village during this time period and the increased efforts by missionaries and Indian Agents to push forward the agenda of civilization for the village dwellers. As a result, Hushgah Adiish becomes an outlet for traditionalism that is otherwise being repressed. Chapter four reveals the waning years of Hushgah Adiish, and establishment of the final village away from the reservation, Hushgah eeda Aashiish: The Stream of the Badlands Band. It explains the reasons for the eventual forced removal of the band to the reservation and how they retained a distinct cultural identity and practice from their 24 years of successfully living away from the influences of missionaries and Indian Agents. It displays how these people fit into the wider context of the waning days of the buffalo hunt and the desire for Indian people to live as they once did before the restriction of their movements by the federal government. The Hushgah or Crow-Flies-High band were a reactionary group of Hidatsa and Mandan who lived for 24 years away from religious restriction and flourished as a defiant people.

Level of Degree
Masters

Degree Name
History

Department Name
History

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Language
English

Document Type
Thesis

Recommended Citation

In 1832 Prince Maximilian of Wied, a German naturalist-explorer, and Karl Bodmer, a Swiss artist, embarked on a voyage of discovery to document the land and native peoples along the Upper Missouri River. In the context of American cultural history, their journey provided a remarkable opportunity, as it was undertaken just before the unspoiled West was to change irrevocably. Bodmer's depiction of the settlements visited, the extraordinary landscapes observed, and his portraits of Blackfeet, Crow, Cree, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Sioux Indians are acknowledged as one of the finest records of Indi C However, up to the eighteenth century, river work was seen in a generally favourable light. For Langland, writing in the fourteenth century, the labourers working on river merchandise were relatively prosperous. And the porters of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were, if anything, aristocrats of labour, enjoying high status. However, in the years from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, there was a marked change in attitude. This was in part because the working river was within the region of the East End of London, which in this period acquired an unenviable r Nearly one century later, the Three Affiliated Tribes-Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara-had successfully recovered through intermarriage and cultural replacement. On the river bottom we had plenty of water to drink, wash and water our livestock. When we were forced to move to the upper plains, wells were dug so deep that you could not pump them by hand...When we moved to the prairie, we could no longer eat the chicken eggs...they were blood red because of the water! The water was not suitable even for animals. The poor water supply has forced many residents to move from the rural countryside to the hub of reservation activity at New Town.