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usual attractive and quality-controlled format that one may expect from this publisher. Haviland and Power not only have filled a large gap with needed knowledge but have produced a model book as well. Both those interested in studying Northeastern Indians (past and present) and the Vermont Abenaki themselves should be delighted with this publication. It sets a standard well worth emulating, in both scholarship and inter-ethnic understanding.

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John Eliot's Indian Dialogues: A Study in Cultural Interaction. Edited by Henry W. Bowden and James P. Ronda. Contributions in American History, No. 88 Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980. 173 pp. \$27.50 Cloth.

In 1671 John Eliot, missionary to the Indians, wrote his *Indian Dialogues* in the hope of converting more Indians to Puritanism. It was printed poorly and in a very limited press run. Henry W. Bowden and James P. Ronda, who discovered that there are only two copies extant (one in Oxford's Bodleian Library and the other in the Lenox Collection at the New York Public Library), have now reprinted and annotated the *Dialogues* for a wider audience. They not only have adopted modern usage as to capitalization, punctuation and spelling but have corrected the misspellings and typographical errors which are numerous in the original.

The *Dialogues*, a series of imagined encounters between Praying Indians and other Natives, is divided into three parts. In Dialogue I Eliot portrays the Indian missionary as having denounced the traditional Native way of life as "filth and folly," accepted Christian truth as contrast with pagan falsehood and come to a village to root out a depraved way of life and to replace it with correct beliefs that nourish true piety. The Native listeners, however, are largely unconcerned, saying that "We are well as we are, and desire not to be troubled with these new wise sayings." When the missionary begins demonstrating his piety through practical examples, the Natives begin to listen more respectfully as they understand how the new religion applies to their present lives in a practical, day-to-day fashion.

The reactions of the sachem and the pow-wow are different. The sachem complains that potential converts would have to give up too much to accept the new faith. The pow-wow concurs, insisting that their customs are satisfactory and that Native gods are sufficient, especially as their large number can accomplish more than any single deity could. The missionary responds by stressing God's omnipotence and the sinful life of non-Christian culture, but the pow-wow remains unmoved, saying, "Let us alone, that we may be quiet in the ways which we like and love, as we let you alone in your changes and new ways." Although the missionary succeeds in making many Indian villagers receptive to Christianity, both sachem and pow-wow find enough reasons not to accept Christianity.

In Dialogue II the central figure is Waban; headman of the first Praying town at Natick, who speaks of the typically Puritan views of God as creator and law-giver, of man as sinner fated to die, of the Trinity, of Christ and of human repentance. He outlines the distinguishing marks of a practicing Christian, without mentioning anything adverse to indigenous customs. Indians, Waban adds, could remain ethically distinct and add prayerful habits to their life style, but they require diligence against backsliding. Responding to an old man who says, "I am old and cold and dry, and half dead already," Waban insists that the gospel applies to the old as well as to the young.

Dialogue III involves Philip, a Wampanoag chief, who, different from the historical Philip, is depicted as having a serious interest in Christianity. His argument against the new faith is that conversion would destroy him politically. If people accept Christianity, they will reject him as their sachem. If he becomes a Christian without his fellow tribesmen, then he loses social influence by abandoning his constituency. The sachem points out that if a headman enters the new faith, he would lower himself to equality with his people and jeopardize his social standing. He also questions Biblical authenticity.

Although the missionary's answers to these questions seem not fully convincing, the last part of the dialogue deals with the Wampanoag leader (though no longer mentioned by name), who has become a penitent Christian. The Indian is told that the new birth rarely brings absolute certainty with it, but believers should trust in God to provide for their eternal security. Selfless dependence is the best evidence that grace is truly operating

within them and will sustain their journey to ultimate peace. The missionary tells him to trust in God and move on to dutiful Christian living, to which the Native finally responds with an emphatic statement, "I am another man than I was. I looked upon my self the most miserable of men. I now am happy being united with Christ."

The basic ideas and issues embodied in Eliot's earlier writings are clearly reflected in the *Dialogues*. The readers are struck by his full understanding of Indian culture and way of life. Eliot was insightful enough to recognize Indian tradition, custom, ideologies and political leadership antithetical to Christianity and elaborated them to illustrate the Indian resistance to missionary activities. The *Dialogues* is an honest account in which Eliot made an effort to accurately describe the Indian attitudes and problems. There are occasional jumps of logic in the process of converting Indians, indicating the missionary's extremely difficult task of conversion, especially among Indian chiefs and pow-wows.

Some recent historians have doubted the sincerity of John Eliot to convert the Indians, maintaining that he had no intention to incorporate them as part of the colonial population. The *Dialogues*, however, seems to attest to the fact that Eliot, as late as 1671, did hope, *in theory* [Ed.'s italics] at least, to Christianize Indians and to assimilate them into the White community.

The 56-page introduction by the editors provides a general but pertinent background for Eliot's work, covering the nature of Indian culture in seventeenth century New England, the missionary activities among the Indians and the nature and significance of the *Dialogues*. The editors argue that the *Dialogues*, besides being a handbook for the Christian Indian missionaries, was written with some ulterior motives such as to portray Eliot's charges as orthodox believers to the larger Christian world and to make a favorable impression on the Commissioners of the United Colonies. The book was printed in English not because it was designed for the English readers but simply because English was Eliot's own native language, which the Indian missionaries could understand. The editors point out that the *Dialogues* was hastily written and carelessly printed, but it is understandable that Eliot wrote the book in a straightforward fashion without much literary refinement because it was prepared solely as a training manual.

The sketchy bibliography, though not much use for serious

scholars, is beneficial for general readers. The annotations are sparse but helpful. As a whole, the editors have produced a useful work, but its sales, unfortunately, will be small because the book is grossly overpriced. Asking \$27.50 for a book of 173 pages is simply self-defeating.

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THE POLITICAL OUTSIDERS: Blacks and Indians in a Rural Oklahoma County. By Brian F. Rader. San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, Inc., 1978. 188 pp. \$13.00 Paper.

The Political Outsiders is a study of Blacks and Indians (specifically Creek and Cherokee) living in McIntosh County in east-central Oklahoma. The study is based primarily on census, voter registration and election statistics and on interviews conducted by the author and assistants. It is a *tour de force* in the application of established theoretical models for explaining social and political action, through which the author arrives at a series of conclusions. The ethnic citizenry does not take more active political roles than it does because the county lacks "political modernization;" "economic dependence and tradition" reinforce ethnic political and social subservience to the Whites. The ethnic citizenry believes in working within the democratic process, but the Indians are more politically active and effective than the Blacks. The ethnic leadership is "fragmented," and there is no coalition of groups; and, the political issues that interest each group are different. These conclusions, which no doubt vary in their degrees of validity, are hardly startling, and the reader puts down the study feeling that its potential has not been realized. The reasons for that feeling are many, but the following are exemplary.

One aspect of the study that blunts its potential is the persistent subjection of the acquired data to established theoretical models. One understands that graduate studies stress methodology, but there has been little attempt to disguise the dissertation effect of this study. Brian F. Rader seems intent on demonstrating that he has searched the secondary studies in sociology and