FRANCIS JENNINGS — *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744.* New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1984. Pp. xxvi, 438.

Although he did not set out to do so, Francis Jennings has written what is certain to become a major reference work for studying the history of New France. The Five Nations Iroquois, who lived in upper New York State, played an important role in shaping the development of Canada no less than that of the United States. Yet no comprehensive history of these tribes has been available. Early in his career, Francis Parkman planned to write such a history, but he abandoned the project when he concluded that it would not be of much interest to "civilized readers". In his monumental *Iroquoisie*, the first volume of which appeared in 1947, Léo-Paul Desrosiers brilliantly chronicled relations between the Iroquois and the French; although this work does not appear in Jennings' bibliography or many others. G.T. Hunt's *The Wars of the Iroquois* was a specialized study of the role that the Iroquois were thought to have played in the fur trade rather than a rounded history. Iroquois dealings with Dutch and later English colonists in New York State during the seventeenth century were last surveyed in moderate detail in A.W. Trelease's *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*.

Canadian historians and historical anthropologists are familiar with the complex network of relationships that enmeshed the French, the Iroquois, and various Indian tribes as far west as the Mississippi Valley. They have also paid considerable attention to relations between the Iroquois and European colonists in New York State and New England. Understandably, they have been less concerned that the Iroquois homeland embraced the headwaters of the Delaware, Susquehanna, and Ohio Rivers as well as the Hudson and various tributaries of the St. Lawrence system; that the Iroquois had significant economic and political dealings with Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; and that the Iroquois raided tribes as far south as the back country of the Carolinas. Jennings' meticulous study allows Canadian scholars for the first time to understand Iroquois history in the round. By providing a detailed guide to their dealings with the European colonies to the south and east, it makes possible a more comprehensive understanding of their relationships with the French.

The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire is the second volume of a projected three-volume work in which Jennings seeks to document how European colonists and Native Americans "shared in the creation of the society that became the United States of America" (p. xv). More specifically he attempts to demonstrate how different strategies were adopted by the various Indian tribes and European colonies to cope with neighbouring groups, both Indian and European. In *The Invasion of America*, Jennings established that other historians failed to realize that the strategy adopted by the Puritans of New England was one of deliberate armed conquest because they had accepted uncritically self-serving Puritan accounts of their relations with native groups and neighbouring colonies. In the present work, he delineates how, down to 1744, the "middle colonies" of New Netherland and its English successors, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey, pursued a strategy of accommodation based on formal co-operation between themselves and Indian tribes. This co-operation also served as a major instrument of intercolonial rivalry.

Jennings demonstrates that the myth that the Iroquois ruled over a "savage empire" extending westward to the Mississippi and south to the Carolinas was fabricated by British colonists to further their own expansionist policies. It survived in written form and Iroquois traditions and was accepted and popularized by the nineteenth-century anthropologist L.H. Morgan and the historian Francis Parkman. In reality the Iroquois suffered repeated military and economic defeats at the hands of the French and their Indian allies beginning in the 1660s. Thereafter they could only achieve durable successes when backed by European allies, which usually meant that their interests had to correspond with those of English colonists. They were also able to exert only fleeting influences over tribes allied to the French.

The Iroquois and the English pursued their respective goals within the context of a complex alliance known as the Covenant Chain. As part of this alliance, the so-called Iroquois empire was a complex and shifting conjury of tribes organized and maintained by incessant treaty negotiations in which the English colonies were involved. Weakened by a high mortality rate resulting from epidemics and continual warfare, the Iroquois alternately sought support from other tribes to resist European encroachment and depended on European assistance to coerce other tribes. The English, like their Dutch predecessors, regarded an Iroquois alliance as an expedient to be maintained until the colonists were powerful enough to assert their pretensions to sovereignty. While Jennings stresses that his book is a history of the Covenant Chain rather than of particular tribes or colonies, it comes closer than any major work published to date to being a history of the Iroquois from 1600 to 1744.

Jennings' demonstration that the political and military power of the Iroquois has been greatly exaggerated will not surprise many Canadian historians. In recent years, the idea that the Iroquois posed a constant threat to the existence of New France has been called increasingly into question. The Iroquois appear never to have sought to annihilate New France and at no time after the peace of 1653 did they have the power to do so. While their raids occasionally inflicted severe privations and losses on the French colonists, the Iroquois themselves suffered even greater losses between 1658 and 1667 and again between 1689 and 1701. They were also repeatedly defeated by tribes allied to the French as they sought to raid and extend their hunting territories westward to the Mississippi Valley, and late in the seventeenth century an alliance of Ojibwa and Wyandots expelled them from southern Ontario. It is evident that in their efforts to portray the history of New France as a valiant struggle against a circle of deadly foes, Canadian historians of the nineteenth century were overly predisposed to accept the reality of Parkman's Iroquois empire.

Yet, despite its importance and undeniable strengths, Jennings' book has some shortcomings. His knowledge of relations between the Iroquois and the English is not matched by his understanding of their relations with the French. Moreover, despite the care that he takes to analyze Indian behaviour in terms of native perceptions and values, Jennings is primarily interested in political history. This traditional approach is a legitimate one provided that by ignoring other factors it does not distort an understanding of political relations. In *The Invasion of America*, where the principal economic issue pitting Puritan against Native American was the exploitation of land, a political focus worked very well. In the present volume, Jennings' failure to pay more attention to social and economic data creates a number of serious problems, in part because the fur trade and accommodation with native peoples were of greater importance in the middle colonies than in New England. These problems are especially evident with respect to Iroquois relations with the French. In some instances they result in Jennings misinterpreting French motives that seem to have been correctly understood in the past.

Jennings is particularly assiduous in differentiating the policies pursued by each of the five tribes that belonged to the Iroquois confederacy. He stresses that this league, which primarily served to curb blood revenge among its member tribes, was far from monolithic in its dealings with other groups. In particular, the rivalry that was already evident early in the seventeenth century between the Mohawks and the Onondagas persisted into the eighteenth century and led the latter tribe to seek political and economic alliances with New France and Pennsylvania as a means of counter-balancing the prestige that the Mohawks derived from their closer association with Albany. Jennings does not, however, examine the factional rivalries within individual Iroquois tribes that are also very important for explaining their relations with Europeans. Claude-Charles Bacqueville de La Potherie observed that when it came to foreign policy, and especially when they feared an enemy, Iroquoian peoples divided into two factions that pursued diametrically opposed policies. He also argued that, instead of weakening them, these alternative positions made their foreign policy more flexible and helped them to fend off humiliating defeats.

In a number of ways, the French were highly useful to the Iroquois. They were a source of trade goods and potential allies when relations deteriorated with Albany. By trading with the northern tribes the French also ensured that these tribes did not threaten the Iroquois' monopolization of trade with the Dutch and English. For these reasons, the continued existence of New France was essential to the Iroquois.

Factions preferring good relations with the French and with Albany are attested among the various Iroquois tribes as early as the 1640s. For the Mohawks, it is clear that this division followed pre-existing clan lines, with the Turtle and Wolf clans favouring good relations with the French. While the English factions tended to be the stronger one in each tribe, especially among the Mohawks, the French factions became dominant and were able to make peace with the French whenever prolonged warfare with the latter proved too costly for the Iroquois. The leaders of the French factions often maintained clandestine contact with French officials during periods of hostility. By shifting power between these factions, the Iroquois were able to avoid total defeat by the French and total reliance on the English. It is also clear that the Jesuit missionaries did not so much divide the Iroquois in the manner Jennings suggests as accentuate existing political divisions within each tribe.

Yet this factionalism was not without cost to the Iroquois. The destruction of the Mohawk villages in 1666 as the result of a needless prolongation of hostilities with the French by the English faction appears to have been a major factor inducing many pro-French Mohawks to leave their villages and settle at Caughnawaga, as still more did during the later stages of the war of 1689 to 1701. Jennings also appears to be mistaken when he accuses Alexandre de Prouville de Tracy of ruthlessly attacking the Mohawks in 1666 despite their evident desire for peace. From 1653 on, the more extreme elements of the English faction had worked first to terminate the peace with the French and then to keep the war going despite formidable Iroquois losses and the growing invulnerability of the French. Although an increasing number of Mohawks were inclined to make peace, French officials were almost certainly correct when they concluded that a lasting peace was impossible until the militant faction had been totally discredited. The indignation and mistrust that Jennings alleges this action aroused among the Mohawks did not prevent the French faction from welcoming Jesuit missionaries to their settlements and moving in growing numbers to Caughnawaga.

The study of factionalism also raises interesting questions about the nature of the Covenant Chain. Jennings believes that in the 1680s the Onondagas tried to bring the French into this alliance and to transform it from being "a confederation with New York and the Mohawks at its center to a confederation with the Onondagas linking Canada and New York" (p. 185). He also observes that the Onondagas had no desire to renounce the alliance already linking them to New York. Yet one wonders if the Onondagas were speaking about being linked by the same Chain to the French and to the British. The Iroquois may have seen one Chain linking the French factions to Canada and a completely separate one linking the British factions to Albany and through Albany to the other British colonies. The existence of two chains negotiated by different people may account for the otherwise enigmatic tendency of the Iroquois to address the French Governor as Father and the English one by the less venerable title of Brother. It would also explain the wording of the rather desperate order that Thomas Dongan, Governor of New York, issued to the Iroquois in 1686 not to "Enter Into any Covenant Chain with any Christians french or English" without his consent (p. 232). If the Covenant Chain that Jennings has studied linked British factions rather than whole tribes to the English colonies, it may have had considerably less significance within the overall context of Iroquois politics than he has suggested.

Jennings also underestimates the extent and importance of factionalism within New France. In citing Marcel Trudel to show that the French aimed to control the Indians politically between 1604 and 1627, he is referring to the policies pursued by Champlain and the Recollet and Jesuit missionaries rather than to those of the fur traders, who had closer and more effective relations with the Indians. These traders, who knew the Indians well and how to

get along with them, no more aspired to control them politically at this time than did their Dutch counterparts at Fort Orange.

It is also clear than in 1645 (unlike the dark days of 1653) the French made peace with the Mohawks only on condition that the latter also made peace with their tribal allies. Jennings errs in his claim that provisional French responses to a suggestion made by the Mohawks that allies be excluded from the peace treaty are an example of the "demands of honour" giving way to "those of faith and expedience" (p. 92). The implementation of this peace clearly demonstrates that the French did not abandon their native allies, either Christian or non-Christian. One of the strong points of French policy was their general willingness to fight to support their Indian allies, which the English would not do for the Iroquois.

Jennings pays far less attention to the economic aspect of relations between the Iroquois and neighbouring groups than did either Hunt or Trelease. He rejects, summarily but probably correctly, W.J. Eccles' arguments that European goods may not have cost more in New France than at Albany, but nowhere considers the volumes of furs that the Iroquois were trading with Europeans; where and how they were obtaining these furs; and how much and what sort of European goods they were receiving in return. He also vacillates in his analysis of the beaver wars of the 1640s and 1650s. On the one hand, he says that these wars were fought to gain hunting territories and control trade but elsewhere he makes a special point of according more importance to political factors. He employs a highly obscure passage in the *Jesuit Relations*, which possibly refers only to Huron traders captured on the St. Lawrence, to argue that the Mohawks were motivated to attack the Hurons in the late 1640s by an Indian "dream of empire" (p. 94). He does not take account of the Iroquois' growing need for furs beginning in the 1630s or of what appears to have been their inability to supply these needs from a possibly declining beaver population within their own territories. He also pays inadequate attention to Iroquois activities in the north following their defeat of the Hurons. In the decade that followed this victory the western Iroquois tribes extensively plundered furs and hunted beavers in Central Ontario and around the Upper Great Lakes, while the eastern Iroquois did the same in northern New England and deep into northern Quebec. The main motive that the Senecas may have had for dispersing the Eries was to expand their hunting territories into the Ohio Valley.

I am convinced that Jennings errs when he suggests that the Mohawks attacked the Hurons primarily because they wished to usurp their special trading relationships with the French. A far more important motive was to help remove the Hurons as an impediment to Iroquois raiding and hunting in the fur-rich regions of Central Ontario. They also sought to force the French to adopt a position of neutrality so they could raid the Algonkins and Montagnais of Central Quebec without hindrance. The latter objective was achieved temporarily by the peace of 1653. By requiring the Iroquois to abandon their raids in the north, the far less favourable peace completed in 1667 compelled them to intensify their search for furs south and west of Lake Erie. Because he has not analyzed economic relations in the same detail that he has studied treaties and records of political activities, Jennings has failed to account for Iroquois relations with their northern and western neighbours in a satisfactory fashion. He has lost sight of the basic factors that not only drove the Iroquois to attack neighbouring tribes but also involved them in a series of disastrous confrontations with the French. While he has deflated exaggerated claims of Iroquois power, it appears that their wars were motivated even more by economic necessity and less by "imperial" ambition than he is willing to credit.

It is painful to see Jennings, who understands the crucial importance of certain kinds of interdisciplinary research for historical interpretation, so scornful of archaeological findings. His hackneyed quip about the danger of relying for conclusions on "a few cracked pots" (p. 34) is not supported by any serious assessment of what archaeological findings can and cannot reveal. The logical extension of his argument would be to assert that nothing worth

knowing can be determined about the Indian past prior to colonial times and that Indian history can only be a facet (albeit an essential one) of colonial and post-colonial history. This is a narrow and, in my opinion, an erroneous view. Archaeology is a rapidly developing discipline and new data and more powerful techniques of interpretation have become available at an accelerating pace in recent decades. To ignore, in the name of narrow disciplinary loyalties, a major source of information about what happened to Native American societies over many thousands of years and what was occurring at the time of European contact is self-defeating even for those historians who wish to restrict their research to the colonial period. If Jennings had familiarized himself with the abundant archaeological literature supporting an *in situ* origin of the Iroquois tribes, he would not have entertained as a still likely hypothesis Cadwallader Colden's eighteenth-century view that "the Five Nations retreated from the St. Lawrence Valley to their historic locations south of Lake Ontario where they were found by Europeans to be frequently at war with the tribes on all sides" (p. 43).

Jennings is more respectful of oral history. He condemns Parkman for ignoring the Ojibwa George Copway's recording of his tribe's traditions concerning the defeat and expulsion of the Iroquois from southern Ontario at the end of the seventeenth century. He is not always, however, as careful as he might be in using such data. He cites oral traditions recorded by the Jesuits in 1642 to the effect that the ancestors of certain Indians had been driven from Montreal Island by the Hurons as evidence that the Hochelagans, who had lived there in the sixteenth century, had been dispersed by the Hurons. He further concludes that the Hurons who began trading with the French had fought their way to the St. Lawrence. Nothing, however, is recorded about native peoples in more detail in contemporary documents than the diplomacy by means of which, between 1609 and 1615, the Hurons contacted and concluded an alliance with the French. Warfare played a role in this process only to the extent that Huron offers to help the Algonkins who lived in the Ottawa Valley to fight the Oneidas were significant in overcoming the opposition of Algonkin middlemen. Jennings fails to note that the Indians the Jesuits interviewed in 1642 were not Iroquoians but Weskarinis, an Algonkin tribe living in the lower part of the Ottawa Valley. He also ignores Pierre Charlevoix's recording of an alternative tradition that this group had been expelled from the St. Lawrence by other Algonkins; a story which, except for the name of the victims, is very similar to Colden's account of how the Mohawks were driven from the St. Lawrence Valley. It is very difficult to base any firm conclusions on these data alone.

Jennings also draws conclusions about Iroquois behaviour in the seventeenth century from particular articles in the Great Law of Peace of the Iroquois, although the latter was not codified by them until the late nineteenth century and he himself notes that "it bears signs of European influence, and it must not be taken as authentic for aboriginal society" (p. 94). In other places he is wisely sceptical of the historicity of specific oral traditions and notes that they "are not strong on chronology" (p. 39).

If Jennings' judgements of those who have studied native people and their history often seem unduly harsh, they are generally warranted. He is right that both Morgan and Parkman were racists. Yet his passion sometimes overcomes his good judgement. Any parallel between Morgan and Joseph Goebbels is surely anachronistic and unjustified. A comparison with Joseph-Arthur, comte de Gobineau, the vociferous nineteenth-century advocate of racial determinism and Aryan superiority, would have been more to the point.

Jennings is right that the historian's "proper task is not to glorify ideology, but to investigate actuality" (p. 59). His faithfulness to this dictum has enabled him to penetrate the denigration and marginalization of Native Americans that permeated the intellectual life of the nineteenth century and to understand the important role that Native Americans played in shaping the colonial history of North America. While more attention to social and economic data would have enabled him to explain Iroquois political behaviour more accurately and in

greater detail, it is safe to predict that research along these lines will be inspired by Jennings' account of their political history.

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J. R. POLE — *The Gift of Government: Political Responsibility from the English Restoration to American Independence*. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1983. Pp. xiv, 185.

JOYCE APPLEBY — *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. New York: New York University Press, 1984. Pp. x, 110.

These books by Joyce Appleby and J.R. Pole share a number of characteristics. Both derive from lecture series, Appleby's from the long-established Anson G. Phelps Lectureship in Early American History at New York University, Pole's from the first Richard B. Russell Lectures at the University of Georgia. Both deal with political thought. Both view Anglo-America transatlantically, though they write primarily for early American historians. Their major difference is that Appleby is a lumper and Pole is a splitter.

Appleby defines her approach as the analysis of "how the market economy influenced the way people thought about politics and the human potential for purposefully reordering social institutions" (p. ix). In the context of the recent historiography of early modern ideology, particularly that taking its lead from J. G. A. Pocock, this is a revisionist task. The Jeffersonians, she argues, were not blinkered by the political language of classical republicanism, with its distrust of self-interest and its awkwardness with economic relations. They were intellectually challenged by the advantageous terms of trade for American agricultural products, particularly grain, after 1750. By the 1780s proto-Republicans were people who were at ease with the prospect of commercial development and its political implications. They were preoccupied with the prospect of comfort, not the discipline of industry and frugality. They had gone through the same ideological process that English political economists had gone through in the seventeenth century, a process Appleby described in her fine book, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton, 1978). Consumerism, free markets, and easy credit came to be seen as benign.

To be a lumper is not be an over-simplifier. Appleby's discussion is full of precise distinctions — such as those between those classical and historical definitions of rights and that which would eventually be known as egalitarian liberalism. After the Revolution, "the several meanings of liberty were like elements suspended in a solution, awaiting the catalyst that would crystalize them" (p. 22). That catalyst was the French Revolution. The Republicans saw the Federalists' true hierarchical and repressive colours in their denunciations of French Republicans. Appleby plays down the fiscal disputes of the 1790s; these were issues that fit the classical republican paradigm well. She identifies approval or denunciation of the democratic societies of the 1790s as the true test of political orientation. The question being decided was the relative legitimacy of popular and élite authority.

Since Appleby had situated these issues in a context of economic change, her discussion does not have the over-familiarity that may be suggested by a sheer recapitulation of her topics. It is paradoxical, however, that she has little to say about the economic circumstances of the period of the Jeffersonian triumph itself. Having started from an apparently reductionist position, she finishes at an idealist one. What the Jeffersonians really imposed was less a