



The Last Stand of the Raven Clan: A Story of Imperial Ambition, Native Resistance and How the Tlingit-Russian War Shaped a Continent

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Gerald Easter and Mara Vorhees's *The Last Stand of the Raven Clan* is an engrossing history of the Tlingit-Russian war, its causes, and its impacts on North America.

Written from the perspective of the Tlingit, this refreshing narrative explores a war long ignored in white settler history. The Tlingit are introduced in the present day as proud, reflective, and perhaps a little foolhardy. This stature echoes back in time, with the book covering cultural practices of the Tlingit precolonization and showcasing their unbroken cultural spirit. The Russians are then introduced on the Great Northern Expedition. Their exploitation of the otter, mixed with their desire to participate in Europe's colonial expansionism in the Americas, drove them to explore, expand, and conquer. Next came the Tlingit resistance.

The prose is gripping, propelled along by lyrical flourishes even through information-dense and violent sections:

A second hunter, Afanasy Liskenkov, scrambled past Baranov, but was struck by a spear and fell backward. A chorus of jeers rang down.

The beauty of the prose is supported by accounts from native people who witnessed the massacres and battles, giving a complete and rare look into how these events were seen at the time:

I was a boy of nine or ten, when the first Russian ship, a two-master, arrived. We had never seen a ship before, we did not know white men.

As a tribe without gunpowder and other modern European weaponry, their successes against the Russians are an astounding tribute to their skill as warriors and their unbroken will. There is a triumphant historical account of a success forged in the face of tremendous odds.

Captivating and poetic, *The Last Stand of the Raven Clan* is a resonant history of Indigenous resistance whose lessons are far-reaching.

AHLIAH BRATZLER (November / December 2024)

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