



Gifts from the Thunder Beings: Indigenous Archery and European Firearms in the Northern Plains and Central Subarctic, 1670-1870

Roland Bohr

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Gifts from the Thunder Beings examines North American Aboriginal peoples' use of Indigenous and European distance weapons in big-game hunting and combat. Beyond the capabilities of European weapons, Aboriginal peoples' ways of adapting and using this technology in combination with Indigenous weaponry contributed greatly to the impact these weapons had on Aboriginal cultures. This gradual transition took place from the beginning of the fur trade in the Hudson's Bay Company trading territory to the treaty and reserve period that began in Canada in the 1870s.

Technological change and the effects of European contact were not uniform throughout North America, as Roland Bohr illustrates by comparing the northern Great Plains and the Central Subarctic—two adjacent but environmentally different regions of North America—and their respective Indigenous cultures. Beginning with a brief survey of the subarctic and Northern Plains environments and the most common subsistence strategies in these regions around the time of contact, Bohr provides the context for a detailed examination of social, spiritual, and cultural aspects of bows, arrows, quivers, and firearms. His detailed analysis of the shifting usage of bows and arrows and firearms in the northern Great Plains and the Central Subarctic makes *Gifts from the Thunder Beings* an important addition to the canon of North American ethnology.

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