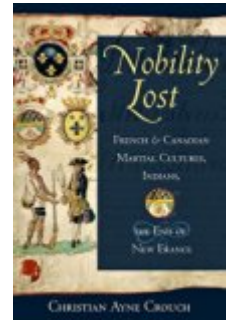


Christian Ayne Crouch. *Nobility Lost: French and Canadian Martial Cultures, Indians, and the End of New France.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. Illustrations. 264 pp. \$35.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8014-5244-4.



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Published on H-War (August, 2015)

Commissioned by Margaret Sankey (Air University)

When it comes to the Seven Years' War, the most well-known treatments focus on three things: the Seven Years' War as the first true world war, the 1763 Treaty of Paris as the end of New France, and the causal role that colonial discontents who followed the Seven Years' War played in the American Revolution.[1] Christian Ayne Crouch's *Nobility Lost* takes a new direction. Crouch explores the meaning of warfare in cultural interactions between French, Canadian, and Indian cultures of war and diplomacy with special attention to the different ways in which they affected French-Indian diplomatic relations. Ultimately, she sees these differing meanings of violence as shaping the eventual withdrawal of formal French claims to North America in 1763.

Culturally, the *troupes-de-terre* (the French regular army) and the *troupes-de-la-marine* (colonial forces) had quite different purposes. The colonial forces were charged with the protection of colonial land and train. Accommodating and collaboration with local Native peoples was a necessity for colonial troops, though orders made by

the French Crown sometimes made these accommodations difficult. For instance, in 1748-49, the colonial government was ordered by the Crown to force Native peoples of the Great Lakes, Ohio County, and Illinois County back into line with French trading orbits. Crouch shows that it began with diplomacy, but proved expensive and challenging, owing to the need to convince potential Native allies that French claims on land were not as intrusive as they seemed.

In contrast, the French regular army was ensconced in the traditional European military culture of personal honor and warfare, representing and defending the interests of the French Crown and other elites. They did not intermingle with Native peoples the way colonial troops did, and therefore did not have to negotiate and accommodate Native territorial claims and sovereignty in the ways colonial forces did. Colonial forces lived and fought alongside Native peoples. They also frequently had direct economic stakes in New France. Their interests were different, and so their experiences were different.

These competing military cultures resulted in questions about the meaning and cost of French imperial interests. One of the key outcomes was *l'affair du Canada*, in Crouch's analysis, a show trial designed to assign blame for failures of colonization in French North America. As she observes, despite the involvement of colonial and regular forces, only officers of the colonial forces stood trial. The result was that French jealousy over the loss of their French American holdings (even if some of those losses were temporary) drove future colonial policy. The colonial officers who were scapegoated for the failures of New France were shut out of France's future global ambitions.

Crouch's nuanced treatment of military, economic, and political considerations of the French and their allies are among the book's strengths. Her integrated treatment is akin to what Fred Anderson has done for Anglo-American treatments of the Seven Years' War in *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (2001). So, too, is her treatment of the Native Americans as diplomatic and military partners, even if the French did not always see them as equal partners. *Nobility Lost* provides a promising model for other Franco-American explorations of the Seven Years' War.

Note

[1]. See, for example, Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage, 2001); and Daniel A. Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

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Citation: Jessica M. Parr. Review of Crouch, Christian Ayne. *Nobility Lost: French and Canadian Martial Cultures, Indians, and the End of New France*. H-War, H-Net Reviews. August, 2015.

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