



Traders and Raiders: The Indigenous World of the Colorado Basin, 1540-1859

Natale A. Zappia

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The Colorado River region looms large in the history of the American West, vitally important in the designs and dreams of Euro-Americans since the first Spanish journey up the river in the sixteenth century. But as Natale A. Zappia argues in this expansive study, the Colorado River basin must be understood first as home to a complex Indigenous world. Through 300 years of western colonial settlement, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans all encountered vast Indigenous borderlands peopled by Mojaves, Quechans, Southern Paiutes, Utes, Yokuts, and others, bound together by political, economic, and social networks. Examining a vast cultural geography including southern California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Sonora, Baja California, and New Mexico, Zappia shows how this interior world pulsed throughout the centuries before and after Spanish contact, solidifying to create an autonomous, interethnic Indigenous space that expanded and adapted to an ever-encroaching global market economy.

Situating the Colorado River basin firmly within our understanding of Indian country, *Traders and Raiders* investigates the borders and borderlands created during this period, connecting the coastlines of the Atlantic and Pacific worlds with a vast Indigenous continent.

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