

***Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.***  
**By Lisa Brooks.**  
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TSUKADA HIROYUKI

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Doctoral student

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American historians long ago dismissed the frontier thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner, which posited the dichotomy of civilization versus savagery and was chiefly concerned with the former's westward expansion. Current researchers have labeled this region of the United States the "borderlands," a region where different groups of people interact with one another. In addition, Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr.'s "New Indian History," which puts Indians at its center, and Daniel K. Richter's perspective in *Facing East from Indian Country* have been established as foundational to the new historical stance on European westward expansion. This trend is also evident among Japanese scholars of Native American history (see *Rikkyo American Studies* in 2007). Early Americanists have increasingly turned their gaze toward Native Americans, and Lisa Brooks gave birth to a work that epitomizes this shift.

Lisa Brooks, one of the two winners of the 2019 Bancroft Prize and Professor of English and American Studies at Amherst College, wrote *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*. King Philip's War occurred in New England in the 1670s, and Brooks' book contains new perspectives on different aspects of the war, including detailed writings about the land deals as a cause of the war (ch. 3), battles on the northern front (chs. 6, 9), and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative (ch. 7). As regards the battles on the northern front, Brooks opposes the dominant interpretation of King Philip's War as a defeat of New England Indians. This view has been maintained by separating the war from the northern front, which would continue intermittently for one hundred years. At that time, the English were unable to overcome the Maine area Indians, and the Casco Bay Treaty of 1678 articulated that the English inhabitants in Indian territory must pay tribute to Indian leaders.

Moreover, from the perspective of the New Indian History, Brooks focused on two Indians: Weetamoo, the female leader of Pocasset, and James Printer, a member of the leading family of the Nipmuc praying town (chs. 1-2). These two figures have not been featured by other researchers, but are important in Indian history because they succeeded in defending their lands and communities, that is, their beloved kin. Weetamoo, in particular, adapted to the English notion of land transactions. She "understood that in the colonial system, planting lands that belonged to an individual man would be respected more than those that belonged to a collective of women" (p. 70). In negotiations, she established a male owner to protect her territory.

In describing Indian resistance, Brooks offered a bold new perspective on King Philip's War, emphasizing trans-tribal kinship networks among the Indians of Southern New England. For example, because of their kinship with the Wampanoags, the Narragansetts sheltered the Indian refugees. This action was against the agreement with the English and gradually brought them nearer to the side of



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King Philip (pp. 203-7). Thus, regarding the name of the war, Brooks was in favor of Mohegan leader Owaneco's "the Warres with the Generall Nations of Indians," because this alternate name represents the kinship networks. However, "King Philip's War" has probably been used to describe this conflict since 1716, when Thomas Church published the memoir of his father Benjamin, who led a march against King Philip (pp. 7-8).

Previous studies on King Philip's War (e.g., Pulsipher's *Subjects unto the Same King*) have elucidated two aspects of the war: the ethnic conflict and the Indians' political choice. The former has emphasized the difference between the Indians and the English, and the latter has paid attention to the fact that many Indians supported the English. Those studies have often criticized each other. Brooks seemed to support the positions of those emphasizing the ethnic conflict, because she adopted Owaneco's name and stood by the current studies of settler colonialism, which have analyzed settler violence against the indigenous people. In reality, however, her focus on the kinship networks of "the Generall Nations of Indians," which had both an ethnic and a political nature, enables the two aspects to fuse. In this book, Brooks challenged the historians' analytical frameworks and vividly depicted the Indian resistance in light of Indian culture—thus, she aptly calls her work a "New History" of King Philip's War.