

Along The Hudson And Mohawk: The 1790 Journey Of Count Paolo Andreani

REVIEWS

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Cesare Marino and Karim M. Tiro, eds. and transl., *Along the Hudson and Mohawk: The 1790 Journey of Count Paolo Andreani*. Plymouth and Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006. xii + 116 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8122-3914-0 (hbk.). £23.00; \$35.00.

Travel narratives offer readers a glimpse of bygone worlds. Those written by foreigners are especially interesting because of their outsider's perspective on society. From 14 August to mid-September 1790, a twenty-seven-year-old Milanese nobleman and student of geology, Count Paolo Andreani (1763-1823), travelled from New York City to the Mohawk Valley and back again. During this trip, Andreani kept a journal in which he recorded the landscape and rocks that he observed. More importantly, Andreani also preserved his impressions of the inhabitants, both whites and Native Americans, of the various towns and villages along his way. In doing so, he gave future readers insights into the early American republic and a view of a region about to undergo tremendous change. The American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia houses a microfilm copy of this journal, which has been largely overlooked until recently. Cesare Marino, a Smithsonian Institution anthropologist, and Karim M. Tiro, a history professor at Xavier University, have combined their efforts to translate and edit this short, but fascinating account.

Marino and Tiro open their work with a well-researched introduction, placing Count Andreani into the broader milieu of eighteenth-century scientific investigation. A product of the Enlightenment, Andreani conducted experiments in meteorology and mineralogy, and performed the first hot-air balloon flight outside of France. This background, coupled with extensive travel throughout Europe, coloured his observations after he arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in May 1790. Armed with numerous letters of introduction to various social, political, and scientific leaders, he made his way to New York City, the United States's temporary capital. There, Andreani had the opportunity to see the new republic function up close and quickly became disillusioned with some of its leaders and their partisan politics. The editors note that while the Count greatly admired George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, and respected James Madison's intelligence, he held decidedly lesser opinions of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Andreani wrote that Jefferson "brought from Europe everything bad that he saw there", and described Adams as "pompous" and exclaimed "God prevent that he become president!" (14). Marino and Tiro gleaned much of their information by scouring American and Italian archives for Andreani's letters. They wisely included a selection of these letters to his brother and Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816), the Venezuelan revolutionary, in the back of the book.

The journal itself covers fifty-three pages interspersed with illustrations. Andreani apparently intended to publish this work because he included annotations, which the editors retained and judiciously supplemented with a number of their own. Readers will notice a number of definite themes that run throughout the journal. First and foremost, Andreani was a scientist. He commented on the origin and composition of rocks, recorded temperatures and atmospheric humidity, and conducted experiments on mineral springs near Saratoga and New Lebanon. In the former case, he noted that the waters emitted bubbles that could quickly extinguish candles and suffocate animals. The Count also criticised individuals, who visited the springs for any illness without knowing what properties the waters possessed. Additionally, he was a student of history and commented on such Revolutionary War sites as Fort Washington, the Saratoga battlefield, and West Point.

Another main theme is economics. Andreani discussed the lack of manufacturing in Albany, the richness of the soil, especially in the Mohawk Valley, and the influx of new settlers. He similarly noted the difficulty in clearing the forests and its impact on land prices. In this regard, he made one of his most interesting observations. The Count recorded that settlers frequently left maple trees standing, even though they removed other species. They hoped to develop maple sugar as a substitute for that made from sugar cane. After describing the

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