

A Duty to Protect and Respect: Seneca Opposition to Incorporation during the Removal Period

Claudia Bettina Haake

When pressured to remove after the 1830 Indian Removal Act, some from among the Seneca appealed to the federal government to prevent displacement. In these letters and petitions, their authors periodically invoked the notion of *protection*, an instrument of cross-cultural diplomatic encounters of the previous century. Seneca authors sought to defend their tribe against settler takeover by invoking two different kinds of protection, external and internal. They further drew upon a civil right, petitioning, although originally it had been a method of exclusion from full political rights, and rejected the legal incorporation forced upon American Indians through the “domestic dependent nations” ruling.