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For those who have lived it, colonization is not abstract; it remains an ongoing experience. There continue to be long-term consequences and costs to society as a result of the colonial education system's reluctance to accommodate the cultural needs of Aboriginal students. These negative repercussions of colonization can no longer be discussed or perceived as strictly an Aboriginal issue. Education is vital to the holistic well-being and economic viability of not only Aboriginal communities, but also Canadian society as a whole. All Canadians must share the task of deconstruction and reconstruction, Native and non-Native alike.

Important for those involved in education and policy to understand, this book outlines deep issues and complexities that continue to plague Aboriginal children's achievement of educational success in numbers equivalent to mainstream students. These authors argue that what is at stake for improving education is the need to shift education toward becoming *more* adaptable to the social, cultural, and economic needs of Aboriginal learners. I would recommend this book as a starting point for those readers not aware of the multifaceted issues that surround the education of Canadian Aboriginal children. For us to grow as a country, it is important that *all* citizens be treated with the same dignity and respect, and this includes an education that is meeting their needs.

*Virginia Gluska*

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**The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story.** By Tiya Miles. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. 336 pages. \$35.00 cloth. \$24.95 paper.

In the foothills of the Smoky Mountains that the Cherokees still call home, the Chief Vann House stands in restored splendor, an early twenty-first-century remnant of a particular nineteenth-century-Cherokee mode of life. In *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*, Tiya Miles tells the story of the Vann House, Diamond Hill plantation, and the people who shaped it—"black, brown, red, and white" (204). Miles' work of public history is written with clarity, precision, sensitivity, and depth. As the book analyzes the social life of a historic site of continuing importance and ideological meaning, it restores the histories of women, enslaved blacks, and Cherokee responses to Euro-American colonialism. *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story* continues Miles' scholarly exploration of the relationships between Native Americans, African Americans, and whites in the

early nineteenth century. Like her book *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (2005), *The House on Diamond Hill* charts the racial and cultural tensions, divisions, and connections that everyday people experienced, in this case through the Vann family and the plantation community of Diamond Hill. As a microhistory of a particular Cherokee place, Miles' text stands out from other sociohistorical works concerning the Cherokees, including those by Theda Perdue, Circe Sturm, Thomas Hatley, and others.

From the time of its construction the Chief Vann House and Diamond Hill plantation have been a site of ideological contest, and Miles contextualizes their significance both for the Cherokees in the nineteenth century and present-day Georgians. Like other Cherokee plantation owners, James Vann was of mixed racial ancestry, his father being a Scottish trader. Built in the early nineteenth century with chattel slavery and the business acumen of the Vann family, "one of the first and most prosperous Cherokee plantations," the brick house is surrounded by forty-eight "iconic white columns for which southern architecture is recognized." Diamond Hill was the source of James Vann's wealth; it enabled him to branch into other numerous businesses, making him the wealthiest Cherokee of his generation and the leader of the small but powerful Cherokee plantation class (2-3). By the 1790s, when James Vann was in his early thirties, some Cherokees were reacting to Euro-American colonialism by deliberately consolidating wealth and political power. Both by living within Cherokee law, which enabled a Cherokee citizen to utilize large amounts of communally owned land, and by inheriting slaves from his father, Vann came to own and enslave more than a hundred people.

While Vann was infamous among Cherokees for his erratic and often violent disposition, nevertheless he was a Cherokee patriot who strongly supported Cherokee self-government. Outlining the deep ironies of the socio-political history of Diamond Hill, Miles asks, "Why is a Cherokee Indian plantation so powerful a place in the hearts and minds of modern-day Georgians? What stories are allowed and disallowed, voiced and suppressed, at this beloved historic site?" (17). The Vanns eventually lost their estate to rapacious Georgians during the Removal period, but Miles argues that the historical site of the Chief Vann House recovers their glorious past in a shared nostalgia: "Cherokees and southerners alike had fought for a noble, lost cause" (15). Imagined as a structure that unites Southern plantation culture and the apex of "civilized" Cherokee life, the Chief Vann House allows tourists to "participate in the imagined, combined reenactment of southern antebellum and Native American life" (14).

Against this impulse to mystify the past, Miles reads the Vann House as a public historic site in the prologue, introduction, and conclusion. Chapters 1

and 2 offer a “contextualized biographical treatment” of James Vann, describing the development of the plantation, his marriage to Peggy Scott, and, in 1801, his “invitation of settlement to Moravian missionaries—all within the context of Cherokee cultural change” (the Moravians were invited with the requirement that they establish a school for Cherokee youth). For Miles, chapter 3 is the “heart of the book.” The author uses extensive documentary evidence to draw “a picture I believe has been missing in the historical literature thus far,” one of “the family and community of lives of over one hundred enslaved and free blacks on the premises” (18–19). Aspects of “black community and culture that hold true for the period of James Vann’s administration” are explored through specific examples (19). The enslaved on James Vann’s plantation were brutally punished and suffered “public executions to instill group fear,” yet Miles argues that Vann’s particular brand of subjugation nonetheless allowed “relative physical mobility, economic opportunity, and a degree of social interaction with people outside of the slave class [that] surpassed that of peers living on many white-owned plantations” (80–81).

Chapter 4 is a study of the evolution of Cherokee domestic violence in the early-nineteenth-century plantation household. Miles attributes it to the effects of Euro-American colonialism and increasing alcohol abuse, writing, “the subjugation of Cherokee women to Cherokee men, of black slaves to Cherokee owners, of Cherokee leaders to American authority was all of a piece” (111). Chapter 5 extends this analysis by exploring the social circumstances after the 1809 murder of James Vann, which led to Peggy Scott’s conversion by the Moravian Missionaries of Spring Place and her becoming “the first Cherokee to formally convert to Christianity” (139). Chapter 6 concludes the book, focusing on Peggy Scott’s death, Joseph Vann’s inheritance of Diamond Hill, his loss of the plantation during the Cherokee Removal period, and the reestablishment of his wealth in the west through the labor of those he enslaved.

Miles concludes *The House on Diamond Hill* with an inclusive vision: “Working together—as students of history; lovers of old, magnificent buildings; southerners, northerners, westerners, foreigners, Cherokees, blacks, and whites—we can unwrap this grand old home’s glittering façade, open wide its multistoried windows and doors, and allow the memories and meanings of all who dwelled there to flow through our understanding like a cleansing breeze” (197). She presents *The House on Diamond Hill* as a form of “public engagement and information-sharing toward the end of co-constructing a sense of the past that enriches rather than limits communities” (204). To that end, she states that the work emerged in collaboration with “university professors, college students, local researchers, and staff members as well as supporters of a state-sponsored historic site” (204). Her research was shared with the Chief Vann House State Historic Site employees, and as a result the

site now better reflects the history of all those who lived on Diamond Hill plantation. Considering not only the number of collaborators with the work, but those that claim a stake in the legacy of Diamond Hill—most notably the descendants of those enslaved by the Cherokees, the three federally recognized governments of the Cherokees, and the state of Georgia—it is remarkable how Miles navigates such a troubled history with exemplary grace and equanimity.

However, the metadiscursive choices that Miles makes in order to achieve this variegated history of the Vann House may elide the asymmetries of power that shape the written documents from which she draws her research, masking the crucial political reality that it remains a colonized place. Although Miles recognizes that the Vann records exist as a “colonial archive, since most were produced at the behest or as a result of U.S. military, political, economic, and cultural subjugation of the Cherokees” (209), her study does not range widely beyond the written record and engage a living Cherokee oral history that may have provided additional perspectives and insights into life on Diamond Hill. With its burden of history, it also remains a Cherokee place. What stories are passed down about that place, and how does it continue to function in the Cherokee historical imagination? A democratic vision of interpretive inclusivity may comfort settlers who continue to lay claim to Cherokee territory, position themselves as interpreters of Cherokee history, and deign to act as custodians of Cherokee land and places. Seemingly, the question that cannot be asked is, “Why is it that the Chief Vann House and Diamond Hill plantation continue to be claimed by Georgia?” As Miles boldly acknowledges, “Hostility, ethnocentrism, racism, greed—all of these base emotions fed Georgia’s invasion of the Cherokee Nation” (176). Can the continuing occupation of Cherokee land by Georgia be characterized any differently—more justly—today? And if not, what critical imperatives ensue from that recognition?

In one form the legacy of colonialism rages on for the Cherokee Nation through its dispute with the Cherokee Freedmen (descendants of those who were enslaved by the Cherokee and who were granted Cherokee citizenship after the Civil War), who are seeking Cherokee Nation citizenship. At the same time, the Chief Vann House and Diamond Hill plantation remain occupied by Georgians, functioning largely as a remnant of a colonial past set in the distance, a site for preservation, study, and contemplation. In *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*, Tiya Miles presents a powerful, complicated, and compelling work of public history whose subject remains contentious and painful. For the Cherokee Freedmen, the Cherokee Nation, and the state of Georgia, the story and its effects continue.

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