Part of Ephanie's journey, as both the apple tree and tree of light make clear, is a movement toward sexual identity and would seem to be one away from the male and toward the female, perhaps the androgynous female exemplified by Spider Woman. In the course of the novel Ephanie is abandoned by a first, vaguely defined husband who leaves her with two children and a rising rage. After being abandoned Ephanie moves to free herself of the stifling care of her spiritual *hermano* and teacher, Stephen, realizing that Stephen is trapping her in her dependence upon him. Later, in San Francisco, Ephanie becomes involved with and marries a Nisei man, Thomas, who is also deracinated, tortured and torturing, and who, before Ephanie leaves him, fathers her twin sons, one of whom dies in Ephanie's Oregon retreat.

Supporting Ephanie most of this time is Teresa, a White psychic and sister who seems destined to replace Elena, the lost lover of Ephanie's childhood. In the end, after Ephanie has isolated herself and awakened to knowledge of who she is and where she is, Spider Woman comes to her to complete her quest and to tell her to pass on the knowledge she has gained: "Give it to your sister, Teresa. The one who waits. She is ready to know" (p. 210).

The Woman Who Owned The Shadows is a powerful, uneven book. While the fragmented, involuted style effectively forces the reader to experience Ephanie's anguish, uncertainty and psychic fragmentation, it also makes for turgid reading at times, other times reaching a point of diminishing returns. This novel, however, marks an important place in American fiction. Paula Gunn Allen has given us, for the first time in novel form, a sensitive, sophisticated, forceful portrait of a contemporary American Indian woman, a valuable addition to the increasingly impressive list of novels by American Indians.

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Cricket Sings: A Novel of Pre-Columbia Cahokia. By Kathleen King. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1983. 162 pp. $15.95 Cloth. $8.95 Paper.

This book does not require extensive review. According to the author's introduction, it is "the first attempt to combine the archaeological facts about Cahokia [a pre-Columbian culture located at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers] with a story. The culture of the People is based both on direct research related to Cahokia and studies of historic Amerindians." So it sets out to be a historical—or rather, a prehistorical—novel.

As with all historical fictions, *Cricket Sings* can be evaluated in two aspects: as a work of literary art and as a representation of a particular time, place and people. Very few works are excellent in both ways, nor is there need. *Hamlet* is not judged by its fidelity to Danish history; *The Cloister and the Hearth* may be quite accurate in its rendering of medieval life, though it is a very dull story. So a person might be well satisfied with a mediocre story and good cultural description, or alternatively, with a good story and merely passable historical accuracy.

As a work of fiction *Cricket Sings* has nothing to recommend it. To say that the characters are one-dimensional is unhappily to exaggerate: most are defined by name only, a few by some physical peculiarity (one-eyed) or quirk of personality (garrulousness). The plot is simple and straightforward, although not altogether clearly motivated. The prose is uniformly tedious, consisting almost exclusively of simple declarative sentences. Besides monotony, the style suffers from affectation: idiosyncratic capitalization, euphemisms or circumlocutions, peculiar usage ("ceremonial" and "ceremonious" used interchangeably, and—for the first time ever—shaman pluralized as shamen.)

If it fails as a work of fiction, we must still ask if *Cricket Sings* has any value as a historical representation. In one sense the question is unanswerable because, as the author acknowledges in her introduction, no historical records of Cahokian civilization exist. The only alternative is to judge the book's adequacy by its fidelity to archaeological evidence and by its accuracy in presenting "historic Amerindian" culture as the author claims is the basis for her research.

An extensive bibliography for further reading informs the reader of scholarly sources on Cahokian culture, and numerous passages in the novel—on gambling games, on housing construction, utensils, clothing and so on—can easily be extracted and checked for accuracy. In other matters, however, values, customs and assumptions as presented in the story are foreign to Ameri-

can Indian ways of thought or do not make sense in the context of American Indian culture.

If it resembles anything, the society presented in the book seems to represent a vaguely pre-industrial social organization with some extremely muted hints of revolutionary thinking. The concept and difficulties of making a living, child labor and attitudes towards work, class, caste, family and clan relationships—the whole "infrastructure" of a civilization, insofar as it is represented—is recognizably western European and can be seen to have little to do with indigenous North American cultures presented in ethnographic or historical documents. Some items are vague or contradictory; for instance, is this a patrilineal culture where a bride moves in with husband's family or a matrilineal society where a woman divorces her husband by putting out his shoes? Other items, like the recurrent discussion of the evils of child labor, seem simply anachronistic. My own reading in social history indicates that concepts of child labor, as of childhood itself, are mainly the creation of industrial and post-industrial society. Finally, some things, like the carrying of nursing babies into sweat lodges, are simply not credible in any context.

Quite a few novels have been written that supposedly tell about life on this continent before the European invasion. Most of them are not very good. This book, unfortunately, is no exception.

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Interpreting the Indian: Twentieth-Century Poets and the Native American. By Michael Castro. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983. 224 pp. $22.50 Cloth.

At the Summer Seminar on Native American Literature, Michael Castro mentions in his "Acknowledgments," that Terry Wilson described his concept of the 150% American Indian—a person who has the capacity to learn deeply from his or her own tribal culture(s) and from non-Indian cultures and the ability to create a "new" identity enriched by these diverse perspectives. One of the implicit questions asked by Castro's *Interpreting the Indian*