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Creek Religion and Medicine. By John R. Swanton. Introduction by James T. Carson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. 213 pages. \$37.50 paper.

Swanton's work, *Creek Religion and Medicine*, was originally published as "Religious Beliefs and Medical Practices of the Creek Indians," in the forty-second annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (1928). Although the distinguished ethnographer died in 1958, his research and influence remains a foundational body of work for the study of ancestral and contemporary southeastern Native peoples.

James T. Carson, assistant professor of history at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, provides an introduction to the text. Carson offers a brief overview of the book's subject matter and examines how Swanton's study has both shaped and challenged modern academic approaches related to the examination of Mvskoke (Creek) worldview and history.

The primary strength of *Creek Religion and Medicine* is the vast amount of information presented by Swanton regarding Mvskoke ceremonialism. He compared his personal field notes and oral accounts with the reports of a numerous predecessors and contemporaries, including James Adair, M. Bossu, James Mooney, George Stiggins, and W. O. Tuggle. To a large degree, Swanton focused on the annual renewal ceremony, referred to in the book as the Busk Ceremony (*busk* is an English derivative of the Mvskoke infinitive *posketv*, which means "to fast").

Swanton also recognized the diversity among southeastern communities, listing distinguishing features of the autonomous towns, or *taluvv*, of the Mvskoke Confederacy and noting the multiple versions of *busk* ceremonial patterns conducted across the Mvskoke tribal diaspora (pp. 603–607). Other examples of multiplicity noted by Swanton, within and outside Mvskoke communities, include cosmos (pp. 477–481), supernatural beings (pp. 481–498), medical treatment (pp. 622–629), and medicinal plants (pp. 655–670).

Today, the Busk Ceremony is more commonly known as the Green Corn Ceremony. For modern Mvskoke and Oklahoma Seminole insight into the Green Corn Ceremony, see Jean Chaudhuri and Joyotpaul Chaudhuri, *A Sacred Path: The Way of the Muscogee Creeks* (2001); Willie Lena and James H. Howard, *Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicine, Magic, and Religion* (1984); Louis Littlecoon Oliver, *Chasers of the Sun: Creek Indian Thoughts* (1990); and Craig S. Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (1999).

While the volume of information Swanton collected over seventy-three years ago remains valuable today, his summary omits several important points. A contemporary co-author might have revamped and extended his topical areas.

First, the lack of Native female sources included in Swanton's work ignores the presence of Mvskoke women in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century life. This omission is compounded by his implication that Mvskoke women, with respect to medicine, were more closely associated with common practitioners and midwives, deficient in "supernatural power but . . . nonetheless acquainted with remedies . . . called in case[s] of minor importance" (p. 615). Although members of the Mvskoke Nation continue to feature matrilineal aspects in familial and ceremonial associations, the examination of women's

roles and contributions in this text lacks comprehensive documentation. Swanton ignored potentially 50 percent of the Mvskoke citizens in this oversight, even more if non-Christian Mvskoke women are added.

Second, as Carson mentions in his introduction, Swanton portrayed Mvskoke worldview as static and incapable of retaining cultural integrity once it incorporated any forms of European influence. This notion is most evident in his disregard of integration between Mvskoke religion and medicine and Christianity (primarily Baptist and Methodist). As Mvskoke-Cherokee scholar Craig Womack reaffirms in *Red on Red*, Mvskoke cultural realities have always been adaptive and multifaceted and cannot be interpreted by basic terms such as *pure* or *tainted*. Similarly, Swanton failed to acknowledge Mvskoke architectural influences on campgrounds, Mvskoke songs and sermons, burial practices, fasting customs, gender relations, Fourth Sunday Meetings, and, more importantly, the use of Mvskoke church campgrounds as spaces of cultural persistence. For more on Mvskoke cultural realities of the early twentieth century, refer to K. Tsianina Lomawaima's *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (1994) and Craig S. Womack's *Red on Red*; for Mvskoke cultural innovation, see Joel W. Martin's *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogees' Struggle for a New World* (1991). For an outstanding analysis of Seminole-Mvskoke religious adaptation, see Jack M. Schultz's *The Seminole Baptist Churches of Oklahoma: Maintaining a Traditional Community* (1999).

A third omission clarifies the key weakness of republishing Swanton's work without any updated material. Under the heading, "Supernatural Beings," for instance, Swanton devotes a few paragraphs to Little People, Stilopuckoke (pp. 496–497, 649–650). With the information Swanton provides, readers will associate Little People with negativity. On the contrary, Little People have a friendly, reciprocal relationship with their Mvskoke neighbors. Of course they will protect themselves and use their powers to modify behavior, but they are well known for the guidance and company they offer children and especially for their tendency to select the next generation of Indian doctors, *heleshayv*. For an excellent account on Little People, see Robert Johnson Perry's *Life with the Little People* (1998); for additional information on Little People, refer to Jean and Joyotpaul Chaudhuri's *A Sacred Path*; Willie Lena and James H. Howard's *Oklahoma Seminoles*; and Craig S. Womack's *Red on Red*.

Swanton can only be criticized to a certain extent, however. The University of Nebraska Press deserves a fair share of the reproof for recycling an incomplete study that limits Mvskoke existence and prohibits Mvskoke cultural modification. It is not tribal communities that are static, but the research methods, approaches, and materials published about Native people that become dated.

The omission of seventy-three years of Mvskoke persistence and revitalization leaves the reader with many open-ended questions. As opposed to reservation-based Native peoples, how did the Mvskoke maintain ceremonial and church grounds while living on allotments, personal property, and trust lands located throughout the tribal diaspora? To what extent have the arch-conservative policies of the state of Oklahoma, from statehood to present,

strengthened or negated Mvskoke ceremonialism? How have gender roles, with regard to ceremonialism and medicine, changed since Swanton's work was first published in 1928?

These questions and others could be answered with a more thorough preface or epilogue to Swanton's rich but dated presentation of the complex worldviews of the Mvskoke Nation. *Mvto!*

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The First Global War: Britain, France, and the Fate of North America, 1756–1775. By William R. Nester. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2000. 320 pages. \$69.95 cloth.

Few people celebrate the Seven Years War: Americans remember it—if at all—as a prologue to the American Revolution, French-Canadians recall it as a tragic war of conquest, English-Canadians recollect it as an ambivalent victory, and Native people think of it as one in a series of colonial conflicts that cost them lives and land. Because it transcends national histories and defies simple explanation, the war demands a great deal of its historians, who must accommodate the multiple perspectives of the combatants while still conveying the broad scale of a global conflict. Some writers have risen to the challenge; synthetic treatments of the war are distinguished by the scope and ambition of their authors. Our understanding of the eighteenth-century struggle for North America is deeply colored by the inimitable literary styles and historical methods of Francis Parkman, Lawrence Henry Gipson, and Francis Jennings. It takes a certain hubris to tackle the subject these historical giants have made their own, but that is precisely what William Nester has done in his new survey of the conflict, *The First Global War*, which, along with its companion volume, *The Great Frontier War: Britain, France, and the Imperial Struggle for North America, 1607–1755*, provides an overview of colonial warfare in North America from the founding of Jamestown to the outbreak of the American Revolution.

Nester seeks to offer “a comprehensive, balanced analysis” (p. ix) of the conflict that avoids partisan bias and provides a factual baseline of the war's events. Although he repudiates Parkman's Victorian prejudices, he clearly is an admirer of the Boston Brahmin's ability to combine evocative descriptions with dispassionate analysis, a style that Nester imitates with mixed success. The book consists primarily of a yearly chronicle of military operations in North America, with special attention paid to developments in British policy and strategy. At the end of each chapter is a brief section reviewing major battles in Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean. Events are viewed with the synoptic eye of generals and prime ministers; broad discussions of strategy and tactics figure prominently, the gritty experience of footsoldiers in the field hardly at all. This elite perspective is likely a reflection of his sources. The endnotes include few references to manuscript materials and suggest a heavy reliance on government correspondence and officers' journals.