

liberals enter Indian country with the best intentions. It is a wonderful text for generating research paper topics and discussions regarding the basic principles of historical methodology and practice.

*Jeremiah Sladeck*

University of California, Los Angeles

**Capture These Indians for the Lord: Indians, Methodists, and Oklahomans, 1844–1939.** By Tash Smith. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014. 256 pages. \$55.00 cloth; \$55.00 electronic.

A welcome addition to recent microhistorical approaches to the Christian missions' interface with Indian communities, Tash Smith's recent work provides a focused history of the Indian Mission Conference of the Southern Methodist church, in what is now Oklahoma. Composed of individuals of myopic, missionary zeal, this Indian Mission Conference (IMC) was one of the principal forces in the ethnocentric, racist, assimilationist strategy of "killing the Indian to save the man." The author's narrow subject provides the opportunity to investigate a history that has been broadly recognized, but not fully unpacked. Eschewing a broadly stroked framework of "conquest" and "helpless victim," the book offers a more careful, detailed treatment of the human actors and competing interests within and between Anglo and Indian groups.

Rather than focus on the well-documented, tragic, and lamentable church-run boarding schools and their strategies for cultural annihilation, Smith's readers are given a close look at how in the midst of cultural domination, free-willing Native actors navigated within social confines to accomplish their own social goals. The account "reveals the ways in which Native communities created their own religious space, even as ethnocentric pressures of assimilation marginalized Indians in American society" (192). Smith maintains that "understanding how religious beliefs motivate groups, rather than judging these beliefs on more modern terms that stress their ethnocentric or adversarial overtones, reveals a broader picture of the missionization process and the ways in which individuals exploited religion and church structures for their own needs" (194). And Smith's account reveals how this exploitation was performed by both Anglo and Native actors. The book does an excellent recounting of the variety of factions within both the Native and the Anglo communities and how each pursued their own, and often competing, agendas. It is a complex story of self-interest, institutional trajectories, agency, limited autonomy, and unintended consequences.

The book's chapters are primarily chronological, arranged in periods that are bookended by significant events. The origins of the IMC in 1844 and its focus on its mission work among the Five Tribes begins the first period, which ends with the effects of the Civil War on the organization and its work. The second period recounts the mission work's rebuilding after the war among the Five Tribes and the IMC's expansion to include work with three Plains tribes that were recently relegated to Indian Territory. This was a trying period for the IMC as it was associated with the

losing Southern cause, and they suffered mightily in the postwar reorganization of the States. The third period details the significant changes that the Land Run and Oklahoma statehood engendered. During this period the IMC was renamed the Oklahoma Annual Conference, marking a shift in purpose away from the Indian mission to an emphasis on the recently burgeoning Anglo arrivals in the territory. This section recounts how, to the neglect of Native congregations, mission resources were often coopted to serve the Anglo congregations. However, during this time of being relatively ignored by the larger church, the Native congregations developed strategies which allowed them to meaningfully pursue their own purposes. The book documents how oppressed people worked within the confines of a dominant and discriminatory system to accomplish their own ends for their own benefit. This becomes especially clear during the final period, which returned focus to the Native congregants with the formation of a New Indian Mission. This section provides examples of how Indians expressed their limited autonomy, their tremendous influence in how their churches looked, and how Indian Christianities were manifested.

When equated with civilization, Christianity is understood as inherently antithetical to an authentic Native identity. But framing Christianity as such is simply another element of the dominant hegemony enforcing its agenda on a set of subjugated peoples—it's all or nothing. Christianity is not the opposite of authenticity or tradition. Included in Smith's history are people who "accepted Christianity on their own terms and for their own needs" (5). The reader is provided examples of people resisting assimilation but accepting aspect of the introduced faith. "In expressing their autonomy in little ways . . . Indians refused to act exactly how whites wanted" (167). Their faith was legitimate even while being expressed in ways unrecognizable to a foreign, dominant church organization. In recounting the tensions between actors with unequal access to power, this history demonstrates that less power is not powerlessness. There is agency, creativity, and agendas that are expressed within those limits. The book contributes to an understanding of this.

This is a good narrative and a very accessible read. By analyzing the clearly defined unit of the ICM, the account is made compelling and enlightening. By focusing on a specific denomination in a specific location, the author is able to provide a detailed and critical overview of an intricate history commonly known before only in broad strokes. While the book's focus is ostensibly narrow, its relevance is broad. The book is not only useful for readers interested in the history of Oklahoma's Natives, or Christian missions. Its story has broad application. History, like all memory, is in service of the present. This account invites contemporary people to critically assess their own institutional biases and standpoints and their failure to respect other traditions as equally valid as their own. Our nation is currently experiencing contested institutional responses to immigration, the refugee crisis, transgender identity, and gay marriage. Various factions fetishize an imagined ideal and judge any deviance from that ideal as a threat to one's own identity and well-being. Are we so confident in the rightness of our way, much like the missionaries described in the book, that we dehumanize those "others" and enforce a conclusion that the only valid expression is our parochial own?

Can such practices only be seen and condemned in retrospect? Certainly this book should challenge any reader to see the contemporary parallels.

My only criticism of the book is that it ended too soon. The story recounted in the text doesn't end in 1939; it continues to the present. A book has to end, of course, but the ethnographer in me was left asking, "but how is it now?"

Jack M. Schultz

Concordia University, Irvine

**The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity.** By Gregory D. Smithers. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. 368 pages. \$40.00 cloth.

Native American cultures and histories are unique, but despite the importance of this acknowledgment, there is a strong tendency to level Native experiences and attitudes to those that fit a convenient narrative. Too often the result is that their commonalities dominate. With respect to the far-flung migrations of Cherokee peoples over at least two hundred years, historian Gregory D. Smithers provides a welcome, valuable description and analysis of a very complex set of historical facts, cultural mores, political realities, and individual decisions that shaped the "Cherokee Diaspora."

As *The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity* explains in detail, even in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, well before relations with white European colonists provoked such extreme migrations as the Trail of Tears removal in 1838–1839, Cherokees had relocated to such distant locales as Mexico, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. (Although outside the purview of this book, many of us have also wondered about the circumstances that prompted the original and distant move of the Cherokees away from the rest of the Iroquoian peoples so long ago.)

More recent migrations have received less attention, but have created a huge diaspora of Cherokees all over the world, including major relocations to Texas after the Civil War and to California in the 1950s, particularly as part of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956, but also with decisions of individual families to seek better economic conditions. Even the three organized governments—Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, also in Oklahoma, and the Eastern Band of Cherokees in North Carolina—represent geographically separated populations that sometimes have struggled to figure out their relationships to each other.

Smithers has painstakingly made sense of some very intermingled historical facts. His use of personal biographies, not of just the famous but also of the common, is put to good effect. The book is at its best when the author is laying out the narrative and bringing facts to the fore. Among several important topics in this work is the rancor and the competition for power among the Cherokee people themselves. The idea that Cherokees created much of their own disunity is unlikely to be met with enthusiasm,