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Both Native American and African American identities have been created through colonialism and imperialism—before the Middle Passage, most of the ancestors of African Americans often had conflicting tribal allegiances. In addition, numerous Native American tribes, each with different languages and customs, existed before the reductive term *Native American* was created. By referring to the cultural specificity of each African-Native subject's experience, Brennan and the other contributors to this collection avoid making such facile generalizations. Lastly, it is difficult to describe the African-Native experience without romanticizing the condition of the oppressed (in many cases, Native Americans and African Americans possessed prejudiced attitudes towards one another, probably as a result of colonialism). William G. McLoughlin in "Red Indians, Black Slavery, and White Racism: America's Slaveholding Indians," *American Quarterly* 26 (1974) points out that the Cherokee were proud that there was "little intermixture of Cherokee and African blood" (p. 382) and that the Cherokee often owned slaves (p. 383). The African-Native subject often had trouble articulating any identity whatever because many African Americans considered Native Americans to be savages. Also, Native Americans often treated African American slaves with abuse—according to McLoughlin, "the Cherokees gradually adopted all the worst features of Southern black slave codes" (p. 381). In addition, the African-Native subject was the target of white supremacists who disdained both Native Americans and African Americans. For this reason, Brennan claims that "it has . . . been difficult for African-Native Americans themselves to acknowledge and celebrate their mixed heritage" (p. 40).

This book makes an excellent contribution to the study of American literature. It will also make scholars in African American studies and Native American studies more aware of the urgent need to regard history as more than one long struggle between the colonizer and the colonized.

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Yuchi Ceremonial Life: Performance, Meaning, and Tradition in a Contemporary American Indian Community. By Jason Baird Jackson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. 345 pages. \$75.00 cloth.

The greatest strength of this book is in its straightforward documentation of beliefs and practices associated with Yuchi ceremonial grounds in the 1990s. Jackson expertly introduces his ceremonial material with informative overviews of Yuchi history, culture, and society, past and present. Likewise, before a chapter-by-chapter description of the events of the Yuchi ceremonial cycle—running roughly from late March to September—Jackson provides important general background material on contemporary Yuchi ritual organization, practice, belief, and oratory.

For the most part, Jackson's ceremonial cycle chapters are solid narratives of each type of event, mercifully free of currently stylish theoretical posturing

(although some creeps in on occasion), and do not sacrifice mundane detail for exotic effect. Along the way, he weaves in useful information on the wider historical and ethnological context of Yuchi ceremonialism. The strongest chapter is on “Indian football,” which figures so prominently in the Yuchi ceremonial calendar but is so poorly reported in previous ethnographic literature. Oddly, the weakest chapter deals with the climatic event of the entire cycle, the Green Corn ceremony. Most of the description of the actual ceremony is relegated to an appendix containing detailed but unannotated schedules of dances and rituals of the three-day ceremony at each of the three currently extant Yuchi grounds. Almost perversely, Jackson devotes much of his Green Corn chapter to an unsatisfying discourse on the nature of myth and myth-making, despite his broader emphasis on a “practice-centered view of tradition” (p. 297). A concluding chapter helps place Yuchi ceremonial ground life within the larger processes of Yuchi “cultural intensification and revitalization” (p. 273).

As description, Jackson’s work compares well with classics of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth century salvage ethnography and, to a much lesser extent, with participant-observation studies in modern American Indian communities inaugurated by Margaret Mead’s 1930s study of “the Antlers.” Jackson does not acknowledge Mead’s pace-setting work, even though he relies partly on the same conceptual framework as she, “event analysis” (p. 75). Unfortunately, while fully recognizing his debt to the salvage ethnographers—and offering some genuine improvements on earlier works in the “ethnographic present”—Jackson seems almost oblivious to the later community-based “ethnography-of-the-present” studies of American Indians. He does not realize the fuller comparative potential of his Yuchi material, with respect to, for example, Kendall Blanchard on Mississippi Choctaw ball play and Charlotte Neely on Snowbird, North Carolina, Cherokee traditionalism.

Despite brief introductory statements on the limits of his study, it is only in the conclusion that Jackson comes fully to grips with such methodological shortcomings as his purposeful avoidance of representativeness and an admitted “idealization of Yuchi culture” (p. 281). His reasons for such deviations from modern scientific ethnographic practice are respectable and convincing. Nonetheless, he would have been better served by stating these caveats up front and saving the reader nagging doubts about his methodological integrity, which can intrude on the reader’s appreciation of the rich selection of data that he presents. Despite this belated explanation for his inversely truncated approach to modern Yuchi life, Jackson often comes through—almost in spite of himself—as a first-rate, “old-fashioned” fieldworker offering fine-grained descriptions over a surprisingly wide sampling of everyday life.

It is when Jackson dresses up solid ethnographic information with frills from currently chic genres of anthropological discourse that the reader senses how much more could have been done with his field material if unencumbered by intellectual trendiness. This is especially important with respect to recognizing fully the significant ethnographic contribution of his stark exposition of the transition of Yuchi ceremonial leaders to English as their primary mode of ritual communication even as they participate in a surge of

Native American language rescue operations. Jackson also presents the sometimes almost half-hidden evidence that stresses the self-consciousness of Yuchi ceremonial leaders' efforts to formalize and reconstitute, as well as preserve, a Yuchi cultural heritage. On his own, Jackson makes some astute observations on formative processes of cultural identity maintenance, paying particular attention to the importance of perceptual contrastive sets, especially as they are played out in Yuchi intellectuals' own ethnological foraging in life and in literature.

Jackson could have greatly sharpened his analytical focus by drawing from older, more established anthropological conceptual frameworks. Particularly useful would have been Ward H. Goodenough's concepts of "public culture" and "culture pool." Also, Jackson should have relied more on Anthony Wallace's well-known work on revitalization processes (he cites Wallace, but not in this connection). Reaching even farther back, Ralph Linton's ideas on nativistic movements offer a ready-made paradigm for comprehending what Jackson observes (paradoxically, despite a surface structure of spirituality, current Yuchi nativism seems far more "rational" than "magical," in Linton's terms). To his credit, Jackson recognizes the importance of Kluckhohn in understanding the nature of culture (p. 256) and draws upon Erving Goffman's interactionist theory (p. 167), although it is unclear how the latter adds to the analysis.

Despite these shortcomings, Jackson clarifies the collective distinctiveness of Yuchi ceremonial grounds in Oklahoma. At the same time, he is careful to stress differences among the Yuchi grounds. Also, his ethnological sleuthing often produces some gems in similarities and differences between the Yuchi, their present-day Oklahoma tribal neighbors, and other groups in their ancestral Woodland culture area, now and in the past. In this respect, some of the most perplexing omissions are Jackson's neglect of James Howard's 1968 overview of the Southeast Ceremonial Complex (*Missouri Archeological Society Memoir*, No. 6) and his failure to explore analogues of Yuchi beliefs and practices among Plains peoples, especially central Siouan, as well as more far-flung Woodland Algonquian peoples such as the Ojibwa.

Curiously, despite his ethnological stage setting, Jackson never deals directly with the complex questions of linguistic classification in the Southeast. In this respect, if no other, scholars have long acknowledged the distinctiveness of the Yuchi, which makes all the more important Jackson's deftly presented case for sustained Yuchi distinctiveness despite the loss of their language.

Today, the Yuchi are politically subsumed under the Creek Nation, reflecting pre-Removal history. This is the most unsettling aspect of Jackson's work. As background, he mentions failed Yuchi attempts to obtain their own federal recognition as an Indian tribe (p. 5), although it is unclear if he is aware of early efforts in this direction soon after the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (p. 41). The documents are in the National Archives. Eventually the reader learns that Jackson began his research as part of a Yuchi effort toward federal recognition (p. 125). Apart from sharing the common anthropological misunderstandings about federal acknowledgment of Indian

tribes, Jackson never explains how he deviated from the path of practical anthropology to the more esoteric course that he follows. One almost gets the impression that despite his evident multiple fieldwork skills Jackson is pursuing his “discourse-centered approach to culture” as a kind of consolation prize to the greater challenges of the close-to-the-ground of empirical anthropology entailed in “federal recognition” research (p. 281).

Whatever channeled Jackson in this direction, the end result makes a valuable contribution to American Indian studies, one that combines the best of an “antique style” (p. 12) of anthropological research with modern sensibilities. True, along the way there are many specific points of criticism. To name but a few: the precious use of “consultant” rather than “informant”; cavalier dismissal of issues of privacy; pretentious typographic presentation of talks as poetic “text”; a propensity to exoticize and “literature-ize” the ordinary; an overdrawn critique of pan-Indianism “theory” (p. 136), yet failing to consider fully the possibility of a widespread pool of contemporary pan-Indian rhetorical spirituality (p. 202) as an element of Yuchi revitalization; and missing important points of connection to wider anthropological literature and world ethnology—although Jackson can sometimes surprise with his citation of, say, African parallels (p. 296). For example, when he describes Yuchi leaders’ intellectual attempt to justify doing some dances publicly and out of season, the reader is denied the link to W. W. Hill’s description (*American Anthropologist* 41, p. 258) of precisely the same problem for the Navajo in 1939!

Conversely, Jackson can delight the reader with such gems as his almost casual discussions of Yuchi use of published ethnography and modern technology in cultural preservation; the adaptation of ceremonials to the modern work week; the intertwining of experience in Christian churches and ceremonial grounds (one ground includes an Easter egg hunt as an adjunct to its Indian football ceremonial); and interaction with non-Indians at many levels, from local landowners who control nearby sources of willow boughs and oak trees needed for ceremonial ground structures (p. 180) to the World Council of Churches (p. 199). Despite, or perhaps because of, Jackson’s sometimes almost maudlin expressions of respect for the people and values that he studies, he has given anthropologists and other scholar/scientists a valuable and welcomed account of Yuchi “stomp dance people” (p. 274) at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

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