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# Chiefs, Churches, and “Old Industries”: Photographic Representations of Alabama- Coushatta and Coushatta Culture and Identity

STEPHANIE MAY DE MONTIGNY

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Ethnologists in the early twentieth century were the first to publish photographs of the Alabama-Coushatta people of Texas and the Coushatta (often written as “Koasati”) of Louisiana. Since then, authors have shaped the photographic and textual representations according to their own notions of culture and identity. In this case, Mark Raymond Harrington and John Reed Swanton went to Texas and Louisiana looking, like other salvage anthropologists, for remnants of Native cultures that were uncontaminated by European influence. These authors used photographs to authenticate “old industries” that represented, to them, an Indian past. Yet Native peoples all over the Southeast had already been subjected to considerable outside pressures to change their beliefs and practices. Early ethnologists neglected the processes of cultural hybridization and creativity in which Native peoples engaged to deal with these pressures.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of these weaknesses, early ethnologists pointed out elements of cultural preservation that many later authors ignored. Other writers supported the assimilation of the Alabama-Coushatta into Euro-American culture and Christianity. Through their text and photographs, such authors highlighted cultural change through tribal members’ participation in church, school, and vocational education. Yet some of these authors lamented Native culture loss at the same time that they praised the adoption of Christianity. Their difficulty in reconciling coexistent elements of cultural continuity and change surfaced in their use of photographs. As a result, certain Alabama and Coushatta practices, such as river-cane or pine-needle basket making and the preparation and cooking of the corn soup *sof-ke* became emblematic of tribal culture.<sup>2</sup>

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Both proassimilationist writers and ethnologists shared a preoccupation with chiefs while they neglected individual identity and diversity within Native groups. Their photographs and texts described typical and anonymous men and women of Native groups rather than offering in-depth portrayals of multifaceted, complex individuals. Instead of demonstrating the diversity of perspectives and experiences within Native groups, the accounts of such authors were limited by their reliance on a few individuals, often chiefs or other prominent men. Yet even their portrayals of chiefs remained superficial, focusing on their public and political roles as liaisons between the tribes and non-Indians.

In later years, photographic depictions of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta began to change, especially in the work of scholars such as geographers, historians, linguists, and anthropologists. In text and photographs, authors began to recognize Native consultants and collaborators to a greater degree, and tribal members began to exercise greater control over research and representation. Authors used photographs not only to document objects and practices but also to convey broader conceptualizations of the everyday lives of tribal members. Yet photographic depictions in certain popular books and magazines, such as *Texas Highways*, were sometimes more effective than scholarly works in portraying the depth and complexity of individuals. Meanwhile, Coushatta authors offered textual and photographic contributions to represent their own definitions of culture and identity.

Although the scope of work on the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta is not nearly as extensive as other groups such as the Navajo, it is broad enough so that I can only examine a few examples in this article. I focus mainly on the use of photographs in published texts in the areas of anthropology and history.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of Geoffrey Kimball's work on the Coushatta language, I do not discuss works on the Alabama and Coushatta languages, which both belong to the Muskogean linguistic group. Although there are a number of good unpublished theses and dissertations written about the two tribes, I confine my analysis to published works because they have reached a wider audience.<sup>4</sup> I consider works on both the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta; however, my work focuses more on the Alabama-Coushatta of Texas because my own research has been devoted to this group. I have not discussed the Alabama-Quassarte, who were removed from Alabama to Oklahoma in the 1830s along with other Creek groups.

The discussion of the Alabama-Coushatta also has appeared frequently in popular newspapers and periodicals, especially those focused on tourism in the state of Texas, and magazines and journals about local and western history. However, the extent of such sources is beyond the scope of this article and an analysis of popular sources would take the discussion in an entirely different direction. I confine my discussion of popular sources to the magazine *Texas Highways* because the comparison points out some strengths and weaknesses in the scholarly literature.<sup>5</sup>

Even though newspapers and magazines have reached a wider audience, their purpose was not primarily to discuss Alabama and Coushatta history and culture. When they did so, it was usually in a cursory and often misinformed

manner. In such venues, the Alabama-Coushatta became a tourist "attraction," a nostalgic piece of the Old West, or a point of controversy in recent local and regional debates on topics such as gaming. Researched works focus on elucidating history and culture, and Native people continue to attribute a certain amount of authority and credibility to them because they were researched; therefore, it is imperative to interrogate their visual and textual constructions of Native peoples.

### PHOTOGRAPHS, TEXTS, AND REPRESENTATION

Although no one has critically examined the use of photographs in publications (or the texts, for that matter) about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people, other authors have noted and explored several of the same trends in the use of photography to construct ideas about other Native American groups. Numerous researchers have discussed how authors used photographs in conjunction with their texts to shape the representations of Native peoples.<sup>6</sup> I do not attempt to summarize this extensive literature here; however, I do wish to mention several points that converge with the material on the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta.

Joanna Scherer makes the point that in using photographs as "anthropological documents" one should look at the photograph as a "social artefact" and consider the contributions of the producer, subject, and audience in creating meaning.<sup>7</sup> In large part, my project here is to begin a more critical consideration of the producers and the use of photographs and texts of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people. I have found critical analyses of historical texts and photographs lacking in the body of work on these groups. A closer analysis is also important to interpret photographs and texts as historical sources.<sup>8</sup> As Rick Hill states, "We must understand the nature and extent of stereotyping about Indians if we are to decide how to use historic photographs of Indians in a contemporary context."<sup>9</sup> Depictions of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta not only have impacted a wider audience and the subsequent treatment of the tribe, but also have been passed down uncritically through both popular and scholarly accounts. Too often, authors writing about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people have taken the veracity of past writings for granted rather than evaluating the authors and their research. For example, none have pointed out that the influence of missionaries on the representation of the tribes extended beyond pro-missionary authors. Many researchers relied on local missionaries to gain entry into the community, furnish information about the groups, and, sometimes, provide photographs of the group. In general, when past works have been taken uncritically, the results have repeated simplistic historical scenarios and typifications about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people.

Much of the similarity between the work on these groups as well as on other Native American groups has to do with the connections between text and photograph. Susan Sontag and others have pointed out that the text that accompanies a photograph has a great impact on how a viewer extracts meaning from that image.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, this is the case in the examples I will

discuss here. Central to my analysis are the interconnections between text and photograph, specifically, the ways in which selected words encourage the viewer to notice certain elements. It was necessary for me to mine the extensive works of Swanton to find the references to the Alabama and Coushatta individuals with whom he worked. Juxtaposing the textual references with his choice of photographs helped illuminate Swanton's portrayals of Native peoples, while a closer analysis reveals that often, as Barbara Wolbert suggests, photographs undermine the authors' intentions.<sup>11</sup>

How have photographs conveyed certain messages about Native Americans? Since the early twentieth century, if not before, authors often depicted Native peoples and cultures as if they were on the verge of disappearance. Such attitudes, authors have argued, worked to support the non-Indian notions of manifest destiny and subsequent efforts to conquer, eradicate, and assimilate Native Americans.<sup>12</sup> These critiques converge with Pauline Turner Strong's argument that representations or typifications of Native peoples contributed to "colonial domination."<sup>13</sup> The concrete consequences of such constructions may be seen in the efforts of groups such as the Lumbee and Mashpee to gain recognition. As Karen Blu and Jack Campisi have shown, both groups faced obstacles to federal acknowledgment due to partial and inaccurate stereotypes that others held about Lumbee and Mashpee ancestry and appearance.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, as Hill suggested, "It is also important to see how Indians themselves are using photography to counteract such stereotyping."<sup>15</sup>

This idea of vanishing Native American peoples and cultures manifested in different ways in the use of photographs in texts about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta. In one way, the notion spurred early ethnologists to look for evidence of cultural preservation. For other authors, the same idea underscored their support for assimilation to non-Indian culture and Christianity. These same trends may be found in works about other Native groups.<sup>16</sup> Yet one must attend to how stereotypes of specific groups have been defined in particular circumstances and how such stereotypes have figured in localized historical and sociocultural processes. Without going into an extensive historical review, non-Indian stereotypes of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta cannot be reduced merely to the idea of vanishing peoples. Various generalizations about them were no less inaccurate, yet their historical effects were complex. In the case of the Alabama-Coushatta, non-Indian perceptions of them have spurred alliances, fueled and ameliorated local tensions, encouraged efforts to seek government aid, and fed support or opposition to efforts to remove the group from east Texas. Lastly, more attention should be paid to the ways that ethnologists used photographs of individuals to authenticate material items and cultural practices. In addition, the interactions between missionaries and anthropologists and how such interactions have shaped representations of Native Americans remain to be explored.

## HISTORY

By the time anthropologists such as Swanton and Harrington wrote about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta, members of these two groups, like other

peoples of the Southeast, had faced dramatic pressures to change.<sup>17</sup> Yet questions of cultural continuity and change would remain inadequately addressed in the literature. Swanton's focus, as George Lankford said, was "ethnological reconstruction" of precontact Native cultures. However, the peoples of the Southeast had been forcibly removed from their homelands and otherwise had to accommodate drastic changes. As Lankford said, "With the cultural agility for which southeastern peoples are rightly famous, they had adjusted to changing reality." As a result, Swanton had to make sense of contemporary and old cultural practices.<sup>18</sup>

A brief summary of the history of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta will oversimplify complex events, situations, and processes. It also risks repeating some of the same tired tropes. However, some background is necessary to understand how scholars used text and photography to represent the tribes' culture and identity. When De Soto came through the Southeast around 1540, the Alabama and Coushatta groups resided in the woodlands of Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee.<sup>19</sup> By the late 1600s, European diseases had devastated the populations and social organization of the complex chiefdoms of the Southeast.<sup>20</sup> Like other groups who relocated and consolidated for strength and protection, the Alabama and Coushatta moved to central Alabama where they participated as members of the Creek Confederacy.

Alabama and Coushatta people began to move away from central Alabama in the mid-to-late 1700s to avoid the English and maintain closer contact with their French and Spanish allies. Eventually, they migrated to east Texas and southwestern Louisiana to become the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta respectively. Throughout their successive migrations, Alabama and Coushatta groups resettled near each other and maintained the social, political, economic, and religious ties that existed between them. Although some authors have seen these movements as tribal fragmentation, Alabama and Coushatta towns, like other Creek towns, were autonomous units that made decisions independently.<sup>21</sup>

Once in the Texas area, the Alabama and Coushatta people weathered tensions between the Spanish, Americans, and Mexicans. The Republic of Texas tried but failed to acquire reservation land for the Alabama and Coushatta tribes. The lack of a protected land base, violent conflicts with settlers, and epidemics spurred some Coushattas to return to Louisiana while other Alabamas and Coushattas relocated their towns within East Texas. In 1854, the state legislature designated land for the Alabamas but failed to do so for the Coushattas. In 1857, the legislature approved the settlement of the Coushatta in Texas on Alabama land. With the approval of the Alabamas, some Coushattas did join them. Since arriving in Texas, the Alabamas and Coushattas have resisted several attempts to remove them to north Texas and Oklahoma. In Louisiana, the Coushattas remained though they had to relocate their settlement.

During and after the Civil War, both the Texas and Louisiana groups faced poverty, disease, and isolation from their Native allies and other ethnic groups. Neither state nor federal governments offered aid at this time. In particular, the refusal of the Texas groups to participate in the General

Allotment Act no doubt provided one reason for the federal government to cast them aside. In the late 1800s, the Alabama and Coushatta peoples faced considerable outside pressure toward cultural, religious, and economic change. In 1881, the railroad came to east Texas and southwestern Louisiana providing some jobs for the Alabama and Coushatta people in these areas. Individuals also worked in the timber industry, on local farms, and, in Louisiana, on rice farms. These jobs brought the Alabama and Coushatta further into the market economy as wage laborers. Also at this time, Christian missionaries came to both the Texas and Louisiana groups exerting pressure to ban Native practices of dance, music, and spirituality. Many tribal members converted to Christianity.<sup>22</sup>

The situations for the Texas and Louisiana groups improved with the shift in national sentiment toward Native Americans during the New Deal era. After the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the Alabama-Coushatta of Texas incorporated as a tribe and wrote a constitution. They received land from the federal government and aid for health and housing from both the federal and state governments.<sup>23</sup>

The Coushatta of Louisiana still were not federally recognized. In the 1920s, they received only some educational aid from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They had no lands in trust and continued to lose lands to back taxes. The area in which they lived remained isolated and economically depressed. The Coushatta continued to exist on the fringe, ignored by the government.<sup>24</sup> In the 1950s, the federal government terminated the Alabama-Coushatta, shifting responsibility for health, housing, and education to the state of Texas. The federal government also cut off aid to the Louisiana Coushattas, and, even though the state of Louisiana tried to take up the slack, the discontinuation of federal aid made the economic situation even worse.<sup>25</sup> In the 1960s, the Alabama-Coushatta tribe, with the Texas Indian Commission, began a tourist enterprise on the reservation. They acquired federal grants for various programs such as the Office of Economic Opportunity, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Head Start. The tribe also began oil and mineral exploration, started a reforestation program, and developed tribal scholarship. Children no longer went to the missionary school on the reservation but began going to public schools in nearby towns. Adults would continue to enter many sectors of the workforce in the surrounding areas. Increases in general mobility, the nationwide Indian rights movements, increases in education, and the spread of the intertribal powwow circuit, among other changes, all contributed to growing contact between Alabama-Coushatta tribal members and Native Americans around the country.<sup>26</sup>

In 1973, the Coushatta incorporated and were recognized by the federal government, which began giving them aid in 1975. In this way, the tribe was able to build a community center and clinic, provide employment through the Comprehensive Employment Training Act, and provide housing rehabilitation. In 1977, the tribe received another one hundred acres of land in trust from the federal government on which they were able to build homes for landless members.<sup>27</sup> Yet after federal funding cuts in the 1980s, the situation for the Coushattas was still economically depressed. In the early 1990s,

the Coushattas contracted for the construction of a casino.<sup>28</sup> The income allowed the tribe to provide housing, education, and other benefits to members on a scale that they had never been able to do before. The casino also drastically uplifted the economy of the entire local area. In the late twentieth century, the Coushattas settled a federal land-claims case and built a tribal court and museum. Today their Web site describes their casino, golf course, national powwow, summer camp, and ranch.<sup>29</sup> In the 1980s, a dispute with the state of Texas regarding hunting rights prompted the Alabama-Coushatta to seek and regain their federal recognition. In recent years, the tribe has settled a land-claims case, and replaced old facilities with new ones including a pavilion, convenience store and gas station, and gymnasium. They are looking into building a casino, but the state of Texas has blocked their efforts repeatedly.<sup>30</sup>

Like other Native American groups, the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta have faced enormous pressures affecting processes of identity formation, cultural change, and preservation. Yet an analysis of textual and visual representations of the tribes shows that authors have not adequately addressed such issues.

## ETHNOLOGISTS

Aside from the European travelers and government officials who first wrote about the Alabama and Coushatta, ethnologists provided some of the earliest accounts and photographs. Scholars such as Swanton, Harrington, and Frances Densmore were influenced by Franz Boas. As salvage anthropologists, they aimed to document, preserve, and compare Native practices through textual description, photographs, and collection because they thought Native cultural practices would soon disappear.<sup>31</sup> In this regard, their writings and use of photographs contrasted to those of authors whose goal was to prove that the Alabama and Coushatta had assimilated to non-Indian culture, society, and religion.

Early ethnologists did not aim to explore the social and cultural complexities within Native groups nor the cultural creativity through which Native people faced their contemporary circumstances. Yet, even though my critical analysis of these researchers occurs in hindsight with an understanding that they were not engaged with our contemporary theoretical notions, methods, and ethical imperatives, one can learn from the past to inform current modes of research, writing, and representation.

Such early anthropologists went beyond the analysis of written materials to work firsthand with members of Native groups. However, their visits were short, and they worked with one or a few individuals.<sup>32</sup> Densmore, for example, visited the Texas Alabama-Coushatta in January of 1933. She recorded songs and information about dances with Charles Martin Thompson, Chief Sun-ke, who was seventy-one years old at the time. Densmore encountered snow, rain, and ice that prevented her from visiting the reservation. While waiting for the weather to improve, she gathered information from non-Indian Livingston residents, especially Hickman Chambers, the son of the missionaries. The state



Indian agent, Hobby Galloway, then went to the reservation (called “the Indian village” by Densmore and still called that by some Livingston residents today) and brought Thompson to Densmore in Livingston. Galloway arranged a place for them in the county courthouse to make their recordings. Given their goal to describe Native culture before European contact, these ethnologists did not discuss contact and influence between the Alabama and Coushatta. Rather, Swanton, Densmore, and Harrington applied their Texas material strictly to the Alabama as if they existed in a vacuum without the Coushatta.

I focus here on Swanton and Harrington, who published the first photographs of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta (whom both authors referred to as “Koasati”). They acknowledged Native individuals to a limited degree—mainly informants, chiefs, or other prominent men. Each also showed a strong concern with artifacts, whether texts or objects, associated with Native culture uncontaminated by European influence. They authenticated those items and practices by presenting them in photographs with people. Rather than showing multidimensional individuals, Swanton and Harrington constructed their own representations of typical Indianness. But their quest for the past led them to neglect the ways individuals in the present negotiated between various social forces to engage in complicated processes of cultural hybridization. Hoelscher notes similar tendencies in Bennett’s photography of the Ho-chunk.<sup>33</sup>

### SWANTON

Swanton’s voluminous work exemplified ethnology of the Boasian era in its comprehensive comparison of sociocultural practices across the Southeast. Substantial information and photographs about the Alabama and Coushatta appeared in two works, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States* (1946) and *Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy* (1928). In the 1946 work, Swanton wrote historical sketches of a vast number of southeastern groups, including the Alabama and Coushatta. He then discussed a wide array of categories such as food preparation, hunting, housing, clothing, ornamentation, musical instruments, ceremonial life, warfare, social organization, and marriage practices. These works combined his analysis of written materials and his own research. During the length of his career, Swanton visited various Creek groups between 1907 and 1915. He visited Texas and Louisiana in 1911 and 1912 and Louisiana again in 1929.<sup>34</sup>

Swanton’s accounts of the Alabama and Coushatta referred mainly to the Texas and Louisiana groups, not the Oklahoma groups, except for some references to and photographs of their square grounds. Swanton’s Alabama and Coushatta research contributed to several of his categories including spear fishing, the use of dogs to hunt rabbits, modern house construction as compared to Choctaw summer-house construction, the use of red-and-white flags over square grounds, thongs made from hides, hammered ornaments made from silver coins, nose rings, gorgets, wooden spoons, mortars and pestles, arrows, bows, spears, blowguns, the garfish, the stickball game, the medicine bundle or “ark,” and placement of the deceased and burial items.<sup>35</sup>

In this regard, Swanton's work clearly supported Wolbert's observation that early ethnographic photography evinced "a shift from commented picture to illustrated text."<sup>36</sup>

Here I restrict my discussion of Swanton to his use of photographs in his written works. I have not found any reference to an assistant or other means by which Swanton may have acquired photographs. Furthermore, his photographs now reside in his collection in the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution. These factors lead me to believe that Swanton took the photographs. However, because there is room for doubt, I do not discuss Swanton as the photographer. Rather, I focus on how he used these photographs in his texts to construct pictures of the two groups. I address the relationships between Swanton as a researcher and the Alabama and Coushatta people. In this regard, Swanton's short visits to these groups and his reliance on a minimal number of individuals played an important role in shaping his textual and visual representations of the Alabama and Coushatta. In particular, his limited interactions created a generalized portrait of the groups based on the experiences and perspectives of a few individuals, mostly prominent men, who frequently acted as liaisons between their people and non-Indians.

#### "OLD INDUSTRIES"

Swanton was primarily interested in what individuals remembered about the practices of their forebears rather than contemporary practices. Swanton wanted to verify the elements of material culture in use.<sup>37</sup> He includes more than sixty photographs, nine of which depict subject matter that relates to the Texas Alabama or the Louisiana Coushatta. Six photographs depict people, three depict objects, and one depicts a drawing of a 1790 Koasati chief named Stimafutchi.<sup>38</sup> Some photographs of the Alabama and Coushatta he uses merely to illustrate his textual sketches of those groups. Other photographs augment his general discussion of such topics as the use of mortars and pestles to pound corn and how to dress a skin.<sup>39</sup>

In figure 1, for example, an unnamed woman stands behind a skin stretched on a frame. Her pose suggests that she is dressing the skin. With the skin in the foreground, and the lack of the woman's identification, the skin draws the primary attention in the photograph. The woman, I argue, is there mainly to show that people did conduct this practice. Swanton uses the photograph to illustrate his discussion of dressing a skin, not to say anything about the woman or her life. Her presence authenticates the practice and Swanton's description of it.

Swanton's interest in recording past practices to the neglect of the present makes it difficult to get a clear picture of what people were doing at the time of his research. In the photograph just discussed, he says nothing of the woman's clothing, for instance, which would represent an element of cultural change. In addition, Swanton drew on Thompson, an Alabama chief, and Jackson Langley, a Coushatta chief, to discuss pottery making. Swanton's use of the past tense gives the sense that their descriptions applied to practices done in the past, not in the present. It is difficult to ascertain whether people



**FIGURE 1.** *The woman pictured may have been Celissy Henry. From John R. Swanton, The Indians of the Southeastern United States, volume 1, plate 71, Figure 1. Courtesy of National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, negative 12-A.*

were making pottery at the time of Swanton's research. Similarly, river-cane basket making has continued into the present even though Swanton talks about it as if it were something "remembered."<sup>40</sup>

## IDENTITY

In his text and photographs, Swanton recognizes chiefs, informants, last speakers of particular languages, and prominent men. Other individuals usually became anonymous; only three of his photographs picture otherwise ordinary men.<sup>41</sup> Yet Swanton was notable at the time for talking to Native individuals to obtain information. He mentions Thompson and Langley, and Langley's mother, Salin Langley. He further states that he obtained information on the Alabama from "two old people, George Henry and Celissy Henry," as well as John Scott, an Alabama chief. However, more frequently, Swanton refers to people anonymously as in, "my Alabama informant" or "one of my Alabama informants." When he refers to contemporary peoples, he often uses phrases such as "the present Alabama Indians remember," "the Alabama say," or "the Alabama of Texas remember a game."<sup>42</sup>

Swanton identifies men much more frequently than women.<sup>43</sup> Where possible, I have added names to this article's figure captions based on archival information. Swanton's photograph caption in figure 1 reads, "An Alabama woman dressing a skin, Polk County, Tex." This may have been Celissy Henry, who acted as an informant to Swanton in regard to cane baskets and dressing hides. He states, "I saw Celissy Henry use for this purpose [scraping

a skin] a piece of iron in the shape of a grubbing hoe." Neither did Swanton index Henry as he did Thompson, Langley, and other male informants. No doubt the failure to identify individual women conformed to scholarly practice that, at the time, tended to neglect the experiences and perspectives of women. Through photographs Swanton documented the typical duties and roles of women and shows them as members of the families of men.<sup>44</sup>

In their photos, Swanton identified his male informants, Thompson and Langley, but he did not identify Langley's mother nor Thompson's wife and daughters. The photograph of Salin Langley shows a woman standing in front of the wall of a house (see fig. 2). It bears some resemblance to a form of photography that was common at the time. Physical-type photography focused on a person's physical attributes as an example of a wider category while submerging individual identity. Salin becomes an example of a type of woman rather than an individual.<sup>45</sup> She is also decontextualized in this photograph because the nondescript



**FIGURE 2.** *Salin Langley, mother of Jackson Langley. From John R. Swanton, The Indians of the Southeastern United States, volume 4, plate 27, Figure 2. Courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, photo 160-B.*

background gives little information regarding her everyday life. She becomes suspended in a timeless moment with an ambiguous past, present, and future. As Gregory Starrett argues, such photographs allow the viewer "to project onto the image an imagined past and future for its subject."<sup>46</sup>

To a degree, Swanton did acknowledge particular individuals. Such recognition lent credibility to his writing and the information he presented, especially the documentation of material culture. However, as Lankford noted in regard to Swanton's text on southeastern myths, "the silence about his sources makes it clear that for Swanton and his generation of folklorists, for the most part, the text was the goal."<sup>47</sup> Likewise in his textual descriptions, individuals disappeared into broader descriptions of social and cultural practices that typified Native groups.

## HARRINGTON

Harrington's work was the first to focus on the Alabama and Coushatta (Harrington used the spellings "Alibamu" and "Koasati") specifically. He shares with Swanton an emphasis on artifacts and documenting "uncontaminated" Native practices. His portrayals of the Alabama and Coushatta remain at the general level rather than providing in-depth accounts of complicated individuals. Harrington did not address how such persons coped with the competing social pressures in which they existed nor did he share Swanton's failure to recognize women and ordinary men. Rather, all of Harrington's photographic subjects remain anonymous. Yet Harrington's (and Swanton's) work provides some of the earliest descriptions of the continuation of Alabama and Coushatta cultural practices. It is unfortunate that many subsequent authors neglected these materials in the interest of demonstrating assimilation and the adoption of Christianity.

Harrington's career was broad and his publications numerous and varied. Taught by Boas, Harrington worked as an ethnologist, an archaeologist, and a curator at the University of Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia and the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. From 1908 to 1911, he visited various tribes for George Heye and collected objects and photographs. Harrington visited the Coushatta in Louisiana in 1908 and the Alabama-Coushatta in 1910. Harrington published both of his articles on the Alabama and Coushatta in the *Southern Workman*, which was published by the press of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, now Hampton University in Virginia.<sup>48</sup> For his article on the Coushatta, he spent about one month "searching out the remnants of Indian tribes still left in the state of Louisiana" to learn about their location, numbers, and conditions; taking photographs; and collecting "specimens illustrating their old industries, arts, and customs."<sup>49</sup> Because he comments in the Coushatta article that part of his project was to take photographs, and because these photographs, with the exception of one that I will discuss shortly, reside in Harrington's collection at the National Museum of the American Indian, it seems to me that it is safe to assume that he took these photographs. However, because, as with Swanton, there is some room for doubt, I will again confine my discussion to Harrington's use of photographs and his relationships to the Alabama and Coushatta as a researcher rather than a photographer.

Harrington defined his project in contrast to what the Presbyterian missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Caleb W. Chambers, had learned about Alabama-Coushatta culture, even though Harrington stayed in the Chambers' home. He explained that the Chambers "did not give me much encouragement when told of my wish to hunt for relics among the people." The missionaries, he notes, had seen "practically nothing in the way of Indian handiwork, except a few cane baskets and a silver brooch or two." However, the results of Harrington's search surprised the missionaries. By the time he finished, "the floor of the room they had assigned to me was fairly covered with specimens. No one had ever asked the Indians about their beadwork and other things, laid carefully away as keepsakes; and they had not volunteered to show them

to the missionaries, because they thought their teachers disliked everything connected with the old life." Like many salvage anthropologists of his time, Harrington acquired these items (though he did not specify if he actually bought them) and took them to the Heye Museum in New York.<sup>50</sup>

Besides providing Harrington an entry into the Alabama-Coushatta community, the missionaries also supplied Harrington with at least one photograph, that of an Alabama farmer and family. This photograph is in the collection of Dorothy Chambers Shill, daughter of the missionaries, at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. In this subtle way, the influence of the missionaries extended to the work of anthropologists.

### DOCUMENTING "OLD INDUSTRIES"

Harrington's 1908 article concerned the Coushatta, Chitimacha, and Houma. The Coushatta were the "mysterious tribe" whose name even locals did not know. In Harrington's 1908 article he focuses on "their old industries, arts, and customs," which he documents through textual description and photographs of items, people, and individuals engaged in particular activities. He notes that the Coushatta people lived in "good houses"; worked in farming, at wood cutting, and in sawmills; dressed in "citizen's clothing"; and universally spoke the Coushatta language. According to Harrington, they rarely practiced old dances and ceremonies and had a new church and school. Nevertheless, he notes that although the Coushatta had made considerable "progress along the ways of civilization I found fully as many old specimens of Indian handiwork among the Koasati as I secured from the primitive Seminoles of Florida, who still follow the ways of their ancestors."<sup>51</sup>

In his photographs and the text that referred to them, Harrington emphasizes "old industries" and material culture rather than evidence of cultural change. In the article on the Coushatta, four of Harrington's five photographs depict some sort of "old industry," such as the use of a blowgun or cane basket weaving. Two of these photographs show Spanish moss weaving. In the past, he states, women had spun Spanish moss into bedding and rugs. At Harrington's time, they wove the fibers mainly into horse blankets. In one photograph, two women cooperate to spin Spanish moss. In the other photograph, a woman works on a blanket stretched on a vertical frame. Meanwhile, a young girl stands nearby looking at the camera (see fig. 3). All the women in these photographs wear long-sleeve cotton shirts and long skirts. In each photo, a picket fence and buildings indicate that the women are outside in a yard near a home.<sup>52</sup> Harrington's focus in his textual discussion of these photographs is on the "old industry" of Spanish moss weaving rather than the women or the modern intrusions of clothing, home construction, and the like.

In his article on the Alabama, Harrington's photos and text amplify the same emphases that were apparent in the article on the Coushatta. Harrington's seven photographs include a non-Indian man seated on a horse in front of the missionary's house; a family of five; a mixed group of individuals posed outdoors; a seated man; a seated woman; a clay pot; and the school and church building with a large group assembled in front of it (see



**FIGURE 3.** *Harriet Williams and a daughter or granddaughter. From M. R. Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," 659. Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian photo archives, print P12146.*

figs. 4 and 6). The photos were relatively equal in terms of men and women and more varied in subject matter than those in the Coushatta article. Several photos bear captions that consist of phrases excerpted from Harrington's text and placed in quotation marks.

Harrington subtly disparages cultural change. For example, he says that most of the arts of the Alabama were extinct with the exception of basketry, which became a primary focus of his article. However, he wishes that the Alabama would give up store-bought dyes for the more beautiful colors of natural dyes. The latter were used by the Chitimacha whom Harrington praises as the best basket makers.<sup>53</sup>

Some of Harrington's photographs show a concern for material objects that supersedes interest in the individuals. In one photo, a man wears a turban or headdress with drops, sashes, silver medallions, and a fan. In another, the caption reads, "Many pieces of old-time finery have been preserved," and a woman wears a tired expression and a multitude of silver medallions around her neck (see fig. 4). Both individuals seemed weighed down with an excessive quantity of ornaments, perhaps more than he or she would likely wear at one time. This portrayal of objects in use legitimized their authenticity.<sup>54</sup> Yet it made the person little more than a bearer of the items.

Although Harrington did include a photo of the church and school building, he uses this to critique politely the church and the culture loss it had affected. The attendance of tribal members in church and school was a popular topic with authors who favored the Christianization of the Alabama and Coushatta. Harrington contrasts the current use of the space with its prior use. In the photo, a fairly large group of people stand in front of the building. The caption reads, "A building which serves for school and church. 'It stands in the clearing where once the tribal dances were held.'" The second statement comes from a portion of the text where Harrington acknowledged the work of the missionaries who were also his hosts.<sup>55</sup> In the photograph, he shows tribal participation in church and school. However, he also implicates the building and its institution in culture change through the usurpation of the space formerly used for tribal dances. He did not accompany this observation with negative or positive comments. Yet it is clear from both of his articles that Harrington favored the preservation of Native practices over the changes elicited by European contact.

### IDENTITY

Although Swanton acknowledged informants and prominent men as photographic subjects, Harrington identified no one. Rather, Harrington showed typical Alabama and Coushatta men and women. For example, the photo "An Alibamu Indian," which appeared in the 1908 article on the Coushatta, pictures an unidentified man in profile (see fig. 5). Like Swanton's



**FIGURE 4.** Archival notes identify this woman only as Mrs. George Battise. From M. R. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," 549. Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian photo archives, negative N02706.



**FIGURE 5.** Thompson Bennett. From M. R. Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," 657. Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian photo archives, negative N02717.



photographs of Langley and his mother, this photo resembles what Ira Jacknis called the “physical type photography” of early anthropology.<sup>56</sup>

Harrington’s focus on types, material objects, and the anonymity of his photographic subjects all combine to deemphasize individuality. In another photograph from the article on the Alabama, a group of five individuals (presumably a family) includes a seated man, woman, and young boy, and two older girls standing. They are arranged against the wall of a building. The two girls wear long skirts and long-sleeve shirts in light colors. The boy and the man wear suits. The woman wears a light, long-sleeved shirt and a long, patterned skirt. Around her shoulders is a cloth with a floral pattern, seemingly appliquéd. None of the individuals are identified. Rather, the caption states, “The Alibamus have retained their purity of blood.” The phrase was adapted from the text of the article which states, “The Alibamus have retained their purity of blood to an unusual degree; consequently many fine native American types may be seen among them. They still retain their ancient language in common use.” Here Harrington’s concern with the preservation of Native peoples untainted by European influence extends to their biology and shows his emphasis on type rather than individuals.<sup>57</sup>

### CONSTRUCTING INDIANNESS

In another photograph, Harrington depicts a “typical” Alabama family accompanied by the photo caption, “An Alibamu farmer and his family.” It



**FIGURE 6.** *George Battise and family.* From M. R. Harrington, “Among the Alibamu Indians,” 547. *Shill Collection, University of Texas at San Antonio’s Institute of Texan Cultures, no. 070-0245.* Courtesy of Dorothy Shill.

depicts three men and three women all wearing clothing in a Euro-American style (see fig. 6).<sup>58</sup> The individuals were arranged in poses that depict various activities. One young man holds a timber saw; another holds a plow harnessed to a horse. Two women pound corn behind a river-cane basket that sits on a small bench or table while a dog looks on from the foreground. A woman in the background appears to be holding a broom. The oldest man stands left of center not engaged in activity but seemingly in charge of the proceedings. All the people are posed in front of a picket fence behind which stands a frame house obscured by trees.

The same photo includes elements of cultural continuity and change though Harrington does not address them. Through this photograph, he shows that traditional practices, such as the preparation and use of corn and river-cane baskets, continued alongside the adoption of non-Indian agricultural and domestic endeavors. But nowhere does Harrington interrogate this combination of practices. The photograph implicitly carries associations with Euro-American gender roles such as the father's dominance, the women's domestic activities, and the men's farming responsibilities. However, these roles would have contrasted sharply with the division of labor and status of women in southeastern matrilineal societies such as the Alabama and Coushatta.<sup>59</sup> Harrington does not address whether the gendered division of farming practices had changed in response to European contact.

This photograph is one that Harrington acquired from the Chambers, so he did not choose the arrangement of the figures. The picture supports the notion that the accompanying text can shape the interpretation of a photograph. Through his caption, Harrington emphasizes that this was a typical family. Yet Aline Thompson Rothe gave the photo an entirely different focus with her caption: "Alabama-Coushatta Indians at work. The Indian Women are pounding corn for 'Sofki', [*sic*] Corn Soup. The mortar is made from a hollow log. The baskets shown were made of cane and used as Trays and Sifters."<sup>60</sup> In this particular photograph, Harrington focuses on the people as types. In contrast, Rothe's focus on work would have supported her assimilationist view that the Alabama-Coushatta ought to adopt non-Indian labor and agricultural practices. Yet she demonstrates an uneasy tension by also emphasizing Alabama-Coushatta rivercane baskets, trays, and sifters that represented cultural preservation.

Staged photographs also reveal how photographers and authors constructed portrayals of Indianness according to their own expectations. Martha Macintyre and Maureen MacKenzie discuss how Barton staged photographs to heighten the exoticism of the subjects; while Jacknis points out, regarding Lyman and Gidley's research, that staging was a prominent issue in the photographs of Edward Curtis.<sup>61</sup> To a degree, such staging may have been a result of the technological limitations at the time. However, some photographs suggest that by the time Harrington and other authors included photographs in their works, staging was not the only alternative. In particular, one of James Mooney's photographs from the late 1800s depicts Cherokee men in the midst of a ball game. Another photograph from the Shill Collection that Fox used in her 1983 publication shows Alabama-Coushatta women playing

volleyball in the 1920s, but by this time, Wolbert suggests, there had already been significant advances in photographic equipment.<sup>62</sup> Staging continued into recent years as in Rothe's use of the photograph of "Old Josephine, the basketmaker," which I will discuss below. Certainly, as Sontag suggests, photographs of people in action did not eliminate the role of the photographer, author, or editor in controlling how a photograph represents its subject to an audience.<sup>63</sup> Whether or not a photograph was staged, the author influenced the viewer's understanding by selecting particular photos and by augmenting them with certain textual descriptions.

In their text and photographs, ethnologists bring attention to cultural practices that other authors ignore by selecting elements that they regard as especially "Indian." Thus, they control and define the representation of Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta culture and identity. Yet ethnologists miss elements of cultural change in their efforts to search for surviving Native practices. At the same time, they tend to typify Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people and acknowledge only chiefs, prominent men, or informants. Certainly, this limits their depictions of Native experiences and perspectives. They did not describe variation within the group in terms of status, gender, and other characteristics.

It seems likely that some of the people depicted in these photographs were those who acted as intermediaries between non-Indians and tribal members. Langley and Thompson, for example, fulfilled this capacity as chiefs. Thompson repeatedly acted in this role because he also appeared in the work of Swanton, Densmore, Rothe, and others. The representation of the Alabama-Coushatta was further limited by authors' reliance on such individuals. How might other tribal members have represented their cultural practices, history, experiences, and perspectives? Thompson was a more complex individual than authors acknowledged. He was a chief and a research consultant with enormous knowledge of Alabama cultural practices, but also a deacon in the Presbyterian Church.<sup>64</sup> Thompson embodied the ongoing processes of cultural hybridization in which individuals engaged. Yet the literature was silent on how he reconciled these various elements and what they meant to him.

### ASSIMILATIONIST WRITERS

Before embarking on a critical analysis of the use of photographs by authors who supported the Christianization of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta peoples, it is imperative to recognize that many if not most tribal members today identify themselves as Christian. Statements on the Alabama-Coushatta Web site show how important Christianity is in the everyday lives of tribal members.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, one must interrogate the biases on non-Indian authors toward Christianity in any critical ethnohistorical analysis to understand how such a perspective has shaped the textual and photographic representations of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people.

Many authors, within and outside of academia, approved of the missionization of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta peoples. This perspective

has persisted into recent times. Such writings have existed alongside those of anthropologists, historians, and other scholars who have been more interested in documenting Alabama and Coushatta cultural preservation. I have grouped these authors into the assimilationist category even though they did not all share the same view on the definition or value of assimilation. Some authors favored both Christianization and assimilation to non-Indian society with the adoption of non-Indian farming techniques, clothing, sports, wage labor, gender roles, and so on. Other writers lamented the loss of Alabama and Coushatta culture while they favored the adoption of Christianity.<sup>66</sup>

Some authors were directly connected to the church or were outright proponents of the church's program. Yet the influence of missionaries regarding the representation of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta culture extended to a variety of authors, even those who opposed the culture loss affected by missionization. In particular, many writers drew on local missionaries for information about, assistance with, and even photographs of tribal members.<sup>67</sup> Any critical analysis or use of historical materials about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people must address how the authors' propensity to go to local missionaries and other local non-Indians rather than tribal members shaped the information they acquired and their representation of the tribes.

In terms of the relationships between these writers and the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people, those whom I discuss here (with the exception of Nettie McClamroch about whom I do not have the relevant information) did not take the photographs that accompany their texts. These photographs were supplied by the missionaries and are now in the Shill collection at the Institute of Texan Cultures. As researchers, the relationships between these individuals and tribal members seemed quite limited. Although authors such as Rothe and Vivian Fox lived in east Texas, they relied primarily on the missionaries for information in regard to their research on the Alabama-Coushatta.

Many non-Indian writers used photographs to underscore their arguments that the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people had given up their Native ways and adopted Euro-American values, practices, and religion. Their photographs and captions directed the viewer's attention to church and school attendance and vocational training. Gender-specific notions of dress and appropriate activities also came across implicitly in these photographs. Like other authors, they shared a preoccupation with chiefs and neglected to identify ordinary individuals. These writers had great difficulty reconciling elements of cultural continuity and change and tended to ignore photographic elements that contradicted their conceptual frameworks. As a result, they perpetuated the misconception that tribal members did not maintain Native values and practices.

## CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

Authors often used photographs in which large groups of tribal members stood outside a church to demonstrate widespread participation in Christianity



**FIGURE 7.** From *Aline Thompson Rothe, Kalita's People, and Vivian Fox, The Winding Trail, 80. Shill Collection, University of Texas at San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures, no. 072-1705. Courtesy of Dorothy Shill.*

(see fig. 7). To similar ends, writers frequently included photographs of large groups of children either inside or outside a school.<sup>68</sup> With such photos, authors suggested that tribal members widely accepted school attendance and the practices and principles of the dominant society that school represented and reproduced.

The frontispiece of McClamroch's *History of the Alabama Indian Church* includes such a photograph and helps her justify the investment of the Presbyterian Church. The photo shows a group of people, mainly women in light-colored, knee-length dresses, gathered at the door of the Presbyterian Church on the reservation. In 1944, McClamroch wrote her text at the request of the synodical historian of the women's auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church of the state of Texas. She drew on information from missionaries, church personnel, tribal members, and written sources. Like many works of its kind, McClamroch praised the missionaries and their endeavors. The photograph that opens her text underscores her goal to show that, as she says, "The Indians, as a whole, have fine traits of character, and it is evident that these traits, with little encouragement, can be developed into the highest type of citizenship for the Spiritual Kingdom, and for their Country. The church's time and money are well spent in making this development."<sup>69</sup> According to McClamroch, becoming first-rate citizens of their church and country involved tribal members overcoming the "inborn traits and habits inherited from their ancestors."<sup>70</sup>

In *Kalita's People*, Rothe includes a photo of a large group in front of the church that supports her point that many tribal members had converted and attended church (see fig. 7). The caption reads, "A group of Alabama-Coushatta Indians at Church on the Reservation soon after the turn of the century. Dr. and Mrs. Caleb W. Chambers, their daughter Dorothy, and Missionaries from Brazil are at the far right on the front row."<sup>71</sup> Even though the images of tribal members dominate the photograph and outnumber the missionaries, through her caption, Rothe gives prominence to the missionaries while tribal members remain anonymous.

Efforts to missionize and educate Native American peoples often include attempts to modify their gender roles. Likewise, photographs depicting Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people show similar endeavors. In McClamroch's church photo, the women are all dressed in a way that the church officials would have been likely to approve. Many years later, Fox used a photo in which young boys and men stood behind the chairs they had made in furniture class (see fig. 8). The photo bears some resemblance to those of Harrington and Swanton in that the presence of the boys authenticates the accomplishments of the class. Yet the boys remain unidentified. Through such photographs, the author demonstrates that tribal members took up the gender-appropriate behavior and practices valued in non-Indian society.<sup>72</sup>

The use of such photographs continued into recent years and perpetuated the persistent misconception that Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people had "lost their culture." In the photograph "First Indian School" in Fox's *The Winding Trail*, a large group of children sit outside the school. Although this text was published in the 1980s, it evinced the same idea—that tribal members



FIGURE 8. Vivian Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 87. Shill Collection, University of Texas at San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures, no. 072-1725. Courtesy of Dorothy Shill.

had assimilated to non-Indian culture. The photograph that appears on the same page further emphasizes the point by showing two women in non-Indian clothing with a caption that reads, "First Indians who went to school."<sup>73</sup> Yet the caption neglects to mention that the women in this photograph were attending college in Durant, Oklahoma as the archival notes state.

To Fox, a photograph of women playing volleyball in the 1920s represents a successful and beneficial example of assimilation. According to her, safer contemporary sports had replaced the dangerous and sometimes fatal stickball game.<sup>74</sup> But if one considers the oppressive influence of missionaries and the pressure they placed on Native practices like the stickball game, this picture comes to represent an instance of both cultural oppression and creative cultural hybridization. In the new sport, people may have found a new outlet for the values, beliefs, and practices associated with the stickball game.

### ROTHE

Rothe's 1963 work, *Kalita's People: A History of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians of Texas*, provides an example of an assimilationist perspective that is in some ways representative and in other ways unique. Her work exhibits a confused mix of pro-Christianization and preservationist elements. She was a local schoolteacher and correspondent for the *Houston Chronicle*. In her book, she recounts Alabama-Coushatta history and folklore drawing mainly on Swanton, Albert Gatschet, and Harriet Smither. In terms of content, Rothe's photographs show a neglect of individual identification, a focus on church participation, and an inability to reconcile elements of cultural continuity and change. Although she favors Christianization, she also shows nostalgia for an imagined Indian past expressed through romantic depictions of elders and a reification of certain "traditional" practices such as the *sof-ke* and basket making.<sup>75</sup>

Rothe acquired much of her contemporary information from Dr. and Mrs. Caleb W. Chambers, who served as Presbyterian missionaries to the Alabama-Coushatta for more than thirty years. She also received help from their daughter, Dorothy Chambers Shill, who learned to speak Alabama when she was a little girl.<sup>76</sup> Although Rothe mentions that Shill accompanied her to the reservation to gather information about customs and legends, Rothe does not mention what information they received nor from whom. It is not clear what or how much information Rothe received from Alabama-Coushatta tribal members. Most of her photographs came from Shill and are now in the Shill Collection at the Institute of Texan Cultures. Two other photographs came from Presbyterian Reverend Oscar Landry.

Rothe includes photos to show typical examples of Alabama-Coushatta people rather than to portray their individuality. She identifies the missionaries Chief Ti-cai-che (Bronson Cooper Sylestine), Chief Sun-Ke (Thompson), and "Old Josephine, the basket maker." However, she neglects to identify other tribal members. Rothe labels a photo that shows a woman, boy, and man in front of a house, "An early Alabama-Coushatta Indian home." In one photo, she neglects to identify McConico Battise, an Alabama-Coushatta chief, even

though he is identified in the Shill collection (see fig. 9). Fox used the same photo many years later and did identify Battise. So it seems clear that Shill could have identified the individuals and supplied that information to Rothe. It is surprising that Rothe did not identify this chief because she usually identified chiefs. Battise is pictured wearing a Plains headdress, which typically was worn only by chiefs.<sup>77</sup>

The photo "Nine Little Alabama-Coushatta Indian boys" objectifies the boys and supports her argument regarding assimilation. The caption seems to be a clear, and demeaning, reference to the rhyme "Ten Little Indians." Similar to a police lineup, from right to left, the boys are arranged roughly from tallest to shortest. They stand to the side while their faces are turned toward the camera. All except for one wear jackets, two wear long pants while the others wear short pants, and two are not wearing shoes. The photo resembles the one of Salin Langley mentioned earlier in that the boys stand in front of the wall of a building without any further references to their lives, context, or individuality. They become objectified as examples of a type while their western clothing underscores the author's argument that they have assimilated.

The contradictions in Rothe's text and photographs show how difficult it was for her to grasp complex cultural dynamics based on the conceptual frameworks she brought to the experience. On the one hand, she states that, aside from language, the Alabama-Coushatta "retained little of the skills of their race in handicrafts and know little of the folklore and ancient customs of their race."<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, Rothe points out and valorizes certain "old industries" such as basket making and *sof-ke*, which often appear in her photos.<sup>79</sup> For one photograph, through her caption Rothe reduces a mass of visual information to a focus on the preparation of *sof-ke*. She ignores complex images of baskets, cotton dresses, beaded moccasins and necklaces; a timber saw; the horse and plow; and the picket fence.

Further, in the photograph of Battise, the subject wears a Plains headdress, sits in front of a log cabin, and holds a rifle across his lap (see fig. 9). The caption reads, "An Aged Alabama-Coushatta Tribal Member Sits before



FIGURE 9. *McConico Battise. Aline Thompson Rothe, Kalita's People, and Vivian Fox, The Winding Trail, 28. Shill Collection, University of Texas at San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures, no. 072-1705. Courtesy of Dorothy Shill.*



the Log Cabin He Built Many Years Ago.” Rothe did not mention that the style of this headdress came from Plains groups, not from the Alabama-Coushatta. Neither did she discuss his clothing nor the rifle. She did not note that although southeastern groups lived in log homes, the square design of the log cabin pictured was influenced by European styles of architecture.<sup>80</sup> Yet Rothe’s purpose in pairing this particular caption with this photograph seems neither to describe an individual or chief nor to address the material items depicted. Rather, by pairing the “Aged” quality of the man with the “Log Cabin He Built Many Years Ago,” she nostalgically harkens back to an imagined Alabama-Coushatta past.

In a similar manner, her photograph of “Old Josephine, the basket maker” recalls the skills at handicrafts that belong to a distant, imagined era. The staged quality of this photograph becomes obvious in its symmetrical composition and the decorative rather than utilitarian placement of a gourd in a river-cane basket. The emphasis on basket making and *sof-ke*, together with a romanticization of the elderly, all point to a construction of Indianness based on the author’s nostalgia for a past uncontaminated by European influence—with the exception of Christianity. Authors like Rothe had great difficulty coming to terms with practices that to them may have seemed contradictory. Certain practices such as basket making and *sof-ke* became emblems of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta while other more subtle values, beliefs, and practices escaped notice. The resulting depictions of Indianness relied on what the authors expected or hoped Indians to be in the past and the present. Like the ethnologists before them, these representations defined typical likenesses of Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people rather than conveying the lives and experiences of multidimensional individuals.

#### REPRESENTATION IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY: PERSISTENCE AND CHANGE

Some of the aforementioned trends have persisted in photographic depictions of the late twentieth century. The juxtaposition of people and things continued to appear in later photographs, with river-cane and pine-needle basket making receiving considerable attention. Beginning in the 1970s, depictions of powwow regalia and Plains-style headdresses also increased but often connected the Alabama-Coushatta to broader stereotypes of Native American people. Although these items were still used to mark and define identity, the focus seemed to be more on people than on objects. In a photograph in Johnson’s book, for example, Maggie Langley does not disappear behind the basket she holds. Rather, her direct gaze confronts the camera and dominates the picture.<sup>81</sup>

Other changes in the use of the photograph marked continuing developments in the relationships between researchers and Native people. Authors began to acknowledge tribal members as consultants, collaborators, and photographic subjects to a greater degree. Often the people photographed acted as consultants to the researcher as in the work of linguist Kimball. Geographer Donald Hunter included photographs of his consultants and

their grandchildren. Furthermore, the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people have exerted more influence over research and representation, whereas in early works, tribal members had little or no power to determine how authors depicted them.<sup>82</sup>

These developments reflected similar trends occurring more broadly in research about the Southeast and about Native Americans more generally. Charles Hudson remarked on these shifts, and his own work exemplified them. But while Hudson's 1976 broad overview of the Southeast was a clear successor to Swanton's voluminous work, he paid much more attention to acknowledging the individuals who aided anthropologists and who appeared in the photographs.<sup>83</sup>

Photographs and texts have begun to show more complex portrayals of the lives and experiences of Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people. Professional photographer Reagan Bradshaw's contact with the Alabama-Coushatta seems to have been limited to the work he did for a photo-essay about them. His other professional work covered a wide range of subject matter especially in commercial photography. Nevertheless, his photo-essay on the Alabama-Coushatta moved away from portrayals of typical "Alabama-Coushatta-ness" toward more varied depictions of people and their lives. Gelo called this work "a welcomed collection of fresh photos depicting modern occupations, church life, and softball."<sup>84</sup> The 1987 photo-essay achieved Bradshaw's hope for a "caring and generous" portrayal of Native American people in Texas. The work appeared in *Indian Life in Texas* by Charles Shaw. Shaw's text is an impressionistic interpretation of the lives of Indians in early Texas, complemented by his own imaginative illustrations. Bradshaw's photos, in contrast, focus on Native Americans in contemporary Texas. He includes photos of the Tigua, Kickapoo, Alabama-Coushatta, and Native individuals in Dallas.<sup>85</sup>

His photos of the Alabama-Coushatta are an exposé of life at the reservation rather than a description of a few individuals. As such, he includes photos of people in a wide array of activities, many of which would not be described as markedly "Indian." His photographs situate subjects in the surroundings of their everyday lives (see figs. 11 and 12). He includes people at the Baptist church, people at a softball game, teenagers at an outdoor meal, a judge in his office, a bricklayer at work, a welder at work, and a dancer at the tourist center. Many of his photos are candid shots. Though some photographs are posed, they are not staged to the same degree as the photos discussed previously. For example, Bradshaw's photo of Chief Robert Fulton Battise depicts him at home in his living room, seated in his recliner, and gazing back at the camera (see fig. 10).

Although Bradshaw did not always identify individuals, his depiction of emotion, everyday settings, and the comfort of people in front of the camera emphasizes their humanity and individuality. The result is a multifaceted and multidimensional portrayal of Alabama-Coushatta identity. Of his twenty photos, thirteen depict individuals and six include groups of people. More than half of the photos identify the individuals shown. A few photos include Nelson Celestine whom Shaw, the author of the accompanying text,



**FIGURE 10.** Robert Fulton Battise. From Reagan Bradshaw, *“Photographic Essay.”* Courtesy of the State House Press.



**FIGURE 11.** From Reagan Bradshaw, *“Photographic Essay.”* Courtesy of the State House Press.

acknowledged as a source of information. The photos of Celestine, taken together, show multiple facets to his life and identity including his work as the former director of the tourist complex, as a welder, and as a preacher at the Baptist church. Further, one of only a few captions states, “Alabama-Coushatta tribal members work in many trades . . . . Maurice Bullock is a welder, a former Tribal Council Chairman and coach of the men’s fast pitch softball team.” Thus Bradshaw’s text and his photographs show multifaceted individuals.<sup>86</sup>

Like other authors, Bradshaw’s photographs of people at the Baptist church did show tribal members’ participation (see fig. 11); unlike others, Bradshaw depicts the church not merely as an avenue toward assimilation but also as a complex site transformed by tribal members into an outlet for the expression and enactment of their values, beliefs, and practices. The montage includes individuals of various ages singing a hymn in the pews, a man lifting and smiling at a child, and people gathering and moving around a table laden with many varied contributions of food. The photographs illustrate the continuation of Alabama-Coushatta values such as the importance of family, community cooperation, generosity, and intergenerational interaction.<sup>87</sup>

Photographs of life in action largely replaced the staged photographs like those of the man with the blowgun, the woman preparing a hide, and the “Alibamu family.” Later authors preferred “snapshot” or “slice of life” photos that caught people in the course of their daily life and activities.<sup>88</sup> Such photos

contextualized people into their everyday lives and created a greater common ground between themselves and the viewing audience. Although such photos gave the sense that they were constructed to a lesser degree, authors still selected photographs and thereby controlled the representation of the lives of tribal members.

The depiction of disparate cultural elements and the ways Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta individuals incorporate and transform them still remains largely unaddressed. Bradshaw photographed and commented on assimilation and cultural maintenance but was not able to reconcile the two.<sup>89</sup> Scholarly works on the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta still have fallen short in the depiction of individuals as multifaceted beings. In this regard, some articles for a popular audience have done a better job. Some Coushatta tribal members have written articles that use photographs to convey their own notions of culture and identity that differ markedly from the portrayals by non-Indians.

#### POPULAR DEPICTIONS OF THE ALABAMA-COUSHATTA AND COUSHATTA

Popular sources on the Alabama-Coushatta (here my analysis focuses more heavily on the Alabama-Coushatta rather than the Coushatta of Louisiana) offer both serious limitations as well as some advantages over more scholarly works. Of particular note are the articles in the magazine *Texas Highways*, a widely circulated travel magazine. These authors and photographers were employed by the magazine and otherwise had little contact with tribal members. This magazine has featured articles of the Alabama-Coushatta since the 1970s. For this reason, one can trace how the magazine's representations of Indians have changed.

In one respect, the articles in *Texas Highways*, like many other popular venues, were sometimes limited by inaccuracies and misinformation regarding Alabama-Coushatta culture and history. The text and photos often applied broader Indian stereotypes to the Alabama-Coushatta. Some articles, for example, identified powwows and other recent, complex cultural hybridizations as "traditional" Alabama-Coushatta culture.<sup>90</sup> At times, the *Texas Highways* articles depicted culture in a more complex manner yet without analysis. The text and photographs often contained a disorderly mix of objects and practices associated with the past and present, jumbling Indian and non-Indian, tradition and nontraditional elements.<sup>91</sup>

The *Texas Highways* articles were sometimes very effective in presenting tribal members as unique individuals. Much scholarly work tended to generalize about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta based on information from a few individuals. In general, authors did not acknowledge the limited nature of their sources nor present their information as a profile of particular individuals or families. Such authors failed to portray individual variation and the ways people shared and/or changed culture in different ways adequately.

In contrast, Herman Kelly used profiles of particular individuals and families to show a complex cultural milieu and multidimensional



**FIGURE 12.** Winona, Missy, Rita, and Nita Battise. From Herman Kelly, “A Red Man in a White Man’s World,” 15. Courtesy of Texas Highways Magazine, slide number 4A-LS-22.

individuals. In his 1971 article, Kelly featured Jack Sr. and Lawrine Battise and their family. He showed pictures of Jack and Lawrine working at the tourist complex, Jack working on a car, their daughters attending school, and one daughter viewing an oil drilling site. In one photo, in particular, three teenage girls look at a poster of the Osmond brothers while a younger sister looks on (see fig. 12). The table before them is laden with records. The girls smile while the Osmond brothers smile back at them. From one perspective, the photo depicts the girls as “typical” teenagers and might be considered evidence of assimilation. But the components of the photograph contain greater complexity. In the background, a fan gives a hint to the interior of the girls’ home. The blurred image of something in one girl’s hand defies capture and refuses to be suspended in time. The caption for this photo states, “A poster of the Osmond Brothers is just as necessary as the record player to Wanonia [*sic*] (left) and Rita (center). Nita (right) teases them about having their picture taken in such a pose.”<sup>92</sup> The caption shows the girls’ humor and their own cognizance and critique of the process of photography. Further, by emphasizing how the girls reacted to and used the poster, Kelly demonstrates (knowingly or not) how they hybridized such elements. Together the photograph and text show how the girls insert items of popular culture into their own lives rather than being dominated by it. At the same time, they and their surroundings remain individualized, personal, and particular. It is not so easy for a viewer to insert his or her own ideas about the past, present, and future of the photograph’s subjects as in the photos of Salin Langley and the nine boys.

Unlike authors such as Swanton, Harrington, and Rothe, some of the *Texas Highways* authors used photographs to depict individuals more fully rather than authenticate practices or objects. For example, Tommie Pinkard uses a photo of the late chief Robert Fulton Battise barbecuing. The chief appears not in the regalia that he would have worn for public events and publicity photos but in a plain white t-shirt and khaki pants. One can see the logs holding up the shelter, the fence posts in the background, the tinfoil. In other words, one can see the items acted on and shaped in particular ways by particular individuals. Pinkard uses the photograph to show how the activity fit into the chief's life and connected him to his social world through the communal meal of Thanksgiving (see fig. 13). Yet although the photo and its caption broaden a representation of an individual, the article also attaches clichés to the tribe. The article was included in a November issue and covered Thanksgiving with the chief. The caption that accompanied the photographs states, "As host for a big family gathering, Chief Fulton Battise (far left) tends the smoking venison ribs. His wife, Eva, stirs *yakche*, at her wood stove. The guests bring dishes to add to the mix of traditional Indian and pilgrim foods."<sup>93</sup>

Although the *Texas Highways* articles presented more varied portraits of tribal members, culture, and identity, they sometimes misrepresented that culture and relied on stereotypes. Their portraits of the everyday lives of individuals could draw a commonality between the Alabama-Coushatta and readers. However, because these articles portrayed only a small number of individuals, they constituted only partial depictions of the tribe. It is not clear whether the result bridged a gap between photographic subject and viewing audience or magnified their differences.

#### COUSHATTA AUTHORS

Although the use of photography in scholarly articles about the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people improved, these depictions still represented non-Indian constructions of identity. By contrast, the photographs that Coushatta



**FIGURE 13.** Robert Fulton Battise. From Tommie Pinkard, "Feast for a Chief," 15. Courtesy of *Texas Highways Magazine*, slide number 5G-Liv-1a.



**FIGURE 14.** *Russell and Curtis Sylestine. From Curtis Sylestine, "Koasati Celebrations," 67. Courtesy of Bertney and Linda Langley.*

contributors used in Louisiana State University's Folklife Series illustrated subject matter important to the authors in defining Coushatta and Indian identity.

In "Koasati Celebrations: Contemporary Dance Traditions," Curtis Sylestine's text and photographs express the complex ways in which he relates to powwow music, dance, and regalia. His article includes photos of Sylestine and his son's personal powwow experiences (see fig. 14). In showing the father adjusting his son's regalia, the photograph emphasizes the personal connection between them. After living in Oklahoma and traveling with a powwow dancer, Sylestine contributed what he had learned to his son's regalia and dancing. Rather than portray the experience as a facile adoption of Plains music, dance, and regalia, Sylestine saw a resonance and continuity between contemporary powwow expressive

practices, Native Coushatta practices, and Christian worship. He contradicted the simplistic notion that missionaries held about Native music and dance. He states, "What they did not understand was that our music was very important to us, and that among other things it was a way of worship, just as King David wrote in the Psalms that we should all 'make a joyful noise unto the Lord.'"<sup>94</sup> Sylestine expressed here a more nuanced conception of culture and identity than many non-Indian authors, past and present, were able to grasp. Although many writers neglected or misrepresented the place of the powwow in the lives of Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta people, Sylestine emphasized how powwows carried particular meaning for him.

In another article, "Growing up in the Koasati Community," Bertney Langley recalls his personal childhood memories and experiences that he found important in forming his own identity. Many of these he contrasts with growing up in today. A photograph of a woman collecting herbs accompanies his narrative on the healing practices of his grandmother. When he talks about how children created their own types of play without the influence of television, he includes photographs of children having fun in everyday contexts. One picture depicts children playing on swing sets; another photograph, which appears on the last page of the journal, depicts a teenage girl on a four-wheeler surrounded by several younger children. One photograph caption reads, "Younger children learn from older ones" (see fig. 15). This simply shows two smiling boys standing

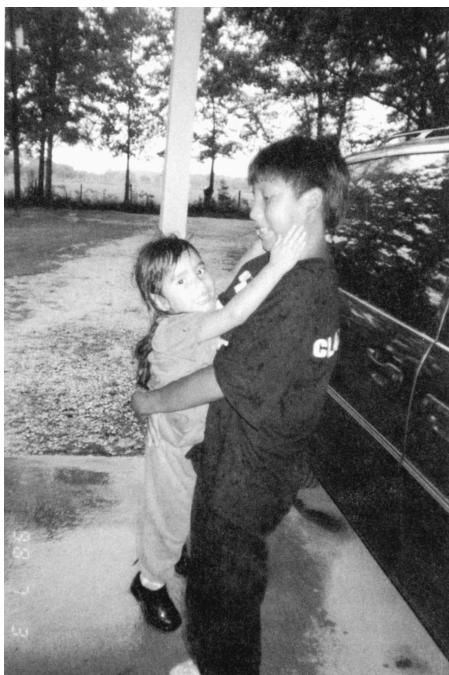


FIGURE 15. From Bertney Langley, "Growing up in the Koasati Community," 71. Courtesy of Bertney and Linda Langley.

beside a minivan under a carport. The older boy lifts the younger one who places his hands on the older boy's cheeks.<sup>95</sup> Langley's narrative and his photographic depiction of tender moments and everyday situations did much to collapse the distance between the subjects and the viewer, diminishing a sense of difference. At the same time, Langley constructed and conveyed his own sense of identity by assembling elements of the personal memories and experiences that were close and meaningful to him.

## CONCLUSIONS

In recent years, researchers have begun to acknowledge individuals who have helped them, and tribal members have gained more control over the representations of them. The resulting photographic depictions of the Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta have become more

varied in their representations of everyday life and people and have broadened the definitions of identity and Indianness. Certainly, exploration of more diverse platforms such as the Internet will contribute an even greater picture as to how individuals choose to express visually what it means to be Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta.

Even with all these issues in mind and with a closer eye to and awareness of the power of photographs, the inclusion of photographs still begs further questions. One issue is the protection of privacy. Different disciplines and researchers follow different rules for identifying people. But how do contemporary people react to the publication of such books and seeing themselves in text and print? Many ethnographers use pseudonyms and otherwise conceal the identities of the individuals with whom they work to protect their identities. But if we regard photographs as powerful tools in communicating to an audience, how do we incorporate them and still protect individuals' privacy? Beyond the mere practical questions, how does one avoid the totalizing and emblematic quality of photographs? How does one counteract the tendency of ethnographic photographs to represent and symbolize a group of people to a viewer? How does one emphasize that photographs are not uncomplicated windows into the lives of others?

Perhaps we should take a lesson from Trinh Min Ha's film *Sur Name Viet, Given Name Nam*. The film makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the audience



to go away with an image in mind that encapsulates Vietnamese womanhood. The process of viewing this film is uncomfortable, and the position of the viewer is repeatedly destabilized through moving camera shots of individual's hands, feet, and faces. Printed words are presented simultaneously with oral speeches, and songs and poems may be heard over monologues. The viewer is constantly reminded that a filmmaker, a person, was responsible for editing and putting together the film. Such has also been the purpose of various post-modern ethnographies, to call attention to the way the text is written so the reader must acknowledge that it is put together by a person with a particular point of view, so that the reader cannot take for granted that the account is an unproblematic window into the lives and cultures of a particular group of people.<sup>96</sup> Perhaps such texts, films, and photographs can lend clues to the use of photography in accounts of Native Americans in order to subvert the unequal relationship between the viewer and the viewed on.

In hindsight, what does a critique of earlier authors accomplish? Certainly, their goals and methods were a product of their time period as well as their own personal positions and biases. We cannot expect them to conduct or analyze their research from the perspectives of our own contemporary era. However, I would hope that a critique of the photographic and textual representation of earlier authors would encourage those of us who research and write about Native peoples to continue to interrogate the sources on which we draw.

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### NOTES

1. Drawing on Bakhtin's notions of linguistic hybridization, cultural hybridization as an anthropological theory has gained prominence over previous conceptions such as syncretism, which has a more static connotation (Stephanie May, "Performances of Identity: Alabama-Coushatta Tourism, Powwows, and Everyday Life" [PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2001]). Cultural hybridization foregrounds culture

as a dynamic process in which people combine values and/or practices of two or more cultures to create something new, without necessarily erasing the original elements. Such elements may exist simultaneously or situationally even if they appear contradictory. The concept of cultural hybridization emphasizes that people appropriate practices and transform them to serve their own needs and reinterpret them according to their own systems of meaning. Notions of hybridization are discussed in Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Deborah Kapchan and Pauline Turner Strong, "Theorizing the Hybrid," *Journal of American Folklore* 112, no. 445 (1999): 239–53.

2. Also see Joanna C. Scherer, "The Photographic Document: Photographs as Primary Data in Anthropological Enquiry," in *Anthropology and Photography, 1860–1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 35; Joanna C. Scherer, "Historical Photographs as Anthropological Documents: A Retrospect," *Visual Anthropology* 3 (1990): 143; Martha Macintyre and Maureen MacKenzie, "Focal Length as an Analogue of Cultural Distance," in Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography*, 160, 163.

3. Some sources that do a good job interrogating and analyzing prior historical sources include Dan L. Flores, "The Red River Branch of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians: An Ethnohistory," *Southern Studies* 16 (Spring 1977): 55–72; William Edwin Shepard Folsom-Dickerson, *The White Path* (San Antonio, TX: Naylor, 1965); Daniel Jacobson, "Koasati Cultural Change" (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 1954); Daniel Jacobson, "The Origin of the Koasati Community of Louisiana," *Ethnohistory* 7 (1960): 97–120; Bobby H. Johnson, *Coushatta People* (Phoenix, AZ: Indian Tribal Series, 1976); Geoffrey D. Kimball, *Koasati Grammar* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press: 1991); Howard N. Martin, "Texas Redskins in Confederate Gray," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (April 1967): 586–92; Howard N. Martin, "Ethnohistorical Analysis of Documents Relating to the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes of the State of Texas," in *Alabama-Coushatta (Creek) Indians* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 179–256; Howard N. Martin, *Myths and Folktales of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians* (Austin, TX: Encino Press, 1977); Howard N. Martin, "Polk County Indians: Alabamas, Coushattas, Pakana Muskogeas," *East Texas Historical Journal* 17, no. 1 (1979): 3–23; Dorothy Rushing, "The Promised Land of the Alabama-Coushatta" (master's thesis, East Texas State University, 1974); Harriet Smither, "The Alabama Indians of Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 36 (October 1932): 83–108.

4. Authors who have written extensively on the languages include Mary R. Haas, Helena Halmari, Heather K. Hardy, and Geoffrey Kimball. Some unpublished works include Jacobson, "Koasati Cultural Change." Unpublished theses and dissertations include May, "Performances of Identity"; Rushing, "The Promised Land"; Ruth Peebles, "The Westward Migration of the Alabama and Coushatta Indians" (Huntsville, TX: Sam Houston State University, 1968). For a more comprehensive list, see Daniel J. Gelo and Tammy J. Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians: A Research Guide and Bibliography," *Recent Research from the Institute of Texan Cultures Department of Research and Collections* 2, no. 2 (1992): i–35.

5. See articles in *Frontier Times* published in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. See *The Polk County Enterprise*, the *Houston Chronicle*, and the *Houston Post*.

6. See Brian W. Dippie, "Representing the Other: The North American Indian," in Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography*, 132; James C. Faris, "Photographing the Navajo: Scanning Abuse," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996):

65–82; Steven Hoelscher, “Viewing Indians: Native Encounters with Power, Tourism, and the Camera in the Wisconsin Dells, 1866–1907,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 27, no. 4 (2003): 4–5; Ira Jacknis, “New Questions for Old Images: Recent Contributions to the History of Photography of Native Americans,” *Current Anthropology* 46, no. 3 (2005): 492; Willow Roberts Powers, “Images across Boundaries: History, Use, and Ethics of Photographs of American Indians,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 129.

7. Scherer, “Historical Photographs,” 139; Scherer, “The Photographic Document,” 33. Also see Iskander Mydin, “Historical Images—Changing Audiences,” in Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography*, 249, 252; Gregory Starrett, “Violence and the Rhetoric of Images,” *Cultural Anthropology* 18, no. 3 (2003): 399, 410, 412, 416, 419.

8. James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 4–5; Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Southeast* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 4, 7–8.

9. Rick Hill, “High-Speed Film Captures the Vanishing American, in Living Color,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 112; also see Ira Jacknis, “Preface,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 9; Hoelscher, “Viewing Indians,” 3; J. Diane Pearson and Fred Wesley, “Recalling the Changing Women: Returning Identity to Chiricahua Apache Women and Children,” *Journal of the Southwest* 44, no. 3 (2002): 262; Monty Roessel, “Navajo Photography,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 84; Martha A. Sandweiss, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Scherer, “The Photographic Document,” 33; Scherer, “Historical Photographs,” 142; Colleen Skidmore, “Touring an Other’s Reality: Aborigines, Immigrants, and Autochromes,” *Ethnologies* 26, no. 1 (2004): 146. Thank you to one of the anonymous reviewers for bringing Sandweiss’s work to my attention.

10. Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003). Thank you to one of the anonymous reviewers for bringing Sontag’s work to my attention. For discussion of this process, see Jacknis, “Preface,” 5. See also Barbara Wolbert, “The Anthropologist as Photographer: The Visual Construction of Ethnographic Authority,” *Visual Anthropology* 13 (2000): 337.

11. Wolbert, “The Anthropologist as Photographer,” 337.

12. Hoelscher, “Viewing Indians,” 5, 35.

13. Pauline T. Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 7. Also see Jacknis, “New Questions,” 492; Carolyn J. Marr, “Marking Oneself: Use of Photographs by Native Americans of the Southern Northwest Coast,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 52; Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*; Starrett, “Violence,” 399.

14. See Karen Blu, *The Lumbee Problem: The Making of an American Indian People* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Jack Campisi, *The Mashpee Indians: Tribe on Trial* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991).

15. Hill, “High-Speed Film,” 112.

16. Deborah Poole, “An Excess of Description: Ethnography, Race, and Visual Technologies,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (2005): 4.

17. Various authors have used many different spellings of Alabama and Coushatta. I use the names that the tribes have chosen to represent their groups:

Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta. Linguists often use the term *Koasati*. Harrington and Swanton used the terms *Alibamu*, *Alabama*, and *Koasati*. They did not use the term *Alabama-Coushatta*, but the Texas tribe was not incorporated as such at that time. However, Harrington and Swanton's focus solely on the Alabama in Texas neglected the Coushatta and their influence. M. R. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," *Southern Workman* 43, no. 10 (1914): 544–51; John R. Swanton, "The Indians of the Southeastern United States," *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 137 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1946): 1–943.

18. George E. Lankford, introduction to *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians* by John R. Swanton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), xii.

19. There has been some debate on this point. For more see Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*, 4; Jacobson, "Koasati Cultural Change," 99; May, "Performances of Identity," 29; Smither, "The Alabama Indians of Texas," 83; Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 27–28, 86, map 12.

20. Charles Hudson and Carmen Chaves Tesser, "Introduction" in *The Forgotten Centuries: Indians and Europeans in the American South, 1521–1704*, ed. Charles Hudson and Carmen Chaves Tesser (Athens: University of Georgia Press: 1994), 2. Also see Patricia Galloway, "Confederacy as a Solution to Chiefdom Dissolution: Historical Evidence in the Choctaw Case," in Hudson and Tesser, *The Forgotten Centuries*, 393–420; Vernon James Knight Jr., "The Formation of the Creeks," in Hudson and Tesser, *The Forgotten Centuries*, 373–92; Randolph J. Widmer, "The Structure of Southeastern Chiefdoms," in Hudson and Tesser, *The Forgotten Centuries*, 125–55.

21. For more on migrations, see Jacobson, "Koasati Cultural Change," 105; Johnson, *Coushatta People*, 30; Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*; Martin, *Myths*, ix; Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States"; Rushing, "The Promised Land," 49. On tribal migration as fragmentation, see Dickerson, "The White Path"; Rushing, "The Promised Land," 25; Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 87; Flores, "The Red River Branch," 56. On southeastern town organization, see Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976); Gerald Sider, *Lumbee Indian Histories: Race, Ethnicity and Indian Identity in the Southern United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

22. For history of the Alabama and Coushatta after they arrived in Texas and southwestern Louisiana, see Johnson, *Coushatta People*, 42, 44, 48; Jacobson, "Koasati Community," 110; Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*, 9; Howard Martin, "Timeline of Alabama-Coushatta History" (n.p., 1983); Martin, *Myths and Folktales*, xxi; May, "Performance of Identity," 47–50, 52–53; Rushing, "The Promised Land," 65; Smither, "The Alabama Indians of Texas," 95, 100.

23. May, "Performance of Identity," 56–57; Rushing, "The Promised Land," 103, 108, 110; Dorman H. Winfrey and James M. Day, eds., *The Indian Papers of Texas and the Southwest, 1825–1916*, 5 vols. (Austin, TX: The Pemberton Press, 1966).

24. Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*, 11; Johnson, *Coushatta People*, 90.

25. Senate, US Congress, *Restoration of Federal Recognition to the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and the Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes of Texas*, 99th Cong., (1986), H. R. 1344; Johnson, *Coushatta People*, 91.

26. Rushing, "The Promised Land," 119–20.

27. Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*, 13.

28. *Ibid.*, 14

29. See Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, <http://www.coushatta.org> (accessed 21 July 2007).

30. See Kevin Battise, *Statement by Kevin Battise, Vice-Chairman, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas before the Texas House Committee on Licensing and Administrative Procedures* (2003), <http://www.alabama-coushatta.com/media/press/121803.htm> (accessed 10 January 2006); Stephanie May de Montigny, "Alabama-Coushatta," in *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Ethnicity*, vol. 6, ed. Celeste Ray (2007).

31. For a complete bibliography on early writings, see Gelo and Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians." On salvage anthropology, see Ira Jacknis, "Alfred Kroeber and the Photographic Representation of California Indians," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 20, no. 3 (1996): 15–32. Also see Dippie, "Representing the Other," 133; Hill, "High-Speed Film," 114; Hoelscher, "Viewing Indians," 5; Macintyre and MacKenzie, "Focal Length," 159; Mydin, "Historical Images," 249; Poole, "An Excess of Description," 159–79; Roessel, "Navajo Photography," 84.

32. Frances Densmore, "The Alabama Indians and Their Music," in *Straight Texas: Publications of the Texas Folklore Society*, vol. 13, ed. J. Frank Dobie (Austin, TX: Texas Folklore Society, 1937), 279.

33. Hoelscher, "Viewing Indians," 5.

34. Gelo and Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians," i, 23–24; John R. Swanton, "Early History of the Creek Indians and Their Neighbors," *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 73 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1970 [1922]): 31–32. Swanton acknowledged that his account could not be complete. Swanton, "Early History," 11; Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 1. Also see Lankford, "Introduction," xii–xiii. Lankford recommended pairing Swanton's work with Hudson's 1976 "ethnological overview" (Lankford, "Introduction," xvi). Later scholars have critiqued Swanton on certain details. See Gelo and Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians," 22–23. E.g., he mistakenly categorized the Koasati as a subgroup of the Alabama. Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," table 1; Swanton, "Early History," 11.

35. Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 339, 345, 394–95, 431, 495–96, 513–15, 520, 557, 560, 575, 579, 583, 586, 617, 678, 695, 724.

36. Wolbert, "The Anthropologist as Photographer," 323.

37. See, e.g., the account of Celissy Henry dressing skins in Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 445. He also stated, "Plate 72, figure 2, and plate 73 show mortars and pestles in use among the Alabama, Hitchiti, and Caddo," in Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 560. Yet the plate concerning the Alabama showed only a mortar and pestle, not a person actually using them.

38. People were depicted in *ibid.*, plates 2, figs. 1 and 2; plate 27, figs. 1 and 2; plate 28; plate 71, fig. 1. Material items were shown in plate 71, fig. 2; plate 72, figs. 1 and 2. Stimafutchi appeared in plate 26. Like other Creek men depicted in the text's illustrations, Stimafutchi wore a cloth turban with feathers, nose ring, armbands, and crescent-shaped silver gorgets suspended across his chest. Stimafutchi's adornments also could be discussed in terms of how they embody cultural contact and change.

39. For the Alabama, see Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 87, plate 2. For the Koasati, see p. 146, plates 26–28. For mortars and pestles, see p. 560, plate 72, fig. 2. For dressing a skin see p. 445, plate 71, fig. 1.

40. Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 552–53, 606.

41. Seven photos of prominent men who acted as informants include Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," plate 2, fig. 1; plate 27, fig. 1; others who served as informants: plate 38, fig. 2; plate 49, fig. 1; last speakers: plate 4, fig. 1; plate 38, fig. 1; other men: plate 17; plate 21, fig. 2; plate 22, fig. 1.

42. John R. Swanton, "Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy," *Bureau of American Ethnology, Forty-Second Annual* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1928), 32; Swanton, "Early History," 199; Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," 339, 345, 583, 586; Swanton, "Social Organization," 468.

43. Although approximately half of the photographs of men identified them by name, only two of those depicting women did so. Both of these were labeled as the last speakers of a particular language. Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States," plate 39, fig. 1; plate 40, fig. 1. In other photographs, six depicted women only as wife or part of an identified man's family as in plate 2, fig. 2; plate 4, figs. 1 and 2; plate 17; plate 21, fig. 2; plate 22, fig. 1. Three photographs showed anonymous women as part of single-sex groups (plates 5, fig. 1 and 2; plate 61), and four included women in mixed groups in which all the individuals were anonymous (plate 23, fig. 2; plate 24, fig. 1 and 2; plate 28.) Five photographs depicted individual anonymous women. Some of these were captioned as follows: plate 25, fig. 1, "Old Houma Woman, Point Au Chien, LA"; plate 27, fig. 2, "Mother of Jackson Langley, Kinder, LA"; plate 71, fig. 1, "An Alabama Woman Dressing a Skin, Polk County, Tex.;" plate 73, fig. 1, "Hitchiti Woman Pounding Corn, Near Sylvian, Okla."

44. Swanton, "Indians of the Southeastern United States": plate 2, fig. 2; plate 27, fig. 2, pp. 606, 445; plate 71, fig. 1; plate 71, fig. 1. For more on how European male writers neglected to discuss women, see Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

45. Jacknis, "Alfred Kroeber," 23; Poole, "An Excess of Description," 3.

46. Starrett, "Violence," 414.

47. Lankford, "Introduction," xiv.

48. General Samuel Chapman Armstrong founded Hampton as "a training ground for the head, heart, and hand of newly freed slaves and Native Americans." Captain R. H. Pratt first asked Armstrong to admit Native Americans into Hampton, and the success of this project led Pratt to further endeavors such as the Carlisle School in Pennsylvania. William R. Harvey, "Founder's Day Remarks," (26 January 2003), <http://www.hamptonu.edu/administration/president/speeches/foundersday2003.htm>, Hampton University (accessed 21 July 2007).

49. Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," *Southern Workman* 37 (1908): 656.

50. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," 547-49; Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," 661.

51. Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," 656-57, 660.

52. *Ibid.*, 657, 659.

53. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," 550-51.

54. *Ibid.*, 548-49. The photograph as evidence and as means to establish an author's ethnographic authority is discussed in Scherer, "Historical Photographs"; Poole, "An Excess of Description"; Starrett, "Violence," 415; Wolbert, "The Anthropologist as Photographer," 321.

55. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," 546, 551.

56. Harrington, "Among Louisiana Indians," 657; Jacknis, "Alfred Kroeber," 23. Also see Poole, "An Excess of Description"; Scherer, "Historical Photographs," 143.
57. Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians," 546-47.
58. *Ibid.*, 547.
59. See also Perdue, *Cherokee Women*; Laura A. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, *Women and Power in Native North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).
60. Aline Thompson Rothe, *Kalita's People: A History of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians of Texas* (Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1963). All of Rothe's photos are included on unnumbered pages following p. 88.
61. Macintyre and MacKenzie, "Focal Length," 162; Jacknis, "New Questions," 492.
62. Wolbert, "The Anthropologist as Photographer," 322.
63. Thank you to one of the anonymous reviewers for making the point on technology and staging. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 46.
64. Densmore, "The Alabama Indians and Their Music," 279.
65. Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, "History," <http://www.alabama-coushatta.com/history/tabid/53/default.aspx> (accessed 10 October 2007); "Welcome," <http://www.alabama-coushatta.com> (accessed 10 October 2007).
66. Of the former: Anna Kilpatrick Fain, *The Story of Indian Village and the Alabama Indians of Polk County, Texas* (Livingston, TX: n.p., 1960); Vivian Fox, *The Winding Trail: The Alabama-Coushatta Indians of Texas* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1983); Nettie (Mrs. R. S.) McClamroch, *History of the Alabama Indian Church* (Beaumont, TX: n.p., 1944). Of the latter: Rothe, *Kalita's People*, Clem Fain, "Ha-ce-ha-pah: The New Moon," in Rothe, *Kalita's People*, ix-xiv.
67. Including Densmore, "The Alabama Indians and Their Music"; Harrington, "Among the Alibamu Indians"; Jonathan B. Hook, *The Alabama-Coushatta Indians* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997).
68. For churches, also see photos in Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 7, 80; McClamroch, *History*, frontispiece; Rothe, *Kalita's People*. For schools, also see Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 15, 17, 94.
69. McClamroch, *History*, 7, 22.
70. *Ibid.*, 10.
71. Rothe, *Kalita's People*, u.p. This was the same photo that Fox would include later on p. 80, labeled merely, "Tribal Photo, 1909."
72. See Perdue, *Cherokee Women*; Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 87.
73. Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 15.
74. *Ibid.*, 31.
75. Gelo and Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians," 21. Romanticization of the elderly may also be seen in a photo caption that reads, "A Typical Indian Woman of the Texas Indian Village," in Martha L. Emmons, "The Texas Indian Village," *Naylor's Epic Century* 3 (July 1936): 29 and "An Old Man of the Alabamas," in Clem F. Fain Jr., "White Chief's Tepee," *East Texas* (April 1928): 28.
76. Rothe, *Kalita's People*, vi, 96.
77. Regarding the Plains headdress, a few exceptions include some of Jack Battise Sr. in tourism photos and as medicine man for chiefs' inauguration. "Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation," *Texas Public Employee* 26 (July 1970): 27; C. K. Chamberlain, "East Texas: Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation," *East Texas*

*Historical Journal* 8 (March 1970): 109–17. Also see "The State of Two Tribes," *The Cattlemans* 69 (August 1982): 158. Fox, *The Winding Trail*, 28.

78. Rothe, *Kalita's People*, 96.

79. *Sof-ke* is an Alabama-Coushatta corn soup similar to that of other southeastern groups. See May, "Performance of Identity," 404; Muriel Wright, "American Indian Corn Dishes," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 36 (1958): 2, reprinted in *Ethnology of the Southeastern Indians: A Source Book*, ed. Charles M. Hudson (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985): 155–66.

80. Also see Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, *Native American Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

81. For photographic depictions of basket making, see Johnson, *Coushatta People*; Fox, *The Winding Trail*. Also see Stephanie A. May, "Alabama-Coushatta Pine Needle Basketry as Meaning-full Practice" (master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1993). For powwow photos see, Reagan Bradshaw, "Photographic Essay" in Charles Shaw, *Indian Life in Texas* (Austin, TX: State House Press, 1987); Gelo, "Powwow Patter"; Johnson, *Coushatta People*; Samuel M. Wilson, "A Texas Powwow," *Natural History* 103, no. 10 (October 1994): 20–25. Maggie Langley's photo is in Johnson, *Coushatta People*, 63.

82. On Native control of the use of photographs, see Marr, "Marking Oneself," 63; Powers, "Images across Boundaries"; Scherer, "The Photographic Document," 37. See also Scherer, "The Photographic Document," 35; also see Jacknis, "New Questions." It seems doubtful that these later visual depictions of the Alabama-Coushatta would stand up to Faris's stringent critique in "Photographing the Navajo."

83. E.g., see Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 265, fig. 66; 486, fig. 112; 492, fig. 115. No doubt some archival photographs did not have identification.

84. Gelo and Morales, "The Alabama-Coushatta Indians," 22. Also see "Reagan Bradshaw Photography," <http://www.reaganbradshaw.com/bio.htm> (accessed 19 October 2007).

85. Bradshaw, "Photographic Essay," after page 145 (pages are unnumbered). Also see Hook, *The Alabama-Coushatta Indians*; Donald G. Hunter, "The Settlement Pattern and Toponymy of the Koasati Indians of Bayou Blue," *Florida Anthropologist* 16 (1973): 80; Johnson, *Coushatta People*; Kimball, *Koasati Grammar*; Kniffen, *The Historic Indian Tribes*.

86. In his photo as preacher, Nelson Celestine was not identified. Bradshaw, "Photographic Essay," u.p.

87. Bradshaw, "Photographic Essay." For a similar discussion, see Jack M. Schultz, *The Seminole Baptist Churches of Oklahoma: Maintaining a Traditional Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

88. See also, Johnson, *Coushatta People*; Bradshaw, "Photographic Essay." For commentary on this style of photography, see Faris, "Photographing the Navajo."

89. Bradshaw, "Photographer's Introduction—Photographic Essay," u.p.

90. Tommie Pinkard, "Weaving Ways," *Texas Highways* 25 (November 1978): 10–13; Tommie Pinkard, "A Stitch from Time," *Texas Highways* 27 (June 1980): 26–29; Herman Kelly, "Pow-wow," *Texas Highways* 21 (May 1974): 8–13; Jack Lowery, "A Celebration of Cultures," *Texas Highways* 38 (November 1991): 42–49. Also see "The State of Two Tribes," 158.

91. Herman Kelly, "A Red Man in a White Man's World," *Texas Highways* 18 (October 1971): 10–17; Tommie Pinkard, "Feast for a Chief," *Texas Highways* 25



(November 1978): 14–15; Pinkard, “A Stitch from Time”; Tommie Pinkard, “Fulton Battise—Mikko Choba,” *Texas Highways* 33 (June 1986): 40–41.

92. Herman Kelly, “A Red Man in a White Man’s World,” 15.

93. Pinkard, “Feast for a Chief,” 15. Pinkard also used this photograph in “Fulton Battise—Mikko Choba.”

94. Curtis Sylestine, “Koasati Celebrations: Contemporary Dance Traditions,” in *Le Reveil Des Fetes: Revitalized Celebrations and Performance Traditions. Folklife Series*, vol. 3, ed. Linda Langley, Susan G. LeJeune, Claude Oubre (Eunice: Louisiana State University, 1995), 61.

95. Bertney Langley, “Growing Up in the Koasati Community,” in *Les Vieux Temps: Recreation and Family Traditions of Southwest Louisiana. Folklife Series*, vol. 4, ed. Linda Langley, Susan G. LeJeune, Claude Oubre (Eunice: Louisiana State University, 1995), 66, 68, 71, 76.

96. E.g., Kathleen Stewart, *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an Other America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). Also see Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 31.