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Native North American Spirituality of the Eastern Woodlands: Sacred Myths, Dreams, Visions, Speeches, Healing Formulas, Rituals and Ceremonials. Edited by Elizabeth Looker.

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A very ambitious work, *Sacred Words* not only attempts to correct the confusion of religion and magic in Reichard's seminal study, but also to discern and unlock the depths of Navajo myth, religion, and ritual. Such a profound theoretical undertaking cannot, by its very nature, be accomplished adequately in one volume. Though Gill's argument regarding the structure of Navajo prayer and the linkage between prayer and ceremonial context is persuasive, his general theoretical argument about the nature of religion, critical as this argument is, demands a more detailed exposition. Gill quite rightly perceives that many, if not most, studies of "primitive" religion are in reality ethnocentric—even in sciences that claim to be free of the ideologies of their own culture. Upon this basis, he persuasively and compactly argues for a new, non-ethnocentric understanding of Navajo religion. Yet, unlike the Athapascan "culture heroes," he has not completely destroyed the monster; his powers of insight need to be more directly trained on the beast. When this is accomplished, one could better judge the power of his general theoretical arguments. Though flawed by attempting too much, Gill has produced a work that must stand along with that of Reichard, and that will hopefully correct the ethnocentrism present in many studies of American Indian religions.

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Native North American Spirituality of the Eastern Woodlands: Sacred Myths, Dreams, Visions, Speeches, Healing Formulas, Rituals and Ceremonials. Edited by Elizabeth Tooker. Preface by William C. Sturtevant. New York: Paulist Press, 1979. 302 pp. + Index. \$7.95 paper.

A persistent problem that plagues the teaching and general study of Native Americans, their cultures and religions is the gap that exists between the existence of excellent records and their availability to students and general readers. Elizabeth Tooker's *Native North American Spirituality of the Eastern Woodlands* bridges this gap for one area in North America.

In the Introduction Tooker describes the nature and character of the texts that record the religious dimensions of these cultures. She shows that we must appreciate the difficulty involved in recording them and the peculiar character and forms they take as documents recorded by outsiders in often awkward and laborious fashion, frequently inexpertly translated into English, and rarely with the Native language surviving even if originally set down.

In a relatively extended section of the introduction Tooker discusses the dimension of the history of the study of Native American religions that stems from Edward B. Tylor's and others' notions of animism. In North America this view was focused on Native concepts identified by such terms as *wakan*, *orenda*, and *manitou*. Tooker, appealing particularly to A. Irving Hallowell's discussion of Ojibwa world view, effectively shows that this history of viewing Native American religions is based on unfounded expectations and has often led to serious misunderstanding and distortion. All this is excellent, but Tooker does not go far enough. She simply tells us that "the world of the Indian—both spiritual and otherwise—is not to be understood by assuming that it is like ours;" she warns us against a "too-literal reading of the texts;" and she sets us immediately loose on the texts. Her well-placed criticism would be much more effective if she had presented some principles and paradigms, even some positive examples, of how to read the texts and how to understand the world they reflect in something of the views of the Peoples and their cultures. If we take Tooker's warnings seriously, and we certainly must, we should be reluctant to go on to the selections for fear of perpetuating a history of insensitive and erroneous readings of such materials.

There are a number of excellent texts reprinted in the collection, although I am somewhat confounded by the organization of the selections and the relative importance given to some types of selections. The organization seems to shift from types of religious and cultural categories, such as "cosmology" and "dreams and visions," to selections from particular tribes, tribal groups, or geographic areas, such as Fox clan ceremonials, Iroquois ceremonials, and southeastern formulas. The chapter entitled "Cosmology" is really Iroquoian cosmology, while the chapter entitled "Dreams and Visions" includes selections from several

diverse and geographically separate areas. More than a third of the anthology is given over to two extensive accounts of clan ceremonials—the Fox and the Winnebago.

Tooker noted that her selections were guided by availability which we can appreciate and we should laud both Tooker and her publisher for including a number of long texts, free of radical editing. Still the division into titled chapters suggests that the material has some overall meaningful organization. It could be accurately described as a collection of classic texts generally pertaining to the religions of tribes in the Eastern United States and Canada. It might have been presented simply and clearly as such.

In addition to those already mentioned, the selections include accounts of Iroquoian creation stories, formal speech acts, and ceremonials. Tooker procured a retranslation of portions of Frank G. Speck's monograph on the Delaware Big House ceremony. Included are selections describing the Winnebago Night Spirits Society ceremonial, Menominee bundle ceremonials, and some Cherokee curing, love, and war formulas.

Tooker's introductions to the various selections are fairly general and would have been more useful had they placed the selections more fully in their historical and cultural contexts. This would have taken more seriously the importance of reading and understanding the texts from the point of view of those in the cultures they reflect.

While I do not believe that from these selections alone we may gain any clear view of the spirituality of religious systems of any of the tribes represented or of the large, complex, geographic area, the anthology makes available some of the classic texts that document dimensions of Native American religions and they may introduce us to the richness and complexity of this large area.

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Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774–1890. By Robin Fisher. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977. Map. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. pp. 250 \$12.50 paper.