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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture. By Helen C. Rountree.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7rm6j8hb>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 14(1)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

1990

DOI

10.17953

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11, pages 141–60 and 292–309; vol. 12, pages 11–48 and 192–207). While part 3 was a basic musicological analysis of three song genres by Nettl and Stephen Blum, the remainder of the series (“Traditional Uses and Functions”; “Musical Life of the Montana Blackfoot, 1966”; “Notes on Composition, Text Settings, and Performance”) contained material and earlier forms of some of the same questions to which Nettl has returned in this monograph.

Blackfoot Musical Thought, like the earlier series as well as most ethnomusicological studies, is the product of an outsider’s analysis and speculation. It is based on personal fieldwork but also on earlier ethnologies and recordings gathered, for the most part, by other outsiders with their own biases and limited technological resources. One of the most helpful aspects of this book is the consistent reminder of the differences between insider and outsider perceptions and verbalizations, and of the possibility that disparate conclusions can be drawn from the same information. At several points, the author compares the outsider’s attempt to describe musical culture accurately to the task of a paleontologist working with dinosaur bones, in terms of the process and potential errors of trying to determine a whole structure from its visible parts. Nettl thus contributes to epistemological studies at the same time as he shares with the reader his sense of the consistency and complexity underlying Blackfoot musical culture.

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The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture. By Helen C. Rountree. Norman, OK and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989. 230 pages. \$18.95 Cloth.

This account of the “traditional culture” of the Algonquian peoples of Virginia’s coastal plain (1607–1610) is written in a traditional ethnographic format that proceeds from chapters on environment, technology and subsistence, and settlement patterns through a central set of chapters on social structure, and concludes with two chapters on politics and religion. The volume is presented as an “historical ethnography” (page vii), but it

differs from most contemporary ethnohistories in generally abstracting cultural forms from their historical context. The historical conditions of our knowledge of Powhatan's chiefdom are treated cursorily in the prologue; historical change will be the subject of a forthcoming companion volume, *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia Through Four Centuries*. Many readers would prefer a more integrated account of culture and history, if only because repeated references to the forthcoming volume are as annoying as they are tantalizing. Similarly, the organization of the book, which moves from material to social to cultural levels of analysis, entails many troublesome references forward in the text. Still, the volume will be extremely useful for those seeking an exhaustive, authoritative, and well-documented compilation of our knowledge of early seventeenth-century Virginia Algonquians.

Rountree gives a remarkably detailed account of native life at the time of English settlement by supplementing the earliest historical records with accounts of later periods and neighboring peoples, modern archeological findings, and her own knowledge of the coastal environment. Enlivening the text and reflecting these various sources are the book's twenty-five black-and-white illustrations, which include seventeenth- and twentieth-century maps, seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century engravings, and photographs and diagrams of artifacts and environmental features. In most cases, Rountree skillfully evaluates the relevance of each source to the particular societies and period she is delineating. However, the goal of describing the particular is largely achieved at the expense of exploring similarities and contrasts among coastal Algonquian societies, and between southeastern Algonquians and other southeastern peoples. With the exception of a brief discussion in the epilogue, the book provides little sense of the relations between Powhatan's chiefdom and other eastern and southeastern societies.

The volume is intended to be primarily descriptive, but its title reflects a theoretical position that is briefly explicated in the somewhat more technical prologue and epilogue. Despite the newness of Powhatan's empire in 1607 and the variation among surrounding chiefdoms in their dependency upon and subordination to Powhatan, Rountree calls all indigenous inhabitants of Virginia's coastal plain "Powhatan Indians." Most radically, she extends this term to the independent Chickahominies because of apparent cultural similarities, despite significant differences in politi-

cal structure. Rountree's rationale for defining the Powhatan empire this broadly derives from a "core-and-fringe" model of ethnicity (page 14), as well as from a desire to find a less cumbersome term than "Virginia Algonquians" (as Feest calls these people in the *Handbook of North American Indians*). However, it is cumbersome indeed to add the terms "Powhatan Indians," "Powhatan population," and "Powhatan culture" to the already existent cluster of Powhatans (the "throne name" of the paramount chief himself, his natal town, and the Algonquian dialects of the region). More seriously, to call these groups "Powhatan Indians" essentializes what seems to have been a transitory moment of extreme centralization (likely reinforced, if not instigated by, the European invasion), and obscures the flexible political organization of the region.

Indeed, in Rountree's discussion of Powhatan's chiefdom (in the latter chapters and, especially, the epilogue), flexibility emerges as a significant characteristic. This, together with minimal redistribution, the absence of a nobility, a degree of social mobility, and certain limitations upon the power and status claimed by the paramount chief, distinguishes Powhatan's chiefdom from more highly stratified and bureaucratic chiefdoms elsewhere in the world. These features support Rountree's characterization of Powhatan's empire as "only an incipient" paramount chiefdom (page 148) with an incipient class structure. Differing from those who emphasize environment or trade routes as primary causal factors, Rountree considers the chiefdom to have risen for defense against invading peoples, both Europeans and northern Iroquians (Massawomecks and Pocoughtaonacks). This interpretation is supported by a brief comparison with the expansion of chiefdoms among New England Algonquians.

The Powhatan chiefdom was three-tiered, the paramount chief (*mamanatowick*) ruling over a set of district chiefs who themselves ruled over the chiefs of individual towns. Membership in the chiefly class (and perhaps the priestly class as well) was inherited matrilineally, as was authority over a particular town or district. Powhatan, for example, inherited chiefdoms in the upper James and York river basins, and extended his rule over other towns by conquest, a process that continued after English settlement. Although chiefs were generally male, the English were aware of several female chiefs who inherited power after the death of their brothers. While a male chief was called a *weroance*, a female chief

was called a *weroansqua*, a title corresponding to the better-known "squaw sachem" of the northeast. Chiefs were differentiated from commoners primarily by their wealth, their judicial power, their control over warriors, the respect shown them by commoners, their close relationship with priests, and the special treatment accorded their corpses.

Priests (*kwiokos*) provided support to the chiefs in the form of counsel, prophecy, curing, and rituals intended to control the weather and disorient enemies during warfare. Valuables, which passed from the commoners up the hierarchy of chiefs, were placed in temples under the priests' care and probably dedicated to the harsh deity Okeus. The nature of Okeus and his relation to a beneficent creator called Ahone and numerous lesser deities (also known as *kwiokos*) is unclear in the sources—and further muddied by Rountree's odd comment that "the English called the Powhatans devil worshippers, but only in a very limited sense were they right" (page 135).

Rountree's description of the Virginia Algonquians highlights one other distinctive feature in addition to political centralization: their heavy reliance upon four major estuaries for food and communication. Ten separate ecological niches provided a wide variety of food resources, ranging from the marine life of saltwater marshes to the freshwater fish upstream, from the vegetation and game of oak forests to the animal inhabitants of juniper and cypress swamps. Because all towns had access to a large variety of resources, there was little economic specialization from town to town. Exceptions were chiefly luxuries such as copper, pigment, shells, pearls, and (with European trade) iron. Two major dispersals, in spring and fall, facilitated use of the various environments. When cleared, the forest lands adjacent to the estuaries were extremely fertile for maize/bean/squash horticulture. Maize, cultivated by women, was highly valued, as were venison and other large game hunted by men. These prestige foods supplemented the bountiful supply of wild foods gathered by women and the fish, shellfish, and small game procured by men. There were seasonal shortages of both maize and game, except among the chiefs, who had their own hunting preserves and fields and, in addition, took deer, turkey, and maize as tribute. Rountree suggests that heavy dependence on fishing and foraging might reflect not only their archaic inheritance but also the

tendency of commoners to concentrate their energies on those foods not subject to appropriation by the chiefs.

The mixed economy of the Virginia Algonquians was similar to those of other, less centralized Algonquian peoples to the northeast. On the other hand, their matrilineal descent system ties them to the more intensely horticultural societies of the southeast. The transitional position of Virginia Algonquian culture, however, intrigues Rountree less than the basic features they shared with both northeastern and southeastern peoples, including social stratification supported by rigorous socialization practices. The arduous *huskanaw* initiation ceremony—the major avenue of social mobility for males—receives an extensive and perceptive discussion that sorts out the sacrificial meanings attributed to it by the English from its indigenous symbolism of death and rebirth. Rountree persuasively argues that the lengthy ritual freed initiates of their family ties, replaced these with strong relations with their peers, and oriented initiates to the social good—thus preparing them to serve as warriors, councillors to the chiefs (“cockarouses”), and priests.

Unfortunately, Rountree’s fine discussion of the *huskanaw* rite is marred in the end by a reference to “nations of ‘he-men’” (page 87). A similar gratuitous reference to popular American categories occurs in the chapter on family life, where a discussion of deportment is introduced with the statement that “in some ways the Powhatans resembled the stereotypical silent Indian, and in some ways they did not” (page 96). Such lapses in an otherwise scholarly ethnography can only be considered an attempt to secure the attention of a general audience. One would rather see attention directed to a systematic discussion of how Powhatan’s people resembled or differed from the English colonists and their indigenous neighbors. Neither a general nor a specialized audience is best served by downplaying the important theoretical and comparative implications of the ethnography. An expanded treatment of these issues in the forthcoming historical volume will be most welcome. In the meantime, this volume is a useful addition to the literature on coastal Algonquian peoples.

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