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Social Order and Political Change:Constitutional Governments among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw and the Creek. By Duane Champagne.

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weaving, accompanied by a description of provenance and a detailed analysis of materials and weaving techniques. This information is of obvious value to textile scholars.

In addition, the collection was thoughtfully assembled to illustrate the diverse repertoire of today's Navajo weavers, including the Navajo/Nolands. The catalog of the exhibition is particularly noteworthy for the biographical information provided for each weaver. Hedlund's cultural sensitivity is nowhere more evident than in her inclusion of each weaver's clan affiliations; an affirmation of an important protocol in a society that places high value on kinship relationships. Quotes by the weavers concerning their work add dimension to the biographical section and underscore the meaningful role that weaving plays in Navajo life.

Thus *Reflections of the Weavers World* is not only about weavings but also about weavers. The emphasis on contemporary textiles and the prominence of the weavers' voices both contribute to making this exhibition catalog an outstanding addition to the literature on American Indian art studies in general, and Navajo textiles in particular. The careful research and extensive documentation further increase the book's value and interest. Today's textiles are inherently tomorrow's historical artifacts; therefore, this thorough study of contemporary Navajo weavings will be of continuing importance to future generations of scholars. But *Reflections of the Weaver's World* is not an exercise in salvage ethnology; rather it is an eminently readable and accessible evocation of the dynamic creativity that has always characterized Navajo weaving. Consequently, the catalog is not only a valuable scholarly resource but also a powerful vehicle for shaping public perceptions of Navajo culture, people, and art.

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Social Order and Political Change: Constitutional Governments among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw and the Creek. By Duane Champagne. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992. 317 pages. \$42.50 cloth.

Most scholars who have studied the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek peoples have concentrated on particular

historical eras or on specific examples of acculturation. Duane Champagne, however, in his systematic analysis of institutional order and change, is concerned with the process of creating democratic governments and written constitutions.

Champagne found that political activity in each tribe was highly decentralized, affording little impetus for tribal loyalty. There were, however, both equality of interaction and decision by consensus, factors that provided potential for later development of democratic institutions. He argues, furthermore, that role differentiation was so exact among the Cherokee that the same individuals could set one role aside, say that of clan leader (a position that transcended village boundaries), to fulfill the role of village elder. Because of this political decentralization, major institutional changes were necessary before constitutional governments could be established.

In the political practice of southeastern peoples before 1800, there seemed no recognizable tendencies toward constitutional democracies. Apparently, only after the intrusion of outside value systems was there pressure for the development of centralized governments. Prior to the European arrival, native value systems placed order and harmony first, in stark opposition to the Western emphasis on individual gain. In the tribal subsistence economies, acquisition was not a priority; personal honor was more highly valued than the accumulation of goods. Although the arrival of Europeans on the scene did force the adoption of what Champagne characterizes as a "strategy of geopolitical survival," those steps were taken within the existing institutional framework and religious context.

After the American Revolution, the new federal government demanded more lands and sought to "civilize" the Indians. As Bernard Sheehan pointed out in *Seeds of Extinction*, the leaders of the new country thought the native peoples should "live according to the white man's individualist ideology" (Sheehan, p. 10). Urged to organize a centralized authority to implement treaty stipulations, three of the four tribes moved in that direction. From 1795 to 1817, the Cherokee changed the most rapidly, the Choctaw and Chickasaw to a much lesser degree. The greatest difficulty was faced by the Creek, bitterly divided over abandoning their long-held worldview. The spiritual traditionalists, or Redstick millenarians, as Joel Martin calls them in *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogee Struggle for a New World*, defiantly rejected demands for conversion. Only after the resistance of the

prophets and their followers was crushed in the Creek War of 1812–14 could agents of change work more effectively among the Creek peoples.

After 1814, the southeastern societies were pressured increasingly by expansionistic activities of the states, who were fueled by nascent Jacksonianism. Economic pressures also were at work, as the more successful Indian planters constituted an elite separated from their poorer kinsmen who remained subsistence farmers and husbandmen. Most damaging were the frequent land cessions, realized despite the opposition of most tribal members. Among the Cherokee, a patriotic movement flourished, favoring a centralized government that could present a unified opposition to federal demands for land and removal. Particularly noteworthy is Champagne's point that constitutional government never would have succeeded without some cooperation from the community at large, none of whom wished to lose their lands, whether they were planters or subsistence farmers.

The Choctaw, like the Cherokee, were under almost constant pressure after 1800, on the one hand from state officials demanding land and on the other from missionaries seeking to convert them. Faced with these threats, the Choctaw began to replace their older chiefs, who seemed tempted by promises of gifts from land-hungry suitors. In their places were elected leaders who believed a government based on a constitution would aid Choctaw resistance. For almost five years, the Choctaw successfully discussed national policy, but rampant factionalism prevented real progress. As a result, they were unable to resist the combination of persuasion, bribery, and military intimidation by the United States that led to a removal agreement in September 1830.

Among the Chickasaw there was less change than among the Choctaw. Although the Chickasaw had turned increasingly from hunting to subsistence farming and wanted schools for their children's practical education, they were not interested in changing tradition or location. The state of Mississippi, however, gave them no breathing room as it extended its jurisdiction over them in order to seize their lands. Faced with this inevitability, the Chickasaw elected to remove westward but were unfortunate in their choice of lands and wound up as a district within the Choctaw area of Indian Territory.

Even after their military defeat in 1814, the Creek conservatives clung to their old ways, both economically and spiritually, but were under pressure to change. When the Creek council

sought advice about protecting the tribe, they were counseled by David Vann and John Ridge, two educated Cherokee, that a written constitution and centralized authority might effectively resist American encroachment. Despite all efforts, however, the Creek were overwhelmed by Alabama's withdrawal of civil rights and a disastrous drought that devastated their crops in 1832.

Once the four tribes had moved to Indian Territory, their struggles over tribal government did not end. Among the Cherokee, intense disagreement brought consideration of permanent tribal separation. Division deepened during the Civil War as the slave owners backed the Confederacy, while the poorer conservatives favored the Union.

Choctaw factionalism in the Indian Territory followed the tribe's traditional clustering of the villages into three groupings, an alignment that the American agents sought to change. Several attempts were made to draft tribal constitutions, but no success was achieved until 1860, when a document was finally ratified that served until tribal dissolution in 1907.

The Chickasaw faced the double difficulty of both factionalism and their inferior position as a district within the Choctaw territory. Ultimately, they compromised in order to escape the thumb of the Choctaw and adopted a tribal constitution.

Still seriously divided were the Creek, who had migrated to Indian Territory as village units, each carrying their own sacred relics. Despite pressure from the Creek agent, no constitution was adopted until after the Civil War, but even then the importance of the village was not destroyed.

None of these newly adopted constitutional governments could withstand postwar federal government assaults aimed at absorbing tribal lands or abolishing their governments. Powerful economic interests, such as the railroads, also sought to undermine the tribes. Further weakening tribal resistance was increasing economic stratification, the emergence of more educated elites, and the absorption of the freedmen. At the same time, some conservatives in all four tribes clung to subsistence labor practices and traditional worldviews. Bitterness left over from the Civil War also contributed to continued hard feelings.

Duane Champagne's book represents a close scrutiny of institution building and change in four relatively well-known Native American groups. He is both careful and conscientious in presenting each as an entity, never attempting to treat

them in some standardized fashion, always maintaining comparison points throughout the narrative. The greatest difficulty some may find is the occasional lapse into particularly dense prose.

Overall, the author deserves congratulations for undertaking this long-needed study, especially in light of his success in dealing with all four tribes. The nature of his task dictated that he read widely in the cultural and historical sources of these peoples. Given the amount of material available, his accomplishment is all the more impressive. His most puzzling factual stumble comes over the identity of the famous Creek leader, Alexander McGillivray. For some reason he is misidentified as "William McGillivray" on pages 80–83 and 172. Since the sources cited do not misname McGillivray and since the activities described are those of Alexander McGillivray, the name inaccuracy may be an editorial oversight.

Champagne's contribution is twofold: First, he synthesizes a great deal of political and cultural information about four different southeastern peoples into one study; and, second, he reveals that political change among these peoples, as slow and painful as it was at times, resulted both from external pressures, such as federal policy and economic forces (e. g., the nineteenth-century cotton economy and post-Civil War railroad expansion), and from tribal consensus-building, compromise, and consent in the name of survival. It is the latter that may have been overlooked by scholars who sometimes fail to comprehend subtlety in tribal cultures. Indeed, this revelation also is of great significance in helping us to understand the persistence and success of tribal organizations today. Although present tribal organizations are not universally successful, many have recovered their own internal resources sufficiently to begin the task of rebuilding, reorganizing, and reasserting their tribal identities and governments. Clearly, if they could withstand the forces described by Champagne in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they are resilient enough to face the twenty-first century. The author deserves our thanks for reminding us that these peoples have endured and will continue to do so.

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