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heritage of the Gros Ventre tribe for their future generations. However, perhaps equally valuable is the possibility that *The Seven Visions of Bull Lodge* may promote a reawakened sense of Gros Ventre spirituality by encouraging Gros Ventres themselves to seek out this knowledge and put it into use for the benefit of the tribe.

Such a resurgence of traditional Gros Ventre spirituality may prove difficult because of the powerful influence that the Catholic Church has had on the Fort Belknap Reservation. In the past the Church has condemned indigenous forms of worship, and most of the Indians on the Fort Belknap Reservation are now Catholic. However, though the Church may not be ready to accept indigenous forms of worship in their entirety, it is nevertheless beginning to listen to the voice of Native America. Hence, it is not uncommon to see a priest using sage instead of incense to make his smudge and to see him participating with local Native tradition. One cannot help but get a sense that *The Seven Visions of Bull Lodge* is not just another compilation of Gros Ventre cultural data; it is, rather, an invitation to Gros Ventres themselves not just to read about their heritage, but to glean from it spiritual insight that might bring back "medicine" into the world at a time when it is sorely needed.

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Racing Alone: Houses Made with Earth and Fire. By Nader Khalili. New York: Harper & Rowe, 1983. 256 pp. n.p. paper.

Racing Alone is the story of an architect's search for an indigenous architecture, for a system of building to meet the needs of village peasants, and for a unique treatment of fired adobe. The book is an odyssey, part prose and part poetry, carrying its author across two countries, two cultures, and two contrasting landscapes. It is a tale told by a man, who after education and practice in Iran, Turkey, and the USA, abandoned the profitable design of Los Angeles skyscrapers to spend years travelling by

20th century motorcycle over a 10th century landscape in search of the roots of the indigenous architecture of his country.

Some may liken *Racing Alone* to *Architecture for the Poor* by the renowned Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy. And, indeed, there are many parallels: both authors seek an architecture suited to indigenous societies, show great concern for tradition, and describe in almost painful detail what happens when their "radical" approaches—radical because they are concerned with roots—confront institutional bureaucracy and both its preoccupation with the "modern" and its subservience to the dictatorship of concrete and steel. Khalili knows the power of a good story, and wields this power with consummate skill.

Like Fathy's work, *Racing Alone* is concerned with the virtues of adobe construction, the evolution and development of its use as building material, and rediscovery of ancient knowledge. The author, however, carries the adobe construction process one vital step further: to the traditional element of adobe—earth, air, and water—he adds the magic of *fire*. Noting that kilns outlasted houses by many years in traditional Iranian villages, Khalili further observed that 84% of the heat generated in the mud kiln firing process went into the kiln itself, baking it into hard brick. Why not, he asked, apply the same process to the domed and vaulted houses themselves, thereby preventing moisture from weakening walls and winter snows from collapsing roofs; why not, then, *use* that 84% unutilized heat to make better houses?

Firing individual bricks is an old and well-understood process, but the idea of firing an entire house at once, *from within*, was a radical departure. The baking of the first village home in Iran was accomplished using two drums of readily-available fuel oil, with a simple gravity-fed procedure. Midway through the firing process, however, the villagers cheered an unexpected fringe benefit: the vermin that had plagued the villagers for generations—mice, insects, and others—came rushing out of the first house being fired. In the middle of the cold night, the gleeful villagers ran about with sticks and clubs, taking vengeance upon the tiny pests. Thus encouraged, Khalili expanded his experiments to include ceramic glazing of house interiors and the eventual firing of an entire school.

But what, other than the ability to "race alone," the capacity to enjoy and profit from aloneness, makes a review of this book appropriate for a Native American journal? The author does en-

counter an American Indian in Southern California at the end of the first third of the book, but the account occupies just five pages, leading to the observation that "The greatest element pushing a lonely man into an abyss is not the lack of company, but the lack of hope."

Racing Alone details conflicts between Western culture and a non-Western culture in transition, and clashes in values not unlike the Native American experience. It is the record of a technical innovation, but also of a spiritual quest, and of revolution and social change. Indians who have had to deal with the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or any of the other "helpful" agencies will understand Khalili's vivid description of governmental bureaucracy and obstructionism that covers more than 25 pages in the middle of *Racing Alone*. Others will relate to his account of the aftermath of a great earthquake, and the Iranian government's imposition of concrete boxes as a form of disaster relief, a "solution" to the housing problem.

But there are specific parallels, as well, to the process of house construction among certain Native American groups. Many of the Indian nations of the American Southwest have relied on mud-brick construction for a thousand years or more, and still bake their bread—and, in the process, their kilns—in traditional ways. All of the Pueblo Nations do this, and the Navajo build mud hogans, as well. Khalili's apprentice in his American work has been Tsosie Tsinnajinnie—a Navajo.

Nader Khalili left the United States more than a decade ago and came back, after this long absence, in 1981. One reason for his return was to see what use his innovative ideas of baked adobe construction might be to Native American peoples of the Southwest. Since the publication of his book, he has worked with various tribes in New Mexico. The response has been most enthusiastic: a testimony to the potential applicability of *geltaftan* in our own country. Similar efforts have now been initiated in Baja California, Mexico, as well.

In reviewing any book, it is tempting to play the game of "good and bad." But this is neither a conventional text nor a conventional autobiography; it is, one is tempted to say, almost without comparison. The book, barely off the presses of Harper and Row, is already popular; and as Nader Khalili's work in this hemisphere expands, the circle of adherents to *Racing Alone* will widen

steadily. Because of its remarkable story and the innovative technology it re-introduces to the indigenous world through a fresh set of eyes, it may well rank near the top of all writings on architecture during the past quarter century. For its message about society is as significant as its contribution to environmental design:

The senseless stupidity of the border line comes to mind again, . . . you can't cross the line; you are a different type of animal and we can't let you in

Maybe one day we will be left free to walk on our God-given globe with only cultures, rather than painted lines to cross. (p. 78)

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Southeastern Indians Since the Removal Era. Edited by Walter Williams. Athens University of Georgia Press, 1979. 253 pp. \$8.95 paper.

Twenty years ago there were few historians who even attempted an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of Native American history. Indeed, an Indian-centered history was the rarest of forms. Today skilled practitioners approach Native American studies from an interdisciplinary perspective. Among the most capable of these is the editor of the volume under review. Trained in both history and anthropology at the University of North Carolina, Walter Williams has been a pathfinder since he entered the profession. His ability is certainly reflected in this volume of essays, *Southeastern Indians Since the Removal Era*.

At the outset one is struck by the underlying assumption of the study. There are Indians alive and well (although not numerous) in the Southeastern United States today. Many persons, including some professional academics in their less reflective moments, forget that the Southeast was not emptied of Native Americans by the "trails of tears."

Williams is at his best as editor when he crosses disciplinary lines to bring together a number of wide-ranging articles. Anthropology and history are both drawn upon as Williams seeks