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mention of sources published since 1970. Yet upon closer examination of the chapter citations, the reader finds only one of the articles published since 1970 (a John Ridge document) has been incorporated into the notes for this edition. Although Moulton's study of John Ross is mentioned in an explanatory note on p. 205, his work (not to mention those of John P. Reid and Rennard Strickland) is not incorporated into the notes. Furthermore, certain standard works have been ignored, especially studies about the American Revolution which include the Cherokee as well as Charles Hudson's magisterial *Southeastern Indians* and his informative *The Black Drink*. Ignoring the last named work has led Wilkins to continue describing the black drink (a tea brewed from the leaves of an indigenous holly) as an emetic, which it was long thought to be, but which Hudson and his associates have demonstrated has no purgative qualities whatsoever. The ritual purging associated with certain ceremonial uses of the black drink seemed to have been an acquired ability.

*Cherokee Tragedy* stands, in its second edition as in its first, a story that needs to be told. It is written in readable fashion, although one must overlook the author's biographical and bibliographical omissions. For now, and possibly for a scholarly generation to come, this will remain the best account of the story. Perhaps in twenty years an ethnohistorian will examine the sources and give us a slightly different interpretation. Until that time, Wilkins' book will remain the standard account.

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**Robes of Power: Totem Poles on Cloth.** By Doreen Jensen and Polly Sargent. Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 1986. 86 pp. \$18.95 Paper.

This is a badly needed contribution to the study and understanding of Northwest Coast art and art history. While Bill Holm's *Northwest Coast Indian Art* and Hilary Stewart's *Looking at Indian Art of the Northwest Coast* are landmark scholarly contributions to this phenomenal culture, *Robes of Power* enhances and builds upon the total three dimensional perspicuous backdrop against which all three books are endeavouring to triumph. As George

F. McDonald, director of the Canadian Museum of Civilization writes in the preface, . . . "The blanket is clearly the two-dimensional intermediary piece between these fields of meaning (the rattle, the totem pole and the painted house front)."

One of the major hurdles to overcome in the study of any native art form, whether it be Northwest Coast art, Woodland art, or Plains Indian art, is the urge to classify anthropologically at the expense of art criticism. And because there is inherent in the western psyche vestiges of latent Victorian science and art theory, we are at the mercy of the dregs of history. Therefore, no thoroughly educated scholars of native art of any great consequence have emerged to my knowledge. There are those (Houle, Hill, Highwater, Southcott) who have a very good idea as to the direction we must be heading, but on the whole more time, work and effort need to be put into this promising field. A quick check of native studies departments around Canada and the United States have revealed that native art criticism is still in its infancy and is still, along with native studies, to paraphrase, "the orphan of the great god ART." ("Indian Studies—The Orphan of Academia," by Vine Deloria, Jr. *The Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall 1986), pp. 1-7). We still seem to have our cousin anthropology to thank or curse for the dilemma we are in. Art is sacrosanct and to be attained only by those who sacrifice their souls and selves to the sanctity of the iconographic western monolith of knowledge. If Art is the highest source of knowledge, then surely there is much more to learn from Northwest Coast Art than what we know already, which in 99% of cases is nil. *Robes of Power* is the necessary road sign which points us in the appropriate direction for more scholarly research activities in not only Northwest Coast Art but in all native art in North America.

We needed the input of the people themselves, and *Robes of Power* gives us that crucial link with their past. I believe I've somehow received a gift from their past through the information gained in studying this book. Pieces of the puzzle left by Franz Boas, Bill Holmes and countless other specialists on Northwest Coast art began falling into place. I'm thankful to the authors for that opportunity.

Teaching and appreciating native art can be a rewarding and beautiful experience, but it can also be a frustrating one. *Robes of Power* is timely and of fundamental importance in assisting native art to become thoroughly established as an Art and not

simply to be seen as idle curios which are shuffled off to the halls of anthropology and ethnography, there to hopefully die a lingering and prolonged death. This book should be on the teaching and reading lists of every anthropologist, ethnographer, art historian, and politician in the country. What is appreciation of art if not it's germinal growth? This is true of cultures as well. Ignorance is no longer an argument for studied philosophical prejudice.

The main body of the book consists of color photographs and personal interviews with the makers of the robes which comprise the exhibition *Robes of Power*. Silver Harris, exhibitions manager for the Adelaide Festival Center in Australia, requested an Australian tour of these majestic garments. To everyone's consternation, many robe owners wouldn't lend their precious heirlooms for the tour. Robes then had to be commissioned. This eventually led to writing of this book and the subsequent dissemination, perhaps quite unexpectedly, of new and useful information about the nature of creativity and its meaning.

The significance of colour and the importance of validating the robe in ceremonial performance is explored. It is explained at the outset that the format of the book is an example of past traditions brought forward to the present. The titles of "Requests," "Responses" and "Results" echo the format of the potlatch: "requests" being the invitation bearers, who request the presence of guest witnesses at the potlatch; "responses" being the potlatch itself, where all manner of business is carried out and histories recorded in the memories of the witnesses; and "results" being the responsibility of the witnesses to restate or "call" important names and business and commit them to memory.

The book and exhibition meet those requirements beyond anyone's wildest expectations. In a very real and substantial process, the "Results" justify the initial "Requests" and the essential "Responses" which heretofore had the impossible tasks of preserving the Northwest Coast art and culture in a fashion thought by many in that bygone Victorian age to be fast becoming extinct. Welcome to the 1980s!

The "Results" (p. 78) do what any good research on any subject should do: bring about knowledge and understanding. I felt enlightened and inspired. "The term 'button blanket' is a poor translation for *gwiis gan m'ala*, which literally means 'covering a robe with buttons.' 'Ceremonial robe,' 'chief's robe,' or 'chief's

button robe' are preferable. 'Blankets' implies bedding'' (p. 7). I tend to agree with the Book Builders of K'san. Western concepts, when applied indiscriminately, without sensitivity and appreciation of the art form of native peoples can do great violence and harm where there should otherwise be immense beauty and wisdom.

*Robes of Power* will fill your mind with just such knowledge and wisdom and protect the Northwest culture and its many children from the ravages of cruel science and money-hungry religions. The real power, as Plains Indian mythology and cosmology teaches, is in the object and not the individual. We are merely the intermediary between the object and the Creator, nothing more, nothing less. It takes great humility and wisdom to know and understand this.

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**Is Summer This Bear.** By Maurice Kenny. Saranac Lake, N.Y.: The Chauncy Press. 1985. 52 pp. \$6.95 Paper.

The title of this latest body of poems by Mohawk poet, Maurice Kenny, challenges the ground of our perceptions and the assumptions on which they are built by a radical disjointing of syntax. The exclusion of the expected question mark displaces the functional intent of the phrase and negates the dialogical or discursive field in which this usage might be expected to occur. This displacement and negation of the acceptable received paradigm of syntactic structure is further emphasized by a reversal in the ordering of the phrase, both grammatically and logically, by placing the general quality or class (summer) in the subject place, and the particular (bear) in the object place. Without attempting to go into the development of precise possibilities as to Kenny's hidden counter-linguistic paradigm and the meanings that may be inherent there, it is, nevertheless, important to note that, like the zen koan, the question has no particular "correct" answer, but asserts its value in the challenge it places to conventional and prosaic perception, to "received wisdom."

Among the questions that this verbal formulation, *Is Summer This Bear*, raises are the relation of sign to object and of object to