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The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos. By Richard White

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tions of Thomas Gorst's journal (from the 1670s), is located in the Guildhall Library, London. More archeological research should help answer some of the questions posed in these volumes: e.g., whether there were coasters before the arrival of Europeans, or whether the Cree were newcomers to the region (perhaps pushed north by Iroquois).

The authors recognize that Cree oral history must be reckoned with but were unable to attempt such a project in the present volume. Documents tell us nothing about life in the bush where most Cree spent most of their lives. Cree narratives can also add a new dimension to written sources. For example, the Cree claim that early traders required them to pile furs as high as the height of the gun they wanted, a practise which is apparently not recorded in documents. These accounts cannot be dismissed as myth. Whether they are accepted literally or as moral statements, they will have to be integrated with this history based on records written by non-Natives. Fortunately, Morantz is now engaged in such a project.

Partners in Furs is important as the first history of eastern James Bay. We are indebted to the Ministère des Affaires Culturelles, Quebec for supporting the research for this book and Morantz's monograph. These need to be followed geographically by a comprehensive history of western James Bay, for anthropologists are now becoming aware of important differences between these two groups of Cree.

Chronologically, they should be followed by a history of the post-1870 years of church-government influence.

John S. Long

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The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos. By Richard White. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983. xix & 433 pp. \$26.50 Cloth.

From its inception the field of Indian/White relations has been plagued by reductionism. Too often the complicated story of the synergistic interaction between the cultural, political, economic and philosophical dynamics of very different societies has either

been simplified and emotionally super-charged in the interest of moral edification or reduced to a morally indifferent mechanistic process exemplifying the ruling paradigm of one social science or another. Richard White's *The Roots of Dependency* constitutes a notable exception to this general trend.

As the title implies White finds "dependency" to be the common denominator in the historical relationships between three very different Native American groups and an invasive White society. Of course the equation between Indian people and dependence is nothing new; generations of public officials have complained about Indian dependence on the largess of the government. White, however, goes well beyond both this automatic association and the simplistic definition of dependence upon which it is based. In White's account the Choctaws, Pawnees and Navajos each found themselves involved in unique patterns of historical change which brought increasing pressure to bear upon their social, political and economic systems. As each group attempted to adapt to the newly forming realities, they found their freedom of action increasingly circumscribed by environmental limitations, their own cultural imperatives and the workings of the White marketplace, leading eventually to their complete entanglement in a system upon which they were totally dependent for their basic subsistence but over which they had virtually no control. Thus were they made dependent but not just in the sense bemoaned by the bureaucrats. Instead dependence was the byproduct of a much deeper form of dependency.

To attempt a brief summary of the complex interactions presented by White would undermine his purpose. The essence of his work lies in drawing sketches (unfortunately, not painting portraits) of the processes at work during the acculturative phases of the three cultures under consideration. Any attempt to further accelerate the action for quick review would blur things beyond recognition. It is a grand sweep of motion that White wishes to convey and justice demands that readers respect his cinematic vision.

Given his objective, White's discussion of each group's historical situation necessarily covers a lot of ground and spans a number of disciplines. This being the case, scholars will undoubtedly find much about which to quibble. For example, Alvin M. Josephy complains in a recent review (*Western Historical Quarterly* 3 (1984): 336) that White's discussion of the Lake Mead situation issue and factionalism among the Navajo are not suf-

ficiently researched; Calvin Martin has commented (personal communication) that the treatment of Choctaw alcohol addiction is less than satisfying; and I find the treatment of the missionary influence among all three groups totally insufficient. But this is, as Josephy himself states, merely carping.

Without question more detailed research concerning the complicated processes that combined to erode Native American independence is called for but this should not blind us to what is, perhaps, the even more pressing need—the integration of the already exhaustive body of specialized information into larger and more meaningful patterns. White's work is a notable step in this direction but it constitutes only one step. The breadth of White's conception suggests a great deal more than he has undertaken in this relatively slim volume. Most obviously, we learn very little about the various goals of the White participants in the complex historical interactions that White describes. A few statements about "the global capitalist system" found in the Introduction constitutes the closest thing to an explanation of White motivation to be found in *The Roots of Dependency*. If we are to appreciate the complexity of the structure that White wishes us to see, we must examine the White participants under the same lens as the Indians. Only in this way can we avoid the sort of reductionism that the author has so nobly and justifiably battled against.

This being said, it remains only to congratulate Richard White on the scope of his vision and the weight of his contribution. American society has labored far too long under the assumption that Indians were either too stupid or too polite to resist White encroachment. It can only be hoped that *The Roots of Dependency* will lead to increasing attention to the complex realities which lay behind Indian/White relations in both the past and present.

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Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians. By Sally J. McBeth. Washington, DC: University Press of America, Inc., 1983. 184 pp. \$21.75 Cloth. \$10.00 Paper.

In the last few decades as more public schools have become commonplace in American Indian communities, student enrollments