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## Reviews

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**Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast.** Edited by Peter Wood, Gregory A. Waselkov, and M. Thomas Hatley. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. 355 pages. \$50.00 Cloth.

*Powhatan's Mantle* is an exciting book which leaves the reader feeling like a witness to lost worlds regained. Unfolded before us are interdisciplinary perspectives derived from the work of historians, ethnohistorians, environmental historians, anthropologists, archeologists, and historical geographers. There is, encouragingly, a wide range of experience in this scholarship, from those fresh in the field to laborers with more than twenty-five years' experience tilling Powhatan's garden. It is appropriate that the publication is dedicated to the memories of Roy Dickens and Leitch Wright, two brilliant pathfinders in the study of Southeastern Indians during the colonial period.

The book includes twelve essays, plus three introductory transitions. Despite the discreteness of each contribution, there are thematic connections. In Helen Tanner's useful synthesis of Southeastern communication systems, for example, there is a description of Indians carrying deerskins to Charleston, South Carolina; approximately two hundred pages later, Thomas Hatley further illuminates the matter of trade and its transport by citing Mark Catesby's observation of Indian women laden with heavy packs of deerskins.

Such happy connections raise other intriguing questions. At what point, for example, did the horse supplant the human beast of burden? In terms of cost, the woman who carried a sixty-pound pack was probably more efficient than an Indian horse carrying only 150 pounds, which was a proportionally smaller

ratio of load to carrier. Were such horses more plentiful and thus able to provide cartage for more deerskins? Questions about transportation as well as those concerning trade, social structure, government, survival, and population are only a few of the potential research possibilities suggested by this provocative venture.

Clearly this was not an easy volume either to edit or to publish. Congratulations should be distributed liberally to all concerned: the staff of the press, the volume's three editors, and the authors of the essays, not to mention all those unseen and unnamed, without whom such a publication would never have seen day's light. If the reputation of the University of Nebraska Press previously rested on a temple mound of solid accomplishments, the press now may take pride in this fresh mantle, worthy of additional national recognition.

In a number of ways this volume answers long-neglected questions: What were these peoples like? How many were there? How did they live and adjust to European intrusion? How and why did they move from place to place? Charles Hudson repeatedly has challenged us to read between the lines of the sources; *Powhatan's Mantle* is a dramatic example of that practice at its best. Yet even while each essayist focuses precisely on a fundamental research problem, the larger view is never forgotten. No one allows us to lose sight of the macroworld; while we are gazing intently at the circles on Powhatan's cloak, the authors lead us toward the larger symbolic universe. Never are we left simply confronting a musty artifact of frayed deerskin and shell beads.

On both sides of Powhatan's mantle we gain insight. Helen Tanner, to whom we already are indebted for *The Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, offers us tempting glimpses into communication systems in the Southeast. That such lines of interchange were well known is clearly explained by Gregory Waselkov's analysis of maps prepared by Indian peoples, which reflect their intimate familiarity with the geography of their homelands. Such understanding makes it all the more apparent how the population movements described by Marvin Smith were accomplished by persons to whom the landscape was neither mysterious nor unknown.

Daniel Usner's outstanding case study of Native American involvement in the life of a colonial city further underscores the

dynamic participation of Indian peoples in the society produced by the interplay of all the area's inhabitants. New Orleans becomes a microcosm of Indian-white relations: Indian slaves; Indian diplomacy; campaigns against native peoples; Indian allies; Indian truck farmers; Indian emigrants; Indian trading partners; all were part of the experiences of the native peoples in dealing with New Orleans.

Among the individual essays, the longest is Peter Wood's carefully assembled population data on the Southeast's resident peoples during the century prior to the first United States census. Wood's success is a reflection of both his imagination and his patience. His figures dramatize the startling shift of majorities from 1685 to 1790, with the 4:1 advantage of the Indian peoples in 1685 being reversed to an overwhelming 18:1 preponderance of white peoples in 1790. Wood's statistics on Black population, moreover, indicate how forced migration, plus natural increase, swelled their numbers by 178 times between 1685 and 1790. On the other hand, Native American persistence, in the face of such engulfing tides, is amazing, especially if one considers how certain tribal groups managed to survive and ultimate reverse what had appeared a catastrophic decline.

Even as we are informed, we are also reminded of our scholarly narrowness by essays such as Amy Bushnell's. Her "Republic of the Indians" reflects the rich Spanish colonial archives which many have ignored. However dated Herbert E. Bolton's call for comparative studies, if it forced us to confront the Spanish sources, we would benefit. Those with curiosities piqued by Bushnell's investigations should read John Hahn's marvelous presentation of the people and places in *Apalachee*. Scholars seeking Southeastern cultural continuity will appreciate not only Hahn's painstaking reconstruction of Spanish Apalachee, but also his translation of the important ball game manuscript.

On the wonderfully ironic side is Patricia Galloway's analysis of French misperceptions regarding the familial metaphors used in Choctaw diplomacy. As Galloway explains, since the French misunderstood the matrilineal structure of Choctaw society, they certainly did not comprehend why the Choctaw were so willing to accept them as "fathers." Thus, when the Choctaw agreed to regard the French as "fathers" in the Choctaw sense, the tribal leaders could please the French, yet at the same time leave themselves happily without any obligation. Perhaps such careful

scholarship will excavate a permanent burial place for the misleading proposal that the rhetorical devices of Native American diplomacy originated among nineteenth-century American politicians who lacked adequate father figures.

Two notable investigations consider how trade impacted Native American societies. James Merrell's analysis of the Indian trade as a "Bond of Peace" demonstrates continuity from pre-European trading networks through the time when economic exchange became the means for creating a state of dependency; Thomas Hatley's case study of the Cherokee village of Keowee reflects how the trade impacted that village's society, geography, economy, and material culture. Little imagination is needed to spring from these two examples to broader generalizations about the regional impact of economic interchange.

An intriguing chapter by Vernon Knight expands our understanding of the continuity between the so-called mound-building peoples and the more familiar historic peoples of the Southeast. If we accept Knight's interpretation, we no longer need assume the puzzling disappearance of a mystery race; we now may acknowledge the natural evolution of peoples, and their periodic migrations from old to new cultural sites. If we follow Knight's reconstruction of population movements in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the abandonment of Mississippian locales becomes more readily understood.

The topic of population movements receives additional attention from Marvin T. Smith in his helpful analysis of aboriginal relocations in the interior Southeast. Thanks to his understanding of the archeological and historical evidence, the migrations of many Southeastern peoples seem far clearer. He carefully explains how these shifts in location were exacerbated by the *soto entrada*, slave raids, trade wars, and epidemics.

One of the advantages held by this collection is that we are not left wondering how well hypotheses test. Concerns about the impact of the trade, for example, are answered, at least in part, by Stephen Potter's careful analysis of post-European alterations in exchange and tribute in the Tidewater Potomac area. Indeed the responses of one particular Native American leader are presented in Martha McCartney's fascinating depiction of Cockacoeske, the Queen of Pamunkey.

Emphatically there is an exciting timeliness about this publication, especially as it comes in the same year as Helen Roun-

tree's *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia*. These new studies (along with earlier ones by Fausz, Feest, and Merrell) answer some of the challenges posed more than thirty years ago by Nancy Lurie (Rountree's doctoral adviser) in her "Indian Cultural Adjustment to European Civilizations." As a result, the spring located by Mooney and uncovered by Lurie has now been joined by other freshets of information, forming brisk currents of research on the native peoples of the colonial Southeast. In this informational streamflow, *Powhatan's Mantle* forms an intellectual confluence of considerable magnitude.

In their introduction the editors adopt the metaphor of fires around which the contributors symbolically gathered. Perhaps that figurative device might be extended by the suggestion that no matter the number of scholarly fires, all dwell in one lodge of scholarship, seeking greater understanding of native peoples in the colonial Southeast. One can only hope that the Nebraska Press will continue to feed these flames by bringing forward additional volumes in the future.

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**Navajo Textiles: The William Randolph Hearst Collection.** By Nancy J. Blomberg. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988. 257 pages. \$30.00 Cloth.

A kaleidoscope of incredible artistic depth, diversification, and dazzling beauty is inherent in the nearly two hundred masterworks by Navajo weavers featured in this *catalogue raisonné*. The William Randolph Hearst collection of Navajo blankets and rugs, now contained in the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, traces 120 years of Navajo innovative genius and highlights the contributions Hearst made toward preserving this historically important Native American art form.

The Navajo weaving industry has flourished for over three hundred years and has become a sensitive and significant feature of the people and their culture. In every textile the imaginative growth and development of the individual, as part of a larger cultural tradition, is observed. Navajo blankets and rugs reflect an evolutionary attitude. There is change, but there is also a con-