

Can such practices only be seen and condemned in retrospect? Certainly this book should challenge any reader to see the contemporary parallels.

My only criticism of the book is that it ended too soon. The story recounted in the text doesn't end in 1939; it continues to the present. A book has to end, of course, but the ethnographer in me was left asking, "but how is it now?"

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The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity. By Gregory D. Smithers. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. 368 pages. \$40.00 cloth.

Native American cultures and histories are unique, but despite the importance of this acknowledgment, there is a strong tendency to level Native experiences and attitudes to those that fit a convenient narrative. Too often the result is that their commonalities dominate. With respect to the far-flung migrations of Cherokee peoples over at least two hundred years, historian Gregory D. Smithers provides a welcome, valuable description and analysis of a very complex set of historical facts, cultural mores, political realities, and individual decisions that shaped the "Cherokee Diaspora."

As *The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity* explains in detail, even in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, well before relations with white European colonists provoked such extreme migrations as the Trail of Tears removal in 1838–1839, Cherokees had relocated to such distant locales as Mexico, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. (Although outside the purview of this book, many of us have also wondered about the circumstances that prompted the original and distant move of the Cherokees away from the rest of the Iroquoian peoples so long ago.)

More recent migrations have received less attention, but have created a huge diaspora of Cherokees all over the world, including major relocations to Texas after the Civil War and to California in the 1950s, particularly as part of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956, but also with decisions of individual families to seek better economic conditions. Even the three organized governments—Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, also in Oklahoma, and the Eastern Band of Cherokees in North Carolina—represent geographically separated populations that sometimes have struggled to figure out their relationships to each other.

Smithers has painstakingly made sense of some very intermingled historical facts. His use of personal biographies, not of just the famous but also of the common, is put to good effect. The book is at its best when the author is laying out the narrative and bringing facts to the fore. Among several important topics in this work is the rancor and the competition for power among the Cherokee people themselves. The idea that Cherokees created much of their own disunity is unlikely to be met with enthusiasm,

but Smithers is clear-eyed in his examination of the strategies with which Cherokees met the challenges of dealings with colonists. By the time of the 1827 Constitution, Cherokee leaders had already assimilated colonial political rhetoric. One of the farthest-reaching developments was to embrace the interlopers, both culturally and literally, by means of intermarriage. Intermarriage with whites was a stated policy of some influential leaders, who generally were of mixed blood themselves, such as Elias Boudinot and John Ridge. This policy, intended to produce a new and evolved kind of Cherokee, even encompassed abandoning matrilineal society in favor of patriarchal marriages. Smithers does a good job recounting the well-known story of the Ridge versus Ross struggle and its tragic aftermath. The friction between the traditional people and the English-speaking, formally educated political elite erupted in numerous ways that sometimes ended in the formation of factions, including a distinct political entity which survives today: the traditional Keetoowah band.

Another topic of interest is the author's unsentimental examination of the Cherokees' relationships with their African slaves and later, their African-Cherokee descendants. Important to this discussion is the idea of "blood," which the author always puts in quotes. A fair number of Cherokees, especially the politically powerful, engaged in the idea of race as something differentiable, and hence subject to differential valuation, a notion that had taken root with plantation slavery. Indeed, many became rich and powerful as a result of exploiting black labor, which spurred the overarching importance of "not being black." Indeed, early codices condemned any intimate relations between Cherokees and persons of color, while liaisons with whites were often explicitly encouraged. However, the Cherokees learned that despite their accommodation and adoption of white ways, and the fact that the laws were on their side, the US government could and did confiscate their lands, but left them their slaves, who were to be counted as Cherokee.

Among other consequences of the Removal, the assignment of western lands created a place where "Cherokees" could take refuge. One of the best parts of this book is Smithers's patient explanation of the problem of all manner of war and economic refugees seeking land and affiliation. Now the problem of the "mixed-bloods" took on great importance. Smithers prefers the term "multi-racial," but the more loaded term suggests the distress that Indian Territory governments had in dealing with persons who now outnumbered Cherokees in good standing. Figuring out who were "intruders" and who were legitimate Cherokees made "blood" of primary importance. Ultimately, persons of African descent were disenfranchised no matter what their legal and biological claims had been.

Smithers's stated goals for the book are to illuminate "migration and resettlement, memory, and identity" (18). With respect to this last point, he turns to and elaborates on recent theory about Native American identity, with statements such as "Cherokee identity can be understood as a multi-dimensional, multi-sited concept" (16). But this work is interesting and valuable enough without wading into the waters of Cherokee identity. This question "who is Cherokee?" rages among Cherokee people. The eventual lowering of "blood quantum" to include anyone with a Cherokee ancestor has created a huge tribe that is mostly "multi-racial" with tiny proportions of "Cherokee blood." The

diaspora itself lowered the density of Cherokee people in the new communities such that preservation of the language there became impossible. It remains to be seen how this will play out in this time of enormous flux.

The author has some lapses in his prose style, with too many sentences such as “The Civil War divided American families, towns, and regions” (150). At times he assumes psychological states and motives when perhaps simple phrases such as “given these circumstances,” or “we can infer” would have introduced a more appropriate bit of distance from these kinds of assertions. In the prologue, the author includes a long and tangential story about the Corn Mother: why not choose one of the migration stories, which would have matched the book’s theme? Still, these quibbles should be overlooked. I learned a great deal from this book, and I expect that others, both experts and newcomers to the topic, will as well.

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Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Worlds of the Early Americas. Edited by Matthew Cohen and Jeffrey Glover. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. 464 pages. \$70.00 cloth; \$35.00 paper and electronic.

Colonial Mediascapes energetically opens a range of early-American communication practices to new scholarly approaches and dialogues. The essays in Matthew Cohen and Jeffrey Glover’s edited collection offer an impressive array of concepts to explain forms of representation and communication that exceed the linguistic or textual. Arjun Appadurai’s term “mediascapes” helps the editors move beyond writing to consider, in particular, indigenous media and the social relations that produced them. Other terms the contributors posit to explain the indigenous and intercultural media of colonial America include “objects of knowledge transfer” (48), “mediation” (301), “notational practices” (109), “visual poetry” (195), and “dialogization” (157). Such concepts respond to a problem that Andrew Newman articulates in his essay: while intended to work against the myth of literate Europeans encountering illiterate Indians, to define Native American forms as “writing,” “literacy,” or “books” might distract from their particular qualities and uses in indigenous contexts. Instead, embracing discontinuities between European and Native American representation might illuminate indigenous worldviews that remain undertheorized by scholars. The invigorating move toward diverse, defamiliarizing concepts for the communications of colonial encounter is both a powerful asset and a unique challenge of *Colonial Mediascapes*. The book will undoubtedly help scholars and students of the colonial Americas overcome limiting assumptions about the ways colonists and Native inhabitants conveyed meaning. Its plurality of sources, geographic locales, and scholarly approaches, however, bespeaks the difficulty of applying theoretical concepts to the diversity of colonial American experience and its media.