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We apologize to those who received smudgy copies of our last number. We hope to go to an improved format next January. This move will be facilitated if subscribers will pay for their subscriptions. We apologize also to contributors (particularly reviewers) whose work we have been so slow to publish, but we are still swamped with material. Stay with us, send your money, enjoy!

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North: Poems of Home. Maurice Kenny. Blue Cloud Quarterly Press. Marvin, SD, 1977. Pb. \$1.50

Kenny's poems are of a particular yet unspecified place, a place seen clearly with vivid images drawn from the individual and collective memory. Kenny's "North" is a place where, as in Pound's use of history, "all times are contemporaneous." It is a place where the old ways still live and come through to us in natural factual images like "muskrats in the stream/swimming to shore with a mouthful of mud," images which confront us with an unsentimentalized, realistic, ongoing creation.

Kenny's focus is not primarily historic, nor is it nostalgic. What these poems communicate most strongly are feeling states which bring us "home," and for which the geographical markers of "North" become a kind of algebra we can agree on. Kenny explores the meaning of "home" in its ancestral and personal guises through a poetics sure in its clear, specific images and skillful in its open rhythms, which often return to techniques of repetition and incremental

repetition found in ancient chantways. It is a poetics evolved from the Native American oral tradition Kenny is rooted in, yet one much engaged with a vital tradition of modern American poetry of particularity and place.

North's opening poem, "First Rule," presents as alternating refrains "Stones must form a circle first and not a wall" and "words cannot be spoken first." These admonitions suggest a caution toward coming to words, toward the wall they can create when they don't bend or suggest, and a respect, traditionally Indian, for the open spaciousness of silence. They also suggest that in order for our timeless "stone" words to build anything, they must be arranged with the perception of the circle and not the linear wall. Kenny's poems extend the implications of this preference to include the importance of perceiving the world through the "circles" of our own eyes, through a relation with nature's exemplary cycles, through the medicine wheel developed on our continent, and not just through the wall-like abstract rationality Blake called "Newton's sleep." Kenny's stone circles represent a regenerative power, a connection to every living thing in the universe. Or, as Kenny tells us of himself in characteristically concrete terms:

I am committed to the earth and to the past; to
tradition and the future. I am committed to
people and poetry.

Kenny's North works with images out of his own Native American heritage, the sacred Twins, Gowane, Dekanawida, Hiawatha, and Handsome Lake; it explores personal symbols like "North" itself in ways which draw the reader into their circles;

and it includes observations of people, landscape, and history. The poet composes, as in the refrain for "In North Country," with "fingers in the earth." North grows out of this direct contact with "Home." It is the rich, personal work of a mature writer.

Michael Castro -- St. Louis

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Brian Swann, who is editing a collection of essays on Native American oral and written literature, invites essays for consideration, especially on "forgotten" Indian novelists and poets of this century, as well as contemporary writers. Deadline is October, 1979. Send material to Dr. Brian Swann, The Cooper Union, Cooper Square, New York, N.Y. 10003. Deadline October 1979.

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The Worlds Between Two Rivers: Perspectives on American Indians in Iowa. ed. Gretchen Bataille, David M. Gradwohl, Charles L.P. Silen. Ames: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1978. pp. 148. Hb. \$7.95. Bibliography.

This is a book with a purpose. Gretchen Bataille writes that the editors "hoped that this collection. . . will help inform educators, students, and concerned people about the Indian in Iowa -- the historical and contemporary Indian(129-30). Guided by the conviction that "education seems to be the key to a new understanding and awareness for both Indian and non-Indian people"(129), the editors offer some of the papers of a 1974 symposium at Iowa State University. Proceedings of such symposia are often uneven, disjointed, short on thematic integrity, but The Worlds Between Two Rivers is formless.

There are bright spots. Donald Wanatee's excellent piece interprets an important and little-known aspect of Mesquakie history and is, I hope, only the first of many such contributions. L. Edward Purcell's

"The Unknown Past," though previously published, is well repeated here, and will hopefully come to the attention of Iowa educators. David Gradwohl's "The Native American Experience in Iowa: An Archaeological Perspective," if too technical for this book, is among the best summaries extant of Iowa's prehistoric past. And the printing of ten Mesquakie photographs from the incomparable Duren J. H. Ward collection of the State Historical Society of Iowa is welcome. On the other hand, those who know Fred McTaggart's Wolf That I Am will be disappointed by the superficiality of his contribution. These and nine other papers, grouped to deal with media distortions, historical interpretations, contemporary Native American perspectives, and alternatives for the future compose the book. A solid bibliography, partially annotated, accompanies the text.

Every serious student of Native American history of Iowa knows the deficiencies in the literature. Distortions, lies, ignorance, and misconceptions abound, and virtually anything which seeks to fill even some of the gaps should be welcomed with open arms. But Bataille, Gradwohl, and Silet have given us a porcupine to embrace. "Random" best describes the results of the editors' efforts. There is a little bit of archaeology, a little bit of Mesquakie history, a little bit of urban sociology, and a bit on Native American education, literature, and the image of Indians in commercial films. The historical section, strong on certain aspects of Mesquakie history, ignores the Sauks, Ioways, Pottawatomies, Winnebagos, Poncas, Omahas, Otos, and the many bands of Dakota who also inhabited the country between the Mississippi and the Missouri. The "sociological" section includes a couple of brief descriptions of the purposes of urban Indian centers and a plea by

a professor of sociology (ignoring the special rights of Native Americans) for the establishment of a state Ethnic Commission to overcome the suspicions of other groups "about state favoritism toward Indians (117)." In the education section one finds a strong statement of frustrations of Native Americans when confronted with traditional white Protestant educational values, and an account by a disillusioned Native American recruiter of the difficulties of Indian students in college when their primary and secondary school experiences are overwhelmingly negative.

Many of these short papers, most under six pages, are tantalizing, and one can imagine all sorts of possibilities for their use. But together in this book, subject to little editorial control, organized around no workable theme, connected in only a perfunctory way, the insight which many of them contain is lost in unfulfilled expectation. The worlds between two rivers remains unexplored.

Michael D. Green -- Dartmouth College

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Kaczurkin, Mini Valenzuela. Yoeme: Lore of the Arizona Yaqui People. Tucson: Sun Tracks, 1977. p. vii + 59. Pb. \$4.00 Address: SUPO, Box 20788, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85720.

Contemporary Yaqui Indians in Arizona are descendants of political refugees from the eight sacred pueblos of their people on the Río Yaqui in northwestern Mexico. They are survivors, tenacious and adaptive people who have recreated much of their traditional culture in a new environment. Their grandmothers and grandfathers lived through dispossession, destruction, deportation, war, imprisonment, the sundering of family unity and traditional ways. They made their way across the border into Arizona with little more than the will to live in freedom and re-establish family, social, and ceremonial bonds. Like other refugee groups in this country, they struggled to

establish themselves, and when the political upheavals that disrupted their tribal autonomy ended, only a few chose to return to Sonora, Mexico. Those who stayed did not reject their homeland, but rather determined to bring into being a vital and growing Yaqui way in new villages and urban communities. They have been remarkably successful in their survival techniques, renewing their ceremonial system, re-establishing kinship and ritual bonds, retelling the old stories and creating new.

Mini Valenzuela Kaczurkin's collection of Arizona Yaqui lore is a direct reflection of both the tenacity and the adaptability of her people. The unifying element in the collection is the consistent drawing forward of the past into the present. The old tales and the new are integrated to create a composite portrait of both traditional and contemporary Yaqui values, beliefs, and ways, and the juxtaposition of the two elements creates a sense of the vitality of the oral tradition among Yaqui people.

Divisions in the work are fluid. Immediately following a traditional story about rain, the author recalls briefly how in her own youth men on the ranch where she lived shouted at the thunder storms to scare them away. She consistently relates the mythic past to the historical present, from the naming of the sun to events in the 1970s. The monte (wilderness) of the ancient times and the ranches of modern Arizona are part of a unified landscape. Events exist in time -- the surem (ancient tiny people) of the mythical world are gone now and the prophetess Yomumuli has disappeared, but they are part of the living reality that joins the people to their past. All periods of the Yaqui way are addressed by the collection, from the creation of the Yaqui world to the coming of the Spanish to

the resettlement in Arizona, but there is a sense of continuum, of the past being pulled forward into the present rather than of distinct periods of time. In some tales time is specific -- a reference to a 1960s OEO report -- in others as ephemeral as "long, long ago" or as vague as "one day." The order is not fixed by chronology but by unity of subject and event.

The sense of continuity is largely a result of Kaczurkin's care in preserving the oral quality of the tales, legends, and anecdotes she has collected. Many of the tales are personalized. "My Granpa Rosario believed. . ." When I was a young girl, and living in Marana. . ." bring a sense of immediacy and personality. Other beginnings, such as "Have you heard the story about. . ." create an even more distinct sense of the oral. Awareness of both teller and audience is clear, not a self-conscious device but a natural translation of speech into text. In one sense, the book is not so much a collection of lore of the Yaqui people as a collection of her own family lore as it relates to the broader fabric of Yoeme culture. Some stories she tells in her own voice and from her own experience, though most are from informants.

The range and variety of the tales reveal the extent of contact Yaquis have had with other cultures with whom they share the Sonoran desert. The traditionally Mexican tale of La Llorana, the weeping woman, is included, as well as a Robin Hood tale and others that reveal Yaqui adaptation of non-traditional materials. In each borrowing, though, the tales are clearly Yaquized through injection of kinship terms, traditional tribal values, or familiar landscapes.

Kaczurkin's introduction reveals her purposes: "In spite of many changes that have taken place in our culture, we continue to hold on to the Sonoran heritage, to find pride in that heritage that remains

with us, and to base our newer cultural experiences against that background." She is concerned because young Yaquis do not know the oral lore, and she has set out to "preserve" the Yaqui cuentos and myths and legends for her own and future generations. The collection is small, taken from elders in her family, but it is diverse and the range of Yaqui experience and values is broadly representative. This is not an anthropologist's collection nor a formal presentation. There are only a few fully developed myths and tales. Most of the lore comes in snatches, much as if it were spoken within the household. It is lively with the language of colloquial speech and patterns of dialogue.

The collection does convey a sense of stability and projects an ongoing tradition through continued incorporation of contemporary material into the matrix of traditional forms. The way of the Yoeme is often described as "hard" but never as rigid. Neither is the book, which is informal and loosely structured. It is not a polished work. If it feels unfinished, that is because it is -- there will be more Yaqui lore. The tenacity and adaptability that has allowed the Yaquis to survive will undoubtedly allow the lore to go on being told.

Kathleen M. Sands -- Arizona State University

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Duane Niatum. Digging Out The Roots. New York: Harper & Row, 1978. pp. 61. Hb.\$6.95

Duane Niatum. Turning To The Rhythms Of Her Song. Jawbone Press, 17023 5th Avenue, N.W. Seattle, Wash 98155.

Duane Niatum has published an impressive body of verse. Apart from editing the anthology Carriers of the Dream Wheel (Harper, 1975), Niatum has published three chapbooks and two larger collections since 1970: After the Death of the Elder Klallam (Baleen, 1970),

Taos Pueblo (Greenfield, 1973), Ascending Red Cedar Moon (Harper, 1973), plus the two books in hand.

Niatum has consistently striven to publish poetry of strategic input bearing a chiseled effect of artistry. During a time when free verse has dominated, he has not only made a continuous study of classical form but presented his poetic vision in structure without sacrificing his lyrical gift, which is profound. His insight has remained open to change. To him a poem is the sum of its parts, not chopped prose lazily reclining for verse. Nor is he contented with sprawled digressions of thought nor broken meters and the shock of outrageous declamation or confession which has been so often the content and context of modern verse. Yet his sestinas, sonnets, and so forth do not suffer impoverishment of freshness. The poem "To Love" is a fine example of control, form emancipated from strict structure, with music and images that free his vision and language with an air of modernity. "To Love" proves that the lyrical gift need not be vapid or succumb to strident screaming.

Niatum has paid homage to Louise Bogan, Roethke, Richard Hugo and others: his poetry is succinctly stronger, richer for it. His themes, images and metaphors are drawn from a Native American tradition. He is a member of Klallam tribe. Yet he does not allow this cultural past to overwhelm his control. Acutely aware of the historical injustices to his people, he maintains an intelligent grip on politics. His poetry is a product as much of European as of Klallam influence. Niatum's poetry is not so much to be reckoned with as savored and enjoyed:

Question of the Forest

Arrow, cedar, mask, and star,
What keeper strikes the drum:
The river calling tyee salmon,
Or, the woman of white pine
Picking berries well into dusk?

Maurice Kenny -- New York City

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Howard A. Norman. The Wishing Bone Cycle: Narrative Poems from the Swampy Cree Indians. Stonehill Pub, distr. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 1976. pp. xi + 180. Illus. William Threepersons. \$3.95 Pb.

Howard Norman's collection of Swampy Cree poems and stories seldom fails to please throughout the first encounter. The Cree literature is varied in form, delightful in tone, frequently provocative in theme, and always entertaining. It is only on reflection that, despite testimonials from Gary Snyder and Rolling Stone about the "old original Way" and unified consciousness," one wonders whether Norman has done the best possible job as editor and translator.

Section one, "The Wishing Bone Cycle," is a series of poems about transformations and storytelling; it is a stylistically refreshing and thematically challenging sustained effort by a single narrator and a valuable addition to the growing corpus of contemporary oral literature. A second section consists of "poems," which are not themselves ritual naming poems, but rather poems about a name's several meanings. The third section includes contemporary and traditional poetry of personal experience, lullabies, and so on, many of which contain the book's most powerful imagery. The final section consists of a sample of the tale cycle of Wichikapache, the sacred Cree Trickster-Transformer. There is a "pre-face" by Rothenberg.

"The Wishing Bone Cycle" is the most fascinating portion of the book. The premise of the "poem" cycle is to endow the narrator with the ability to create events and choices for the characters he describes. Each poem then becomes an experiment in storytelling. Because the narrator is more competent at storytelling than at story-making, however, many of the situations he creates backfire: the resulting dramatic ironies are both pleasurable and instructive. In one poem, the vain transformer-narrator wants to have two moons in the sky instead of one, only to impress his audience.

But the audience suspects him and, guessing his motive, they downplay the situation, asserting nonchalantly, "You will not believe this, but there are ONLY two moons in the sky tonight." Conscious they were "sending the trick back" to him, he installs a third moon, prompting them to claim there is now only one moon. Thoroughly confused by his own juggling act, taken aback by his audience's own adroitness at his game, he ends: "I was left standing there/ with three moons shining on me./ There were three" -- a long pause -- ". . . I was sure of it." At another point the narrator listens to a hunter who has finally become aware that the transformer-narrator has been involved in all his recent hunting success: "He said, 'You are just helping me now/ so I will trust you/ and you can trick me good later on!'/But I hadn't thought of that./ Until then." Deft narrative touches like this and the humor that abounds are worth the whole book.

Throughout the collection storytelling appears as a correlative for living. To make a story and to make a life are intimately related activities. People appear to have multiple pasts and futures in the stories they tell, just like the Wishing Bone narrator who could change his life by changing his story. One poem explains why a woman named Many Talks offers a listener many different baskets, each containing its own story from her life, and as she tells the story selected she becomes the story. In another poem a woman was named Many Voices because she could speak in the voice of the creature she thought about; she could even have that creature's mode of silence. One girl, named Quiet Until the Thaw, never spoke during the winter; each spring she spoke again and each spring the people looked forward to her speech.

This concern for the value of the spoken word produces some startling imagery. A poem explains how a girl became known as Pollen Leggings, a name not so remarkable for what it said about the girl who loved to

sit among wildflowers, but for the people who would give her such a name because, "We saw the chance/ to hear a winter and summer thing/ in a name./ So we didn't let that pass by."

Like many translations of Indian oral literature, these are open to misinterpretation. One is never sure when one is reading a poem or a tale, or what the Cree distinction amounts to (for surely there is one) in terms of form and performance. We must take Norman's word that the teller of the Wishing Bone Cycle "was considered an excellent teller," for we are given no sense for the sociocultural criteria for such judgment. The notes are weak and contribute nothing to knowledge of form or style. Neither do typography nor translation for that matter. There seems no reason for utterance divisions and the post-Tedlock upper case, lower case, italic typography here appears gratuitous. The book lacks the critical apparatus and the contextualization needed to provide a reader with full understanding.

The only bibliographic references are to Bloomfield's early work. Overlooked is the impressive work of Richard Preston (Cree Narrative Expressing the Personal Meaning of Events, Nat'l Museum of Man, Ottawa, 1975) and Regna Darnell ("Correlates of Cree Narrative Performance," in Richard Bauman and Joel Scherzer, Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking, 1974). This volume strikes a reader familiar with the field as only slightly less soft than the frequently misleading representations of the worse "ethnopoets." We need to attend to lessons about performance, indicated by Tedlock and Bauman's recent Verbal Art as Performance (Mewbury House, 1977), if we are to have real understanding in this field. It may be argued that this book and others like it deliberately avoid being scholarly -- they certainly succeed. But if they would achieve the understanding that the benevolence of their tone suggests they desire, they should be as informative as entertaining.

Dr. Andrew O. Wiget -Univ. of New Orleans

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Basil Johnston. Ojibway Heritage. New York, Columbia University Press, 1976. pp. 171. \$11.95 Hb.

This volume is the best published record of traditional Anishinaubeg literature. Its greatest value, in my opinion, is that the author has made a serious attempt to record oral traditions and state them without personal or local interpretations and embellishments. This effort has cost something, particularly in the dramatic build-up of specific narratives, which was undoubtedly an important part of early oral recitations. In addition to creation and origin myths carefully told, included by the author, amazingly, is an explanation of the four degrees of the Midéwiwin. Knowing me to be Midékwe, a friend asked me how I found these expositions. My answer was, "Adroit." Like the other materials in this volume, the information for the four degrees is minimally outlined, the statements precisely underexpressed. This is the first time I have seen Midé information publicly printed by a native author. No one could accuse Mr. Johnston of excesses. The Anishinaubeg must have a great diplomat in this man.

Even before anyone asked my opinion of this book I had used it so much that everyone assumed I thought it was perfect. Of course not. I object strongly to the past tense used so frequently by the author. Some of the legends are not exactly as I have heard them; and, mainly, I prefer the way I heard them told. Some of the translations I think could be expressed more euphoniously in English. In spite of these comments, I would like to see Ojibway Heritage reprinted on better paper, with a sturdier binding, and illustrated profusely by designs which are typically Anishinaubeg and woodland in style.

When Champlain decided to ally his nation with the Algonkian peoples it was because he found them

to be distributed from the eastern coast of North America to the present state of Minnesota, from the northern reaches of Canada to the entrance of the Missouri along the Mishe-Seepee. He had no way of knowing that the majority of these peoples were indisposed to organization and sustained warfare. If he had known this, and had affiliated with the highly organized and more military Iroquois confederacy, the course of history might have been different. (Time has not changed us; we still eschew organization and would prefer to have a party with almost anybody rather than engage in military maneuvers.) The same formidable range of geographic distribution, I am convinced, influenced conquering governments to subdivide the Algonkians into geographically designated 'tribes.' No one noticed nor cared that all these people called themselves by the same name, the Anishinaubeg, lived in the same woodland and cultural style, practiced the same religion, and were capable of understanding each other linguistically. It was not politic to allow such a widely distributed people to feel that they were one. So I should like to see one word changed in the title of Mr. Johnston's book. It is the cultural heritage of the Anishinaubeg he has recorded. The time is overdue for the Anishinaubeg to reaffiliate if we are to preserve our common heritage.

Keewaydinoquay Peschel (Ojibway) Anishinaubeg

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Duane BigEagle. Bidato: Ten Mile River Poems. The Workingmans Press, c/o Serendipity Books, 1790 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley, CA 94709. pp.20. \$2 Pb.

The last poem of the book "My Father's Country" is the stating point of BigEagle's vision. There is community, but that community is reached only through involvement of one individual with another. Through the father we can reach the grandfather and all that he stands for. BigEagle explores this path as the only one through which we will find community that also binds us to the land and nature.

BigEagle's concerns in this slim chapbook are with these bindings, and his method is lyrical: he sings with hope and certainty of its value in our moon-shaped lives. His poems have an unerring flight back to the center of of experience, as he puts it in a poem recalling his grandmother, "arrows to the heart." One feels his poems driving directly to the emotional center -- then the unnerving silence that surrounds the poem hums like a string. One senses that BigEagle is unsure of the ability of any but a short, intact poem to penetrate the simple mysteries of life. Sometimes his misses his aim, but mostly not, and the power of a poem like "Valeriano," addressing his absent newborn daughter, sweeps away small hesitations.

BigEagle's voice is clear and distinct, not imitating any writer, Indian or other, though he explores ground common to all of us. BigEagle assures the reader that through the exploration of the heart "someday you will know and understand."

James Ruppert

The University of Washington Press has produced another superb art book: Allen Wardwell's Objects of Bright Pride, 128 pp. 15 color plates and 95 black and white photographs of exemplary clarity of Northwest Coast Indian art. All the objects are from the collection of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, many never before photographed for publication. \$17.95 Pb. Bibliography.

