
Anita Endrezze. **Throwing Fire at the Sun, Water at the Moon.** Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000. Pp. xxiii + 187, illustrations, appendix, notes, suggested bibliography. \$29.95 cloth, \$16.95 paper.

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For the Yaqui, an aboriginal tribe that inhabited parts of Baja California and Northern Mexico before and during the Spanish conquest, the eclipse of the sun or moon was a sign of death for men and women, respectively. During the eclipse the Yaqui would throw clay pots of fire or water in order to rejuvenate the sun or moon and forestall the death an eclipse predicted. In this sense Anita Endrezze's book, *Throwing Fire at the Sun, Water at the Moon*, is a work intended to preserve Yaqui myths and legends through poetry and short prose pieces. Material for the book was collected from various textual sources, the author's personal and familial history, and Endrezze's personal ethnographic study in Sonora, Mexico.

In the first section Endrezze recounts Yaqui creation myths, elucidating parallels and differences between Christian and Yaqui narratives. This distinction gathers significance as she explores Spanish and Mexican attempts to subvert and annihilate Yaqui culture through religious and political pressure. The second section explores the author's genealogical connections and their wider cultural implications. For example, Endrezze examines how her ancestors walked across the desert to Arizona and California and how they attempted to integrate themselves into an American culture they didn't understand—and which didn't attempt to understand them, either. Recounting these prejudices and frictions suggests the difficulties aboriginal peoples experienced in the face of Anglo-American social systems.

As she weaves poems and prose from history, myth, and cultural, familial, and personal experiences, Endrezze creates a text that is dense with symbols and images that work to reveal the Yaqui as they were in the past and as they are today. Thus the book may be valuable as a starting place for those studying Yaqui culture, the clash of cultures, and the effects of colonization that continue to shape society. Endrezze

also gives some suggested reading for those interested in learning more about her culture, aiding her goal of sharing myths, preserving culture, and alerting others to the Yaqui presence.

Endrezze writes sometimes in a familiar scholarly style, but generally she relies on short, direct sentences that Westerners tend to perceive as “mythic” in character, creating a “mythic presence” of the narrator: “We came from the moon and it is the mother of all women. [. . .] And when the sun died, many men would die” (50). Perhaps due to its personal and political aims, however, the poetry and prose often lack compression and force. Although there are insightful passages, illuminating images, and some brilliant lines such as “the dolphin-eye of the human fetus” (180) and “the soft/teeth of water clacking on rock” (29), the text often slips into mere sentimentality: “dreaming of red stars falling into our hands,” or “blue capes, skins of night jaguars and green-eyed stars” (75). Also, the author is always at hand in the text, leaving explanatory notes as to subject and intent. On one hand these notes explain Yaqui culture; on the other, they weaken the impact of essays and poems by undermining the universality of the text.

Thus the text succeeds in documenting and sharing culture, but it lacks the sublime sense of beauty and force that art requires. Despite this, *Throwing Fire at the Sun, Water at the Moon* is a handy introduction to Yaqui culture and is also an informed look at how cultural identity is shaped, maintained, transformed, forgotten, and revisited.

Charles Colcock Jones Jr. **Gullah Folktales from the Georgia Coast.** Foreword by Susan Millar Williams. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000. Pp. xxxv + 184, glossary. \$14.95 paper.

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Originally published in 1888 as *Negro Myths from the Georgia Coast*, this compilation of sixty-one texts includes excellent versions of familiar and obscure narratives told in African-American communities among the south Atlantic Coast. This volume includes