

war, and internal political divisions had taken their toll. They were now only about half as numerous and could claim only about one-fourth of their ancestral homeland. New ideas and expectations aggravated intergenerational cultural tensions as whites and blacks, both slave and free, married or otherwise infiltrated into their ranks. As a people they had reached an identity and survival crisis.

The American policy that served as the guideline for Indian-American relations from the 1790s into the 1830s assumed Indians could be acculturated and integrated into American society. A majority of the Cherokee felt compelled to seek ways to accommodate their old traditions to the new circumstances on Cherokee terms.

They were to be buffeted and bruised by the perceptions and misperceptions of government agents, missionaries, traders, and divers opportunists, by the jurisdictional vagaries of states' and federal machinations, and by divided loyalties and varied agendas in their own ranks. They suffered through such wrenching experiences as an internal "Cherokee Rebellion," a ghost dance movement that gave way to the southern Indian phase of the War of 1812, four abortive removal crises, and destiny probings against the sounding board of the United States Supreme Court.

In this context of adversity, shattered dreams, broken promises, and misplaced trusts, the Cherokee accepted the generous promises of American policy and sought to emulate the American model of evolving nationhood imbedded in history, language, culture, and inviolable sovereignty, and a readily identifiable homeland. They even crafted their 1827 constitution after the American counterpart. The Removal Bill of 1830 and the Jackson presidency were major factors in the reversal of American Indian policy. At the height of its fulfillment, the remarkable Cherokee renaissance was doomed.

William G. McLoughlin fleshes out his previous studies of Cherokee pre-removal history. He gets as close to the Cherokee level of the unfolding story as the records will permit. His revisionist suggestion about the relationship between the cultural transformation taking place in America in those years and the changing attitude toward the Indian's place in the new nation, not developed in this study, deserves monographic treatment itself. Although the publisher's manuscript editor might have improved its style, *Cherokee Renaissance* stands as the best account of the subject.

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American Singularity: The 1787 Northwest Ordinance, the 1862 Homestead and Morrill Acts, and the 1944 G.I. Bill. By Harold

M. Hyman. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986. Pp. x, 95. Notes, index. \$15.00.)

This book considers the acts in its title evidence of "American Singularity." This uniqueness lies in the public policies that provided opportunities to achieve equality by granting access to land, education, and legal remedies.

In the introduction, Harold M. Hyman discusses whether American national experience is exceptional and whether, as Goethe wrote, America "has it better." Hyman provides a survey of contemporary opinion spanning the political horizon, but his erudition does not obscure his optimism. That may be explained, in part, by the change in the membership of the historical profession between World War II and 1950.

Hyman begins by analyzing the Northwest Ordinance. He states that its antislavery provisions were, like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, "a vision as well as a blueprint for immediate implementation" (p. 28). Although the government was unable to monitor them effectively, the author believes that they had the effect of making the laws of the slaveholding states " 'alien,' dangerous, diseased, and distorted" (p. 29).

With the author's vast knowledge of the era, it is not surprising that the second chapter, dealing with the 1862 statutes and the 1863 Habeas Corpus Act, is the strongest. The Morrill Act made the United States the first nation in the world to commit resources to higher education—and gave an unanticipated opportunity to women. Hyman also presents evidence that these three statutes, seen in the context of the Thirteenth Amendment and a speech that Lincoln gave in April, 1865, demonstrate that Republican leadership accepted and advocated public education for blacks, thus contradicting some of the opposition to the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.

In the third, most innovative chapter, Hyman describes the democratizing effects of the G.I. Bill. By ending a near-monopoly on access to elite universities and graduate education that had formerly been determined by family and money, it brought the nation unexpected talents that otherwise would not have been realized.

The unexpressed *a priori* assumption of this book is that the true wealth of the nation lies in its citizenry; its postulate is that America has been uniquely successful when it has devoted some of the fruits of its natural resources to its human resources. That is a significant message to all of us who hope that our posterity will celebrate the tricentennial of the Constitution.

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