

One Hundred Summers: A Kiowa Calendar Record.* Candace S. Greene. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. 286 pp.

Reviewed by Clyde Ellis

In this stunning contribution to the literature, Candace S. Greene confirms her status as the preeminent scholar of Plains pictorial art and memory. Building on the work that she has steadily produced for the last decade, Greene examines the history of a calendar that chronicled the century between 1828-1928, and which was drawn by the highly regarded Kiowa artist and calendar-maker known as Silver Horn, who lived from 1860-1940. Known colloquially as the OU calendar, a reference to the fact that it is housed at the University of Oklahoma's Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, the calendar came to light in 2001 when it was discovered in the papers of its late owner, Nelia Mae Roberts, who with her husband E. M. ran a small trading concern and Indian crafts store in Anadarko, Oklahoma. Greene believes that the bulk of the calendar was originally drawn in the winter of 1905-06 when Silverhorn was in his mid-forties. Rendered in pen-and-ink, watercolor, and colored pencil on the pages of a bound ledger book, the calendar suffered over the years from heavy handling; by the time it was rediscovered, the leaves were loose and tattered, but the majority of the images remained intact.

As with her previous work, Greene's ability to connect the calendar to the larger Kiowa world that it reflected makes this book useful and absorbing, and reminds us of how dynamic these calendars were. Writing with a sure hand and a clear understanding of the history and events that framed the calendar, Greene begins with an insightful essay on the nature of calendar keeping in the Kiowa community. Called "*sai-guat*" in Kiowa, the term refers to "winter pictures" and calls to mind a tradition of recording "a series of years by means of pictures standing for events that occurred over time" (p. 2). A number of other Plains groups kept winter counts, and one of the unique features of the Kiowa calendars was the depiction of two events per year—one for the summer, and one for the winter. The events were not necessarily the year's most important; rather the emphasis was on distinctive or memorable qualities designed to function as a reference for the entire community, and in Greene's words "to position such memories in time" (p. 2). Drawn on a variety of materials including paper, muslin, and hide, multiple calendars were kept in the community, often serving as mutually reinforcing sources in the task of safeguarding tribal memories.

Silver Horn is credited with drawing at least three calendars (including one for James Mooney, for which he never received proper credit); his father, brother, and uncle also kept calendars. The OU calendar is important in several ways. It adds substantially to the collection of Kiowa calendars already known and catalogued, for example, and in doing so it deepens our understanding of how and with what consequences Kiowas experienced the rapidly shifting world of the Southern Plains in the 19th and 20th centuries. Equally important, the OU calendar is "unique in the power of its images and the amount of information that they convey" (p. 5). Indeed, as Greene deftly shows, although the entries are economically drawn, many of them are complex commentaries that reveal the subtle and not-so-subtle ways in which Kiowa life

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unfolded in the years between 1828 and 1928. Most interestingly, they convey both the deep roots of traditional culture as well as the significant social, political, religious, and economic changes that shaped Kiowa life, especially after the turn of the 20th century. Using the OU calendar as both a visual and cultural cue, Silver Horn's discerning eye demonstrated that the period covered by the calendar was often made up of equal parts "resistance and resiliency, of cultural creativity and religious revitalization" (p. 9).

Greene's discussion of the OU calendar's entries is absorbing and compelling. Using both her deep knowledge of Silver Horn's work, and also her keen understanding of other Kiowa calendars, Greene offers a masterful commentary on the events that form the core of each entry. The calendar features an astonishing array of illustrations that recounted a wide array of experiences. Not surprisingly, there were references that conjured up deadly encounters, as in the entries for 1839, 1840, and 1862 that depicted small pox epidemics, and in the entries for 1846, 1872, 1892, and 1900 that depicted outbreaks of measles. The 1833 summer entry remembered the awful consequences of the Cut Throat Gap massacre in which an Osage war party left the decapitated heads of its Kiowa victims in brass buckets, while the 1868-69 winter entry recounted the attack by George Custer on Black Kettle's Cheyenne camp on the banks of the Washita River. There were also more light-hearted memories, as in the case of the 1893 "Big boy summer," an entry with a drawing of a chubby youngster that was a reference to a remarkably fat white child who had been on display with a traveling fair in Anadarko. Some of the most intriguing entries suggest the degree to which the Kiowa world was changing in fundamental ways; the 1898-99 winter entry depicts the first train line across the Washita River at Chickasha, for example, while the 1901-02 winter entry has a starkly drawn series of squares denoting allotment. The 1908-09 winter entry includes a drawing of a Kiowa woman dressed like the era's iconic Gibson Girl, while the 1914-15 winter entry depicts the first airplane seen in Kiowa country. The 1918-19 winter entry memorializes the honors given to returning Kiowa veterans from World War I. At the same time, other entries from that same span of years recount traditional dance gatherings and the rising influence of the Native American Church. Clearly, Kiowa identity was complicated.

There is much to ponder in this book; it is a triumph of scholarship that has rescued a valuable document of Kiowa life, one that tells us a great deal indeed about a pivotal century in the tribe's history.

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