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Review of *Coacoochee's Bones: A Seminole Saga* By Susan A. Miller

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Coacoochee's Bones: A Seminole Saga. By Susan A. Miller. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003. xix + 264 pp. Photographs, maps, figures, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.

In *Coacoochee's Bones* Susan Miller tells the outstanding story of an outstanding leader in an outstanding manner. The repeated use of "outstanding" is necessary because Miller has produced a unique work on the history of the Seminole people, not just Coacoochee. The narrative is written from the point of view of a Seminole, with insights an outsider wouldn't have. Furthermore, she makes judicious use of primary historical Seminole, Mexican, and US sources and of published material, enhanced with knowledge garnered from anthropological studies. The result is a highly informative and readable book.

Miller does not shrink from taking stands on controversial historical and contemporary themes related to the Black Seminoles (whom she identifies as Maroons). She also seems to advocate the return of the Seminole Indians to the lands they abandoned almost 150 years ago in Mexico, seemingly not giving due consideration to the fact that the Kickapoo Indians and the Black Seminoles (known as Mascogos in Mexico) who remained behind and still occupy the land would mightily resist the notion. She also seems to believe that the exclusion of the Seminole Freedmen from the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma in 2000 was acceptable. Yet, controversial as these points of view might be, Miller states them in a reasoned and clear manner, which leads even a skeptical reader like this reviewer to pause and consider them.

In the end, Miller's work is above all a great contribution to the historical literature of the Seminole Indians in particular and of the American Indian in general. It should be read by anyone who wants to know about the travails suffered by the members of an Indian tribe at the hands of the American government, from their own point of view. As Miller herself identifies her work, this is "decolonizing" history at its very best.

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