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The Texas Cherokees: A People Between Two Fires, 1819-1840. By Dianna Everett. The Civilization of the American Indian Series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. Preface, illustrations, maps, epilogue, notes, bibliography, index. xiv + 173 pp. \$14.95.

In her very readable and significant ethno-historical work *The Texas Cherokees*, Dianna Everett resourcefully tells the story of this small and little-understood group during their twenty-year tenure in Texas. Everett argues that the Cherokees' migration to, problems in, and expulsion from Texas can best be understood via their traditional yet dichotomous political structure. That is, Cherokee ideals of group consensus and harmony among individuals

conflicted with the realities of factionalism; and like most writers, Everett relates that this dichotomy became detrimental only after white contact.

Cherokees were among the various splinter groups that voluntarily sought cultural and economic refuge west of the Mississippi at the turn of the nineteenth century. After a tenuous period along the lower Arkansas River, this group broke away from the Arkansas Cherokees and went southwest to the Red River before moving in 1820 to the sandy, piney hills between the headwaters of the Neches and Sabine. Presumably safe in Spanish territory, they rebuilt their settlements and made raiding forays on the Osages and Comanches to the north and west. As Anglo colonists arrived in the following years, the Texas Cherokees assumed an important position in regional geopolitics. They soon became "a people between two fires," as both the Texans and Mexicans sought their alliance by promising them land. Because of turnovers in administrations, their loyalty to Mexico went unrewarded, and to the Texans, the Cherokees appeared to swing their affiliation indecisively, thereby posing a military risk that could not be afforded. Everett's interpretation of this is convincing: the Cherokees were not simply giving lip service to the Texans, but rather, factionalization was chiseling away at the unity of the group.

The author eloquently weaves into her thesis amazing stories, like the spy mission of Texas agent Isadore Pantallion, and the tragic irony of the father-son relationship of chief Duwali and Sam Houston. The paranoia of Houston's political enemies finally prompted the Texans, ironically commanded by the Georgian and hater of Cherokees, Mirabeau B. Lamar, to rout the band on their flight from east Texas.

Everett is less than convincing in other respects. The paucity of documentation on the Texas Cherokees at times necessitates the use of qualifiers such as "no doubt," "surely," "must have," "probably," "possibly," and "it is reasonable to speculate" (p. 83). The conjectural

nature of the narrative is extended by Everett's inferential use of James Mooney's ethnographical data (recorded at the turn of the twentieth century among the Eastern Band in North Carolina) to interpret actions of individual Western Cherokees a century earlier. Those familiar with Cherokee society will wonder why Everett's Cherokees are culturally and socio-economically monolithic; indeed, it is the incredible toleration for diversity within Cherokee culture that accounts for its characteristic political factionalization. For example, the author never examines Richard Fields's actual intentions for leading his people into Texas, despite his wealthy background and one-eighth Cherokee blood. In the final chapter, Everett's cultural comparison of the Texas band to the Western and Eastern Cherokee Nations, as well as her conclusions as to why the Texas band was snubbed once they got to Indian Territory is overly simplistic because she does not give justice to the wide range of diversity and animosities that existed within each group. Critical information about the band is absent, like population size, number of settlements, trade connections, and their poor reputation among other Cherokees for the bloody massacre of an Osage village.

Despite these flaws, *The Texas Cherokees* is certainly worth reading. It remains the most important, sympathetic, and culturally-oriented work on this little-known offshoot of the Western Cherokee Nation.

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