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## Review of The Osage Ceremonial Dance I'n-Lon-Schka

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*The Osage Ceremonial Dance I'n-Lon-Schka*. By Alice Anne Callahan. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. xv + 172 pp. \$19.95.

"The I'n-Lon-schka supports the people in times of joy and tragedy and goes on in spite of them. It passes on traditions and gives them a feeling of belonging and properness from generation to generation . . ." (p. 136)

*The Osage Ceremonial Dance I'n-Lon-Schka*, by Alice Anne Callahan, is a fascinating look at contemporary (1970s) Osage ceremonialism. Acquired from the neighboring Kaws and Poncas in the 1880s, the I'n-Lon-Schka is reportedly the only surviving Osage ceremony that contains both song and dance. Drawing heavily from oral interviews, the author presents a composite picture of the dance that honors the eldest son.

The extensive use of oral interviews gives this book its special value. Callahan reported an on-going process of interviews, coupled with personal observations of the I'n-Lon-schka dances held at Grayhorse, Pawhuska, and Hominy, Oklahoma, from 1974 through 1987. Only through long-term interaction with oral informants could such a clear view of this complex ceremony be reached.

In the prefatory pages Callahan noted that "the ceremonial tradition will undoubtedly continue to be modified with the passage of time" (p. xv). A weakness of this study was the lack of historic material to document the changes that had already occurred. The acquisition of the I'n-Lon-Schka in the 1880s was noted only briefly. Two tantalizing photographs of Osage dancers, circa 1912, were offered without comment or analysis. The remainder of the narrative referred to an amorphous "traditional" nature of the I'n-Lon-Schka, creating a sense of a static, rigidly unchanging dance. It remains unclear whether this was the collective view of the oral in-

formants or of the author. As members of the Native community can attest, there have been horrendous and diverse pressures brought to bear upon "traditional" ceremonies. An understanding of how these pressures influenced contemporary ritual forms could be as important as the ritual themselves.

Case in point: In the description of the 1880s dance organization, the author's informants provided a laundry list of twenty-two individuals grouped around ten ritual positions (p. 34). In comparison, the 1974-75 organization was enlarged to fifty-five persons grouped around fourteen ritual positions. The contemporary arrangement was only noted as being similar to the earlier organization (p. 35). This simplistic view does not address such questions as when the new ritual positions were instituted, why they were added, and the reaction of the community to the changes.

The mixed blessings of Osage oil wealth in relation to the continuation of ceremonial life receives inadequate scrutiny. What effects did the Depression, Indian Reorganization, and New Deal programs of the 1930s have upon Osage societies? What about wars, relocation, or the threat of termination? Exploring such questions could enhance the historic perspective while increasing appreciation of contemporary ceremonial forms.

As this reader can confirm, the I'n-Lon-schka remains a vital, vibrant part of contemporary Osage ceremonial life. *The Osage Ceremonial Dance I'n-Lon-Schka* can be rightly viewed as one of the tribe's cultural treasures.

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