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## Review of *Chickasaw: Unconquered and Unconquerable* By Jeannie Barbour, Amanda Cobb, and Linda Hogan

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Chickasaw: Unconquered and Unconquerable.* Essays by Jeannie Barbour, Amanda Cobb, and Linda Hogan. Photography by David G. Fitzgerald. Introduction by Bill Anoatubby. Ada, OK: Chickasaw Press, 2006. 127 pp. Photographs, index. \$ 45.00.

This stunningly beautiful work by the Chickasaw Nation relates the fascinating story of the Chickasaw people, from ancient to contemporary times. Packed with simply gorgeous photographs and illustrations, it evokes the strength, endurance, courage, and determination of the Chickasaws in the face of relentless American colonization. The Chickasaw story of survival and persistence in the face of this aggression is an inspirational tribute to the ancestors, who not only endured dispossession and permanent exile but flourished in spite of the terrible tragedy of removal. This book addresses a popular audience, not an academic one, beginning with an overview of Chickasaw history. The last third of the text relates the determination of the Chickasaws to preserve their language and cultural beliefs, ending with a series of portraits of contemporary Chickasaw leaders in all walks of life.

The Chickasaw Nation is one of the closely allied five nations expelled from their ancient homelands in the southeast. Although the smallest numerically of these major Indigenous nations, the Chickasaws thrived, in part due to their reputation as a warlike nation. The text explains the inculcation of the warrior spirit in many aspects of traditional Chickasaw daily life, encompassing the entire community. Chickasaw women participated in warfare as expert strategists who ran the communications essential to success in martial enterprises. Despite such fearsome prowess, the Chickasaw

people were also expert diplomats, winning decisive concessions from the United States government during treaty negotiations, which greatly enhanced their ability to withstand and overcome the forced expulsion from their homelands and, later, the deleterious effects of the Civil War in Indian Territory.

Despite the ultimate betrayal of the United States government in abrogating treaties that guaranteed Indian territory lands to the Chickasaw people “forever,” they have emerged from this calamity with a keen sense of community and nationhood, and an inspiring determination to maintain and continue their culture and society. This text nicely balances the history of the nation with their contemporary condition, illustrating how beliefs and identity have persisted in the face of numerous challenges and obstacles. *Chickasaw: Unconquered and Unconquerable* is highly recommended for youth and adults interested in Native American history and culture.

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