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Review of *An Archaeology of the Soul: North American Indian Belief and Ritual* By Robert L. Hall

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An Archaeology of the Soul: North American Indian Belief and Ritual. By Robert L. Hall. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997. Illustrations, notes, references cited, index. xiv + 222 pp. \$49.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

This rich and complex book reminds me of Sir James G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, with one big difference: Hall is a distinguished practicing archaeologist. He knows about the symbolic and ceremonial life of Native America from firsthand experience with its archaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic record. Archaeologists look to the earth for their information but look down upon it in order to discover meaningful patterns. Hall surveys the Native American symbolic vocabulary with an eagle's eye, discovering connections among such diverse symbols and practices as sacred poles, calumets, atlatl weights, spirit release ceremonies, and Hopewell interaction spheres.

Hall, whose ancestry includes Mohican, Menominee and Ottawa, begins with a tribute to Omaha ethnographer Francis La Flesche for preserving physical objects and information that today provide invaluable clues to understanding Native American symbolism. La Flesche and Hall's own forebears in archaeology led the author to discover that cultural history can be "extracted from museum collections and ethnographic records." His practice of "noninvasive archaeology emphasizing Native American spirituality" led him to call his enterprise "an archaeology of the soul."

The cover of this handsomely produced volume shows a duck-headed male calumet, one of a pair used in the Pawnee and Omaha Hako and Wa'wa ceremonies. Calumet ceremonialism, Hall tells us, "is a theme around which to relate such seemingly unrelated phenomena as the Morning Star sacrifice of the Skiri Pawnees, the worship of Xipe Totec in Mesoamerica, the relationship of sacred pipes to spear throwers, and the cosmology of the Aztec calendar stone." His wider objective is to facilitate "a broader recognition of the con-

tinuous roots of many varieties of American Indian religious experience."

Each chapter tells a set of interrelated stories, sometimes drawn from a single tradition: gifts of the White Buffalo Calf maiden; spirit bundles; soul release; the Ghost Lodge. Sometimes the stories range widely across space and time: atlatls, courting flutes and calumets; mourning and adoption; calendrics; contrary behavior and the spirit world. Together, they reveal deeply rooted and widely distributed Native American ideas about individual and cosmic death and renewal. The book is particularly powerful in its reading of symbolic objects and ceremonies as texts.

At a time when Indian spirituality is sometimes reduced to facile formulations of "medicine wheel teachings," Hall provides both substance and insight. This remarkable book will serve both Native American philosophers and non-Native students of cultural history. A chart showing relationships among Woodland, Mississippian, and Mesoamerican traditions would have been a handy reference.

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