

non-enrolled/self-identified Cherokees. The point the author makes about data from self-identified Cherokees (more than half the estimated total) on matters of education, employment and income skewing the overall picture is well taken.

The most effective component of the self-definition theme, not just for Native Americanists, but for ethnicists generally, is Thornton's appreciation of the process of "negotiating ethnicity." His frequent references to blood quanta (and minimums for recognition) remind the non-Indian reader that such standards are only legally imposed in the U.S. on American Indians.

Another key concept that this work addresses, albeit indirectly, is the place of urbanization in the formation of Cherokee identity. Thornton astutely recognizes the role of "voluntary removal" among modern Cherokees, seeing it as much less negative than the forced exile of an earlier era. Although noting that this widens the Cherokee diaspora, the choice to urbanize reaffirms the basic ethnic view Cherokees hold of themselves, that their cultural pride will help them keep their traditions alive wherever they go. It would be preferable if this idea had been more developed, possibly touching on more broadly defined concepts of spirit-of-place, but it is sufficient for a book with an emphasis on the interpretation of historic and modern population trends.

In summary, Russell Thornton's *The Cherokees: A Population History* is an excellent resource for ethnic studies professionals. His use of tables is particularly helpful in illustrating changes and trends. More importantly, though, he expertly synthesizes his material, placing statistics in their proper social and historic context.

— Cynthia R. Kasee  
Miami University

**K. S. Tom. *Echoes From Old China: Life, Legends, and Lore of the Middle Kingdom*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989) 160 pp., \$23.50; \$14.95 paper.**

K. S. Tom provides insightful glimpses into a variety of aspects of Chinese culture. In the preface, the author states "this book provides a general introduction to Chinese customs, traditions and culture. It is by no means an exhaustive or definitive account of the topics that have been selected for discussion." This reviewer was initially distracted because of the wide range of topics covered and the lack of conclusiveness and interrelatedness among these topics. However, acknowledgement by the author that this book is an introduction to a variety of aspects of Chinese culture, rather than a conclusive analysis, encouraged this reader to review the book in light of the author's objective.

The prospective reader should not be discouraged from pursuing Tom's study because of the aforementioned shortcomings. Mainland China is a

difficult culture to study, let alone be conclusive about, so the author's candid acknowledgment of this limitation is encouraging. The author presents general descriptions of his findings and does not recklessly speculate about areas he is unsure about. This inconclusiveness, which was initially perceived as a weakness, seems to be a strength.

The book includes seventeen chapters that span a wide range of topics including the origin of Chinese society, Chinese names, celebrations, religious beliefs, philosophers, traditional Chinese medicine, family arrangements, afterlife, inventions, artifacts, food, education and influential subcultures. The discussion of Chinese origins provides a helpful chronological table charting Chinese society from 3,000 B.C. to the present. Over one-fourth of the book is dedicated to the origin of celebrations and festivals and religious beliefs associated with these events. A chapter dealing with Chinese philosophy describes Lao Tsu (founder of Taoism), Confucius (the foremost Chinese sage), and Mencius (the second great sage of China). The teachings of each philosopher are highlighted.

The ten-page analysis of traditional Chinese medicine is illuminating. Tom describes this complex phenomena in easily understandable terms. This analysis, a highlight of the book, is probably well written because Tom is a medical doctor. His expertise with western medicine no doubt enhances his ability to analyze the unique aspects of traditional Chinese medicine.

The book is successful as a means for conveying the ethnic experience. The archetype concept of afterlife, which is common in most ethnic group beliefs, is exemplified in the author's description of Chinese hells and their relationship with non-Chinese afterlife perspectives. As is found in many western religions, Tom says of Chinese hells, "Stories describing the frightful punishment administered in hell were often told to children to encourage them to lead virtuous lives."

The bibliography provides a diverse collection of sixty-three sources paralleling the diversity of subjects covered in the book. Similarly, the index contains 447 topical references ranging from "abacus" to the "yin and the yang" of traditional Chinese medicine. Inclusion of maps and tables is understandably limited because of the subjects covered. Tom's narratives are easy to understand even for the reader unfamiliar with China.

— Jim Schnell  
Ohio Dominican College

**Thomas Vennum, Jr. *Wild Rice and the Ojibway People*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988) ix, 358 pp., \$29.95; \$14.95 paper.**

Everything you wanted to know and lots more you never thought to ask about North American wild rice are included in this extensive tome. The plant is labelled *Zizania aquatica* in the Linnaean nomenclature; the Ojibway