

advantageous settlement. This time it was back to the Ohio Valley, with some southern Shawnee consolidating near the Tallapoosa and Alabama rivers.

From trade partners and promises to settler encroachment, Lakomäki deftly maneuvers among changing circumstances and continued Shawnee autonomy, as well as the active diplomacy and engagement with shifting alliances in the era of the so-called Seven Years War. Southern Shawnee acted as advocates for peace by means of their multiethnic kin alliances with other indigenous groups of the South. After the birth of the United States, in unity against consistent enemy invasions, the diasporic Shawnee responded to the calls for nationhood in two ways. In search of new sources of diplomatic, military, and spiritual power, some sought to unify and consolidate. Creating national identity through symbolic expressions of unity, male clan leaders assumed leadership of the nation in a hierarchical fashion, particularly among the Mekoche. As settlers pushed further west into the Ohio Valley and the Lower South, disputes and confusion about alliances (American, English, or Native) once again threatened Shawnee hegemony. Throughout this section, Lakomäki effectively utilizes primary sources directly from Shawnee archives that highlight the debates over legitimacy, centralization, and autonomy.

Lakomäki argues that one should not view the Shawnee as “passive victims of colonial violence.” Despite their factionalization, Shawnee mobilization, migrations, and political alliances with other Native groups as well as with the British demonstrate the Shawnee resolve to persevere while maintaining their kinship ties and sacred power (131). In the strongest chapter, the author discusses Wapakoneta as Shawnee people faced removal and United States settler colonialism in an era of racial ideology. The stories of the Western Shawnee in Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas certainly drive home the importance of understanding indigenous sovereignty and nation-building. Lakomäki makes it abundantly clear Americans did not understand the Shawnee or any indigenous polity as they ignored important differences between Eastern and Western Shawnee. While some Shawnee worked towards collective decision-making in a common homeland, others believed that while dispersed, the Shawnee are autonomous but also linked, connected by common threads of kinship and history. Lakomäki’s contribution is a welcome addition to the field of indigenous nation-building and studies of Native agency throughout the settler period.

*Kristalyn Marie Shefveland*  
University of Southern Indiana

**Howling for Justice: New Perspectives on Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead*.** Edited by Rebecca Tillet. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013. 248 pp. \$55.00 cloth; \$55.00 electronic.

Readers of various predilections will find much to savor in this collection, especially those fascinated by Silko’s creative range and those who continue to be astonished by her prescience. Some of the contributors to Tillet’s volume share my own notable experience of Silko’s writing. Like any fine author, she writes books that reward

multiple readings because we discover more in the text each time we read; uniquely, however, she writes books that also change with the changing world outside them. *Almanac*, in particular, always seems to be reflecting the post-*Almanac* world we happen to occupy at the present moment. It seems to contain not only previously undiscovered, but previously nonexistent, emergent dimensions. However we may account for this uncanniness—as a result of Silko’s rational or nonrational faculties—it remains a powerful feature of her work.

The first critical collection to address *Almanac* exclusively, Tillet’s volume provides a twenty-year retrospective on this inexhaustible text, one that profoundly challenged Silko to write and took her many years to complete. She frequently remarks on how she often felt driven by the project throughout those years, at times even taken over by forces beyond her control. The history of *Almanac*’s reception rewards Silko’s faith in the process. Though the novel has drawn hostile fire from numerous reviewers, a long, steady stream of increasingly insightful readers bears witness to Silko’s claim in Laura Coltelli’s interview that “people finally come along behind you and they see, they understand” (215). Such are the individuals whose essays appear in Tillet’s volume.

Tillet’s introduction and leading essay locate *Almanac* within the various contexts it evokes, which range from history, postcolonialism, social justice, and environmentalism to revolution and transnational politics. Tillet argues that the book demands well-informed readers who are willing to become judges, readers who will understand *Almanac* as a book that blurs the boundaries between textual and extra-textual worlds of global politics, corporate capitalism, and environmental destruction in order to inspire them to social activism. Affirming Tillet’s contentions, the eleven contributors’ essays, two of which are reprinted, fall into three groups. Three essays address types of trauma represented in *Almanac*; four articles investigate ways in which *Almanac* develops “allegories of apocalypse”: capitalist, environmentalist, political, and sexual (10). Four more essays explore how, despite its overtly dark and pessimistic messages, the novel promotes healing transformation and resistance from within a revisionary worldview that is accessible to those readers willing and able to track Silko’s construction of it throughout the text. The 2010 interview with Silko conducted by Laura Coltelli concludes the collection.

Common critical threads uniting the eleven contributors’ essays are Silko’s employment of structural and conceptual binaries; her construction of reader roles, particularly with reference to political alignment and activism; and the relationship of *Almanac* to its more benign predecessor, *Ceremony*. Amanda Walker Johnson’s “Silko’s *Almanac*: Engaging Marx and the Critique of Capitalism” warns readers of how easy it is to “become possessed by . . . destructive and seductive forces” of capitalism that offer pleasure and fulfillment of materialist desires at the expense of our humanity (95). However, far from being a simple Marxist analysis of *Almanac*, Johnson’s essay shows us how even as the novel incorporates Marxist principles, it also undertakes an insightful critique of Marxist practices. According to Johnson, Silko engages the reformative power of Marxism in order to reclaim it as a weapon against neoliberal forms of capitalist corruption.

Investigating another kind of reclamation in *Almanac* is Ruxandra Radulescu’s “Unearthing the Urban: City Revolutions in Silko’s *Almanac*.” Radulescu argues that

*Almanac of the Dead* is profoundly connected to *Ceremony*, not a negation of its healing message; however, *Almanac* sets up a more complex contrast between nature and the urban than *Ceremony* entertains. *Almanac* is not an anti-urban statement, but Silko's reclamation of urban space as a site where the forces of corporate capitalism may be resisted and transformed.

Two other outstanding pieces in the collection are Susan Berry Brill de Ramirez's "The Hemispheric Webs of the Sacred and Demonic in Silko's Gothic *Almanac*," and David L. Moore's "The Ground of Ethics: Arrowboy's Ecologic in *Almanac*." Typical of her other original, stylistic close analyses of complex texts, Brill de Ramirez considers Silko's development of "conversive" and "discursive" strategies to transform the gothic genre for her own purposes. Conversive strategies involve healing, grounded stories amounting to "shields" for the reader against the horrific discourse of much of the text. Silko's management of style also orchestrates reader response, allowing readers to bear witness to horror while protected from its corrosive effects. Similarly, Moore builds on his own earlier work concerning readers as witnesses. He analyzes structural features of Silko's novel that cause readers to see and to seek alternatives to the horror stories of cruelty, waste, and barbarity that are associated with all things European and prophesied to vanish. Moore discovers Silko's "ethical grammar" that constructs the reader's search.

Joni Adamson's "Indigenous Cosmopolitics and the Reemergence of the Pluriverse" provides a fitting end to the sequence of critical essays comprising this collection. Bringing together a variety of questions raised by the other contributors, Adamson focuses on Silko's seemingly prescient awareness of global developments that came after *Almanac*'s publication. She analyzes the ways in which Silko confronts western epistemological constructions that atomize and separate people from one another and from the earth, including other-than-human beings. Honing in on the lifeways represented by characters Serlo and Sterling, Adamson reveals Silko's apparent intent to articulate and promote an "indigenous cosmopolitics" (186) that will eventually end the reign of Silko's Death-Eye Dog.

*Howling for Justice* adds distinctive voices to critical conversation about *Almanac of the Dead*. It focuses our attention squarely on salient issues raised by the text since its publication in 1991, but more significantly, it clarifies key contexts for future discussion. Among these, Silko's concern with geopolitics, neoliberalism, and urban environmentalism are especially compelling. Several of Silko's remarks in the interview with Coltelli are also provocative. She comments on contemporary human beings' apparent "loss of will" to deal with the worst effects of technology (199). She speaks at length about her own creative process in ways that shed valuable light on the subject of creativity overall. She talks about painting and the interconnections between visual and verbal art. In short, there is much in Tillett's volume to educate the reader who is new to Silko's work, and also to advance the thought of readers who have followed Silko's career for more than four decades.

Catherine Rainwater  
St. Edward's University