# UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

# Title

The Stars We Know: Crow Indian Astronomy and Lifeways. By Timothy B. McCleary.

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6qk3p791

## Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 22(2)

#### ISSN

0161-6463

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**Publication Date** 

1998-03-01

## DOI

10.17953

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Powered by the <u>California Digital Library</u> University of California future disarming of a more militaristic sort. After all, our private defenses are good metaphors for the escalation of destruction that can spiral outward from what the poet calls "my tiny wars" (p. 7) in her opening poem.

Lenore Baeli Wang Rider University

**The Stars We Know: Crow Indian Astronomy and Lifeways**. By Timothy B. McCleary. Waveland Press, 1997. 127 pages. \$9.95 paper.

Originally done to teach the vitality of the Native studies/science interface at Little Big Horn College, this study of Crow cosmo vision relies on excerpts from longer interviews by elders rendered into edited English. Twenty were interviewed, with sixteen providing detailed sky lore. The book is divided into ten chapters, each focusing on a particular feature of the heavens. An initial chart of the stars and constellations with their images drawn in, like those of Greco-Roman (classical) astronomy, is especially helpful.

Using their familiar self-referent, "Our Side" astutely describes Crow continuities from triple ancestral bands known as River or Mountain (Many Lodges), from which separated the "Home Away from the Center" along the western edge, better known as "Kicked the Bellies" in honor of their first encounter with the horse. Squeezed from 38 to 2.2 million acres, the Crow Reservation now has six districts, each with a major town. Each band settled separate districts, with River Crow in the north, Mountain to the west, and the third in the southeast opposite their former range. Crow Fair, their most famous event, occurs in late August at the time of the ancient fall bison hunt. Historically, of course, this date has shifted to its present one, but this association makes clear its ultimate timing. The most curious, if not perplexing, aspects of the overall text, however, are offhand references to clanship. Crow matrilineality is never made explicit. Instead, the "mother's relatives are expected to provide for the emotional and physical needs of the individual, whereas the father's side is expected to provide the religious training and social recognition of the individual" (p. 7). In English, the father's relatives are called "clan fathers" or "clan mothers" to distinguish them from straightforward kin. Crow literary stylistics—including lengthening for emphasis, repetition, and contrast—are briefly discussed, without full recognition of their universal applications. Indeed, such fascinating comparisons lurking in these data will be indicated throughout this review.

In treating the Crow People and the Stars, various natural cycles are named. Considered egg-like spheres in their own form, stars nevertheless have emotions and thoughts like humans, along with far greater powers. Stars played a crucial role in Crow self-creation as they wandered with the Hidatsa in quest of their true home, led by the chief called No Vitals elsewhere and No Intestines herein. After four visions to locate the sacred tobacco seed that defined Crow identity, this leader found it, looking like scattered stars, below the crest of the Bighorn Mountains at the center of their world. Throughout the night, sky movements were noted, with the dark before the dawn especially holy. Similarly, celestial shifts, matched with vegetative changes, marked the course of the year, serving to introduce each star and constellation within a temporal frame. Only "Weasel Star," "Seven Stars" (Big Dipper), and "Star That Does Not Move" (North, Polaris) remain visible across the circumpolar region.

The "Bright Star" is Sirius, known to Crows as "Old Woman's Grandson," the result of a variant of the Star, in this case Sun, Husband epic. A powerful being, he was nonetheless afraid of newborn buffalo calves, a peculiarity explained by the disappearance of this star during calving season. Until flooded behind Garrison Dam, Hidatsa enshrined the rock that killed his mother to save his own life. Similarly, in Puget Sound, where Star Husband provides genesis, a rocky knoll still "proves" this epic. Crows now pray to Sirius toward the end of Peyote meetings. While the Native American Church is a pan-Indian form of worship, its sources in Caddo moon and star lore are now clear (Jay Miller, "Changing Moons: A History of Caddo Religion," *Plains Anthropologist* [1996]: 41-157, 243-259. Thus, Crows have accommodated these ancient practices to their own cultural latitudes.

"Planets, The Unpredictable Stars" considers Venus as Morning and Evening Star, and Mars as Fire or Woman Star. "The Twins and The Hand Star" concerns mythic twins, often called Thrown Away and Spring Boy in famous Hidatsa accounts. The subsequent torture of Spring Boy by Long Arm (echoing the Celtic Lug) instituted the Hidatsa tribal rite, a Sun Dance. For Crows, severing his left hand created a constellation. Curiously, the left hand is often regarded as sinister in human societies. While unexplored in this text, internal indications link Hand Star with both cruelty and women, consistent with the left elsewhere.

The Seven Stars (Big Dipper) are Seven Buffalo Bulls who chose to be immortal, although they can be nourished by slain warriors, a belief otherwise associated with the sun from Mexico to the Plains. Interestingly, their debate to become trees, rocks, water, and other less permanent phenomena echos the actual transformations of the Pleiades Boys of the Delawares.

"The Sweatlodge and the Stars" confirms this vital means of purification, taming both Red Woman and Spring Boy and used to fuse with the universe. This core institution was a gift from the Seven Buffalos, representing the ideal of brotherly love, who also provided the Sacred Pipe through the medium of their adopted daughter, the fugitive wife of Wormy Face.

"Moving Lights of the Night" are comets, meteors, and shooting stars, regarded as omens and portents. Senior elders recalled how their parents slept in their burial finery during the 1910 appearance of Halley's Comet, prepared for the death it threatened. "The Sun, The Moon, and The Milky Way" discusses Old Man and Old Woman, including the right turn at summer solstice and the left one at winter. The interplay of this pair includes "Full Moon Meetings" when the Sun Dance bundle is opened. Similarly, family bundles are opened at full (new) moons, when children jump into the air to add to their own growth and strength. Unusually, the Milky Way is merely the route taken by wife-stealing Coyote, rather than the cosmic river between the living and the dead that it is for many other tribes.

"In The Company of Stars" summarizes how, throughout everything, Crows were guided by the stars, orbits, and seasons, both as markers of time and space and as characters in momentous epics in the life and traditions of themselves as a nation. An appendix provides brief data on two unidentified constellations, while photographs nicely capture the local landscape, and line drawings convey various situations.

Augmenting classroom use of this text, Claire Farrer offers a general foreword to the topic of ethno- and archaeo-astronomy, fieldworker rapport, and holism, along with a set of questions based on the text to provoke discussion. A prologue by Dale Old Horn, liberally sprinkled with Crow terms, emphasizes the theological implications of this sky lore. He explicitly states that this project was encouraged by the elders to foster intellectual curiosity to overcome negative self-concepts, to improve self-awareness, and to ensure a vitalized Crow future. Such Native justification for allowing publications are too rare in the literature and need to be brought into the classroom, much as the Yup'ik teach that hoarded knowledge will cause the brain to rot.

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The Struggle for the Georgia Coast: An Eighteenth-Century Spanish Retrospective on Guale and Mocama. American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers, Number 75. By John E. Worth. Athens: The University of Georgia Press. 222 pages. \$23.00 paper.

This highly useful and fascinating volume reconstructs the history of Spanish-allied Indians in the provinces of Mocama and Guale along the Georgia coast in the last half of the seventeenth century. The book revolves around fifteen documents which the author discovered in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville. In 1739, Florida Governor Don Manuel de Montiano had assembled these documents as part of Spain's claims of prior occupation of Georgia to British usurpers who had colonized in 1733. England could care less about Spain's claim and was content to ignore it for the *fait accompli* of their new settlement. Fortunately for the modern-day researcher, Montiano's documentary record did more than prove Spanish occupation. These documents both outline and provide detail on Indian settlements along the Georgia coast—sea-islands and mainland—while also illustrating the reasons for the Spanish missions' decline and abandonment.

Anthropologist John E. Worth has translated the documents and filled in many of the gaps in the historical record. A hefty introduction delineates the story of the missions, while ably elucidating the external pressures faced by the Indian population. The documents themselves, then, provide the meat of the volume, each with an introduction and annotation. Dispersed throughout are extremely helpful and well-designed maps and tables.

The province of Mocama extended from the mouth of the St. Johns River north to St. Simons island, with Guale abutting from the mouth of the Altamaha river north to the Ogeechee River's mouth. In 1655 Guale had six primary mission towns and Mocama four. (Some had satellite villages.) The early history of