Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999. 394 pp., ISBN: 0-674-00066-8; $29.95 paper.

Much scholarship has been devoted in recent years to rewriting the history of the displacement of Native Americans by European settlers: a welcome trend, helping to dispel much of the myth surrounding some of the blacker chapters of American history. *Jefferson and the Indians* is not Wallace's first contribution to the field. With a background in anthropology, he has previously given us works such as *The Death and Rebirth of the Senecas,* given favorable mention by Vine Deloria Jr. in *God is Red*. Wallace's book provide's a useful supplement to the last work on the subject: Bernard W. Sheehan's *Seeds of Extinction, Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1973). The same complaint could be made about both works however: both deal too little with Jefferson himself, and tend to wander away on tangents. Although this tendency affords useful background information concerning the period, also it leaves those carrying out research on Jefferson feeling a little frustrated. I would recommend reading the two works together, as Sheehan provides the reader with a view of the philosophical underpinnings of Jefferson's which complements Wallace's discussion of the matter.

Jefferson and the Indians begins with a look at the activities of land speculators in the trans-Appalachian territories during the 1700s, and the connections that the Jefferson family had with them. Although Wallace presents evidence which seems to exonerate Jefferson from charges of direct conflict of interest in opening up western lands, he draws attention to Jefferson's life-long desire to see the American colonies expand westward across the continent. It would be this desire which would come to shape and eventually taint Jefferson's Indian policy. Jefferson was ostensibly a defender and admirer of the Indian. But his admiration was formed from a Eurocen-

tric standpoint of cultural superiority. The book's introduction includes 'Logan's Lament,' the speech delivered by Tachnnedorus, or John Logan, upon the defeat of his people by Lord Dunmore in Virginia. Jefferson presented the speech in his *Notes on the State of* Virginia as evidence of the Indians' capacity for eloquence and in large part to refute the contentions by Europeans such as the Comte de Buffon that everything in the New World, including its inhabitants, was deficient in comparison with Europe. Jefferson defended the Indians, not in and of themselves however, but in terms of their ability to achieve European 'civilization.' It was this position which would be fundamental to Jefferson's Indian policy during his years as President.

Several chapters deal with Jefferson's scientific interest in Native Americans. As an amateur linguist, he was an avid collector of Indian vocabularies. He lamented the fact that so many Indian languages had already disappeared by the late 1700s, and he thought it of great importance to obtain samples of as many existing native languages as possible. His collection included vocabularies of fifty languages when they were lost: thieves ransacked his belongings as they were being shipped from Washington back to Monticello in 1809 and the lists were thrown into the James River. This linguistic passion was not motivated by a wish to preserve native cultures. The vocabularies were collected with a sense of urgency rooted in the resignation that Indian cultures were doomed. Jefferson was mostly interested in the origins of native Americans, not the preservation of their cultures intact. Working on the thesis that American Indian and Asian languages were related, he hoped his lists would prove that native languages were more ancient than Asian. In the process this would indicate that Asian civilization stemmed from America, and not vice versa. American boosterism, not respect for native culture, was Jefferson's prime motivation in this scientific endeavor.

With the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson was presented with a new opportunity to help preserve the native inhabitants. He was uncertain as to his constitutional authority to execute such a land purchase, and proposed a constitutional amendment to legitimate the transaction. As part of the amendment, he proposed a grand scheme of land exchange. He saw the Louisiana Purchase as chance to create a giant Indian reserve west of the Mississippi, and wanted natives east of the river to exchange their lands there for new lands to its west. This plan was predicated on two assumptions. The first was that native inhabitants needed time and space in order to catch up with European levels of civilization. If protected from white encroachment and given adequate assistance, they would quickly evolve. The second assumption concerned the rate at which white settlers would populate the West. Jefferson expected a much slower westward expansion than actually occurred; believing it would take scores of generations for whites to fill the continent, when in practice it took less than four. Although removal of the Indians from the East did not occur until after his death, Jefferson's proposal certainly presaged the event.

Wallace asserts that Jefferson's policies towards native Americans were fatally flawed from the start and probably could not have produced any result other than what actually transpired during the nineteenth century. No consideration was given, for example, to the importance of maintaining native society and culture. The Indians were forced to adopt a form of civilization which was foreign to them and made them increasingly vulnerable to the depredations of white settlers. Jefferson himself, mea-

nwhile, could be downright duplicitous in his behavior. He was personally responsible for a policy which was intended to circumvent, or at least make easier, the treaty process as a means of obtaining native lands. He also instructed government agents to encourage Indians to run up sizable debts. Not having the resources to pay these debts in any other way, they would be forced to cede lands as payment. Jefferson thus espoused a policy of protecting native lands and nurturing Indian efforts towards 'civilization' while at the same time plotting to push them off the land. There were never enough Federal resources devoted to keeping settlers from encroaching on that land. When Jefferson's expansionist ambitions came into conflict with desires to protect native inhabitants, expansionism always won out in the end.

Wallace concludes by asserting that Jefferson left the legacy of an administrative apparatus which led directly to the policy of removal and the Trail of Tears. He asks whether there could have been another way and answers that, given the state of affairs at the time, Indian preservation was impossible. In the end, the only way he can at least partially exonerate Jefferson is to state that the sharing of space by different ethnic groups is a dilemma which still haunts us; a dilemma not limited to the United States, but one which is global in nature.

David Harding University of Aarhus