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The Osage Nation

 The Osage were originally from the area of today’s Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas. Forced removal and signed treaties claimed Osage lands, moving the tribes further west to Oklahoma beginning in the late 1700s. A trio of treaties, a final one signed in 1825 “stipulated that the Osages would stop raids of travelers on their land, in order to allow that the lands to be cleared for the eventual Santa Fe Trail” (“Treaty” 148).

In 1815 there were an estimated 12,000 full-blooded Osage (“Osage” *UXL*); by 1900, there were only 900 full-blooded Osage (Walker). Mixed-blood and half-blood tribal members strengthen their numbers, but when cultural traditions take on the weight of clarifying authenticity, “[t]he potential danger here lies in not allowing Osage practice to change over time” (Dennison).

With the discovery of some of the largest oil reserves in the country on their land, the Osage again were confronted with hardship and even murder in the early 1900s (“Osage murders”). Nonetheless, the Osage endure looking to past traditions, see Fig. 1, and modern ones, see Fig. 2.

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| The Inlonshka, has been an important part of Osage life since 1884. The four-day ceremony is celebrated in each Osage district every year in June. This photograph by Vince Dillon shows Osage dancers from the Grayhorse district in 1912 in front of the old roundhouse.Fig. 1 (“Osage Indian”) | https://www.osageculture.com/sites/default/files/images/83282239_3077750568901898_8685468842350084096_n_3.jpgFig. 2 ("Grayhorse”) |

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