Restoration and Reorganization period, sponsored by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier. The Cherokees and other native peoples all over North America began to rediscover their cultural heritage, which the assimilationists had tried to take away, and to reorganize their tribal leadership into vital and effective governing bodies.

Yet, unfortunately, those tribes who underwent allotment never regained the lands given to whites. Remaining Indian lands in Oklahoma are not called reservations, as most tribally held pieces are in other states. In Oklahoma, they are called Indian trust areas. Some are tribally owned and some are allotted to families or individuals. Yet, by an act of Congress in 1936, the lands are protected as reservations from outside speculators.

Termination and Urbanization

The federal government went through other phases in its policy toward Indians. In the 1950s, some politicians sought to end the special protective relationship between the government and Indian tribes (see "Menominee"). Indians in Oklahoma and elsewhere were encouraged to move to cities in order to join the economic mainstream.

Self-Determination

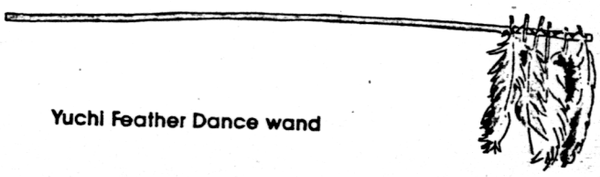
Termination as a policy failed. The Cherokees and other tribes knew that their best hope for a good life in modern times was tribal unity and cultural renewal as called for in the earlier policy of Restoration and Reorganization. Since the 1960s, the federal Indian policy has been one of tribal self-determination, which means Indian self-government and strong tribal identity.

Cherokee tribal headquarters in the West is located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Some of the western Cherokees have made money from oil and other minerals found on their lands. There is a pageant for tourists every summer with dancers, musicians, and actors. The pageant is called *The Trail of Tears*. A famous American humorist by the name of Will Rogers was a Western Cherokee. He gained a wide audience in the 1920s and 1930s through radio, movies, books, and newspapers. He was called the "cowboy philosopher."

There are still Cherokees in the East too, in North Carolina. Descendants of those who hid out in the mountains during the relocation period still live there. They presently hold rights to the picturesque Cherokee Reservation in the Great Smoky Mountains in the western part of the state. There, the Cherokees have a factory where they make crafts sold in stores all over North America, as well as a lumber business, and motels and shops for tourists. The Cherokees lease some of these businesses to whites. At the reservation in North Carolina, visitors can watch the annual pageant of the eastern Cherokees called *Unto These Hills*. Participants perform many dances, including the stunning Eagle Dance, passed down through the centuries among many generations of Cherokees. The dancers, wearing colorful costumes, move in swooping circular patterns, like birds in flight. The feathered eagle wands they wave are symbols of peace.

Yuchi

The Yuchis (pronounced *YOO-chee*) spoke a unique dialect, usually referred to simply as Yuchi. When scholars cannot find sounds or words in a native language resembling elements in other languages, they have a difficult time tracing the ancestry and ancient history of a tribe. Until recently, this was the case with the Yuchis. Now it is thought that the Yuchi dialect has some elements in common with dialects of the Siouan language family. Therefore, the Yuchis probably long ago split off from other Siouan-speaking peoples and settled in the Southeast. They lived near the Catawba Indians, another eastern Siouan people (see "Catawba").



Yuchi Feather Dance wand

The earliest known location of the Yuchis was in what is now eastern Tennessee. But, after that early period, the Yuchis came to live in territory now part of many different states, including Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. Scholars classify the Yuchis within the Southeast Culture Area (see "Southeast Indians"). That is to say, they were Woodland Indians who built villages and planted crops along river valleys. They lived by farming, hunting, fishing, and collecting wild plant foods.

The known history of the Yuchis begins with Hernando de Soto's expedition of 1539-43 that explored much of the Southeast and encountered many Indian peoples. Other Spaniards mention various bands of Yuchis under different names in their historical accounts. A Spaniard by the name of Boyano under the explorer Juan Pardo claimed to have battled and killed many Yuchis on two different occasions in the mountains of either North Carolina or Tennessee. Because the explorers' maps were inexact, it is difficult to pinpoint the locations.

In the 1630s, various Yuchi bands swept south out of the Appalachian highlands to raid Spanish settlements and missions in Florida. Some of these Yuchis settled in what was then called West Florida, in Apalachee country

In the 1670s, various Englishmen, exploring southwestward out of Virginia and the Carolinas, made contact with Yuchis still in Tennessee and North Carolina. In the following years, many Yuchi bands, probably because of pressure from hostile Shawnees, migrated from the high country, following the Savannah River toward the coastal country in Georgia. The Yuchis who had previously gone to Florida also migrated to Georgia. Both groups of Yuchis became allies of the English colonists and helped them in slave raids on mission Indians of Spanish Florida, including the Apalachees, Calusas, and Timucuas (see those tribes).

By the mid-1700s, the Spanish military and mission systems in Florida were weakened. From that period into the 1800s, many Yuchis migrated southward and settled on lands formerly held by other tribes.

The Yuchis eventually lost their tribal identity. Those who stayed in Tennessee and North Carolina merged with the Cherokees; those who settled in Georgia joined the Creeks; and those who migrated to Florida united with the Seminoles.