
The peoples of the Fourth World are the original inhabitants of lands who, through extensive colonization, now find themselves as minorities, “politically weak, economically marginal and culturally stigmatized” (p. 1). As such, they face severe problems in their attempts to promote their own development and self-determination. The eight essays in this volume are bound around one common theme: the manner in which the peoples of the Fourth World articulate politically with the state structures that wield so much power over them. These studies from Canada, Australia and Norway make a significant contribution to our knowledge of the contemporary situation of Fourth World peoples.

In his introduction to the volume, Dyck establishes the theoretical framework for the subsequent case studies, and in so doing provides the vital link so often absent in edited volumes. Particularly, Dyck discusses the Fourth World concept, defines the state structures within which Fourth World peoples must operate, and outlines the various options open to these people to represent their interests. The primary focus is on the assertion of indigenous, rather than ethnic minority, status, which allows for the invocation of legal arguments based on a “we were here first” ideology (p. 13).

The remaining papers in the volume present the various case studies in the representation of Fourth World issues to the nation-state. Case studies from Canada are provided by Harvey Feit, Sally Weaver and Doug Sanders. Feit’s previous work on the politics of hydro development in northern Quebec has provided extensive material on the issues of Native political articulation with the state, and his essay here adds a new dimension to his analysis. He examines “the historical and
cultural context” (p. 31) in which Cree opposition to the James Bay hydro project developed, arguing that this opposition developed from within the Cree communities themselves, and not as a result of the actions of outside advisors as previously thought. He concludes that the new regional structures developing out of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement were based primarily on the existing Cree socio-political structures, particularly the band councils.

Sally Weaver compares “political representivity” between the Indians of Canada and the Aborigines of Australia, and argues that the representivity of Native organizations in these two countries is largely under the control of the state, which can validate or invalidate the apparent political representivity of these indigenous groups as it sees fit. Representivity thus becomes a resource to be accessed by Fourth World organizations through lobbying and other means. As Weaver states, “representivity can be a government-assigned status rather than a Native-achieved status” (p. 116). This fact is evident in Doug Sanders essay on the Indian lobby of the British parliament, which took place from 1978 to 1982. When attempts failed to convince the Canadian government that Native people should play a role in constitutional reform, the Native leaders could have been thwarted. However, owing to the fact that Britain had signed treaties with the Indians of Canada, and that the Queen was still the head of state in Canada, an alternative avenue of lobbying was available. Despite the enormous complexity of mounting such a lobby, and the cost (estimated at 4.5 million dollars), the London lobby focused national and international attention on the issue. Although the lobby failed in the short-term to move the Indians officially into the constitutional process, it rattled the federal and provincial governments and no doubt demonstrated to them the extent to which the Indian people were prepared to go to achieve self-determination.

Two papers deal with the issue of representivity among the Australian Aborigines and the Torres Strait Islanders. Basil Samson notes that, in Australia, “the practical politics of the
representation of indigenous peoples is presently not only the politics of special status, but is also the politics of special issues” (p. 91). In other words, the Aborigines seem to have their greatest political success when a particular issue or problem (such as alcoholism) is linked to them as an indigenous people, often resulting in the formation of a commission or committee through which they can articulate their position.

The Torres Strait Islanders, according to Jeremy Beckett, learnt well “how to talk to white people” (p. 4) through the long process of coloniza-
tion and the establishment of local councils as colonial administrations. However, when modern developments resulted in increasing impover-
ishment for these people, they discovered that such communication led them nowhere, and that they lacked the experience in mobilizing public opinion behind their cause. It has become apparent to them that skills in this area are sorely needed if the state is to be responsive to their needs.

In the final case study, Robert Paine describes the successful manner in which the Saami of Norway mobilized public opinion behind their cause to stop construction of a hydro dam. Through the use of “moral opposition,” the staging of visual and public displays of Saami culture and their sincerity in protecting their future, they employed an action which Paine terms “ethnodrama.” The staging of such events is clearly an important tool for Fourth World peoples, who usually lack any direct political influence, but it is often difficult to maintain the necessary momentum. As Paine notes, “All depends on whether the ethnodrama, before it burns itself out, manages to create a furor sufficient to pressure the government” (p. 229).

Overall, this volume provides the reader with both the theoretical overview and sufficient case material to develop an understanding of the political issues facing the peoples of the Fourth World. It would be particularly valuable as a text or supplemental reading in courses on international indigenous issues, a growing area of study. Perhaps the only significant omission in the volume is the lack of comparative material from
the United States, which would be especially valuable to Canadian readers. Nonetheless, Dyck has assembled an excellent array of case studies which, when combined with his own introduction and conclusion, make a important contribution to the field.

James B. Waldram


Second Nature, which grew from a series of programs produced by Alan Herscovici for CBC Radio program, Ideas, is an important, if not unflawed, contribution to a body of literature concerned not with animal rights pro or neutral, but with the real and potential negative effects the movement has had at several strata of Canadian society. While not explicitly about Canadian Native experiences, be they Inuit, Dene or Cree, Herscovici presents some of his most powerful material in specific relation to the animal rights movement and those cultures least often thought about in Canada.

The book is divided into three principal sections covering the theory, the practice and, essentially, the future of Western society in relation to animal rights. Herscovici, originally approaching the question as a journalist, covers the basics of his subject clearly and plainly. Beginning with a statement of the problem, Herscovici attempts to delve first into the philosophical and epistemological roots of the animal rights controversy. He does this through a review of the religious and non-theoretical arguments which have been advanced as justifications by both pro- and anti-animal rights spokespersons regarding their respective positions. In this section, the author to some degree hoists both sides on their own words, especially through the device of ending the theoretical section with a portrait of the human-animal universe as recognized by the Cree. In so
doing, some of the shabbiness of both sides of the Western argument about animals is exposed.

Part Two concerns itself with the recent history and practice of both sides of the controversy, especially as they have been drawn regarding what have become quintessential issues in Canada: sealing, both Inuit and non-aboriginal, and the leghold trap debate. It is in this section, as well, that Herscovici paints portraits of recent important actors, Greenpeace, Inuit, Cree and Dene, the Canadian Government, European parliamentarians, the scientific community, and the news media. And it is in this section that some of the subtlety found in his introduction is lost. Here the author begins to identify much of the animal rights establishment as villains, while not differentiating between the callous and the ideologue, much to the detriment of his overall thesis. At times it becomes difficult to tell when individuals are being attacked because of the position they represent or because their stance on one aide or the other of the issue has not been well understood by the author.

The strongest parts of this section, by far, are Herscovici’s documentation of the “seal wars” fought off the coast of Newfoundland and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the subsections touching upon Inuit and other aboriginal peoples’ use of their resources. In contrast, his vignette about the 1983 meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species held in Botswana is somewhat embarrassing, at least to me, because of its tone and superficiality.

The final section, “Building a New Relationship with Nature,” is, for me, too preachy at times, specious (no pun intended) at others. For all Canadians, whether original citizens or, like most us, recent immigrants, the need to arrive at a new awareness of our environment, to “build a new relationship,” is critical. In this section, the author neglects to discuss, or at times mention, some of the most serious architects concerned with the future, such as Tom Regan and J. Lister-Kaye.
In some respects, Second Nature is the antidote to Farley Mowat’s Sea of Slaughter. While this may seem too damning with faint praise, by this I mean that Alan Herscovici has produced a timely and readable book. It is not and does not pretend to be scholarly. For much of its length, it provides a good and, in the Native peoples sections, excellent overview of events and effects. Because it is not scholarly in intent (although it definitely will find use in ethics, philosophy and anthropology-sociology forums and classes), the problems of weak bibliography, manner of referencing, and heavy reliance on personal communications can be absorbed. One thing that might be noted, however, is that it is my understanding that the author received some material support during the writing stage of Second Nature from the Fur Institute of Canada. If this is true, it is nowhere acknowledged in the book’s preface. Beyond this, I believe that the author has provided us with a work that deserves a wide readership from all sides of the question.

George W. Wenzel


When I heard that Driben’s 1975 thesis on an Alberta Metis colony was to be published, I had hoped that he would have taken the opportunity to update his material, or at least inform his readers of the many significant changes that have taken place in the Metis communities since he visited the colonies in 1970. However, except for the addition of an index, the thesis has been reprinted without change. The unfortunate result is that opening this book thrusts the reader into a sort of time-warp, with few indications that this is happening.

The time-warp operates on at least two levels: the theoretical framework is hopelessly out of date and irrelevant (it is based in part on a refutation of the Social Darwinist ideas of
Herbert Spencer, circa 1892), and the ethnographic description gives us a totally out-moded picture of life on the Metis colonies (or settlements as they are now called) of Alberta. These data are presented in the “ethnographic present” with absolutely no indication that anything has changed in the last fifteen years. Anyone who is unfamiliar with the current state of Metis life in Alberta is going to be left with a very distorted impression after reading this book.

For example, Driben describes the power structure as it existed in the colonies in the late 1960s, showing the almost total subjugation the residents suffered at the hands of the colony supervisor, the Metis Rehabilitation Branch and the rest of the provincial government hierarchy. We are left with the impression that there was an almost total political apathy on the part of the Metis residents. This is a disturbing picture, but the situation has changed greatly since then. For example, the Metis Rehabilitation Branch (now known as the Metis Development Branch) has been moved out of the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Municipal Affairs. This involves more than a mere name change; the Metis themselves see the move as a positive one, as part of the long range plans to have the settlements function as full-fledged municipalities. Another kind of change is evidenced by the formation of the Federation of Metis Settlements (FMS), the political voice of the settlement residents. From its inception, the FMS quickly began challenging established government policy concerning the Metis settlements, and in 1974 launched a court case against the province in an attempt to recoup oil and gas royalties which had been flowing into the provincial coffers from oil wells located on settlement lands.

It seems likely that the Metis were much more politically active than Driben reported in 1970. The Federation of Metis Settlements was formed in 1973, only three years after Driben visited the colony, and its formulation was just one manifestation of a long line of Metis political activities, many of which were going on while Driben was there. For example, The Metis Association of Alberta was operating at the time, and had as one
of its official concerns the welfare of the settlement residents. Driben does not mention the organization once.

There are other problems with this work besides the fact that time has passed it by. The treatment of Metis history in the province of Alberta is one example. Although the bulk of the ethnography concerns itself with life on a Metis colony, there is no indication of why these colonies exist, or how they came to be. Instead, Driben gives us a quick rehash of Metis history ending with the 1885 Rebellion. He then begins to describe Metis colony life in 1970 as if nothing of import had happened in the intervening eighty-five years, other than noting that the Metis Betterment Act was passed in 1938, and the first colonies opened in 1940. But where did the decision to open the Metis colonies come from? What were the social conditions that led to this? Driben does not seem to think that these are important questions. Nowhere is there any mention of the Ewing Commission, or why it was set up, or why it eventually recommended the establishment of the Metis colonies. Neither is there any mention of early Metis leaders like Brady, Norris or Dion, whose activities formed such an important part of the entire proceedings.

If Driben ignores history when he discusses the settlements, he lives history in his theoretical approach. Here we are carried all the way back to the nineteenth century when Social Darwinism was in flower. Incredibly, Driben seriously quotes an 1893 suggestion of Herbert Spencer’s that interracial miscegenation would undoubtedly lead to physiological misfits. Ignoring the fact that physical anthropologists have long since abandoned such ideas as completely unfounded, Driben then considers whether the Metis could be characterized as “sociologically maladapted” because of miscegenation. Near the end of his thesis, Driben indicates that he does not think that they can be, but he cautions us that his data cannot completely refute Spencer’s hypothesis. It is unbelievable that Driben should give these ideas any credibility in this day and age, or that he does not at least discuss the negative assessment of Social Darwinism held by the majority of social scientists today.
Driben’s inappropriate and outmoded theoretical perspective is matched by his apparent lack of awareness of other research and writing being done at the time. He seems to think no one has done research on the Metis colonies previously—”They have been ignored,” he tells us, more than once. Granted, in 1970, research on the Metis had not yet become the mini-industry it is today, but Driben overlooks such basic material as Hatt’s 1969 thesis on a sister colony near Lac-la-Biche, or Spaulding’s 1970 thesis on the Metis of Ile-a-la-Crosse in Saskatchewan. This adds to the impression that Driben is writing in some sort of vacuum.

Driben’s thesis does provide those interested in the political activities of the Metis with a useful basis for comparison with the contemporary situation. His research was carried out at a significant time in the Metis’ political development. They were just beginning to find their voice on the provincial and national levels with the reformulation of the Metis Association of Alberta, but they had not yet formulated an effective organization that could speak to the problems of the Metis living on the colonies. However, the significance of all this is likely to be lost on the reader, since Driben’s framework of analysis does not allow him to place his material in any kind of wider perspective, but leaves the Metis frozen in some sort of never-never land untouched by time or by any events outside the confines of their colony.

At the very least, this book needs an introductory chapter delineating some of the political activities that were already under way during Driben’s stay, as well as some of the fundamental changes that have occurred since 1970. But even with such an addition, this work would still be saddled with its woefully inadequate historical treatment, and its inept and irrelevant theoretical orientation. It is difficult to see why this book was published. It is doomed to occupy a very low place on the bookshelves devoted to Metis literature and analysis.

Joe Sawchuk
REFERENCES CITED
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