

saying that the Five Nations came to the conclusion that French expansionism, carried out if not necessarily motivated by the fur trade, threatened the existence of the Iroquois. Dr. Brandão's overall interpretation would have been more unified and comprehensive had he reconciled his two viewpoints on Iroquois motivation – for captives and for preservation – into a single thesis.

However, perhaps he realized that construction of a grand, unified interpretation would merely invite critical examinations by future graduate students.

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David T. McNab (editor). *Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Studies in Canadian Ethnohistory*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press, 1998, 332 pp.

Review by Neal McLeod, Department of Indian Studies, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College.

*Earth, Water, Air and Fire*, edited by David T. McNabb, emerges from a conference of the same name organized by Nin.D. Waab.Jig [those who are looking around] and Wilfred Laurier University. McNabb notes that the title of the book and the conference reflect the holistic world view of Aboriginal people (p. 2). The seventeen essays contained in the book cover a vast array of topics, including Aboriginal perspectives and historical essays concerning the Mikmaq, Ontario and other regions. A multi-layered discussion of self-government and treaties permeates the book. The strength of the book is that it links present circumstances to past historical events.

In an interdisciplinary manner, the book incorporates Aboriginal perspectives (especially Chapters 1 and 2), and written records in the spirit of ethnohistory to achieve dynamic results. Also, the pieces provide links between contemporary circumstances with past events and, in particular, understanding of treaties. For instance, Rhonda Telford (Chapter 4) notes the existence of Anishinabe subsurface or submarine rights through treaties or other agreements with the Crown (p. 65), which contradicts the widespread notion of treaties as surrenders. Such perspectives offered by Telford, along with descriptions of Aboriginal land use (pieces by David McNabb, Theresa Redmond, Chapter 2) "upstream" other sources. The thorough discussion of treaties throughout the book is especially timely given the recent Delgamuukw decision. Unfortunately, the Aboriginal perspectives found in the book are rather vague such as Dean Jacob's use of the terms *holistic* (p. 17) and *circle of life* (p. 18).

One of perennial issues of Aboriginal history is the intersection of the

Aboriginal world and the European one. Jim Miller's piece on Simpson Brigham discusses the play between the traditional Aboriginal world and the challenges of contemporary life. According to Miller, Brigham was caught between helping his people while at the same time not giving his community the perception that he had gone over to the other side (p. 90). Olive Patricia Dickason (Chapter 2) also notes the challenge of modernity with the interaction of ancient tradition and contemporary forces (p. 129). Bruce W. Hodgins (Chapter 12) speaks of the socio-economic trauma and growing conflict of values (p. 24). Despite the massive changes and challenges that Aboriginal people face, there is still the possibility of change through the incorporation of Aboriginal perspectives and a rethinking of conventional historical narratives.

Another central issue discussed in the book is the rethinking of the notion of settlement, and in particular the colonial history of southern Ontario and the Maritimes. E. Reginald Good (Chapter 9) in her piece explores the history of where the conference actually took place which she speaks of as the "myth of the pioneers" (p. 147). Good attacks the notion of progress that is often used to describe the founding of Canada. Sidney L. Harris refers to the foundational myth that Canada was settled in a peaceful manner. Janet Chute in her discussion of the Mikmaq (Chapter 6) follows a similar line of argument. All told, the writers of the book challenge the presumptions of the foundations of this country and hope to in turn construct alternative national discourses reminiscent of the work of Noel Dyck and John Tobias.

A common strand throughout the book is identity and cultural representations. Heather Rollason (Chapter 13) in her thoughtful piece notes the differences between Samuel Hearne's depictions of Dene women in his field notes and those in his published pieces. Also, Elizabeth Graham discusses the impact of residential schools (Chapter 12) upon collective memory.

At points, the book does live up to its promise of being ethnohistorical. However, there is not a single reference to the pioneering work of William Fenton in ethnohistory. Also, there is a paucity of Aboriginal perspectives, which would be an essential aspect of constructing Canadian ethnohistory. If Fenton's notion of upstreaming has been more thoroughly applied throughout the book, the scope of the written records could have been greatly expanded. Nonetheless, on the whole, there is much discussion of timely issues, and the book is a welcome resource for discussion and reference.

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