

a synthesis which helps to explain Canada's rural past not as a period that was put aside in favour of progress but one from which modern Canada continues to emerge, and which still contributes to its changing personality.

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*Scalping and Torture: Warfare Practices Among North American Indians.* Ohsweken: Iroqrafts Reprints, 1985. Pp. 225; *Hair Pipes in Plains Indian Adornment*, by J.C. Ewers. Ohsweken: Iroqrafts Reprints, 1985. Pp. 85.

*Scalping and Torture* reprints three essays that have become classics: Georg Friederici's "Scalping in America," Gabriel Nadeau's "Indian Scalping Technique in Different Tribes," and Nathaniel Knowles's "The Torture of Captives by the Indians of Eastern North America." Friederici's essay is an extract from his doctoral dissertation, first published in German in 1906; Nadeau's was read before the seventeenth annual meeting of the American Association of the History of Medicine in 1941; and Knowles's first appeared in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 82, no. 2 (March 1940). Nadeau's essay is descriptive and technical in nature.

Since neither scalping nor torture were unique to Amerindians—indeed, both were practiced in Europe—the question immediately arises as to why so much attention has been paid to these phenomena in the Americas. Few European histories include Herodotus's description of Scythian scalping, published in 1502; neither do they dwell on the techniques of torture that were an integral part of institutional judicial systems until well into the eighteenth century. But in the Americas, until recently, colonial histories have routinely included the subject of Amerindian torture, some of them going into grisly detail. The answer lies partly in the fact that in Europe scalping had been an ancient practice in a limited region and had fallen into disuse; it was not remembered or even known except to the élite few who read Herodotus. As for torture, it was practiced in the Americas in a different context than in Europe, which Europeans found horrifying. In their view, the image of Amerindians as brutal savages, living without faith, law or king was reinforced by detailed accounts of their bloodier practices. Seventeenth-century Europeans, in the process of establishing nation-states, regarded torture as necessary for the administration of law and order, using fear to inspire respect among their citizens for state authority, personified by the king. Indirectly, it was also used for the maintenance of the faith. Most Amerindians who practiced torture belonged to non-state societies, and used it against outside enemies, thus demonstrating their community solidarity and superiority over hostile outside forces. One of the most ironic passages in the *Jesuit Relations* describes Father Jean-Paul Mercier's attempt to explain that the French use of torture was "civilized," while that of the Hurons was "savage."

Europeans *wanted* to believe in Amerindian savagery; for one thing, it justified (at least in their own eyes) their colonization of the Americas. Judicial torture was a feature of colonial government in the Americas, and was practiced by all the colonizing powers.

Friederici says that while scalping was being practiced in North America when Europeans arrived, it was on a regional basis. With the introduction of firearms and the steel knife, and later of bounties paid by Europeans, its practice became nearly universal north of Mexico, except for certain points on the Pacific slope and among the Inuit and Athapascans of the north and northwest. Scalps were only one of the war trophies that could be taken from the human body, on the principle that the part represented the whole. The "whole," incidentally, included not only the body but also the soul. Originally, only the enemy could be scalped; Amerindians who had been executed by their own people were not treated in this way. That scalp trophies evolved from head trophies is indicated by Native pictographs, in which scalped bodies are represented as headless. Friederici points to the Puritans of New England as being the first to pay bounties, in 1637—in that case for heads, as scalping was not yet practiced in that region. Later, as the colonial wars dispersed populations, the custom appeared in the Caribbean and parts of South America. Interestingly enough, it was never adopted by the Inuit, even though they often suffered that fate at the hands of neighbouring Algonquians.

Scalping was also part of the torture complex. Nathaniel Knowles discerns three distinct patterns of behaviour in this regard. In the "Old Southeastern Pattern," extending from Texas to the Atlantic seaboard, scalps or heads were used as sacrificial offerings to the supernatural; acquiring these trophies was more important than bringing back captives. Torturing was generally absent, except on the lower Mississippi, where it was strongly oriented toward religion, and took the form of attaching the victim to a frame. When captives were tortured, they were often ceremoniously scalped beforehand. Cannibalism was not a part of this tradition, except among southern Caddoans. Along this region's Atlantic seaboard, there were no reports of torture until long after the European intrusion—in some cases as long as two centuries later. When it did finally appear, it seems to have been as a retaliatory measure.

The "Intrusive Southeastern Pattern," which is roughly identified with the Muskogean peoples, also emphasized the value of scalps over that of prisoners. This importance was connected with placating the ghosts of the dead, and scalps were given to mourning relatives rather than being offered to the supernatural. Also, as with the Atlantic coast, there is no indication of torture until two hundred years after European contact, and when it does appear, it is in the European pole and stake pattern. There may also have been some Iroquois influence.

The "Iroquois Pattern" placed a different value on scalps than those we have been considering. For the Iroquois, they were badges of merit, proofs of valour. However, captives were more important; those who were not tortured were adopted, a practice the Iroquois carried further than any other eastern tribe. Their platform torture appears to have been derived from human sacrifice to the Sun or War God, and became more intensive with the upsurge of war during the colonial period. Neighbouring Algonquians borrowed some of its practices.

The conclusion to be drawn from these essays is that while the origins of Amerindian scalping and torture are lost in the mists of time, these practices were greatly encouraged and developed by the advent of Europeans. This occurred because of the introduced technology, but also because of European example and war policies.

The "hair pipes" of J.C. Ewer's survey are the long, tapering shell beads, also called "hair bobs," which became so popular among Plains Amerindians during the nineteenth century. Prehistorically, tubular ornaments had been made by Eastern Woodlands Amerindians from shell, bone, stone, and copper, and had been worn as hair ornaments, as well as ear pendants, chokers, and necklaces. Specimens have been recovered archaeologically that date back four thousand years. European traders sought to improve on the Native product, and began offering tapering, cylindrical beads made of glass, brass and silver. However, the glass proved fragile, while the silver was expensive; little is known of the brass beads, which are very rare. It was not until some enterprising colonists in New Jersey mechanized Amerindian techniques for producing the beads from conch shells that they became available in the quantity and quality that made them acceptable for a widening trade during the nineteenth century. Plains Amerindians, in particular, favoured them for breastplates, which became more and more elaborate. Hair pipe ornaments in one form or another became characteristic of Plains Amerindian dress. In other words, industrialization combined with a traditional craft to enhance an Amerindian fashion that is still with us.

Iroqrafts are to be congratulated for their initiative in making such studies easily available.

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*Out of the Background: Readings on Canadian Native History*, edited by R. Fisher and K. Coates. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1988. Pp. 294.

This reader is part of an inexpensive series, "New Canadian Readings," designed to provide the student with a cross-section of scholarly writings in Canadian history. Its fourteen articles cover Canadian Indian history in various