

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Tangled Webs of History; Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries*, by Dianne Newell. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. 303 pp. Illus., maps. \$40.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

In the early 1970s I acted for eight Indians from Cowichan who were charged under the Fisheries Act. The legal argument I used was based on the Terms of Union of British Columbia and Canada. The argument was one developed by Andrew Paull, the Squamish Indian leader who had been involved with the Native Brotherhood, the Indian fisherman's organization. He used the argument to try to block the extension of income taxation to Indian fishermen. The Indian people at Cowichan, with a couple of exceptions, accepted my work on their behalf with some fatalism. Getting charged under the Fisheries Act was a common experience, as predictable as the salmon runs themselves — some years lots of arrests, other years not so many.

I argued that the Indian fishery should be given priority over commercial and sports fishing — an approach taken from judicial decisions in the US Pacific Northwest. Representatives of the Department of Fisheries testified about their competence to manage the fishery, in effect asking the court to trust their skill. I had feared that they would say the opposite — that the offshore commercial fishery was indiscriminate in terms of its impact on particular runs. As a result conservation restrictions would often have to be imposed at the last minute on the river fisheries, largely Indian, because only when the salmon were starting up the rivers and streams could anyone tell the extent to which the run had been depleted by the offshore commercial and sports fisheries. If Fisheries officers had testified along such lines, then a court would have been unable to order Fisheries to give priority to the Indian river fishery without also ordering the restructuring of the industry.

At the trial the Indians were convicted. I took the case through to the Supreme Court of Canada because I felt the testimony by Fisheries officers was the most favourable we could hope to get for such a case. But that was 1979 and the *Jack* case was just another in a long series of Indian fishing cases where the government and the Fisheries Act won. A new judge on the Supreme Court of Canada, Brian Dickson, wrote a concurring judgment which was mainly a dissent, upholding rights but saying that conservation seemed to support the application of the Fisheries Act in the particular case. Later, as Chief Justice, Brian Dickson quoted from his judgment in the *Jack* case in the *Sparrow* decision, the first decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to uphold aboriginal rights to fish, and the first decision to interpret the constitutional provision on aboriginal and treaty rights that, after disputes, became part of our basic law in 1982.

The *Jack* case is just one of many modern test cases on Indian harvesting rights in British Columbia. Professor Dianne Newell later testified in the *Reid* case, where an Indian claim to commercial harvesting of herring roe or spawn on kelp was dismissed perfunctorily. Other British Columbia cases on commercial fishing rights are to be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada in the 1995-96 term.

While the *Jack* case was not unique, it had for me the set of elements which ran through all the west coast Indian fishing disputes: the history of Indian political struggle (for I was a staff lawyer for the Union of BC Indian Chiefs using an argument developed by Andrew Paull, the Indian leader who functioned for many years as an "unlicensed lawyer"); the common patterns of arrests and the continuation of fishing by communities in spite of convictions; the ability to call impressive expert evidence on the historical character of the issues that would, in the end, not impress any of the judges involved in the case; the sense that the United States was ahead of us in recognizing rights in this area and the hope that the attitudes of Canadian judges would also come around; and the nagging sense that the Department of Fisheries would always win because the complexity of the management issues would always trump the temptation of judges to do good.

The court cases each tried to pull together the strands of fisheries law and policy in British Columbia as they involved Indians and Indian communities. The need for litigation reflected the marginality of the issues in the eyes of the politicians. The cases were asking for some kind of balance or prioritization between the rights of different user groups. Dianne Newell of the history department at UBC has

attempted to pull all the strands together in *Tangled Webs of History*. The title is a warning. Readers will not find the book light reading.

The account runs as follows. For thousands of years fishing was an activity central to Indian economies and culture. Indian populations declined, settler populations grew, and settlers established what Newell calls the "industrial fishery." The pattern of small multiple reserves for individual Indian communities was based on an assumption that Indians would continue to fish.

In 1888 licensing was introduced for the industrial fishery and a subsistence fishery was recognized for Indians. This was the "invention" of an Indian right or tradition, the real significance of which was the exclusion of Indians from traditional rights in the commercial or industrial fishery. In the industrial fishery they were to be subject to the full regulatory regime of the Fisheries Act and regulations which regulated the fishery in the interests of the fish processing companies. Indians had a limited presence in the fleet and a substantial presence in the shore work at canneries, and Indian agents cooperated with the canneries in promoting Indian labour in the industry.

The industry declined during the Depression and boomed during the Second World War. After the war there were attempts to rationalize the industry economically, which led to the licence limitation program, the "Davis Plan" of 1968. But the response to licence limitation was a radical increase in investment in equipment. The changes protected the processing companies and their increasingly centralized operations. They further excluded Indians from the industrial fishery, limited their subsistence fishery, and moved the cannery jobs away from the sites of seasonal Indian labour. It was occasionally suggested that Indians had a future in the forest industry, but not in fishing — with the exception of a small number of prosperous Indian fishermen often linked to canneries.

Special Indian programs, such as the Indian Fishermen's Assistance Program, the A-1 Indian licence, the Indian Fishermen's Emergency Assistance Program, and the take-over of BC Packers' gillnet fleet in 1980, meant that the Indian portion of the fleet declined more slowly than the fleet as a whole. In the postwar period Indians only retained a strong presence in the salmon fishery in the northern district.

The Indian role in the fishery was considered sympathetically, for the first time, in the Pearse Commission report of 1981. The context of land claims and the legal developments in Washington state led the federal government to change its historic view of the Indian subsistence fishery and to begin to recognize limited commercial rights. The

Supreme Court of Canada endorsed a shift to a "rights" position in the 1990 *Sparrow* decision, though subsequent judicial decisions have denied commercial rights.

The story is left hanging, as it had to be. At the time of writing there would have been little or no information on the actual implementation of the *Sparrow* decision. Cases are still in the courts on commercial rights. The impact of the treaty process in British Columbia on Indian fisheries is still in the future.

The book brings together this story in great detail. It attempts introductory overviews at the start of each chapter, as well as having an introduction and a conclusion. But one is still puzzled by a number of parts of the account.

While the Indian struggle for rights is noted throughout the book, the account is surprisingly faceless. There are only brief references to Andrew Paull, Peter Kelly, Bill Mussell, George Manuel, and Noll Derriksan. There is almost nothing on the Native Brotherhood and its links with the Liberal party which helped it get the Indian Fishermen's Assistance Program for its members (who were the economic élite in the Indian part of the fishery). There is nothing on the Native Brotherhood's troubled relationship with the United Fishermen's and Allied Workers Union. There is almost nothing on the UFAWU and only side references to strikes in the industry. There is nothing on the modern organization of litigation on fishing rights.

The book is focused on the regulatory regime under the federal Fisheries Act. The Department of Fisheries is consistently described as incompetent and callous. This account is also faceless. While the "invention" of the Indian subsistence fishery is described in such a way as to suggest that it was a deliberate federal strategy, there is no naming of the possible architects of the policy. Professor Newell notes a parallel to regulations in Ontario which limited fishing to subsistence (and such a limitation occurs in the Natural Resources Transfer Agreements of 1930). We cannot even be sure whether the policy was invented for British Columbia by federal or provincial officials. A pattern developed of allowing provincial officials to draft the regulations under the federal Fisheries Act which applied to individual provinces. These provincially drafted regulations would be enacted under the sweeping federal jurisdiction over "Sea Coast and Inland Fisheries." So the inventors of the policy could be federal or provincial. The dynamics of federal-provincial relations on such issues are not alluded to (and are a particularly hidden part of the story for lawyers, legislators, policy analysts, and historians). We are given a

glimpse of the figure behind the litigation which ruled that the federal government could not regulate canneries, but I got no sense of the impact of that decision on management patterns. According to Newell, the federal government favoured the processors before and after the decision.

Another difficult area is the relationship between the two federal relevant departments — Indian Affairs, on the one hand, and Fisheries, on the other. Over the years, Fisheries had more clout within the federal government than Indian Affairs, with the result that the lawyers for the Department of Justice supported Fisheries in court and opposed Indian rights arguments. The federal government ignored arguments from Indians in British Columbia that it had a conflict of interest on matters like Indian fishing rights. For a number of years there was an attempt to formulate a federal Indian fishing policy. This is another hidden part of the story, but one which is part of the explanation of why Fisheries was vulnerable in the *Sparrow* case. The only federal Indian fishing policy around was a prioritization statement of Jack Davis, as federal Minister of Fisheries, which was clearly not being followed in the actual management of the resource. The *Sparrow* decision, stripped of rhetoric, imposed Davis' prioritization statement on a management system that was ignoring it. Officials may have dismissed it as unworkable. It would be interesting to know more of Jack Davis' role, the origins of his prioritization statement, and the story of internal resistance to its implementation. But that would have taken the kind of protracted Ottawa-based research project that produced Sally Weaver's study of the Chretien-Trudeau white paper on Indian policy of 1969. This again shows the complexity of the story Professor Newell has set out to tell.

Newell describes the fishery as the most highly regulated in the world, though she cites no material for that proposition. Perhaps she regards it, as well, as the most incompetently regulated fishery in the world. The overcapitalization of the industry and its relationship to patterns of regulation is reasonably well known and is described in detail in the book. The description brings a familiar sense of despair: how could we have been so stupid to increase costs of harvesting at the same time we were reducing the harvest? The book does not give us a real sense of why this happened, or, to put it another way, what the realistic regulatory alternatives were. She is critical of "tragedy of the commons" concerns, but also suggests that in the end that kind of concern did not dictate the system of management. These management questions are difficult and complex, a fact which has served

to sustain government's monopoly on management. I came away from the book without a clear sense of what Peter Pearse had recommended in his 1981 report. Did Pearse really come to grips with the management problems of the industry? The reader is left to suspect that he did not.

The *Sparrow* decision was a radical departure from previous judicial decisions on aboriginal and treaty rights. The decision was justified as an interpretation of section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982, but the Supreme Court of Canada had already begun to turn around on Indian rights issues before *Sparrow*. The sweeping, uncautious character of the judgment can be understood, in part at least, on the basis that it was the final legacy, the "swan song," of the two strongest members of the court, Chief Justice Brian Dickson and Madam Justice Bertha Wilson, both of whom were retiring. Like the judgment of Emmett Hall in the 1973 Nishga land claims decision, it was the effort of retiring judges to leave a legacy that redressed at least some part of the black history of our marginalization of Indian peoples. The decision, as well as the new approach to land claims (and perhaps also any response to the Pearse report), has led to the need for fishing agreements with individual bands or tribal councils — a complex and detailed task that seems to be underway, with the federal government maintaining a basic management role to balance interests and promote conservation. I find it hard to see how this complex process of reaching agreements with individual Indian communities will work itself out in practice. Will some Indian fisheries commission with legal authority emerge to broker claims between Indian communities? Even that is a move away from the focus on individual communities which is central to aboriginal rights. But these issues are for a different book.

I came to Professor Newell's book with high hopes for the final answers on all sorts of questions, from aboriginal politics to federal-provincial relations. My utopian dreams should not detract from the fact that this is the first book to give us a detailed historical analysis of an extremely complicated story. It has moved us ahead. I hope Professor Newell continues her work in this field.

*To the Charlottes: George Dawson's 1878 Survey of the Queen Charlotte Islands*, edited by Douglas Cole and Bradley Lockner. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1993. 192 pp. Illus. \$19.95 paper.

Born in Pictou, Nova Scotia, in 1849, George Mercer Dawson grew up in a stimulating intellectual setting. William Dawson, his father, was an eminent Dalhousie geologist and confidant of Darwin's mentor, Charles Lyell. After attending McGill and graduating from the Royal School of Mines in London (where he studied under Thomas Henry Huxley), George Dawson got a job in 1875 with the Geological Survey of Canada. He spent four summers in British Columbia; this book concerns his last field season when, aged twenty-eight, he undertook the first scientific survey of the Queen Charlotte Islands. This elegant volume contains Dawson's 1878 journal and his ethnological essay "On the Haida," first published in 1880.

Editors Douglas Cole and Bradley Lockner call Dawson "one of the most remarkable field scientists of the nineteenth century." It is humbling to read the journal of a man with such a range of interests and such an appetite for hard work. Dawson was a one-man university expedition: he had a good practical understanding — and often an advanced knowledge — of geology and geography (hydrology, glaciology, cartography, topography, and photography), palaeontology, zoology, ethnology (including linguistics and archaeology), and botany.

Dawson arrived in Victoria in May 1878 and left for the Charlottes shortly afterwards on the Nanaimo schooner *Wanderer* ("wide of beam and good for the storage of booty"). Dawson couldn't stop geologizing even when the *Wanderer's* anchor dragged one stormy night at Skincuttle Inlet, endangering the vessel and its terrified occupants. He steadied his pen and described the predicament: "The holding ground cannot be good, & is probably a fine sandy gravel of granitic fragments." Huxley and Darwin provide an intellectual context. "There would seem to be much activity in the struggle for existence down below," he wrote near Bella Bella after pulling up his fishing line to find a starfish attached to the remains of a dogfish, which — after taking the hook — had been decapitated by a shark. The very next day, as though to assert his own position in the struggle, he levelled his rifle and shot a deer attempting to swim across a coastal inlet. The most remarkable moment came at the end of September, when the *Wanderer* put into Bull Harbour on Hope Island during a gale. Alone, Dawson walked over to Roller Bay on the exposed Pacific coast. "The impressive Sound of the Stones & pebbles along the whole beach

roaring as the broken waves retired brought vividly before one the process of the destruction of continents, & the immense sum of work which must be performed by an agent like this eternally busy. The scene almost realized that of a dream of great waves breaking on a beach, which I remember once to have had." This passage is both the private confession of a young man confronting his essential solitude and — in its acknowledgment of the great passage of time required for geological or evolutionary change — an attempt to grapple with the huge intellectual impact of Darwin. In both ways it is reminiscent of the cliff scene in Thomas Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873).

Dawson's other intellectual debt was, perhaps surprisingly, an indigenous one. Like botanist Robert Brown in the previous decade, Dawson relied on the Hudson's Bay Company literate élite, consisting of officers who, in the absence of any kind of university structure in the new province, formed the intelligentsia.<sup>1</sup> Tolmie, McKay, Anderson, Finlayson, and others took Dawson into their homes and shared fifty years' worth of accumulated knowledge of natural and human history. Dawson drew on their skill and resources, and in places the journal almost amounts to a series of interviews with them and a recapitulation of their data. He employed vocabularies compiled by Tolmie and Work and an orthography dating from the 1820s. On his previous visits he had mastered the Chinook jargon, an artifact of the company's spatial extension. "Aukook Illaghie King George Illaghie, Aukutty Bostons tike Kapsallow fie mika Klooshnaanich," he was told at Masset. (This country is English; long ago Americans wanted to steal. Be careful).

With the aid of Hudson's Bay Company censuses Dawson calculated an "alarmingly rapid decrease of the Haida people during the century," which he attributed to the prevalence of heart disease, blindness, smallpox, and prostitution. An old man remembered a time when the beach at Skidegate had been too short to launch all the village's canoes at once, and a Bella Bella told him that "the Indians are always talking among themselves about their decrease in number. Long ago he says they were like the trees, in great numbers everywhere." "Klunas saghalie tyee Mamook," Ham-chit concluded: "I don't know what God is doing." Advocates of the "Enrichment thesis" might ponder this.

The old company hands also gave Dawson a sensitivity to history and place that was generally lacking in the works of the American

<sup>1</sup> See Robert Brown, "The Present State of Science on the North-Western Slopes of the Rocky Mountains," *Journal of Travel and Natural History* 3:1 (1868), 173-80.

professional ethnographers who followed him. Dawson's writing contains a large amount of contemporary British Columbia that was absent in the (published) work of Boas and his students. The history of British Columbia had not yet been written in 1878, but Dawson learned it firsthand by talking to early settlers and reading such texts as Dixon's *Voyage Round the World*. His account of the Haida contains almost as much history as ethnography. He wanted to know what had happened to the Haida since contact, and he possessed the curiosity and resources to find out; he was more interested in understanding the demographic catastrophe that had befallen them than reconstructing the totality of their pre contact past.

Dawson's work shows a consistent concern with historical and cultural change. From Edensaw he obtained the "first account of these Indians by the Whites," and others recalled their naivety for hanging trade axes and gun flints around their necks as ornaments. "Aukutty Indians dam-fools," they said. He was intrigued by adaptations to British material culture: the replacement of slate fish knives and nephrite adze blades with steel knives and files; of bone spear and harpoon tips with iron tips; of bone halibut hooks with iron facsimiles. He noted the carving of argillite for commercial sale, and he speculated that the traditional Haida proficiency in copperwork had made for a natural transition to working silver and iron. The introduction of "spurious coppers" by traders had reduced the value of the originals. He traced the arrival of Hudson's Bay Company blankets as the "currency of the coast," and he recorded adaptations everywhere, including the addition of sails to canoes and the baking of bread by Native women. Dawson's essay on the Haida, therefore, possesses a discrete historical context and integrity, for which there was really no need for the editors to apologize, or to treat with "caution" as the product of a "prejudiced" and "necessarily imperfect" cultural understanding. As a piece of historical writing the essay stands on its own.

Moreover, while the editors do justice to the historical context in the footnotes, they don't transfer this information to the introduction: they haven't made the most of the data they have uncovered. "On the Haida" could have been annotated as thoroughly as the journal, and there was no need to omit Dawson's ten-day exploration of Quatsino Sound. Darwin's influence could have been traced more rigorously. The index is thorough, but the listing of only the chiefs seems élitist. The lack of a good map is a real hindrance to finding one's way around the text, and Dawson's original sketches are not reproduced.

Cole, Lockner, and UBC Press should, however, be commended for locating and publishing these valuable accounts by British Columbia's first notable Darwinian. This volume marks the beginning of the serious study of the history of science in British Columbia.

*Courtenay, BC*

RICHARD MACKIE

*Kwakwaka'wakw Settlements, 1775-1920: A Geographical Analysis and Gazetteer*, by Robert Galois. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994. xviii, 470 pp. Maps, tables. \$60.00 cloth.

This book is a terribly important work. As the sub-title indicates, it is made up of two parts, a geographical analysis and a gazetteer. The latter is modestly described as "a research tool, guiding others to, and facilitating the use of, available documentary sources" (77). It certainly is that, but it is much more.

As a research tool and reference work, the gazetteer is not meant to be a good read, but any researcher or writer trying to make sense of the bewildering complexity of Central Coast groups, locations, and names will find it indispensable. Galois, building on Franz Boas's 1934 *Geography of the Kwakiutl* and Wilson Duff's ninety-five page manuscript of the 1950s, has added elaborations that almost exhaust available sources on Kwakiutl sites and their history up until the recommendations of the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission or about 1920. The information provided in the gazetteer deserves consideration, but first something about the "geographic analysis" portion.

While the great majority of this fat book is given over to the gazetteer (and appendices), no one interested in the history of the Kwakiutl, of Northwest Coast peoples, or of Native-White contact should treat it as only that. The earlier essay, "Kwakwaka'wakw Settlement Patterns, 1775-1920" (19-74), constitutes a model of interpretation of the data provided in the gazetteer. Galois begins with an overview of his sources, the structure of the later gazetteer, some brief ethnological observations on social structures, especially the numaym and tribe, and the seasonal cycle, before launching on his interpretation of the effects of 145 years of the contact process upon territorial patterns. He deals with trade, demographic disaster (disease and warfare) and its consequences to tribes (divisions and amalgamations), to tribal territories, to settlement patterns, such as altered criteria for winter village sites, and, of course, the loss of land to Whites.

This historical-geographical interpretation rests on the data provided in the gazetteer, which, with its own introduction, makes up pages 77 to 380 of the book. A description of the information deserves to be given here so that the basis — and usefulness — of the book is clear. The Gilford Island tribes, the first of Galois's eight regional groupings, may serve as a sample. A brief introduction to the five tribes within the Gilford Island region summarizes the history of the groups, and the internal adjustments which occurred during the contact era, largely as a result of a Bella Coola attack, about 1856, on the Kwiksootainuk village of Gwayasdums. A description of reserve history (G.M. Sproat's provisional allocations of 1879, Peter O'Reilly's alterations of 1886, and the changes made by the McKenna-McBride Commission) is followed by two paragraphs on demographic history (Galois's extensive discussion in the introduction and his appendix on Kwakiutl population data allows him to limit his regional discussion to two paragraphs and a table). Then the tribes are dealt with one by one: little is known about the Dlidliget, who joined the Kwiksootainuk between 1850 and 1880, and so no numayms and only six sites are listed; of the Gwawaenuk more is known, so we have their four known numayms, a brief history, an annotated list of their twenty-nine sites, giving alternative names and other information; the Hahuamis are similarly treated, though here a foundation narrative by Jim King, recorded in 1981 at the U'Mista Cultural Centre, is provided in English and in U'mista Kwak'wala. The two remaining tribes, the Kwiksootainuk, devastated by the Bella Coola raid at their principal village of Gwayasdums, and the Tsawatainuk, decimated by an early, perhaps 1790s, attack from five Kwakiutl and Bella Bella groups, receive like attention. Seven maps aid in clarifying the altered tribal groups within the region and the sites and probable movements among them. The information and the sources upon which it rests are all clearly presented. The maps and tables are easily read.

Galois's book was done in some kind of collaboration with Alert Bay's U'mista Cultural Centre and comes with an introductory statement on its behalf by its distinguished former curator, Gloria Cranmer Webster, who has contributed so much to her community and our knowledge of it. She writes, with linguist Jay Powell, a statement on "Geography, Ethnogeography, and the Perspective of the Kwakwaka'wakw." Powell also contributes a short essay on the Kwak'wala language.

The title of the book reflects the contribution of Cranmer and the U'Mista Cultural Centre to the word usage. To many, still familiar

with the Kwakiutl of Boas, Hunt, Curtis, Codere, Goldman, Duff, Drucker and Hiezer, Rohner, Rosman and Rubel, Walens, the Smithsonian's *Handbook*, and the American Museum of Natural History's *Chiefly Feasts*, Kwakwaka'wakw will read strange, even meaningless. Re-invented to solve the problem of "Kwakiutl" being really only one, Fort Rupert, group of tribes among twenty odd, it has its own problems.<sup>1</sup> To readers interested in problems of cultural construction, this sort of thing adds interest to a book that is extraordinary on its own terms.

Simon Fraser University

DOUGLAS COLE

*Cork Lines and Canning Lines: The Glory Years of Fishing on the West Coast*, by Geoff Meggs and Duncan Stacey. Toronto and Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992. 166 pp. Photos, map. \$35.00 cloth.

The salmon fishery exercises a powerful hold on the BC imagination. Geoff Meggs, former editor of *The Fisherman*, and Duncan Stacey, an expert on fishing and canning technology, have collaborated on a volume of text and photographs on the salmon, herring, and halibut fisheries that should tighten that grip.

Despite the book's subtitle, the text is not nostalgic. An anonymous gillnetter from the 1930s is quoted at the beginning: "salmon mean dollars and dollars are always more important than men." The story told here of commercial salmon fishing from its beginnings until the 1950s is one of canners' greed, government mismanagement, destruction of fish stocks and habitat, and endemic racism. There were certainly glory years of cannery profits, but not until the contracts won by the UFAWU after World War II did fishers and shoreworkers find much prosperity.

The real glory in this well-designed book is the pictures. The authors have done a wonderful job of culling public and private collections, and the publisher has given the photographs the care they deserve. (My only complaint is that all the maps and plans and a few photographs are too small for details to be easily seen.) The brief text moves along quickly in each chapter, but the photographs are worth lingering over. They balance the technological and the social: Stacey's expertise in fishing and canning technology is put to good use, but it is

<sup>1</sup> See Judith Berman, "The Seals' Sleeping Cave: The Interpretation of Boas' Kwakw'ala Texts" (PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1991), esp. 112-13 for an examination of past use; and Harry Assu with Joy Inglis, *Assu of Cape Mudge* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989), 16, for another contemporary view.

not overdone, and there are glimpses of the social life of the industry's workers, at work and outside it (one of my favourites is a man posing for the camera with an oolichan between his teeth, p. 124).

There is thus a tension at the heart of the book, between the photographs and the text, and between the Native, European, and Asian men and women who harvested and processed the resource and the businesses and governments that controlled and abused it. In the book it is a creative tension; whether it will be so in reality remains to be seen.

*Trent University*

JAMES R. CONLEY

*On the Translation of Native American Literatures*, edited by Brian Swann. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. xx, 478 pp. US\$45.00 cloth; US\$19.95 paper.

We learn a lot in editor Brian Swann's prologue to this collection of essays. He tells us of the history of scholarly resistance to acknowledging that Native peoples had literatures of significance and how recognition of those literatures made us aware of the need for techniques and understandings that would allow them to be translated. Swann leaves no doubt that the world needs a book that provides a history of our developing ability to do sensitive cross-cultural translation and a theory-driven "how-to manual" for doing it. This book was supposed to fulfil both those needs. He sent out hundreds of letters to individuals, organizations, and journal readers, inviting essays on "any aspect of [translation] that interests you," and from the essays that were submitted he chose those included in this sourcebook on the translation of Native American literatures.

The responses to that process of invitation were edited into a book with a lot of promise but, frankly, diffuse and rather disappointing substance. The essays are of very uneven quality. Remember that this is not a new field. There has been scholarly interest in "Amerindian texts" for a century. And, although this interest hid away for generations as a recondite aspect of ethnography and comparative lit, it burst out during the 1950s and 1960s to express itself in studies of "ways of speaking," cultural narrative and discourse, traditional poetry, ethnopoetics and rhetoric, and verbal performance art. Names of the great and famous in this field (Hymes, Rothenberg, Tedlock, Swann, Sherzer, Krupat) leap out of the table of contents, suggesting that if there are understandings of importance or late-breaking news in the

theory and practice of translation, we will find it here. Furthermore, this isn't Swann's first effort at collecting articles and editing a volume in this area. He and Arnold Krupat put together *Recovering the Word* in 1987. In light of that experience, and because he had control over the selection and editorial process, one might have hoped that the outcome would have been a set of essays providing a focused synthesis of the theoretical and procedural understandings that we have developed up to this point. What we have, with a few delightful exceptions, are a collection of reminiscence and research reports, ephemera that provide us with analysed texts, and the analyst's experience of discovery. Don't get me wrong! There are enabling theoretical and practical nuggets here — a few of the essays deserve to be recognized as classics. And there are other helpful insights tucked here and there in the 500 or so pages of this book. But (here's an opinion; as reviewer, I get to make claims, too!), many of these essays belong in the periodical literature of our various fields, and this book is less than it could have been because it didn't take itself seriously enough. Swann had the opportunity to provide us with a state-of-the-art review of a field that's hard to keep up with. But this book isn't it.

Some of the articles have lasting value. Arnold Krupat's show-me-the-good-parts history of translation of Amerindian song and stories is helpful and, along with William Clements' essay on Native American literature and Euroamerican translation, gives an overview of the history of the endeavour. Rothenberg, voluble as ever, adds to this history a discussion of the "problematics" of translation. Later Dale Kinkade gives a succinct example of reconstructing understandings from a text in an extinct language (Pentlatch). There are no essays by First Nations writers, reinforcing our awareness of the "crisis of representation," the out-of-date but continuing tradition that non-Native writers are continuing to collect, interpret, and present the perspective and history of Native communities. It is important to recognize, of course, that individual readers may bring their own idiosyncratic needs and interests to this book; and they may find answers and inspiration here that works for them.

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