

The formal Chinese history of Cumberland — or, better, the multi-ethnic history of Cumberland — awaits the hand (or hands) of persons with the appropriate academic skills and determination. May its writing begin soon, while there are still persons of Mr. Low's generation available and interested in contributing to it.

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Brotherhood to Nationhood: George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement, by Peter McFarlane. Toronto: Between the Lines, 1993. 328 pp. Illus. \$18.95 paper.

George Manuel (1921-1989) ranks among the leading half-dozen modern aboriginal political figures in British Columbia. His standing is even higher outside the province. After emerging as an Interior spokesperson in the 1960s, he went on to Ottawa and led the National Indian Brotherhood during its crucial formative period in the early 1970s. In 1975 he became the first president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, in which role he brought hope and help to first peoples elsewhere, most notably in Scandinavia and Latin America. In 1977 he came back to British Columbia and served several terms as leader of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC). Obviously Manuel merits a serious biography. McFarlane's book does not provide it.

Factual errors range from the silly to the serious. Manuel travels "500 miles north" from Chase to "Athelmer" rather than 160 miles east to Athalmer (p. 40). Diefenbaker becomes Prime Minister in 1967 (p. 53). The province is said to issue Indian fishing licences (p. 247). George Clutesi, one of the most prominent of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth, becomes a Sechelt (218). The 1978 UBCIC annual assembly had "eight hundred delegates" (p. 252), even though each of the province's 199 Indian bands was entitled to only one delegate, and many bands no longer supported the organization.

McFarlane is unaware that "Nuu-Chah-Nulth" is the current and proper name for the people formerly known as the Nootka, that they are one of the most populous tribal nations in the province, and that they live on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, consisting of thirteen member communities, provided important early opposition to Manuel and the UBCIC.

McFarlane dismisses the Tribal Council as consisting of only “three Vancouver Island and coastal bands” (p. 256), and remains unaware that it was in fact the Nuu-Chah-Nulth who hosted the important founding assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1976 — held in Port Alberni, not in Nanaimo as McFarlane implies (pp. 217-18).

At first it might appear that McFarlane has been taken in by those whom he interviewed. Of the more than thirty persons he spoke with, all but several were Manuel’s relatives, friends, allies, advisers, or employees. One of the exceptions is Manuel’s opponent Bill Wilson, whose views are dismissed. McFarlane takes little substance or insight from the more knowledgeable of his sources (Doug Sanders and Marie Smallface-Marule, for example) and instead allows his book to serve as an unchecked vehicle for the more partisan of Manuel’s disciples to attempt to settle old scores and create new myths. The result is exemplified in the treatment of Manuel’s relations with Andrew Paull and Fred Walchli.

Prior to Manuel, Paull (1892-1959) was the best known Indian politician active in the Interior. Even though Manuel was ultimately more effective, and famous, some of Manuel’s followers have always wished to believe he was Paull’s chosen successor. Without citing any sources, McFarlane perpetuates this myth, stating that “When Andy Paull was in the interior, he . . . began stopping to visit George Manuel in Chase” (p. 49) and that “Paull was . . . impressed with George Manuel’s leadership potential and he soon began to invite him along on his tours of the interior” (p. 50).

Both statements are false. In my own research I have found no evidence that the two men ever met. Members of Paull’s family vehemently deny that Paull even knew of Manuel, as does Frank Calder, who often travelled with Paull. Moreover, when I interviewed him in 1980, Manuel himself told me that he had never actually met Paull.

Central to the myth-making about Manuel in British Columbia is the claim that he created a successful Indian “people’s movement” after his return to the province in 1976. With Manuel’s son Bob as his source, McFarlane tells us:

Manuel signalled this approach when he arrived back in BC and went out to lunch with the regional director of Indian Affairs, Fred Walchli. He told Walchli point-blank that he intended to start a peoples’ [sic] movement that would have “a consistent ideology of struggle” against

the government. Walchli was equally frank. "It will be my job then," he said, "to fight you every step of the way." When the lunch was finished, two men shook hands and began a five-year battle. (p. 242)

When informed of McFarlane's account, Walchli responded:

That never happened. We never had that kind of discussion. In the first meeting that we had after he came back we discussed implementing the 1976 consultation policy and setting up the Secretariat. The disagreement between us came only later, when it became apparent that George wouldn't agree that tribal councils should be part of the process. And I never had lunch with him. (Personal communication, 6 July, 1994)

Evidence in the minutes and records of the Secretariat, a device by which Manuel's UBCIC could meet formally with federal officials, supports Walchli's account. During the first year or so relations were harmonious. Only as Manuel resisted demands from the growing numbers of tribal councils (notably that of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth) for inclusion in the Secretariat did relations become strained.

Manuel never fully understood the forces underlying the political reawakening of the tribal nations in this province. The Union declined steadily in support and influence during and after his leadership. The Union did play a substantial role in mobilizing Indian opposition to the new Canadian Constitution, but the political momentum among British Columbia Indians remained focused at the tribal level.

Manuel did not create any new Indian people's movement in British Columbia, despite McFarlane's sustained attempt (embodied in the title of the book) to demonstrate that he did so. If there was any new Indian movement in the province, it was led by those who viewed traditional tribal nations as the source of identity and legitimacy, and who rejected Indian bands, upon which the Union was based, as creations of the *Indian Act* and creatures of the Department of Indian Affairs.

More generally, McFarlane consults little of the literature dealing with the organizations and issues in which Manuel was involved, either in British Columbia or beyond. His use of the material he does consult is partial and highly selective, thus demonstrating his willing partnership with his interview sources.

The book has one positive feature. It does provide some frank insight not previously available into Manuel the man, especially into

his handling of the competing demands of political fame and family life. Yet here, again, the most insightful and understanding sources remain largely muted.

The harm that may come from this book is only in part that some may take it seriously. The real danger is that those who see it for what it is may as a result take George Manuel less seriously than he deserves.

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Out of the Interior: The Lost Country, by Harold Rhenisch. Vancouver: Cacanadadada Press, 1993. 208 pp. \$12.95 paper.

This collection of poem-stories from the Okanagan maintains a thesis apparently contradictory to its local and personal colour: "There is only one history." Harold Rhenisch, compiler of *Six Poets of British Columbia* (1980), and author of four previous collections of poems, claims that history must be written as global and that each human is implicated in the life of each other living thing. Hence the obvious if unpredictable intertext (Isak Dinesen's *Out of Africa* 1938) and its subtle direction to read the political economy of Kenyan coffee plantations against the colonialism of a Keremeos orchard. Hence the linking of the economies of Coast and Interior, of the cultures of Germany and Canada, of the disciplines of war and apple-growing, of the ecologies of orchard and ocean, of the circulation systems of tractors and trees, of the syntax of Canada and the United States.

But, as this web of connections implies, Rhenisch speaks frequently about history just because he distrusts history of the textbook variety, with its continuum of predictable cause and effect. His history dances out of his own interior, shaped by the fluid archives of memory and feeling. In part, the book is Rhenisch's autobiography, a memoir of days young and easy under the apple boughs, and of following his father out of grace.

Ordered in nine sections carrying grandly abstract titles, the story line follows the tragedy of his father's lost dream of a new Eden in the Okanagan. But these "chapters" are composed of short short stories or prose poems; (some of only a few sentences/most one to three pages) with more specific and shifting titles and focuses. Some stories apparently transcribe directly the anecdotes (repeated over coffee cups and