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Severing the Ties that Bind: Government Repression of Indigenous Religious Ceremonies on the Prairies. By Katherine Pettipas.

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soldiers entered the province. Of these, forty were convicts sentenced to serve in the desolate northern province and transported there in chains.

Life was hard for those unable to withstand the furies of the land; some who were broken by it left the area when they could. With the citizens divided into three camps, as described earlier, many colonists turned to the ways of the fourth camp, the original indigenous natives. Thus today there is a unique culture in New Mexico—the architecture, food, and folkways practiced in the native villages—including the Pueblo Indians and the descendants of the settlers.

In the concluding chapter, Knaut points out the final instigator of the rebellion, Juan Francisco Treviño (1675–77), the governor who exercised a level of persecution never before experienced by the Pueblo people. Treviño outlawed congregation in kivas and ordered many kivas destroyed. Soon he ordered the arrest of forty-seven Pueblo leaders (not medicine men), who were brought to Santa Fe and publicly whipped. This humiliation caused one of those whipped, Popé of San Juan Pueblo, to begin to organize the Pueblo people and plan a revolt. Thus it happened.

In the epilogue, Knaut explains that Popé was replaced by Luis Tupatu of Picuris Pueblo for a while. In July 1683 Tupatu sent an emissary, Juan Punsilli, to the Spaniards from his pueblo. Tupatu's message was an invitation for the Spaniards to return, provided they did not pillage and burn any more pueblos. This bears out Pueblo oral history, which claims that Pueblo men were in the company as DeVargas accomplished his bloodless re-entry.

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 is a good book; it is not complete, but it is an interesting addition to written history for the average reader.

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Severing the Ties that Bind: Government Repression of Indigenous Religious Ceremonies on the Prairies. By Katherine Pettipas. Winnipeg, Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1994. 304 pages. \$39.95 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

This detailed study of Canadian government policies and practices aimed at destroying indigenous religious traditions, and of

First Nations strategies of resistance to these attacks, bears a suggestive title that might be understood in at least a couple of ways. The phrase *severing the ties that bind* invokes an ironic usage of one of the more prominent metaphors for Protestant Christian unity (preserved in the hymn "Blest Be the Ties that Bind"), an appropriate connection to make since Pettipas argues that government attitudes and actions were rooted in Christian morality and religious intolerance. This title could very well refer to indigenous efforts to sever the oppressive ties binding their religious freedom, but the author's intentions are made clear by a subtitle foregrounding colonial agency; herein lies the fundamental weakness of this book, a problem that is magnified by methodological choices that quiet the First Nations voices that might have contributed more substantively to this account of their religious history. The intriguing cover illustration, a 1926 photo of indigenous celebrants at a Saskatchewan ceremony, is a graphic synopsis of the topic of this book: Eight seemingly relaxed Cree men in full ceremonial regalia are posed with a grim-faced Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, whose arms are crossed and whose eyes are shaded by the wide brim of his government-issue hat. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Pettipas is curator of native ethnology at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, and thus has good reason to be concerned with the history of indigenous religious oppression, in light of current struggles over repatriation. This book is based on her 1989 doctoral thesis in history and anthropology at the University of Manitoba and is volume 7 in the "Manitoba Studies in Native History" series, which has an editorial board representative of "scholarly and Native communities," as if these are mutually exclusive categories; Pettipas reinforces this narrow dichotomy in her acknowledgments when she refers to "both the First Nations and western scholars." Nine chapters with three maps, fifteen black-and-white photos, extensive notes, a thorough bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and a detailed index mark this book as a solid piece of documentary scholarship according to the conventions of Western academic research.

This study considers "the conceptualization and implementation of an aspect of Canadian Indian policy that can best be described as the repression of indigenous religious systems among Aboriginal peoples residing in the prairie region" (p. xi). Pettipas uses the experiences of the Plains Cree during the period from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries as her case study, and

she focuses on a series of amendments to the Indian Act of 1876 that proscribed certain religious and cultural practices, beginning with the 1885 Potlatch Law and ending with the revised Indian Act of 1951. Like other writers who have studied the history of indigenous struggles for religious freedom, the author argues that "despite the adeptness of Aboriginal peoples at evading and resisting prohibitions, there was a significant effect, especially when other forms of assimilative measures are taken into consideration" (p. 5). The opening chapters of the book present important cultural realities that defined and determined the historical interactions described later; Pettipas provides a very useful survey of government policies and the intellectual influences that lay behind them, and she presents a detailed ethnographic account of "traditional" Plains Cree life. Chapter 3 recounts the Plains Cree transition from freedom and independence to reserve wardship and the economic, political, and social conflicts that ensued, disrupting time-honored cultural traditions. Chapter 4 documents the rise of legally sanctioned "religious interference" by missionaries and agents and its initial impact on Plains Cree ceremonies. The author is cautious to a fault in narrating the history of colonial conflict in these opening chapters, at one point even referring to the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee as a "Battle" (p. 101), a disconcerting interpretive misstep that casts suspicion on the political sympathies of the rest of her historic narrative.

The balance of the book surveys Canadian government policies and practices of repression and First Nations strategies of resistance during three periods: 1896–1914, 1914–40, and 1940–51. Pettipas shows that despite Department of Indian Affairs attempts to promulgate general guidelines governing indigenous religious traditions, "the repression of ceremonial life was left to the discretion of the Indian agent and was largely dependent upon his abilities to influence his charges. In short, the policy was ambiguous" (p. 109). Local officials' regulation of ceremonial practices was accomplished through police cooperation, arrest and removal of leaders, disruption of ceremonies, a pass system, and withholding of rations, although loopholes in the guidelines allowed these efforts to be thwarted by a few sympathetic agents and even some entrepreneurial settlers, who recognized the potential for economic gain in promoting indigenous dances as entertainment. First Nations leaders responded to these intrusions with written petitions, official delegations, legal consulta-

tions, and court cases, while simultaneously adapting to this oppressive climate by covertly maintaining religious traditions, altering their outward appearance, or abandoning them altogether. Broad ideological shifts in attitudes toward indigenous religious practices after World War II facilitated a more open and concerted critique of repressive policies, which eventually led to review and revision of the Indian Act in 1951. Readers interested in a comparative context for this book should consult Douglas Cole and Ira Chaikin, *An Iron Hand upon the Land: The Law Against the Potlatch on the Northwest Coast* (University of Washington Press, 1990); Christopher Vecsey, ed., *Handbook of American Indian Religious Freedom* (Crossroad, 1991); and Omer C. Stewart, *Peyote Religion: A History* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1987).

Pettipas has attempted an investigation of historical and anthropological literatures that employs a "holistic and diachronic" method (p. 4), but she acknowledges the limitations of documentary evidence in uncovering repressive experiences. The foreword by A. Blair Stonechild praises the author for her emphasis on "hearing the First Nations voice as it emerges in the written records," and for having "gone further than just considering the written records. She has gone directly to the elders with an attitude of respect and willingness to understand their point of view" (p. ix). But nowhere does Pettipas outline her hermeneutical methodology for revealing this "First Nations voice," and contemporary oral testimony appears very infrequently in this book, apart from an effective opening account of the life of Cree leader Piapot. The most serious consequence of this absence of oral historical sources is that Pettipas's book, in the final analysis, reads as the narrative of two male societies in confrontation; the author does not address the absence of female perspectives in the documentary record, nor does she examine how religious repression and resistance were gendered in ways that are historically and culturally significant. Incorporating oral testimony by living Plains Cree women and men, many of whom can recount first-hand experiences with the policies and practices considered in *Severing the Ties that Bind* would have given this otherwise thorough work of historical scholarship a greater degree of substance and texture.

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