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Yaquis continue to help Father Sun cross the sky to the best of their abilities. The inside story of that effort is yet to be written.

Joyotpaul Chaudhuri
New Mexico State University

Wasi'chu: The Continuing Indian Wars. By Bruce Johansen and Roberto Maestas. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979. 268 pp. pap. \$6.50.

Following a thirty page history of United States-Indian relations, the authors present a synopsis of the Indian struggles in the United States during the 1970s. They focus principally on repression of Indian leaders and communities and attribute the repression to the lustful thirst of the "Wasi'chu" for Indian resources and land. The term, "wasi'chu," is a Dakota (Sioux) word meaning "takes the fat," but is also the term used by the Sioux to refer to white people. The authors explain that "wasi'chu does not describe a race; it describes a state of mind" (p. 5). However, John Redhouse, Navajo activist, in his introduction to the book, states that the word refers to "a strange race that not only took what it thought it needed, but also took the rest . . . used to describe the white race."

The book is an update of an earlier similar work by William Meyer, *Native Americans: The New Indian Resistance*, published in 1971 by International Publishers. The authors rely heavily on the Meyer book. Other resources include numerous newspaper articles, United States Civil Rights reports, FBI files secured under the "Freedom of Information Act," and the American Indian Policy Review Commission Report of 1977. Many arguments that sound familiar are presented without references. For instance, there is no reference nor mention of the voluminous work of Vine Deloria, Jr. Since the citations in the notes are sparse and incomplete, a bibliography would have been called for.

Though there are serious problems with the book as it is, the main problem is what it is not. From Monthly Review Press we have come to expect rigorous studies in Third World political-

economy, the authors being the very finest economists, sociologists, and historians available. *Wasi'chu* lacks such rigor in its analysis, as well as being ahistorical. Badly organized, it jumps centuries back and forth as well as continents, and presents facile analogies, which might be effective in a dramatic public speech or solidarity statement to a mass rally, but appear absurd and even far-fetched when frozen in print. We are curious about the rationale that led Monthly Review Press to accept the book for publication, it being the first book the press has published on indigenous peoples in the United States.

Though one can appreciate the authors having brought the many issues and struggles of Indian people during the past decade into one easy-to-read volume, one also expects a somewhat more sophisticated analysis. There is nothing new here. In the brief chapter on history, the long discussion on demography and the reduction of Indian populations is attributed to "lack of immunity to European diseases." And though the distribution of small-pox infested blankets to Indians is mentioned, there is no discussion of the relationship of epidemic disease to crowded, refugee conditions, to war and deprivation of adequate diet and health care.

There are many errors of fact or omission, which can be attributed to an obvious lack of thorough knowledge on the part of the authors. In discussing the termination policy of the United States of the 1950s, the authors refer to it: "yet another assimilative panacea was decreed 'termination.'" They do not refer to, and apparently were not aware of "The Termination Act" of the United States Congress—a law to be enforced. And further, the authors completely misunderstand what termination called for. They write: "Within the next 2 decades 1.5 million acres were taken out of Indian ownership and about eleven and a half thousand people were forced off their landholdings." Of course, what was removed under termination was federal trust protection, so the land became marketable and taxable. The result is the same, but the lack of comprehension of the legal tools used by the United States misleads the reader, who when they discover that the statement in fact is not true, does not then know just how termination erodes the Indian land base.

The most annoying aspect of reading the book is the constant unnecessary use of literary devices better suited for popular magazines or even poor fiction. For example, "As Emma Yazzie

approaches her hogan from Shiprock on Highway 550, the sky gradually changes color from the familiar pastel-turquoise blue of the surrounding countryside to a murky, hazy brown" (p. 143). Another example reads: "A gentle, but steady October rain was falling against the windows of the Seattle Indian Center on a fall day in 1972" (p. 199). Possibly a third of the book is made up of such corny literary devices. Far from making the book more readable, or the situations described more visual, the literary attempts get in the way and create a thin veneer over facile reasoning, hasty writing and scrambled dates and facts.

The authors state initially: "The major thesis of this book is that the economic, cultural, and political forces which propelled mercantile colonialism across the Atlantic are now in retreat; the Wasi'chu of today have found it increasingly necessary to exploit domestic people and resources to sustain their system. As this exploitation intensifies, all outside the Wasi'chu classes are learning what it has been like to be 'Indian.'" They do not expound on this thesis in the body of the book, nor do they challenge the well-developed thesis of neocolonialism, the subject in which their publishers specialize. But with this as a stated thesis, it is not surprising to find in their conclusion a recommendation that everyone get together. Their only other conclusion is a long argument against the demise of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

This book could be recommended among several others for introductory classes in Native American Studies. Surely, it is good for guilt-infliction, though it is clear that students and readers today expect more, and the Indian struggle deserves more serious, rigorous analysis.

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