

In chapter 5, Brian Gettler breaks somewhat from the general tenor of the volume, in that he is not explicit about positioning his work in terms of counter-narrative. The chapter is an important contribution, however, as he demonstrates how Jeune-Lorette's first families rose to prominence through their involvement in industrialization and finance. The final contribution by Annette de Stecher is unique in the volume for its focus on material culture. She examines the role of finely decorated birch-bark trays in political performances: acts of ceremonial reciprocity with Canada's governor-general by which the Wendat asserted identity and sovereignty.

All in all, Peace and Labelle have done an excellent job of ensuring that the contributors reference each other's work, highlighting shared themes and key contrasts, so that in spite of the episodic character of the coverage, the reader comes away with a sense of cohesion and interconnection. At the same time, the various chapters subtly reflect tensions between different decolonial historiographical approaches, such as those emphasizing themes of resilience and cultural continuity, and those emphasizing the agency some members of indigenous communities exercised by embracing practices associated with encroaching settler societies as part of their efforts to maintain economic and political sovereignty. Far from a weakness, however, the tensions in the collection serve to foreground the diversity and complexity of Wendat "survival," to use Gerald Vizenor's term. The result is a book that effectively resists easy reduction to the tired colonial tropes that have been so damaging to popular understandings of indigenous history in eastern North America.

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From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to Twenty-First Centuries. By Gerhard J. Ens and Joe Sawchuk. University of Toronto Press, 2016. 704 pages. \$71.25 cloth; \$41.58 paper and electronic (CND).

This is an amazingly comprehensive book, providing detailed historical analysis, theoretical discussion, and contemporary understandings of Métis identity. The authors continuously demonstrate how Métis identity has developed through the interplay of both external and internal factors. Their focus is on the Métis as an ethnic group and the cultural, economic, and political strategies that have shaped Métis boundary maintenance. In this respect, the book diverges from many Métis histories by rejecting a normative focus on Métisness as primordial—the notion that Métis nationhood developed naturally and intrinsically through shared kinship, heritage, language, and customs. Instead, they utilize an instrumentalist approach to focus on the ways in which Métis identity developed situationally and strategically through the interplay of politics and available resources. As well, the authors view Métis nationhood as a social construct, developing through symbols and particular framings of histories. However, they also take into account the affective aspects of identity—the family memories,

shared rituals, and tradition—as well as the colonial framework which brutally subordinated Métis peoples for years, particularly in the north.

Beginning with an exploration of the colonial concept of hybridity and how Métisness continues to be conceptualized simply as “mixedness,” the authors address Métis ethnogenesis as an economic process originating with the fur trade; that is, the familiarity of mixed-blood people with both indigenous and European languages and ways of life led to their roles as middlemen, brokers, and diplomats between different Great Lakes indigenous nations and Europeans. While endogamy among this occupational niche clearly resulted in the growth of distinct mixed-blood Great Lakes communities, the authors engage with, and to some degree reject, the various arguments which suggest that these groups did not necessarily self-identify yet as distinct peoples. With an influx of white settlers, these peoples migrated, some to the Lower Missouri and others to the plains. The authors assert, in common with many historians, that Métis identities really began with the “freemen” who left the employment of the fur trade companies and became tradesmen and provisioners for the fur trade, establishing enduring settlements across the plains.

The book examines key points that are frequently addressed in Métis historiography—in particular the battle of Seven Oaks and the resistance at Red River. However, in its detailed attention to the Manitoba Act, Métis land entitlement, and the scrip commissions that took place between 1885 and 1929, the book is masterful. Also unique, this section of the book posits that the scrip process (extinguishment of Aboriginal title in exchange for land or money) became central to Métis self-identification, arguing that the scrip and treaty administrative practices which defined and counted collective identities in an “all or nothing” manner subsequently forced people to see themselves in the light of these categories. Indeed, not only their identities, but their subsequent histories have become interpreted in the light of how they were categorized during the treaty and scrip commissions.

This understanding is occasionally uneven. At times, as the authors describe how significant numbers of people sought to leave Treaty Six to take scrip, Métisness seems pre-assumed—as if the thousands of people who left treaty seeking money scrip during times of starvation were always already “Métis.” At other times the authors clearly indicate that the boundaries between different Métis and “Indian” groups were permeable, and that any mixed-bloods who left treaty were automatically classified as Métis regardless of their background. While the Métis had manifested a preference for scrip where they had a choice, many also took treaty and were classified as Indian.

The transborder nature of the Métis in following the buffalo is also explored. As the herds contracted southward, the Métis were continuously required to evade capture by the police and military patrolling the only-recently defined border. While the scrip process in Canada, created as a means of silencing Métis Aboriginal title, is posited as one of the primary reasons that a distinctive Métis identity survived in Canada, the Métis who settled in Montana were faced in the United States with the racialization process that transformed them into “Indians.” The history of the Union nationale Métises St-Joseph du Manitoba is carefully documented, showing its efforts to vindicate Louis Riel and to create pride in Métis identity immediately after the

1885 uprising. Meanwhile a series of chapters describe in detail the social experiments by the Catholic Church and provincial social services to set up colonies for the Métis in Alberta and Saskatchewan to learn farming, and the provincial organizations which either supported or challenged these processes from the 1930s through to the 1950s.

Finally, the authors describe the development of Métis political awareness and the organizations that emerged during the 1960s to promote Métis empowerment; the struggles to define “Métisness” apart from the perspectives of non-status Indians; and how the repatriation of the constitution and the inclusion of the Métis as one of three Aboriginal peoples has highlighted an increasing focus on Métis nationhood. The authors seem implicitly to agree that this nationhood should include only the prairies, as the site of Métis ethnogenesis.

Two subsequent chapters devoted to the Ontario Métis and the Métis of the Northwest Territories seem significantly weaker than the preceding chapters. The chapter on the Ontario Métis is mostly taken up with struggles between competing Métis organizations and examining membership surveys to see if any of the membership had developed a real sense of Métisness (as distinct from a racialized sense of self as “half-breed”). Much detail is omitted here that might have provided a deeper understanding of historic (and contemporary) Métis presence in Ontario—the study by Annette Chretien of the Mattawa Métis, for example, which demonstrated that until very recently, the Mattawa Métis were seen as distinct from the non-status Algonquins of Mattawa, and despite the fact that both groups were confined to the “Native” part of town, saw themselves as distinct. There is also James Morrison’s examination of the Métis of Sault Ste. Marie and the land grants that were made to them when the Robinson Huron treaty was signed. These and other studies would have shown a distinctive Métis presence at specific spots around the Great Lakes; their absence weakens the chapter immeasurably.

On the other hand, the Métis history in the Northwest Territories demonstrates how the descendants of Red River Métis rejected Dene nationhood while local Métis embraced it, even though the Dene Declaration represented the most radical assertion of indigenous sovereignty and resistance to colonialism in recent years. Some discussion might have been useful here about what it means to always assert Métis “difference” at a time when, politically, unity is most required.

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George Sword’s Warrior Narratives: Compositional Processes in Lakota Oral Tradition. By Delphine Red Shirt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016. 330 pages. \$65.00 cloth; \$30.00 paper and electronic.

“How do you define Lakota literature?” Delphine Red Shirt asks in the introduction to *George Sword’s Warrior Narratives: Compositional Processes in Lakota Oral Tradition*, a question for which she creates an entire foundational framework in order to answer.