

lands into the form of private property. Where First Nations persisted, they were often subjected to policies of cultural annihilation and/or assimilation. All of this is discussed only in the most circumspect of ways by our authors.

In other words, the transformation of pre-capitalist property forms into forms of private property, the making of the modern world, which is the topic of both books, was everywhere based on violence, deceit, corruption, and the sheer assertion of rights by states and individuals. It would be very difficult to point to any example of appropriation of land in the colonized territories that could be described as completely free of any ethical or legal doubts, that could be defended as completely legitimate, even within the legal framework of the colonizers. There was outright theft from the First Nations, corrupt practices among officials and corporations, and deceit and often violence throughout the whole process. The same legal and ethical reservations persist to this day in the continuing appropriation of commons and communally held lands and in the maintenance of private property. In short, both authors miss the point that everywhere the extinguishment of pre-capitalist rights was and remains questionable. Such an assessment of the "modern world" could have provided interesting conclusions for Clarke and Weaver.

The fact that this transformation of rights was questionable reveals itself in the current demands for Aboriginal rights, now growing the world over. Along with these demands for restoration of rights to land and water, there are also claims for reparations for the wealth generated by the labour power taken by force or fraud from Native, slave, and indentured labour. General consciousness of this point is growing, in particular amongst those whose ancestors were defrauded, coerced, or enslaved. The entire edifice of a world of private property rests on dubious grounds; and while this important point is certainly deducible from

these studies, the authors do not venture down this path of inquiry.

Both authors have written lengthy tomes that seem to embody a career's worth of learning and reflection. (Oddly, Clarke's book is the re-working of his doctoral thesis — at the end of his career.) The result of several decades of dedicated scholarship, however, would hopefully be revealed in the manner of the virtuosity of a mature musician — as the presentation of an interpretation that manifests itself as the effortless grasp of the essence, that highlights the themes and subordinates all that merely complements them. There are many historians who have written such pieces at the end of their careers. But with these authors their interesting theme of changing property is incompletely grasped and unfortunately obscured by the accompanying overwhelming detail. Both provide a daunting display of scholarship that continuously threatens to override the themes and cloud what otherwise could have pointed to novel ways of interpreting history. Elements of a good interpretation are all but lost in the excess of detail.

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David Quiring, *CCF Colonialism in Northern Saskatchewan: Battling Parish Priests, Bootleggers and Fur Sharks* (Vancouver: UBC Press 2004)

THE TITLE CONTAINS the central conundrum of this book. Who are the colonialists? Apparently not the parish priests, bootleggers, and fur sharks. Indeed, Quiring concludes the book with the claim that churches and private businessmen (including the fur sharks) deliver up more promise of progress, development, and employment than the Government of Saskatchewan.

From 1944 (when the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was first elected) to about 1964 (when the CCF was

defeated by Ross Thatcher's right-wing Liberals), the provincial government made use of politically sympathetic existing public servants and appointees to try to transform the northern economy. Quiring's account is that of a historian at the University of Saskatchewan, trying to trace how well that plan worked.

This review rests in part on my living and working in the north starting in 1960 and earlier visits to the north as a somewhat politically aware teenager. I also participated intermittently in the La Ronge CCF club and provincial CCF conventions.

Quiring defines neither colonialism nor socialism. At least in this case, they go together for him. The book's introduction says he was alerted to the "socialism" of the CCF in his youth when the party called for co-op and government farms in his native southwest Saskatchewan, events which influenced his views of the CCF in the North.

CCF socialism seems to consist of ideologically motivated government intervention in the North at the behest of a couple of cabinet ministers and some partisan government employees, many (but not all) of whom were friends, activists, and CCF members. Leanings toward development of fur, timber, fish and other co-operatives, grants to local housing or employment projects, and evidence from archived government correspondence provide the basis for this view. Prior occupations in private business, subsistence activities, and bush piecework have no ideological content or importance for the author.

Colonialism seems to be founded on the fact that these partisans were there and took action, apparently as external forces sent to "colonize" the North. Though some southern CCF activists went to the north during that time, most mentioned in the book were long-time residents. Little is made of the fact that the number of so-called colonial activists was very small, and that the vast majority of northern government employees were not at all

partisan, but merely did long-standing, non-political jobs.

Saskatchewan Archives Board material provides most of the citations. Though Quiring interviewed about two dozen northern and government individuals, archive documents override these voices. Quiring says he found memories faulty or selective. The documents apparently are seen as dependable. But Quiring's own documenting practices leave something to be desired. He makes claims, but the footnotes often show a group of sources, so it is impossible to tell which source made which point. In addition, some sources quoted do not show up in the bibliography. One interviewer, cited by last name only, is several times discovered in the middle of lists of archive sources, making it impossible to tell which source by that surname is being cited (though I know who it was, because I was a peripheral participant in the taping process).

The CCF as a party had very diffuse ideas about changing Saskatchewan's North. To transform an economy from mixed hunting and gathering and resource extraction into a periphery of an agricultural and industrializing provincial economy (which was, and is, a periphery itself) is a task that defeated more disciplined socialist forces elsewhere on the face of the globe.

The Saskatchewan CCF, having become the New Democratic Party in 1961, developed more conscious ideas and organizational forms to try again in the 1970s in the North. It would be more accurate in both earlier and later cases to call those efforts "social democratic management of a capitalist periphery economy." "Colonialism" existed only in the sense that there is some evidence for overt moves to attach the North to the southern provincial economy. The global uranium market, new uses for timber previously viewed as low grade, fleeting hydro power and water export possibilities, greased with federal government funding until the mid 1970s, made the North eco-

nomically attractive in a way it could not be during the time dealt with in Quiring's book. Quiring cites other authors on colonialism in the North, but definitions and analytical rigour are somewhat stretched among them also. Socialism is normally construed as anti-colonial, so the reader has to do some mental gymnastics to adapt to Quiring's assumptions.

The book is nonetheless a useful read. It marshals evidence that was formerly diffuse. Purposeful marches through archived government files uncovered much detail most ordinary citizens would never see. Quiring's historical assemblage fills in much colour and shading previously rendered in the black and white arguments of the partisans. He has little to say about the reasons why CCF and other socialist and non-socialist activists battled abuses by the parish priests, bootleggers, and fur sharks.

The key role of the former Centre for Community Studies at the University of Saskatchewan is outlined too sparingly. Oddly, the CCF newspaper, *Commonwealth*, was not accessed for any official party views on the North. Perhaps it had little editorial or news content about this topic, but the very few mentions in Quiring's book indicate there was something there. Quiring conflates the CCF and the Saskatchewan government. He refers to the party members and employees interchangeably, as if the party and the government virtually acted as one. In one case among several, he refers to a person I know well as the CCF Public Relations Director, though he in fact held that job in the provincial government.

Quiring's conclusions seem liberally founded, pragmatically oriented to jobs and incomes within the narrow confines of the bush economy, without much focus on means for political and economic northern transformation. He thinks the aboriginal (his term) people were satisfied with the arrangements set up by the churches and fur trading stores. In the end, he thinks the CCF government activ-

ists did no better, and did worse in some instances.

When I showed this book to some of my northern Saskatchewan friends mentioned, they were bemused to see their words (from old government, party, and organization files) in print and analysed. They knew the people and places on the cover pictures, taken in the 1940s. They, like myself, do not share Quiring's views, but took a certain amount of satisfaction seeing their work recognized and acknowledged, even if the results of their efforts were not as hoped.

Given the nature of the book, most potential readers will probably want to wait until it appears in paperback. The hardback version sells for over \$80 Canadian.

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Peter Eglin and Stephen Hester, *The Montreal Massacre: A Story of Membership Categorization Analysis* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 2003)

I ADMIT that I began Eglin and Hester's book with some uncertainty. My initial concern was whether it was appropriate to apply an ethnomethodological approach to something that in Canadian society is treated with such reverence (as evidenced by the National Day of Mourning that is observed on 6 December of every year). Countering this uncertainty was my own experience in researching violence and my firm belief that such topics are necessary areas of study, if we are ever to understand why violence of such magnitude occurs.

In fact, in reading the book, I found myself quite impressed with the sensitivity the authors showed in exploring the Montreal massacre, and I think they were able to acknowledge the immense feeling associated with this event without compromising their analytical approach. In particular, I was pleased that they devoted an entire chapter to examining their own