

issue in many, if not most, Inuit communities due to issues including the lack of a consistent supply, the high cost of hunting gear and licences needed to obtain country foods, fewer available hunters, and a changing food distribution system.

*The Inuit World* is an easy choice as an instructional text or as an addition to a university reading list for Arctic studies, Indigenous studies, anthropology or geography classes. Students must now be used to the price of textbooks but the cost of this one seems exorbitantly high. It's a real shame as this means this book is likely out of reach for many community libraries and northern residents whose experiences are reflected in its pages.

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SEEN BUT NOT SEEN: INFLUENTIAL CANADIANS AND THE FIRST NATIONS FROM THE 1840S TO TODAY. By DONALD B. SMITH. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. ISBN 978-1-4426-2770-3. xxxii + 451 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, references, index. Softbound. Cdn\$32.62. Also available as an eBook and Pdf.

The title of Donald Smith's magisterial study, *Seen But Not Seen*, is an ambiguous, even ironic, one that captures the nuance and sophistication of Smith's analysis of the extraordinarily complex and highly controversial story of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. In the prologue to this book, Smith reflects on his long career studying Canada's Indigenous peoples with a brief but enlightening personal reminiscence, making it very clear that this book is the product of a lifetime of research and personal interactions with numerous scholars as well as Indigenous people. Smith's passion is readily apparent.

This book is not an attack on Canada's colonial past and how it relentlessly and without compassion destroyed Indigenous people. Smith's purpose is not to condemn. Instead he sets a far more difficult and important task for himself: to "understand people in their historical context, through the reconstruction of the atmosphere and mentality of their age to help reveal their outlooks and situations. I try to avoid, as much as I can, what the historians call "presentism," the judgment of the past through the lens of the present" (p. xxii). What is so disturbing about this basic definition of the historian's craft is that Smith feels compelled to remind readers of what historians are supposed to be doing. Regrettably, this basic credo of the historian's task has been forgotten by too many crusading historians who prefer to judge historical figures harshly with the moral certainties of today. Such presentism is precisely what Smith avoids. Instead each biographical portrait in this book is presented with close attention to appropriate historical context. Smith's deep and wide knowledge of Canadian history appears on every page.

This unfortunate presentism in contemporary historiography, both in the academy and the public square, has led to an appalling lack of understanding of many historical figures, most notably Canada's first Prime Minister John A. Macdonald. For many readers, therefore, Smith's portrayal of Macdonald will be of particular interest. Macdonald is presented as neither the saint nor the sinner of current public debates. Instead, he emerges as a man of contradictions and deeply ambiguous views of Indigenous people. Macdonald mixed romantic sentimentalism with a "total disregard for their rights to keep their ancestral cultures and religions" (p. 18). The contradictions become most clear in the 1880s. Macdonald promoted legislation to extend the franchise to the Indigenous males living east of Manitoba; and yet his Government's repression of the North West rebellion was illegal, brutal, and dishonest. Here Smith does not equivocate, "Without question ... Macdonald's record

with the Indigenous peoples in the North West in 1885 was totally reprehensible” (p. 31). Smith is consistent with the current trend in historiography toward a more critical perspective of Macdonald. Unlike Macdonald’s most severe critics, who seem determined to denigrate Macdonald to the point of demonical caricature, Smith is balanced and fair-minded.

Smith follows his discussion of Macdonald with analysis of other prominent Victorian figures, which shows that Macdonald’s ambivalent views were deeply rooted in the culture of Canada. Typical was the Presbyterian clergyman and university administrator, George Munro Grant, who supported the idea of assimilation on the grounds that otherwise Indigenous people were destined to extinction. Even those who knew and worked alongside Indigenous people and were sharply critical of the Department of Indian Affairs, like the Methodist missionary John McDougall, did not dissent from the prevailing view of the necessity of assimilation. McDougall remained committed to assimilation, “a prisoner of the thinking and values of the times” (p. 65). Also of great interest is Smith’s portrayal of the notorious Duncan Campbell Scott, who has served as a symbol in Canadian historiography for all that was wrong-headed and negligent about the Canadian Government’s Indian policies. Scott’s relentless campaign of disregard for Indigenous grievances was possible because both Parliament and the Canadian public showed very little regard for Indigenous people. For Smith there is no excuse for Scott’s or other Canadians’ refusal to listen to the growing criticism of the appalling conditions endured by many Indigenous people, especially in the residential schools. His disappointment and exasperation are clear. Smith (p. 164) cites the historian George M. Wrong’s *The Canadians: The Story of a People* (1938), which contained only one brief reference to the First Nations: “The native Indians, the oldest residents, are contended wards of the nation.” How could prominent Canadians be so blind and get things so egregiously wrong?

While many readers may find the early chapters familiar territory, the later chapters contain many gems of new information and ground-breaking analysis of prominent Canadians, relatively unknown in the historiography. Smith asserts that the Second World War was a turning point in non-Indigenous perceptions of the First Nations. There was a “surging concern for human rights,” which was accompanied by a growing awareness of the “limitations of federal Indian policy” (p. 259). In 1946, literature Professor Paul Wallace published a book about the origins of the Iroquois Confederacy. According to Smith, Wallace’s highly acclaimed *The White Roots of Peace* (1946) resonated with the new mood and served as a counter-balance to the extremely negative portrayal of Indians in school textbooks, which portrayed them as “bloodthirsty primitives” (p. 172). Despite this emerging change of attitude, Canadian historians remained remarkably oblivious. Smith has harsh words for two of the “fathers” of modern Canadian historiography, Donald Creighton

and A.R.M. Lower. He sums up the state of Canadian historiography in the 1940s and 50s by suggesting that the discussion of Indigenous peoples in the textbook, *Canada: A Political and Social History* by Edgar McInnis, can be encapsulated by a quotation from the book stating, “The aborigines made no major contribution to the culture in the settled communities of Canada” (p. 184).

Deeply rooted assumptions of Euro-Canadian superiority also stubbornly persisted on the west coast. For example, Bruce Hutchinson’s wildly popular account of Canadian life, *The Unknown Country* (1942) made only one reference to First Nations. Here, Smith can barely contain his indignation: “The First Nations remained unnoticed by a man who had grown up in BC and had travelled through ... his beloved province” (p.225). More direct, even confrontational, political action was necessary. Maisie Hurley, was tireless in raising awareness about the racism, prejudice, and discrimination faced by Indigenous people in the pages of *The Native Voice*. Smith quotes another contributor to *The Native Voice*, Jasper Hill (Big White Owl), who boldly articulated the ever-rising frustration and anger of Indigenous people in Canada, “This nasty business of integrating the North American Indian people into slum communities in the big cities”, Hill wrote, “is shameful, unfair and utterly disastrous. It is a plan of extermination by assimilation. It is a plan of legalized genocide” (p.230). This utilization of the word “genocide”, according to Smith, was one of the first times such strong condemnatory language was used to describe Canada’s Indian policies.

By the 1960s, the ground was now laid for the emergence of a more persistent and public Indigenous voice—one that could not be ignored. The way was prepared by important figures such as Chief Buffalo Long Lance and the archivist-historian Hugh Dempsey who served as bridges connecting colonial Canadians to Indigenous people and culture, especially through their writing. Dempsey was particularly instrumental in bringing Indigenous people to their rightful place in the historical consciousness of broader Canadian society. The Indigenous perspective was brought into clear view by a young and well-educated Cree, Harold Cardinal. He took advantage of his education at residential school and university not for the purposes of assimilating into Canadian life but to call attention to how First Nations had been historically mistreated. From *The Unjust Society* (1969), a blunt attack on the assimilationist assumptions in Canadian Government Indian policies, Smith (p. 264) quotes Cardinal, “Now at a time when our fellow Canadians consider the promise of the Just Society, once more the Indians of Canada are betrayed by a programme which offers nothing better than cultural genocide.” Without comment, Smith exclaims: “Again the term genocide” (p. 264)! Smith does not engage directly with the current controversy over whether “genocide” is an appropriate term to define and describe the treatment of Indigenous people throughout Canadian history. By not commenting on current disputes, Smith allows the historical figures in this book to speak for themselves, giving readers the

opportunity to assess their views on their terms and not those of today's condemnatory and intolerant revisionism that lacks any attempt at thoughtful understanding. Smith argues, approvingly quoting John Webster Grant's *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534* (1984), that in the late 1960s, Canadians were startled to find "themselves portrayed as destroyers of culture they had never taken pains to appreciate" (p. 264).

This book deserves a wide readership. It is written in an engaging and accessible style. The mini-biographies of the fifteen prominent Canadians are very well drawn and solidly placed in a deep and rich historical context. In attempting to understand why so many Canadians were blind to Indigenous people and their distressful situation in Canada, Smith helps readers arrive at some of the truths—albeit unpleasant ones—that are necessary for reconciliation to advance. This book is deeply humanistic in spirit, for its objective is to shed light on the deeply flawed human condition and not to act as judge and jury.

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- REFRACTED ECONOMIES: DIAMOND MINING AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION IN THE NORTH. By REBECCA JANE HALL. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2022. ISBN 978-1-4875-4084-5. 272 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, appendix, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$34.95. Also available as an epub and Pdf.

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