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rimental effect on tribal society and morality wrought by contact with the whites.

Rather than merely collecting the tales and publishing them in English, however, the editor has used them as a vehicle for making the Cree language accessible to any who might wish to study it. The first recounting of the stories is in ideogrammatic Cree; then follows a section that prints the stories in Cree transcribed into English alphabet on the verso, with a facing English translation. The appendices, which take up more pages than the combined three versions of the stories themselves, contain a thorough set of notes on the orthography and the glossary; a bibliography of references; a Cree-English glossary; an inverse stem index; and an English index to the glossary.

The apparatus of this volume lends itself well to pedagogy, which, whether used for classroom instruction or as a point of reference by which to study additional Cree texts, is one of the book's primary functions. Language, after all, is essential to the maintenance of a culture. It is quite possible that as an oral culture declines, the meticulous publication of native texts might play a key role in the survival of that particular culture. I applaud the publishers for making this cultural investment in the Cree, even though the financial return will likely be small, and I would urge other presses to follow their example.

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Kiskinhamawâkan-âcimowinisa/Student Stories: Written by Cree-Speaking Students (second edition). Edited, translated, and with a glossary by Freda Ahenakew. Saskatchewan Indian Languages Programme, Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre, 1989. 91 pages.

The second edition, revised and enlarged, of this collection of eight stories is the product of an intermediate course in Cree given at Saskatoon in the summer of 1982. Written by native speakers, the stories are an important contribution to the growing body of accessible literature in a major dialect of Cree. In their original version, the editor tells us, these stories represent several

variants of Plains Cree, but have been standardized to reflect the central Saskatchewan dialect of the *atâhk-akohp* (Star Blanket) reserve. Given that Cree is the most widespread of the Algonquian languages in Canada, and that Western or Plains Cree is the dialect spoken by the largest single block of speakers, the importance of materials such as *Kiskinahamawâkan-âcimowinisa* becomes readily apparent. The term *âcimowin* normally connotes an account of something represented as a real event, as opposed to *âtayôhkân*, a traditional myth or sacred story. The *-is* is a diminutive; the *-a* signals the plural. Hence *âcimowinisa* might fairly be read as "short stories." Several of them, however, are based on, or are shorter versions of, traditional legends.

The first item in the collection, "Three Old Men," and the second, an untitled account, are both humorous and engaging introductions to the series. In the first, three old-timers vie to see who can tell the biggest huntin'-fishin' whopper à la Baron Münchhausen. The second has a streak of wry humor. It relates how an Indian older brother who speaks no English follows his younger brother's directives as to when to say "yes" and "no" on a visit to town. He uses them in the wrong context and, sadly, gets beaten up as a result. The third story, "A Wihtikow" (Ojibwa: *windigo*), accounts for how a place known as "Red Deer Hill" got its name. The fourth anecdote, "A Story about a Boy and a Mouse," is obviously based on a partial memory of the traditional legend, "How Cahkâpêš Snared the Sun." The Cahkâpêš legends are commonly told further east; one wonders about the personal history of the writer.

The fifth story, untitled, begins in a way reminiscent of Hansel and Gretel, with two children getting lost in the woods. The writer omits the scary nastiness of the German tale, however, and the story ends happily, as the children see a light and find their own home—*mitoni miywêyih tamwak ê—miskahkik wîkiwâw*.

The sixth, "Wisahketchahk and the Birches," is an etiological myth that explains why birch trees are striped. Seventh in the series, "Shut-Eye Dance," is another well-known legend, here recounted with certain variations. It explains how loons, geese, and ducks come to be marked as a result of the deviousness of Wisahketchahk, the trickster. The eighth and final story, untitled, is obviously based on the memory of a longer myth. It tells how Wisahketchahk wished to fly with the eagles, disregarded their careful warning and so fell from the sky.

The stories seem to have been produced originally as an exercise in the development of a clear, straightforward, narrative style; they have an authentic, Indian flavor. Those based on traditional legends can, like *Gulliver's Travels*, be read on several different levels. Stylistic variants have been standardized by the editor, Freda Ahenakew, who, as a native speaker of Cree and a member of the staff of the linguistics department, University of Manitoba, is eminently qualified to carry out this task.

The format of the book, with large, clear type, numbered paragraphs and the Cree and English texts on facing pages, makes it a pleasure to handle. For the Cree-speaking reader, all eight accounts are printed in clearly legible syllabics (pp. 3-26). This format will obviously be useful to several different classes of user. The stories are a welcome addition to the growing body of class texts suitable for schools where reading and composition in Cree are taught. For persons wishing to study a Canadian indigenous language of major social importance, the text provides materials of digestible length in a principal dialect of Plains Cree. Access to the syllabic transcription is facilitated by the consistent roman transliteration (pp. 28-66). In both syllabic and roman texts, vowel length and pre-aspiration are carefully marked, a convention not everywhere observed by syllabic writers. The matched numbering of paragraphs also makes for easy cross-reference. For the reader who possesses a knowledge of the basic grammatical features of the language, the glossary at the end contains a full listing of all terms necessary to understand the stories.

As noted, some of the *âcimowinisa* are in fact legendary in nature; this contribution to the preservation of elements of an ancient literary tradition will be welcomed. While the fragmentary nature of the more legendary accounts may be deprecated by some, the initial purpose in their compilation should not be forgotten. The editors and publishers are to be highly commended on an enterprise which has already led to further work of literary and scholarly merit, i.e., *Wâskahikaniwiyiniw-âcimowina/Stories of the House People* (University of Manitoba Press, 1988), edited and translated by Freda Ahenakew. It is to be hoped that much more such valuable and interesting material is still to follow.

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