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Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada. By J. R. Miller.

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peoples west and north of the Mississippi were just beginning to adjust to life bounded by reservation perimeters. Now, with a population thoroughly familiar with the cities and televised national culture, a number of sophisticated Indians have entered the arena of the dominant society. Russell Willier is not alone in asserting the worth of native tradition, insisting it should take a place among the great traditions honored and supported by the Western world. Black Elk could not, in his lifetime, overcome the marginalization of his people. Willier's generation is not going to be pushed back.

*Cry of the Eagle* reads like a work in progress. It does not tell us whether chemists have analyzed Willier's herbal medicines; it cannot tell us whether his Traditional Healing Center will be built; it cannot predict whether he and Young will succeed in getting a natural preserve in the Swan Hills. Raising these questions, publishing this account of a truly contemporary Cree healer, the book "tells it like it is." Indian readers will find it interesting and perhaps inspiring. Other readers—college students, the general public—will gain a better sense of what it is to be an intelligent, caring Indian person today.

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**Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada.** By J. R. Miller. Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1989. 329 pages. \$35.00 Cloth.

James Miller, who teaches history at the University of Saskatchewan, has filled a long-felt void in Canadian studies by giving us an up-to-date overview of the place of the native peoples—Indians, Inuit, métis—in the unfolding of the nation's political, social, and economic development. As academics always have known, at least in general terms, it is not a pretty picture, in spite of all the rhetoric about Canadians never forcibly removing thousands of Indians to make way for white settlement, or turning the cavalry on the displaced persons when they resisted further intrusions. At least until 1701, Canadians were nurtured on the myth of the nasty Iroquois, who seemed determined to destroy

New France, then on the concept of "good" Indians who fought the threatening Anglo-Americans. Pontiac, Brant, and Tecumseh were to a degree national heroes. In religious terms, the Iroquois were responsible for the martyrdom of seven Jesuits, yet they too eventually provided the church with their own saint, Kateri Tekakwitha, or the "lily of the Mohawks" at the Kanawaké Reserve. After the initial fur trade era, the native peoples tended to disappear from the historical texts, or remained as part of the wilderness decor, seemingly destined to substantiate the nineteenth century myth of the "vanishing red man."

Then the métis made a sudden and necessary appearance as the course of national history moved westward to the Red River. The resistance to the Hudson's Bay Company trade monopoly and eventually to the purchase of the area without consultation of the population led to a popular protest movement headed by Louis Riel and to some political backtracking by the federal government in 1870-71. The region adhered to the Canadian federal union, created in 1867, as a full-fledged bilingual and bicultural province, the métis were granted certain land rights, and negotiations were initiated with Indian bands to extinguish their title to vast tracts to make way for a transcontinental railway, white settlement, and resource exploitation. The federal government, which, by virtue of the written portion of the constitution (British North America Act), had jurisdiction over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians," passed the Indian Act (1876) which is still in force today after numerous amendments over time for the government of native bands through a Department of Indian Affairs. The department is a successor to the British bureau created in the 1750s which had attempted to apply a unitary imperial policy on the entire North American continent.

The métis made a spectacular reappearance on the stage of national history in 1885 in the so-called North-West Rebellion, led politically by Louis Riel and militarily by Gabriel Dumont. There was fear of a general Plains Indian uprising, and Chiefs Big Bear and Poundmaker were imprisoned in humiliating circumstances on charges of treason, or "kicking off Queen Victoria's bonnet," as was interpreted to the Cree. Riel was hanged; this resulted in a national political crisis and soon thereafter in the end of the long period of Conservative party rule.

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald will be remembered for his explanation of the Indian Act amendments. Said he, they aimed

“to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all aspects with the inhabitants of the Dominion.” This reassured mainstream Canadian society that the “problems” were being resolved. The Indian agents answerable to the bureaucracy in Ottawa, the Catholic and Anglican missionaries, the farm instructors, and the teachers at the residential schools would see to that. This approach is neither novel nor foreign to American readers. None of it really worked. But the Indians remained invisible in national history and national consciousness until the world saw the lamentable state of their survival at the native people’s pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal and the revamped Macdonald policy in the 1969 White Paper, which proposed abolition of Indian status and “privileges” in a supposedly great egalitarian, democratic reform. Native reactions were immediate and largely intensely negative.

Since then, Indian interests have been very much a consideration in constitutional issues, resource development, a reallocation of economic and political jurisdictions. Miller’s book appears, therefore, at an opportune time when students and the general public are seeking information on the precise nature of the relationship with native peoples over time and the historical and moral bases for aboriginal claims. It is generally known that the Hollywood version of the Indians obstructing settlement and progress ill suits the Canadian drama, yet there is the uneasy feeling that the Mounted Police and the missionaries were not merely protectors of native interests. Our question then is, How well does Miller’s book describe and analyze the Canadian version of native/newcomer relations?

This book does not pretend to be a history of Canada’s native peoples. It is a study of Indian-white relations in the traditional mode of historical research; therefore, it begins quite properly with the ill-fated Norse ventures, the unfriendly fishing contacts shrouded in the mists of Renaissance outreach, and progresses to the French settlement and emergence of dual dependency. The interconnections of French mercantile, missionary, and military intrusions into native ancestral territories from a small Laurentian settlement base are well presented. This is a period that in the past has been incorrectly portrayed through statements indicating that the French never recognized any aboriginal title or that they ruthlessly exploited the Indians in the fur trade. Miller concludes instead (p. 258) that the “French period did not

weaken aboriginal title to the land or the indigenous peoples' powers of self-government." I would have asserted more boldly that natives today should look beyond their supposed charter of rights, the Royal Proclamation of 1763, to the French régime when Europeans issued many official statements recognizing native independence and self-government under the umbrella of their sovereignty. One Abnaki chief described this French exercise of sovereignty against the claims of other European nations through the recognition of native nationhood in the metaphor of "one cabin, two fires." The British proclamation of 1763 was, in a very real sense, the adoption of French imperial policy. Indeed, even in the Capitulations of 1760, which had the force of an international treaty, Indian property and occupational rights are guaranteed as a condition of French surrender.

The British colonial period, which ended in 1860 when the British North American colonies assumed responsibility for Indians, is treated fairly, with due consideration given to the Native Loyalist issue, the Upper Canadian treaty-making process, the role of Protestant missionaries, and the influence of British humanitarians in a context of evolving scientific racism. One might have liked to have more information on the unique relationship between the Lower Canadian (Quebec) government and society and the natives prior to confederation, and perhaps more information on Maritime regional developments. Ontario and the West are better served than the rest of Canada.

The post-confederation and contemporary periods are treated in comprehensive fashion in six chapters, which cover such matters as political evolution, mission work, education, reserves, land claims, aboriginal rights, and constitutional issues. More could have been said about landmark court cases, conditions on reserves, and especially about urban problems, since the title does evoke the skyscrapers hiding the heavens. Miller outlines the rise of some native organizations and their politicization as the original peoples prepared to fight back against the policies proposed in the 1969 White Paper, in the Nielson Task Force report in 1985, and the present-day Meech Lake accord.

The final chapter is entitled, "Do we learn anything from history?" Certainly, we can learn much from this book, but it still appears that governments, like institutionalized education, religion, and social welfare services, learn only very slowly. Miller concludes that the consensual, cooperative, and noncompetitive

tradition of Indian decision-making has much to offer mainstream society. But his historical overview does not convince one that it has been a particularly fruitful approach in preserving and promoting native society in the past. The Micmac poet Rita Joe wrote that "while skyscrapers hide the heavens, they can fall." Canadians generally hold to the skyscrapers, while the native peoples focus on the heavens. Perhaps the heavens are more enduring, but the skyscrapers obscure more and more of the heavens, and they show little sign of falling down. Miller is not entirely optimistic that effective solutions will be applied. One obstacle is that the "public cannot perceive an Indian victory that does not entail a corresponding loss for non-natives in the overheated rhetoric and guerilla theatre that has (*sic*) accompanied recent political confrontation" (p. 284).

This sympathetic and sensible overview of four centuries of contact relations is augmented by thirty poignant illustrations, nine maps, useful notes on primary sources, an excellent bibliography, and an adequate index. A few statistical tables would have been useful additions to document demographic factors and the extent of social and economic deprivation. The publishers are to be commended also for an attractive presentation; unfortunately, the book is overpriced for consideration as a textbook, so in most institutions it will likely remain a reference work. Pity.

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**The Chippewas of Lake Superior.** By Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. 217 pages. \$21.95 Cloth. \$12.95 Paper.

Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr.'s *The Chippewas of Lake Superior* provides a brief, descriptive overview of the history of that portion of the Chippewa (or Ojibwa) people whom the United States government designated "Lake Superior Chippewas." Although located primarily in Wisconsin, the Lake Superior Chippewas also include sizable communities in northeastern Minnesota, northern Michigan, and Michigan's upper peninsula.

Danziger begins his work with a description of traditional Chippewa culture, then moves to a discussion of the French and