

maintains the nation-state close to the center of the analysis. More references to other dimensions of the LASHIPA project—which was indeed a thoroughly international endeavor—would have helped to overcome this relatively narrow national focus. This book needs to be recognized as one important part of a broader research project that certainly seems to be achieving the author's stated goals. As it stands, some revisions to the doctoral dissertation would be necessary to make this book attractive to general readers with an interest in Arctic history. But this fascinating book will already be of great interest to a broad range of specialist scholars working on polar themes.

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SKIN FOR SKIN: DEATH AND LIFE FOR INUIT AND INNU. By GERALD M. SIDER. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8223-5521-2 (pbk.). xix + 288 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, references, index. Hardbound, US\$ 89.95; Softbound, US\$24.95.

Attributing the miseries of colonial history to the stupidity or willful blindness of individual actors—traders, mine employees, or government officials—is a mistake. Historically, they operated within the necessities of a particular way of making sense, communicated through edicts, texts, and norms embedded in the logic of capital expansion and their (our) culture. Colonial behaviour is more than a case of stupid people doing mean and hurtful things.

In *Skin for skin*, Gerald Sider, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Graduate Centre, City University of New York, focuses on Innu and Inuit of Labrador, the title being a reference to the personal price paid, historically, for delivering fur to the Hudson's Bay Company.

Sider is at pains to explain the self-defeating and destructive behaviour of Inuit and Innu, plagued by persistent substance abuse, youth suicide, and violence against women and children. In the first four chapters, he walks us through the brutal history of White/Inuit, Innu relationships. The remaining chapters are a salvage operation—but not entirely. While documenting the strength of contemporary Innu and Inuit cultures, he notes new exploitive threats: contemporary versions of what he has previously documented.

Sider's writing is heavily influenced by the theorizing of anthropologist Paul Willis (1977). Willis' contention was that the self-destructive behaviour of British working class 'lads' was a form of resistance against their attempted socialization to the labour regimes of industrial Britain. This was, at the time, an attention to agency by Willis that broke with the rigidity of Marxist structuralism. Sider aspires to do more than recount a colonial history. He wants to make a difference by offering a way out of this cycle of self-destructive behaviour.

Substance abuse as resistance takes agency in peculiar and questionable directions. Sider might have benefited from the experiential wisdom of Aboriginal theorists like Brave Heart (2003) and Wesley-Esquimaux (2004), who understand substance abuse as an attempt to make the pain of historical trauma disappear; a response that returns pain in ever-widening circles.

In her 1992 review of Willis' *Learning to Labour*, Beverly Skeggs argues that his political project leaves the reader with a romanticized, celebratory view of working-class 'lads' and that rhetorical devices like the use of "we" invite a commitment to the text without prior consideration of theory. Sider does the same. In writing *Skin for skin*, he uses archival sources. He did a little "hanging out" in Labrador towns. He interviewed no Innu or Inuit. Nevertheless, not unlike the results of Jean-Paul Sartre hanging out with Simone de Beauvoir in Paris cafés, his observations are worth taking seriously.

Sider duplicates Willis' rhetorical style with full force. The reader is often provided a lecture framed by, "As we shall see...", "As we all know..." etc. Canadian readers will also be jarred by Sider's reference to Indians and Native people. Arguing for the use and historical context of this language, in that the State and traders were busy trying to make Innu and Inuit "Indians" and "Eskimos," reinforces images that Sider wants to change. "Native people"—a term used throughout the text—is current in the United States, but definitely passé in Canada. Sider might have empowered Aboriginal peoples in Canada by deferring to Inuit Tapirisat Canada's online resources stating how they would like Inuit, Aboriginal, and the term Indigenous to be used.

The first half of Sider's text is a rough but important read. The reader is given a thorough journey through a colonial history badly in need of deconstruction. Sider delivers. The text, however, is not a straightforward chronology. Like Sartre's *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1976), Sider's narration, en route to detailing capitalist expansion in the New World, gives us many asides. A discussion of the Spanish Flu epidemic in northern Labrador introduces us to the spread of the Black Plague in Europe. Sider makes the point that, like the European peasants, Inuit and Innu endured years of suffering—famine and relocation—that made them vulnerable to whatever diseases came along.

In the chapter "Living Within and Against Tradition, 1800–1929," Sider takes issue with the glorification by Native people and outsiders of the fur-trade era as

traditional society. He questions that it can play any role in healing the damage done to Native people. But Innu and Inuit reference to that period, in regard to tradition, cannot be lightly dismissed. Sider's protestations beg the question of what is traditional and suggest that the strategies required to survive the vicissitudes of that period may indeed be strengths relevant to healing the damage of a colonial past. In questioning what is traditional, Sider may have mixed tradition (customary ways of being with each other) with a history of labour abuse, disease, and displacement. People (likely themselves under the influence of alcohol or drugs) using gasoline-soaked blankets to calm babies crying in their cribs are hardly demonstrative of "customary ways of being with each other." Traditions of respectful, kind, thoughtful, caring ways to which people aspire in living together can survive the worst atrocities of history, as documented by holocaust survivor Victor Frankel (1959), to whom Sider refers. Whether the period excavated for these ways of being is traditional or not is perhaps a moot point.

Sider is at his best in the chapter "Today May Become Tomorrow." Here he maps contemporary relations, notably with mining companies that have descended upon northern Aboriginal peoples with a vengeance. Sider is determined to come up with a solution to problems that he, for good reason, associates with Paul Farmer's concept of "structural violence." It is a case well-made.

Unfortunately his last chapter, "Warriors of Wisdom," not unlike Willis' portrayal of the resistance of British working class 'lads,' left me feeling that I was digesting the romantic conclusion of a complicated meal. Sider provides us with interesting examples of councils of Elders and militant resistance turning the tide of self-destructive behaviour in other Aboriginal settings. The extent to which these events have been romanticized—including the history of Wounded Knee (1973)—requires interrogation. Recent revelations about the death of Mi'kmaq activist Anna Mae Aquash at Wounded Knee and the internal politics of the American Indian Movement (Konigsberg, 2014) cast doubt on what Sider celebrates as potential solutions.

Innu and Inuit in Labrador and elsewhere are up against something that those of us who are not Aboriginal need to address and better understand. The history that Sider recounts is not simply one of evil people doing cruel and unthinkable things to others, an impression that one can mistakenly take from Sider's text, with its heavy reliance on archival documents penned by culpable individuals. Sider doesn't disavow the logic of capital accumulation. Neither does he clearly articulate its logic. Unpacking the logic of capital accumulation, particularly by dispossession, is a pre-requisite to understanding our own culture and working effectively with and for social justice and Indigenous peoples everywhere.

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