

focussing on the twentieth century. It is perhaps the material on travelogues as well as on the post-revolutionary period that one finds most valuable. One must note also that while there is no dearth of scholarship in the established field of orientalism, there are very few studies from the opposite side, namely, the impact or images of the West in Eastern literature. *In a Persian Mirror* deserves credit on this basis as well.

The author adopts a historical approach to his subject. He begins with the classical period when the West (*farang*) was seen simply as the hostile Christian Other as opposed to the Islamic Self. This dichotomy between the Self and the West as the Other lingers in the minds of early Iranian travellers to the West in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in particular. With increasing contact between the West and Iran, the prevailing image of the West began to shift from a monolithic, negative Other to something that could be appealing as well. The scientific and material progress of the West makes the modernists propose a total emulation of the West, while the traditionalists focus on safeguarding Persian/Islamic values and culture. The predominant picture in the post-revolutionary period is, however, free from this intellectual conflict as the Iranian writer turns back to a one-dimensional, negative image of a hostile, imperialist West bent on exploiting Iran and the Muslim world.

The historical and political background helps the reader situate the text and understand the subtle details of Iranian attitudes towards the British or the Americans at a given point in history. For instance, much of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Persian literature is characterized by an anglophobia that was a direct result of the British imperialist policies, particularly during the period of Mosaddeq and the oil nationalization movement. Later on, the target of Iranian anger shifts from the British to the Americans, who are blamed for the repression during the Pahlavi regime.

There are, however, some problems. For example, Professor Ghanoonparvar's assertion that the Iranian attitudes towards the West are not clearly defined and that much of Persian fiction treats the dilemma of the encounter with the West in an ambivalent fashion is not borne out by the post-revolutionary material examined in the book. Another weakness of the work is that the literary analysis it offers often lacks depth—it tends to be limited to plot summaries.

SHAMSUL ISLAM

Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie, eds. *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1992. pp. 393. \$19.95.

There are two miracles of Canadian history. The first is the survival of French Canada, and the second is the survival of Canada.

F. R. SCOTT, *Essays on the Constitution*

Scott, a poet as well as a constitutional lawyer, overlooked another miracle, which if it was not apparent in 1952 when he spoke those words, is becoming clearer and clearer in the 1990s. The miracle of which I speak is the survival, indeed the flourishing, of Native culture in the face of incredible odds. Canada's constitution was formed largely on the premise that aboriginal persons would be assimilated by the mainstream. Federal policy often sought to reduce Native cultures to a shell of their former selves. Recent efforts have, however, attempted to assist Natives as they revitalize their cultures. It was disappointing to many that the constitutional initiatives of 1992 ended without an amendment explicitly recognizing a right to self-government for Indians, Inuit, and Métis. Nonetheless, the constitutional debates did contribute to a greater awareness of the existence of distinctive aboriginal communities within this land, each with forceful cultural and political voices.

Perhaps the most important task at hand for Canadians in the next century will be to understand and appreciate truly the situation of Natives in this country. *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature* gives readers a good start in that direction. One might note that this is an anthology and does not purport to be the definitive collection of Native writings to date. This aspect of the text is stressed by the editors, Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie, in a dialogue they conduct in their preface. The two make clear their refusal to create through their selections a canon of Native writing. Such an approach offers a good deal of merit, particularly inasmuch as many of the writings chosen were published after 1985. A delightful surprise for readers not immersed in the field is the large number of gifted writers who are really still in an early phase of their careers—no evidence here of a sober, rarified museum atmosphere.

Moses, a Delaware Indian and talented poet and playwright, whose work may be found in the body of the anthology, and Goldie, who teaches English at York University and is the author of *Fear and Temptation: the Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures*, conduct their dialogue in a lively and provocative manner. The question is posed, for instance, as to whether or not Native writers should be considered to be part of the mainstream in this country. Moses pungently observes: "The mainstream god got killed a while back and a lot of people are desperately holding on to the corpse" (xiv). Earlier he states: "My image of that mainstream is that it is pretty wide but it's spiritually shallow. I don't think we are worried about being 'subsumed'" (xiv). In other words, Native writers are more than capable of paddling their own canoe, whether it be down the mainstream or along a separate one.

Alas, the dialogue soon becomes entangled in the prickly question of appropriation of voice by non-aboriginal writers. The editors reach no clear conclusion but in the process—not surprisingly—give W. P. Kinsella a good going-over. Can we or, more important, should we establish

rules on such matters? No one surely can confuse Kinsella's Sijas Ermineskin stories with documentary realism and after all, is he not writing fiction? If Twain had ever accepted the precepts seemingly advocated here, presumably the world would never have been given *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, in which a black character plays such an important role.

Whether or not white writers choose to portray Native characters in their fictions, there is no doubt that we genuinely need to take advantage of the opportunity to read gifted Native writers, who have the capacity to tell us so much about their communities. This anthology begins with a number of selections from the oral tradition, referred to as orature by the editors. These songs and poems reveal an obvious reverence and respect for the natural world and a clear-eyed perspective on the hazards of mortal existence. To take but one example, the Inuit "Dead Man's Song" recounts a particularly compelling dream in which the singer looks back on the glorious nature of his life, a life which he had been too distracted by practical concerns to appreciate.

A number of selections are autobiographical in nature. An excerpt from Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* reveals why that work has established itself as a classic. Like many of the other autobiographies that are included, *Halfbreed* vividly conveys the trials and tribulations (but also the fierce joys) of communities that are largely hidden from other Canadians. Considerable flavour is added to the stew of Canadian history by accounts such as these, as we learn what happened to the Métis who fought alongside Riel and subsequently scattered to Saskatchewan and Alberta.

This anthology aims to be timely and politically relevant. A number of pieces contain impassioned, eloquent statements advocating full recognition of aboriginal rights. Such polemical works are occasionally tough going, at least for other Canadians, but it must be recognized that the issues raised are ones that we must attempt to resolve in the near future if our society is to remain peaceful and united.

The most exciting aspect of this anthology is the encounter it allows with relatively new and unknown writers. I have certainly heard much of Tomson Highway, but reading the excerpt from the *Rez Sisters* stimulates my desire to see a performance of one of his plays at the earliest opportunity. It is a strange, moody piece which includes a hallucinatory scene in which a Bingo Master is transformed into the night hawk, Nanabush, one of the trickster figures in Native mythology who are referred to by several of the writers. Dramatists like Highway, Moses, and Monique Mojica (whose hilarious *Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots* is excerpted here) stand ready to transform Canadian drama. Native writers, able to draw upon various cultural traditions including the oral storytelling tradition exemplified here most spectacularly by Harry Robinson's "An Okanagan Indian Becomes a Captive Circus Showpiece in England," reveal considerable potential to create a unique form of

drama, with elements of myth, dance, and song carried along by muscular vocal rhythms. The works included here achieve Highway's ambition, stated in the highly informative Notes on Authors, that being to "show and to celebrate what funky folk Canada's Indian people really are" (375).

Of the many fine samplings of poetry I would like to single out the Archie Belaney sequence by the Ojibway poet Armand Garnet Ruffo. The sequence is from his unpublished work *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney*. It is a moving yet unsentimental exploration of the strange life of that famous Canadian Indian whose existence was in reality a masquerade. Ruffo indelibly captures the fear of unmasking that must have been Grey Owl's constant companion in "Archie Belaney, 1935":

Helpless, I fall to the knees. And above me, there she is, Ivy,
the young actress Belaney once loved and abandoned.
And beside her, all his old Hastings Grammar School class mates
laughing at odd-ball Archie who's still playing Indian
after all these years. (322)

Rather impressive are two recent stories contributed by writers associated with this province: Thomas King, part Cherokee, who has taught for ten years in the Native Studies program at the University of Lethbridge, and Emma Lee Warrior, a member of the North Peigan (Blackfoot) band. King uses coyote in an amusing fashion and reworks the role of the trickster figure within a contemporary idiom. Warrior provides an adept take on the meaning of authenticity in relation to Indian culture.

There are other compelling works from Indian, Inuit, and Métis writers that bode well for the future of Native writing in Canada. The last word should go to one of the writers included in this fine book, a famous one in her time, Pauline Johnson: "There are those who think they pay me a compliment in saying that I am just like a white woman. My aim, my joy, my pride is to sing the glories of my own people" (378).

ROBERT J. NORMEY

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. *Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars*. New York: Oxford UP, 1992. pp. xix, 199. \$19.95 pb.

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s *Loose Canons* is a book of miscellaneous essays, most of which were published between 1989 and 1991 in weeklies and journals as diverse as the *New York Times Book Review* and *Newsweek*, *Critical Enquiry* and *Dissent*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *PMLA*, and *American Literary History*. "Integrating the American Mind" and "The Big Picture" are first publications, while "Writing, 'Race,' and the Difference It Makes" dates back to 1985.

Although the ten essays are thematically related by variously discussing the urgent need and the critical and institutional potentialities of establishing a black canon as part of a comprehensive multicultural