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# RESOURCES FOR MÉTIS RESEARCHERS



**Lawrence J. Barkwell  
Leah Dorion  
Darren R. Préfontaine**

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**Cover artwork by Christi Belcourt**

“Our Roots Go Deep, Our Hopes Stand Tall” (#1, blue background), acrylic on canvas, 20” x 24”. Reproduced with the permission of Christi Belcourt. Christi Belcourt is a Métis woman who was born and raised in Ontario, and whose ancestry is from the Métis community of Lac St. Anne, Alberta. She is an emerging self-taught artist who has been painting for 15 years.

Since 1993 she has been refining the themes within her paintings to reflect her strong sense of Aboriginal heritage and pride as a Métis woman. The themes can be grouped into three topics: *Florals* – inspired by the beadwork patterns of Métis and First Nations women; *Water* – honouring the sacredness and relationship that all living creatures have with water; and *Métis History* – depicting various Métis and First Nations people, painted or drawn in black and white like the old photos from which they were taken. Christi recently received a Cultural Development Grant through the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives in Toronto, to produce and promote new and existing works. She lives in Ottawa with her husband Wayne Peltier, and daughter Jeana.

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# Table of Contents

Introduction		
Lawrence Barkwell		1
Part One		
Deconstructing Métis Historiography:		
Leah Dorion and Darren R. Préfontaine		
Introduction		3
The Epochs of Métis History		4
Emerging Voices of Métis Women		5
Métis Identity and community Studies		7
Exploring Métis Oral Tradition and Spirituality		12
Métis Culture and Language		14
Métis Resistances and Political Activism		17
Métis People and the Land		23
Educational Resources About the Métis		24
Métis Literary and Artistic Sources		25
Canadian Military Service		27
Contemporary Issues		28
Conclusion		30
Part Two		
Bibliography		
Lawrence Barkwell, Leah Dorion and Darren R. Préfontaine		31
Part Three		
Videos, Audio Tapes, CD's and CD-ROM's		
Lawrence Barkwell, Leah Dorion and Darren R. Préfontaine		117
Part Four		
Web Sites		
Lawrence Barkwell, Leah Dorion and Darren Préfontaine		121
Index		125



# Resources for Métis Researchers

## Introduction

Lawrence J. Barkwell<sup>1</sup>

John Friesen and Terry Lusty completed the last extensive bibliography on the Métis in 1980. A more limited annotated bibliography dealing with Métis history and land claims was written by Dennis Madill in 1983. Many Métis students have commented that an update is long overdue. This effort is a response to that request.

This collection attempts to gather a comprehensive listing of resources written for, by and about the Métis people of North America. The listing includes published papers, journal articles and books as well as unpublished theses, dissertations and working papers from a variety of organizations. The collection also contains references to fiction, poetry and plays written about the Métis and a large number of children's storybooks. Video and audio portrayals of Métis stories and music are listed at the end of the bibliography. Much information is now available on the worldwide web and the relevant web pages are also listed.

Within the general listings arranged by author are listings which cover a number of themes: Métis Women, the Michif Language, Métis Communities, Métis Bibliographies, Métis Biographies and Métis Genealogy are some of the specific topics we have tried to survey.

We have not attempted to list everything written about Louis Riel and the two resistance movements as these are already documented in detail in George Stanley's (1985) *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel, Volume 5, Reference*.

The specific intent of this project was to produce a resource listing for the Louis Riel Institute, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Métis

National Council, the Métis Resource Centre, Manitoba Native Affairs Secretariat and instructors of Native Studies. The more general purpose was to provide a resource list for Métis students.

This compendium reveals that Métis issues such as residential schools, health, justice, economic development, natural resources, and human services such as child welfare are under-represented in the literature and in some cases references are almost non-existent. Compared to the body of literature and research which makes reference to these issues for First Nations and the Inuit, the Métis have truly been ignored and neglected.

Another neglected area is the syncretic spiritual and medical belief systems of the Métis. The folklore and mythology of the Métis also require further documentation.

The Métis people's language, Michif, was poorly understood until Peter Bakker's ten years of research was published as a monograph by Oxford University Press in 1997. The Michif language will be receiving more attention over the next few years since the Métis National Council has recently obtained funding under the Canadian Heritage Ministry's Aboriginal Language Initiative to revitalize and maintain this unique language for future generations. There is a pressing need for Métis linguists to create an accessible lexicography for this oral language.

One would have thought that the Métis Tripartite self-government negotiating process involving the various Métis political groups would have led to more in-depth and extensive research in the health, education and social

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1. The author wishes to acknowledge and thank Lorraine Freeman from the Métis Resource Centre, Fred Shore of the University of Manitoba Native Studies Department and Devin Dietrich, Manitoba Native Affairs Secretariat summer student, for their contributions to this work. The encouragement and support received from David Chartrand, Paul Chartrand, Stephanie Courchene and Harvey Bostrom was invaluable. Research for this project was carried out with the support of Manitoba Northern Affairs, Native Affairs Secretariat.



sciences areas as they pertain to Métis people. The major impediments to relevant Métis research are twofold: first, the absence of a thorough enumeration of Canadian Métis people creates problems and expenses that do not exist with regard to research within the Inuit and First Nations populations; second, university and college curricula addressing Métis interests are sparse. The comment I usually hear from Métis students is that the label *Aboriginal* usually means First Nations content. The low numbers of Métis youth involved in graduate studies is also a matter of concern. Métis youth discussed this at length at their recent National Métis Youth Labour Awareness Conference (November 1997).

This book is a co-operative co-publication of the Louis Riel Institute of the Manitoba Métis Federation and Saskatchewan's Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, an affiliate of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. The substantial land claims research available to these two Métis institutions has not been listed in this bibliography.

Readers will find some of the references contained herein to be rather arcane. Those who are interested in locating the referenced documents that are now out of print or generally not available are encouraged to contact the Louis Riel Institute or the Gabriel Dumont Institute for assistance.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI) is an educational system directly controlled by Saskatchewan's Métis people. GDI's mandate is to design and implement Métis and other Aboriginal specific educational and cultural programs and services. When GDI was founded in 1980, only Aboriginal people themselves – such as Maria Campbell and Howard Adams – were thinking and writing about the visceral racism undergirding Canadian society, and of our country's historical development from a Native point of view. Today, the mission of GDI's

Curriculum and Publishing Department is to address racist historiography by producing historical works and other resources, which are culturally affirming for Métis and other Aboriginal people. The Institute as a whole strives to promote the cultural renewal of the Métis people and to excel in producing quality cross-cultural educational products for use by non-Aboriginal people.

The Louis Riel Institute of the Manitoba Métis Federation (LRI) was incorporated in 1995 by an Act of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. In 1997, efforts began to turn the LRI into an operational entity. The goals of the LRI are: (1) to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research, material development and dissemination of cultural material; (2) to design, develop and deliver quality educational and cultural programs and services; and, (3) to provide educational opportunities which are uniquely suited to the aspirations of Métis people.

It is our sincere hope that all readers, and students in particular, will find this compendium useful. The two Institutes intend to immediately produce an annotated version of this reference work and encourage readers to send in additional referencing for future revisions. Please send your comments to either of the addresses shown on the flyleaf of this book.

I want to close by thanking my partners in this endeavour – two young academics with a passionate interest in Métis history and culture – Leah Dorion and Darren Préfontaine. Their essay in the following chapter is intended to give the reader a critical overview of some of the classic scholarly writings on the Métis along with a review of topics that they have identified as contemporary issues and concerns. Most importantly, they direct the reader to material written from a Métis point of view. They have also pointed out many under-researched and little-documented topics worthy of further exploration.



## Part One

# Deconstructing Métis Historiography: Giving Voice to the Métis People

Leah Dorion and Darren R. Préfontaine

### I Introduction

In this essay we will argue that the recorded history of the Métis people has been incomplete and as written has contained pejorative bias. We will demonstrate that this situation has begun to change as Métis people have moved into the role of historical narrators who have their own views of their ancestors as historical participants.<sup>2</sup>

Today, the Métis experience still remains a "hidden" history best expressed by the memories of Elders and other community people. In spite of these factors, there have been many exciting developments in the literature.<sup>3</sup> This paper will critically analyze much of the expanding literature pertaining to the Métis experience in Canada. Certain resources will be recommended and others will be deconstructed<sup>4</sup> of bias. This paper will not analyze all resources

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2 The authors wish to thank Lawrie Barkwell for his generous assistance, guidance, and thoughtful insights.

3 Gary B. Nash, "The Hidden History of Mestizo America," *The Journal of American History*. December 1995: 941-962. In this article Nash documents the history of mixed-race people in America and specifically the attempts made by the dominant culture (Anglo-Americans) to obliterate the memory of these "hidden" people.

4 Deconstruct: A belief in Postmodernism which attempts to demolish oppressive and conformist ways of thought in society by emphasizing group differences and the inclusion of religious, sexual, racial and ethnic minorities into mainstream culture. To better understand Post-Modernism theory consult Richard Appignanesi and Chris Garrat, *Postmodernism for Beginners*, Cambridge: Icon Books Ltd., 1996. For a look at how a Métis scholar has deconstructed many historic myths pertaining to the Métis people see: Howard Adams, *A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization*. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books, 1995: 25-35 and 93-101. For insight into the mind of the colonized and the colonizer (from a North African point of view), see Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.

pertaining to the Métis people, but it will be demonstrated that Métis studies are becoming a more balanced discipline.

The Métis people of Canada and the United States have been called the "New Peoples"<sup>5</sup> because they emerged through intermarriage between two distinct populations, First Peoples and Europeans. Interestingly, the Métis almost always entered the traditional historiography<sup>6</sup> in studies of the great continental fur trade, or when they interrupted the plans of fur trade officials or Canadian politicians, especially during the 1869-70 and 1885 Resistances. It should also be noted that Europeans largely wrote the historical record. The Métis and First Peoples histories came from oral traditions that were not given much valence by the colonizers. As a result, the historical record regarding the Métis people remains invariably negative.

In the past, Euro-Canadian historians generally wrote about political, economic and military matters. From the late 1800s until the early 1960s, the Great Man of History school was the dominant canon in Canadian historical writing. Rather than studying society as a whole, historians wrote biographies of politicians, soldiers, and diplomats. Regarding Métis history, historians only analyzed the life of Louis Riel and the political events leading to the two major Métis Resistances. Social and economic factors along with the concerns of ordinary

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5 Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Introduction," in Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown (Eds.), *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985: 3-4.

6 Historiography: Is the study of how history and historical interpretation has changed over time. History: Is the interpretation of past events and people through the use of primary source documents. This branch of knowledge is concerned with the recording and explanation of historical events. See Pierre Savard and A.B. McKillop, "Historiography," the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, Volume I. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1985: 817-819.



Métis people were rarely assessed. History was largely written from an ethnocentric<sup>7</sup> perspective since the experiences of women, ethnic, visible minorities, and Aboriginal people were either ignored or were inaccurately portrayed. Needless to say, an Euro-Canadian male perspective dominated traditional Canadian historical writing.

At a time when liberalism and the Protestant work ethic were in vogue, historical biographies of political, military and economic leaders focussed on how one individual, through hard work and sheer determination, could rise up through the social ranks and could achieve greatness in his chosen field. These works served as models for socially mobile young men.<sup>8</sup>

The great man of history theory still applies to Métis history. For instance, popular historians continue to work on projects that concentrate exclusively on Louis Riel rather than having a more thorough analysis of the Prairie Métis people's historic grievances.<sup>9</sup>

The liberating climate of the 1960s led to the rise of socially conscious groups in society who resented the way traditional political history ignored their groups' contribution to the Canadian mosaic. This led to an explosion of writing by regional, feminine, Aboriginal, and ethnic historians who wrote their own interpretations of the past – social, intellectual, women's history, and ethnohistory.<sup>10</sup> For the Métis, this has

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7 Ethnocentrism: The belief or emotional attitude that one's own culture, nation or ethnic group is superior in every way to all others. (William A. Havilland, *Anthropology*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Montréal and Toronto: Holt, Reinhart Winston, 1985.)

8 This is the Horatio Alger myth, popular in movies and pulp fiction. See, E.H. Carr, *What is History?* Markham, Ontario: Penguin Canada, 1987: 109-132.

9 See George Woodcock and Paul Chartrand (1997), *Making History: Louis Riel and the North-West Rebellion of 1885*. This interactive CD ROM is a useful resource, especially its biographies, photographs and primary documents. However, its Aboriginal content is limited to a few quotes from Métis leader Paul Chartrand. Nonetheless, with this focus on individuals we are learning more about some of the peripheral people in Riel's life including his friends and secretaries. See also: Raymond Huel, "Living in the Shadow of Greatness: Louis Schmidt, Riel's Secretary" (1984), and Donatien Frémont, *Les Secrétaires de Riel: Louis Schmidt, Henry Jackson and Phillippe Garnot* (1953).

10 Ethnohistory: Is a discipline within history which attempts to be sensitive to the point of view of particular groups of people

meant that the Métis experience as a whole was finally being analyzed. Recent historiographical works such as J.R. Miller's, "From Riel to the Métis,"<sup>11</sup> have articulated many, if not most of these much needed changes in Canadian historical writing. These essays and other historical works discuss all aspects of past Métis existence, not just Riel's struggles.

There is now a plethora of writing by academics, popular writers, Elders, and other community people. Many of these authors are now writing about Métis communities outside the Red River area, the most widely known Métis homeland. Métis Studies has been greatly enriched by these developments. Métis Studies has now become an offshoot of many academic disciplines including Native Studies, History, Anthropology, Geography, Sociology, Political Science, Literature, Ethnology, Linguistics, Folk History, and Economics. Consequently, the process of collecting resources relating to the Métis experience in Canada involves an eclectic appreciation of all the Social Sciences and the Humanities.

## II The Epochs of Métis History

The periodization of Métis history into epochs is an aspect of Métis Studies which has only recently received attention. It is important to study and assess the full sweep of Métis history, not only to better understand historical context, but also to better understand some of the themes that have been integral to the Métis people from their beginnings.

In order to make Métis history easier to

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different than that of the historian writing about them. See: Bruce G. Trigger, "Ethnohistory: Problems and Prospects." *Ethnohistory*, 29 (1), 1982: 1-19.

11 J.R. Miller, "From Riel to the Métis," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LXIX (1), 1988: 1-20. Miller assesses much of the literature pertaining to Métis history. This fine essay is a good start to better understand how the historiography of the Métis people has evolved from a narrow focus on Louis Riel to the study of Métis communities. See also J.R. Miller, "Native History" in Doug Owram (Ed.), *Canadian History: A Readers Guide, Volume 2: Confederation to the Present*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994: 179-201. See also Stephen Hewit, "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Collected: Recent Western Canadian Historical Writing," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 32 (13), 1997: 162-172.



understand Fred Shore (1991) and other authors divide Métis history into convenient periods. As of yet, no encyclopedic approach to Métis history, such as the compilation of *North American Indians* by Sturtevant and Trigger,<sup>12</sup> on behalf of the Smithsonian Institute, exists. Such a work would allow Métis students to better understand the time periods of Métis history. The following is an example of how scholars and instructors have divided Métis history into more easily discernible time periods.

- [ \_\_\_ -1750] **Origin of the Métis People in Central and Atlantic Canada**
- [1750-1800] **Origin of the Métis People in Western Canada**
- [1800-1821] **Birth of Métis Nationalism**
- [1821-1870] **The Golden Years**
- [1869-1885] **Resistance and Dispersal**
- [1885-1900] **The Forgotten Years**
- [1900-1950] **The Road Allowance People**
- [1930-1960] **Struggle and Rebirth of the Métis**
- [1965-1980] **Emergence of New Political Organizations**
- [1980-1990] **The Search for Self-Determination and Self-Government**

### III Emerging Voices of Métis Women

In the past, most Métis societies were matrilineal and matriarchal. Métis women's roles in the family and community were valued and fundamental to the preservation of Métis culture. In her 1996 article, "Les Métisses: Towards a Feminist History of Red River", Sharon Blady has identified that Métis women at Red River, during the nineteenth century, held social and political power that was unseen in the lives of European women in the community. Over time, there was an erosion of the status of Métis women due to the Europeanization of their communities during the nineteenth century. As a result, the Métis woman's perspective and

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<sup>12</sup> William C. Sturtevant and Bruce Trigger, *Handbook of North American Indians*, Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1978. There are 20 volumes in this useful but dated collection. Those volumes which contain Métis content include Volume 13 (The Plains) and Volume 15 (The Northeast). For a recent Canadian effort in this regard see J.V. Wright and D. Wright (1998).

voice were often neglected in the historical record. Métis filmmaker and writer Christine Welsh effectively explores the impact of assimilation on the women in her family in the 1991 article "Voices of the Grandmothers: Reclaiming a Métis Heritage." Her search to document the life of her great-great-great-great-grandmother, Margaret Taylor, led to a new self-awareness for the author. She painstakingly discusses issues such as erosion of cultural identity, survival mechanisms, racism, adaptability, receiving the oral tradition, and silence – all common themes in other literature written by Métis women. Welsh adamantly believes that "being both women and Native we have been doubly silenced." She claims that through her work Native women will no longer be rendered historically voiceless.<sup>13</sup>

Like Christine Welsh, other women have tried to reconstruct the life history of their many grandmothers. Jock Carpenter's book entitled, *Fifty Dollar Bride, Marie Rose Smith – A Chronicle of Métis Life in the Nineteenth Century* (1977), is based on family papers, remembrances and correspondence which delineates the life story of her grandmother, Marie Rose Smith. This work gives important insights into Métis women's roles, work, family duties and gender relations. Sylvia Van Kirk's article, "What if Mama is an Indian?" (1985) closely examines how the mixed-blood children within the Alexander Ross family assimilated into the various racial hierarchies within fur trade society. Van Kirk discussed important issues about race, class and gender with regard to the Ross children's mixed-blood identity. The article is particularly relevant. Through the example of one nineteenth century Red River mixed-blood family, Van Kirk illuminates the struggle that many mixed-descent families have in coming to terms with their identity. More case studies such as this are needed to assist in understanding the roots of the historic Métis identity dilemma.

Since the 1980s more historians, communities and families are documenting the lives and contributions of Métis women. Unfortunately there is still limited information about nineteenth century Métis women, especially about women at Batoche. Most writing about Batoche is Eurocentric and male-centred. However, Diane

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<sup>13</sup> See also Welsh's 1992 and 1994 National Film Board films, *Women in the Shadows* and *Keepers of the Fire*.



Payment, in the article, " 'La vie en rose': Métis Women at Batoche, 1870-1920" (1997), documents the life and times of Batoche Métis women. Her work was based on interviews with eighteen Métis women from the Batoche area who were born between 1870 and 1920. This work is a great complement to the existing body of literature about Métis women. The article provides commentary on the erosion of Aboriginal women's status through contact with European missionaries, fur traders and colonizers. This essay examines both the diversities and the similarities in the life experiences of these Métis women. Payment highlights the underlying strength of the female kinship tie and the once complementary roles of women and men. She notes that Métis women participated alongside the men in building buffalo pounds, scouting, interpreting, hauling and skinning meat.

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of Métis history it is necessary to learn about Métis people and the fur trade. Unfortunately, most traditional fur trade literature entirely ignores the contributions of Métis and First Nations women. If women were mentioned it was often as a passing reference in a trader's journal, and in most instances framed in a variety of popular stereotypes. In the past, most popular fur trade histories used pejorative and stereotypical images of Métis women, such as the dirty or promiscuous halfbreed. Racist terms like 'squaw' or 'squawman' were used extensively in fur trade histories.<sup>14</sup> A squawman was a negative term for a trader who lived with an Indian or Métis woman. For example, in the book, *Trappers and Traders of the Far West*, the author dedicates a chapter to "Dorion's Squaw". In the book she is never given a name and was portrayed as the possession of her husband, even though her name, Marie Toway, and her independence were well documented elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

In the late 1970s, Jennifer Brown, Sylvia

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14 For more information on these terms see David D. Smits, "Squaw Men, Halfbreed, and Amalgamators: Late Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Attitudes Toward Indian-White Race-Mixing." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, Vol. 15 (3), 1991: 29-61.

15 This book portrays Pierre Dorion Sr. as a drunken wild halfbreed who, in a drunken rage, would often kill unfortunate individuals. James Daugherty, *Trappers and Traders of the Far West*, New York: Random House, 1952.

Van Kirk, and Jacqueline Peterson became the first authors to analyze the numerous and varied roles played by Native women in the fur trade. They viewed Native women as active agents and integral players in the development of the fur trade. In 1979, Ron Bourgeault published an article, which took the issues of Indian, and Métis women in the fur trade society in a new direction. In "The Development of Capitalism and the Subjugation of Native Women in Northern Canada," Bourgeault carefully examines how mercantilism, pre-industrial capitalism, class divisions, and colonization during the fur trade period contributed to the subjugation of Native women. He takes particular pains to deal with the economics behind the displacement of Indian and Métis women. Currently, Métis scholars such as Emma LaRoque are expanding the study of the impact of colonization on Aboriginal women into the present day in articles such as "The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar" (1996).

Even more comprehensive research is needed about the extensive historical experience and contributions of Métis women. In this endeavour, the women at the Métis Resource Centre have made a conscious effort to include vignettes of Métis women in their newsletter, *Buffalo Trails*. As well, Cathryn Halverson's 1997 article, "Redefining the Frontier: Mourning Dove's Cogewea, the Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range," examines the role of Métis women in the agriculture and ranching frontier of the nineteenth century.

Today, Métis women are reclaiming their traditional roles as coequals in society. Métis women are now taking the lead in community development, politics, and education based upon the foundations laid by preceding generations of Métis women. The first author to address the hard issues surrounding the life and times of Métis women was Maria Campbell in her book *Halfbreed* (1973). After its release, it was evident that she had paved the way for a new generation of Métis women writers. Even though it is listed as fiction, *In Search of April Raintree* (1983) by Beatrice Culleton poignantly illustrated the challenges faced by many Métis women, particularly regarding their own Métis identity, the effects of racism, and the impacts of the child welfare system on Métis children and families.



In contemporary society, Métis women are now reclaiming their rightful roles in the community, the workforce and the family. Scholars recognize this trend; for instance, Jennifer Brown in "Women as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities" (1983), acknowledges this contribution to community and family life.

In Grant MacEwan's anthology of biographies, *Métis Makers of History* (1981) there were biographical excerpts of two women along with the sixteen men. MacEwan highlighted the lives of Granny Callihoo and Pauline Johnson, but failed to give recognition to the many other women who helped form the backbone of the Métis historical experience. In comparison, *A Pictorial History of Métis and Non-Status Indians in Saskatchewan* (1976), by the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan, made a great effort to include both Métis men and women. This publication highlighted many women, including: Madeline Welky Dumont, Rose McKay-Boyer, Nora Oulette-Thibodeau, and Maria Campbell. Madeline Welky Dumont's legacy was particularly strong in oral memory. She has been honoured as an educator and as a healer who tended the wounded Métis resistors at Batoche in 1885. In 1975, the Secretary of State, Native Women's Program produced a book, *Speaking Together: Canada's Native Women*, which profiles several Métis women: Maria Campbell, Bertha Clark, Lena Gallup, Gloria George, Rita Guiboche and Vera Richards – however it is a very slim volume and only devotes a page or two to each woman. Overall, it would be fair to say that in modern general Métis histories and anthologies Métis women still struggle to have their equal presence and voice recognized.

Métis women are also creating awareness of Métis identity and culture by sharing their own diverse stories. Métis writers such as, Louise Legare, Marilyn Dumont, Janice Acoose and Cheryl L'Hirondelle are documenting the lives and oral history of Métis women. The strength of these women to tell their stories has encouraged more and more Métis women to share their voice in current literature. For example, the book, *In Our Own Words: Northern Saskatchewan Métis Women Speak Out*<sup>16</sup>(1986) reflects

16 Irene Poelzler and Delores Poelzler. *In Our Own Words:*

the determination of Métis women to no longer be ignored or silenced. These outspoken women provide personal opinions on contemporary issues such as: family breakdown, the impact of the church in Northern communities, poverty, isolation, child rearing, addictions, and community development.

Entire courses delineating the experience of Aboriginal women are now delivered in academic milieus. It is now possible to find much more contemporary academic material on Métis women. A good example of the adaptation and resilience of Métis women is provided in the article by Miriam McNab (1995), "From Bush to the Village to the City: Pinehouse Aboriginal Women Adapt to Change." Recent literature has started to document how Métis women have persisted, adapted and survived but more research is still needed on these issues.

#### IV Métis Identity and Community Studies

In 1982, the repatriated Canadian Constitution recognized the Métis as one of Canada's three Aboriginal peoples; the others being Indians (First Nations) and the Inuit.<sup>17</sup> The Métis people are only now becoming part of the literature from the federal government relating to Aboriginal peoples. For instance, in the 1998 *Statement of Reconciliation: Learning From the Past*, the Honourable Jane Stewart, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development<sup>18</sup> and the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians wrote:

No attempt at reconciliation with Aboriginal people can be complete without reference to the sad events culminating in the death of Métis leader Louis Riel. These events cannot be undone; however we can and

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*Northern Saskatchewan Métis Women Speak Out*. Saskatoon: One Sky, 1986.

17 Department of Justice, Canada, *A Consolidation of the Constitutional Acts, 1867 to 1982*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1987; Section 35 (2), *1982 Constitutional Act*, (pg. 69).

18 See also, *Gathering Strength – Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan*. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Jan 7, 1998.



will continue to look for ways of affirming the contributions of the Métis people in Canada and of reflecting Louis Riel's proper place in Canadian history.

This recognition has raised profound questions about who is Métis. It is therefore not surprising that the process of "being and becoming" Métis is one of the most interesting areas of Métis studies. Nobody knows for sure when the first Métis person lived or when Contact first occurred.<sup>19</sup> Until recently, little academic attention was paid to the origins of Métis people. Furthermore, few historical surveys – other than works by de Trémaudan (1936), Giraud (1945), Purich (1988), McLean (1988) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute (Dorion, Paquin and Préfontaine, 1999) – have attempted to assess the full sweep of Métis origins and history. Even so, more comprehensive and detailed historical surveys of the entire Métis experience in Canada would be welcome. Until recently, most authors maintained that the Métis phenomenon was limited to Rupert's Land.<sup>20</sup> A notable exception is Martin F. Dunn,

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19 Pre-Contact Period: The period before Europeans came into contact with Aboriginal peoples. Post-Contact Period: In the Americas, the period after Europeans came into contact with Aboriginal peoples. This period is most often associated with all recorded time after 1492 and Christopher Columbus' alleged "discovery" of the New World. See Bruce Trigger, *The Indians and the Heroic Age of New France*. Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association Historical booklet, No. 30. The period of New France (1534-1763) was when the Métis people emerged and developed a distinct identity separate from First Nations, *Canadiens* and British Americans. See also George R. Hamell, "Strawberries, Floating Islands, and Rabbit Captains: Mythical Realities and European Contact in the Northeast during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 21 (4), 1987: 72-94; Christopher L. Millar, "A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact: Cultural Symbols and Colonial Trade," *the Journal of American History*, 73 (2), 1986: 311-328; Howard Adams, "The John Cabot Myth: Did Cabot Discover Newfoundland? The Answer Has to be No." Vancouver, spring 1997; Bruce J. Trigger, "Early Native North American Responses to European Contact: Romantic versus Rationalist Interpretations," *the Journal of American History*, March 1991: 1195-1215. For a controversial look at Indian-European contact James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Context of Culture of Cultures in Colonial North America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986. Finally, it would be well worth consulting Denys Delâge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeast North America, 1600-1664*. Translated by Jane Brierley. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993.

20 Rupert's Land was the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America. King Charles II granted it to the Company in 1670. The territory consisted of the entire watershed

who completed an extensive paper, "All My Relations – The Other Métis," for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People in 1994.

New knowledge about Métis origins is still emerging and the study of miscegenation<sup>21</sup> is in its infancy. The traditional literature on Métis origins was primarily racist. For instance, past historians, such as Francis Parkman<sup>22</sup>, and Lionel Groulx<sup>23</sup> believed that Métissage<sup>24</sup> brought Europeans to the same level of "savagery" as Native Americans. Parkman's racist views regarding European and First Nations intermixing are articulated in the following excerpt from an historical narrative.

The fur-trade engendered a peculiar class of men, known by the appropriate name of bush rangers, or *coureurs de bois*, half-civilized vagrants, whose chief vocation was conducting the canoes of the traders

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that drained into Hudson's Bay. Canada acquired the territory in 1869; the Red River Resistance soon followed, since the local Aboriginal population was not consulted about the land transfer.

21 Miscegenation: The marriage or interbreeding between races, especially of whites and non-whites.

22 Francis Jennings, "Francis Parkman: A Brahmin among Untouchables," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XLII, 1985: 305-328.

23 In one of his polemical histories of New France, Canon Groulx maintained that there were only 94 marriages between Aboriginal people and the *anciens canadiens* (French Canadians), and that "these Métis have left no descendants among us, as their families were extinguished at the end of the eighteenth century." (In Esther Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and the Delirium of Extremist Right-Wing Nationalism in French Canada, 1929-1939*. Toronto and Montréal: Robert Davies Publishing, 1995: 80-81.) Lionel Groulx, a priest and the first professional French-Canadian historian, wrote between the 1910s and the 1960s. He founded both *L'Action Nationale* and *Revue D'histoire de la Amérique française*. In Quebec, Groulx's views on Métissage have been discredited. For instance, the Quebec historian, Louise Dechêne studied the parish registers of Ville Marie (Montréal) from 1642 to 1712, and found only seven recorded marriages between First Nations and French colonists. However, she argues that this does not mean that Métissage did not occur in early colonial Canada, for even around Montréal there were incalculable marriages "à la façon du pays" – common law marriages which would not have been recorded by the Church. Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth Century Montreal*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill and Queen's University Press, 1992: 14.

24 Métissage: "Croisement, mélange de races. Le métissage de la population brésilienne. Le métissage culturel – acculturation." "Race-mixing; race mixing in Brazil; cultural-mixing." Source: le Robert, quotidien. Dictionnaire pratique.



along the lakes and rivers of the interior; many of them, however, shaking loose every tie of blood and kindred identified themselves with the Indian and sank into utter barbarism ... The renegade of civilization caught the habits and imbibed the prejudices of his chosen associates. He loved to decorate his long hair with eagle feathers, to make his face hideous with vermilion, ochre and soot, and to adorn his greasy hunting frock with horsehair fringes. His dwelling, if he had one, was a wigwam. He lounged on a bearskin while his squaw boiled his venison and prepared his pipe. In hunting, in dancing, in singing, in taking a scalp, he rivalled the genuine Indian. His mind was tinctured with the superstitions of the forest. He had faith in the magic drum of the conjuror; he was not sure that a thunder cloud could not be frightened away by whistling at it through the wing bone of an eagle; he carried the tail of a rattle snake in his bullet pouch by way of amulet; and he placed implicit trust in his dreams...<sup>25</sup>

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scholars, journalists and popular authors noticed the ease with which Europeans colonized Indigenous peoples throughout the world. They equated this trend to the inherent superiority of European peoples over Native populations. Extreme Eurocentrism led to colonialist tragedies from Africa, to South East Asia, to the North American Plains.<sup>26</sup> Out of this racist thinking emerged the discipline of Anthropology, which was initially the study of the "disappearing" Indians of North America. This discipline created an hierarchical structure that placed industrial countries at the top and hunting and gathering and Indigenous cultures at the bottom (the Savage-Civilization dichotomy).

Like Parkman and Groulx, many Anglo-

American historians felt that the existence of the Métis and other mixed-race populations impeded European settlement and created a corrupted gene pool.<sup>27</sup> From about 1850 until the 1960s the Frontier Thesis<sup>28</sup>, the Savage-

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27 European primary sources from the early colonial period, such as the *Jesuit Relations* often had negative portrayals of Aboriginal people. "Some say to us, 'Do you think you are going to succeed in overturning the Country.' Thus do they style the change from their Pagan and Barbarous life to one that is civilized and Christian." *Jesuit Relations* (1936: 10:27). See Alfred Goldsworthy Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures, 1504-1700: A Study in Canadian Civilization*. Second Edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969; and Thierry Berthlet, "La Francisation des Amérindiens en Nouvelle France: Politiques et Enjeux / Frenchifying the Natives in New France: Policies and Aims," *Etudes Canadiennes/Canadian Studies*, No. 34: 79-89.

28 The Frontier Thesis was a canon of historical discourse in the United States and Canada, which maintained that the agricultural frontier of settlement was vibrant and demonstrated the best traits of the national culture. Before European settlement could take root in a particular frontier a number of obstacles had to be overcome including the "pacification" of the Native peoples, the clearing of land and the creation of infrastructure. This theory and its eurocentric moorings have been discredited, and scholars have tried to downplay this thesis of "civilization" clashing with a savage frontier. This frontier was "... the westward movement', the expansion of European-American civilization at the expense of both traditional societies and natural ecology. Such a history is at heart dialectical, a history of conflict, and as Frederick Jackson Turner pointed out back in 1893, the point of interaction between the old (the wild ... and Indian culture) and the new (explorers, mountain men, and pioneers...) is the frontier." J. Lyon, "The Literary West," in Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor and Martha A. Sandweiss (Eds.), *The Oxford History of the American West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994: 709-744. In the same volume consult Charles S. Peterson "Speaking of the Past" (pp. 743-769), for a better understanding of how the frontier thesis marginalized Aboriginal people. The Métis historian Olive Dickason (1997) argues that the savage-civilization dichotomy existed as early as the Contact Period (1534-1666). The ethnocentric primary documents left over from the early contact period obviously coloured the interpretations of Parkman and other historians. See also: J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989: 3-80; Arthur J. Ray, *I Have Lived Here since the World Began: An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1996: 1-92; Cornelius J. Jaenen, "L'autre en Nouvelle France/The Other in New France," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers*, 1989: 1-12; Cornelius Jaenen, "Amerindian Views of French culture in the Seventeenth Century," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LV (3), 1974: 261-291; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. This book is particularly useful in that the author argues that the French colonists and the Aboriginal nations of the Great Lakes region were able to achieve a rough amount of cultural accommodation before this region became inundated with Anglo-American

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25 Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Conquest of Canada, Volume I: To the Massacre at Michilimackinac*. (Introduction by Michael N. McConnell) Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1994: 78-79.

26 See particularly, Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building*, for an analysis of the post-contact American expansionist movement. (Minneapolis and New York: University of Minnesota Press, 1980 and Schocken Books, 1990)



Civilization dichotomy, and Social Darwinism<sup>29</sup> were articulated in the newly expanding social sciences, humanities and in popular literature. Such sweeping theorizations, enthused more by personal prejudice than by empirical observation, have now been deconstructed by both students and instructors, and are no longer considered to be acceptable paradigms.<sup>30</sup>

None the less, even after the Second World War, historians failed to understand why Métissage occurred, and they certainly failed to analyze this phenomenon from the point of view of Native women. It was not until Jennifer Brown (1980) and Sylvia Van Kirk (1980), both non-Aboriginal women, published their groundbreaking works that the role of Native women in fostering Métissage was documented. This was done using anthropological techniques, particularly ethnohistory and cultural relativism,<sup>31</sup> which maintains that we should not judge other cultures by our own standards.

Little is known about the development of Métis group identity. One of the inherent problems in researching this field is the lack of primary resources relating to the development of Métis group identity throughout North America. Since historical memory in Métis society is largely orally based, it is extremely difficult to trace the development of early Métis nationalism or group identity. There is even less primary

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farmers following the War of 1812.

29 Social Darwinism: The concept based on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which postulated that human societies evolve, like people have biologically. Hunting and gathering societies were seen as the least developed, and industrial societies, especially those of Europe, as the most advanced. Note that Darwin himself did not support this position, his rival, Herbert Spencer, articulated this flawed thesis. The way in which Social Darwinism and Eugenics tainted the social discourse in Canada from 1885 to 1945 is outlined by Angus McLaren in *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics, 1885-1945*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990.

30 Emma LaRoque (1988) deals forcefully with the issue of scholarship based on the writings of early European fur trade employees in her essay "On the Ethics of Publishing Historical Documents." She points to the entrenched ethnocentrism, demeaning images of women, racism, hate, double standards and tendentious words and classifications as only a few of the problems that arise from the use of such material.

31 Cultural Relativism: An anthropological theory that maintains that we should not make value judgements against traditional cultures. It holds that because cultures are unique, they must be evaluated according to their own standards and values (Haviland, op.cit. p. 309).

source material available outside of the Prairie region. Métis perspectives from the early 1800s have largely been lost.

With so few written and oral sources it is hard to analyze such fundamental issues as early Métis national identity. As a result, non-Métis scholars such as Giraud (1937) and Stanley (1936) were able to maintain that the Métis did not develop a group consciousness on their own, and even maintained that Métis nationalism was the creation of others. Both argued that the Métis people discovered their group identity out of a rear guard action against the manipulations of the fur trade companies. Ethno-historians have challenged the Giraud-Stanley thesis, since the 1960s, by pointing out that the Métis people of Rupert's Land identified as being Métis before the 1812-1821 fur trade war between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company (Foster, 1976, 1985).

A recent development in the historiography of the Métis is the study of the "other" Métis – who lived outside of Rupert's Land. Martin Dunn (1994) has extensively studied the early Métis residing in Central and Atlantic Canada. This and other new works challenge the conventional way of thinking about the historical Métis experience. They analyze the emergence of mixed-heritage groups throughout North America. Historically, many early mixed-heritage populations, particularly in the Great Lakes region, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces were assimilated into First Nations, Acadian and French-Canadian populations. Olive Dickason (1986) argues that most of these Métis groups did not identify as being Métis, despite their mixed heritage. However, a strong mixed-heritage identity did develop in what is now Labrador (Borlase, 1994).

Other historic Métis groups in what is now the North West Territories, the Great Lakes area and in the Pacific North West, readily identified as being Métis (Koosel et al., 1992; Coates and Morrison, 1986). For all of these groups, their Métis identity was localized in smaller communities and did not cover large expanses of territory. In this respect the Métis of Rupert's Land are unique because they developed a group consciousness and a political will that was separate from First Nations, Euro-Canadians and Euro-Americans. Their identified homeland also covered a broad expanse of territory.



All of the authors who contributed to *The New Peoples* (Peterson and Brown, 1985) demonstrate that Métis identity has existed in various locales over time. Jacqueline Peterson's excellent essay "Many Roads to Red River: Métis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region, 1610-1815," (1985: 37-72), demonstrates that various Métis communities in the Great Lakes region were on the verge of proclaiming their group identity before the region was inundated by Anglo-American agrarians. Verne Dusenbury describes how the Métis people of Montana, a part of the historic Métis Nation, became dispossessed (1985: 119-136). John S. Long describes how the Métis in northeastern Ontario were registered as Status Indians under Treaty Nine (1985: 137-162), and Trudy Nicks and Kenneth Morgan (1985: 163-185) describe how a unique Métis identity developed in Grande Cache Alberta.

The New Peoples Forum has had a definite impact upon the academics writing about the "other" Métis. The recently expanding literature base on this topic is not only exciting, it is long overdue. For example, Métis identity in the Pacific North West has been delineated by John C. Jackson (1995) and by Sylvia Van Kirk in her recent essay on Victoria, British Columbia's founding Métis families (1997-98). It is noteworthy that Jackson (1995: 206) is able to demonstrate that the Pacific Métis and the Red River Métis were in constant contact with each other since the early 1800s. Tanis Thorne (1996), in the book, *The Many Hands of My Relations*, examines how the kinship networks between the "Halfbreeds" and the various other cultural groups on the lower Missouri River served as a means of accommodation and coexistence in the mid-west multiethnic panorama. However, as mentioned earlier, Métis history is plagued by the necessity to reconstruct the past since the historical record was largely written by others, from a European viewpoint, and much of the oral history from the Métis and their communities has been lost.

Major studies have been done regarding the Chippewa-Métis Turtle Mountain community at Belcourt, North Dakota (James Howard, 1977, and Camp, 1987, 1990, 1993). This community is probably the largest Michif-Cree speaking group in North America. Their language is almost identical to that of Michif-Cree

speakers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Finally, it would be interesting and useful to do a comparative study of intermarriage between European, Amerindians and Africans in the Western Hemisphere to document and compare assimilation,<sup>32</sup> miscegenation rates, acculturation,<sup>33</sup> cultural adaptability, and cultural retention among mixed-heritage peoples. Groups that would be candidates for such a study are the Kanakas,<sup>34</sup> Mestizos, Freejacks,<sup>35</sup> Melungeons,<sup>36</sup> Creek Indians,<sup>37</sup> Choctaw Indians, "Half-breeds" or Crossbloods<sup>38</sup>, and Métis.

All mixed heritage groups, throughout the world, have been plagued by problems of self-identity. The Métis are no exception. The development of a positive self-identity will always be an important consideration among Canada's Métis people. The solution to every modern social problem facing the Métis people rests upon both ameliorating their devalued social status and overcoming systemic racism – two things which continue to relegate Métis people to a position of second class citizenship. A

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32 Assimilation: When a person from a minority culture loses his or her cultural identity and becomes part of the majority culture. While often voluntary, assimilation can be forced as was the case for Aboriginal peoples and many non-British immigrants coming to Canada before World War II. Cultural suppression is a related term in which a majority culture forces its mores on a less willing minority culture.

33 Acculturation: The mutual cultural accommodation between two groups. The most frequently documented case of acculturation was the mutual cultural borrowings between First Nations and newcomers during the *ancien régime* (1534-1867) in Canada. See White (1991) and Axtell (1985).

34 Jean Barman, "What Ever Happened to the Kanakas?" *The Beaver*, December 1997 - January 1998: 12-19.

35 Darrell A. Posey (1979). The "Freejacks" are a mix of Cajuns, French Creoles, African-Americans and Native-Americans. Apparently, this group felt shame about their mixed-heritage identity.

36 "Meet the Melungeons," in *The Fortean Times*, No. 106, 1998: 24-27. Melungeons are people originating from the mountains of eastern Tennessee and their origins are probably First Nations and Turkish or Berber. See also, N. Brent Kennedy (1997). To find out more about this interesting people visit one of the numerous web sites on the Internet.

37 See William Loren Katz, *Black Indians: Hidden History*. Toronto: Collier MacMillan Canada Inc., 1998, and Gary B. Nash (1995: 943-947).

38 Gerald Vizenor (1990).



thorough decolonization process has to occur among the whole Métis community before the evils of racism and poverty can be eliminated. Ann Charter, a Métis Social Work Professor at the University of Manitoba, discusses how she struggled, over many years, to decolonize herself (Charter 1997: 75-79). Her work is a great complement to the explicit decolonization efforts of Howard Adams, and the less explicit, but no less powerful testimonials of Maria Campbell and Beatrice Culleton.

## V Exploring Métis Oral Tradition and Spirituality

The Métis people's unique forms of spiritualism, oral traditional and traditional knowledge are areas of study in need of further development and analysis. The Métis perspective on history is orally based and is central to Métis group identity. Many non-Aboriginal historians are now using oral tradition and written sources in order to reconstruct Métis history. From a Métis point of view, this is a welcome development because too often in the past historians, in their pursuit of historical "truth,"<sup>39</sup> neglected to use Aboriginal oral history, and relied almost exclusively on written sources. Therefore only one side of the historical equation, that of the European, was considered, and the Aboriginal point of view was neglected.

Using oral history allows students of Native Studies and History to better understand events in the past. For instance the Gabriel Dumont Institute's (1997) *Remembrances: Interviews with Métis Veterans*, and the Manitoba Métis Federation's *Past Reflects the Present: The Métis Elders' Conference* (Shore and Barkwell, 1997), provide history from the point of view of Métis Elders, taken from their oral accounts. Oral tradition has been used to glean insights from more prominent Métis people as well. For instance, Gabriel Dumont's role in the 1885 Resistance was elucidated by Dumont himself in interviews held in 1888 and 1903 (Dumont, 1985, and 1993). Mary Weekes' (1945) inter-

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39 Alexander Von Gernet, *Oral Narratives and Aboriginal Past: An Interdisciplinary Review of the Literature on Oral Traditions and Oral Histories*. Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1996: 9-10.

view with Norbert Welsh, conducted in 1931, is transcribed in *The Last Buffalo Hunter*. Welsh explains why not all Métis supported Dumont and Riel during the 1885 Resistance.<sup>40</sup> The book also contains reminiscences of Welsh's days as a buffalo hunter<sup>41</sup> and his relationships with First Nations bands.<sup>42</sup>

Another source well worth consulting is *Ted Trindell: Métis Witness to the North*, (Morriset and Pelletier, 1987) an interview conducted with a Métis Elder from the North West Territories. Though not considered oral history, *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel*, by George F. Stanley (1985) elucidates Louis Riel's intellectual and personal development as a statesman, historian, poet, theologian, activist, friend and family man.<sup>43</sup> While this five volume collection contains introductions and analysis which demonstrate the bias of Riel scholars such as Thomas Flanagan and George Stanley, the volumes are useful, as is Flanagan's (1976) edited diary of Louis Riel.

Orally based community histories allow Métis people to describe their own historical experiences. Numerous Métis groups, aided by historians and anthropologists, have conducted interviews with Elders in order to document the historical viewpoint of Métis people. While community studies are an expanding area of Métis Studies, more literature is needed to describe how the relationships between various Métis communities evolved. This would modify the myth that the historic Métis constituted a single community.

These community remembrances delineate a fundamental theme of Métis history – diversity of experience. Each Métis community, despite many commonly held experiences with other Métis communities, has a unique history, and a slightly different cultural background. This was

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40 Mary Weekes, 1945: 149-169.

41 Ibid. 34-46.

42 Ibid. 47-71, 78-83, 99-110 and 132-137.

43 Another good primary source to consult regarding Louis Riel's life and role as a political activist is H. Bowsfield (Ed.), *Louis Riel: Rebel of the Western Frontier or Victim of Politics and Prejudice?* (1969). This book provides insight into Riel's execution. See especially John A. Macdonald, "White Man's Conspiracy" (pp.126-129). In a speech delivered in parliament, Macdonald stated that the 1885 Resistance actually occurred as a result of the intrigue of non-Aboriginal conspirators.



amply demonstrated when individuals from a variety of Métis communities, particularly in Atlantic and Central Canada, submitted reports to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Métis community histories are also empowering because they allow Elders to give voice to the Métis experience. Some excellent community histories include: Emile Pelletier's (1980) *Le Vécu des Métis*; Ken and Victoria Zelig's (1997) *Ste. Madeleine, Community Without a Town*; Rita Shilling's (1983) *Gabriel's Children*; and Kermit Moore's (1982) *Kipawa: Portrait of a People*. Pelletier writes an interesting social history of the Manitoba Métis which includes insights into finger weaving, bison hunts, the fishery, salt making, maple sugar manufacturing and seneca root gathering. The Zelig's collection of Elder's stories offer a particularly poignant discussion of the destruction of their community and their eventual dispersal to various parts of the Prairies when the government implemented Depression era "improvements" under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act.

The Elders in Gift Lake Alberta (David May, 1984) provide the reader with an interesting series of vignettes regarding traditional Métis social and economic activities. Nicole St. Onge (1983, 1984, and 1985) has conducted numerous interviews with Métis Elders in central Manitoba.

Using extensive oral history and interviews, Diane Payment has written a comprehensive social history of the Batoche Métis, *The Free People – Otipemisiwak* (1990). Payment analyzes this Métis community's self-governing political system, economic activities, family structures, relations with First Nations and French Canadians, and the impact of the North-West Resistance on their group identity. Payment's major contribution is in elucidating key aspects of Métis history, which were previously little-known outside of the Métis community. For instance, she argues that the Batoche Métis had a strong tradition of self-governance and had developed a syncretistic religion that melded Aboriginal spiritualism and Roman Catholicism (1990: 58-59).

Métis spiritualism is an important but neglected area of study. Elmer Ghostkeeper's *Spirit Gifting* (1996) is the first book to explore Cree-Métis spirituality. Joseph Couture (1991)

has analyzed Aboriginal spirituality and other aspects of traditional knowledge, specifically the role played by medicine people in First Nations and Métis communities.

Most of the literature on Métis spiritualism, however, relates to the Métis people's embrace of various forms of Christianity rather than to their Aboriginal spiritual practices. Most studies involving formal religion centre on the role of missionaries in administering the gospel and the impact of church-sponsored residential schools upon Métis identity.<sup>44</sup>

Raymond Huel (1996) has written a great deal about the interaction of Roman Catholic missionaries with the francophone Métis. Finally, Father Guy Lavallée (1997), a Manitoba Métis sociologist, has recently written a (1997) prayer book with prayers in Michif-French, French and English.

A more in-depth explanation of the Métis peoples' traditional syncretistic religion is needed. Many Métis people fused traditional Aboriginal spiritualism with Roman Catholicism. Thomas Flanagan avoided discussion of the hybrid spiritualism practiced by some Métis people in his controversial monograph on Riel's spiritual system.<sup>45</sup> More research should be conducted to link Riel to the numerous spiritual movements of the late nineteenth century. For example, was Riel's spiritual vision much different than the thirst dance of various Plains First Nations, or was it strictly in line with the late nineteenth-century millenarianism,<sup>46</sup> of such groups as the Mormons or the Orthodox Hasidic Jews?

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44 Antoine S. Lussier (1985). For the role of Church-sponsored residential schools see Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School*. Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1993. In order to better understand the experience of American Métis (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) in residential schools consult Carole Barrett and Marcia Wolter Britton (1997). The Canadian Right also addresses the residential school experience in *Western Report* (Patrick Donnelly, January 26, 1998: 6-11).

45 Thomas Flanagan, *Louis 'David' Riel: Prophet of the New World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997: 125-129 and 198-204. Flanagan discusses Riel's "Massinahican," a prophetic vision that was supposedly part of Riel's new religion. Massinahican means, "book" or "bible" in Cree and this tract has spiritual significance.

46 Millenarianism: "A revitalization movement that attempts to resurrect a suppressed pariah group which has long suffered in an inferior social position and which has its own special sub-cultural ideology." (Haviland, op. cit. p. 635)



## VI Métis Culture and Language

Métis is a French word that means mixed. In the Canadian context, the word means persons of mixed Aboriginal and European heritage who identify themselves as Métis. The word *métif* or *métchif* is an old variant of the standard French word, *métis*. Pentland (1982: 11) notes that the earliest record of the archaic French form that he has seen is Mathevet's Loup dictionary (ca. 1750). In English the word Métis is pronounced "Maytee", and in French it is pronounced "Maytis," a form still in use by many Elders.<sup>47</sup> In some, but not all locations, the Métis people often called their spoken language "Métif" or "Métchif", after themselves.

The unique languages of the Métis people is an area which needs further investigation. The Métis people of the Prairies have traditionally spoken a host of First Nation's languages as well as English and French.

The Métis also have a long tradition of adapting aspects of First Nations and European culture to better suit their needs. Language is no exception. The languages most widely used by the Prairie Métis people were Michif-French, Michif-Cree and Bungee. The first language is a dialect of Prairie French; the second is a distinct language like no other in the world. All the nouns and associated grammar are Métis-French and all of the verbs and associated grammar are Plains Cree. These are both very unique adaptations of the Métis people. Bungee or Bungi (see M. Stobie, 1968; and E. Blain, 1989, 1994), a now extinct language, consisted of Gaelic and Cree mixed with French and Saulteaux.

As noted above, the Prairie Métis people created an absolutely distinct language, "Michif." Michif-Cree is a unique and structured language consisting of Plains Cree, Saulteaux, and French components; however, Cree and French are the dominant components. The Aboriginal words are usually verbs and the French words are nouns. Cree grammar is used for the verb phrases while French grammar applies to the

noun phrases. Michif is not a random mixture of languages; its first speakers must have been perfectly bilingual. As the language developed more and more Michif speakers, while aware of the mixed nature of their language, spoke neither Cree nor French. Conversely, while unilingual French and Cree speakers can recognize French and Cree phrases in spoken Michif, the language is unintelligible to them. Today Michif-Cree speakers are found mostly in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, North Dakota and Montana (Crawford, 1983 and 1985).

The development of the Michif-Cree language was poorly understood until Peter Bakker's ten years of research was published by Oxford University Press in 1997. Bakker, a prominent Dutch linguist (University of Aarhus), is the leading scholar in the field. His numerous articles on the topic culminated in *A Language of Our Own: The Genesis of the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis* (1997). His analysis is ground breaking in that he documents the origins of this unique language and shatters the belief that Michif is merely a patois or Creole. He lived in numerous Métis communities, interviewed dozens of Michif speakers, and carefully constructed his arguments. The result is the most thorough and useful monograph on the Michif language to date. Unfortunately, only experts in linguistics can follow his technical terminology and lexicography. This book, while extremely valuable, is too complicated for use by the general public.<sup>48</sup>

Bakker postulates that early forms of Michif were spoken in the St. Lawrence valley and in the Great Lakes area during the eighteenth century (1997: 269-270). The language probably spread among the Métis who gathered twice a year for the large organized Prairie bison hunts (1997: 279).

There may well have been other antecedents to Michif spoken in Central and Eastern Canada. For example, "Chiac," the little-known mixed Algonquian-Acadian French language of the Métis people in Maritime Canada bears a remarkable similarity in syntax to Michif, and in Quebec some Innu speak a mix of Innu (Mon-

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47 'Métis ... dont le père et la mère sont de races différentes ... qui est issu du croisement de races, de variétés différentes de la même espèce.' Le Robert quotidien: Dictionnaire pratique de la langue française. "Métis - a person of mixed Aboriginal and European descent. (French *métis*, Old French *mistif* from Romanic: related to Mestizo," *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.

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48 For those interested in hearing Michif-Cree and seeing it in written form, samples are now available on the internet via The Creolist Archives homepage. These samples provided by Peter Bakker include a song, a short story, and a Michif myth and various sentence samples.



tagnais) and French (Bakker 1997: 11).

The most notable efforts to develop Michif-Cree curriculum have occurred at the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Reservation in North Dakota, where many Métis entered into Treaty. The most widely used Michif dictionary was written by two Métis Elders, Pauline Laverdure and Ida Rose Allard, *The Michif Dictionary: Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree* (1983). Ida Rose Allard (1992) has also developed a language resource book for Michif, which is used at the Turtle Mountain Community College.

Other useful resources for children to become acquainted with Michif-Cree include the interactive K.I.M. CD-ROM, developed by the Manitoba Association of Native Languages. This CD and its associated teaching aids, allows children to learn words in Cree, Dene, Dakota, Oji-Cree, Saukteaux, Ojibwe and Michif-Cree (1997). The Gabriel Dumont Institute has produced a series of five children's books in Michif-Cree, known collectively as the *Alfred Reading Series* (D. Pelletier 1992). Finally, Métis Elder Chris Blondeau Perry speaks her Michif dialect in the read-along companion to the *Alfred Reading Series*, "Come and Read With Us" (L. Dorion, 1997).

Unfortunately, Michif-French or Métis-French is becoming a fading dialect of Canadian French. Patrick C. Douaud (1989) has analyzed the development of this language in northern Alberta. He concludes that this "archaic" dialect of French is similar to Acadian French. Bakker (1997: 149-153 and 250-254) notes that Métis-French is very much like *Joual*, the working-class language of French-Canadians and Québécois.

Father Guy Lavallée (1988) has done extensive research on the development of Michif-French in the Interlake region of Manitoba, where Métis people were persecuted for speaking this French dialect. The missionaries, along with French and English Canadians, actively tried to discourage use of Michif-French in St. Laurent in the 1930s. Father Lavallée's (1997) book *Prayers of a Métis Priest: Conversations with God on the Political Experiences of the Canadian Métis, 1992-1994*, has some prayers in Michif-French (1997: 1-6 and 38-39).

By contrast, there is a Métis-Cree dialect that has not been subject to much analysis. The only scholar to pay much attention to this dialect

of Cree was the late Dr. Anne Anderson, who compiled a valuable Métis-Cree dictionary (1997). Other Métis-Cree dictionaries were prepared by Rossignol School in Ile-à-la-Crosse Saskatchewan (1995) and by Vince Ahenakew (1997).

Most studies of Michif are community based. This is simply because almost every community has a separate dialect of Michif. Furthermore, most analysis of Michif centres around Métis communities in the Turtle Mountain region of North Dakota and the Westman, Parklands and Interlake regions of Manitoba (Crawford, 1983). The important issue of the survival of the language has generated a great deal of interest within the Métis community. The degree to which Michif is spoken in Métis communities varies, but most fluent speakers are over 50 years old. Almost no young Métis learn Michif as a first language today. Since few children learn Michif as their first language there is a real danger that Michif (in all its forms) could become extinct. For many Métis people, losing the Michif language is akin to losing the essence of being Métis.

Just as the study of Métis languages and dialects is developing, so too is the study of the rich traditions of Métis folk culture, fiddle playing, folk songs, jigging, and folk tales. In the past such cultural producers<sup>49</sup> as Helen Creighton,<sup>50</sup> Edith Fowke and Lucinda

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49 Cultural producers are outsiders who appropriate Aboriginal and other traditional cultures for political and financial purposes, while maintaining that they are 'preserving' the culture from which they are appropriating. In Aboriginal communities, taking stories, knowledge and medicine belonging to others is a grave offence. When telling a traditional story, credit must be given to the Elder who told it to you, and permission must be asked to use that story and an offering of tea or tobacco must be given to the Elder. This is a necessary protocol which cultural producers more often than not ignore. See also Wendy Rose (1992), "The Great Pretenders: Further Reflections on White Shamanism."

50 In order to understand why traditional cultures are appropriated by dominant cultures for political ends; refer to Ian McKay's excellent monograph, *The Quest of the Folk*. In particular, McKay analyzes the role played by Helen Creighton in appropriating traditional Celtic folk culture in Nova Scotia in order to fight the trend towards modernization in the twentieth century. "The challenge was to remove the common property resources of songs and sayings, which had ... no market value, and to transform them into marketable commodities, to take that which had value only in use and redeem and preserve it by giving it value in exchange. To preserve the idealized "culture" of the Folk it was necessary to commodify it. This was the contradictory logic of modernizing antimodernism." Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in*



Clemens<sup>51</sup> appropriated Aboriginal, French-Canadian and Celtic-Canadian folk songs and tales. In addition, scholars have documented the appropriation of Louis Riel's memory by non-Métis groups for political purposes.<sup>52</sup>

The Métis community is now reclaiming its folk heritage from anthropologists and linguists. For instance, the respected Métis author, scholar and story-teller Maria Campbell has translated many of the rich folk legends told to her by Métis Elders in *Stories of the Road Allowance People* (1995). This book contains ten folk tales written in a style, which simulates the speech of Métis Elders, and is richly illustrated by Aboriginal artist Sherry Farrell Racette. In her introduction, Campbell credits each of the Elders<sup>53</sup> who told her these stories, something which the cultural producers and other colonizers of Aboriginal oral culture have failed to do.

There are many other cultural resources emanating from the Métis community, which have been eagerly received by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The demand for these cultural resources has led to the production a myriad of music, dance and craft compilations – a testament to the Métis people's vibrant culture. For instance, John Arcand, a Métis fiddle player from northern Saskatchewan, has produced several fiddle books, *Métis & Old Tyme Fiddle Tunes, Volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4* (1996) and music cassettes in order to preserve his family's Métis fiddle tunes. In Manitoba, Anne Lederman's (1987) collection, *Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Manitoba, Volumes 1 and 2*, preserves this music from six Manitoba communities. In the accompanying booklets and

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*Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill and Queen's University Press, 1994: 136. See also: Ian McKay, "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia, 1933-1954," *Acadiensis*, XXI (2), 1992: 5-47.

51 Lucinda Clemens' "Une chanson de vérité: Folk Songs of the Prairie Métis," 1983, took Métis and French-Canadian folk-songs and sang them as operettas. Needless to say, a Métis buffalo hunter or a French-Canadian voyageur would not be able to recognize Clemens' "adaptations" of such classic folk songs as "La chanson de Falcon," "Champs de Bataille," and "Un Canadien errant."

52 See Frances W. Kaye (1997) and Douglas Owrain (1982).

53 Anita Lavallee (1997) also credits each of the Elders in *Aboriginal Stories from the Central Plains*, a collection put together for the Aboriginal Head Start Program at the Portage la Prairie Friendship Centre.

subsequent journal article (1988) she describes the syncretic nature of this unique music form. Her work also includes biographies of each fiddle player, illustrations of dance steps, as well as notes and explanations of how this music developed. Producer and director Michael Loukinen (1991) has made a documentary film that celebrates the fiddling and dancing traditions of Native and Métis families on both sides of the U.S. and Canadian border in the film *Medicine Fiddle*. This film weaves music, dance, and storytelling together to tell the story of this unique cultural tradition.

In response to a request from the community, the Gabriel Dumont Institute explored the development of traditional Métis folk-singing when it published *Métis Songs: Visiting was the Métis Way* (Whidden, 1993). This songbook is a collection of traditional Métis songs in Cree, French and Michif. "Singing to Keep Time," (1993) is the songbook's companion cassette and compact disc. Other Gabriel Dumont Institute products which preserve Métis folk culture include the (1993) video cassette "Steps in Time: Métis Dance," and the (1986) audio visual kits, "Métis Crafts: Finger Weaving," and "Métis Crafts: Quill and Bead Earrings."

It would be helpful to have more resources that describe the development of Métis material culture and its related issues of adaptability,<sup>54</sup> acculturation and Native Agency.<sup>55</sup> In order to achieve this end the Gabriel Dumont Institute has produced *Where Two Worlds Meet* (1986), a series of study prints, and the Glenbow-Alberta Institute has produced a number of books which contain pictures of Métis crafts and other aspects of Métis culture (Harrison, 1985, 1986). There is a need for more monographs,

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54 In order to survive, some societies are forced to adapt cultural attributes from the dominant culture. For instance, after the bison disappeared in the 1870s, the Métis people were willing to adapt to this dramatic change by becoming agrarians. While this change was occurring, they still wanted to preserve their languages, spirituality, and traditional knowledge. This idea of preservation or cultural survival is known as cultural retention.

55 Native Agency: Is a controversial term which maintains that Native people of the Americas were not always pawns of the European New Comers, and that Aboriginal people shrewdly calculated their best interest in all their relations with the New Comers. See Robin Brownlee and Mary-Ellen Kleim, "Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonist Alibi?" in *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LXXV (4), 1994: 543-556.



which describe the use of traditional medicines, food preparation, arts and crafts and land use. Creating these Métis resources often proves to be a daunting task since oral tradition and culturally sensitive archaeology are both necessary to better understand historic Métis material culture, and to provide further insights into past lifestyles (see Doll, 1993). In addition, social histories of Métis people should be consulted to develop a fuller picture of how Métis people lived in the past. Emile Pelletier (1977), highlights many of the socio-economic activities of the Red River Métis, including, quarrying limestone, maple sugaring, fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering wild rice and seneca root. A particularly useful resource, which delineates past aspects of Métis material culture, is Burley, Horsfall and Brandon's (1992) *Structural Considerations of Métis Ethnicity*.

The background and history of the fur trade sash is another aspect of Métis material culture that needs to be revisited and reworked. Today the Assomption Sash is part of the national dress of the Métis Nation; however, it was originally designed and worn by the *anciens canadiens*, the ancestors of today's French Canadians. All the various sashes, whether made by First Nations, Métis or French-Canadian groups have a common origin and are likely an adaptation of both French and First Nations finger weaving traditions. The French-Canadian anthropologist Marius Barbeau has written a book and several articles about the Assomption variety of the fur trade sash, the *ceniture fléchée* or "arrow" sash as it is known to French Canadians. Nevertheless, a monograph is needed to explain how this item was adapted and worn by First Nations, French Canadians and Métis people alike, and particularly how it became a patriotic symbol of Métis identity, like the Red River Cart or the Métis Infinity Flag.

The use of Métis patriotic symbols is an area that has received little academic interest. Calvin Racette's *Flags of the Métis* (1987), is the only book which details the development of Métis flags. This interesting survey provides the reader with panoply of illustrations of Métis flags. These designs include French fleur-de-lis, Irish shamrocks, bison, St. Joseph (the Métis people's Patron Saint), the Virgin and the Infant Jesus, and even the Union Jack! Most impor-

tantly, the book traces the development of the Métis Infinity flag as a symbol of resistance. When describing this flag, Racette (1987: 8) wrote, "The blue background is derived from the alliance with the Northwest Company, who used blue as a main colour rather than the red of the Hudson's Bay Company. The horizontal eight is an infinity sign, which has two meanings; the joining of two cultures and the existence of a people forever."

It was widely recognized that the Métis people used a certain style of beadwork embroidery so frequently that this art form became part of the Prairie Métis people's group identity (Blady 1996: 133-144). Ironically, most of these flower beadwork designs, now in museums and numerous private holdings in North America and Western Europe, were erroneously classified as "Plains Cree." As Ted Brassler (1985) notes in his article, "In Search of Métis Art," Métis beadwork patterns were more elaborately designed than First Nation's motifs, had less spiritual significance, and engendered considerable financial reward.

## VII Métis Resistances and Political Activism

The dominant theme in Métis history is resistance against coercive power, and to societal stereotypes. Each Métis resistance originated out of heartfelt desire to preserve the Métis people's culture, language, spiritual belief systems and economic activities against the neo-colonialist policies of Euro-North Americans. When the Métis people resisted, it was to ensure their community's survival. The first act of deconstruction for Métis, and other authors sympathetic to the Métis point of view, involved disassociating the word rebellion and its negative connotations from the Métis people's struggles with the Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian State. Instead, the word resistance, which has a positive connotation, is used by Métis people to both honour and to legitimize their ancestor's struggles against Euro-Canadians.<sup>56</sup>

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56 In Canadian history, there were events that have been called the Upper and Lower Canadian Rebellions (1837-38) and the Métis led Red River (1869-70) and North West Rebellions (1885). In all these cases, groups of people "rebelled" against



The Métis people engaged in resistances prior to the 1869-85 period. Very few published resources exist on the Seven Oaks Resistance in 1816 (J. Pelletier, 1985; D. Bruce Sealey, 1976 and M. MacLeod, 1963), the Métis Free Trade Movement in 1849 (W.L. Morton, 1976: 70-93), or the Battle of Grand Coteau in 1851 (W.L. Morton, 1970). These few existing resources demonstrate that the Métis people were inclined to resist outside intervention in their affairs well before 1869-70. However, deconstruction is still needed. For instance, until quite recently the incident at Seven Oaks was seen as a "massacre" in both the historical literature and in popular imagination. This motif is illustrated in C.W. Jeffrey's sketch "The Massacre at Seven Oaks" wherein Métis resisters are depicted as stereotypical Hollywood 'savages.'<sup>57</sup> It is also evident in Peter C. Newman's (1987: 173-175) popular history of the Hudson's Bay Company, *Caesars of the Wilderness*, and in Barry Gough's recent biography of fur trade explorer Alexander Mackenzie (1997: 195-198).

Lyle Dick (1996) recently argued that there was little difference in the sensationalist accounts of the Seven Oaks incident by both popular and academic historians. The Gabriel Dumont Institute offered its own interpretation of this long ago event in order to counter decades of historical bias (Pelletier, 1985). By understanding the context of these early resistances, students of Métis history are provided with the information necessary to an understanding that the events in 1869-70 and 1885 did not happen in a vacuum.

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distant government authority in London and Ottawa, after years of having their petitions and concerns unanswered. Rebellion is a term that has generally negative connotations, in that these uprisings are almost always put down, and the insurgents, always-marginal people, are usually depicted as pawns, exploited by a group of élites. Resistance is a term which has positive connotations. One needs only think of the Free French forces under General Charles DeGalle during the Second World War to appreciate this fact. Because this term is positive, Aboriginal people in North America and throughout the world have begun to describe their ancestor's struggles against Europeans as "resistances" against genocidal or near genocidal policies. For instance, the Métis people of Western Canada refer to the North West Resistance rather than rebellion, and First Nations groups across the continent refer to Pontiac's, Tecumseh's, Crazy Horses' or Sitting Bull's Resistances.

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57 See John Herd Thompson, *The Illustrated History of Canada: Forging the Prairie West*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998: 21.

Traditional accounts of both the Red River and the North West Resistances were written from a political point of view, concentrated on the actions of the political class and were devoid of Aboriginal primary sources or ways of thinking. The authors of these early monographs, fed with doses of social-Darwinism and a Liberal historical view, argued that the Métis and other 'primitive' Indigenous peoples irrationally resisted Euro-Canadian 'civilization' and the onward march of progress. The most well known advocate of this school of thinking was the military historian George F. Stanley, whose *Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* (1936), remained the orthodox interpretation of these events until only recently. Stanley portrayed the Métis resisters as primitive people who engaged in a rear-guard action in order to preserve their fading way of life. Stanley claimed that, "both the Manitoba insurrection and the Saskatchewan rebellion were the manifestation in Western Canada of the problem of the frontier, namely the clash between civilized and primitive peoples..." (1992: xxv).

Stanley failed to adequately address the social and economic factors, which lead to the Resistances of 1869-70 and 1885. A synthesis of his work would read that the federal government blundered in the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada and in honouring the promises granted in the Manitoba Act, but that its dealings with the Métis were sincere and devoid of intrigue (see Sprague, 1988).

In 1869-70, the Métis wanted to be consulted about the transfer of their homeland to Canada from Hudson's Bay Company control. As the Indigenous settlers of the territory, the Métis feared for their future, not so much because the buffalo were disappearing, but because they believed that the expected flood of settlers from Ontario would not respect their way of life.<sup>58</sup> In both *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel* (1985) and in his subsequent biography of Riel, Stanley maintained that the Métis leader was the complete impetus behind both Métis resistances.<sup>59</sup>

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58 See Raymond Huel (Ed.), 1985: 35-45, 60-67, 74-84, 89-93 and 110-120.

59 G.F. Stanley, 1985: 65-77, 274-314 and Stanley, 1961: 67-106 and 295-326.



In 1945, Marcel Giraud, a French ethnologist, published his massive sociological history of the Métis from their genesis in the early fur trade through to the early 1900s. *Le métis canadien*, the largest study of the Métis to date, was influenced by the *longue durée* (the long duration) approach of the Annales School of historical Interpretation.<sup>60</sup> In that sense, his treatise was full of meticulous research but this was tempered by sweeping generalizations regarding the alleged characteristics of particular ethnic groups. Giraud's Eurocentrism<sup>61</sup> was evident when he dismissed the activities of those Métis involved in the traditional economy as a mere distraction rather than a legitimate livelihood. When some Métis people became indebted and sold their land to the Church he argued that the priests hoped to "substitute for those unambitious individuals a race whose qualities were no way inferior to those immigrants of the English or Germanic language" (1945, Vol. 2: 390).

What is remarkable about such discourse is its racist overtones. In the end, Giraud saw the Métis as violent rebels who invited Canada's retribution. He states (*ibid.* 374) that, "the attacks, the violent attacks of every kind that

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60 This French-based school of interpretation specialized in studying the broad sweep of history in order to better discern long-term social and economic trends. These historians and sociologists were particularly fond of marshalling extensive social and economic data in graphs and charts in order to more fully understand the past lives of Europe's peasant classes over several centuries. Explicit in this analysis was an attempt to wed raw economic data with psychological profiles of peasant societies. The purpose of this fusion was to better understand everyday reality for European peasants over time. Giraud was certainly influenced by this movement; he studied long term trends and tried to explain Métis economic behaviour on the basis of their supposed racial characteristics. Gerhard Ens also uses the Annales School methodology in his 1996 monograph. While this quantitative compilation of data is useful, Annales School methodology should not be used exclusively to interpret Métis history since its psychological analysis leads to Eurocentric portrayals of Métis people. For a good example of the Annales School historical writing consult Fernand Braudel's masterpiece, *Civilization and Capitalism: 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Volume II, The Perspective of the World*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1986.

61 Eurocentrism: Is a bias which many people in the West have long had towards Indigenous cultures throughout the world. Essentially, the Eurocentric world view emphasizes that every thing of value and virtue has come from Christian and capitalist-based Western European and North American society, and every thing from non-western cultures is not as important.

were now directed against the Métis... aggravated the inherent weakness of their nature, of their upbringing and their antecedents, and precipitated the disintegration of their group."

Taken together, Giraud and Stanley offer the same interpretation, although they arrived there by different methodologies. Two conservative Canadian historians, William Morton and Donald Creighton, have elaborated on the Giraud-Stanley thesis. Morton's early interpretation of the Métis was based on many of Stanley's conclusions. In 1950, Morton wrote that the Métis were "nomads" who practiced an indolent and "rude" agriculture. Instead of farming, they clung to the hunt. Morton, like Giraud, believed that the Métis were eventually defeated by the Canadian State because of their "defective" upbringing.<sup>62</sup>

It was their tragedy that the insanity and violence of Riel, reflecting the inherent instability and ready violence of his own uncertain people, ruined his achievement and destroyed his nation.<sup>63</sup>

In 1957, Morton revised his interpretation of the Red River Resistance with the publication of *Manitoba: A History*. Morton's new, slightly revised, thesis was that the Métis resisted Canadian authority in 1869 because they preferred French Canadians to teach them the rudiments of agriculture, rather than English Canadians (p. 2). The Métis resisted in 1869-70, not out of their own cognizance, but rather as French Canadians who wanted to preserve their francophone and Roman Catholic heritage before the expected flood of Ontario-born Anglo-Protestants. Morton wrote that the Métis recognized that they could no longer rely on the buffalo hunt for survival, and that they were willing to become farmers, but not English Canadians (p. 5). Interestingly, Morton projected the national unity debate between English and French Canada onto the Métis struggle. Thus, it was not seen as an Aboriginal versus European struggle but rather as English versus French.

Morton (p. 89) further contends that even though the federal government hired the Hud-

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62 Cited in Sprague, 1988: 6.

63 Morton 1950, cited in Sprague 1988: 7.



son's Bay Company's Donald Smith to bribe Louis Riel and to undermine Métis solidarity, its dealings with the Métis were benign! Morton reveals his bias when he describes the Wolseley Expedition to Red River as a "mission of peace" (Morton 1957: 143).

The repression of the Red River Métis by Canadian soldiers during the Wolseley Expedition is one of those "uncomfortable" facts, which was either ignored or downplayed in the historiography. For a thorough understanding of the repression and mayhem which was visited upon the Métis following the Wolseley expedition consult Fred J. Shore's (1991) *The Canadians and the Métis: the Recreation of Manitoba, 1858-1872*. In explaining the mass exodus of the Métis out of Red River after 1870, Morton (1957: 154) argued that the government honoured the land-holding promises made to the Métis in the *Manitoba Act*. Succinctly put, Morton was an apologist for the Macdonald government.

Donald G. Creighton, the pre-eminent English-Canadian historian (1930s-1950s), was another apologist for the Macdonald government's lackluster Métis policy. Creighton was a firm believer in the Laurentian Thesis of national development<sup>64</sup> and he preferred to analyze the larger national picture and the role of such "great" men as Sir John A. Macdonald rather than studying such "little" and "insignificant" people as the Métis or First Peoples. Since the Métis people and Louis Riel were foils to Macdonald's nation-building project, they were excoriated. Creighton's discussion of the Métis and John A. Macdonald was largely in the second volume of his well-written two-volume political history of Canada's first Prime Minister (1995).

Creighton argued that the Prime Minister dealt fairly with the "half-breed rioters" during

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64 The Laurentian Thesis – as advocated by Donald Creighton and Harold A. Innes – maintained that the national and economic development of Canada occurred through the exploitation of key staples, fur, timber and wheat by British-Canadian merchants living along the St. Lawrence River system. As Canada expanded westward, it exploited the hinterlands inhabited by Métis and First Nations peoples. Like other grand national development theories based on ethnic and regional exploitation, this thesis fell into disuse since it glorified the economic exploitation of all of Canada's regions for southern Ontario's and Montreal's benefit. Source: A. Brian McKillop, "Laurentian Thesis" in *The Canadian Encyclopaedia, Vol. II*. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1985: 981-982.

both Métis uprisings. Macdonald was the hero of Creighton's drama since he had to negotiate with a "rogue" regime based on military power (the Provisional Government), the British, French Canada and the "fanatical" priest Père Ritchot – the Métis' representative to the federal government (pp. 59-63).

Creighton further maintained that the Métis had asked for too much: their demands for protection of their language, faith, culture and land base were "unrealistic." And the demand for provincial status for the Red River colony was "absurdly premature" (pp. 62-63). Creighton saw Riel as an indolent grafter whose sole raison d'être was to extort money from the federal government and to derail Canada's troubled integration of the Prairie West. "Had Riel determined to put down the heavens because his own private demands for money were ignored?" (p. 416).

Thomas Flanagan, an American-born political scientist, is the heir apparent to Creighton's interpretation of Louis Riel's leadership during the two Resistances. Flanagan argues that the two great resistances were purely the result of the ambition and greed of a religious visionary, Louis Riel. Riel's messianism was addressed in Flanagan's controversial (1996) book, *Louis 'David' Riel, 'Prophet of the New World.'* Flanagan has not changed his interpretation on Riel's religiosity since this book was first published in the 1970s. His position that Riel was a religious visionary, not unlike the Old Testament Prophets, is also shared by Gilles Martel (1984).

Flanagan has an anti-Métis agenda. To many, his "reconsideration" of the 1885 Resistance was little more than a personal attack on Louis Riel and the Métis people's claim that they were wrongly dispossessed following the 1869-70 and 1885 Resistances. Flanagan argues that Riel inspired the second "rebellion" only to line his own pockets (1983: 101-115), that the federal government dealt fairly with the Métis land question in Manitoba (1983: 14-53 and 1991) and that there is no need to posthumously exonerate Riel since he had a "fair" trial.<sup>65</sup> Flanagan's assault on Riel's memory was

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65 The question of whether or not Louis Riel had a fair trial in 1885 has always been a contentious issue. The fact that he was charged under a 1350s statute, and faced an English and Protestant jury in a highly intolerant age would seem to throw



at its worst when he claimed that Louis Riel and his sister Sarah likely had an incestuous relationship (1996: 93). Predictably, Flanagan has provided his expertise to both the Canadian and Manitoba governments in their court fights with the Manitoba Métis Federation over Métis land claims in Manitoba.

Due to the evident biases in the historical record regarding Riel and the two Resistances, and the evident lack of consultation with any Métis primary sources, many scholars and writers have addressed this imbalance by attempting to both rehabilitate Louis Riel and to vindicate the Métis people's defeat in 1885. A French immigrant wrote the first of these works during the Great Depression. Auguste de Trémaudan's (1935, translated 1982) *Histoire de la Nation Métisse dans l'Ouest Canadien*, was written on behalf of *L'Union nationale de la métisse de Saint Joseph*, an early twentieth-century Manitoba Métis cultural organization. Trémaudan believed that the Métis were a martyred people who suffered greatly at the hands of their English-Canadian tormentors. The Métis, a "little" Catholic and French people, resisted the grand schemes of the Orange Lodge, Ontario expansionists and a francophobe Prime Minister and paid the ultimate price, the destruction of their way of life and their nation.

Gradually, the little people who had fought so valiantly for the independence and rights of the North-West's inhabitants were forgotten. As for the great martyr it gave to this sacred cause, the Métis people long remained alone to revere him, alone to see rising above the horizon, the shadow of their emancipator and liberator (1982: 159).

Other authors sympathetic to the Métis resistors include Joseph Howard (1974), Calvin Racette (1985), Howard Adams (1975), the Association of Saskatchewan Métis and Non-Status Indians (AMNSIS, 1979), Don McLean (1985) and Douglas Sprague (1988). Adams (1975: 53), argues that the actions of Riel's

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doubt on the objectivity of the trial. The Crown almost certainly wanted a conviction for political reasons. See Ronald L. Olesky (1998), "Louis Riel and the Crown Letters", Desmond Morton (1974) and John Coulter (1985).

Provisional Government in 1869-70 were legal under international law since protocol dictates that when one nation incorporates another nation outside of conquest, it must negotiate with the original occupants of the country. This concept of international law was ignored when the eager young Dominion acquired Rupert's Land. Furthermore, the AMNSIS portrayed the Red River Resistance as a just struggle by the Métis people in order to ensure that the rights of all Red River citizens would be protected in the newly expanded Canada (p. 24).

Howard Adams (1992) similarly argued that during the initial stages of the 1885 Resistance, the Métis built a broadly-based coalition with non-Aboriginal farmers, English and French Métis and First Peoples. This was to ensure that everybody's rights in the Saskatchewan country would be advanced in negotiations with the federal government. The government was eventually able to divide this coalition by playing upon the fears of non-Aboriginal people that a general Aboriginal insurrection was about to break out (Creighton 1995 and Adams 1975). All of these authors demonstrate that the two Métis resistances were grass roots movements that were loyal to the Crown, and did not originate out of Louis Riel's personal ambition. This documentation is a direct refutation of those scholars who argued that Riel was the main impetus behind the "Riel Rebellions".

That one individual could inspire, lead and control two insurrections is a spurious concept. Most serious students of Métis studies recognize that Riel was only the instrument of the will of the Métis people, not their controller. Even in such a straight-forward history as J.M. Bumstead's, *The Red River Rebellion* (1996), no one individual, not even Louis Riel, has a pre-eminent position in the narrative. As Calvin Racette demonstrates, the Métis people had a well-entrenched democratic political system, with governing councils and elected officials (*Petitioning for Rights* 1985: 14-20); moreover, the Métis people drafted and sent many petitions and negotiators to the federal government after 1870, in order to address their long-standing grievances. This idea of democratic Métis self-governance is also demonstrated by Diane Payment (1990: 145-201), Howard Adams (1975: 53), George Woodcock (1976: 93-102) and Lawrence Barkwell in "Early Law



and Social Control Among the Métis" (Corrigan and Barkwell 1991: 7-37).

Many academics have been seeking different explanations to better understand the origins of the Red River and North West Resistances. Frits Pannekoek and Gerhard Ens have written about the Red River Resistance from social and economic perspectives. Through the use of extensive Church documents, Pannekoek (1985 and 1991) argues that the francophone and Catholic Métis and the anglophone and Protestant Country Born were rival and irreconcilable sectarian communities due to the proselytizing of the various missionaries. This accounted for the Country Born's lack of enthusiasm and sometimes outright hostility to the French-Métis led Provisional Government in 1869-70. Pannekoek also maintains that the Country born welcomed annexation to Canada because they wished to integrate into Anglo-Canadian society and wished to see their Métis cousins assimilated. On the other hand, Irene Spry (1985a) counter argues that given the extensive family ties between the Métis and the Country Born this thesis is flawed.

In contrast, Gerhard Ens asserts that it was class differences, not religious, ethnic or linguistic considerations, which divided traditional Red River society. He maintains that the Métis bourgeoisie resented Riel's "heavy-handed" methods to muzzle their opposition to his governing style (1996: 128-29). Ens emphasizes the economic dimensions of this conflict to demonstrate that the resistance was not a civil conflict pitting English and French Métis against one another. Furthermore, he attempts to persuade the reader that during the resistance there were powerful economic, social and family considerations, which cut across ethnic and religious lines. This conflict between a preponderance of the Métis bourgeoisie and Louis Riel and his largely working class supporters, suggests that while there may have been a consensus in the Red River district to negotiate with the Canadian State in January 1870, there was no consensus on Riel's leadership (pp. 123-38).

Ens also provides an economic interpretation of the Métis exodus from the Red River settlement in the middle to late nineteenth century. Prior to the Red River Resistance, the Métis had been making the transition from a traditional Aboriginal economy to a more sed-

entary agricultural and pre-industrial market economy. By providing buffalo skins for the lucrative buffalo robe trade the Métis had made the shrewd economic decision to abandon subsistence agriculture for a more profitable proto-industrial economy (Ibid.). Ens further argues that the Métis emigration from Red River to the Saskatchewan country was voluntary. This thesis that the Métis were on the verge of an industrial take-off and that they were organized like the peasant societies of early modern Europe is contrived and not overly convincing. Finally, the Métis in both St. François Xavier and St. Andrews Parishes are portrayed more like transplanted Europeans than as Aboriginal people.

The lively debate generated by Pannekoek, Spry, and Ens demonstrates the need for further analysis of the social, sectarian, linguistic, economic and political cleavages in traditional Métis society during the 1869-1885 time period. No leader could transcend these divisions, not even Louis Riel or Gabriel Dumont. Riel faced opposition from many prominent Métis including, James McKay, James Ross, Norbert Welsh, Pascal Bréland, Charles Nolin, and Xavier Letendre *dit* Batoche. During the Red River Resistance, Riel and the Provisional Government relied almost exclusively on the muscle of a few hundred seasonal Métis boat brigadiers and buffalo hunters (Ens 1996: 26). Bourgeault argues that Riel harnessed the ongoing labour-mercantile corporation disputes and the discontent of the Hudson's Bay Company's Métis boat brigades.

After re-organization of the Company in 1862, the internal politics and economic structures of Assiniboia began to crumble. Elements of the labouring class were becoming radicalized: reduced wages, unemployment and over-work increased their suffering. Strikes were more numerous among the voyageurs: the La Loche boat brigades engaged in work shut downs every summer throughout the 1860s (Bourgeault 1983: 71).

In 1871, the Métis population of Red River amounted to about 10,000 souls (Adams 1975: 53). At best, only 200 or so Métis resisted the Canadian state at Batoche. In addition, many of



the Métis of northern and southern Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta remained neutral. This demonstrates that the Prairie Métis have always been a diverse group. The decision-making process of various Métis groups to participate or to remain neutral in these conflicts has yet to be addressed in detail.

The 1885 Resistance was a seminal event in Canadian history. Its immediate and long-term effects had a great impact upon various ethnic and racial groups throughout Canada. For instance, Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser (1997) have now written a First Nations' perspective to the 1885 Resistance. This book, despite its anti-Métis sentiment, is a welcome addition to the literature on the 1885 Resistance.<sup>66</sup> It attacks the thesis held by both traditional historiography and popular imagination that there was a united Aboriginal front in central Saskatchewan during the 1885 Resistance. Stonechild and Waiser argue that the Cree and the Métis were engaged in two separate and unrelated resistances.

The military aspects of the 1885 Resistance have been fully documented by Desmond Morton (1974), Walter Hildebrandt (1985) and Bob Beal and Rod MacLeod (1984). The late George Woodcock has written a readable biography of Gabriel Dumont that was laudatory to both Dumont's skills as a general and the Métis people's struggle to preserve their rights (1975). Woodcock may have stretched his argument when he wrote that the historic Métis were anarchists, but his sincere respect for Dumont and the Métis people is evident.

Some authors have attempted to explain the reaction of the North West Mounted Police (Hildebrandt 1994), French Canada (Silver 1998) Ontario (Silver 1988 and Ooram 1980) and Atlantic Canada (Silver 1986) to the Métis uprisings.

It will no longer suffice to argue that the

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<sup>66</sup> The Métis desperately desired and needed First Nations support in their struggle with Canada; however, Stonechild and Waiser imply that the Métis were in fact colonizers in their own right, who forcibly conscripted First Nations people to their lost cause. In the end, the reader is left with the impression that the Métis were little different in their attitudes towards the Indians than the arrogant and vengeful English Canadians. For example, the authors indicate that the First Peoples were vulnerable to the "insidious" activities of Riel's agents, who "bullied" the Cree into rebellion and exploited anti-government feeling among the Cree (p. 145).

1869-70 and 1885 Resistances were the result of a clash between a 'primitive' and a 'civilized' society. Most academics are now writing separately about Riel and the Resistances, this trend will likely continue in academic writing. Popular writing, however, still tends to fuse those aspects of Métis history. The most notable of these attempts is Maggie Siggins' biography *Riel, A Life of Revolution* (1994). Her book has been attacked by just about everybody in Métis studies for its flagrant plagiarizing, failure to understand historical context, over-romanticization of Louis Riel and its simplistic analysis.<sup>67</sup>

### VIII Métis People and the Land

The Métis people have an historic relationship to the land and to its resources. Despite this connection there are few published resources about traditional Métis land and resource use. Fortunately, the Métis land issue was revived in the 1980s when self-government and land rights were deemed as high priorities on the Métis political agenda. Métis land claims research was financed by the Canadian government at the same time that they financed Treaty and Aboriginal rights research, a decision they later came to regret. For instance, the Métis land claims court cases of *Dumont v. Q* (1981)<sup>68</sup> and *Morin v. Q.* (1994)<sup>69</sup> created a wealth of literature on the subjects of Métis scrip and Métis land rights. This is information that will be used in further litigation against the Crown.

Oposing perspectives on the Métis land question are evident. Thomas Flanagan, writing on behalf of the federal and Manitoba governments, asserts that the claims of the Métis arising out of the legal requirement for extinguishment of Indian title have been effectively disposed of through the provisions of the *Mani-*

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<sup>67</sup> See the *Globe and Mail*, 15 October 1994 and 22 October 1994, *Quill and Quire* 61 (5), 1994, and *Western Report*, 6 March 1995: 34-35.

<sup>68</sup> Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench, *Dumont v. Her Majesty, the Queen*, 1981 and *Manitoba Métis Federation Inc. v. Attorney General of Canada*, (1988, 3 C.N.L.R. 39).

<sup>69</sup> Queen's Bench Judicial Centre of Saskatoon, *Morin et al. vs. Her Majesty the Queen*, 1994.



*toba Act* and the *Dominion Lands Act*. Flanagan states that as far as the Métis living on the Prairies are concerned, Métis claims are a dead issue (1991: 3).

Since the 1980s, Prairie Métis political associations, and scholars who support the Métis position, have provided counter arguments to the Flanagan-Crown position. For example, the work of academics such as Bruce Sealey (1975), Douglas Sprague (1980, 1988), Sam Corrigan (1991), Paul Chartrand (1991), Joseph Magnet (1993), and Leah Dorion and Frank Tough (1993) identify numerous accounts of how the federal government did not discharge its fiduciary or moral obligations to the Métis people. They also document the ways in which the scrip system, with the government's complicity, benefited speculators at the expense of the Métis people. Paul Chartrand's 1991 book, *Manitoba's Métis Settlement Scheme of 1870*, is the most complete treatment of the many inherent problems within the scrip system of land distribution. Joseph Sawchuk et al. (1981) also provides an extensive analysis of the nature of the outstanding Métis claims in *Métis Land Rights in Alberta*.

Paul Driben, in a 1981 article entitled, "The Nature of Métis Claims" assesses these claims from a cultural, political and legal perspective. John Taylor attempts a comprehensive chronological overview of the Métis land claims (1983). Various researchers have provided more focused information about the complexity of the Métis scrip system. These works include Ken Hatt's, "The North-West Rebellion Scrip Commission, 1885-1889" (1985), and D.J. Hall's, "The Half-Breed Claims Commission" (1977).

In his review of *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel*, historian Gerald Friesen (1996: 18) argued that Riel believed that the Métis people had a right to resist the Canadian state in 1885 because the federal government had broken its treaty with the Métis Nation, *The Manitoba Act*, and had thus forfeited its right to the North West. These points are particularly pertinent when scholars attempt to determine how the Métis lost their land base so rapidly after 1870.

The question of the misappropriation of the Manitoba Métis land base remains a hotly contested legal issue, pitting Métis political organizations against the Manitoba and Canadian governments. The Manitoba Métis Federa-

tion hired historian Douglas Sprague to investigate Canadian-Métis relations during the early years of confederation. The findings of this research are documented in *Canada and the Métis, 1869-1885* (1988). Sprague argues that the Canadian government systematically deprived the Métis of the land base promised to them in 1870 as a condition of Manitoba's entry into Confederation (p. 184). Don McLean (1985: 122-123) goes further than Sprague by asserting that the federal government and its operatives may well have engineered a conspiracy, which fermented the 1885 Resistance, in order to sweep aside long-standing Métis grievances. To this day, Métis land issues remain unresolved in Canadian courts. The current schedule calls for the adjourned Manitoba land claim case to resume in 1999.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People contracted Dale Gibson, Clem Chartier and Larry Chartrand to research and write an overview of "Métis Nation Land and Resource Rights." In their work, they discuss these rights in terms of the different geographic areas of Canada because these rights "... involve a complicated mixture of history, geography, politics and law," and the historical facts differ sharply from one region to another (p. 333). This precis which appears as Appendix 5C in *Volume 4: Perspectives and Realities* (1996: 333-375), is an excellent synopsis of the Métis case.

The opening of the Métis land base to newcomers, between 1870 and 1874, was probably more traumatic for the Manitoba Métis than the final defeat of the Métis people in 1885. The Métis Diaspora and the dispossession of the Métis following 1885 needs to be addressed in more detail. For a whole host of reasons, the Métis people migrated to many new locales, particularly to the northern fringes of the four western provinces.

## IX Educational Resources About the Métis

In the past, most curricula and textbooks failed to address the contributions and participation of Indian and Métis people in Canadian society. Since the 1980s, educational resources about Indian and Métis people have been



completely reviewed. Today, there is an explosion of curriculum resources in the field of Native Studies. Saskatchewan Education has mandated that Indian and Métis content has to be integrated throughout the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.<sup>70</sup> Even conventional social studies textbooks are integrating Indian and Métis content. *The Story of Canada*<sup>71</sup> and *Revisiting Canada*<sup>72</sup> are two recent examples of social studies texts that contain a significant amount of Indian and Métis content.

Many provincial ministries of education have developed Native Education Branches in order to develop Native Studies curriculum, evaluate resources, and conduct research on Indian and Métis educational policy and perspectives. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba extensive Métis content is found within existing Native Studies curriculums.<sup>73</sup> These provincial bodies have also provided useful bibliographies for teachers. In order to be put on these bibliographies, the books have to pass extensive review criteria set up by each ministry.<sup>74</sup> These bibliographies can be very beneficial to the general public.

There is still a great demand for high quality Métis resources by educators. Some provinces have responded by publishing Métis supplements to the curriculum. For example, in 1994, the First Nations Education Division of the Greater Victoria School District # 61, published a resource book on the Métis written by Christel Barber, *Growth of the First Métis Nation: 1600-1885 A Social Studies Resource Guide for Teachers*. In Alberta, the St. Albert School

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70 Saskatchewan Education has developed extensive Native Studies curriculum such as *Native Studies 10: Societal Structures of Indian, Métis and Inuit Peoples* (1990), *Native Studies 20: International Indigenous Issues* (1991), and *Native Studies 30: Contemporary Aboriginal Issues* (1997).

71 Janet Lunn and Christopher Moore. *The Story of Canada*. Toronto: Lester Publishing, 1992.

72 Penney Clark and Roberta McKay. *Canada Revisited: A Social and Political History of Canada to 1911*. Edmonton: Arnold Publishing, 1992.

73 Manitoba Education and Training, Native Education. *Reaching for the Sun: A Guide to the Early History and the Cultural Traditions of Native People in Manitoba*, 1993.

74 Manitoba Education and Training, Native Education. *Native Peoples: Resources Pertaining to Indians, Inuit and Métis*, 1995. Saskatchewan Education. *Indian and Métis Resource List for K-12*, 1994.

District #3 and St. Albert Protestant Separate School District # 6 co-published a book entitled *Alberta's Métis* (Scribner and L'Hirondelle, 1998). However, educational publishing about the Métis is still in its infancy and there is still a great need for Métis resources that complement existing curriculum.

### X Métis Literary and Artistic Sources

American and Canadian scholars have documented a whole tradition of racist literary works which stereotyped the Métis people. Rarely did Métis people write about themselves and their own history. Today, Métis writers, playwrights, artists and musicians are emerging to provide a voice for the Métis. They are raising awareness through children's literature, prose, poetry, drama, non-fiction and fiction.

Deconstructing the stereotypes of Métis people in literature has become a common practice. Peter Beidler, an English professor, studied the characterization of the "halfbreed" by non-Aboriginal people in American literature from 1890 to 1910 (1985). He documents how most literature in this time period viewed the halfbreed as repository for animistic behaviour, conscienceless and wickedness – traits commonly ascribed to their Indian relations. For instance, Mark Twain's character named Injun Joe reflects the evil and murderous halfbreed stereotype. If the halfbreed character did possess qualities of virtue, intelligence and conscience, these were attributed to their European blood.

Most early literature containing Métis characters focussed on their struggle to quash their uncivilized Indian traits in order to fit in to the dominant 'white' culture and society. There was rarely an accurate portrayal of the social and psychological consequences of denying an individual's cultural identity. The literature often advocated complete assimilation as a positive step for mixed-race people.

Métis writers are now taking lead roles in deconstructing historical and contemporary literature pertaining to Métissage. Métis scholar Olive Dickason has examined the emergence of the larger historical myths and stereotypes of



Aboriginal people in "The Myth of the Savage".<sup>75</sup> Dickason effectively traces the origins of European imposed racial terminology and the stereotypical concepts of the noble savage and the evil savage. Similarly, Emma LaRoque's, *Defeathering the Indian* (1975), deconstructs the myths of Indians as nature lovers, the halfbreed 'problem' and the 'dirty' Indian. Her book is geared towards rethinking the way society portrays Aboriginal people both in the literature and in the classroom. Through evocative poetry, Marilyn Dumont (1996) passionately deals with the emotional consequences of common stereotypes in her poems: "Memoirs of a Really Good Brown Girl;" "Half Human/Half Devil (Halfbreed) Muse;" "The Devils Language;" and "Squaw Poems."

Since the mid-1980s, Métis writing has penetrated the mainstream consciousness and is available in various anthologies. Examples of these are *Our Bit of Truth: An Anthology of Native Literature in English* (Grant, 1990), *In a Vast Dreaming* (Native Women in the Arts, 1995), and *Gatherings, the En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples* series.

The literature of contemporary Métis writers reflects their diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives – yet reiterate some common themes – such as resistance to assimilation and the resurgence of Métis identity and culture. Monica Goulet's poem, "Just Remember"<sup>76</sup> contains strong statements about accepting Aboriginal people for who they are instead of always expecting them to change. Sharon Proulx's short story, "She is Reading Her Blanket with Her Hands,"<sup>77</sup> talks about the consequences of denial of identity and assimilation for an urban family. Like many others, she stresses the importance of reclaiming identity. Dorine Cooper's poem, "What Colour is Love?" eloquently deals with the issue of getting beyond colour and race.<sup>78</sup> These are only a few of

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75 In Olive Dickason, *The Noble Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984.

76 *Gatherings, the En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples*, Vol. IV, Fall 1993.

77 *Gatherings, the En'owkin Journal of First North American Peoples*, Vol. V, Fall 1994.

78 In Grant, 1990, *Our Bit of Truth*.

the writers who have expressed what it is like to be Métis through poetry.

Although there has been noticeable growth in Métis literature, more women than men have been publishing their creative work. However, one of the first Métis men to write poetry and songs was Louis Riel (1886, 1993). Métis men have tended to contribute more to the academic and political literature, however, since the late 1980s more Métis men are emerging as writers of poetry, biography, novels and short stories. For example, Métis poet Gregory Scofield is also a dramatist and non-fiction writer. He has had two radio dramas produced by the CBC: "The Storyteller" and "Follow the Buffalo Home." His first book of poetry, *The Gathering: Stones for the Medicine Wheel* (1993), traces his biographical journey towards spiritual renewal and acceptance. He has also given his perspectives on the effects of government policies and Métis dispossession/dislocation, the controversy over Bill C-31, self-government and colonization. His poem "Mixed-Breed Act" addresses the impact of government legislation on the expression of identity.

Another collection of poetry, *Batoche*, by Kim Morrissey (1989), gives voices to the various Métis who were at Batoche during 1885. Jordan Wheeler's novel, *Brother in Arms* (1989), takes the reader on a journey into the lives and relationships of brothers. James Tyman's, *Inside Out: An Autobiography by a Native Canadian* (1989), shares his struggle in accepting his identity and dealing with addictions.

There are very few published plays by Métis people. Maria Campbell and Linda Griffith's play, *The Book of Jessica: A Theatrical Transformation* (1989) expresses the themes within the novel *Halfbreed* (Campbell, 1973) in a dramatic form. There is a great deal of creative literature addressing the historic Batoche experience. These plays written by non-Métis playwrights include Ken Mitchell's *The Plainsman* (1992), a drama about Métis resisters at Batoche in 1885, and Laurier Gareau's *La Trahison/The Betrayal* (1997), which discusses the relationship between Métis leader Gabriel Dumont and the French Oblate Père Alexis André.

In the past, many non-Aboriginal people who often perpetuated dangerous stereotypes about Aboriginal people, were the same people



who wrote about Indigenous people in the Americas, and most children's literature about Aboriginal people. Generations of children have been influenced by comic books, movies and children's stories that depict Aboriginal people in a pejorative way. Most recently the Disney version of Pocahontas has affected the attitudes and perceptions of young children. The Council on Interracial Books for Children<sup>79</sup> has responded to these issues by establishing criteria for selecting bias free textbooks and storybooks. They recommend the following ten important steps to follow in evaluating children's literature: check the illustrations, check the storyline, look at lifestyles, weigh the relationships between people, note the heroes, consider the effects on the child's self-image, consider the author or illustrator's background, the author's perspective, the use of loaded words and look at the copyright date. In Canada, the various ministries of education have adopted similar policies and guidelines to follow when selecting children's literature.<sup>80</sup>

Maria Campbell's *Riel's People: How the Métis Lived* (1983) was the first children's book about Métis culture and lifestyle during the fur trade era. Due to a lack of resources about Métis people in children's literature both Pemmican Publications and the Gabriel Dumont Institute have taken lead roles in developing appropriate literature. Recent children's literature such as Sherry Farrell Racette's *The Flower Beadwork People* (1993) have provided young people with a better understanding of the Métis people's historic development. *The Alfred Reading Series* (Pelletier, 1992) highlights the contemporary experiences of a Métis boy named Alfred. Other children's books from Pemmican Publications like *Red Parka Mary* (Eyvindson 1996) and *I Love to Play Hockey* (Klassen 1994) tell positive stories about Métis children in contemporary society. Those readers interested in northern stories should consult Tina Umpherville's, *The Spring Celebration*

79 The Council on Interracial Books for Children is located in New York, New York.

80 The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has re-evaluated the resources used in schools. See *Prejudice in Social Studies Textbooks: A Content Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks Used in Saskatchewan Schools*. Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1974.

(1995) and *Jack Pine Fish Camp* (1997).

## XI Canadian Military Service

Another contemporary issue, which is becoming highly politicized, is the plight of Aboriginal veterans. J.L. Granatstein, Canada's pre-eminent military historian, argues that Canadians have largely forgotten Canada's heroic efforts in World Wars I and II.<sup>81</sup> If Canadians have little knowledge about the sacrifices made by past generations in war, what would they know of the role played by First Nations, Inuit and Métis veterans? We need more information about the wartime experiences of Métis and other Native veterans. Through this all Canadians will better understand the social plight of Métis veterans in general.<sup>82</sup> Despite being subjected to systemic racism, Métis Canadians have loyally served Canada in World Wars, United Nations police actions and in other military duties. Indeed, Métis people have eagerly volunteered to fight for "King and Country."

The enlistment ratios for Métis people were high during both World Wars. Nobody knows exactly how many served since many if not most were listed as French-Canadians or non-status Indians. Furthermore, no agency, (government, private or religious) has ever completed a thorough enumeration of Métis enlistees and conscripts. In both world wars, whole Métis communities enlisted, notably Cumberland House, Saskatchewan and St. Albert, Alberta. This is the hidden history of the Métis people, which all Canadians should know.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has produced the only book, *Remembrances: Métis Veterans* (1997), which exclusively deals with the experiences of Métis veterans during the two world

81 J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* Toronto: Harper Collins Publisher Ltd., 1998: 111-135.

82 Gabriel Dumont Institute, *Remembrances: Métis Veterans*, 1997: 84-87. The late Joseph MacGilvary, a Métis trapper from Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, did not receive any form of recognition for capturing General Kirk Meyer, leader of the Hitler Jüngend, and murderer of more than 20 Canadian servicemen during the Falaise Campaign in the summer of 1944. The Métis community feels strongly that he should be posthumously recognized and honoured for capturing this infamous German war criminal.



wars and the Korean War.

Although many agencies and authors, including Fred Gaffen (1985), the Department of Veterans Affairs (1993), the Canadian Senate (1995), the Saskatchewan Indian Veterans Association (1989), Daniel Byers (1996), Michael Stevenson (1996), R. Scott Sheffield (1996), Maureen Simpkins (1998), Carrielynn Lamouche (1995) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples<sup>83</sup>, have written short histories regarding the service of Aboriginal people during wartime, there is very little Métis content in these books and articles. For insight into the military lives of two famous Métis service men, James Brady and Louis Nor'West see Murray Dobbin<sup>84</sup> and the Department of Veteran's Affairs<sup>85</sup>.

Métis film maker Loretta Todd's *Forgotten Warriors* (1996) examines the reasons that compelled Aboriginal people to enlist and the social problems they faced upon their return home. Howard Margolian (1998) examines the murders of members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles (many of whom were Métis and First Nations enlistees) by an armed branch of the Hitler Youth in July of 1944. The number of Métis veterans who became leaders in the struggle to establish and gain recognition for Métis political organizations is worthy of note and has been under-reported.

In Native communities across Canada, and in academia, it is generally accepted that returning First Nations and Métis veterans were instrumental in forming the Aboriginal political resurgence. The experiences they gained overseas gave them the self-confidence and understanding of non-Aboriginal society needed to represent their people's long-standing grievances (see Laurie Barron 1997: 13).

## XII Contemporary Issues

Within Métis Studies, self-government, community and economic development, political

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83 Vol. 1, Looking Forward Looking Back, 1996: 545-604.

84 Murray Dobbin, *The One-And-A-Half Men*, 1981: 138-144.

85 Department of Veteran's Affairs, *Native Soldiers: Foreign Battlefields*, 1993: 11-13.

organization, cultural life, Aboriginal hunting rights, residential schools, racism, Métis legal identity and justice issues are popular contemporary topics. However, the amount of time and resources spent on self-government issues during the 1980s has resulted in less comprehensive development of materials pertaining to these other issues. Some very good resources have been developed by various organizations in specific areas. For example, *The Struggle for Recognition: Canadian Justice and the Métis Nation* (Corrigan and Barkwell 1991) provides a good overview in a series of papers discussing Métis justice issues. Since the early 1990s, the Métis National Council has published informative papers and studies on literacy, the Michif language, the child welfare system, and Métis economic development. The internet also contains a significant amount of content about Métis history, identity and culture, however these resources must sometimes be examined with a critical eye. Significant information about contemporary Métis issues is contained in the recent Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples publications, particularly *Volume 4: Perspectives and Realities*, which has a full chapter on a variety of current Métis issues (1996: 199-386).

While the Métis people generally face appalling social conditions, higher than average rates of poverty and incarceration – very few studies, other than those of the Métis National Council and its affiliates address this imbalance. However, there are a number of authors analyzing the related issues of community healing, decolonization and social justice for the Métis people. For instance, L.J. Barkwell et al.<sup>86</sup> and Lyle Longclaws<sup>87</sup> emphasize that respect for Aboriginal traditions of self-governance and ways of knowing should occur in non-Aboriginal society.

The development of Métis political activism after the 1885 Diaspora and up until the early 1960s, remains a neglected period in Métis studies. During this time period the Métis were marginalized or assimilated, and many hid their

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86 L.J. Barkwell, D. Chartrand, L. Longclaws and R. Richard, "Devalued People: The Status of the Métis in the Justice System" (1991).

87 Lyle Longclaws, "New Perspectives on Healing," *Issues in the North*, Vol. 1, 1996.



Métis identity in order to escape racism. For these reasons Métis leaders had great difficulty in organizing and politicizing Métis communities. The pre-war and post-war generation of political leaders developed new strategies to alleviate the dire social conditions of Métis people.

The first book of note on this subject was Murray Dobbin's political biography of James Brady and Malcolm Norris, *The One-And-A-Half Men*<sup>88</sup> (1981). Although written from a Marxist perspective, this is a valuable addition to the literature. Brady and Norris were two well-respected leaders who sacrificed their personal lives in order to alleviate the socioeconomic situation facing the Métis people. They laid the groundwork for modern Métis political organizations in both Alberta and Saskatchewan. Dobbin's book also details the process which led the government of Alberta to appoint a commission to look at ways to alleviate the grinding social conditions facing the Métis in Alberta in the early 1930s.

The work of Norris, Brady and others led to the historic creation of the Alberta Métis settlements and the passing of the *Métis Betterment Act*. Joe Sawchuk is considered the pre-eminent authority in this area of study. His monograph, *Métis Land Rights in Alberta: A Political History* (1981), written with Patricia Sawchuk, Theresa Ferguson and the Métis Association of Alberta is the most widely known resource on this topic. They provide a useful analysis of Métis scrip (pp. 87-158), the St. Paul de Métis Colony<sup>89</sup>, the Métis settlements (pp. 187-214) and the unique development of the Grande Cache settlement (pp. 215-241). T.C. Pocklington's more recent study on the same topic (1991), explains the process leading to Métis control of these lands by a final bi-partite agreement with the Alberta government in 1990.

The literature on the historic development of Métis provincial organizations is rather sparse. Joe Sawchuk (1995) has written the only overview of Prairie Métis political organizations including *L'Union Nationale Métisse St.*

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88 This expression comes from the old saying that the Métis were half Indian, half White and half Devil.

89 Père Lacombe originally started the St. Paul de Métis settlement as a Métis colony in 1896. For a host of reasons, the Métis people lost control of the colony in 1909 and were forced out. French-Canadian settlers were given the land which the Métis people had spent years clearing.

*Joseph du Manitoba* and *L'Association des Métis D'Alberta et des Territoires du Nord Ouest*. He has also provided a useful analysis of the structure of the Manitoba Métis Federation during the late 1960s and early 1970s in *The Métis of Manitoba: Reformulation of an Ethnic Identity* (1978). His most recent book, *The Dynamics of Native Politics: The Alberta Métis Experience* (1998) is an excellent volume for anyone interested in the creation of Métis political organizations, their internal structures and their relations with the Canadian state.<sup>90</sup>

For a controversial look at the alleged corruption within the Manitoba Métis Federation consult Sheila Jones-Morrison's sensationalist account in *Rotten to the Core: The Politics of the Manitoba Métis Federation* (1995).

Laurie Barron describes the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) government's well-meaning but paternalistic Aboriginal policy in Saskatchewan (1990, 1995 and 1997). In his assessment the effort failed to significantly improve the lives of the province's Métis people.

As part of a centennial project commemorating the execution of Louis Riel, Wayne McKenzie wrote "Métis Self-Government in Saskatchewan" (1986). In this article he provides a paradigm for the implementation of Métis self-government. Clem Chartier, the current President of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan has written extensively on the Métis peoples struggle to obtain self-government (1994 and 1997).

Former RCAP Commissioner, Paul Chartrand argues that the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal self-government will revitalize the Canadian federation. This would allow for the creation of a true multinational state rather than perpetuating the current political debate over a country fractured by a narrow English-Canada and French-Québec division, which does not reflect Canadian reality (Chartrand 1997).

To date, Will Goodon (1998) is the only researcher to write about Métis activities on the international stage. In his recent essay he notes that the Métis National Council (MNC) has now

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90 Sawchuk provides further insights into the imposition of categories of "Nativity" on Aboriginal people by the Canadian State (pp. 13-27) and has a thorough discussion of Aboriginal organizations in Canada (pp. 28-48).



been recognized by the United Nations and has been granted Non-Governmental Organization status. The MNC has participated within the United Nations, in the areas of children's rights and human rights as well as sitting on the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

### XIII Conclusion

In the past, scholars and popular writers have concentrated exclusively on Louis Riel and the two resistances he led, to the exclusion of other aspects of Métis history. Consequently the historical record was skewed, biased and failed to reflect the totality of the Métis experience. Even the focussed reporting on 1869-70 and the 1885 time periods left out the majority of Métis people and their concerns.

Very few of the early Métis studies were written from a Métis point of view or by Métis academics; as a consequence the authors often coloured their work with the prevalent anti-Métis biases of their times. Reading books written by Giraud, Stanley or Flanagan reveals a great deal of the dominant society's prejudices.

In Métis Studies there are four competing voices within the historical narrative: biased academic historians dedicated to "historical truth" via referenced sources; culturally sensitive scholars, popular authors pursuing simplistic answers to complex historical problems; and Métis people themselves. If book sales mean anything, popularizers like Siggins and biased scholars such as Thomas Flanagan are the most popular authors. In the end, neither patronizing works nor anti-Métis diatribes give a representative view of the Métis people's history. Neither school of thought serves the Métis people's struggle for equality, social justice or self-determination since non-Aboriginal people are left with either an over-romanticized or a hostile perspective of how the Métis people became marginalized. To borrow Howard Adams apt phrase, both of these kinds of interpretation are forms of neocolonialism.

Without doubt, the most exciting developments in Métis studies are coming from within the Métis community and from culturally sensitive scholars. Authors such as Maria Campbell, Beatrice Culleton, Doug Sprague, Jacqueline Peterson, Diane Payment, Paul Chartrand, Clem Chartier, Antoine Lussier, Fred Shore, Ron Bourgeault, Howard Adams, Lawrie Barkwell, Bruce Sealey, Guy Lavallée and numerous Métis Elders, eloquently give voice to the Métis people and to their historical contributions to Canadian society. These talented and creative people have reclaimed Métis experiences for the Métis people and in the process have deconstructed many long-held prejudices.

Métis-run publishing houses such as Pemmican Publications (the successor organization to Manitoba Métis Federation Press) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute have offered a forum for the reclamation of the Métis communities' experience, and the examination of a people who have for too long been ignored and devalued. As a result more Métis people, particularly women are finding their voice. Community-based studies and social histories are now the dominant trend in Métis Studies. Métis people are finally reclaiming their own history by articulating that historical voice which others have sought to deny them.

The future of Métis Studies will depend on how the diverging interpretations of the discipline will reconcile themselves. If the dominant trend of scholarship, à la Thomas Flanagan continues, Metis Studies will remain a splintered discipline. If community-based studies and culturally sensitive writing gains a larger following then the discipline will expand. It is important that Métis Studies courses continue to flourish within Native Studies Departments in Canada and the United States – not just to inform Métis students as to the Métis historical experience but also to inform mainstream society. As more and more Métis people enroll for post-secondary education and as more resources are spent on Michif language preservation and on gathering oral histories, the future of the discipline will be assured.



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## Part Three

### Videos, Audio Tapes, CD's and CD-ROM's

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## Part Four Web Sites

Aboriginal Single Window Initiative (Winnipeg)

[www.mb.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/~asw/](http://www.mb.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/~asw/)

Aboriginal Super Information Highway

[www.RemCan.Ca/abinfohwy/](http://www.RemCan.Ca/abinfohwy/)

Aboriginal Youth Network

<http://ayn.ca/>

Bakker, Dr. Peter (Homepage)

[www.hum.aau.dk/dk/lingvist/linb/home\\_uk.htm](http://www.hum.aau.dk/dk/lingvist/linb/home_uk.htm)

Batoche National Historic Site

[www.parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/parks/saskatchewan/batoche/batochee.htm](http://www.parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/parks/saskatchewan/batoche/batochee.htm)

B.C. Metis Nation Homepage

[www.vcn.bc.ca/michif/](http://www.vcn.bc.ca/michif/)

Bill's Aboriginal Links

[www.io.org/~jgcom/aborl.htm](http://www.io.org/~jgcom/aborl.htm)

British Columbia Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

[www.aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/](http://www.aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/)

Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement

[www.buffalo-lake.ab.ca/](http://www.buffalo-lake.ab.ca/)

Canadian Museum of Civilization

[www.cmcc.muse.digital.ca/cmcc/cmcceng/welcmeng.html](http://www.cmcc.muse.digital.ca/cmcc/cmcceng/welcmeng.html)

Canada, National Archives

[www.archives.ca](http://www.archives.ca)

Canada's People: The Metis, Teacher's – Curriculum Resource

[www.lrdc.edc.gov.ab.ca/upi/14882601.htm](http://www.lrdc.edc.gov.ab.ca/upi/14882601.htm)

Centre for Rupert's Land Studies

[www.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/ic/rupert/](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/ic/rupert/)

Chalifoux & Associates: Metis Resource Centre

[www.metisresource.com/about.htm](http://www.metisresource.com/about.htm)

Charles Denney Genealogical Collection (Metis)

[www.glenbow.org/archhtm/denney.htm](http://www.glenbow.org/archhtm/denney.htm)

Deborah McIntosh's Aboriginal Law Page

<http://fox.NSTN.Ca:80/~nstr439/abolaw.html>



Finger weaving a voyageur sash  
[www.agt.net/public/gottfred/sash.html](http://www.agt.net/public/gottfred/sash.html)

Fraser/Brazeau Metis Clan  
[www.saltspring.com/braz/](http://www.saltspring.com/braz/)

Gabriel Dumont Institute  
[www.gdins.org/](http://www.gdins.org/)

Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research  
<http://schoolnet2.carlton.ca/english/ext/aboriginal/gd-hist/gabriel.html>

Glenbow – Alberta Institute  
[www.glenbow.org/](http://www.glenbow.org/)

Labrador Metis Nation  
[www.labmetis.org](http://www.labmetis.org)

Manitoba Association for Native Languages  
[www.manl.mb.ca](http://www.manl.mb.ca)

Manitoba Association for Native Languages: Aboriginal Language Information System  
[www.manl.mb.ca/alis.html](http://www.manl.mb.ca/alis.html)

Melungeon Homepage  
[www.melungeons.org/](http://www.melungeons.org/)

Metis Families  
[www.telvar.com/~gmorin/](http://www.telvar.com/~gmorin/)

Metis – Land Scrip  
<http://library.usask.ca/northwest/index/subject/77.html>

Metis Life  
[www.vcn.bc.ca/michif/mlife.html](http://www.vcn.bc.ca/michif/mlife.html)

Metis Links and other resources  
<http://www.metistraining.org/contact.html>

Metis Messenger  
[www.labmetis.org/news1.htm](http://www.labmetis.org/news1.htm)

Metis Nation of Alberta Homepage  
[www.metis.org/](http://www.metis.org/)

Metis Nation of Alberta: Career Opportunities  
[www.metis.org/pages/employment.html](http://www.metis.org/pages/employment.html)

Metis Nation in New England  
<http://members.aol.com/METISNwEng/>



- Metis Nation of Ontario  
[www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org)
- Metis National Council: Metis Business Centre  
[www.sae.ca/mbc](http://www.sae.ca/mbc)
- Metis Provisional Government – 1885  
<http://library.usask.ca/northwest/index/subject/148.html>
- Metis Resource Centre  
[www.mts.net/~metisrc/](http://www.mts.net/~metisrc/)
- Metis Traders  
[www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca/Metis\\_traders.htm](http://www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca/Metis_traders.htm)
- Michif Cultural Preservation Society  
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/michif/>
- Mixed-Blood Census of Michigan – Surname Index  
[www.members.aol.com/vwilson577/1836-mix.html](http://www.members.aol.com/vwilson577/1836-mix.html)
- Native American Authors: Metis  
[www.ipl.org/cgi/ref/native/browse.pl/t240](http://www.ipl.org/cgi/ref/native/browse.pl/t240)
- Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association  
[www. Omaa.org/](http://www.Omaa.org/)
- Pemmican Publications Inc.  
<http://www.pemmican.mb.ca>
- Saskatchewan Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat  
[www.gov.sk.ca/indmet/](http://www.gov.sk.ca/indmet/)
- The Creolist Archives: Michif-Speech  
[www.ling.su.se/Creole/Archive/Michif-Speech.html#1](http://www.ling.su.se/Creole/Archive/Michif-Speech.html#1)
- The Melungeon Outpost  
[www.bright.net/~kat/melung.htm](http://www.bright.net/~kat/melung.htm)
- The Other Métis  
[www.cyberus.ca/~mfdunn/metis/](http://www.cyberus.ca/~mfdunn/metis/)
- University of Saskatchewan, Other Collections, Native Resource Centre  
<http://library.usask.ca/public/othercat.html>
- Wisconsin's French Connections (University of Wisconsin, Green Bay)  
<http://gbms01.uwgb.edu/~wisfrench/library/>



# INDEX

## A

*Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba*, 35, 36, 47, 67, 77, 97, 100  
*Agriculture*, 6, 19, 22, 50, 53, 56, 60, 86, 106  
*Alonsa*, 32  
*Amaranth*, 32  
*Anthology*, 7, 26, 33, 63, 87  
*Art*, 25, 37, 40, 41, 49, 51, 56, 64, 72, 85, 89, 93, 94, 95, 99, 109  
*Assimilation*, 5, 11, 25, 26, 32  
*Acculturation*, 11

## B

*Batoche*, 5, 6, 7, 13, 23, 38, 51, 66, 73, 85, 86, 92, 98, 117, 118  
*Battle at the Grand Coteau*, 18, 87  
*Beadwork*, 17, 27, 38, 77, 96  
*Beaupre, Joseph 'Édouard'*, 84  
*Beauval*, 68  
*Beaver Métis Colony*, 65  
*Bibliography*, 1, 33, 34, 52, 60, 69, 71, 77, 89, 94, 101  
*Binscarth*, 38  
*Bird, James Jr.*, 64  
*Bird, Madeline*, 38  
*Brady, Jim*, 53, 64  
*Branconnier, Jean Baptiste*, 40  
*Brandon*, 40  
*Breland, Pascal*, 45, 74, 78, 84  
*Bruce, John*, 99  
*Bruneau, François-Jacques*, 54  
*Buffalo*, 6, 12, 18, 19, 22, 37, 40, 42, 63, 66, 71, 74, 81, 85, 93, 98, 106, 108, 113  
*Buffalo Lake*, 53, 121  
*Buffalo Narrows*, 66  
*Bungee*, 14, 38, 93, 112

## C

*Cadot Family*, 42  
*Callihoo, Victoria*, 7, 42  
*Campbell, Maria*, 2, 6, 7, 12, 16, 26, 27, 30, 43, 44, 69  
*Camperville*, 73, 78, 91, 109, 118  
*Captain William Kennedy*, 78, 103  
*Cardinal, Douglas*, 29, 44  
*Cardinal, Michael*, 89  
*Carlton*, 108  
*Caslan Métis Settlement*, 112  
*Chatelain, Nicolas*, 82  
*Child Welfare*, 36, 67, 69, 71, 83, 86, 104

*Cochin*, 72  
*Colonization*, 6, 12, 31, 41, 45, 52, 63, 71, 72, 99  
*Correctional Services*, 36, 45, 49, 73, 87  
*Courchaine, Marie Therese*, 84  
*Culleton, Beatrice*, 6, 12, 30, 51, 118  
*Cultural relativism*, 10  
*Cypress Hills*, 56, 63, 66

## D

*Daniels, Harry W.*, 56, 63, 66  
*Davis, William*, 74  
*Delorme, Pierre*, 104  
*Delorme, Urbain*, 84  
*Delorme-Smith, Marie Rose*, 84  
*Dubuc, Sir Joseph*, 92  
*Duck Bay*, 60, 91, 109, 117  
*Dumont, Gabriel*, 12, 22, 23, 26, 32, 55, 61, 77, 81, 93, 99, 107, 109, 111, 114, 118  
*Dumont, Marilyn*, 7, 26  
*Dumont, W. Yvon*, 48, 79, 105

## E

*East Prairie*, 108  
*Easterville*, 72, 112  
*Education*, 24, 25, 27, 45, 46, 54, 67, 68, 70, 72, 74, 77, 78, 82, 83, 90, 92, 95, 100, 102, 103, 114, 115  
*Elizabeth Métis Settlement*, 68  
*Erasmus, Peter*, 57  
*Ethnocentrism*, 4  
*Ethnohistory*, 4  
*Eurocentrism*, 9, 19

## F

*Favel, Gilbert (Gilbert Pelletier)*, 114  
*Fiddle*, 16, 33, 51, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 100, 113, 118, 119  
*Fidler, Peter*, 76  
*Fishing Lake*, 67  
*Fort Chippewyan*, 44, 59, 102  
*Fort Ellice*, 42, 59, 80, 95, 105  
*Fort Resolution*, 52, 105  
*Frontier Thesis*, 9

## G

*Gaboury, Marie Anne*, 69



Garnot, Philippe, 59  
Genealogies, 52, 64, 85, 89, 106  
Gift Lake, 13, 80  
Glenbow, 17, 37, 41, 45, 52, 62, 64, 122  
Goulet, Elzéar, 68  
Goulet, Louis, 45, 69, 103  
Grant, Cuthbert, 77, 78, 84, 102, 114  
Green Lake, 65, 109, 110  
Guiboche, Louis, 92

## H

Half-Breed Allotment Lists, 80  
Hallett Family, 64  
Head Start, 43, 61, 104  
Health, 32, 37, 43, 61, 67, 68, 70, 71, 94, 96, 104  
Historiography, 3, 10, 77, 85  
Hope, Adrian, 73  
Housing, 33, 39, 43, 46, 48, 70, 72, 79, 108

## I

Ile-à-la-Crosse, 40, 49, 75, 99, 105  
Isbister, Alexander Kennedy, 49, 67, 68, 112  
Isbister, James, 105

## J

Jackson, Henry, 4, 59, 105  
Jaxon, Honoré Joseph, 48, 105  
Justice, 28, 31, 33, 35, 36, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 66, 69, 74,  
77, 83, 86

## K

Kanakas, 11  
Keeseekowenin, 89  
Keg River, 68  
Kelly Lake, 32  
Kikino Settlement, 84

## L

La Baye, 110  
Labrador, 10, 39, 63, 95, 122  
Lac la Biche, 64, 69, 71, 76, 80, 92, 99, 107  
Lac St. Anne, 42  
Lagimodière, 63, 49, 76  
Land Claims, 23, 38, 51, 58, 64, 65, 78, 82, 83, 98, 100,  
106, 109, 110, 113  
Laurentian Thesis, 20  
Law, 22, 35, 41, 47, 48, 56, 69, 73, 75, 79, 104,  
113  
Légaré, Jean Louis, 67  
Lépine, Ambroise-Didyme, 42, 49, 78, 84, 110, 111  
Lépine, Jean-Baptiste, 40

Lépine, Maxime, 74, 92  
Letendre Family, 111  
Létourneau, Henri, 74  
Literacy, 61, 83, 89  
Literature, 25, 26, 27, 33, 40, 56, 63, 72, 87, 94  
Logan, Jim, 56

## M

Macdonald, John A., 20, 51  
McKay, Angus, 44  
McKay Family (St. Eustache), 81  
McKay, James, 22, 63, 77, 78, 109, 111  
McKay, John Richards, 80  
McLeod (Ballenden), Sarah, 112  
Medicine, 13, 17, 37, 50, 59, 65, 102  
Melungeons, 11, 70, 122  
Métis Elders, 12-16, 33, 40, 50, 67, 79, 95, 104, 115  
Métis Enterprise, 48, 55, 66, 80, 85  
Métis Flags, 17, 96  
Métis Horses, 69  
Métis Identity, 5, 7, 10-13, 17, 26, 28, 32, 48, 50, 51,  
54, 62, 70, 72, 73, 85, 88, 89, 94, 95, 101, 102, 117  
Métis Provincial Organizations, 29, 86, 101  
Métis Sash, 17, 34, 67, 71, 122  
Metis Settlements, 29, 31, 32, 37, 62, 80, 84, 85, 95, 117  
Métis Women, 5-7, 30, 31, 39, 40, 41, 44, 56, 62, 63, 65,  
72, 82, 84, 90, 92, 95, 97, 100, 109, 112, 114  
Métis Youth, 35, 75, 84, 121  
Michif Language, 14-16, 31, 32, 34, 35, 48, 49-51, 54,  
57, 67, 71, 73, 75, 79, 83, 89, 90, 91, 93, 99, 109,  
113, 117, 118, 123  
Military Service, 27-28, 42, 43, 46, 95, 103  
Montana, 6, 11, 42, 55, 64  
Moose Factory, 69

## N

Nolin, Angélique and Marguerite, 45, 84  
Nolin, Charles, 22, 74, 92  
Norquay, John, 49, 60  
Norris, Malcolm, 28, 29, 53  
North-West Resistance 1885 (Rebellion), 17, 18, 20, 32,  
33, 36-39, 42, 48, 49, 52, 55, 58, 65, 69, 70, 71, 72,  
77, 80, 81, 84, 87, 88, 90, 96, 97, 102, 104, 107,  
108, 110, 112, 114, 118, 119  
Northwest Territories, 39, 62, 64, 71, 74, 83, 97, 105  
Norway House, 33, 37, 66

## O

Oblate Missionaries, 32, 44, 48, 94

## P

Paulet Paul, 59  
Pembina, 43, 59, 71, 109



*Picheito Tanner*, 88  
*Pilon, Christine Dumas*, 92  
*Pinehouse Lake*, 7, 82, 110  
*Poetry*, 26, 43, 98  
*Pointe-à-Grouette*, 106, 107  
*Postmodernism*, 3  
*Potts, Jerry*, 52, 57, 75, 103  
*Pre-contact period*, 8  
*Pruden Family*, 96

## Q

*Quillwork*, 37, 66

## R

*Red River Cart*, 17, 41, 62  
*Red River Jig*, 39, 62, 100  
*Red River Resistance*, 19, 21, 22, 34, 42, 49, 56, 61, 85, 88, 90, 91, 93, 96, 105, 110  
*Red River Settlement*, 38, 57, 59, 66, 70, 74, 76, 81, 86, 93, 97, 98, 99, 106  
*Riel Family*, 92  
*Riel, Louis*, 7, 8, 13, 18-24, 31-33, 38, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 51, 52, 54, 57, 58, 60, 61, 63, 65, 67, 71, 76, 79, 80, 85, 87, 88, 90, 93, 98, 99, 104, 107, 109, 111, 114, 117  
*Riel, Louis Sr.*, 87  
*Riel, Sara*, 57, 69  
*Ross, Alexander*, 110  
*Ross Family*, 112  
*Ross, James*, 116  
*Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, 15, 27, 31, 32, 38, 44, 46, 47, 53, 54, 60, 61, 63, 67, 70, 71, 74, 79, 80, 82, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, 93, 94, 96, 101, 105, 106, 110, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 131  
*Royal, Joseph*, 78

## S

*St.-Laurent*, 92, 118  
*Sanderson, George William*, 118

*Sansregret, Louison*, 42  
*Sayer, Pierre-Guillaume*, 118  
*Scrip*, 27, 50, 52, 59, 66, 69, 72, 73, 74, 88, 94, 95, 97, 112, 122, 131, 134  
*Self-government*, 22, 23, 28, 29, 37, 39, 40, 46, 47, 48, 52, 54, 55, 59, 64, 68, 73, 79, 81, 84, 92, 94, 114  
*Settee, James*, 121  
*Seven Oaks*, 21, 57, 60, 63, 68, 90, 104, 115  
*Sinclair, James*, 83  
*Schmidt, Louis*, 6, 67, 76  
*Smith, Marie Rose*,  
*Snowshoes*, 49  
*Social Darwinism*,  
*Songs*, 18, 19, 69, 86, 98, 110, 112, 113, 126, 129, 130  
*Spence Lake*, 117  
*Spirituality*, 12, 13, 17, 73  
*St. Germaine, Pierre*, 67  
*St. Laurent*, 18, 38, 66, 82, 88, 101, 103, 110  
*St. Louis*, 56, 59, 76, 89, 103, 118, 121  
*Ste. Madeleine*, 13, 115, 119  
*St. Paul des Métis*, 62  
*Steamboat Bill*, 55

## T

*Tanner, James*, 98  
*Tanner, John Falcon*, 77, 98, 99  
*Turtle Mountain (Belcourt N.D.)*, 13, 16, 17, 18, 38, 49, 64, 68, 71, 74, 89, 95, 98, 113, 123, 124

## U

*Urban Governance*, 71

## W

*Westbourne*, 70

## Y

*York Boats*, 71



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# RESOURCES FOR MÉTIS RESEARCHERS

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By: Lawrence J. Barkwell, Leah Dorion, and Darren R. Préfontaine

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