

hidden by their desire to be more than a collection of immigrants living off aboriginal wealth and talents. It is a strange tale, but closer to the truth than most Canadian myths.

In this important book, the author deftly exposes His Majesty's original constitutional vision of Canada. He unravels the British colonial pretences surrounding aboriginal rights with riveting logic and with historical documents. This book and the author's scholarship constitute an important milestone in the decolonization of Canada. It elegantly replaces the myth of the rise of responsible government. More importantly, this legal history reveals the unlawful activities of the provinces and the federal governments, which attempted to dismantle the aboriginal governments, and why these attempts were constitutionally invalid.

Chapter after chapter reveals that ever since 1763, the First Nations had the constitutional right of aboriginal self-government: not the familiar *Indian Act* band government structures, nor the racial dreams of the National Indian organizations, nor the narrow concerns of the First Ministers, but rather a right to their culturally-defined traditional government. For those who work with the aboriginal people or seek to understand their modern movement toward tribal self-determination, it is required reading. The author's vision is clear, even if his proposed remedy is not. Most importantly, it lays the foundation for tribal government and respect in Canada's future.

Women of the Praia: Work and Lives in a Portuguese Coastal Community

Sally Cole

Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991. xvii + 189 pp. \$39.50 (cloth), \$12.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Ann Marie Powers
Acadia University

Women of the Praia is one of those rare monographs that combines theory, method and ethnography and weaves them together to provide a splendid book that is at once an important contribution to European ethnography, as well as a critical pedagogical resource.

Incorporating the life histories of five women from Vila Cha, a parish in northwestern Portugal, Sally Cole presents a detailed account of changing gender relations through three generations of fisherfolk ("*os pescadores*") and agriculturalists ("*os lavradores*"), focussing on the emergence and decline of the maritime economy.

From fieldwork undertaken in 1984-85 and again in 1988, as well as through the use of archival data, the author describes the changing patterns of social and economic organization which characterized the maritime economy of Vila Cha during the Salazar regime (1926-74). With insight and artistry, Cole challenges the view of women in the Mediterranean as being victims of their own sexuality, tied to a code of honour and shame which enhances male prestige. Instead, with vivid clarity we see how "in practice, gender is actively constructed and negotiated at several levels and that local gender systems do not merely mirror the hegemonic constructions of church and state" (p. 79).

During the Salazar regime, the division of labour and male emigration (as far distant as Mozambique and Newfoundland) within the maritime community provided a

context in which women saw themselves more in terms of their roles as workers and managers (producers) within the household, rather than as reproducers. While at the community level there may have existed a myth of male dominance, under the Salazarean State communities were essentially powerless and it was the household that took priority in the lives of rural people. Consequently, among the fisherfolk of Vila Cha, the ideal of a partnership between spouses existed and female autonomy was exemplified by patterns of female inheritance and uxorilocality and a positive identity of women as *trabalhadeiras* (hard-working). By contrast, the male-centred households of the agriculturalists of the same parish, whose wives did not leave their homes, were subject to the constructions of gender and family from a state that legislated male dominance and a church which promulgated female servitude. The women of the wealthier *lavradores*, confined to their homes, were envied by the fisherwomen of Vila Cha *not* for their position within the home, per se, rather for the wealth and status such a role (*dona de casa*) symbolized. Cole goes on to explain how this paradoxical attitude towards women who were *donas de casa* eventually became a source of conflict for young maritime women hired by industries coming into the area during the 1960s. Low wages, coupled with increasing time away from their households, led to a decline in status and autonomy for many of these women and increased social stratification throughout Vila Cha.

By understanding gender as a changing historical and social construction, the meaning of honour and shame in the Mediterranean takes on new dimensions. No longer is shame seen in opposition to honour, nor woman seen as "the other" of man. Cole brilliantly deconstructs this code to demonstrate the system as one of social control applied to both men and women and places the analysis of shame into a context that is not sexuality dependent. By so doing, it reminds us once again of how our theoretical assumptions sometimes misguide us into asking the questions which will produce the answers we expect, rather than seeing the kaleidoscope of meaning and behaviour that exists within every culture.

This book is exemplary in many ways and is a welcome resource for teaching and research in a variety of courses from European cultures and historical ethnography to gender and sexuality. My students thoroughly enjoyed it, as did I.

Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa, Volume 1

Jean and John Comaroff

Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1991. xx + 414 pp. \$60.00 (cloth), \$18.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Sean Morrow

National University of Lesotho

Historians schooled to seek economic and political motives have sometimes dealt simplistically with missionaries in Africa. Missionaries were generally not drawn from the most socially or economically significant classes and, at least initially, often possessed little understanding of the communities they entered. They became, even so, crucial interpreters (or misinterpreters) of Europe and Africa to each other. Unsummoned and importunate though they were, their activities in incipient or actual