

view that these languages descend from a Proto Central Algonquian (PCA) much more recent than PA. They also provide a plausible if somewhat speculative account of the influence on Cree vs. Ojibwa relations of the rise and fall of Missippian societies just to the south of them. However, some other ethnographic reconstructions are too specific for the very small amount of data considered, and do not convince.

The paper by Denny (p. 15-36) is evidently an overview of the account he has developed in recent years, on the archaeology of times and places he suspects of having harboured Algonquians. The framework for this is more art than science, and it almost never convinces me. The main problem is that the linguistic evidence he is working with is much too tenuous, and will not really sustain a detailed account of any kind. Costa's paper (p. 1-14) consists of notes on Shawnee.

The paper by Philip LeSourd (p. 141-164) is easily readable, a fine introduction to Malicite-Passamaquoddy for the Algonquianist unfamiliar with it. After introductory remarks on the phonology and grammar of this language, the topic is the noun substitute, best known throughout Algonquian for its use when one has forgotten a word ("whatyoumaycallit"). However, LeSourd discovers unsuspected uses for it: to announce a clarification, including a switch in gender of a referent, and as a generalizing modifier meaning "of some kind." He explores its historical phonology, inflection, and syntax. Rich with examples taken from texts, it inspires confidence. He also discusses its relation to the suffix *-4èy* "pertaining to, consisting of," also found in Micmac, that forms modifiers (adjectives) indifferent to gender. These are unique within Algonquian, as far as I know, and thus of special interest.

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Barker, John and Douglas Cole (eds.), *At Home with the Bella Coola Indians: T.F. McIlwraith's Field Letters, 1922-4*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003, 224 pages.

Reviewer: *Brian Thom*
McGill University

This publication of T.F. McIlwraith's field letters chronicles an important point in the life of an historically significant figure in Canadian anthropology, and provides an important window into the personal and professional relationships that inform the writing of ethnography.

Before McIlwraith became one of the first Canadian anthropologists to be established in a Canadian university (University of Toronto), he was employed by Edward Sapir to engage in fieldwork in the Nuxalk (Bella Coola) community of coastal British Columbia. The enthusiastic, 23-year old Cambridge graduate who had studied under A.C. Haddon and W.H.R. Rivers, set out to comprehensively document Nuxalk traditional culture from kinship systems to the potlatch to shamanism and religion. Out of his two field seasons of work in 1922-24, McIlwraith produced a seminal 2-volume ethnography (*The Bella Coola Indians*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948) that is a distinctive Northwest Coast ethnography from this time in his departure from the general Boasian research agenda of focussing on native texts. The current volume completes the publication of his writings on Nuxalk culture, providing his home-bound family and professional letters from his time in the field, along with the three other short pieces which were obscure or previously unpublished.

The preface by Barker and Cole describing the impetus for the work is followed by an introduction that supplies background information on McIlwraith, the Nuxalk and the texts that follow. The letters read as freshly and lively as if they were written last winter. The letters and papers are richly annotated with endnotes and bibliographic citations that give enough detail to prevent the reader getting lost in the particularities of language, personal relationships or historical events that were current in the 1920s. The book is significant for the new contributions to early 20th Nuxalk ethnography, and perhaps more widely significant for the insight and point of self-reflection it provides for the practice of ethnographic fieldwork.

As Barker and Cole assert in the introduction, the book has been highly interesting to contemporary Nuxalk people. Through these writings, they gain a rare glimpse into the lives of their ancestors and some close descriptions of aspects of their culture as it was practised during the years that McIlwraith was in the community that were not included in his larger study of "traditional culture." Indeed, the letters provide an interesting contrast with *The Bella Coola Indians*. They are concerned with the immediacy and presentness of events and relationships in the community, whereas the ethnography is primarily concerned with the memory culture of pre-contact issues.

The letters show how the Nuxalk community influenced McIlwraith's fieldwork through their insistence on discussing and working on matters of importance to them. During his first season, they wanted him to understand "Indian Laws" and the details of legendary ancestral history before they would engage him in discussions of other cultural issues. From the close relationships McIlwraith developed with individuals in the Nuxalk community during his first year, he became heir to a number of ceremonial prerogatives that he was obliged to exercise during the next winter ceremonial season.

While his field letters detail his extensive participation in the Nuxalk winter ceremonial of 1923-24, they also reveal that he felt the time-consuming experience was "getting in the way" of interviews and other fieldwork that was more relevant to a study of "traditional" or historic Nuxalk cultural practices. In spite of his understated enthusiasm for the process in the letters, this was clearly a time when McIlwraith came to know and more deeply understand the Nuxalk people, their language and the ways in which cultural practices became meaningful for them. Though the material manifestation of these practices were, in McIlwraith's view, somewhat "spoiled" by elements of European assimilation, the ceremonies were an embodiment of what it was to be Nuxalk.

McIlwraith discusses the tensions between his growing pride in his Nuxalk identity and the embarrassment he felt towards his very public participation in Nuxalk ceremonial life. McIlwraith reflects on these feelings in his letters to his family and his professional mentors, to whom he recounts his indignant feelings towards the smells, tastes and aesthetics of Nuxalk life, at times employing words like "filth" and "stench," and referring to the Nuxalk as being "barely intelligible" and "all I can stand." Such frank personal notes may not sit well with some readers, but are more revealing when seen along side his expressions of deep respect for the veracity and potency of Nuxalk culture that other non-Natives living in the Bella Coola valley did not share. Living in the non-Native com-

munity and working in the Nuxalk villages, McIlwraith became quite aware of his insider/outsider status in both of them. That status produced an emotional response that is well revealed in the letters to his family and professional colleagues.

This emotional tension culminates in a letter to his father following a Christmas pageant held towards the end of his field studies. At the pageant, he performed Nuxalk song, dance and speech for a mixed audience of Nuxalk and non-Native community members from the neighbouring village where he had his lodging. He writes of feeling intensely loyal to the Nuxalk, but not being able to look his non-Native friends and acquaintances in the eye while performing for fear of breaking down in laughter and not completing the complicated dance he had learned out of respect for his Nuxalk consultants. The mix of pride, humility and embarrassment expressed by McIlwraith reveal the tensions the anthropologist feels while engaged in between two cultural worlds and provides a frank and vivid point from which others engaged in the insider/outsider dialectic of ethnographic fieldwork can reflect on their own experiences.

The book is well conceived and edited, with the usual high production values of the University of British Columbia Press. The notes and references are, however, set in a very tiny typeface that may be a challenge to older eyes. The book, which is not a large volume at just over 220 pages, would have filled out nicely if as much of the existing inward correspondence (particularly that from other anthropologists) to McIlwraith was also included. The only instance of this is found in a single footnote that contains a humorous comment from Edward Sapir regarding the very high-ranking name that had been bestowed upon him for having sent McIlwraith into the field. Regardless of these few weaknesses, *At Home with the Bella Coola Indians* documents an important chapter in the history of Canadian anthropology and is well worth the time to read.