

references does nothing more than bring doubts into the minds of readers regarding the validity of the information presented.

Another weakness of the work is the lack of Canadian material, especially for those of non-Native ancestry who have played vital roles in the lives of Native peoples living in Canada. For example, the Native Canadian population is well represented ranging from Louis Riel to Ovide Mercredi to Big Bear. However, Indian policy makers such as Sir John A. Macdonald, Edgar Dewdney, Hayter Reed, and Pierre Trudeau, to name a few, are sadly missing. This reviewer realizes that exceptions had to be made in the selection of entries, but in order to understand many of the individuals listed it is also necessary to have an idea of with whom these individuals had to deal in their struggles for survival on both sides of the Canadian American border.

In spite of the weaknesses mentioned above, this reviewer found the volume to be a useful reference tool. It is an excellent resource if one is looking for a short and concise description of individuals. This encyclopedia is a superb time saving device. Rather than having to chase down obscure references to individuals, researchers will be able to come to this volume to begin their searches. As a person whose job requires accessing information as quickly as possible, this encyclopedia will be essential to my work. Rather than having to send researchers on wild goose chases they can instead be directed towards this work as a starting point. I am convinced that researchers and information providers alike will find this work to be an essential reference tool for years to come.

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Johnston, Basil H.: *The Bear-Walker and Other Stories*. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1995, ISBN 0-88854-415-4 Cloth CDN \$19.95.

Faithful to his work of celebrating for a huge audience the imaginary world created by Anishinaubae story-tellers, Basil H. Johnston published in 1995 *The Bear-Walker and Other Stories*. This new book joins two previous publications, *Tales the Elders Told* and *Tales of the Anishinaubae*. Johnston, for a long time associated with the Royal Ontario

Museum, has written these books under the mandate to collect, translate and broadcast the heritage of the Anishinaubaek. This superb book collects in English translation tales told by Sam Ozawamik of the Winkwemikong, Frank Shawbedees of the Saugeen, and Johnston himself, a member of the Cape Croker First Nations (Ontario). After a brief introduction devoted mainly to explaining the Ojibway term *Anishinaubaek*, Johnston offers us nine stories, some ancient, some recent, from the rich oral tradition of the Anishinaubaek.

Johnston has preserved the oral characteristics of these tales. The narrators often declare that they are reporting tales that they heard, thereby underlining the collective nature of the production of myths. These are stories in which fantasy, visions, wisdom, and humour is each a product of Man's relationship with nature and its spiritual dimension, and of his relation to his inner world of dreams. Simple vocabulary, short sentences, and frequent dialogues also make this book enjoyable for children as well as adults.

Nine colour plates and many black and white drawings accompany the tales. Or maybe it is the reverse, for the illustrations, by David A. Johnson, take their inspiration from petroglyphs or "picture writing". The artist's plates rely on very simple lines focusing for the most part, on human beings transforming into animals, as in *Mer-Man*, or on humans who are simultaneously also animals or even plants, as in *Red Willows* and *The Bear-Walker*. Rich colours and shining effects capture the deep spirituality of the tales and their mystic vision of the spiritual identity of Man and world. One must commend the care with which these exquisite illustrations have been reproduced in the book.

There's a fine architecture in the way these tales are presented: the two central sections, containing stories of origin and stories of the relation between humans and an often magical nature, are introduced by *The Great Lynx*, a story that brings us to the magic of nature through the threat posed by the woods. Nature and Man are inseparable, even when they are at odds with each other, but the origin stories tell us that in the beginning Man had a hand in nature's creation. *Mer-Man* explains how lakes came to have fish: a man who ate a fish became thirsty and plunged into a spring, transforming it into a fish-filled lake. *Red Willows* explains how Ontario got its physical geography: the hero Nanabush and a bear had a terrible fight, their stamping and rolling raised the hills and depressed the valleys. Fish have names, *Fish* tells us, thanks to an old man who wanted back the bones of his dead son. Not only does this creator have the power to name the fish, though; like a deity, he also has the ability to resuscitate his son.

Nanabush also appears in *The Woodpecker*, once again as ravenously hungry as in *Red Willows*. Using his magic, he transforms a woman who refused to feed him into the bird of the title. In *The Snake and The Man*, a story delightful for its lively scenes and the sharply drawn personalities of its animal characters, a man ends up killing the fox who saved him from a snake. Both stories illustrate what happens to hypocrites and to those who lack solidarity with others or fail to keep their promises. *Bull Frog* relates how some Anishinaubaek, captured by a group of Iroquois after having teased them, escape with the help of a bear and a spirit who appeared in their dreams. This tale stands as a fitting conclusion to these myths of creation and magic, for it draws attention to a characteristic of the Anishinaubaek that makes them well prepared to meet the vicissitudes of daily life: "Such, then, is what is said to have happened to the Ottawas. No one could injure an Ottawa. They were very spiritual in ancient times" (p.59).

Johnston framed these stories with two recent tales. In doing so, he draws a line from the ancient stones to the new ones, showing that the oral tradition of story telling is still lively, and, moreover, of relevance to Natives in the contemporary world. In the concluding *Vision*, a young man has a dream that causes him to weep. The dream is a vision of the future city of Toronto. The story with which the book begins, the funny and wise *Bear-Walker*, concerns the modern Native's quest for identity. A young man consults a bear-walker in order to learn about the world and himself. The medicine man tells him to fetch a water lily from a stagnant pond; he will have to dig and get dirty if he is going to bring back something beautiful. Only much later, living in a city, does the man understand:

if you were to help your fellow Anishinaubaek, or your fellow human beings generally, what you must do is already set. However you may hate it, however unpleasant it may be, you must work at it. It is not always beautiful. And this—everything on the surface of the water is beautiful. To get to the source of beauty you must dig deep (p.15).

Through the water lily parable, the medicine man invites us to stop any stay within the collective and personal self's sorrows in order to help beauty bloom—a collective, and yet very personal, need.

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