

**Enduring Critical Poses: The Legacy and Life of Anishinaabe Literature and Letters.** Edited by Gordon Henry Jr., Margaret Noodin, and David Stirrup. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021. 304 pages. \$99.00 cloth; \$36.95 paper.

Joining *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies* (2013), *Bawaajimo* (2014), *Our War Paint Is Writers' Ink* (2018), *Picturing Worlds* (2020), and monographs on individual Anishinaabe writers, *Enduring Critical Poses* adds to specific studies of Anishinaabe literature and letters. Eleven chapters plus an introduction and an afterword are gathered to examine Anishinaabe memoirs, poetry, novels, plays, and nonfiction. A peep at the names of editors and contributors tells that voices of non-Anishinaabe critics are welcomed in this tribal-centric collection. The enduring Anishinaabe storytelling is also re-visioned as clearly a tribal one that fits into world traditions. The very first sentence, "Duration and endurance is Bergson's series of conscious states, Vizenor's trickster stories remembered, Cruikshank's subversion, and Rilke's trembling love" (1), showcases the visionary design.

*Enduring Critical Poses* opens with a mythic structure. Majikawiz, Bakaawiz, Jiibayaaboozo, and Nanabozho, the four brothers, shoulder respective responsibilities to the Anishinaabe community and represent distinctive Anishinaabe ways of knowing. Drawing on those enduring stories, the editors group all chapters into four parts: history, transformation, critique, and challenge. "These arrangements are not all-defining; the overlaps are considerable" (9), as the editors point out self-reflexively. Readers, too, may find each chapter somehow related to all four keywords, partly invalidating the well-intended categorization. Nevertheless, to borrow the metaphor of prism from Stuart Rieke's analysis in chapter five of ambiguity and empathy in Gordon Henry's poem "Leaving Smoke's," the loosely grouped chapters demand a reading pose, requesting that readers see the collection through a prism patiently. How I play with the prism is imagined here.

Initially, I leave the prism as it is, only to see no living Anishinaabeg, their culture on display. Gerald Vizenor's *Ishi and the Wood Ducks* and E. Donald Two-Rivers' *Chili Corn*, according to Stirrup (chapter eleven), address Anishinaabe-settler relations and, with agility, show that memorialization prescribes forgetting. The presence of public statues honors the "pastness" of the Anishinaabeg, and the space for memorials speaks to the absence of colonization.

The moment I grasp the prism, a beam of survivance shines through. For Deborah L. Madsen (chapter seven), Heid E. Erdrich's book of poetry *National Monuments* critiques the erasure of Anishinaabe material traces. Erdrich's performative poems unsettle American exceptionalism as a settler-colonial creation myth, give voice to material objects and human remains, and exhibit the continuance of Anishinaabe ways of life, especially *bimaadiziwin*, the circle of life. Sharon Holm (chapter six) reads

Vizenor's political essay "Genocide Tribunals" as a compelling call for Native survivance and legal sovereignty. Vizenor creates in Anishinaabe fourth-person narratives a presence and visibility of the witness in absentia, draws upon judicial systems and models outside America, and emphasizes orally transmitted Native systems of law, all to explore a legal paradigm that redresses genocidal practices against Natives.

Pulling the prism closer, I see the Anishinaabeg in constant motion. By both re-storying Anishinaabe identity and providing an academic analysis of various legislation and statements in the early twentieth century, Jill Doerfler (chapter nine) constructs a "tribalography" and affirms that Anishinaabe identity is never measured, divided, rigid, but diverse, fluid, and determined through actions.

I rotate the prism, eager to see more colorful expressions of Anishinaabe motion. More authors, like Majikawiz the wayfarer, record their life journeys. David Treuer has long been a controversial voice, but as defended by Pdraig Kirwan (chapter three) in reading *Rez Life*, Treuer's contrarian stances call for a learning readership that is conscious of both individual and tribal selves and the issue of representation in Native literature. Chris LaLonde (chapter one) argues that *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country*, with a dream-like quality to place and time, marks Louise Erdrich's being, healing, and efforts in remapping the Anishinaabe world. "An Account of the Chippewa Indians" depicts Maungwudaus' urban travels. For Nichole Biber (chapter two), Maungwudaus stresses the vastness of the present and that Anishinaabe identity remains rooted in their dependency on, observation of, and responsibility to the living earth. Eco-poetics, summarized by Susan Berry Brill de Ramirez (chapter four), crystalizes Anishinaabe motion and vision. "Eco" here is meant in the broadest sense, a totality of Anishinaabe universe that encompasses language, life, and place. As manifested in journey poems of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Margaret Noodin, Kimberly Blaeser, and Gordon Henry, the Anishinaabe eco-poetics—poetic repetitions and parallelism, metrical rhythmic, emphatic silences, Anishinaabe geography, survivance, and balance—also evokes emphatic readers' co-creative responses.

After running through the prism, I look beyond it to see where colorful beams of light converge. Anishinaabemowin, the language of the Anishinaabeg, could be one light source identified by *Enduring Critical Poses*. Writers and critics constantly turn to the language for insights into Anishinaabe spiritual belief and their thoughts on the circle of life, the relatedness of beings, the centrality of the present, the universe in motion, and so forth. Consider Carter Meland's comparison in chapter eight regarding how Anishinaabemowin informs Daniel Brinton's and Vizenor's radically different understanding of Nanabozho. For Brinton, the language is diseased and Nanabozho is thus the Anishinaabe Fallen God. Vizenor, in rejecting a universal or reductionist truth-making, views Nanabozho "as muddled, enlightened, contradictory, ludicrous, and complex as it may be" (187), like the language itself. As another example, Noodin argues in chapter ten that *miigwech* (giving thanks) serves as Jim Northrup's narrative praxis and that the truth of his story time lies in *giizhigad* (day), *dibikad* (night), *ziigwan* (spring), *niibing* (summer), *dawaagig* (fall), and *biboon* (winter). Furthermore, by tracing elements of *anishaendamo* (imagination), *miikindizi* (teasing irony), and

*baapaawinad* (joke) in Northrup's works, Noodin highlights Anishinaabe contribution regarding existentialism, irony, and humor to world literature.

The afterword, "The Songs We Are Given," discusses poses of "Anishinaabe academics." The given songs represent Anishinaabe critics' filiative and inherent bonds to tribal roots, yet they also address the greater institutional, professional, economic, and historical powers of affiliation. In adjusting themselves between these two critical poses, critics should remember themselves as part of an enduring Anishinaabe continuum. The afterword, a teaching for Anishinaabe critics, is a clear-cut reminder that this collection is tribal-centered.

I believe *Enduring Critical Poses* will usher in worldwide examinations of Anishinaabe literature before long. I recommend it to anyone interested in Native and Anishinaabe literature. It would be more helpful if they could see the collection through a prism—to realize, patiently, that contrasting colors are complex and connected.

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