

permettra toujours de changer de figure. Elle comprend que les circonstances de la vie la rendront triste ou joyeuse, tranquille ou fâchée et qu'elle restera à travers tous ces changements simplement elle-même.

Cette histoire nous est contée dans un style dépouillé. A peu d'exceptions près, le vocabulaire est celui de tous les jours. Les phrases sont courtes et claires. C'est Amélie qui se raconte en petite fille. Un désavantage: faire d'un enfant le narrateur maintient le niveau de langue au stade enfantin et ne permet malheureusement pas à l'écrivain d'exploiter toute la richesse d'une langue adulte. Néanmoins, Christine L'Heureux a su rendre compréhensible un thème peut-être trop abstrait pour un enfant de quatre ans et ceci grâce à la description d'une suite de scènes très simples.

Les illustrations complètent bien le texte et lui confèrent tout son sens. Les lignes des dessins sont nettes, la composition et les formes extrêmement simples, les couleurs jamais agressives et l'emploi fréquent des tons pastels souligne l'atmosphère joyeuse et insouciant du récit.

En faisant ressortir les différences caractéristiques de chacun des personnages mis en scène — tout en frôlant parfois la caricature — l'artiste peintre a su mettre en relief le thème du livre: la richesse de la nature humaine entrevue par une petite fille caméléon qui découvre peu à peu le monde des grands à travers ses expériences.

Le texte, imprimé en gros caractères, facile à lire et bien illustré, intéressera, j'en suis sûre, bien des enfants de 3 à 8 ans.

Dietlinde Baillet est professeure agrégée au Département des études françaises, Université Acadia.

NATIVE LIFE IN LEGEND, FICTION, AND ART

How names were given: An Okanagan legend. Illus. Ken Edwards. Theytus Books, 1984. 31 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0919441-11-4; **How food was given: An Okanagan legend.** Illus. Ken Edwards. Theytus Books, 1984. 27 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-919441-07-6; **How Turtle set the animals free: An Okanagan legend.** Illus. Ken Edwards. Theytus Books, 1984. 27 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-919441-14-9; **Neekna and Chemai,** Jeanette Armstrong. Illus. Ken Edwards. Theytus Books, 1984. 43 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-919441-13-0; **How Raven freed the moon,** Anne Cameron. Illus. Tara Miller. Harbour Publishing, 1985. 36 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-929980-67-7; **How the loon lost her voice,** Anne Cameron. Illus. Tara Miller. Harbour Publishing, 1985. 36 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-920080-55-3; **Orca's song,** Anne Cameron. Illus. Nelle Olson. Harbour Publishing, 1987. 25 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-920080-29-4; **Tales of the Labrador Indians,**

Harold Horwood. Illus. John Mauder. Harry Cuff Publication's, 1981. 50 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-919095-15-1; **A time to be brave**, Christel Kleitsch and Paul Stephens. Annick Press, 1985. 64 pp. \$6.95, \$3.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 0-920303-26-9, 0-92030327-7; **Dancing feathers**, Christel Kleitsch and Paul Stephens. Annick Press, 1985. 64 pp. \$5.95, \$3.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 0-920303-24-2, 0-920303-25-0; **The Ojibway dream**, Arthur Shilling. Tundra Books, 1986. 48 pp. \$29.95 cloth. ISBN 0-99776-173-9.

Canadian publishers have recently issued several series of books based on legends of our Native people. Sometimes these tales are simply retold and illustrated, sometimes they are updated, reworked from a feminist perspective or used as background for contemporary realistic fiction. The thought-provoking effect of these publications can be reinforced by contemplating the dark power of paintings by Arthur Shilling, in Tundra's *The Ojibway Dream*.

The Theytus Books series is simply told and simply illustrated in a way that is suitable for elementary school children. These books also provide an easy introduction to Indian folklore for older children.

Ken Edwards illustrates three Okanagan legends. *How names were given* begins the cycle with the story of how the animals received their names before the Indian people came. Coyote, the bragger and trickster, does not receive an important name, but receives an important task. *How food was given* explains how all living things agreed to provide themselves as food for man when he arrived on earth. It tells particularly how Bear, Salmon, Bitterroot, and Saskatoon Berry agreed to lay down their lives to prepare for the coming of men. And *How Turtle set the animals free* tells how Turtle beat Eagle in a race (cf. tortoise and the hare). Turtle receives knowledge in a dream of how to beat Eagle and save the Animal People from slavery to him.

Jeanette Armstrong offers a useful companion to the legends in this series, in *Neekna and Chemai*. This fictional account of the life of two young Indian girls in traditional times probably requires a Grade 4 or 5 reading level. The story follows them through four seasons, highlighting the dominant food-gathering activities proper to that season. The importance of the family elders in passing on traditional survival lore is stressed.

Comparable traditional stories are creatively retold by veteran author Anne Cameron, from tales which she heard as a girl from an Indian woman on Vancouver Island. These stories, says the publishers' advertisement, represent "the Indians' traditional matriarchal viewpoint", which certainly jibes with Anne Cameron's own feminist attitudes. Fortunately, such traditional material doesn't lend itself very well to blatant politicization, and Cameron's books are readable even by non-feminists.

In *How Raven freed the moon*, Raven, a trickster figure in Indian folklore,

travels far to the north to outwit an old fisherwoman and her daughter who have hidden away the moon in a cedar chest. Transforming herself into a baby Raven steals the moon from them and returns it to the heavens. The publisher's back-cover blurb tantalizingly tells us that the story is "entrancingly retold from the female viewpoint." Judith Saltman comments (*Modern Canadian children's books*, p. 101): "Anne Cameron's feminist, revisionist version, *How Raven freed the moon* (1985). . . arbitrarily changes the traditionally male figure of Raven to a female persona."

In *How the loon lost her voice*, Raven saves all living things from a severe drought when she finds the huge frog that has swallowed all the water, and tricks her into releasing it. Cameron here presents a parable about selfishness. In *Orca's song*, the parable concerns the benefits of love between very different people in a story of the love between a black whale and osprey who together produce a baby killer whale with a love for the sky and song. Both illustrators have produced creative and finished designs to accompany Anne Cameron's text.

Harold Horwood retells folktales from the Naskapi-Montagnais Indians of Labrador, reflecting the harsher lives of natives whose environment made survival difficult and pleasure rare. Although the stories in *Tales of the Labrador Indians* are simply told, they contain references to murder, torture, starvation, and cannibalism which make them less suitable for younger readers. The short commentaries which follow each tale and give historical background and parallels from other cultures are intended for older students. For the student of folklore this is one of the more interesting books under review, but it is aimed at a general audience, rather than for children.

The Spirit Bay Series are stories based on the TV series of the same name and illustrated by stills from the programmes. The heroine is Tafia, a young Ojibway girl, and the stories concern her family, her community (Spirit Bay on Lake Nipigon), and the contrast between traditional Indian customs and encroaching white culture. *A time to be brave* concerns Tafia's winter in the bush with her trapper father and grandmother, and their adventures there. These include a clash of cultures between Tafia's father and a representative of the lumber company.

In *Dancing feathers*, Tafia, her friend Mavis, and her Aunt Lily visit Toronto. Aunt Lily is a painter, and she is taking some work to an art gallery there. On the way Mavis is reading a book by Judy Blume and the general style of these books is rather similar to Blume's. There is the same striving to be contemporary with glimpses of the existential *angst* of pre-teens scattered throughout. The incidents of the Toronto visit are rather improbable, which is not to say that they would bother the book's intended audience. The meaning of being an Indian is sometimes over-verbalized, although the main plotline concerning Tafia's attitude to the powwow is

effective.

Judging from these two books this TV and book series might provide a useful format for presenting issues relating to being an Indian in a predominately white society. They are intended for children ages 9 to 11, but might be more fully studied by slightly older children. The style is similar to popular juvenile fiction. The cover illustrations are by Don Ense, a native artist.

The Ojibway dream is not a book for children. It is a book for people interested in art as an expression of the contemporary life of the artist and of our native people.

This series of paintings with accompanying text was completed by the Ojibway artist Arthur Shilling a year before his death in 1986. In it he discusses and expresses through paint his feelings about what it means to be an artist and an Indian. He employs an expressionist style, and the combination of style and subject matter is vaguely reminiscent of Gauguin's Tahita paintings. The faces peering at us from the canvas have the look of a random collection of individuals caught by a visiting photographer. There is a lack of movement and a certain sameness in the poses and expressions.

Shilling says (p. 22): "Most people I paint don't like themselves. I try to reveal their spiritual soul, the quietness that makes us different, that no other nation or people have." My wife (a painter herself) commented on the contrast between the bright colours employed and the total effect of a depressing darkness. Shilling himself writes (p. 24): "There is not enough color to subdue the shadows within me."

Along with the darkness, tempered by hope for the future, Shilling has a great enthusiasm for art, especially for colour. As with some other modern writers and artists, art partly takes the place of traditional religion for him (p. 44): "Art is the only true religion that God created." It is a bit strange to find an Ojibway artist sounding a little like Matthew Arnold, but it is one more reminder of how small the world has become over the century and a half.

Kevin McCabe teaches *Classical Mythology and Latin* at the University of Regina. He is co-editor, with John Ferns, of *The Poetry of Lucy Maud Montgomery*.

AU PAYS DE L'ENFANPHONIE

Les souliers magiques, Paul Baillargeon. Illus. Girerd. Héritage, 1986. 30 pp. 9.95\$ relié. ISBN 2-7625-2576-4.

Ce petit récit, qui est un mélange de deux genres "enfantins" traditionnels,