

**James S. Frideres, ed. *Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations*. Contributions in Sociology 75. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) xii, 183 pp., \$39.95.**

A volume of the policy and concept of multiculturalism is particularly welcome at a moment when the issue of minority vs. majority rights is once again flaring up in academics and politics. Canada is at the center of this discussion; but comparisons with the US (and Israel) are frequently made, and the US-American situation is explored at length in two essays by Rose. Also, the editor's introduction, though dealing explicitly only with Canada, raises basic issues of the ambivalent view of ethnic difference in liberal thought that transcend national boundaries.

To the reader with more general, rather than specifically sociological interests, two discussions of aging and retirement will be less useful than others, such as Rose's analysis of ethnicity among Asian Americans, which can be read as an exemplification of "identity compartmentalization," or Boldt's discussion of Hutterites within the wider framework of new vs. old ethnicity, and the question of the derivation of symbols in ethnicity. This essay also inquires into the human cost of maintaining old ethnicity (or any degree of real difference) in the face of a fully modernized civilization.

With this concern, one can place it alongside a number of essays that argue against too facile a privileging of ethnic diversity: Di Santo, with a tendency, though, to overlook the chargedness of language/culture questions with economic themes; Breton, forecasting for Canada an increasing importance of class factors and a decline of ethnicity, within which notions of color will dominate over notions of culture; Rose, painting a more divisive picture of the future of the United States.

Rose also implicitly points at the virtual absence of the Native American from the volume, which might be justified if it were actually dedicated exclusively to the Canadian Multiculturalism program, whose history is briefly, but informatively sketched out by Labelle and Burnet, and which, of course, does not apply to Indians. But the historical accounts as well as Adam's far-ranging overview of "Contemporary State Policies toward Subordinate Ethnicity" and Breton's analysis of the vesting of ethnic interests tend towards a wider and arguably more useful notion of the term, which should have made the exclusion of the indigenous population impossible.

The exclusion is partly methodological, resulting from a sociological focus on parameters and frames of present and future action. (This may also account for ethnicity being primarily described as constructed and emerging [cf. Goldenberg on identity formation and the formulation of difference], where one might more fruitfully argue in terms of at least two "steps": difference being biologically or culturally "inherited" and then [re-]constructed socially.) Concern with the past and the "Indian problems" cannot be dealt with if not historically.

But the exclusion is also ideological. It ties in with a basic acceptance of currently prevalent consensus- and hegemony-oriented views of intergroup relations, which may prevent the volume from becoming the standard critical reader on its topic that one had hoped for. As history, theory, and collection of data, though, it has much material to offer.

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**Eduardo Galeano. *Memory of Fire: Genesis*. Cedric Belfrage, trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985) xvii, 293 pp., \$8.95 paper.**

The first volume of a trilogy by the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, *Memory of Fire: Genesis* has been called remarkable, fascinating, vivid, passionate, angry, celebratory, and triumphant. It could also be called a history of Latin America to 1700, though that gives little sense of its style or scope. In his introduction, the author describes himself as “not a historian,” but as “a writer who would like to contribute to the kidnapped memory of all America, but above all of Latin America, that despised and beloved land.” To do this he has created a great mosaic of stories, most of them less than a page long.

The first section of *Memory of Fire: Genesis*, called “First Voices,” consists of creation stories told by the original Indian inhabitants of South, Central and North America. These wonderful tales speak of the creation of the world, of stars, of day, night, the sun, the moon, people, animals, fire, plants, language, death, song, love, fear—the ingredients of life. Their ancient messages of wisdom reverberate through the historical narratives that follow. For instance, there is a Venezuelan myth, entitled by Galeano “Conscience,” about a “phantom born in [the] hearts” of Carib Indians who attack and kill their neighbors.” “Born among the conquerors to avenge the conquered,” this phantom who plagued the Caribs can also be seen to haunt the lives of some of the later European invaders.

The stories in the volume’s historical section, “Old New World,” appear in chronological order from 1492 to 1700. Each is identified by date and locality, and most focus on a particular person. Here are tales of Columbus, of Montezuma, of Juana Ines de la Cruz, and of Cervantes; tales of Indian warriors and monarchs, kings and popes, conquistadors and pirates, slaves and freedom fighters, poets and priests, saints and executioners—hundreds of stories. Increasingly we hear the voices of people of mixed ancestry—the mestizos, mulattoes, and Creoles who will inherit a continent.