

Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, Aimée Craft, and Hōkūlani K. Aikau (eds.), *Indigenous Resurgence in an Age of Reconciliation*. Toronto: UTP, 2023. 263 pages. ISBN 978-1-4875-4460-7. \$34.95 paperback.

Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark's, Aimée Craft's, and Hōkūlani K. Aikau's edited volume is an insightful collection that centres Indigenous perspectives on how to navigate the challenges of pursuing resurgence. A crucial challenge that is grappled with throughout the volume's fourteen chapters is elucidated in Stark's introduction: the very meaning of resurgence and what doing the work of resurgence might entail. Stark explains that resurgence can be misunderstood because it is often placed in a false dichotomy with reconciliation; resurgence is posited as being essentialist and unviable compared to a more "balanced" vision of settler-Indigenous coexistence that represents reconciliation. Stark challenges this binary and suggests that a critical lens informed by resurgent Indigenous knowledge can facilitate transformative changes that disrupt the colonial status-quo. Such a lens can also bring to light the ways in which the politics of reconciliation can be mobilized to obfuscate, co-opt, and diminish this transformative spirit such that Indigenous worldviews become contained by colonial ideas. This nuanced position situates the volume in conversation with pressing questions about how Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, and practices can continue to produce alternative ways of being. Indeed, these are broadly the two main objectives of the volume: employing critical approaches to understand how resurgence can be advanced by all Indigenous peoples and identifying the negative effects of state-centered reconciliation efforts on Indigenous political movements.

When speaking about the barriers to Indigenous resurgence efforts, this collection persuasively problematizes the turn to reconciliation within settler institutions and settings and its effects on Indigenous movements. Starblanket (Chapter 5) and Craft (Chapter 6) each caution against simply acknowledging Indigenous rights and treaties within the Canadian constitutional order, which works to constrain Indigeneity to the past while legitimating state authority. These authors explain that revitalizing and applying Indigenous legal orders and traditions, including treaty making, to Indigenous societies can promote a decolonial future. Goeman's (Chapter 1) and Corntassel's (Chapter 9) respective chapters explore how state-based apologies and truth-telling, which are cornerstones of the politics of reconciliation, can perpetuate settler "unknowing" and erasure if it neglects accountability to relationships in favour of restoring settler innocence. Relatedly, O'Bonsawin (Chapter 12) illustrates how land acknowledgements can turn Indigenous protocols into spectacle when Indigenous nations' position on who can enter their territory is wantonly ignored and even punished by incarceration. These contributions convincingly demonstrate that decolonial futures cannot be centred on the state and its institutions. That being said, Snelgrove and Wildcat (Chapter 10) showcase how the state's pivot to reconciliation politics can provide strategic opportunities for political change. This point is supported by their analysis of the Maskwacis Education Schools Commission, which was able to effectively organize and establish a First Nations-led school division during a moment of state vulnerability. As echoed in

the introductory chapter, state engagement is not altogether rejected by resurgent movements, but such engagement is argued to be more effective and decolonial when it is driven by Indigenous political mobilization rather than through state-based processes.

Although the political and legal structures of the state have consistently been identified as confining Indigenous expressions of political action and sovereignty, it is noteworthy that contributors also pinpointed the academy as a potential source of containment. For example, Goeman astutely points out that the way in which Indigenous politics and history is taught or expressed can focus too much attention on state dispossession and Indigenous loss. Although acknowledging the role of the state in dispossession is important, resurgence also entails learning Indigenous conceptions of territory or how Indigenous knowledge persists, get transmitted, and built upon over time. Crucially, learning about such knowledge requires community participation and oversight. Within the legal academy specifically, Lindberg (Chapter 7) details the potential risk of law schools picking and choosing those aspects of Indigenous legal orders that can be “translated” in existing Western legal pedagogical tools and approaches. Instead, Indigenous legal practices should relate to the communities they are situated in. These reflections are significant particularly as decolonizing curriculum across various disciplines is gaining traction across universities and is a call to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Several contributors in this volume raise interesting pedagogical debates that would be of interest to those seeking to transform curriculum in ways that do not perpetuate colonial assumptions.

In addition to a critique of ongoing settler containment strategies, the volume offers thoughts on how resurgence can be realized through an inclusive movement grounded in community, which also helps avert the reproduction of heteropatriarchy. Belcourt’s (Chapter 14), Hunt and Simpson’s (Chapter 8), and Altamirano-Jiménez’s (Chapter 11) respective chapters bring to light the roles and activism by gendered groups like Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQ+ people. These chapters show why diverse knowledges must be included in visioning and practicing Indigenous ways of being. For example, Altamirano-Jiménez describes how resurgent activities taken place in the Zapotec community of Calpulalpan in Oaxaca, Mexico were driven by Zapotec women who challenged the colonial-capitalist treatment of lands and bodies. Voth (Chapter 13) also situates women at the centre of Métis nationhood and land, as they are central to disobeying and resisting constraining forms of governance and relations. Even within this piece, Voth acknowledges that much more work is needed to bring to light the experiences of gender diverse people in governance and all levels of organizing. In a similar vein, Hunt (Chapter 4) offers a reflection of how Indigenous feminist and queer scholarship and activism have produced more inclusive approaches to kinship and relationality. Such approaches challenge ideas of toxic masculinity and colonial gender binaries.

Inclusive resurgence movements also avoid essentializing Indigeneity. Aikau’s (Chapter 3) contribution helpfully reminds readers that, when living according to responsibilities and putting into practice decolonial futures, care must be taken to ensure that new structures and processes do not replicate racialized identities or a preoccupation with “authenticity” that is emblematic of colonial systems. This sentiment is also reflected in Million’s (Chapter 2) piece, which challenges

the notion that “urban” spaces are somehow incompatible with Indigenous identities. Instead, Million asserts that taking responsibility and relations seriously is done in any place Indigenous peoples reside. Resurgence can reflect the political will to “refuse enclosure” (51) and other limiting forms of social structures.

In these ways, the contributors demonstrate a commitment to incisively cast a critical lens on the resurgence movement itself to identify existing gaps or potential pitfalls. In these reflections on the resurgent activities of Indigenous women, queer, and two-spirited folk, a key strength of the book is revealed. Not only are various Indigenous voices centered in these conversations, but these accounts also showcase agency and joy, which are all essential to the creation of alternative frameworks. As eloquently expressed by Belcourt, “in a world of colonial sensation, Native joy is a conspiracy” (231). Hunt and Simpson’s chapter prompts readers to consider how Indigenous knowledge is always acted upon, with solidarity-building across nations and groups being a crucial component to support co-resistance. These contributors forcefully establish that Indigenous resurgence pursued by diverse groups is an active force that resists against the impossibility of enacting a different future.

This volume makes a significant contribution to our understanding of what resurgent alternatives are possible when Indigenous knowledge and ways of life are at the centre of political organizing. Stark, Craft, and Aikau have assembled prominent scholars and activists to present multifaceted narratives and examples of Indigenous resurgence. This is essential reading for those seeking to understand contemporary Indigenous political movements through a critical lens. Moreover, the diverse theoretical perspectives offered in this collection can serve as a strong foundation for future studies seeking to explain and celebrate resurgent activities. As resurgence and reconciliation are political projects that affect all our relations, engaging with this important work can help everyone (un)learn something about a decolonial future.

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