FROM NEW PEOPLES TO NEW NATIONS

Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries

*From New Peoples to New Nations* is a broad historical account of the emergence of the Métis as distinct peoples in North America over the last three hundred years. Examining the cultural, economic, and political strategies through which communities define their boundaries, Gerhard J. Ens and Joe Sawchuk trace the invention and reinvention of Métis identity from the late eighteenth century to the present day. Their work updates, rethinks, and integrates the many disparate aspects of Métis historiography, providing the first comprehensive narrative of the Métis in more than fifty years.

Based on extensive archival materials, interviews, oral histories, ethnographic research, and first-hand working knowledge of Métis political organizations, *From New Peoples to New Nations* follows the history of Métis identity from the Battle of Seven Oaks to today’s legal and political debates.

GERHARD J. ENS is a professor in the Department of History at the University of Alberta.

JOE SAWCHUK is a professor emeritus in the Department of Anthropology at Brandon University.
The cover illustration is taken from a lithograph of a painting by Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait, *Life on the Prairie – Buffalo Hunt* (1862), published by Currier and Ives. The image appears courtesy of the Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. It is doubtful that Tait ever saw a Métis and he certainly never witnessed a plains buffalo hunt, given that he never travelled farther west than the Adirondacks. It is likely, however, that this scene and the figures in it are an embellishment and artistic rendering of images of the Red River Métis and their buffalo hunts that appeared in a series of articles by Manton Marble entitled “To Red River and Beyond,” published in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* between August 1860 and February 1861. This image thus has some relevance to the themes of perception and representation of Métis identities that are of some consequence to our analyses.
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Includes bibliographical references and index.


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