

7. This would be similar to the 125 year leases issued for the Copper Ridge West development owned by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation: See Chu Níkwän Development Corporation (n.d.), *Copper Ridge West: Welcome Home Whitehorse*, <https://www.chuniikwan.ca/copper-ridge-west>
8. For example, see Chu Níkwän Development Corporation, “The Lease Advantage,” <https://www.chuniikwan.ca/lease-advantage>.
9. See s 400(2), Income Tax Regulations, CRC, c 945, Department of Justice Canada: [https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,\\_c.\\_945/section-400.html](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._945/section-400.html)

### Book Review

*Engraved on Our Nations: Indigenous Economic Tenacity*. Edited by Wanda Wuttunee and Fred Wien. University of Manitoba Press, 2024. 304 pp.

Reviewed by Dakota Erutse

If, like me, the reader has an affinity for real analogies and real parallels, then they will recognize a kind of erudition, as it *is* in one’s self, moulded wholly in the mind *in abstracto*, ready to meet the logician’s abstracts. It is hard to be above ground about certain things. What comes as one, surely must come in two; and what comes as an object of the mind is not necessarily a tangible object in the physical sphere. Adam Smith famously gave a most useful illustration of the movement of the free market, in his treatise on capitalism, by referring to an “invisible hand” thereof. Likewise, Toni Morrison referred to a “glove [that] has to be pulled inside out,” in noting the literary double standards by which Black writers were held as regards American literature—a function of racism. How often the familiar -ism has been put forward as an embodiment, as an aspect of human entities. Now that the groves of academe remain with the post-structuralists, under the airless spirit of Foucault, it is perhaps no surprise that capitalism has been imbued with a temperament, blowing the analogy as a rhetorical device out of proportion.

In *Engraved on Our Nations*, as it were, capitalism can meander through people and places, like a ghost. It can harm a biophysical environment, like an invasive species. It can die like an animal. It is toxic. Moreover, as Clifford Gordon Atleo maintains, in his chapter “Capitalism: Can It Be Indigenized?” capitalism has a red face, is on the reserve, is among Indigenous Tribes, and among Indigenous communities. It lies in the background of community development and economic development, like a prickly bush on an estate. It cannot be subsumed by Indigeneity any more than Indigeneity can be subsumed by it. That is to say, there

is a fundamental contradistinction, an inconsistency, between capitalism and the whole of Indigenous world views and values. Atleo's essay is a part of, but does not sum up, the book's theoretical approach, which is:

Upon the ravages of capitalism and colonialism, Indigenous nations and communities are convalescing.

Hence the word "tenacity" which appears in nearly all essays in the book, to the point of overuse. But the editors only intend for it to convey, on this caustic foundation of our two inimical *isms*, the inflexible, persistent presence of Indigenous peoples today. Incidentally, there are underlying tones of sympathy here, over the extant condition of Indigenous Peoples, as well as feelings of future shock and mild stupefaction, expressed from a collective as opposed to an individual point of view: in the repetitive use of the term, including during attempts to relate history to the present, the narrative effect is to say, "somehow we survived, and we are still here." Arguably this is a mindset, and the effect is psychological. "If the dialogue on Indigenous economic activity in Canada is focused on tenacity," Wuttunee and Wien assert in their concluding chapter, "then it must begin by considering the 'continued existence of Indigenous peoples in Canada' as one part of the tenacity conversation as well as considering what 'continued existence' looks like."

In what ways have Indigenous nations and communities shown tenacity in areas of economic activity? This is the general aim of the book. The case study approach is used to offer a cross-section of Indigenous economic development in Canada.

By collecting these essays and case studies, the editors have inadvertently shown the extremely institutional nature of organized society among Indigenous Peoples today—in Canada, that is. Among band councils, urban and rural reserves, urban and regional municipalities, planning commissions, hunters and trappers associations, self-governments, and provincial and federal partnerships, Indigenous nations and communities are availing themselves of the opportunity to develop their economies, resources, and communities. There is a collective sense of responsibility, but the book reads best when it presents narratives of genuine leadership and individualistic pursuit. The one chapter related to the North is a profile of a business owner in the Northwest Territories. Still, despite the ambivalence of the discussion as a whole, and considering recent announcements

from the Government of Canada that relate to assertions of Arctic sovereignty and funding investments in northern economic and security corridors, the book *can* reconcile us to the idea that as a video-viewing, typing, and flying public, as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people living in a modern capitalist society, the means of economic development are a means of survival. As if those intangible human elements—the shadow characters of capitalism and colonialism—are not by themselves a barrier.

## References

Morrison, Toni, "Toni Morrison Beautifully Answers an 'Illegitimate' Question on Race (Jan. 19, 1998)." YouTube, uploaded by Charlie Rose, 4 September 2015, [https://youtu.be/-Kgg3F8wbYA?si=3BDq36FlunF\\_HNqF](https://youtu.be/-Kgg3F8wbYA?si=3BDq36FlunF_HNqF)

Smith, Adam, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1759, par IV, chapter 1.

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