

negotiations and policy will be a long-term, multifaceted endeavour, and they invite research that can challenge, modify and/or strengthen their findings. With their geographical focus on North America and Europe (plus an intriguing chapter on Australia), there is ample opportunity for others to investigate whether the model of subfederal engagement offered herein holds up in non-Western socio-economic contexts—and in studies on specific trade issues.

## Reference

Meunier, Sophie and Christilla Roederer-Rynning. 2020. “Missing in Action? France and the Politicization of Trade and Investment Agreements.” *Politics and Governance* 8 (1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.17645/pag.v8i1.2616>.

## Colonialism’s Currency: Money, State, and First Nations in Canada, 1820–1950

**Brian Gettler, Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020, pp. 336.**

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Key categories in the study of Indigenous–Canadian politics include land, sovereignty, political authority, status, gender, treaty and resistance. With notable exceptions, money tends to be left off this list. Brian Gettler’s *Colonialism’s Currency: Money, State, and First Nations in Canada, 1820–1950* shows us how ideas related to money, along with its use, have symbolically and practically mediated the colonial project. The text is divided into three sections, each composed of two chapters. The first demonstrates the relationship between money and colonial ideology, the second examines money and changing forms of political authority, and the third discusses how colonial control was justified and exercised through the control of money. While Gettler’s focus is on the history of money and colonialism in Canada, the conclusion deploys this history to interpret Indigenous politics in the neoliberal present, where money remains crucial.

Chapter 1 speaks to the complicated development of Canada’s money and how “the text and images circulated by the Canadian monetary supply” projected an “idealized image of the developing political, economic, and social order” (44). For example, the banknotes that would accompany the treaty process depicted what was and remains at issue in interpreting the meaning of treaties as a land-cession contract or a framework for coexistence, as the images “asserted that the railway would come and First Nations . . . would accept this or some note like it as a token payment in exchange for their lands” (53). Chapter 2 examines the policy debates surrounding the commutation of presents—historically associated with the establishment and maintenance of alliances—into cash. These debates were crucial to associating improvidence with Indigeneity: the idea that Indigenous peoples were spendthrift, careless, profligate and in need of guidance and tutelage. By transforming Indigenous peoples from allies into minors, this association “helped construct a Canadian polity from which First Nations had been excised while simultaneously providing the Indian Department with a renewed mandate” of “shepherding Indigenous peoples toward liberal individualism and their ultimate integration into Canadian society” (76–78). An interesting figure in this development was the lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head. Head applied his previous experience as an assistant Poor Law Commissioner in England to Upper Canada: he implemented the

English workhouse model of indoor relief, “protecting” the poor from immoral merchants and improving them into “productive members of the modern, industrializing economy,” and he presented Indigenous peoples as “inherently improvident in the image of European paupers while recommending that similar measures be taken to deal with the issue” (70). Gettler also shows how debates over commutation of presents was one pathway for the introduction of patriarchal norms into Indigenous communities (71, 73).

Throughout the text, Gettler is attentive to the interaction between structure and agency, as well as control and resistance. In chapter 3, for instance, he notes how beaver money tied to Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) stores was a mechanism for exploiting and controlling First Nations trappers (103). For that reason, money was also a site of resistance. In the case of the Innu near Saguenay-Lac-Saint Jean, cash enabled one to purchase goods wherever one wanted, avoiding HBC markups, and because of this they sought to increase their access to cash (105–6). By the 1890s, colonization increased the size of the Euro-Canadian population and of Innu access to cash, which “diminish[ed] the economic and political power of the HBC” (109). Yet federal and provincial states followed settlers, and the Innu faced increasing state control through the Department of Indian Affairs and the creation of reserves and introduction of band councils (110). The shift to cash mirrored a shift in political authority: from monopolistic companies or company-states such as the HBC to the liberal nation-state. By contrast, in James Bay, the state—not settlers—introduced money through treaty payments, and the state “grafted” onto the HBC rather than displacing it (114, 125).

Chapter 5 nicely connects the effects of the ideology of improvidence to this shift from HBC control to state control by looking at the rejection of treaty and revenue-sharing in Quebec. Following settler colonization, Algonquin, Nipissing and Innu nations petitioned for land as well as revenue-sharing (139). Despite elite support for these petitions (138–39)—and Upper Canada agreeing to a similar proposal in the Robinson Treaties (154)—the province established a Lower Canada Indian Fund, which provided “in kind relief” instead of handing over revenue, “signal[ing] Indigenous improvidence” while “obscuring” questions of jurisdiction and diplomacy (141–42).

Ultimately, Gettler succeeds in undercutting the idea that money is apolitical. His account is generative, too, laying necessary groundwork for future work on the relationship between colonialism, state formation, and fiscal and monetary policy. Nevertheless, in Gettler’s account, the colonial character and use of money appears contingent, not necessary. Part of his argument about the politics of money rests on the idea that money could be directed toward other more emancipatory projects and that this depends on who controls and uses it. It is far from clear that this is the case though. Karl Marx (1867), for instance, makes a distinction between “money as money” and “money as capital.” He speaks of how the former develops into the latter, which marks a qualitative change in a form of life. In capitalist societies, the need for money marks one’s alienation, domination and dispossession. One needs money to access the means of subsistence because of dispossession and subsequent market dependence. While there is flexibility in how one spends it (Gettler’s contingency), the need for money remains (determination). Acquisition is dependent on producing or capturing surplus-value realized through market-exchange (contingency within determination). While Gettler convincingly demonstrates how the control of money has been a colonial tool, he downplays the connections between money, dispossession and market dependence. This matters, I think, for his concluding remarks on Indigenous–Canadian politics in the neoliberal present. As Gettler notes, the critique of compensation and the colonial politics of money has involved an attack on Indigenous self-governance, a dismissal of redistribution and paternalist control of individuals’ desires to satisfy their needs, however defined in the past and into the present (191). But a critique of money might also draw attention to the limits of emancipation through money and through the market—a vision now circulating under the idea of economic reconciliation—

where political self-determination remains circumscribed by a depoliticized economy marked by the subordination of need and relationality to profit.

## Distributed Democracy: Health Care Governance in Ontario

Carey Doberstein, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020, pp. 234.

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One paradox of modern policy making is that the breadth and complexity of policy fields such as health care make it exceptionally difficult to consult widely on policy development and implementation; yet at the same time, the success of these policies may depend upon whether they meet the concerns and expectations of those on the receiving end. Democratic governance in policy making is thus not only a normative consideration but also a functional requirement for good performance.

When health care reform swept across Canadian provinces (largely in the 1990s), it was grounded in New Public Management models espousing the decentralization of public services to make them more responsive to the people they were designed to serve. But the regional health boards that were created across Canada were formally accountable only to the provincial ministries of health; the community health councils established in their wake (even those with a statutory base) had, at best, a spotty record of consultation with the wider public. Ontario embarked on its path to decentralization in 2004, well after other provinces, giving it the advantage of learning from these provinces' experiences in attempting to build citizen engagement into health policy governance.

Carey Doberstein offers a thoughtful commentary on how well Ontario's fourteen Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) have incorporated principles of democratic governance into their operation. This is not an easy task. Ontario's health system is a complex and expansive *engrenage* of interconnected units, while democratic principles are complicated and indeterminate concepts that shape-shift across contexts. Democratic governance can manifest itself in clear Weberian pathways of accountability; in elected delegates that may not be representative of the population; in appointed delegates that are; in transparent decision-making processes; and so on. (One of the best analyses of health care governance is perhaps the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies' *Strengthening Health System Governance* [Greer et al., 2016].)

The analytical framework of Doberstein's study is sound. The author presents a three-layered model, setting out the ways in which democracy is manifest within and between each layer: the provincial government, the LHINs and the "public space." One strength of the book is its nuance: democracy doesn't manifest itself in the same way in different contexts (which is generally a good thing, as different forms of democratic engagement can enhance each other). LHINs are accountable upward to the province in a traditional hierarchical relationship (a relationship that can be distorted if a province is too heavy-handed with its authority). At the same time, LHINs are also accountable downward to the wider population through fora such as advisory committees, citizen panels, surveys, and so on. A second strength of the book is its rich detail: there is a wealth of granularity explaining the governance structure of LHINs. No one, having read the book, could be left uncertain of how LHINs work. Particularly astute is the discussion of LHIN boards and the tension between the desire for the technical managerial experience necessary to run large complex enterprises and the quest for a constituency-based representation of "all walks of life and experience."