Glenn Burger, Lesley B. Cormack, Jonathan Hart, and Natalia Pylypiuk, eds. — *Making Contact: Maps, Identity and Travel*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2003. Pp. xxxv, 284.

"Nosiness and closeting were mutually constitutive," writes Linda Woodbridge in one of the eight essays on medieval and early modern European culture in this wide-ranging collection (p. 130). Woodbridge suggests that an awareness of interiority born of closeting (personal or architectural) generates interest in the interiority of others as well. As much could be said about the act of making contact: a sense of self is born in the encounter with another. Little is more intimate, and more revealing, than an individual's or a culture's perception of the foreign. What is identified as alien betrays the self.

The most interesting essays in this collection cut to the heart of this paradox. Steven F. Kruger foregrounds his study of Jewish-Christian disputations in the Middle Ages by discussing the interrelations of the two faiths, providing a wonderfully clear exposition of how the Christian self was fashioned from the Jewish other. Medieval Christians recognized and celebrated historical ties to Judaism even as they created ideological barriers between themselves and their Jewish neighbours. The disputations, carefully stage-managed by Christians, were a blind alley for Jewish scholars forced into roles determined by Christian history rather than contemporary life. Medieval Christianity demanded of Jews the version of Judaism written into the Christian gospels, not the Judaism that existed as an evolving, living faith throughout Europe. Jews were not simply other to the Christian self: their otherness was constructed and controlled as a prop to Christian identity.

Richard A. Young's piece on the repeated re-creations of an early modern Spanish New World narrative, from autobiography to revised autobiography to modern fiction and film, identifies narrative itself as alien to the experience being described. Young suggests that the ordering of experience into story, including the bridging of gaps created through internal and external censorship, incomprehension, and forgetfulness, results in a report that cannot express the original event. Young notes that narrative aims for "not veracity but verisimilitude, a feeling that what we are told sounds right" (p. 221). Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca created a version of his life among the Aboriginal people of the Spanish New World that sounded right to his contemporaries, and in the process produced a classic piece of travel writing and colonial criticism. Nonetheless, we need not confuse Cabeza de Vaca's success in crafting narrative with truth telling, or even with Cabeza de Vaca's own memories of his experiences. Young charts the motives and impulses that may have caused Cabeza de Vaca to create the particular narrative that he did, and then turns to a consideration of the motives of more recent raconteurs of Cabeza de Vaca's narrative. The essay is especially interesting for its clever transfer of the self/other dichotomy from the early modern European encounter with New World natives to the process of creating narrative.

To understand the other, then, it is necessary to understand the self, for "otherness" is nothing more than a manifestation of interiority. But whose interiority? Can something so intimate be generalized, within a period or within a culture? Nakai Ayako's

essay on five early Christian missionaries in Japan demands that we pause to consider how the personalities of individual Europeans affected their experience of otherness. Francis Xavier, the first Christian missionary in Japan, confessed that, although he had gone to Japan to spread Christianity, after living and speaking among the Japanese he became convinced that, in fact, God had sent him there not to save the Japanese but to test his own spiritual strength. Xavier's encounter with otherness provoked an inward turn. A contrary example is furnished by the story of Francisco Cabral, a successor of Xavier who believed that mutual incomprehension between Japanese and Europeans was desirable "because he felt that Japanese Christians would not respect the European missionaries if they were able to understand what the ... missionaries were talking about" (p. 101). Ayako's point is that both positions were tenable within the Jesuit culture that produced Xavier and Cabral. Otherness is a slippery concept, as much determined by the subjectivity of the individual as the culture to which he or she belonged.

The eight essays in the collection discuss European cross-cultural contact at home, in the New World, and in Asia. Through an imaginative reconsideration of the fundamentals of identity and otherness, the best pieces in the volume bring renewed creative energy to the study of medieval and early modern European identities. With its bold forays across disciplines and fields, *Making Contact* provides sufficient variety to hold the interest of a casual reader, while its freshness of interpretation will satisfy the specialist.

Finally, it would be remiss not to observe the excellent graphic design of this book. Pages are well laid out, with generous margins and leading, creating a pleasantly uncramped distribution of lines. Fonts and printer's ornaments were well chosen, lending the printed page an elegance and balance that the essays emulate. Illustrations are generally well reproduced, with the unfortunate exception of one previously unpublished early modern map. *Making Contact* is a book that should make all involved, scholars and pressmen alike, proud of their creation.

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Nancy Christie, ed. — *Households of Faith: Family, Gender, and Community in Canada, 1760–1969*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002. Pp. xiii, 381.

A call for putting aside the thesis of the separation of public and private spheres in the history of family life, in favour of an emphasis on the relations between households, communities, and religious and political authorities, opens this collection. The result is a series of essays in which past conceptions of one's belonging, authority, and allegiances are studied at once and tracked through a variety of spaces, from homes to churches and assembly halls, from public places to work areas.

The story of Tsimshian conversions to Christianity told by Susan Neylan, for instance, encompasses many realms of social life to affirm the importance of fami-