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European Impact on the Micmac Culture An Ecological Interpretation by Calvin Martin (1974) "It is crucial to understand that animal beings were his mentors in humanity! animals taught him over the course of his adult years how this search for his to be human.... "Hunting these animal beings was a series of spiritual maneuvers designed to engage the spirit of the game so it would agree to make a sacrifice of its flesh to the needy hunter. Hunting was a kind of contract between man and animalj • .---i _ rr: - • as conscious and intelli? gent beings were well aware that their flesh was necessary for man's survival and they willingly donned fleshy clothing from time to time and surrendered themselves to the hunt? er. But they in turn demanded respect. Respect lies at the heart of North American Indian" hunting; it forms the core of the man-animal relationship in Amerindian society.... Thus animals in thTs" man every bit a ware "of this principle. "One begins to realize that the hunt for these northern Canadian Indians was and is much more than a straightforwardly economic pursuit. It is an act that embraces all of life; it is a relationship of reciprocating esteem and courtesy with the spirit beings of the smology were in control of their destiny; in truth, animals conserved man every bit as much as he conserved them. The traditional native hunter was keenly a- man s social universe. bush--by definition the place of spirits. Animals are members &f and man a member of theirs. It Is a cosmology in which men have as much in common with an? imals as they do with women; it is a three-way society of women, men, and animals, with animals teaching men how to be human."--Calvin Martin (1981) As the drive for furs, known prosaically as the fur trade, expanded and became more intense in seventeenth-century Canada, com? plaints of beaver extermination became more frequent and alarming. By 1635, for example, the Huron had reduced their stock of beaver to the point where the Jesuit Fa? ther Paul Le Jeune could declare that they had none. In 1684 Baron Lahontan recorded a speech made before the French governor- general by an Iroquois spokesman, who ex? plained that his people had made war on the Illinois and Miami because these Algon- quians had trespassed on Iroquois terri? tory and overkilled their beaver, "and con? trary to the Custom of all the Savages, have carried off whole Stocks, both Male and Female." This exploitation of beaver and other furbearers seems to have been most intense in the vicinity of major trad? ing posts and among the native tribes most affected by the trade (the Montagnais, Hur? on, League Iroquois, Micmac, and others), while those tribes which remained beyond European influence and the trade, such as the Bersimis of northeastern Quebec, en? joyed an abundance of beaver in their ter? ritories . Even before the establishment of trading posts, the Micmac of the extreme eastern tip of Canada were engaged in lively trade with European fishermen, Thus areas that were important in the fishing industry, such as Prince Edward Island, the Gaspé Peninsula, and Cape Breton Island, were cleaned out of moose and other furbearers by the mid-seventeenth century. Reviewing this grim situation, Nicolas Denys ob? served that game was less abundant in his (23)