

not the Franklin search itself. For those who have this background knowledge, however, it is a necessary read.

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**KIUMAJUT (TALKING BACK): GAME MANAGEMENT AND INUIT RIGHTS 1900–1970.** By PETER KULCHYSKI and FRANK JAMES TESTER. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-778-1242-9. xii + 316 p., map, notes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$34.95.

How do Inuit fit into the Canadian political system? This was the crucial question for the period addressed in *Kiumajut*. Are Inuit to be considered as Indians, their rights addressed in the Royal Proclamation of 1763? Or are they outside that proclamation, their lands having been under Hudson Bay Company rule at the time of the proclamation? Should Inuit be subject to game laws? Should game laws be designed to support the age-old Inuit way of life, or to control Inuit and compel them to adopt modern ways?

Kulchyski and Tester tackle these and related questions in an unabashed attempt to revise the history of Canadian governmental policy and practice in the Arctic. Rather than portraying a steady progression of improvements and recognition culminating with the creation of Nunavut, they catalogue a seemingly endless series of missteps and misunderstandings, together with a stream of opinion and invective masquerading as scientific findings. The result was the demise of self-sufficient bands of hunters living on the land, yielding hardship and starvation on the way towards the creation of permanent settlements designed for bureaucratic convenience rather than for the Inuit way of life.

The authors have documented the story with impressive thoroughness, supplementing archival and official materials with interviews with Inuit who lived through much of the period in question, particularly the 1950s and 1960s, when the clash between officialdom and custom came to a head. The words of RCMP officers, community development officers, wildlife biologists, government officials, and others provide a strong contemporary voice throughout the book. The flaws in logic and errors in fact that

Kulchyski and Tester describe are apparent in the record of the time and not merely with benefit of hindsight.

How, then, did such poor information and argumentation determine the development of policy? The authors frame their history around the concept of “totalization: to incorporate by absorption or to expel by banishment any traces of social difference or social forms not ultimately conducive to the accumulation of capital” (p. 10). Whether such a concept is indeed an accurate portrayal of Canadian policy and practice is beyond the scope of the book (and certainly beyond this reviewer!). Having outlined their theoretical approach briefly in the Introduction, Kulchyski and Tester largely keep it out of sight for the remainder of the book. Nonetheless, the interpretation of the material depends a great deal on how one approaches it, and the theory remains influential throughout the book.

Kulchyski and Tester offer a welcome re-analysis of the events and consequences surrounding Canadian policy and practice with regard to Inuit, particularly through the mechanism of game management. The book should stimulate discussion, reaction, and further research and interpretation of crucial events in Canadian and Arctic history. In this way, *Kiumajut* reminds me of Yuri Slezkine’s *Arctic Mirrors* (1994), which demonstrated how Russia’s Arctic indigenous peoples have typically been viewed in light of prevailing social theories in central Russia, rather than as societies in their own right with their own values and systems. While *Kiumajut* dismantles the standard history of Inuit-state relations, it nonetheless replaces one theoretical lens with another.

The Inuit voice suggested by the title is captured in the book through the use of quotations from interviews and photographs of the speakers. The quotes function to provide some additional perspective, to fill omissions in the written and official records, and to add local depth to the narrative. Nonetheless, their role is neither central nor indispensable, and *Kiumajut* should not be taken as an attempt at an Inuit history. Indeed, a weakness of the book is a rather uncritical regard for Inuit views contrasted with a highly critical (though not always negative) review of everyone else’s role and words. Take, for example, a statement on page 119: “The result might have been entirely embarrassing for an administration that, in its attempts to regulate and control Inuit hunting without the wisdom, insight, and input of Inuit hunters, had codified itself into a tight—and incredibly silly—corner.”

Inuit can do no wrong, and the bureaucrats, biologists, and others can rarely do right. Milton Freeman (1989) describes similar controversies over caribou in the 1970s (after the period covered by *Kiumajut*), but provides a more compelling interpretation of the motivation of the biologists responsible for what he considers “gaffs.” Kulchyski and Tester give John Kelsall, a caribou biologist, the chief villain’s role for flawed studies, apparently willful misinterpretation, and the continual portrayal of Inuit as unrestrained and wasteful slaughterers of wildlife. They do not, however, attempt to uncover why Kelsall did

what he did, offering only a broad absolution to many of Kelsall's fellow officials in the Conclusion: "And while we have questioned many of those purposes, we have no wish to deny the honourable intentions ... of many of the state's agents" (p. 274).

These are minor quibbles and should not detract from Kulchyski and Tester's achievement. They have taken on a vast swath of northern history, immersed themselves in the available material, and emerged with a compelling account of how relations between a modern state and a hunting society were bungled with lasting consequences. Even the creation of Nunavut has been influenced, and not entirely to the good, by the legacy of the events that occurred between 1900 and 1970. *Kiumajut* should be read by political scientists, wildlife managers, government officials, historians, and perhaps most importantly, by Inuit interested in understanding the origins of their political situation today.

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EMPEROR OF THE NORTH: SIR GEORGE SIMPSON AND THE REMARKABLE STORY OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY. By JAMES RAFFAN. Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007. ISBN 9780002007832. x + 484 p., maps, b&w illus., appendices, notes, bib., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$34.95.

Sixty-five years ago, the great American historian Samuel Eliot Morison, in his fine biography of Christopher Columbus, made a perceptive comment about historians who write biographies of explorers. He wrote (1942:xv): "This book arose out of a desire to know exactly where Columbus sailed on his Four Voyages, and what sort of a seaman he was. No previous work on the Discoverer of America answers these questions in a manner to satisfy even an amateur seafarer. Most biographies of the Admiral might well be entitled 'Columbus to the Water's Edge.'" Morison, who was a sailor as well as a historian, was not satisfied with a landlubber's history, and steered his boat around the Caribbean, following Columbus' path to find out where and how the discoverer had made his first landfall.

Much the same might be said about histories of the fur trade and of northern exploration in Canada. Few writers,

certainly few academic writers, have actually walked the paths and paddled the routes of their subjects, and the histories of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), of which there are many, are based more on time spent in archives than time spent in canoes. It is refreshing, therefore, to find a book written by someone with extensive on-the-ground experience in northern Canada and who is also a skilled canoeist. Not that James Raffan has avoided the archives, but the fact that he has served on the boards of both the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the Arctic Institute of North America, and that he is now the curator of the Canoe Museum in Peterborough, gives the book a perspective that is lacking in many accounts of the company.

Sir George Simpson (1786–1860) is undoubtedly the best-known figure in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, and because his career coincided with the company's golden age, a biography of Simpson will naturally include a history of the company that played such an important role in the history of northern and western Canada. One problem with this biography of Simpson is that the man does not come across as a particularly human character, not even in his personal relationships—his marriage and his substantial brood of illegitimate children. He was first and foremost a businessman, and a ruthless one, and he seems to have been all business, both in his public and in his private life, at least in that part of his life that appears in his correspondence. It is just as well, then, that Raffan has expanded the book to include the Company as a whole, and the history of the Canadian northwest.

This book is clearly intended to be popular history, to reach a wider market than histories issued by academic presses. This is made evident on the dust cover, which calls the book "an epic tale." Academics publishing for promotion wouldn't be caught dead writing epic tales, and the motive is made even clearer by an endorsement on the back from Farley Mowat, saying that "with this book, James Raffan joins the ranks of Pierre Berton and Peter C. Newman." To any serious academic writing about the Hudson's Bay Company, favourable comparison to Newman would be extremely unwelcome.

Thus it seems fair to judge this book as a popular rather than an academic work of history, despite its footnotes and bibliography. As such, it achieves a certain amount of success. Raffan does not invent conversations, or at least not many of them, but he does indulge in speculation to an extent that would put a hard frost on a thesis student's chances of success. For instance, when Simpson first arrives in America as an agent of the HBC, Raffan says "It is not known exactly on whom Simpson called during his several days in New York City, but...Simpson may well have called on...J.J. Astor...Col. Thomas Handasyd Perkins...Mr. Robert Lenox..." (p. 81–82). There's really nothing wrong with such a literary device, since it permits Raffan to tell us interesting facts about the commercial history of the North American fur trade without being too didactic about it.

The book's greatest strength, however, is in the author's familiarity with and control over his material. When he