

TALES OF TICASUK — ESKIMO LEGENDS & STORIES. Collected and written by EMILY IVANOFF BROWN "TICASUK." Illustrated by EUGENE C. and MARY LOU TOTTEN. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1987. i-xxv, 133 p., 21 illus. Hardbound. Price not indicated.

Tales of Ticasuk will prove to be a worthwhile addition to the library or book collection of all who have an interest in arctic folklore, legends and stories of the past. Canadian readers will immediately note the apparent happy acceptance of the term Eskimo used throughout to identify Alaska's most northern inhabitants, a fact which this reviewer rather hopes will prompt some serious reflection in this country!

It is always difficult to assess the value and importance of the legendary history of other cultures, but Emily Ivanoff Brown (Ticasuk's married name), in this collection of these traditional stories, has displayed all the skills of a dedicated educator in her work. The volume's frontpiece dedication to "schoolchildren" declares the target section of today's generation, but adult readers may well wonder whether the appellations of Mr. and Mrs. to various animal characters, not to speak of according ancient meals (historically taken whenever there happened to be food) the modern time slots of breakfast, lunch and supper are just a wee bit too anachronistic. But Ticasuk (lamentably no longer with us) could well argue that such niceties may well be sacrificed if indeed the young of this generation are ever to be excited about their ancestry and its story.

For Canadians who have some knowledge of the Eskimo language there will be appreciation that some of the Eskimo vocabulary is expressed in the north Alaskan Inupiaq dialect, that which has so close an affinity with every dialect in the same linguistic family eastward as far as Greenland. But what may present difficulties to the general reader is coping with the orthography. Both in the Publisher's Note and the Word about Spelling (in the introductory material) there is a spirited attempt to introduce the reader to the intricacies of linguistics. However, the guidelines for correct pronunciation may not be enough to enable classroom teachers, for instance, to negotiate names like Ihlliaqaq or Qweexoxok, at least not without a very deep breath first!

But in the collecting of these stories and legends, Ticasuk reveals a very deep and sincere commitment to the task of salvaging what is left of the traditions and culture of her Eskimo ancestry. The recorded stories offer an insight into the past with a wide variety of vivid imagery. In the reading one gets an appreciation of a people whose history was so intertwined with their relationships to the animal world from which their very survival depended. In these recorded epics just what is fact or myth can never be precisely known, but the footnotes the author offers at the conclusion of each story serve to interpret the thrust of each tale. If, indeed, fear does act as a source of motivation, one can well imagine, for instance, that the story of the "Ogre baby" would keep successive generations of children well in line. In her footnote Ticasuk asserts that the awesome cries of this terrifying creature could be heard among the caribou herds, that is, "until the Gospel came . . ." — a fact that this reviewer considers a rather positive deliverance.

Tales of Ticasuk is enhanced by an unusually lengthy prefatory section, which includes a Publisher's Note, Notes on the Author, a Foreword and, finally, an Introduction and Acknowledgements from the author herself. What this introduction does is to introduce the reader to a very courageous and concerned lady who obviously has had, somewhat painfully, to deal with the reality of her own Eskimo identity and roots. After early years of enforced immersion in the dominant culture of her state, she gave all she had to the study and preservation of the rich heritage of her maternal ancestry. These insights into the person and character of Ticasuk add to the authority of the tales and give the reader a special sense of sympathy for the life work of this gallant lady.

There are in this book 24 chapters, each recording a self-contained legend. Transmigration of souls takes place; birds and animals change into humans and back again; a shaman visits the moon; the cruel treatment of a ptarmigan brings swift retribution, and hunters and hunted, heroes and villains, all have their place. These epics are the

fruit of a thousand thousand retellings, all by word of mouth — and became the stuff of which honoured traditions are made.

Tales of Ticasuk is a hardcoverd volume, attractively produced. Its 21 illustrations are striking and in complete harmony with the subject material. The unfortunate absence of a map of the area concerned is a disservice to the reader, who either has to have an atlas on hand or else just allow the geographical locations to slip by in his mind. But despite this, arctic region enthusiasts of all ages will find much profit from these pages, and educational institutions in Canada's North may well find that by adding it to their school libraries some stimulation may result in inspiring the collection and attractive production of legends and folklore from their own rich cultural heritage.

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PART OF THE LAND, PART OF THE WATER: A HISTORY OF THE YUKON INDIANS. By CATHARINE MCCLELLAN. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1987. 328 p., maps, illus., index. Hardbound. Cdn \$40.00.

Catharine McClellan is eminently qualified to write about the Yukon Indians. With four decades of fieldwork in the Territory to her credit, past editor of *Arctic Anthropology*, and author of the important study *My Old People Say*, she has made a notable contribution to our understanding of the Yukon's native people. In this book she has written not merely about, but for her subjects. *Part of the Land, Part of the Water* is aimed not only at a general audience, but at schoolchildren, for McClellan has written a text as well as a book of more general interest.

As would be expected from the author's academic qualifications — she is professor emerita from the University of Wisconsin — and her experience in the Yukon, the book is a treatment of the subject from an anthropological point of view. The languages, life cycles, traditions, and world view of the Indians are described with an authority that leaves no doubt that McClellan is master of her subject. The style is suited to both a school and a general audience. McClellan has taken pains to define a number of technical terms — geology, paleontology, archaeology (and for some reason, the word "rodent"), but not words such as "omnivorous," which might give schoolchildren difficulty.

There are some wonderfully evocative passages in the book. Drawing on the latest work of archaeologists and anthropologists, McClellan in the first chapter paints eight vignettes of the life of the Yukon Indians over the past 25 000 years, from the days of mammoth-hunting to the era of contemporary land claims. An account of life on the Porcupine River 11 000 years ago is particularly realistic:

Six families are camped in the shelter of some small poplar and spruce that have managed to grow in a sunny, south-facing spot along a branch of a river which later will be called the Porcupine. Not far from here, men hunted mammoth 15,000 years earlier. Nowadays, hunters hardly ever see mammoths; they seem, in fact, to be disappearing. . . . The old men and the women gather just enough dry willow twigs to set ablaze the few cakes of dried bison dung they have been hoarding for a cooking fire. One man puts meat, fat and snow into the bison's paunch, while one of the women brings out her store of dried berries to add to the mixture. Tying the bag-like paunch closed with rawhide, they hang it from a pole, so that it twists over the low flame. Ladles of musk-ox and bison horn are brought out: one for each person to eat the bison stew. . . . they have been without food for four days.

McClellan seems here to accept the controversial suggestion that there were people living in the Yukon 25 000 years ago, though later, in an excellent section on Ice Age archaeology, she admits that definite proof on the matter is still lacking.

Perhaps the book's greatest strength, and what should make it most useful for a northern audience, is that McClellan has used her material

to make it seem almost as though the book has been written by the people it depicts. Through the use of first-hand accounts, reminiscences, and stories, she has made the voice of the native people themselves central to the book — in many ways, this is a story of the Indians told through their own words. Dorothy Smith of Ross River tells how her people decided to have a common trapline rather than go along with the officials who wanted individual registered lines:

This is the last place they still have a group trapline. All the other places have individual traplines. Ones who still trap here, they don't care. You can go anywhere you want, and nobody will say anything. That's why we want to keep it that way. The game warden wanted to make it individual, but we had a meeting and we just told him no! Because if it's individual, some of the people would probably sell out, and then the Indian people would have nothing. . . . Whoever wants to trap can go out and trap, can have their traps any place. . . .

This is a remarkable book in other ways as well. It is beautifully produced, with copious illustrations, including some stunning colour photographs, courtesy of the Yukon government. The typeface is handsome, the margins more than generous, the binding sturdy, and the physical appearance of the book bespeaks a quality unusual in a book aimed partly at schoolchildren. It must be one of the most elegant textbooks ever published, and probably one of the most expensive.

There is, however, a serious caveat to be issued about this book from the point of view of an historian. The book in some ways does not seem to be a history at all. Not only is its organization only loosely chronological, but it leaves huge gaps in the historical record; in particular, the history of the Yukon Indians after the arrival of outsiders and their relations with these outsiders is dealt with only very briefly. The history of the twentieth century is covered in a 19-page chapter entitled "It's a Long Way to Ottawa: Yukon Indians and the Government" — the entire modern history of a people occupying less than six percent of the text. Hints of this story are given — we are told something about the casual day labour performed by Indians during the gold rush, but there is no coherent analysis of native employment patterns. Nor is there any analysis of the effects of imported diseases, or of alcohol. There are only two paragraphs on the building of the Alaska Highway, an important episode in native history. One of the most traumatic experiences of many Yukon natives now living — education at a mission school — is not covered at all. Surely some of the author's informants told her of being beaten for speaking native languages in school, but this aspect of Indian history is for some reason lacking.

The result is that many of the darker episodes in the history of Yukon Indians are glossed over or ignored. Reviewers are often accused of criticizing an author for not writing the book that the reviewer would wish to see, but a history, particularly a wide-ranging one that is meant to serve as a school text, must cover its subject as completely as possible, or leave itself open to such criticism. *Part of the Land, Part of the Water*, while a handsome book and sensitive to its subject, is not wholly satisfactory as a history of the Yukon Indians.

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ANTARCTICA: THE NEXT DECADE. Report of a study group chaired by SIR ANTHONY PARSONS. Cambridge: The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1987. 164 p., maps, appendixes, notes, refs., index. Hardbound. Price not indicated.

The continent of Antarctica, which constitutes approximately 10 percent of the earth's land surface and about 10 percent of its oceans, has long remained hidden in obscurity. Only in recent years has Antarctica achieved much recognition of its role in international affairs. Exploration, research, and in the *de facto* sense administration of the continent remained with the largely developed nations that had a long history of activity in the region. In the early 1980s, a group of develop-

ing nations led by Malaysia began to call for a re-evaluation of the present Antarctic Treaty system, with the objective of involving non-treaty members in the affairs of Antarctica. These nations presented a challenge to the present regime, one that is not likely to disappear or be easily resolved. Hence, the present volume comes at a particularly appropriate time and is important reading for anyone interested in the administration and development of the last remaining no-man's land on the planet.

The present work does not attempt to explore all aspects of Antarctic affairs within a single volume. Instead, the book focuses on the future of the Antarctic Treaty regime and on the implications of the disputes between the established treaty members and the developing nations that have hitherto taken little interest in the continent. The companion volume to this study, *The Antarctic Treaty Regime*, edited by Gillian Triggs (and reviewed in *Arctic* 41(2) June 1988), provides the background to the treaty and the details of its many components. Together these works will constitute a definitive study of political affairs in the Antarctic.

The book is divided into three main parts. The first begins with a summary of the origins and purpose of the 1959 treaty and notes the success that the treaty has achieved in the international community. The treaty has been successful in protecting the Antarctic environment, in establishing scientific cooperation, and in circumventing political disputes over the territory. The success of the treaty has been challenged, however, by a bloc of smaller, newer nations that have had no previous experience in the region. These nations are resentful of the dominance exercised by the treaty members, which they perceive as an exclusive club of developed nations controlling a part of the earth's surface that should be used to benefit all of mankind. Their actions in the United Nations and other world fora stem from this perceived exclusion from decision making in Antarctica. Here it should be noted that although 80 percent of the world's population lives in nations that are members of the treaty, these nations constitute only 20 percent of the world's nations, leaving 80 percent of the nations unrepresented on the issue of Antarctica. These differences of opinion concerning the internationalization of the continent put considerable stress on the present treaty system and the current regime. Moreover, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also begun to play a larger role in the affairs of the Antarctic. Environmental organizations, especially, have exerted pressure on the developed nations to limit the development of the continent and to adopt more conservation-oriented policies. The impact of the actions taken by both NGOs and the non-treaty developing nations indicate the need for a reassessment of the present system.

Part Two of the book deals with the uses of Antarctica. Scientific research is one use that could be subject to changes if the treaty is reassessed. Present research in the areas of geology and geophysics, climatology and meteorology, and biological sciences could be subject to greater restrictions under a new treaty regime with a significantly enlarged membership. Biological resources themselves, as well as mineral resources, could also be affected. The authors of this text, however, are not enthusiastic about the development of mineral resources in the region. The difficulties of exploration, access, and cost preclude significant development from taking place. Present world prices are simply too low to justify immediate exploration and development, especially when other energy alternatives are more cost efficient. The military potential of Antarctica is also discounted, at least for the present, as the region is currently demilitarized, internationally administered, and is not strategically important at this time.

The third part of the book focuses on options for the future. After examining various scenarios, the authors make a strong case for affording the non-member developing nations greater participation in the administration of Antarctica. Some accommodation on the part of each side will need to take place, and the present treaty can serve as a basis for the development of a new regime. The review of the treaty, scheduled for 1991, will no doubt see greater involvement from more nations which have recognized the importance of Antarctica.

Antarctica is being transformed from an obscure continent with limited scientific interest into the focus of many of the world's nations.