

BOOK REVIEWS

THE MOUNT ALBION COMPLEX, A STUDY OF PREHISTORIC MAN AND THE ALTITHERMAL. BY JAMES B. BENEDICT AND BYRON L. OLSON. *Ward, Colorado: Center for Mountain Archaeology, Research Report No. 1, 1978. 213 pages, illus., maps. \$14.00 U.S.*

The Mount Albion complex is composed of a series of high altitude archaeological sites in Colorado, all of which share a distinctive style of projectile point. Two excavated sites are described in detail, one by each coauthor. The complex as a whole appears to be insular and unrelated to any nearby assemblages, and Benedict has cast a wide net over most of western and central North America in his search for comparable sites from 5000 to 7500 years old. He perceives close, but poorly understood, relationships with the Northern Archaic of Alaska and the Yukon, with the Shield Archaic of the Keewatin and with the Eastern Archaic.

As a spin-off of his search, Benedict was led to construct population curves for various regions in North America spanning the Altithermal, using five 500-year intervals. Two of these intervals are conceived as "short droughts," the first lasting from 7000 to 6500 B.P. and the second, in which Mount Albion belongs, from 6000 to 5500 B.P. Comparing his population curves with the climatic cycle, Benedict concludes that arid regions such as the Great Basin suffered depopulation during dry periods, at the same time that moist regions such as the Pacific Northwest and Southern Rockies served as refugia. Mount Albion is a specific case in point. Thought to have its original roots in unspecified "drought-susceptible areas to the west," its peoples moved to the high country of Colorado when amelioration of climatic conditions there rendered it suitable for habitation by hunters. Upon the return of cool conditions and increased effective moisture, man moved back into arid regions, away from environments where snow was a limiting factor.

The principal weakness, it seems to me, lies in the formulation of the populations curves, which are essential to the main thesis of the book. They are based on 225 acceptably dated archaeological components; but since these dates are spread unequally over eight broad regions and five time units, the sample seems pitifully small. Perhaps the future will nevertheless bear out the hypothesis.

In proposing two short droughts to replace the traditional concept of one "long drought" for the Altithermal, Benedict has added one more complexity to an already hotly debated issue. Some authorities question the characterization of Altithermal climate as excessively

hot and dry. Others doubt that the Altithermal was synchronous from one region to another. However that may be, Benedict's discussion is thoughtful and stimulating, even exciting. The volume is carefully written and edited throughout, and readers can implicitly feel confident that Benedict is conversant with his subject, and has taken his stance only after diligent research led him there.

One final note. Readers of *Arctic* will find the discussions of geomorphological processes in periglacial environments well worth careful examination. It is a rare report that so cogently integrates an archaeological site into its geological context — before, during and after the time of human occupation. The authors' insightful probing of the subject deserves emulation by good dirt archaeologists with corresponding opportunities.

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THE WHITE ARCTIC. ANTHROPOLOGICAL ESSAYS ON TUTELAGE AND ETHNICITY. EDITED BY ROBERT PAINE. *Toronto: University of Toronto Press (Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers no. 7) 1977. 15.5 x 23.5 cm, 418 pages. Hard cover, no price indicated.*

In *The White Arctic*, Robert Paine has assembled a collection of essays which provide an integrated sociological/anthropological study of the administrators and the administered in what is regarded as Canada's domestic colony: the arctic. Certain of the essays deal with the behavior of whites (Euro-Canadians, or *kadlunat*) in the north, while others focus more closely upon the effects which that behavior has had upon the society of the aboriginal peoples of the area. As stated in the Preface, the rationale for this topical approach is that "... the betterment of ethnic relations and the lot of the Inuit ... seems predicated on whites increasing their understanding of their own behavior in the north."

The views of ten authors are presented in this volume. Most of the research for the essays was undertaken for the five-year project 'Identity and Modernity in the East Arctic', which was sponsored by the Canada Council. The project was directed by the editor of the volume, who in addition wrote the preface and seven of the nineteen essays.

The essays are grouped into three sections: *The Colonial Shadow Over NWT; Case Studies from NWT; and Case Studies from the Labrador Coast.*

The first section, which consists of four chapters by Paine, outlines the government programmes of northern development and administration, and discusses how they were conceived. On the basis of the scale of government expenditure, together with the low level of native participation in administration, it is easy to see why Paine refers to contemporary policy in the arctic as "welfare colonialism" (cf. Chapter 2: The Path to Welfare Colonialism). And here a note of cynicism is apparent: in Chapter 3 (An Appraisal of the Last Decade), Paine suggests that the real government concern over the past decade has been with oil and gas, and that northern policies and programmes in the social field have taken their cues from that basic national purpose. The tradeoffs which form part of the native land settlements announced since the book went to press certainly bear out Paine's opinion.

Case Studies from NWT includes six essays stemming from anthropological fieldwork in the Baffin Region of the NWT, with introductory and concluding chapters by Paine. In each of the eight chapters, the practice of 'white tutelage' is subjected to critical inspection. 'White tutelage', which is based upon the assumption that it is by being taught by whites that Inuit will gain the identity they require in order to adjust to their new world, was discussed in a positive manner little more than a decade ago by the anthropologists John and Irma Honigmann (1965). In contrast, the present essays deal with the deleterious effects that tutelage has on the white tutors as well as on the tutored, and thus on white-Inuit relations.

Although several messages can be read in this section when taken as a whole, one chain of reasoning in particular is quite clear. In the introductory essay to the section (Chapter 5: The Nursery Game, by Robert Paine), two faces of the spectre of white tutelage are sketched. On the one hand, whites feel that they are in the north to "take care of" the Inuit, thereby placing the Inuit in a subordinate position. At the same time, and for various reasons (some of which are discussed in Chapter 8: Why is *He* Here?: White Gossip, by Ditte Koster), the whites form competitive cliques amongst themselves along social, departmental, or religious lines. Also discussed is the notion of the "social flexibility" of the Inuit (Chapter 6: Some Qualities of Inuit Social Interaction, by Philip Lange). While one may object to cultural characterization in terms of such modal traits, this attribute has often been singled out in anthropological analyses of the Inuit. Besides the role that social flexibility appears to have played in traditional Inuit

culture (cf. Willmott, 1960), Lange also shows that it is an important mechanism in contemporary Inuit society — especially in coping with and adapting to whites. However, Inuit response to different reference groups (white cliques) is isolated as a factor leading to internal division. In Chapter 7 (Legacy of Tutelage: Divided Inuit, by Evelyn Kallen), we are told that

"Domination and control by Euro-Canadians, coupled with power struggles between their various agencies, have been the principle sources of fragmentation of the Inuit community." (p. 140)

The remaining essays in the section lend added support to this observation.

The final seven chapters deal with *Case Studies from the Labrador Coast*. This section, too, is introduced by an essay by Paine, although it is Chapter 14 (Northern Labrador: An Ethnohistorical Account, by John Kennedy) that provides the actual setting for the remaining chapters. The praxis of white tutelage continues to be under review, but the dominating theme concerns "ethnicity". In addition to the native Inuit of arctic Labrador, there is a 'Settler' population comprised of individuals of mixed Inuit and white ancestry, but with an identity that is neither Euro-Canadian nor Inuit. The relations between these two groups (which often occupy a single community) cross-cut those between tutor and tutored, and are the main focus of attention.

The influence of Fredrik Barth (1966) is apparent in most of the essays in this section, particularly in those discussions which deal with the establishment and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. In Chapter 16 (Ethnic Values and Ethnic Recruitment in Nain, by Terje Brantenberg), some of the "values" which contribute to ethnic identity are outlined. Among the Inuit, *sharing* generates esteem and respect, and expresses relations of solidarity. For the Settlers, however, *self-sufficiency* is valued as a way of life, and dependence upon others is to be avoided. Ethnic differences could also be identified in attitudes toward education (cf. Chapter 17: The Marginal School and the Children of Nain, by Anne Brantenberg): at least in the past, the Inuit valued education mainly in relation to the mission as a source of prestige, while the Settlers used education as a means to secure a wider range of jobs. In the last essay (Ethnic Commitments and Local Government in Nain, 1969-76, by Terje Brantenberg), the question is asked whether ethnic boundaries would have been maintained if the Inuit and Settlers had been left to themselves rather than having been under the influence of an 'outside agency' (mission or government) since the late 18th

century. Not surprisingly, considering the (admitted) bias of the book, Brantenberg is of the opinion that tutelage maintained the cleavage, which is now disappearing with the advent of local government.

One criticism with the volume concerns an essay in the latter section. Chapter 15 (Inuit-Settler Relations in Makkovik, 1962 by Shmuel Ben-Dor) is an excerpt from a larger work, and as such suffers from a lack of editing. It would be easier to follow with more editorial comments or footnotes; as it now stands, one is at times left with the sense of having missed the author's point. Also, when the essays are read one after the other a certain amount of redundancy is encountered, although this is perhaps to be expected when a number of authors address a common topic. A third comment is that the maps are hidden away (and not referenced!), and could more conveniently be used if they were placed in their appropriate chapters. Typological errors are at a minimum, and an errata sheet is provided.

The rationale behind this book — that there are lessons to be learned in the encounter between colonizer and colonized in the Canadian arctic — will probably not draw much disagreement from the reader. Although most of the research involved took place between 1968 and 1972, and since that time considerable change has taken place in the north, the contents of the book provide a background for an understanding of the present state of Inuit-white relations. In short, *The White Arctic* provides worthwhile reading, although it will likely find its greatest appeal with social scientists rather than with the general reader.

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- BOREAL ECOLOGY BY WILLIAM O. PRUITT, JR. *Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1978. 73 pages, illus. \$10.20 cloth, \$4.80 paper.*
- A new book (#91) has been published in the series *Studies in Biology* sponsored by the

Institute of Biology, London. This very readable little book contains 7 chapters ranging from the first on general northern terms, through chapters on environmental parameters, adaptations of plants and animals and ends with chapters on human utilization and research methods and procedures used in northern studies.

To many, the inclusion of taiga and Arctic within the term boreal may seem strange, for many biologists equate boreal with taiga; the treeless Arctic being considered separately. The author points out that subarctic and Arctic are defined differently in the Russian and English literature, a point that is seldom made. However he incorrectly states that Arctic as used in the USSR is equivalent to High Arctic or Polar Desert as used in North America. The more recent Russian literature recognizes Polar Desert as separate from subarctic and Arctic. The beginning reader would have been aided by a table to show the varying usage of these terms.

Pruitt explains the biological importance of radiant energy to plants and animals, especially in the High Arctic. Light is discussed in relation to photoperiod and the role this plays in mammals and birds. Brief mention is made of long day plants but no recent researches are mentioned.

In chapter 3 water is discussed only as it relates to snow and snow characteristics. The author goes as far as stating (p. 14) "...that one might accurately state that boreal ecology is the study of the ecology of snow." It is doubtful that very many biologists would interpret ecology of the north this narrowly. The section on soils is very elementary, giving no clear picture of northern soils and their genesis. No references are more recent than 1970. The unit on permafrost is more complete, though no mention is made of the dynamic studies of permafrost that have been made in the Mackenzie River Delta region in the past 15 years.

Chapter 5 discusses boreal vegetation. Only one page is devoted to plant adaptations with no real references given to physiological studies of northern plants. Only one, generally non-quantitative, review is cited, though more than six exhaustive reviews have been written in recent years. The author states (p. 32) that boreal vegetation studies have suffered from an excess of hasty superficial surveys of the tundra and a neglect of taiga except for exploitation-oriented research. Pruitt has either not read the literature or has chosen to ignore most of it. Again no reference is made to literature more recent than 1970 and then to only highly generalized articles.