

central position for so long was curiously set. Power came to him through no effort of his own: he was placed in high authority by the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose creation he was and whose creature he remained. His first appearance among the fur traders of the Athabasca District in 1820 was that of management spy. Then, in the general reorganization that followed the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821, he was given, partly because he was an outsider, the task of conciliating the two factions that had so lately been at war. He succeeded admirably in this difficult work, and the Governor and Committee gave him ever greater authority.

In this biography Professor Galbraith underlines Simpson's part in carrying out the Company's policies both in the fur trade and within the context of British geopolitics, a history that he has elaborated in another valuable study¹. Readers of *The Little Emperor* may wish to look also at volumes 29 and 30 of the Hudson's Bay Record Society, edited by Professor Glyndwr Williams^{2,3}. Professor Galbraith has contributed a long introduction to the first of these volumes where, annotated in splendid detail, there appear the letters Simpson wrote to the Company's headquarters during his well-known voyage around the world. Volume 30 includes the notorious "character book" in which Simpson recorded his judgements, most of them cruel, of some 160 of his colleagues in the fur trade. They are not attractive reading.

"The Hudson's Bay Company was not a philanthropic enterprise", Professor Galbraith reminds us. "It existed to make money from furs" (p. 61). During some forty years of the Company's almost unchallenged monopoly of the fur trade in British North America, Simpson ruled with that one object ever before him: to make money. His administrative ability and his shrewdness in business have been extolled by everyone who has written about him. It is my opinion however that, given the same authority, many of Simpson's colleagues could have done his work quite as well, and any of them might have done it without Simpson's personal nastiness.

Because Simpson took pains to leave on record as little information about himself as possible, this new biography is not much more than an account of his life in business. And, indeed, without psychological speculation, onto which quaky ground the author does not choose to venture, the book could not be much more. It is disappointing to have

to accept such a limited description of "one of the great business leaders of the nineteenth century" (p. x), but, in fact, there was no other Simpson: he existed only as a man of business. More than any Indian, he was a slave—a willing slave—of the exploitive machinery of nineteenth-century mercantile capitalism. Although he achieved power, prestige and wealth, his only satisfaction came from work and his only pleasure was in incessant rapid travel. If one looks for more than material success in a life, Simpson's is not an edifying story.

Alan Cooke

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VOYAGE TO GREENLAND: A PERSONAL INITIATION INTO ANTHROPOLOGY. BY FEDERICA DE LAGUNA. *New York: W. W. Norton, 1977. 285 pages, illus. with maps. \$9.95.*

This book, by one of North America's most distinguished anthropologists, offers some tantalizing insights into the personalities and events of anthropological and archaeological research in the late nineteenth-twentieths. It is not only a marvellously candid impressionistic account of a young girl's introduction to Arctic field research, but also a rare revelation of the development of the personality of an immensely successful scholar.

The author sets out clearly her terms of reference in the preface, which should not be overlooked. The book, compiled primarily from material in her field journal and letters to her family in Pennsylvania and Vermont, was written within a year of her return from Greenland in 1929. A number of comments and explanations, supplied in 1930 and 1975, appear in the form of bracketed inserts. The first third of the book deals primarily with the events leading up to the author's field trip to Greenland; her introduction to Therkel Mathiassen and Birket-Smith (of Fifth Thule Expedition fame) and the former's sudden invitation to join him on an archaeological expedition to West Greenland. De

Laguna's decision to accept such an offer was not made without internal struggles, the greatest of them no doubt arising out of the attitude of the day that a woman must choose between marriage and career. Her fiancé, who is referred to as D—, wanted to live and work in Wales — a prospect increasingly unacceptable to "Freddy" for whom a completely new and exciting world was becoming a reality.

The voyage from Copenhagen to Greenland on board the *Hans Egede* took thirteen days — altogether a different experience from the four-hour flight which now connects Copenhagen to Søndre Strømfjord. Arrival and subsequent events in Greenland are recounted with a freshness of spirit indicative of the young assistant's strong sense of determination and purpose.

The island of Inugsuk was the main centre of activity of the expedition. The excavation of a Thule-culture settlement there eventually led to the designation as Mediaeval Inugsuk of a particular phase of that culture. Researchers who have had an opportunity to work on Thule-culture sites will acknowledge this as being perhaps the most interesting part of the book. In reading it one comes to realize fully that advances have been made in the methodological approach to archaeological testing and excavation. In one entertaining passage de Laguna tells of some of the auk meat for which she craved being eventually prepared over an open fire made with scraps of wood from the Inugsuk midden which Mathiassen had discarded because they were not good enough to serve as specimens. Testing of other sites and stone cairns was often carried out somewhat indiscriminately, and usually involved heavy spade work.

While in Greenland, the author met a number of well-known personages, including Knud Rasmussen ("He certainly seems more in his element here than he did in Copenhagen") and Peter Freuchen ("... is enormous, with a regular Forty-Niners beard. He is peg-legged, having lost his foot on the Fifth Thule Expedition"), Dr. Wegener, Dr. Porsild and others. An interlude of soul-searching takes place when it is time for de Laguna to either leave (in order to keep a promise to meet D— in England) or stay in Greenland to the end of the season. At this point, one gets the strong feeling that a lot of decisions concerning the future had already been made by her, however subconsciously. D— loses, and anthropology gains considerably.

It is perhaps during the period covered in the latter half of the book that the young

"partner", as Mathiassen sometimes called her, is seen to mature most rapidly. A lot of reasonable and understandable naivety and smatterings of ethnocentricity, quite often apparent in the earlier writing, gradually diminish. Any researchers acquainted with work in remote and isolated regions will understand the reasons for this change in style and outlook. The "other" world becomes increasingly remote; reality is to be found in the little tent, the rocks and the ice, and in being in communion with the elements.

Just before departing from Greenland, de Laguna encountered her worst experience — having to drink home-brewed Greenlandic "beer" at six o'clock in the morning. Very fittingly, her adventure ended, as it began, with yet another round of hiking and climbing — favourite pastimes of both the author and Mathiassen.

Disconcerting points are but few. A slight confusion exists as to when the author is reproducing letters to her family rather than excerpts from her journal. Some of the statements interpolated in 1975 seem to be either unnecessary or else in need of a good deal of elaboration. The maps could have been tied in a bit more closely to the text, and the term "Sarqaq" would have been more appropriate in the 1975 interpolation about Pre-Dorset on page 69. These are minor points, however, and should in no way detract from the enjoyment of a very informative book by a most respected scholar who chose to devote her life to the science of anthropology.

Peter Schledermann

ANOTHER WAY OF BEING. BY PAMELA HARRIS. *Toronto: Impressions, 1976. 60 pages approx. Paperback, \$7.95; hard cover, \$11.95.*

Many northern residents have become suspicious of the books and articles written by southern "tourists" or "experts". This is especially so, as the writers often dwell on what a mess things are; how the government is to blame for it all, and how they themselves have all the solutions. Although there is no doubt that there are problems, one can't help but be a bit suspicious when the writer's wisdom is often based on a fly-in, fly-out visit of a day or two. Pamela Harris' book proves to be a happy surprise.

Another Way of Being is a slim volume containing about fifteen pages of text and some forty black-and-white photographs. The brief text presents a more balanced view than many other books. Aware that the old life was not easy, Ms. Harris points out that: