

Still, the index is useful, and there is a reference list, a short glossary of unfamiliar (or foreign) terms, and rather extensive notes for each chapter.

There are numerous illustrations and drawings in the text. The photographic plates are found in two groups and are less conveniently placed than in the Danish original. All are in black-and-white, including several which were in colour in the Danish edition. The one great lack of both English and Danish editions of this book is a good map. As a geographer, I am particularly sensitive to what seems to be a universal trait among publishers: an unawareness of the integral usefulness of maps. We are engulfed by a myriad of place names, descriptions of voyages, and progression of settlement, but no one cares that we have a good map with which to follow the course of history.

The text of the two editions appears to be similar. The translation is good, although some flaws are to be found. The occasional misuse of prepositions reflects how demanding a translator's task can be. Occasional awkward word usage appears throughout the text, but these mistakes and a few typographical errors are not numerous. The text, in fact, is free of that *bête noir* of modern book-printing, the transposed line.

Aside from these minor flaws, the translation is superb compared with that in many other Scandinavian books and journals (certain issues of *Meddelelser om Grønland*, for example). Readability is necessary in the translation of such a historical work, and Ernst Dupont was up to the task.

About the translation, Gad states: "It has been very difficult to transfer the specific Danish historiographic style into readable English." Alas, have we been spared something from which Danish readers of history cannot escape?

The main critical comment on this book is that it fills a void in the literature about Greenland. Gad earlier wrote a shorter history of Greenland (*Grønlands Historie — En oversigt fra ca. 1500 til 1945*. Copenhagen, 1946, 272 pp.) and, more recently, we have Lidsgaard's *Grønlands Historie* (Copenhagen, 1961, 166 pp.). Various specific studies on trade, shipping, economic history, and administration have appeared from time to time (viz., works by Bobé, Tving, Sveistrup, and Ostermann). But nothing in Danish approached a comprehensive history of Greenland. In English, we have had even less. Vahl *et al.* edited the three-volume *Greenland* (Copenhagen, 1928-29), parts of which dealt with historical aspects. The Norse era has been written about by, among others, Poul

Nørlund, Daniel Bruun, Finnur Jónsson, Gwyn Jones, Helge Ingstad, C. L. Vebæk, and Knud Krogh; Eskimo pre-history, archaeology, and anthropology by Holtved, Steensby, Thalbitzer, Mathiasen, Birket-Smith, Knuth, Meldgaard, and Helge Larsen. Because these studies concentrated on specific topics within the entire story of Greenland, we have lacked, until now, an attempt to synthesize the whole.

So Gad's present book begins the first large and comprehensive history of Greenland, and it is therefore most welcome, especially to an English-speaking audience.

Although the book reflects careful scholarship and deep research, irrelevant details often interrupt an otherwise good tale. This is not intended as adverse criticism (for good history is often made up of such minutiae), but merely as a warning. This is not a book to curl up with by the fire on a snowy Sunday afternoon. The text attempts historical completeness; it is perhaps this dedication to accuracy — with all its names and dates, places and localities, measurements of churches and house ruins — which strains one's interest and attention. The long succession of archbishops, when they sailed to Greenland and when they died, is interspersed with a steady progression of *umboðsmadr*, *lögmaðr*, *officialis*, *féhirðir*, *sýslumaðr*, and other officials of varying rank and influence. The mind is bogged; only occasionally is it entertained. But more than mind-boggling is mind-stretching, as the reader is led into considering anew the successive waves of aboriginal inhabitants, and the fate of the Norse colonies, why they disappeared, and the various factors which might have played a part. Gad considers these and much more in a dispassionate, non-committal manner. Fresh insights and interpretations await the reader.

William G. Mattox

THE VIOLATED VISION: THE RAPE OF CANADA'S NORTH. BY JAMES WOODFORD. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972. 5½ x 9 inches, 136 pages. \$5.95.

James Woodford joins the ever-enlarging company of biologists, ecologists, economists, lawyers and others who have pleaded with the Canadian Government to change its attitude toward the North, we all wish him well.

"The Violated Vision" is, in many respects, an aggravating book. The publishers are to be congratulated for bringing it out; they also are to be castigated for such atrociously sloppy editing and proofreading. Parts of the book

read as if it were set in type directly from a dictaphone tape (e.g. — Stephanson instead of Stefansson, Thompson-Seton instead of Seton, wrong title for the 1969 tundra conference at Edmonton, incomplete or incorrect references, etc.). The subject is so important to the future of Canada that it should have received an accurate, complete treatment. One scarcely can fault an author for not writing the ideal book, but if he had tapped more sources of information, such as the consulting panel for the Arctic Land Use Regulations, he would have strengthened his case. We could have told him just how our ecologically-based draft regulations were emasculated to the legalistic non-ecological drivel finally sneaked into effect. We could have told him how the biologist members of the panel were kept uninformed of the progress of the regulations, month after month, in spite of formal letters of inquiry. We could have told him how it later transpired that, at the same time, the oil industry had been kept quite well informed of the progress of the regulations.

Perhaps the book's very innocence in its anger will be its strongest point. If Mr. Woodford, just from newspaper articles, political speeches, news releases and a little of the scientific literature, can detect the gross mismanagement of Canada's north, then maybe the entire electorate can detect it also.

And gross mismanagement it is, with reassuring "no environmental damage" statements issued by engineers, businessmen, and politicians, not by biologists; with the crucial ecological reports vital to public understanding of issues still kept secret; with Panarctic's appallingly bad environmental safety record; with virtually no Eskimo or Indians employed by the exploitive industries; with still no legal process in the North whereby ecological considerations *must* be taken into account before implementing exploitive schemes; with the easily-destroyed wildlife resources transferred to the poverty-stricken and therefore money-hungry government of the Northwest Territories; with legal machinery now set up so that the Eskimos can sell their wildlife birthright (to thrill-seeking whitemen) but still cannot collect any royalties from their mineral and oil birthright. The list can go on and on.

Mr. Woodford unfortunately has fallen into the exploiters' cunning trap of emphasizing the need for more ecological research in the North. I think this is a smoke screen thrown up by the exploiters to deflect scientists from agitating for public action against the exploiters. The exploiters know full well that any scientist worth his salt will jump for

research money when it is waved in his face. This is true especially in Canada where ecological research has been starved for so many years. The only catch is that while the research is going on the exploiters insist on freedom to exploit until all the data are collected, all aspects are researched thoroughly. To make premature regulations before all the facts are known would, they say, interfere with free enterprise.

One fault of "The Violated Vision" (and, for that matter, of much of the current environmentally-oriented writing) is the failure to understand that, as far as resources are concerned, there are two levels of knowledge gained from research — complete understanding of a natural phenomenon (which is never achieved fully) and knowledge sufficient to make a management decision.

Thus, we are far from knowing enough about caribou to satisfy us biologists, but we already know enough about caribou to enable us to reach management decisions about them. We are a long, long way from a thorough understanding of muskox biology, but we already know enough to know what *not* to do.

So it is with most northern ecological research — we are far from understanding how northern ecosystems work but we already know enough to make management decisions perhaps 75 per cent of the time. There are some gaps in our knowledge, to be sure, but these could be filled relatively easily. The important thing to remember is that we already know the basics of what *not* to do in order to prevent environmental degradation in the Arctic. If we could only put this knowledge to use we could prevent most errors of commission until better data were available.

If we know so much why don't we use the knowledge? Aye, there's the rub! The knowledge, in some cases, is scattered in scientific papers, reports and books (and people's brains) but in other cases the knowledge is available readily but ignored by politicians and administrators in charge of resources. Here is the weak point — forcing politicians and administrators to make decisions based on scientific data instead of on emotions, tradition or short-term gain. Mr. Woodford's impassioned plea for a moratorium on northern exploitation is quite correct; although not so much for research purposes but more to allow the democratic regulatory process to catch up with the abilities of technological-exploiters to do irreparable harm.

At the recent unlamented Conference on the Law in Ottawa one of the "Environment and the Law" panelists predicted that in the near future there would arise the phenomenon

of "Eco-Guerrillas", engaged in pirating and publishing the ecological reports now classified secret and languishing in government and company files. "The Violated Vision" may be just the instrument to spark such a movement. It already has been instrumental

in sparking Toronto Pollution Probe's Arctic Campaign.

I recommend that all Canadians read "The Violated Vision" and become as aroused as Mr. Woodford.

William O. Pruitt, Jr.

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