

over 80 kilograms (p. 93). It is difficult even to accept that the relatively isolated reindeer Chukchi, who were not collectivized until the mid-1930s, were a “traditional tundra reindeer economy” (p. 87). For nearly 50 years in the 1700s Russia attempted its version of ethnic cleansing on the Chukchi, killing many and forcing the remainder to form alliances with other ethnic groups and to inhabit new territories. In addition, beginning in the early 1920s, “Soviet administrative power was increasingly brought to bear on native society, with its own agenda and plans for the communist transformation of life among the indigenous [Arctic] population” (p. 34).

The data were gathered in the early 1920s and 1930s for the *Komitēt Severa* (Northern Committee), to help the small peoples of the North make the leap from precapitalist to socialist societies without passing through the capitalist stage. Although collected before the onset of the Stalinist repression of indigenous peoples, the data were probably manipulated to suit the *Komitēt Severa*. The introduction of the class struggle into research effectively divided the Arctic populations, legitimized Soviet power and facilitated suppression of indigenous economies. Large reindeer owners were classified as *kulaks* even before 1930; when Stalinist oppression began, they were exterminated as a class and, in reality, as human beings. It is hard to believe that records from the 1920s and 1930s did not have political implications, which makes their accuracy suspect.

The third problem relates to the incompleteness of the climatic data, a cornerstone of the author’s environmental focus. Historical evidence about navigation and ice conditions is anecdotal and sporadic. Dendrograms provide good information about annual summer weather, as do past fluctuations in the Arctic tree line, which are difficult to date except by C¹⁴. Instrument observations are the only reliable source Krupnik uses, but they do not go very far back in time and are reported from only a few stations. An understanding of local climatic conditions that affected the study communities is almost impossible to attain with these sources. While scholars must use the climatic data available, it is difficult to achieve the fine-grained results necessary to correlate with ethnohistorical records.

Arctic Adaptations consists of a complex model built on difficult data and complicated calculations. It is not for the layperson, nor for undergraduates, and should be read by graduate students in a course or under the supervision of an advisor who can help them understand the book. Nevertheless, it is required reading for scholars interested in understanding the past, and the future, of indigenous Arctic peoples. The book’s finest quality is that the Dual Subsistence Model represents an innovative and testable hypothesis on the nature of indigenous Arctic economies and their long-term adaptability.

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TAMMARNIIT (MISTAKES): INUIT RELOCATION IN THE EASTERN ARCTIC, 1939–63. By FRANK J. TESTER and PETER KULCHYSKI. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994. 421 p., maps, illus. Softbound. Cdn\$24.95.

Pity the poor Canadian bureaucrat, especially if he or she is engaged on the front line of social engineering, and particularly if this engineering involves Canada’s First Nations. To the public, this bureaucrat seems powerful, with the ability to determine the destiny of entire peoples. And, as this book points out, the Canadian bureaucracy certainly brought dramatic changes in the lives of the people who dwell in the most northerly inhabited part of this country.

But in another sense, these bureaucrats—or at least their reputations—are highly vulnerable. Charged with the responsibility of formulating and carrying out public policy with respect to First Nations people, they may exert power in the short run, but in the long run they cannot win, for the public’s attitude towards First Nations changes over the decades, and what seems enlightened and progressive policy in one generation is likely to seem repressive and stupid in the next. To use a business metaphor, over time the bureaucracy is always behind the curve.

Nowhere is this more true than in the formulation of Canadian public policy towards the Inuit. In the past century, this policy has come full circle. It began at the end of the last century with an attitude of benign neglect, stemming from a belief that the Inuit were content and self-sufficient, and that there was nothing that “civilization” could do for them but harm them. This was followed by a gradual process of extending Canadian sovereignty and law over the Inuit, discouraging practices such as infanticide, while still leaving them to fend for themselves economically. At the end of World War II, the Inuit were brought into the Canadian social welfare system and by the 1960s they were virtually totally dependent wards of the Canadian state. In the past twenty years the circle has closed: the Inuit have become more and more self-governing, as Ottawa has turned over an increasing measure of control to local and regional authorities.

The bureaucrats suffer because they support all these shifts in policy, yet with each turn of the wheel, the discarded policy and its authors are roundly condemned: benign neglect becomes cruel indifference, attempts to help are seen as unconscionable interference. The title of this excellent book is an example of this change in attitude. What once seemed reasonable and humanitarian policies are now seen as “*tammarniit*,” mistakes.

The core of *Tammarniit* is a discussion of the relocation of certain Inuit groups to the high Arctic in the mid 1950s, an episode which has received considerable publicity in the past few years, much of it embarrassing to the veterans of the government of the day. The public controversy has centered on the relocation of 1953, in which a number of Inuit were moved from the Quebec shore of Hudson Bay and Pond Inlet to new communities at Resolute and Craig Harbour, many hundreds of kilometres to the north. The question which received the most publicity was whether this was done for humanitarian reasons or to strengthen Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic, which had shaky foundations. The authors sensibly conclude that the two

reasons were intermingled: “What started out as a concern for the deteriorating welfare conditions of Inuit in Arctic Quebec was to become entangled in the minds of some officials . . . with concerns about sovereignty and the enforcement of Canadian law in the Arctic Archipelago, both of which were fuelled by Cold War fears, Soviet atomic capability, and American military paranoia” (p. 119).

What makes this book particularly valuable, however, is not the argument over the motives behind this relocation, for there are other books in print which cover the same ground. *Tammarniit* is more than a polemic or an apology for this episode; it is really a wide-ranging social history of Inuit–White relations throughout the period when government first tried to “help” these people. As such, it tells as much about the dominant society as about those towards whom its policies were directed.

A good example is the section on the introduction of the family allowance scheme to the Inuit. As with the Indians of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, the Inuit were paid the family allowance in groceries and supplies, rather than in cash. This permitted the government to influence the kind of food they ate. It also gave the Inuit a reason to send their children to school, since the allowance was not paid unless the children were in regular attendance, and school naturally came to have a powerful effect on the transformation of their culture.

No better example of how things (or the appearance of things) have changed in government–Inuit relations can be given than to quote from the *Book of Wisdom*, a well-meant but astonishingly paternalistic work designed to acquaint the Inuit with the workings of mainstream society. The authors quote the section on family allowances: “The King is helping all the children in his lands . . . The traders are working with the Police to help you and your families and the King has instructed them to issue goods only when it is necessary. He does not wish you to become lazy and expect to receive goods at any time. You are to continue to work hard at hunting and trapping, teaching your children to be good hunters and workers” (p. 85–86). A bureaucracy that could write such “colonial cackle” (the authors’ phrase) could easily uproot and transplant people for what was perceived as their own good.

Tester and Kulchyski are to be congratulated for an extensively researched and well-written book, perhaps the most important work on Inuit–government relations yet written. As an illustration of cultural ignorance and insensitivity, it is of course depressing; yet the resilience of the Inuit it depicts is somehow at the same time exhilarating. It certainly will stand for some time as the most comprehensive treatment of the subject.

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