

Brown's will undoubtedly not be the last word on such consecrated widows for he discounts the religiosity of their behavior, but he neither denies women's participation in early Christianity nor overly romanticizes it — a welcome balance.

Brown never forgets that early Christians thought differently than we do about religion and sexuality, nor does he trivialize into a "topic" the complicated intertwining of sexual fears, misogyny, patriarchy and the Roman civic duty to reproduce and raise children, as recent writers on misogyny have tended to do. He convincingly shows that late antiquity was a period in which many voices were speaking about body, sexuality and the renunciation of reproductive activities. It remains for medievalists and modern historians to begin reevaluating the contributions of the Greek and Latin Fathers to later debates on monasticism, asceticism, clerical celibacy and Christian marriage. To do so with the same consciousness of context which Peter Brown has brought to the origins of those notions in late antiquity will be a difficult task, but he has certainly provided us a solid place from which to start.

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Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison — *Land of the Midnight Sun. A History of the Yukon*. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988. Pp. 336.

It has been an interesting year for students of the history of northern Canada. Characteristically, the list of publications relating to northern history is brief and decidedly thin, but with the release of Catharine McClellan's *Part of the Land, Part of the Water*, new life was injected into a somewhat dejected body. Morris Zaslow has completed his second northern volume for the Canadian Centenary series, and now the productive team of Ken Coates and W.R. Morrison has assembled a volume which surveys Yukon history from ancient times to the present. Although much of the ground covered in this book is not new, *Land of the Midnight Sun* does provide a convenient single reference source with numerous illustrations and several helpful maps.

In many ways, this book is very traditional history. It begins with the now-obligatory chapter on native peoples before contact in which Indians and geography are described together as a sort of "natural history" background scene to the real action, which occurs as the Europeans arrive on stage. To the authors' credit, the impact of various events in Yukon history on the aboriginal peoples is noted throughout the book, but the emphasis is such that this is clearly a non-native point of view. Even in the chapter devoted to the fur trade, native responses are discussed only briefly and the real concern is with European exploration and competition. There is little reference to the current scholarship which has changed radically our perceptions of culture contact experiences in the subarctic.

The chapters which cover Yukon mining exploration and society from 1870 to 1918 are much more lively. Here, the authors mix anecdotal, personal vignettes with analysis and presentation of the broader context to produce a colourful and entertaining description. There is also an interesting chapter on whaling and Herschel Island, an important though little known aspect of Yukon history. While much of the

analysis of whaling society is based on the work of anthropologist Thomas Stone, Morrison's work on the R.N.W.M.P. and Coates' knowledge of mission work are brought together here in an effective way. Clearly, however, a great deal remains to be studied, particularly regarding the subsequent social history of the region. Yukoners' enthusiastic support for service in WW I comes as something of a surprise if one accepts the standard interpretation that gold rush society was influenced primarily by Americans. What changes had occurred between 1900 and 1914 to produce this outpouring of sentiment for the British Empire?

The story continues through a series of economic booms and busts in the twentieth century, coupled to a steadily shrinking degree of political control by Yukoners. The authors blame Ottawa's lack of interest in the Yukon for such peculiarities as the extensive American authority exercised there during WW II, and the potentially disastrous Meech Lake Accord of the 1980s. The authors blame the colonial nature of the relationship between Ottawa and the Yukon for continuing Yukon problems such as transiency of the white population, lack of diversification in the economy, domination of a single urban centre and the marginalization of native peoples. Coates has argued the point more explicitly in his recent book, *Canada's Colonies*. While the formal structures of that relationship are undeniably colonial, the authors do not explain the apparent contradiction between Ottawa's apathy on the one hand and paternalistic domination on the other. The book concludes on a more positive note as the authors see indications that "the colonial patterns are being resisted" (298).

Most of the content of this book is not new. Coates and Morrison have compiled material from a variety of secondary sources, including their own previously published work, into a package intended to be read by both a general and an academic audience. As a convenient reference, it doubtless serves a purpose, but it is to be regretted that the research and analysis were not more adventurous. The authors criticize contemporary tourist promotion in the North for emphasizing the Klondike to the exclusion of other aspects of Yukon history, yet they themselves have given heavy emphasis (and certainly the most colour) to this period of the past. They are critical of transient whites and note the enduring presence of the native peoples, yet they provide relatively little understanding of the nature of either the Indian societies or of the long-term white population. How might the contribution of these societies to northern life be differentiated from that of the transient population? While the authors note that "it was the Indians who had the deepest and most enduring connection to the Yukon" (216), this book does not reflect that emphasis. It is primarily the story of Canadian and American interests there. Nevertheless, given the lack of accessible surveys of northern history, *Land of the Midnight Sun* will fill a gap in the literature.

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