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A FRIENDLY GIANT?

CHINA THE GREAT UNKNOWN

Text by MEDIAVISION LTD.

Simon and Schuster
paperback \$2.50: 112 pages

reviewed by Frederick Nossal

FOR ANYONE WHO has lived in China, even briefly, this great land holds a continuing fascination. Its immensity, its vast problems, its hundreds of millions of people, its power. Superlatives are often inadequate, particularly when trying to describe the culture of China, mankind's most ancient culture that lives to this day. It is against such a backdrop that one must view the Chinese revolution that has been rocking the land ever since Mao Tse-tung's regime assumed power in Peking in 1949.

China the Great Unknown is an interesting and ambitious project in that it tries to squeeze Chinese history as well as recent political developments — including the Great Cultural Revolution — into a mere 112 pages. (The book, the first study to appear since Canada's recognition of Communist China, is a team effort by a group of Canadian Sinologists.)

This is not the book for the China scholar for he will be disappointed that important aspects of Chinese history are dismissed in a few paragraphs. Clearly, it is impossible to

INCLUDING THE
FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR
SUPPLEMENT



Grain harvest. China's victory over famine has been called as great an achievement as man's journey to the moon.

follow the long road taken by the Chinese people from the Shang Dynasty (1766-1123 BC) in what is a relatively brief book, and please everyone.

And yet the average reader will learn much from reading it for the authors have taken a good deal of trouble to explain particularly the post-revolution China. The history from the Shang Dynasty onward until the takeover by the Chinese Communists takes up about one third of the book. Perhaps it is interesting to note here that in the millennial history of China no emperor or Government has ever really known how many people live there. Today the figure is said to be perhaps 750 million, perhaps 800 million. Nobody can be sure.

The authors are sympathetic about the tasks Mao Tse-tung faced when he took over. The job was enormous. He and his supporters had to remould a shattered and embittered part of the world, and give the millions back their national pride. For the first time in centuries, the Chinese people became masters in their own house. The authors say Mao, as chairman of the Communist Party, has done more to shape China's destiny than any other Chinese leader in the last 1,000 years.

Some of Mao's critics, including those within China, would argue with that postulation, and yet there is no doubt that Mao will emerge as one of the great men of global history. He is certainly one of the few historic figures who has lived to see the impact his political philosophy has made upon his own nation and on the rest of the world.

China the Great Unknown goes briefly into the Sino-Soviet rift, the meaning of a proletarian dictatorship, Peking's efforts to curb the population explosion. the

creation of the communes. the problems of achieving greater productivity in the countryside.

In the cities of China, a highly disciplined society has all but eliminated gangsterism, drug addiction, prostitution, black marketeering, robbery, and burglary. It must be remembered, however, that this discipline fell apart for several years from 1966 until 1969 when the violence of the Cultural Revolution shook China.

The book includes bits and pieces about education, religion, communications, medicine, transportation, trade, the economy and foreign relations. The *Great Unknown* is well illustrated. It has nothing new to say about China, but it does present facts and figures about the new China in an interesting, readable fashion. □

FREDERICK NOSSAL was the first correspondent to set up a bureau for a Western newspaper in Peking after the Communist takeover. Today he is an associate editor of the Toronto *Telegram* specializing in Asian affairs.

EDITOR'S NOTE

China The Great Unknown represents a breakthrough for the as yet undeveloped Canadian mass market paperback industry. The book was conceived, written, and produced in Canada and the first printing of 68,000 copies has been sold before its official release date. But the most significant part of this story is the fact that the American rights have just been sold for more money than has ever been paid for a Canadian produced book. Curiously, the book was bought not by Simon and Schuster's parent company but by one of its competitors (New American Library). □

CITIZEN ROBERTSON

THE PAPER TYRANT RON POULTON

Clarke Irwin;
cloth \$7.50; 227 pages; 16 pages of photos

reviewed by David Williamson

WHERE HAVE all the self-made, power-hungry tyrants gone? Have they vanished, or are today's business barons silent, leaving the rabble-rousing to students and minority groups? Are today's world leaders really the colourless lot that they seem to be?

You ask yourself these questions as you read this biography of yet another industrial tycoon who fought his way

to the top in the Victorian era. John Ross Robertson (1841-1918) was one of the primary forces to shape Canadian journalism. He started the Toronto *Telegram* in 1876, made it that city's most successful newspaper, and used it to influence the country's major politicians. These things he did with a brand of rough-and-tumble determination, behind which lurked the complex likes and dislikes of a real individualist.

As a newspaperman in his late twenties, Robertson went to Red River to cover Riel's exploits first-hand. As an editorial writer, he dogged Sir John A. Macdonald incessantly, yet showed himself to be a pro-Conservative. As an employer, he bought unshakeable loyalty with niggardly wages. As a citizen, he supported many causes and gave great amounts of time and money: he was president of the Ontario Hockey Association, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, and founder of the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. While publishing a newspaper pledged to keeping "clear of political fetters." Robertson became the independent Tory for East Toronto. He still found time to collect endless pictures and curios of *Canadians* and to pirate such American literary works as Twain's *Tom Sawyer*.

John Ross Robertson had two wives and three children, but the great man seems to have monopolized all the energy: his offspring were unhealthy ne'er-do-wells.

The impressiveness of Robertson comes through clearly in Ron Poulton's new biography. Poulton chooses an anecdotal style to present a story he has gathered from scattered sources. Instead of taking the subject through chronological stages, the author has shown the development of each separate endeavour. This method seems to emphasize the variety in Robertson's life. You wonder how he could have kept such rigid control of so many worlds.

Poulton relies heavily on newspaper quotes but does not clutter the pages with footnotes citing each specific source. (This is a "popular" biography, not a "scholarly" one.) Piling quote upon quote, he takes the story well beyond Robertson's death, but the details of such successors as John R. Robinson seem redundant.

There is no doubt that Ron Poulton likes Mr. Robertson, and the reader will like him, too. Robertson was a Victorian giant with giant human qualities that balanced his great hunger for power. Poulton has done well in showing us an era and a man that cannot be duplicated today. His book leaves you wishing that they could be. □

DAVID WILLIAMSON is a freelance writer and book reviewer who lives in Winnipeg.

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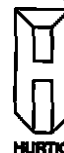
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NOTE

Although this issue is dated August-September, we wish to assure all our subscribers and readers that they are not missing any issues of our magazine. Because our first issue came out slightly later than we expected, we are double-dating this issue in order to get back on schedule. Subscriptions will be honoured for the full eighteen issues as promised.

Lavish

between now and Christmas.. five fine new Canadian titles plus five beautiful additions to our *Canadians* Reprint Series. Watch for Ian Adams' *THE REAL POVERTY REPORT*; Denis Smith's controversial *BLEEDING HEARTS*, *BLEEDING COUNTRY*; Duncan Pryde's fantastic life with the Eskimos: *Ritchie Yorke* on the Canadian rock music scene; Tony Cashman's *ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF WESTERN CANADA*; reprints of Samuel Hearne, Alexander Mackenzie, Henry Youle Hind, John Franklin and Hugh MacLennan's *CROSS COUNTRY*. If you're not already on our mailing list, drop a note to Hurtig Publishers. 10411 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton 14, Alberta. We'll send along our fall catalogue and keep you informed of our future titles.



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Photo Jack Jensen

ASSIGNMENT: MARTIN MYERS

A PROFILE OF A FIRST NOVELIST

by Randall Ware

"Hello? My name is Martin Myers."

"Yessir?"

"I believe you have a book of mine."

"If you wait a moment sir. I will connect you to the order department."

"No, no, I mean I've written a book."

"I'm sorry sir. we do not look at manuscripts."

"No, you don't understand. I've written a book coiled The Assignment which has been published and I understand that you are the people who distribute it in Canada. I'm a Canadian."

"Oh."

AT THE AGE of 43, Martin Myers has published his first novel (Fitzhenry & Whiteside; cloth 59.95) and, in doing so, has joined the burgeoning ranks of Canadian authors who sell their books to American publishers without first trying to sell them in Canada. Paperback rights have been sold and the book is coming out in August in Britain backed by a publisher who believes that it could be an underground best-seller. Alan Arkin, Zero Mostel, Dustin Hoffman, and Stanley Kubrick among others have been reading it with an eye to making it into a movie. "In my contract, I insisted that I would write the film treatment if the book was sold to a producer. So now what happens is that these New York types are coming up here to look at the weird guy who wrote the book."

Myers has successfully avoided the "first novel syndrome," the writer's reach into the past to discover the rationale for his maturity in the events of his immaturity. Myers arrives full-blown and full-grown with a fast-paced comic novel, filled with puns, anagrams and other word-play. These devices do not belie the fact that the book is written with serious intent and is really a novel of ideas. His style is that of the "new novel," a soupçon of Robbe-Grillet, a hint of Barthelme, and a comic style similar to that of the best new American novelists like D. Keith Mano and Ronald Sukenick. But the important difference is that whereas virtually all the new novelists express a weariness with the big, cosmic questions. Spiegel the protagonist of the novel, and Myers himself, tackle them with great zest and much wit. As Myers himself put it. "There are no answers. only questions."

This kind of reasoning has defeated and destroyed many people, but Myers seems to thrive on it. The strongest impression of him that one gets is his seemingly boundless energy and zest for life distilled through his remarkable sense of humour.

Several other profiles have tried to suggest that he is pushy and aggressive. For some crazy reason we think that authors must, by the nature of their discipline, be wallflowers at the orgy. Myers' history (nine years working in television in Regina, advertising copy-writer and producer

of commercials, stand-up comedian) does not suggest that kind of temperament. The book took two and a half years to write, during which he went broke trying to support his wife and children, and he is quite rightly looking for some reward beyond that of the pleasures of being a literary celebrity. He is a man you take to instantly, warm and talkative, and obviously as honest with you as he tries to be with himself.

The Assignment was written while Martin was studying for his MA at John Hopkins University in Baltimore. His return to school after an absence of twenty years was prompted by a feeling of encroaching stagnation and the realization that the writing of a novel was something he had often thought about. "I always do what I set out to do." He received his MA in Creative Writing, working on this novel from 7 A.M. until 3 P.M., then going to school from four until six every day. Ten years' savings vanished in a year and a half, and he came back to Toronto. Since then, he has been writing from seven in the morning until noon, grabbing a quick sandwich, and spending the afternoon as a copywriter in a large advertising agency.

Jack Kuper, author of *Child of the Holocaust* and a friend of Martin's suggested that he send the manuscript of his book to Kuper's agent in New York. Kuper also warned him that placement of manuscripts was a very slow process and he should not be alarmed if it took a year or more.

"Martin Myers speaking,"

"Mr. Myers, this is Kurt Heilmer (New York agent). I have sold your book."

"What book?"

"Your novel, *The Assignment*."

"But I only sent it to you ten days ago."

"Harper and Row have bought it without corrections."

The reviews of *The Assignment* have been uniformly favourable. The *New York Times* said, "The most charming and amusing character I have come across since I first encountered Leopold Bloom frying kidneys." The *Calgary Herald* said, "The best first novel by a Canadian to appear in years... a contemporary novel which uses avant-garde devices and yet succeeds in emerging as a work of immense popular appeal." But the endorsement which seemed to mean the most to Myers was that of Northrop Frye, Canada's pre-eminent literary critic. "Authoritative, witty, and absorbing, a kind of conspiratorial story in which the direction and nature of this conspiracy is never quite defined, and which seems to me to be one of the central imaginative paths of our time."

One day Myers' wife read to him a famous quote from W. B. Yeats about "down where all the ladders start, in the foul q-sod-bone shop of the heart." The quote appears in the front of the book, and according to Myers, was its inspiration. Myers' fast, anecdotal, humorous way of talking (one is tempted to use the word delivery), which closely parallels the style of the book, might lead you to believe that he sits in front of his typewriter and just transcribes his jokes as he invents them. In fact, the novel was re-written three times and, had he not forced himself to stop, the novel still might not be published. He is currently hard at work on the first draft of his second novel which will have a Biblical theme.

BOOKS *in* CANADA

EDITORIAL

NOTHING SUCCEEDS in disconcerting an editor like early success. After only two editions of *Books In Canada*, one introductory, one regular, and both of limited circulation, we find ourselves embarrassed by a response that has been overwhelmingly favourable. We have had letters and phone calls to tell us, as we knew already, how badly Canada needed a book magazine like ours, and to express surprise, which we do not share, that a venture like ours could get started in Canada.

It is pleasant to be so readily liked, but we are already uneasy with the experience. We do not encourage our reviewers to regard Canadian books as sacred cows, and similarly we do not wish our publication to seem sacrosanct. We do not want readers to revere us as a manifestation of Canada's heightened sense of nationality. We want them to relate actively to what we are trying to do, which is to stimulate more and better Canadian books and a growing appreciation of them here and abroad.

To be worth having, the books that Canadians write and publish have to stand comparison with the best of their kind from any country. We intend to measure them by those standards. Our reviewers, however, are not going to be infallible. If writers and publishers care about their books as much as they should do, and if they ever feel that our reviews are unfair or misguided or superficial, then we expect to hear from them. And if what they have to say is pertinent and valid, we guarantee that their views will be published here. Readers too, if they feel that we have been less than just or lacking in perception, can be sure of a hearing, because, as we see it, no one is more entitled to comment on books than the reader who has spent money on them. We would add that our pages are open, not just to response to our reviews and articles but to any comment and information relating to writing and books in Canada.

There is no *WRITE-IN* column in this edition, because as we have explained we do not wish to puff ourselves up with praise (which is not to suggest that we are lacking in gratitude to those of you who took the trouble to encourage us.) In our next edition we intend to bold open at least a page for readers to fill. Something must be wrong with *Books In Canada* if nothing is wrong so write in, and keep us honest. □

VAL CLERY

Myers, like so many people, has developed a sense of humour to insulate himself from the madness around him and to help understand why things are so crazy. This kind of thinking often puts him in lunatic situations. When the Canadian agent for the American publisher of his book found out that he lived in Toronto, he called Myers and asked him if he would come to their semi-annual sales conference to have lunch and to speak to the assembled salesmen and executives about his book. He jumped at the

continued on page 13

THE CANADIAN INDIAN A HISTORY SINCE 1500



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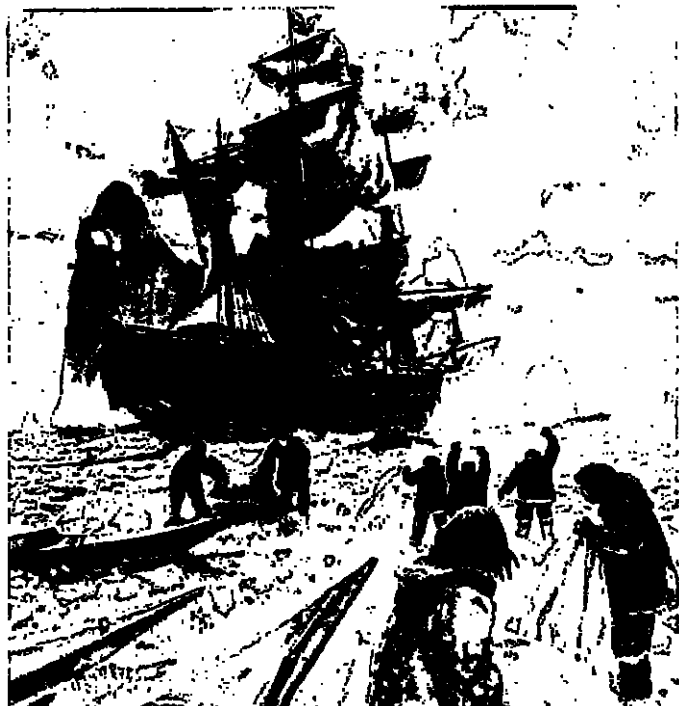
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DAVE GODFREY
new press
392 pages: Cloth \$10.00

FARQUHARSON'S PHYSIQUE

AND WHAT IT DID TO HIS MIND

DAVID KNIGHT
Book Service
478 pages: Cloth \$8.50

reviewed by Michael Levin

Every civilization tends to overestimate the objective orientation of its thought and this tendency is never absent. When we make the mistake of thinking that the Savage is governed solely by organic or economic needs, we forget that he levels the same reproach at us.

Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind

WHY SHOULD Canadian novelists write about African settings? What have Canadians to learn from these novels by Knight and Godfrey and from others by Margaret Laurence set in Africa? Can we learn something about Canada? These novels have been enthusiastically received: Godfrey's for the power and depth of the characters, the sweep and imagination of the writing; Knight's, by Godfrey himself, as the definitive Canadian novel of adultery. But little curiosity is shown in these responses about Africa and the meaning of that environment.

Godfrey slices through the layers of a society ruled by a revolutionary dictator much like Nkrumah's Ghana. The novel is carried on the shifting frame of the protagonists' view of events and on the frame of their relationships much as in reality such intimacy cuts through the politics of new nations. Knight confines us to the expatriate compound of Ibadan University of Nigeria before the Civil War.

Farquharson's Physique reveals his life, marriage, affair and death and his self-discovery through adultery and vain-glorious suicidal courage.

Each develops an outsider's view of Africa. Godfrey has rightly complained that Knight never takes us beyond the expatriate world, the world of foreign white heirs to the colonists' role. Godfrey himself does not take us beyond the small group of his protagonists struggling within themselves, their powerfully drawn dark characters making the revolution and destroying each other. But we have barely a glimpse of the rural and traditional politics of the lost ancestors of the new nation.

The two novels, however, do complement each other completing a picture of West African life that neither reveals alone. Each reveals different aspects of the inevitable roles of outsiders in foreign cultures. Godfrey's *The New Ancestors* reveals the complexity and drama of African society in the post-independence period of rapid and far-reaching social change. Knight's protagonist, Farquharson, never steps out of his Canadian mind even in his fatal intervention in Nigerian politics. His adventures do show us the blinkered isolated existence that a European can pursue in Africa. Ironically Farquharson lives a highly sensitive and self-conscious life but it is the awareness of individualistic personal experience; it ends with the edges of his acquaintanceships.

The last scenes in the book take place at Ikeja airport on the day of the second Nigerian coup of July, 1966, when Ibos were killed in many parts of the country. In the airport Farquharson has finally found his wife who had left him taking their son several days earlier. He has just cleared Immigration for departure and is about to join his wife when he intervenes to save the Ibo Immigration clerk from "Hausamen" soldiers. Even the threatened clerk recognizes the futility of this intrusive gesture and sends him off to his wife, but Farquharson chooses to die uselessly, for a moment delaying an intertribal war. Farquharson throughout the book has been discovering his manliness through adultery, but his mistress is a former student from Toronto. Adventurer! lie has sought

new strength in his personality through new kinds of authority, new kinds of escape, but always in a semi-private environment. Throughout the book we learn how little he understands about Africa. Farquharson never escapes the idea that he can act on this new environment, but he rarely touches it and when he does it is a stereotype he encounters. His protagonist may be limited, but Knight deftly convinces us that he does know his part of Africa, how irrelevant the expatriate presence can be, how the expatriate can isolate himself from the African environment and yet imagine himself acting on it and influencing it.

Nawh! taak i di paas maak; i bi fain plenti. (praise)

GODFREY'S *New Ancestors* are struggling to create meaning from the ideas of the revolution that created the new nation of Lost Coast. Ideals and personal frustration, political organization and idealism, repression and corruption, the "dash" and political prisoners, political self-aggrandizement, self-righteousness and personal salvation conflict and intertwine as we view the Revolution in Lost Coast through the experiences of Godfrey's characters: the Redeemer, in terms of whom life under the Revolution goes on, is increasingly isolated from the people in whose name he leads; Gamaliel Harding, his devoted supporter, perfect in his credentials is murdered in the midst of a mob grown out of a political rally; Michael Burdener, a young English teacher, is driven to revealing the colonial past and its necessary rejection; Ama Awotchi Burdener is caught between her husband's committed but inept political involvements and her family's political punishment and declining fortunes under the Redeemer's displeasure; First Samuels, alienated from the Redeemer but purifying the revolution through insurrection, is the assassin of Gamaliel. Each blends personality, family loyalty and politics. The dark power of Godfrey's writing delivers brilliantly the intensity of commitment that his characters make of their whole persons to the creation of new political environments, of political practice out of ideals.

But what are Canadian novelists seeking in Africa? For Knight it is

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difficult to answer; we can identify with his novel easily and learn a bit about how CUSO volunteers live, but little else. Farquharson's world is that of the man who attracts us to Americans, individualistic, acting out of protestant conscience, seeing his behaviour from sex and fatherhood to politics as a continuous unbroken band of personal expression. But in the end the transfer of personal desires into political action is trivial and fatal. Knight puts the individualistic Canadian into the perfect experimental situation; the bonds of society are loosened just slightly. And, Farquharson in realizing his physique, his potential for heroism, indulges in politics as personal expression. and arranges his own insignificant death. It is the final conceit of the individualist that his political expression is significant. But he dies only because an army lieutenant wants to avoid trouble.

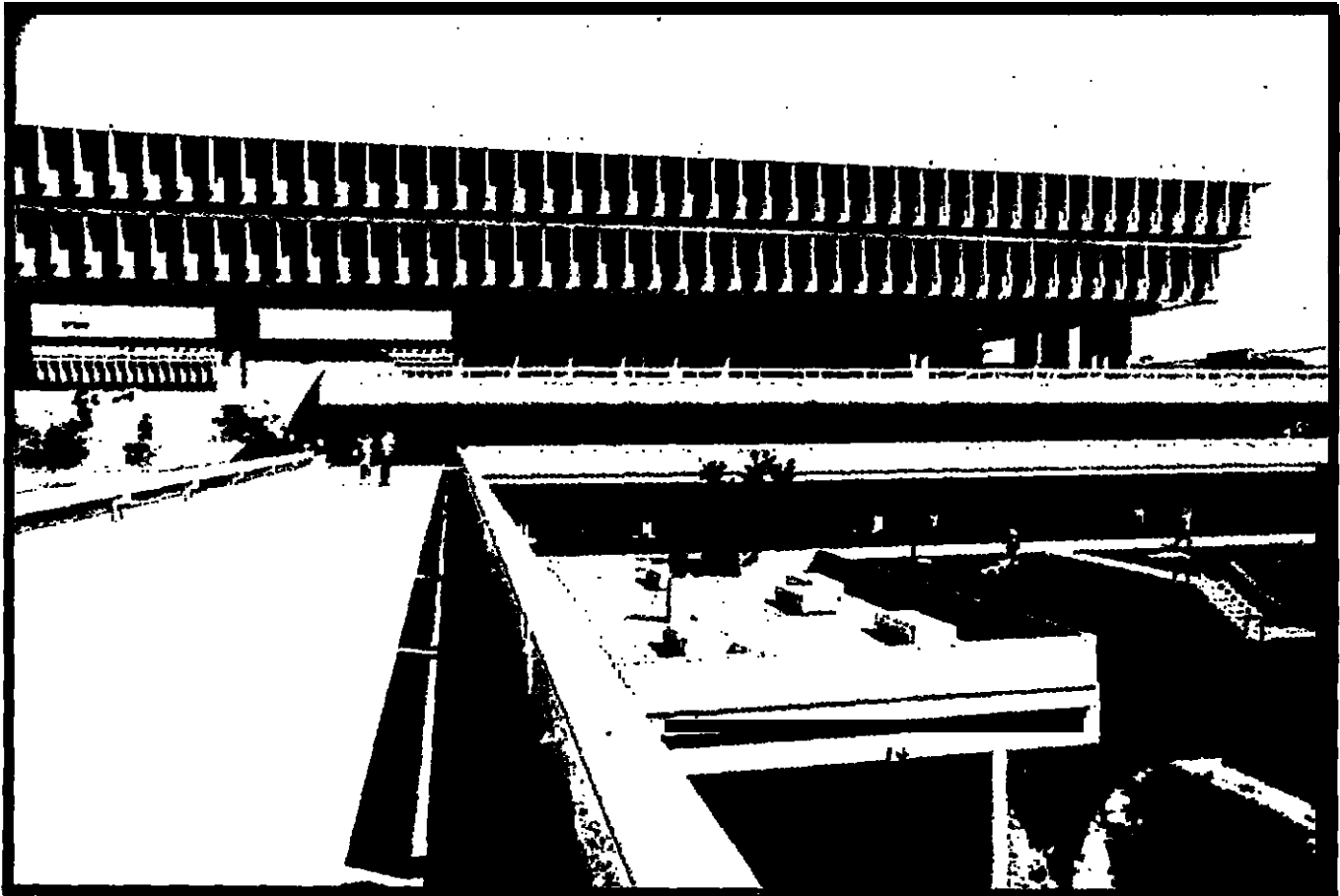
Godfrey has written a powerful, dark novel. His characters are driven, compelled into relationships with each other. The struggles of a post-revolutionary African state are fought out among and are molded by the personal drives of the actors. No discoveries of self, no acting to please, to imitate some inner perfect model, but struggling tortured persons making the revolution and undermining it. driven personalities as committed and as venal as any individualist satisfying his conscience. But Godfrey forces us to see the nature of a nation, the integration of a nation even in conflict over the future. He reminds us that no matter how indifferent one might be to social structure, how free and self-controlled one is, the culture draws us together. our environment draws us in and together. But he leaves us in an ambiguous state about personal expression and the African

revolution. Can we tell if the dark depths of the descendants without ancestors, the revolutionaries, betray and destroy the new politics? Is it the direction— the revolutionary rejection of tradition — that releases the neo-imperial guilt of Burdener, the corruption of Gamaliel in the name of the Redeemer. the isolation of Kruman from the people? Would the Ancestors' traditional politics be less passionate, less destructive. less extreme?

A final note: other reviewers have asked if one of these books is the great Canadian novel. Reject the mockery of that adman's plastic dream, but read them. because Godfrey and Knight are defining the consciousness that will be greatness here in Canada. □

MICHAEL LEVIN is an anthropologist who lived for two years in West Africa.





The Academic quadrangle, Simon Fraser University Burnaby, B.C.

EDIFICE COMPLEX

CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE 1960/70

by CAROL MOORE EDE
Burns and MacEachern
cloth \$25.00. 264 pages

reviewed by Peter Mellen

WHEN I FIRST saw *Canadian Architecture 1960/70* on the bookshelf, I was delighted. At long last a book on contemporary Canadian architecture! But, as I glanced through it, I felt a growing sense of disappointment. Instead of a detailed study of recent architecture, it appeared to be little more than a collection of black and white photographs, with almost no text whatsoever. When I saw the accompanying price tag of \$25.00, I put it back on the shelf and decided to wait until it came out in paperback — which might mean a long wait. Fortunately an invitation to re-

view it allowed a closer look sooner than anticipated.

Canadian Architecture 1960/70 is essentially a photographic study of 24 buildings built in Canada over the past decade. They are neatly divided into categories of Educational, Public, Commercial, Industrial, Religious and Residential. Each building is introduced by a few lucidly written paragraphs showing how the architect faced the problems of site, budget, the nature of the commission, etc. At the end of the book there are brief biographies on each of the eighteen architects. Interestingly

enough, two-thirds of them were born in western Canada. Apart from a lone easterner, the other five are from such diverse countries as Israel, Poland, Greece, Australia and the United States.

The buildings were selected and photographed by Carol Moore Ede, who also wrote the text. In her preface, Miss Ede states her belief that Canadian architecture has moved from the architect's personal expression of an art to a more comprehensive approach to building. She also feels that her selection of buildings reflects a new approach to architecture based on present-day needs. Eager to find if this was true, I looked through the book to see if the examples chosen did show an architecture concerned with human needs. What struck me was how many of the photographs revealed vistas of huge monolithic walls and cold concrete interiors. Memories came back of being in one of these buildings in winter with water dripping down damp, dungeon-like stairwells. Do these masses of exposed concrete really meet our needs for comfort on freezing winter days? I was also surprised to see how

(over)

many of the buildings appeared to be designed for architects rather than the unified approach Miss Ede speaks of. The churches, in particular, seemed to be perfect examples of exhibitionist architecture, if only by the very **seductiveness** of their design.

It soon became apparent that the book was concerned with presenting architecture with a capital "A" — **except** for a rather eccentric pottery studio and a bronze casting shop, which forms a delightful exception. As **striking** and as original as many of the buildings are, they all fit into the traditional pattern of monumental architecture. They are lifted out of their surroundings and presented as isolated monuments — even where far-reaching plans are envisioned, as with Habitat or Scarborough College. No attempt is made to show architecture in relation to a larger environment, or to show less "pun" forms of architecture such as urban renewal projects, public housing, malls, parks, or other types of architecture created to make a more livable environment.

One way of replying to this criticism is to point out that all the buildings shown represent the best known works of the past **decade**. One might even defend the choice by showing how **many have** won Massey Medals, except for the fact that many architects feel this is an outdated award which no longer reflects current trends. In many ways the selection could be described as **very** conservative and conventional. It does **include some** highly innovative works, **such as** Habitat, Scarborough College and Place Bonaventure, but other examples are quite prosaic. What I cannot understand is why buildings such as the National Arts Centre, the Ontario Science Centre, York Square — or even the service station at Malton airport — are not even mentioned.

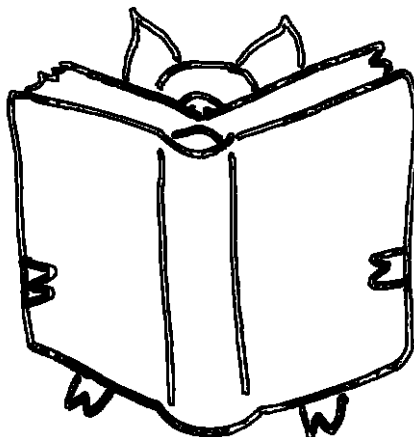
This is my main criticism of the book — that it is not **truly** representative of what has been going on in Canadian architecture **over** the past ten years. The author makes no attempt to justify her selection or to discuss the buildings from a critical point of view. Surely there **could have** been a **more** complete statement, situating Canadian architecture **within** a broader international perspective. Surely an indication could have been given of the past, present and future directions of

Canadian architecture. Perhaps the title of the book led me to expect too much.

What we have then, is a collection of photographs illustrating a **very** personal selection of buildings. The buildings are well documented with **up to** 26 photographs, plans and drawings for each work. Many of the **photographs** are of excellent quality, and with the help of the captions, they give a strong visual impression of each building. However, many of the illustrations are repetitive, some have extremely poor definition, and others are **very "posed,"** giving more attention to the photographs than to the architecture. I would have liked to have **seen more** architectural details, some less obvious views of interior and exterior spaces, and even some "not-so-perfect" views for critical study.

Although I did learn something about a few examples of Canadian architecture, my final impression was of being somewhat cheated — by the deceptive title of the book, by its high cost, by the lack of critical discussion, and by the narrow view of architecture as **isolated monuments**. But until **someone else** comes out with a more comprehensive study, it remains the only book on contemporary architecture in Canada. This in itself is enough **reason** to recommend it, even with its obvious shortcomings. □

PETER MELLEN is Associate Professor of Art History at York University and author of the best-selling *The Group of Seven*. His latest book is *Jean Clouet: Complete Edition of Drawings, Paintings, and Miniatures*.



CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN CANADA



THE WEE FOLK

by MARY ALMA DILLMAN
The Talbot Press, Halifax
paper \$1.95; 67 pages

reviewed by Emma

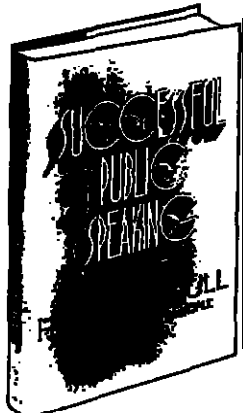
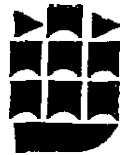
THE WEE FOLK is a book of stories about a very large group of elves living in Nova Scotia, and what it is like being an elf with most things bigger than you are. One story is about an elves' convention at Teaberry Hollow and a human boy who rescues a baby elf called Pinky from floating away from the shore in a picnic basket. In another of the four stories a raven and an old woman save another elf called Danny from drowning in a river.

The author makes very good stories, but the art isn't exciting enough. I would like to see what the artists thought of during the exciting parts. The pictures are pleasant, but not exciting enough. It is different from most books I've seen because the cover is looking at you and not something else. It's a lot more exciting than most English books I've read and a lot more pleasant than most American books I've read because there's too much tighting in them. But it doesn't tell much about Nova Scotia.

I think children from about seven to ten would enjoy reading it, and it would be good to read out loud to children of about five or six. □

EMMA is a nine-year-old writer who attends school in Toronto.

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? WOW!

I AM A SENSATION

G. GOLDBERG and G. WRIGHT
McClelland & Stewart
paperback \$3.95

reviewed by Judith Copithorne

Stretching away on all sides of most peoples' awareness are vistas of uncertainty ... the uncertainties press us down. Some people may ask those same questions, but their lives unfold certainties in spite of them. They are answers. Their lives lapped in richness. look out on fullness ...

THAT IS the beginning of *I am a Sensation*, McClelland and Stewart's new anthology edited by Gerry Goldberg and George Wright.

It is a beautiful book and large too. It has more than 100 contributors (roughly half of them Canadian), an 8½-by-11 Format and 158 pages. The visual appearance of the book is as appealing as the text. The paper is heavy bond and the quality of the reproduction is excellent.

The visual work consists of black and white, high contrast photographs and drawings. Some of the drawings are taken from comic strips — *The Silver Surfer* and *Dr. Strange* — and contain their pertinent metaphysical observations, combined with exquisite

line and powerful Form. IF there is anyone who isn't aware of Marvel Comics this is an excellent introduction. Along with Dr. Strange come the voluptuous etchings and visionary words of William Blake.

As soon as the book arrived my visitors started reading it. One person asked if it were a high school reader and another said that if he had had it as an English text he would have "got into" poetry much more easily. The drawings and photographs have an immediate impact on the reader, drawing attention to the page which then contains other material based on the same central theme.

My first impression on opening *I am a Sensation* was excitement. It has the same chaotic, organic splendour of Fertility which all things have that grow. The book is divided into 11 sections, each indicating some broad aspect of the human condition such as love, war, and our animal identity. Each chapter is prefaced with a hexagram from the *I Ching*. The use of the *I Ching* to indicate complex emotional, social and physical relationships is authoritative and consistent.

Section seven is titled "It has been suggested that learning is primarily a sensory and emotional experience." It contains works by F. R. Scott and Alden Knowlan as well as b.p. nichol's "Prayer" which ends with the words "teach me to be sure." The section on love contains works by Leonard Cohen, P. K. Page and "Fire Garden" by Gwendolyn MacEwen.

Perhaps the strongest section is the one mainly on war. Its hexagram indicates that one's heart should be firm and sure before proceeding. In it you come on Barbara Beidler's incredibly powerful poem about napalm being dropped on a village in Vietnam.



This is a difficult book to consider critically; it covers such a wide range of material. The main problem seems to be to distinguish the Fad from the real impulse, to determine what is genuine and what is used simply to appeal to the public whim of the moment.

There are now also a good many Canadians doing excellent work in these fields. A book similar in content and intent but using all Canadian material, including work from the indigenous cultures, would be a really interesting next step.

Whatever questions there are about *I am a Sensation* it is a positive and creative work. The last section is on prophecy, visions of the future. Its hexagram is the last one in the Book of Changes, before completion. There are a lot of quotes: From Alvin Toffler on *Future Shock*, Marshall McLuhan and The Book of Revelations. It ends with the Russell-Einstein Appeal of July 9, 1955.

"There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal, as human beings to human beings. Remember your humanity and forget the rest." □

JUDITH COPITHORNE is a Vancouver free-lance writer, especially interested in art and all forms of new media. She is a regular contributor to *Artscanada* magazine.



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EPI C STEEL

THE LAST SPIKE

PIERRE BERTON
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$10.00; 478 pages

reviewed by George Woodcock

IF ANY EVENT in Canadian history has the kind of condensed grandeur that makes an epic, it is the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and Pierre Berton may indeed be the man who has most successfully put it into an epic form appropriate to the modern age.

Before such a claim raises the eyebrows of scepticism, let me point out that no epic action ever seemed so to the man who lived through it or to their contemporaries. When King Agamemnon led the thousand ships away from Greece to lay siege to the corsair's stronghold of Troy, he was obviously

reacting to the down-to-earth political imperatives of his time, compounded as they were of tribal pride and piratical rivalries; it was later generations that made the Greek exploits into so strange a combination of truth and fantasy that for long enlightened historians doubted if Agamemnon or Achilles or Hector ever lived or if Troy had even existed. Only the persistence of that great romantic archaeologist Schliemann proved the basic truth of the *Iliad* by digging Troy out of the ground and ending in a desolate valley of Greece the massive citadel from which Agamemnon set forth and to which he returned to the treacherous welcome prepared by his faithless wife Clytemnestra.

The imperatives of state interest made later Greek kings and tyrants encourage the bards who, to make a living, turned the tales of Agamemnon's extremely badly managed military operation (it took him 10 years, exactly as long as it took the CPR to get its charter) into the splendours of the *Iliad*. And if we examine any other of the great epics of the past we usually find that there is a political and probably a national urge behind it all. The epic is the statement in contemporary literary form of the myth in

whose shadow a nation emerges. The *Aeneid* in ancient Rome, the tales of El Cid in Spain, the Song of Roland in France, the *Morte d'Arthur* in Britain—all these (tales) populated with men magnified into heroes who performed superhuman tasks, came into their own at times when rather crude assemblages of peoples were being forged into nations.

Canada today is in that condition. During the past two or three decades we have been going through the process of strain and consolidation that with luck may turn us into the modern equivalent of a nation—hopefully in our case a working federation rather than a nation-state in the old European sense—and we have had to find our epic, as the Americans found theirs in the Civil War. Since we live in a technological age it is the pioneers of our time that we naturally choose as epic heroes; just as iron-age Greeks chose men of the bronze age, so in a post-railway age we choose railway builders. And no story more fits our needs, as the poet E. J. Pratt recognized 20 years ago, than that of the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In *The Last Spike* he turned the story into a poem, and the subject of, the Great Canadian Epic was chosen. But poetry

is no longer the modern epic form; rather it is the reportage or **documentary** in prose. The English-language epic of the Spanish Civil War, for example, is George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*; that of the October Revolution is John Read's *Ten Days that Shook the World*; and both Orwell and Reed were inspired journalists. Perhaps Pierre Berton and his *The Great Railway* are in the same company.

Having suggested such a claim, let me hedge it with qualifications. I am not saying that Berton has written the best history that could be written of the founding of the Canadian Pacific. He is far too involved in his subject to have written the kind of meticulously objective study which modern fashions in historiography demand, even though his facts are unchallengeable and his research had obviously been considerable and thorough; he has not the grand sweep of a Toynbee or even a Creighton that is needed for the other kind of professional history, which amounts to the creation of universal myths. What he does have, remarkably developed, is that instinct of the well-versed and imaginative reporter which is needed to turn bare facts into the fabric of a modern epic. In the whole of the two volumes that comprise *The Great Railway*, perhaps the most significant phrase is one that undoubtedly slipped in half-consciously: "... those illuminating stories of human interest that are the journalist's grist." Berton, of course, is nothing if not a journalist, but he differs from most others in being able to transfer himself into the past and by a great imaginative concentration to be able to treat the facts of that past as if they were happenings today. It is the creation of "stories of human interest" that are so vivid that we can imagine ourselves experiencing them that is one of the techniques of the epic, which always seeks to unite heroic strength with human weakness, and marvellous events with the detail of everyday life.

This is precisely what Berton is doing in his two-volume history of the CPR, and he is even helped by the fact that the railway as our fathers knew it is already becoming part of the past. It is no longer the single and indispensable link that unites our straggling nation;

no more does the wail of its engines mean to solitary men and women that they are not completely alone; indeed, if the CPR had its way now, the rest of us would just forget about it and allow its managers and shareholders to make their profits quietly out of land- and minerals and by any other way than carrying us over the world's most spectacular railway. It is precisely at this point, when institutions or men forget their history, that they recede out of the meaningful present and become fair prey for the epic writer.

The epic intent is even more evident in this second volume of *The Great Railway* than it was in the first, which ended with the final granting of the charter to the Canadian Pacific in 1881 after a decade of complicated and often disgraceful political manoeuvres. During that first volume a great deal of attention had necessarily to be devoted, to those political actions, and it is hard to squeeze much epic grandeur out of Sir John A. or his Liberal adversaries after the climax of their nation-building efforts at Confederation. The epic element in the story of the CPR is brought in by the engineers and surveyors and contractors, and by the thousands of navvies — Caucasian and Chinese — who turned Macdonald's political promise to British Columbia into the physical bond that for two generations kept Canada intact.

Berton gives free and sometimes flamboyant play to their achievements. The political manoeuvres fall into the background. It is the fantastic endurance of the survey teams (many of them literally explorers of unknown country), the enormous technical feat of carrying the railway across the Shield and over the Cordillera, and the great social fact of the CPR as the populator of waste lands and the creator of cities in empty landscapes that forms the vital substance of the present volume of *The Great Railway*.

All epics revolve around a struggle in which the right side eventually wins, and in this case the foe is the land itself (it was an age before environmentalists and eco-philosophers, and the CPR pioneered, among other things, the destruction of much of the Canadian wilderness.) Berton tends to keep the sense of struggle high throughout, just as he streamlines into

grandiose form the myths that surrounded men like Van Home, first general manager and master organizer of the CPR. I am not suggesting that Berton tampers with facts, but he does select and arrange them with a rather baroque imagination, so that his central figures are clearly his heroes (a rather refreshing aberration, actually; in an age obsessed by the anti-hero).



Yet in spite of the high colour and the accelerated prose, which sometimes gives a hectic feeling to events that must have seemed pretty banal in their time, Berton has written not only an entertaining but also a very informative book, full of odd facts and eccentric erudition. His journalistic mind has assured that he never forgets the very profound ways in which the construction of the railway affected the lives of many thousands of ordinary people in the 1880s, and he presents a more thorough account than I have found anywhere else of the way the actual labourers lived and worked; there is a particularly fascinating description of the methods used to push the railway across the prairies at a speed that on one momentous single day exceeded six miles (a feat of railway construction unrivalled since, in spite of our vastly more sophisticated machinery). Berton has lost none of the interest in collective manias which he displayed in his *Klondike*, and he zestfully describes the various land booms that followed the railway across the country. He narrates the story of the second Riel rebellion in a way that persuasively suggests that Van Home was more responsible for the defeat of

continued on next page

FROM THE EDITOR

THE LITERARY image we English Canadians have projected during our first century has been less than prepossessing. And yet today, having reached a proportionate equality with Britain and the United States in the annual number of new titles published, our fame abroad seems to depend largely on a few Canadians in exile — Mordecai Richler, Norman Levine, and Brian Moore — or on such writers as Arthur Hailey and Malcolm Lowry who were only fleetingly Canadian. And yet we do have fine writers and excellent publishers in Canada who deserve to be known abroad.

Our linguistic and economic kinships with the British and the Americans long discouraged the growth of a publishing industry of our own. Abroad our publishers have had to struggle for a corner of a market already well-supplied; at home they have had to struggle against the temptation to engage in the profitable business of importing books rather than the hazardous if worthy business of publishing new Canadian writers. Until recently, only a minority of Canadian published engaged wholeheartedly in either struggle.

But changes have been taking place within Canada which should soon be apparent abroad. A long-delayed sense of national identity, awakened in 1967 by the celebration of our anniversary as a Confederation, brought the realization that our sovereignty was being

EPIC STEEL *continued from page 12b*

the Métis than lack-lustre General Middleton". And he wastes "one of the comedy accompanying the discovery of the mute, through the Rockies and the Selkirks by that outrageous man but brilliant surveyor, Major Rogers.

Major Rogers was an American, and there is an irony about the fact that so many of Berton's heroes — including the formidable Van Home — came from south of the border. It is a little confusing — almost as if Agamemnon had won the Trojan war with Trojan

endangered by foreign (and largely American) take-overs of our economy.

In publishing, this awakened a popular resentment of increasing American control and the sudden growth of a number of small but active Canadian publishers who lobbied the government into a concern over the need to encourage and sustain a book industry of our own.

Books In Canada is a creature of these trends. Already in our brief existence we have been attacked, by Canadians, for our predominant attention to Canadian books. Our answer is that, while we accept the ideal that literature should transcend frontiers, we hear it adopted too often nowadays by those multinationalists whose criterion of literary and educational worth is profitable mass-marketability. Our prime task, as we see it, is to encourage at home a appreciation of Canadian writers and their books. Through this debut at the Frankfurt Book Fair, we seek to encourage a similar appreciation abroad. Necessity has implanted in Canadians the virtue of open-mindedness towards other literatures. We hope that while we give more attention to our own writers we can retain that virtue. And we hope that the world will respond in kind by listening to what we belatedly have to say about ourselves. That would be a proper internationalism.

The Directors of *Books In Canada* gratefully acknowledge the Canadian Government's Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce in distributing this special edition at the Frankfurt Book Fair. □

mercenaries — to find that the feat which was meant to keep us from absorption by the United States was performed so largely by American citizens. It is the kind of salutary lesson that epics should administer. □

GEORGE WOODCOCK, one of Canada's best-known writers and critics, is editor of *Canadian Literature*. He lives and works in British Columbia.

STONING PIERRE.

SHRUG: TRUDEAU IN POWER

WALTER STEWART
new press
cloth 57.95; 288 pages

reviewed by DuBarry Campau

IN THE OPENING chapter of this book, its author Walter Stewart says in part:

"Given his background, the wonder is not that Trudeau has done as badly as he has, but that he has not done worse. He is not, after all, a politician hammered into shape by the bruising and educating scramble up the rungs of power; he is a Montreal snob slung into governance of a nation that many other men have decided was ungovernable. I give him full marks, in the circumstances, for doing his best.

"But measured against the goals Trudeau set himself, and against the normal standards of political judgment in Canada ... I think he has done a bad job and should be replaced.

"The rest of this book is devoted to explaining why."

The explanation includes a most thorough examination of the 3½ years of the Trudeau administration. The War Measures Act., inflation, social welfare, foreign affairs and Canada-U.S. relations are analyzed closely in terms of Trudeau's influence over and attitude toward them.

On balance, Stewart finds Trudeau's record as prime Minister a disastrous one, but he disarmingly concedes him a few constructive achievements, among them the Official Languages Act and the Canada Development Corporation.

However, Stewart points out that "either of these concepts originated with Trudeau or even with members of his Super-Group, as Stewart calls them" in the government and civil service who are closest to the Prime Minister.

In fact, the only quality of Trudeau that Stewart seems to admire unreservedly is his television prowess, which he

considers almost totally responsible for Trudeau's coming to power.

Despite Stewart's admitted -bias against his subject and 'his obvious hope that this book will be used against him in the next election, Stewart has done such an astonishingly careful survey of Trudeau's career as prime minister, and documented in such detail each deleterious point he makes, that it is impossible not to be impressed by the evidence he produces, regardless of one's own political prejudices.

Furthermore, Stewart, with adroit cunning, has written his book in readable, entertaining prose with a breeziness no doubt acquired, if not used, as *Maclean's* Ottawa correspondent.

He himself says he has no doubt but that Trudeau will be voted in again with a substantial majority to back him up in Parliament, but by writing about him as he has, Stewart is giving the electorate an opportunity to evaluate, uphold or disparage the Trudeau administration and to acquire a greater degree of political literacy and intelligent involvement. □

DUBARRY CAMPAU is a well-known Toronto critic and journalist. Her column reviewing current paperback books will soon be appearing regularly, in *Books in Canada*.

SAD STORY OF THE DEATH OF KINGS

KING OF EGYPT, KING OF DREAMS

GWENDOLYN MacEWEN

Macmillan

cloth \$9.95; 287 pages

reviewed by Randall Ware

TO HAVE BEEN born into the late 1940s and early 1950s is to have been delivered into times that cared not for history itself or the lessons it held for the order-seeking intellect. I am 24 years old and have never felt that history had anything much to teach me. This opinion is, I think, fairly representative of my generation and must surely be that of the people maturing after me. Films, happenings, rock concerts are the new history, no history. The electric present replaces the available past. The historical method yields to the hysterical process and no one stops to point out likenesses in these polarities.

Well baby, this may do it to your head, but Gwendolyn MacEwen has written an historical-based-on-the-facts-no-bullshit-but-somechanges novel that not only demonstrates that THEY REALLY WERE A LOT LIKE US! — but also that both history, and the novel itself, can speak movingly and

directly to our 24-frames-per-second cultural nodes.

King of Egypt, *King of Dreams* is the story of Akhenaton, ruler of Egypt from 1367 to 1350 B.C., his rise and demise. A sickly lad who passes his first years not moving from his dark mom, vomiting, feverish, unable to walk properly, and haunted by voices and visions that torment his head from the inside even as his overbearing and power-hungry mother torments it from without. Physically repulsive, yes, and destined to assume the throne when his somewhat aberrant and aggressive father goes to join his ka (transcendental self, spiritual twin) in heaven.

But Akhenaton is a visionary, and having been forged in the separate furies of his parents, he emerges as their mirror opposite. He dissipates, during the course of his reign, the empire that Amenhotep, his father, had so painstakingly grafted (both

senses) onto Egypt. Because he hated war and violence and would neither fight nor defend, many suffered and the empire crumbled. His eye was on the larger pattern.

A knot of reasons propelled him onto the course that is the substance of the novel and the reason for which he is best remembered today. For Akhenaton introduced the concept of monotheism into Egypt and into our lives. Why did he do it? Was it that the welter of different gods, each with his own province, was confusing? Was it perhaps that the people needed new symbol? These could be seen as reasons for the rise of Atonism, but only after the fact. And the fact was that Akhenaton had transformed the terrors dancing inside his head into a quasi-mystical vision of purity that suited his psychology even if it did not produce the goals it implied. The new religion is accepted reluctantly and eventually dies with its creator. We are left looking at a prismatic man; a mystical demagogue, a cross between Hitler and a flower-child, an individual. Akhenaton is known as the first individualist. Indeed, he is a model for what true individualism can represent and a caution for how it adapts to the social jig-saw.

The novel is rich in character and characters. Nefertiti, his wife, drifts in and out of the story but stays with you a long time after it is over. Ay, Akhenaton's father-in-law, is one of touchstones of his life. Philosophical and practical, he illumines Akhenaton's character by contrast. The end of the book is devoted to "The Secret Papyrus of Ay: Circa 1337 B.C." This chapter serves to put the whole book into proper historical perspective and to show what occurred after the death of Akhenaton. Its greatest value, however, is that it gives us Ay's insights into Akhenaton, and help us move toward the definition of a character who is not readily defined.

Gwendolyn MacEwen's prose is admirably suited to her subject matter. One gets the unmistakable feeling that the writing of the book was a slow and painstaking task. The story is written in a straightforward manner, the prose is economical and clean, and we are mercifully spared the miasma of irrelevant historical data that so many



A Collector's Item

national ballet of canada

A Photographic
Interpretation

Amleto Lorenzini, Photographer

The late Igor Stravinsky, who was intensely interested in the National Ballet, wrote the portfolio's dedication.

A magnificent portfolio of photographs of the National Ballet Company of Canada. Printed in Italy, this beautiful collector's item has only now, after four years, been made available in Canada, and will be published in a limited edition of 1,000 numbered copies. Many Canadians thrilled to the enchanting performances by the Company during Centennial year at *Place des Arts* in Montreal and throughout Canada — productions such as *Bayaderka*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Lilac Garden*, *Serenade*, and *Swan Lake*. These however, were the finished product. What about the hard work and long hours of rehearsing — the very real but far less glamorous side of a dancer's life? Present at the rehearsals in St. Lawrence Hall, Toronto, Amleto Lorenzini's brilliant artistry captures the mood of the ballet "behind-the-scene". The resulting collection is an artistic collaboration between the photographer and the printer. Ennio Trevisan, a master craftsman of the Italian printing tradition. Presented in a large, 13¼" x 18½" portfolio case. The 32 black-and-white prints were developed in a "pointillistic" effect that softens the picture, and printed on heavy "fabriano" paper -perfect for individual framing.



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novelists feel compelled to pour upon us. Here, the story's the thing. A useful glossary of Egyptian names and terms is included.

I found *King of Egypt, King of Dreams* to be a moving book. Akhenaton tries to incorporate the god, the beast, and the man into one. The illustration of his attempt can, I believe, teach us more about parts of ourselves than all the Desmond Morris, Lionel Tigers, and Robert Ardrey we can muster. When the intellect fires the imagination, the novel thrives, history becomes redolent with meting, and for a brief time we are transported out of our temporality. □

BI-LINGUA FRANCA

SECOND IMAGE
*Comparative Studies in Quebec/
Canadian Literature*
RONALD SUTHERLAND
new press
cloth \$7.50; 189 pages

reviewed by Howard Roiter

RONALD SUTHERLAND has produced, with his *Second Image*, a fascinating and tantalizing volume. Sutherland teaches comparative Canadian literature at the Université de Sherbrooke, and he has a thorough awareness of Canadian literary production both in English and French. In *Second Image* he tries to delineate the common themes and pre-occupations which are shared by Canada's two literatures. In effect, Sutherland calls them one literature in two forms. His volume, however, reminds this reviewer of Clément Moisan's *L'Age de la littérature canadienne*, a study of comparative Canadian literature which appeared in 1969. Moisan's study was rather weak, filled with facile generalizations and faulty evidence. Almost no serious book-length work had been done in comparative Canadian literary criticism, and Moisan's book was avidly welcomed only because it was a voice

crying in the wilderness — almost the only voice. Sutherland's *Second Image* is much more perceptive and solid than Moisan's superficial observations, but it also leads with the chin and invites attack. Nonetheless, in terms of serious, readable scholarship Sutherland has taken the first step and his pioneering effort should be applauded.

Sutherland finds that both Canadian literatures share a number of common themes: man in harmony with the land and God's cycles of nature, the breakup of old established value systems and the generational tensions and clashes which ensue, and the existential search for truth. It is exhilarating to watch Sutherland oscillate between Ringuet's *Trente Arpentés* and Frederick Philip Grove's *Our Daily Bread* in his attempts to describe the treatment of man and the land. In depicting the contemporary search for truth which emanates from a total existential emptiness, Sutherland, with great agility and knowledge, picks his way through Jacques Godbout's *Le Couteau Sur la Table*, Douglas Le Pan's *The Deserter*, Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers* and Hubert Aquin's *Prochain Episode*. Sutherland's juxtaposition of W. O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind* and Rejean Ducharme's *L'Avalée des Avalés* is expertly done and effectively illustrates Sutherland's point that childhood in both literatures is portrayed as a time of acute misery and conscious suffering.

Sutherland also demonstrates how the two Canadian literatures are permeated by a puritan sensibility, in one case coming from an inbred Calvinism and in the other a die-hard Jansenism. This sensibility has produced several recurring literary themes: a "Saturday-night fling" syndrome, followed by Sunday morning purification, the idea that pleasure is really quite sinful and not to be enjoyed, and the image of "the imperfect priest." Sutherland uses a number of novels to illustrate this Puritan shadow, especially MacLennan's *Each Man's Son* and Roch Carrier's *La Guerre*, Yes Sir! His discussion of the initial reception in the late 1930s of Jean-Charles Harvey's *Les Demi-Civilisés* should be obligatory reading for the middle-aged French-Canadian lovers of "liberté" who crawled out of the woodwork only

when the love of "liberté" became fashionable in the 1960s.

Sutherland also has the courage to denounce the racism of Caron Lionel Groulx's *L'Appel de la Race*. Groulx had badly misguided racist sentiments and subscribed to a type of proto-fascist, biological racial theory. Somebody has to say that the emperor is wearing no clothes, and never wore any clothes, and Sutherland says it well.

Why has Groulx's reputation remained so high in French-Canadian intellectual circles? Why has his influence formed several generations of influential historians who have transmuted the original message but retained certain essential ideas? Here is the rub of the whole matter. Sutherland wants to prove that "It can be safely said ... that French-Canadian and English-Canadian novels of the twentieth century have traced a single basic line of ideological development, creating a whole spectrum of common images, attitudes, and ideas ... There are at the moment no fundamental cultural differences between the two major ethnic groups of Canada ... There does exist a single, common national mystique ... the mysterious apparatus of a single sense of identity."

True, certain common elements co-exist in Canada's two cultures. Sutherland, however, has a socio-political axe to grind ("assuming that we want to preserve this single nation" ... etc.) and he stacks his literary cards heavily in favour of his thesis. Some of his evidence is downright slim, and his generalizations are often facile and unsubstantiated. He often strays into the non-literary (e.g. Quebec cars at 100 mph wrapping themselves around trees) to marshal every available bit of evidence, and links his own undeniable Canadian loyalty to select morsels of prose which support his uni-cultural premise. Prof. Sutherland's emotions as a Canadian often crush his adherence to the objectivity which usually underlies the study of comparative literature.

Prof. Sutherland nowhere explains the fact that Abbé Félix-Antoine Savard's *Ménaud, Maître-Draveur* leaves English Canadian readers utterly cold and disenchanting, whereas French-Canadian literary critics of some eminence and general readers have long accepted it as a "classic." Prof. Suther-

land ignores the fact that the writings of French-Canadian intellectuals about the October crisis reveal a deepening chasm which fundamentally separates them from **English-Canadians**, and this chasm is based on widely differing attitudes to life, death, freedom, and the dignity of individual liberties.

Second Image, however, in spite of Prof. Sutherland's evident over-enthusiasm, must be recognized as a capable pioneering work which **should**, hopefully, **open** a new horizon in comparative **Canadian** literature. □

HOWARD ROITER teaches Canadian Literature at the Université de Montréal.

MARX CHEZ-NOUS

THE HISTORY OF QUEBEC

A Patriote's Handbook
LEANDRE BERGERON
New Canada Press
paper \$1.50; 245 pages

reviewed by Philip Sykes

AT **ONE READING**, you **know** why this **took** hold. **Léandre Bergeron's** little history of Quebec was an instant best seller **there**, a quick success in **English** translation and is even going well in a **comic book version**. The reason is that it provides a whole view., What **desperation** underlay the approval of so many **Québécois** of that scabrous FLQ **communiqué** last fail? And-what **connected last** fall to the events and people of the past — to Duplessis, the **conscription** crisis, Riel and Lord Durham? There are some answers here.

In a time of confusions, the "Patriot & Handbook" is explosive **with** certitude. The **complexities** of 400 years are **"fixed"** in a hard Martian focus. But, **though true** to the guiding dogmas and the **propogandist** tone, this account has none of the staleness of its **genre**. Even such **leader** phrases

as "surplus value" and, "repressive apparatus" lose their **mind-numbing** weight when they are used **with integrity and** precision. The Marxist method works freshly here. **Bergeron uses** it to shatter Quebec's own cherished mythologies. In its harsh light, explorers **turn** to plunderers, heroes and **missionaries** to genocidal rogues. It **reveals** nothing to **comfort** the federalist — one wonders, indeed, if Montreal is not today, as it was one year ago, "in the **trough** of a huge wave preparing to **crash**" — but it does dispel some of the shadowy obscurantism around the discussion of **Quebec's past**.

The author teaches literature at Sir George Williams **University**, but his outlook is light years **from** that of the **now-conventional Parti Québécois** academic who, smugly I think, is **disinclined** to see massive American **ownership** and control as any **menace** to an independent Quebec. **Bergeron**, in **contrast**, separates his history into The French Regime (1534-1759), The English Regime (1760-1919), and The American Regime (1920-?). In plain words — **vigorous** still, despite odd misspellings and coy colloquialisms in **the** English translation — he traces **two lines** of descent in French Canadian nationalism. One **is** romantic — **religious**, or pastoral, inward-looking, a retreat to the **hearth** of the **habitant**. **The other is** revolutionary — its heritage includes the armed **Patriotes** of 1837, the anti-conscription rioters, the journal **Parti Pris** and, by implication, the sympathizers of the FLQ.

It's uncomfortable, of course. One would have liked something more moderate. **But, given** Bergeron's record — **ing** of **blood** and **betrayal**, a case for Fabian reform would not be easily supportable. Here are some threads in **the** author's hard line:

Lord Durham, progenitor of confederation, the governor-general whose report in 1839 led to the union of **Ontario** and Quebec and to responsible government, was a liberal and a "racist despot." Liberalism led him to **recom-** mend responsible government for the **English** colonialists. But his belief in **Anglo-Saxon** superiority demanded a **union that** would **turn** French Canadians, the numerical majority in Durham's time, into a political minority, permanently outvoted by a **combina-**

tion of Ontario and the Quebec English, ripe for assimilation, a process that would "better their condition." They could, in Durham's view, have **the** happy fortune to become **more in-** **dustrious and** more English!

The Asbestos strike, 1949, revealed **the limits** of political democracy.; **"Johns-Manville**, the U.S. capitalist company, exploits the Quebec workers. To continue this exploitation, the company has to use the government it controls by means of the party treasury. It orders the government to put **down** **the** workers. Caretaker Duplessis orders **the** Provincial Police to beat **up the** workers. The cops do their "job"... Here we see plainly how the bourgeois possessor class also possesses **the** state."

Jean Lesage's Quiet Revolution, 1960-66, was impelled by **continental** economic forces: "The role played by the former **Negro-Kings**, Duplessis and the Clergy, **was** not useful enough to our colonizers, **American** and **English-** Canadian capitalists, in the modern system of exploitation. The requirement was **no** longer a **Negro-King** **preaching** hard work and an austere existence, but a Negro-King who could make the **Québécois** believe they had to work hard and live extravagantly... they had to. **consume**, and consume... A new elite was needed, a liberal lay elite who would adopt and preach the **American way of life**, gradually Anglicizing the **Québécois** to make them into 'real' Canadians — second-rate Americans who are submissive **pro-** **ducers** and servile consumers for American **imperialism**. So our **colonizers** supported our small and middle bourgeoisie **morally** and **financially**, concentrating on the **provincial Liberals**. **The party** came to power in 1960..."

It is a partisan and probably a dangerous view. Nonetheless, Bergeron's **record** bristles **with** surprises, original debunking, **unmined** veins of hard truths. And it **is** what **they** are reading in **Que-** **bec—in CEGEPs and Manpower lineups**. It should be **read** in Moose Jaw and Ottawa, too, **read and** understood. It may, on the political scale, **be** a bit late for **that**, but on the scale of history, it is **never too late** to look **truths** in the face. □

PHILIP SYKES, an editorial writer for the Toronto Star, is a student of Quebec politics.

SAW CANADA FIRST

THE DISCOVERERS

An Illustrated History
LESLIE F. HANNON
McClelland & Stewart

cloth \$16.95 until Dec. 31; 260 pages

reviewed by Douglas Marshall

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN the book and the non-book lurks that hippogryph of publishing known as the half-book, often rather desperately subtitled "An Illustrated History." It is a disturbing beast. Faced with a pure-blooded book, a critic at least knows where he's at; the animal is subject to the broad commands of literature. Non-books are even less of a problem; it's merely a matter of determining whether, in the coarse values of the marketplace, the reader is given enough gloss and glitter for his gold. But when a publisher cunningly brings forth a hippogryph, the critic's terms of reference keep swinging dizzily from library shelf to boiler-room floor and back again.

The history illustrated by *The Discoverers* concerns "the seafaring men who first touched the coasts of Canada." I like that word "touched." The poetic compromise between "explored" and "invaded" is the hallmark of the work of a great hippogryph editor.

The Discoverers is not half bad as half-books go. Unfortunately, it's not half good either. (With hippogryphs, critics are constantly forced into litanies.) The main text is an entertaining popular survey of the opening up of Canada from the time-misted forays of almost legendary Vii down to the scientific soundings of that humble humanist, Captain James Cook. Mr. Hannon, a native of New Zealand who admires Canada with a convert's passion, has been more than generous with detail and anecdote. We are treated to insights about everything from the miraculous *annedda tree* that cured Cartier's men of scurvy (it was probably

white cedar) to the sex life of Samuel Champlain (doll, except for an obvious pre-*deliction* for very young girls). Above all, Hannon has the professional writer's ability to bring the scale of his story vividly into focus. Conquest of the northwest passage, he notes, was "still almost too tough a task for the 115,000-ton tanker *Manhattan*, which could have carried Cabdt's *Mathew* at the davits."

And yet there is something disjointed and dissatisfying about the way this survey has been put together. Hannon remains a journalist rather than an historian. His 18 "chapters" are really competent magazine articles hung loosely on a chronological thread. With admirable skill, he has collected and collated prodigious stacks of known facts. wisely, he has let the journals of the discoverers themselves carry the narrative forward as often as possible.



But, more researcher than scholar, he has failed in his attempt to bring a fresh perspective to the oft-told tale. He is too conscientiously objective for his reader's good. He slows the story down by weighing evidence in print when he should have made up his mind before hand. There is no sustaining pattern. Encrusted with excessive decorative data, top-heavy with multiple points of view, Hannon's splendid vassal capsizes into incoherence.

Admittedly, what structure the text did have has largely been sabotaged by the art editors. The book is at once a visual feast and a dog's breakfast. There are some superb four-colour photographs of our eastern approaches by John de Visser (presumably out-takes from the book he did with Farley Mowat) and Don Newlands. The museums, libraries and colleges of two continents have been plundered to

provide an opium-smoker's dream of prints and maps and diagrams and caricatures of kings. There is even, on page 131 of this paragon of half-books, a picture of something that looks very like a hippogryph.

Again, however, the lavish artwork dazzles and confuses where it should illuminate and inform. The eye is asked to wander, without apparent reason, from astrolabe to runic alphabet by way of the South Sea Isles. Portfolios of irrelevancies keep popping up at random (three pages of jolly Rowlandson drawings, for instance) and not even some ingenious outline writing ("The England Captain Cook left behind is . . .") can convince us they belong in a book about Canadian exploration. And there is a perfectly dreadful picture — "one artist's conception" — of poor Henry Hudson being set adrift that can only have scuttled its way into the book during a last-minute crisis.

That lapse is noteworthy, because, generally, this half-book maintains a very high stylistic standard. It is not in any way cheap; money and imagination have been expended on it in professional quantities. It is worth — and one feels this has been costed out down to the last comma — almost exactly the not-quite-exorbitant price (\$16.95 until Dec. 31) that is being asked for it. Even here, though, there has been a curious compromise: magazine-sized and 260 pages thick, the volume is heavy and bulky enough to be awkward to hold, yet, with these demi-tasse dimensions, it has none of the appeal to sheer ostentation that goes with a true coffee-table book.

All told, I can't help thinking both Hannon and the reader would have been better served if *The Discoverers* had either been more of a book or more of a non-book. Conceived as a \$5.95 book, the story would have had a coherent structure imposed on it and become an excellent buy for the average reader. Conceived as a \$25 non-book, it would have lured in those readers who purchase by the square yard. As it is, it will delight illiterate children with its pictures, be dipped into by a few stalwart book-club members, flicked through by subscribers to magazine promotions and then retreat like all hippogryphs into literary extinction. It seems a shame. □

THE SMALL PRESSES

by Randall Ware

PUBLISHING is a responsibility. Not only is it incumbent on publishers to represent minority opinion and unpopular viewpoints, but it is also essential that they work with their authors so that the writer's craft is developed to a point where they are prepared to be introduced to the public. In many cases, people who have had their manuscripts rejected by "major" publishers will publish them on their own. Or, rather than having their egos wounded by a rejection, they will undertake to publish a book privately. Many of these books are valuable. The market for these books may be only 500-1000 copies and so they could not be profitably published by a large publisher. But, one finds an increasing number of privately-printed books that needed a good editor or some pointed marketing advice.

There thoughts were motivated by my reading of *Five Stories* (Jaw Breaker Press, P.O. Box 545, Westmount Station, Westmount 215, Quebec) by Leonard Russo. This 32-page paperback contains five separate pieces which are more vignettes than stories. The stories are short yet fleshed out with detail. The small detail or the inconsequential incident which a good writer seizes on to illuminate the whole is used in these stories but somehow they just do not seem to work. There is no feeling of insight given or of the compressed power of the best short fiction. The most exciting situation take on a Lo-hum, mundane quality.

The National Lampoon (21st Century Communications Corp., New York) has produced in their August issue a supplement & voted to Canada, called *Canada, The Retarded Giant to the North*. It includes typical Canadian jokes, a short course in Canadian history, and a funny story about someone seeing road hockey being played for the first time. The piece, written by Americans I think, is fascinating because it says as much about American attitudes to Canada as it says about how we look at ourselves. The magazine costs 75¢ and should be available on your local newsstand. □

ASSIGNMENT MARTIN MYERS *continued from page 5*

chance and, when the day came, he spoke for fifty minutes. His talk was given a wildly enthusiastic reception. The president of the company took him aside and thanked him for tiring up the salesmen. He then asked Myers if he would mind not staying for lunch, because, if he stayed, his constant exposure to all present would only take the edge off of the enthusiasm everyone was feeling. Myers left.

Martin Myers, the man who moulds his characters into archetypal forms, reminds one of nothing if not of the archetype of the clown. A literary Emmett Kelly, laughing at everything, making everyone else laugh with him, and trying, underneath it all, to drive home an urgent message to those he is entertaining. □

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DI GESTIVE TRACTS

WHERE TO EAT IN CANADA 1971

edited by
ANNE HARDY & SONDR A GOTLIEB
Oberon Press
paper \$2.95: 176 pages

THE EDIBLE WILD

by BBRNDT BERGLUND and
CLARE E. BOLSBY
Pagurian Press
cloth \$6.95: 188 pages

reviewed by Val Clery

*Tell me what you eat and
I'll tell you what you are.*

MEASURED AGAINST this well-worn dictum, one would have to conclude that most Canadians are either lazy or timid. Only the most perverse of us really prefer bad food to good. We know that hidden in most sizable towns is at least one tolerable eating-place. And yet how often do we just swing sheepishly into the tint available drive-in and pretend that eating hamburgers and drinking beer is fun?

Where to Eat in Canada is a "overdue signal of revolt against the Burger Kings and Kentucky Colonels whom we have allowed to impose a Pavlovian serfdom upon our appetites. Although initially it can do little more than map isolated centres of gourmet resistance, it could inflict some damage on the enemy in the long run. Over three decades, the Good Food Guide, on which this book seems to have been modelled, has noticeably humbled the Cod-and-chips-is-off attitude that was common amongst British caterers and undermined the Anglo-Saxon belief that enjoyable eating-out was only slightly less disgusting than public fornication.

Like its prototype, the Canadian guide takes no advertising from restaurants; allows them to buy neither into nor out of its listings; doesn't permit its research eaters to announce themselves or to accept complimentary meals; and invites its readers to contribute comments themselves on restaurants already listed, or unlisted, on tear-out report forms supplied at the back of the book — presumably for

amended and extended future editions. An admirable move towards participatory gastronomy.

As a vagrant eater, I found the reports on widely-scattered restaurants that have fed me were reasonably "ear the mark. I'd be willing to hazard my digestion in the restaurants I don't know on the basis of the assessments of those I do know. The sins of omission seem more numerous than the sins of commission, but that is forgivable in a first edition. And I mean to report two welcome oases discovered in the northern Ontario mining belt, which is generally held to be a Sahara of sustenance.

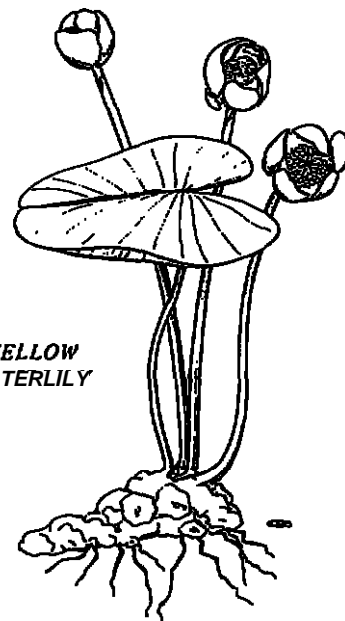
By way of hors d'oeuvre, there is an interesting and well-thought-out preface on the regional variations to be found in menus and décor, and a justified lament at the general neglect by chefs of locally produced fish, fruit and vegetables which should be reprinted and distributed by all provincial ministers of tourism.

Of course quite a few of our larger newspapers have a weekly column on eating out. I don't mean those genteel hacks who are paid to laud certain restaurants in a prose style akin to synthetic cream, but columnists who try to assess the merits of one or two local restaurants every week as objectively as their palates allow. One unhappy effect of such attention is a sudden popularity that so outstrips the capacities of the staff, or so whets the cupidity of the proprietor, that the restaurant's quality is rapidly demolished. There is no way that this can be avoided, and I just hope that this guide does not cause a similar deterioration on a national scale.

Guide books, like restaurants, are too complex to be perfect. Although with appropriate modesty, this guide does not attempt to emulate the star system of Guide Michelin, it has not yet arrived at any formal scale of values. Although it does quote prices here and there in its reports, there is no common and convenient indication of whether prices are high, moderate or low, or whether meals are of good value. What the editors seer" to have arrived at is a nervous and ambiguous use of superlatives. To say that a restaurant is the most classically French in Chinguacousy is to glaze reality in much the same way that the owner might do. Critics must serve their comments plainly and point out that the place is a burger joint trying to better itself.

My most vehement complaint, however, concerns the staffing of Where to

Eat in Canada. Fourteen of the 15 editors listed are women, and the fifteenth is an initialled ambiguity, a sexual disparity that surely lays Oberon Press open to a charge of job discrimination. Men eat out much more than women, and probably understand and appreciate restaurant cooking better because it is largely done for them by men. I hazard that men do eat out so often because the hand that rocks the cradle is not necessarily any great shakes in the kitchen.



YELLOW
WATERLILY

The Edible Wild (published by Paguria Press) is the active equivalent of the passive Oberon guide (which in fact tells you "where to get fed in Canada"). It is the ultimate do-it-yourself book since it tells you how to survive. Its authors — Berndt Berglund and his wife, Clare Bolsby, both experts in wilderness survival — claim it to be "a complete cookbook and guide to edible wild plants in Canada and Eastern North America." And they've done a good enough job to make even me, one of nature's city-dwellers, wish I were more of a wild man.

What immediately impressed me as a cook-book freak was the writing and the layout. The book is crisply organized into sections dealing with Edible Shoots and Leaves, from Black Mustard to Yellow Clover; Edible Roots, Nuts and Seeds; Edible Fruits; Wild Beverages (no, not for Bacchanalian orgies); Tobacco and Sugar Substitutes; and Wild Seasonings. For each plant listed there is a straightforward description of characteristics and appearance, as well as a good "o-nonsense drawing. This is followed in each case by details of how the plant may be used in the

bush -cooked, uncooked, as a garnish for fish and game, or whatever. Cattail, for instance, can provide **firelighters** and bedding as well as sustenance. **Stinging Nettle** can be made **into** strong twine. Many plants have also a medicinal **use**, usually the discovery of Indians, whom the authors very wisely **consulted** on their subject.

To **the** uses of each plant in the bush, there are added some half-dozen recipes for its use **in** home cooking. These again are models of clarity and practicality, and they **seem** to **open** up whole new territories of eating, not just to outdoor and health-food buffs but to anybody **with** an adventurous palate. How would you like to **try Stewed Milkweed Pods with Frog Legs**? Or **Purslane** and **Liver Casserole**? Or **Scalloped Evening Primrose** Roots with Cheese? **Creamed Dandelion Leaves, Chinese Style**? **Boiled Beef and Burdock**? **Chocolate Arrowhead Tuber Cake**? **Here** at last is a rationale for those of us who lazily prefer to let our suburban gardens do their own thing. I'm even tempted to sneak in a few of the more exotic weeds from the countryside.

Apart from information on what you **may eat**, there is **an** excellent and important chapter on what you should avoid-plants like **Jimson Weed**, **Poison Oak**, **Ivy** and **Sumac**, and **Water Hemlock**. **Fungus** is dealt with perhaps too cautiously, but identifying the often delicious **edible** varieties of fungus is tricky and probably deserves a guide more detailed even than **this**, preferably with **colour** plates.

This is a book that could make a transcontinentalhitchhike a more comfortable and satisfying experience, and **could salvage** many hunting and fishing treks into the wilderness from being mere masochistic ego trips. And it **weighs** a lot less than the dead load of **canned** and packaged food with which most campers and trekkers handicap themselves. One **grouch**, however, that I hold against cookbooks generally — that the form of the book negates the practicality of its contents. It is a hard-cover binding, on very absorbent paper that one good rainstorm could recycle **into woodpulp**. **Too bulky for a** pocket, too stiff for easy packing, too **vulnerable** for **the** fireside. Sorely this is a book that really deserves a flexible plasticized binding and water-resistant paper. As it is, it would be safe from damage only **on** a library shelf. Ah, wilderness. □

VAL CLERY

Commonwealth of Stories

FOUR HEMISPHERES

Edited by **W. H. NEW**
Copp Clark
paperback \$4.50, 438 pages

reviewed by **David Helwig**

WHEN I WAS at school in the late Forties, how much of the map was still **coloured** red! I remember the day we all marched to the dusty old town hall for a celebration because Newfoundland had become part of Canada, no longer a separate British colony. We were part of the red on the map — the Empire. The king and queen and the two little princesses were featured players in the family scrapbooks.

Last spring in England, my young Pakistani landlord **who** had been raised in England, educated at Oxford, wrote poetry in English and bought his clothes in the King's Road, told me that he must go back to Pakistan, that **shopkeepers** had been rude to him as never before because of his race, that London no longer seemed the capital of the world to him. That he must go home.

*The Commonwealth is dying,
the Commonwealth is dying,
the Commonwealth is dying
it's very nearly dead.*

Will Ted Heath's smile bring Rhodesia back into the fold? Does anybody care?

Four Hemispheres is a collection of stories from the countries of the Commonwealth. 37 stories by 38 different authors (one written by a team of two), intended presumably for sale as a text book for **courses** in Commonwealth studies. It's an engrossing **collection**, full of variety and energy, and it raises some interesting questions about colonial **experience**. That **means** the experience of most of the world (as colonizer or colonized) **from the seventeenth century on**.

The Commonwealth is. Oat of all, *lingua franca*, that most universal coin-

age. the English language. What in the world, one might ask, should cause Amos **Tutuola** to be writing in the same language as **Lee Kok Liang**? But the whole book is based on the rich unlikelihood of just such things; **much of the global village** speaks with the tongue of our own dear queen, **making** this book possible.

The second point is that there are two Commonwealths, the **white** one and the dark one. the **first** made up of countries like Canada and Australia where the *indigenes* became invisible (if not dead) men, and the second, most clearly exemplified by Africa and India, where the white men, whatever they might do to the native population, could not make them disappear, so that Canadian writers are called Godfrey or Smith while African writers are called **Ngugi** or **Achebe**.

Both the Commonwealths are concerned at times with the bonds of European social and religious values in a new context. This raises the interesting question of how much difference

THE WORLD'S POPULATION:

Problems of Growth

edited by **Quentin Stanford**

This book fills an important need for a non-specialist introduction to the basic elements of the very complex problems of the population explosion. It presents 33 articles and extracts taken from the most recent periodicals and books, together with essays by the editor, grouped in three sections: Part I presents basic information on terms and theories, history and predictions of future growth; Part II considers the roots of the present population crisis in terms of births and deaths, and the implications of present rate of growth; Part III discusses solutions in terms of controlling births and promoting economic development.
480 pp., paper, \$5.95

another Canadian book from

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there is between sex and class anxiety in the colonized, as shown here in Abioseh Nicol's *The Judge's Son* or James Ngugi's *A Meeting in the Dark* and in the colonizers, as in Maurice Duggan's *Along Rideout Road That Summer* or Katherine Mansfield's *At the Bay*.

Canada and Australia have in common with each other the terrifying sense of a hostile land, seen here in Sinclair Ross and Henry Lawson, but it strikes me that this is to some extent a variation of the "White Man in Africa" theme, the problem of a man trying to propitiate gods who don't speak his language. Still, in Ross and Lawson, the land seems mostly abandoned, godless. Dave Godfrey's *The Hard-Headed Collector* is an exploration of the need to find gods for an empty land while Amos Tutuola's *The Treacherous Queen and the King in the Bush of Quietness* is a story wholly indigenous, the gods and kings and

queens embodying themselves in the land and the land in themselves.

Not many of the stories take place in cities. Morley Callaghan's *A Wedding Dress* stands out by its placing in the anonymous metropolis of 20th-century America.

Ruth Praver Jhabvala's *A Loss of Faith* takes place in a large city, but the pressure of city life is altered by the effect of the pressure of Hindu tradition.

Similarly, several of the West Indian stories take place in cities. Port of Spain or even London, but these cities, as seen here, are not Metropolis. In general the West Indian stories have a kind of freedom from the obsessions of the rest of the Commonwealth; there is pain, certainly, but not much neurotic anxiety. I can only speculate that the wide range of racial backgrounds, the tendency to at least some racial mixing and a background of slavery ending early enough to confuse the

simple colonizer/colonized paradigm cause this. but in the stories of George Lamming, V. S. Naipaul and Samuel Selvon, there is a kind of space and light that are remarkable.

But if I had to choose a single story to take with me to a small desert island colony. I would pass over even Patrick White's superb *Down at the Dump* for Margaret Laurence's *The Perfume Sea*. This is a story of such irony and gentleness, such a mixture of comedy and richness, with Africa seen as both home and exile, that it raises the ambiguities of the Commonwealth's existence to the level of perpetual light.

Cod Save the Queen. □

DAVID HELWIG is the editor (with Tom Marshall) of *Fourteen Stories High*, an anthology of new Canadian Stories to be released in September by Oberon Press. Also due in September from Oberon, his first novel, *The Day Before Tomorrow*.

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THE SIX DECADE WAR

THE UNHOLY WAR

DAVID WAINES

Chateau Books
paperback 33.50; 208 pages

THE UNHOLY LAND

A. C. FORREST

McClelland and Stewart
cloth \$6.95; 173 pages

reviewed by Morris Wolfe

IN A RECENT issue of *Commentary*, Nathan Glazer suggests that there has never before been a period of philo-Semitism like that since 1945, and that the massive victory of Israel in the June war of 1967 is bringing this period to an end. If Glazer is right, it may be that it's now becoming possible to consider the Middle East through other than guilt-coloured glasses. Two recent and profoundly disturbing books — David Waines' *The Unholy War: Israel & Palestine 1897-1971* and A. C. Forrest's *The Unholy Land* — attempt to correct the historical imbalance.

Waines is a member of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University. In his carefully documented and effectively understated history, he traces the problem from the late nineteenth century to the death of Nasser in 1970. Although some nineteenth century Jews believed that assimilation was the solution to the anti-Semitism which European Christianity had fostered, others like Pinsker and later Herzl called for the establishment of a Jewish nation. Partly to assuage guilt feelings about anti-Semitism, says Waines, partly because a Zionist presence in the Middle East would protect her own interests — particularly the Suez Canal — Britain supported the Zionist movement. Little thought was given by either the British or the Zionists to the

wishes of the indigenous Palestinian population.

Following the defeat of Turkey in World War I, Britain and France established "spheres of influence" in the "liberated" Arab countries. According to Waines, it now became clear to Palestinian Arabs, despite British assurances to the contrary, that independence would not be granted Palestine until Jews constituted a majority of the population. In the meantime, they realized, Zionists would exercise disproportionate advisory power in a colonial administration. Then as now, those Jews who advocated a bi-national neutral state were ignored.

In 1937 a British commission proposed the partition of Palestine into two sovereign states. Angry Arabs rebelled, and 5,000 were killed by the British troops who quelled the revolt. A revised solution was proposed in 1939 — the establishment of a joint state in which both peoples exercised authority. But, says Waines, events in Germany and the indifference of Canada, Britain and the United States to Jewish refugees forced the Zionists to take matters into their own hands; the results were terrorist acts by the Haganah and large-scale illegal immigration of refugees into Israel. Meanwhile Italy and Germany tried unsuccessfully to woo the Arabs.

In 1947 the United Nations voted for the partition of Palestine. At the end of March, 1948, fearing that the UN resolution might be rescinded, the Haganah took the offensive. On April 12, all 254 inhabitants of Deir Yassin, an Arab village west of Jerusalem, were murdered and their bodies thrown down a well. Other Arabs fled, says Waines, when they were threatened with the same treatment. Despite pleas on their behalf by the Jewish mayor of Haifa, the Arabs of that city were intimidated into leaving. British troops stationed outside Haifa refused Arab requests for protection.

By May 15, 250,000 Arabs were homeless. Waines says that Ben Gurion told his cabinet that no refugees would be allowed to return; he told Time that expansion was essential to accommodate a future population of ten million. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly called for the repatriation of those Arabs who wished to return and the compensation of those who didn't. Israel ignored the resolution and, with the exception of token gestures, has continued to do so.

(over)

heard

GERALD LAMPERT, director of the Creative Writer's Workshop, has just announced that he has formed two literary tours to travel across Canada. The one running from Toronto to Newfoundland will feature Earle Birney, Margaret Atwood, Ralph Gustafson and others. The other, running from Toronto to Victoria, will include Frank Scott, Bill Bissett, Doug Barbour, and Dorothy Livesay. They have been scheduled to read in eighteen universities in October and November. In addition, they will pick up poets on the tour and have them read outside the areas in which they are known. Watch Books in Canada for the schedule of their appearances.

John Robert Colombo, editor of the Tamarack Review and one of Canada's best-known poets, has been assembling a comprehensive volume of Canadian quotations. For the last year, John has spent fifteen minutes a day skimming through Canadian books borrowed from the library and friendly second-hand bookstores, noting quotable phrases and cross-indexing them. A section of the book will be devoted to quotations about Canada uttered by people outside the country, including Adolf Hitler and John Kennedy. The emphasis is on obscure and little known quotations. If you know a tricky Canadian phrase, you may send it to Mr. Colombo via the editors of this magazine.

Austin Clarke, author of *When He Was Free and Young and He Used to Wear Silks*, forthcoming from the House of Anansi, has been signed by the large American publisher Little, Brown. They will publish his novel, Meeting Point, in the spring and a new novel called Storms of Fortune next fall. He is going to be touted as a major author.

David Godfrey, Governor-General's Award winning novelist, and Eldon Garnet, a Toronto poet, have joined forces to form a new press, Press Poreepic. They intend to publish fiction and poetry in hardcovers. Books will be produced in editions of about one thousand. □

By 1966, there were 1.4 million refugees, another 500,000 having been created by the war of 1956. Eighty percent of Israel's land was land that had been abandoned by refugees; it included half of Israel's citrus groves and ten thousand shops and businesses. Waines states that regulations and restrictions of various kinds have made second class citizens of those Arabs who remain in Israel. As well, he says, Israeli officials have called for the curbing of an "unnaturally high birth rate among Arabs" while arguing that Jews should have large families.

A. C. Forrest, editor of *The United Church Observer*, has spent considerable time in the Middle East since 1967. *The Unholy Land* is a summary of what he has learned during this time. Unfortunately, the book is carelessly written and Forrest's argument is weak and infuriating in a number of ways: 1. He doesn't always make his sources clear. He says that **Theodor Herzl originally had proposed** that Jews be converted to Christianity and "suggested seeing the Pope to that end." No source that I've consulted bears Forrest out on this point. 2. He is misleading. Twice he points out that the Egyptians "have reclaimed approximately, the same acreage that Israel has during recent years"; he doesn't make clear that what he means is total acreage, not proportionate acreage. 3. He is gauche. He defends himself against charges of anti-Semitism by saying that some of his best friends are "the leading rabbis of Toronto." 4. He overstates and/or doesn't document his charges. "... The Israelis make the South African whites look like babes in the wood when it comes to practising apartheid," he says, and leaves the comparison at that.

Despite the, above criticisms — and there are others — it's a mistake to dismiss Forrest's book. What I've criticized are the regrettable excesses of a man who has witnessed injustice and who has encountered considerable abuse in his attempts to speak of what he has seen and heard. It's true that his voice is strident. It may be, as often happens, that he's the wrong man trying to do the right thing. Nonetheless, there are charges against Israel in *The Unholy Land* that cannot be dismissed.

Deir Yassin in 1948 is not an isolated example of the inhuman treatment by Israelis of Arab Civilians. Forrest describes the Kafr Qassim affair of October 1956 in which "Israeli soldiers systematically killed 49 Arab villagers

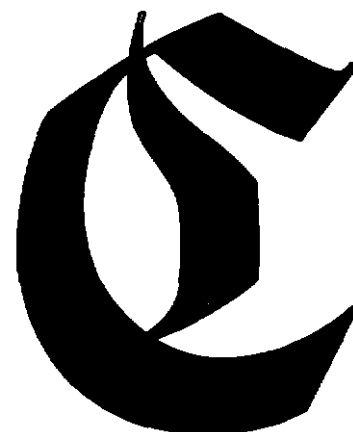
as they returned home in ignorance of a curfew which had been imposed at short notice." (David Waines describes the same incident. According to Waines, the brigadier who gave the original order was found guilty of a "technical error" and fined one piastre.)

Israel, says Forrest, has consistently violated a number of articles of the Geneva Convention, particularly Article 49, which prohibits removing civilians from an area which has come under military occupation and settling one's own people there. He presents a number of examples of such violations. He quotes John Davis, former Commissioner General of UNRWA, who has written that "the extent to which refugees [have been] savagely driven out by the Israelis as a deliberate master-plan has been insufficiently recognized." Forrest echoes Arnold Toynbee when he says that it's "a strange paradox that Israel would refuse to abide by the conventions of international laws which were written as a direct result of the Nazi treatment of the Jews."

Forrest states that Israel used napalm against the Jordanian army in 1967; he says that he has pictures to prove it but that church editors and others have refused to print them. "To condemn napalm in Vietnam is all right," he says. "To report its use by the Israelis is considered anti-Semitic." He suggests that because Mitchell Sharp represents a constituency which has the second highest concentration of Jewish voters in Canada (52%), and because of the general effectiveness of the Israel lobby, it is unlikely that Canada will speak out against Israel's policies or practices.

I had the feeling during much of the time that I was reading Waines and Forrest that there is a great deal more to be told — For example, about the extent to which the Arab-Israeli dispute has become a confrontation by proxy between the US and the USSR, about Arab brutality to Jews and to other Arabs — and that the telling of the Middle East story over the next few years may prove as shattering as the telling of the Vietnam story. □

MORRIS WOLFE lives in Guelph, Ontario, and is a frequent contributor to *Saturday Night* and the *Globe Magazine*.



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OBERON



AN EDITOR REGRETS

YOU MAY **HAVE** seen them on city streets — men or women dressed with shabby **gentility** who walk along groaning deeply, frequently throwing up their hands in a feeble gesture of self-defence mingled with despair. They are not drunks or lunatics defending themselves against imaginary airborne horrors. They are editors merely noticing things around them.

A book editor, you see, is a **man** who has tuned his critical faculties to a high pitch so that he can instantly detect instances of **misuse** of language. Obviously, if he's going to spend his career searching for well-written pieces and then polishing them to what he considers to be perfection — in **terms of clarity, simplicity and accuracy, with** all the niceties of spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax and style duly **observed** — it's both right and necessary that he should have tuned his **faculties to this pitch**. This will produce good books.

But it **will** also make his life almost unbearable. For the real, raw, vital, noisy world outside his dictionary-lined **office** has little time for these niceties, even if it's aware of them. Indeed everyone "out **there**" **seems** determined to flout them; so determined that they will cheerfully interchange "flout" and "flaunt." It's this **kind** of mistake that drives an editor crazy.

"Hopefully" is another. It seems that everyone has given up that particular fight (look up its real meaning). But worse is in store. It seems that we are about to **lose** the splendid word

"regrettably." Whisky advertisements in New York buses are telling passengers that "Regrettably the price of the fare does not allow you to . ." **Meanwhile at least one editor is regrettably thinking** that this advertisement was no doubt written by a copywriter with at least one university degree behind him.

After something like that it's hard to get upset about scribbled price tags in small family stores that advertise "**Potatos**" and "**Cabages**." On a particularly good day an editor can even enjoy this, in the way that he can enjoy the Austrian hotel's **famous promise** to provide "a French widow in **every** bedroom.) **or** the mysterious phrases on menus in Indian restaurants or on the messages found in fortune cookies. But even here knotty editorial problems can arise. **Twice recently my fortune cookie has provided me with the news: "A thrilling time ahead, be on your guard."**

Now this is obviously an entirely different level of editorial problem from the case of the French widow where you simply slap in an extra "**n**." It's the "thrilling" that worries me. I've lost sleep **worrying**, not about the fact that **I'm** supposed to be on my guard, but about what adjective the writer really wanted in place of "**thrilling**."

If a humble fortune cookie can do that to an editor, think of the havoc wreaked on his nervous system by flashing neon signs that tell him about "**Lo Price Donuts Tonight**." Then there are the billboards where the sign painter has decided to **solve** the old problem of the **apostrophe "s"** by putting one in every word that ends in "**s**." So the wincing editor sees: "Coming Attractions! **Toples's** Dancer's!"

There are many, many other examples — if you don't believe me, start **reading** storefront advertising. You'll understand then why a sensitive editor has to be constantly on his guard or, stunned by some commercial **barbarism**, he'll wince himself right off the sidewalk under a bus. Come to think of it, that may be what the fortune cookie meant. But "thrilling"? □

STET

Stet is the pseudonym of the editor of a large publishing house. He wishes to develop his theme in coming issues and would like to hear from our readers about aspects of book editing they would be interested in learning.

Carsh

He makes he *makes*
visible pictorial
what what to
others only others is
sense; only a mood.

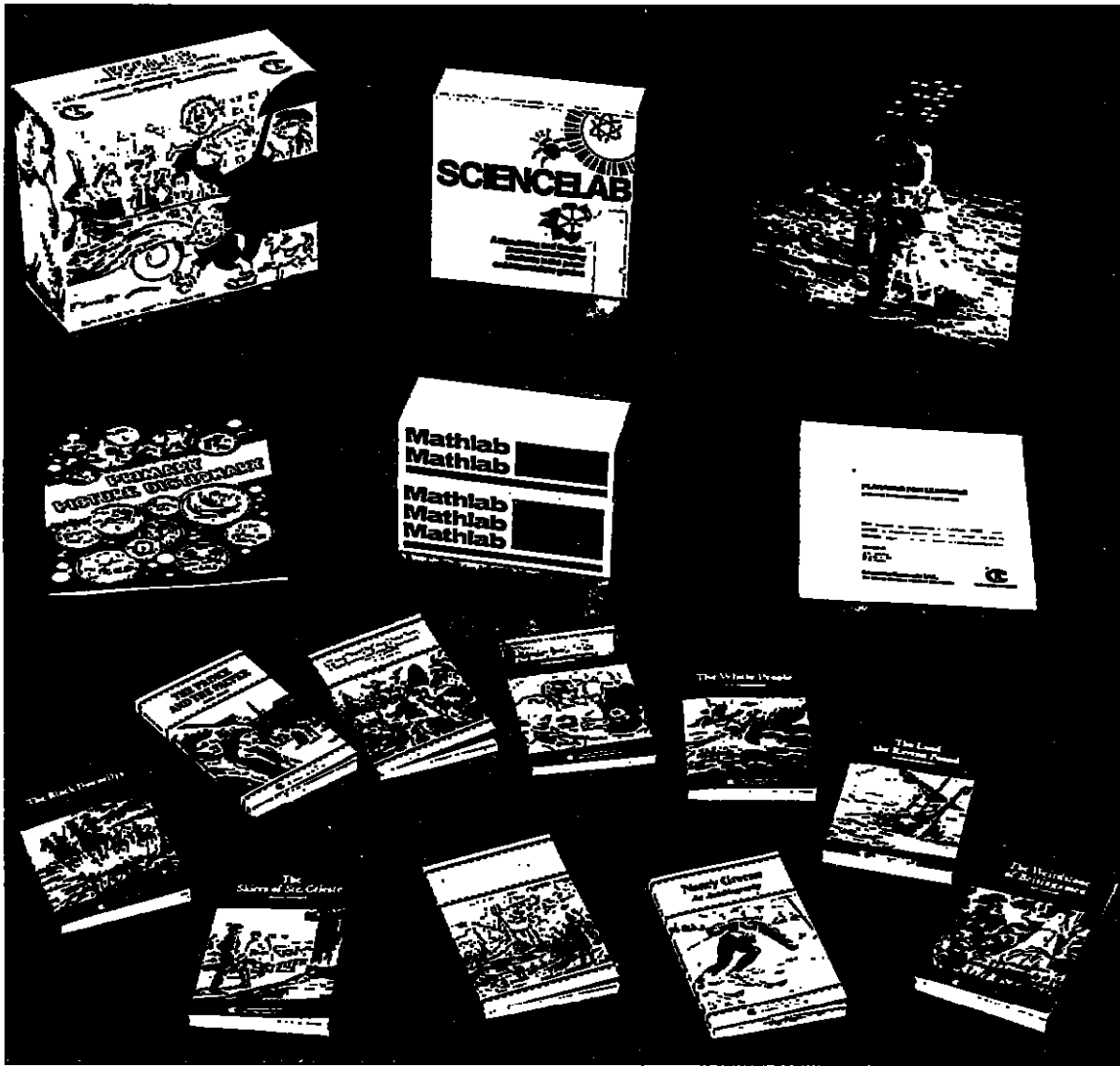
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MARGINALIA

TALES FROM THE MARGIN

by FREDERICK PHILIP GROVE
Ryerson Press
cloth \$7.95: 319 pages

reviewed by Laurie Ricou

FREDERICK PHILIP GROVE stands on society's margin; his is the voice of a man incompletely assimilated, rejecting materialism and mechanism, yet perversely fascinated by them. We sense in Grove that "acute feeling of being at the edge of things," which Millar MacLure suggests is central to the Canadian sensibility. This aspect of Grove is given new emphasis by the title and content of this collection of his short stories.

In *Tales from the Margin* Desmond Pacey has brought together 25 of the 68 Grove stories extant. Bouquets to Pacey for retrieving these stories from inaccessibility and complementing them with a provocative, readable introduction. More compliments to Pacey for the brief notes, textual comments, and comprehensive publication record of the extant stories.

From the margin Grove commands a view of the extremities of the human condition. At the limits of mental stability are the mad Aiph Standish in "The Lumberjack," the pathetically obsessed Mrs. Massinger in "A Poor Defenceless Widow," the grotesqueries of a waning marriage in "The House of Many Eyes," "The Spendthrift," "The Dead-Beat," "Relief," and several other stories concentrate on people living in extreme poverty on the margins of a property-based economy. On the borders of society are the virtual social outcasts in "Riders" and "Glenholm Oils Limited." The frightening precariousness of living at these limits is usually exacerbated by geographic isolation — in small prairie towns, on struggling prairie farms, in the lonely Big Marsh country of Manitoba.

Tales from the Margin, unfortunately, is marginal in other senses less to Grove's credit. It is disappointing to find that Grove is not as good a short story writer as he is a novelist. His success with the short story is very limited; the best in this collection fit

only marginally into the genre of short story. "Saturday Night at the Crossroads," for example, is a sketch emphasizing atmosphere and scene over action. The sensitive depiction of Kalad's store, symbolic of intense human life and love in the midst of threatening wilderness, is reminiscent of *Over Prairie Trails* and *The Turn of the Year*. Grove writes more passionately, more lucidly when grappling with idea and theory in "In Search of Acirema," his allegory of western civilization, than in most of the conventional short stories. "The Desert" is memorable for its essayistic aspect, for Grove's sense of the symbolic possibilities of the prairiescape, which at once ennobles man and reminds him of imminent oblivion:

This bare and apparently cheerless landscape was exalted. When she stood still, she seemed to see and almost to feel how the earth was swinging eastward. The sun was suspended over the edge of the world, hanging over a bottomless abyss into which all living things had to plunge sooner or later — an unknown beyond.

Yet the story is crippled by a wholly sentimental conclusion out of keeping with the dominantly tentative tone.

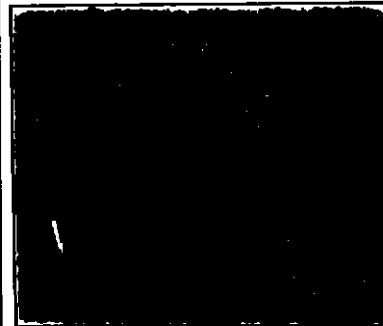
In the short story so much — new perspectives, rich ironies, perplexing paradoxes, complex emotions — depends on the ending. More so than proximity, stylistic lapses, and overly obvious structures, Grove's endings weaken these stories. The reader's imagination is stimulated by the agony of the eternal dreamer in "Water," until the last paragraph destroys all possible speculation. The tone of heartless exploitation in "Salesmanship" is dissipated by an awkward attempt to evoke Marston's slangy indifference. In "The First Day of an Immigrant" Grove imposes on an engaging account of harvest Niels' incongruous reflections on social prejudice.

The margin which Grove and his characters occupy is wide: it is the region where most men live; there is little room left in the middle for the "normal." On the other hand there is a broad expanse beside Callaghan, Ross, Lowry, Munro and Laurence at the centre of the English-Canadian short story. Grove is not likely to occupy that space. □

Laurie Ricou is an English Professor at the University of Lethbridge. He wrote his thesis on "The Prairie Landscape in Canadian Literature."

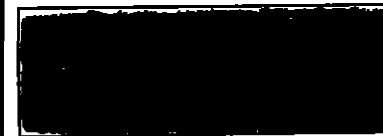
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THE HUNTING DARK

ROBIN SKELTON
McClelland & Stewart
paperback \$2.50; 80 pages

reviewed by *Eldon Garnet*

WHEN A MAN enters the dark, traditionally he enters an underworld of mystery, undefined shapes and shadows. He leaves the definition and clarity of the light for the depth of the darkness. It is for this depth that Robin Skelton hunts.

The door by which he attempts most frequently to enter the recesses of the dark is through memory. The attempt is to move into the past and reveal its hidden meanings. He comes back to events, to personal histories which seem to be slipping through his memory. Here everything physical has changed, "everything is altered but the heart/ I hurt myself with."

Although it is a genteel entry into the past it is not one dominated by the sentimental. A gray feeling hangs over the poems where the past is a mixture of the sentimental and the dark.

*Nostalgia silts the mouth
with smoke and stale beer.*

In his memory there are ruins. There are empty houses crumbling, a girl & ad at thirteen of T.B., a friend's suicide. There are friends now gone, memories covering them "like frost/ hardening the hard clay."

It is through the process of memory that Skelton tries to move toward a centre. "When you can say long ago of your memories," he says, "you have arrived at the centre." It is at the centre that there is softness, that the darkness and the turbulence are dominated by a kind of harmony. As an antidote to the present that seems dominated by coldness he sees an order in a previous time where there was some kind of harmony. So in the cold present he shivers and tries to warm himself with memories, the harmony of what has been.

The coldness of the present takes the form of a subjective inner turbulence. There are touches of the Robert Lowell method; the confessing in poetry of inner suffering. It is the declaration and description of this turbulence which forms Skelton's dark present. But before he can sink too far into a self-pitying world of confessional despair he invariably undercuts himself, applying gentle self-mockery, ridiculing his own problems. He understands his problems are only important to himself:

*Now I bore
others with a turbulence
they cannot share
and I don't wish them to:
the trouble's mine.*

Skelton comes close to indulging in confessional autobiography only to turn around and play as though it has been a ruse, a set-up for a playfulness with the "I." At times he reduces himself to the ridiculous by placing himself beside the grand. He appears on the beach peeling his dry skin while he thinks on Ulysses and the ash-gray smoulders of Troy. The mundane texture of everyday life is exemplified in the comic contrast: the thoughts may be pressing outward, but they are held in the tight confines of actual, everyday life.

He sits writing in a room where:

*presidents never come,
but girls do,
boys, and children.
and the cleaner.*

He writes longing for a depth and a resonance. He searches for this allusive resonance in the past, in memory, and in images from classical sources, but here the soundings are shallow, the resonance is not full. His search in the dark depth of memory is too personal an experience: the chords of a rich sound are not sounded. It is when he combines self-mockery, exemplifying his nothingness, with a search in the darkness of a universal memory that the resonance most often occurs. □

ELDON GARNET is well-known on the Toronto poetry scene. His first book of verse is to be published this fall.

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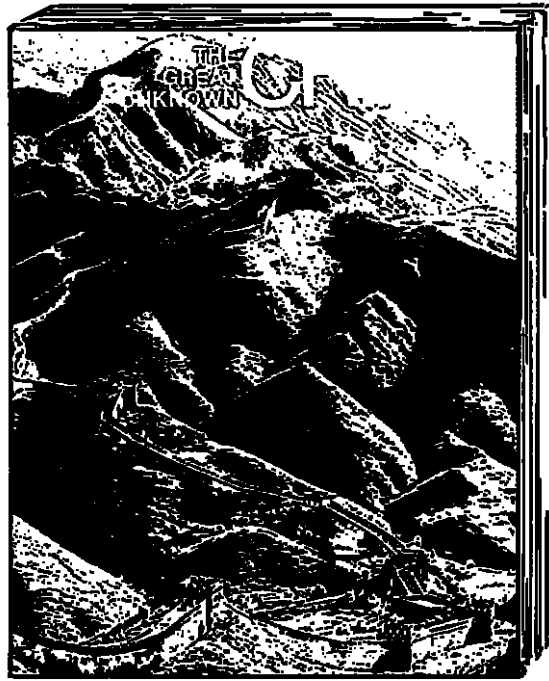
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