

Myths of the North in the Canadian Ethos

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Since the time of Confederation, many Canadians have looked upon their north as a symbol of identity and destiny. Often referred to collectively as the "myth of the north," differing perceptions of the northern wilderness have caused succeeding generations to attach special meaning to the idea of north in relation to national identity. Although most scholars acknowledge the existence of this ideological concept, there are a variety of interpretations as to the origins, make-up and impact of the composite myth. Some claim that there are innate cultural and philosophical roots; others point to European influences during the period of discovery and early colonization; many emphasize geographical and economic factors. Yet regardless of whether these beliefs are endemic or merely adaptations of those held by other societies and cultures, most Canadians believe that the north has somehow imparted a unique quality to the character of the nation. To fully understand the basis of this ideological premise, one must first identify the many lesser myths which gave special meaning to the north and eventually combined to form the vague but all-encompassing core myth.

There are a number of definitions which may be applied to the word "myth." Many believe it to be the antithesis of reality, something imaginary. According to the Oxford dictionary, it is a traditional narrative, embodying popular ideas on natural or social phenomena. By Webster's definition, it may be a story or collection of stories, ostensibly with a historical basis, which serves to explain some phenomenon of nature, or the customs and institutions of a people. Although these definitions imply that a myth is a perception rather than a fact, one Canadian historian recently put forward a convincing argument that fact and interpretation cannot exist independently, that myths are merely "attempts to depict a reality which is not easy to grasp," an inevitable result of man's efforts "to make sense of the world." This premise was derived from the works of Claude Levi-Strauss and other eminent scholars who have attempted to identify the role of myths in the modern world.¹ In essence, a myth can be any story, image or notion which explains something. For Canadians, the "myth of the north" explains how the north has affected the nation's identity and ethos.

From a different perspective, Robert Bringhurst argues that over the years the word "myth" has acquired two meanings diametrically opposed to each other: the one being an ageless truth, the other, a persistent lie.² Yet regardless whether a myth is based on accepted fact or presumed fiction, it is in itself an interpretation derived from an individual's knowledge or bias. More simply, one person's "truth" may, in another's opinion, be a "lie." Thus even if a minority view, a respectable consensus may be sufficient to sustain a myth. However, when two or more are combined to support a broader myth, then the contradictions in the originals will be incorporated into the rationale of the new.

Every society has its own set of myths to explain its origins and character, and while there may be personal connotations to perception and interpretation, it is often the collectivity of similar attitudes that gives a myth credence and strength. The universality of its acceptance may be measured by the degree to which the myth has been incorporated into a nation's cultural framework, as reflected in folk songs and ballads, poetry and prose, art, theatre and dance. Although Canada's pronounced regionalism complicates such assessment, most historians agree that various myths of the north have had, and probably still have, a significant impact on national identity. Just as myths the world over have provided explanations to direct the conscience and understanding of society, so have the myths of the north impacted on the Canadian ethos.

The definition of "north" must also be clarified. In Canada, the term is generally considered in a much broader context than the politically defined Yukon and Northwest Territories, for it is equally applicable to Labrador, northern British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario, as well as the more remote areas of the prairie provinces. Louis-Edmond Hamelin described the concept of "nordicity" as measured by such factors as physical geography, climate, vegetation, isolation, population density, and economic activity.³ Thus in Canada, the north is often referred to as "wilderness," a place beyond southern civilization, agricultural settlement, or urban life. And in terms of size, it is massive. By Hamelin's definition, 70 per cent of Canada's lands and waters are in the north or mid-north.⁴ Hugh Brody, on the other hand, refers to the gradual expansion of the agricultural frontier, with the north on "the other side of the conveniently sliding divide. The 'real' north keeps moving north, but never ceases to exist."⁵ By either definition, the scattered "pocket frontiers" of resource development are "in the north" rather than adjacent to it. Yet the north can also be merely a "state of mind," directly related to one's own experience.

In recent decades, historians have begun to seriously probe the meaning of north in the nation's psyche. Initially, W. L. Morton described the Canadian Shield as an immense heartland affecting the character of the people, their mode of living, and the economy upon which they would depend.⁶ Later he declared that "the comprehensive meaning of Canadian history is to be found where there has been no Canadian history, in the North".⁷ Carl Berger claimed that the influence of the north on Canadian perceptions of identity was derived from the Anglo-Saxon myth which promised future prosperity to a northern country populated with people of northern races.⁸ More recently, Robert Page, wrote that southern attitudes towards the north were a combination of a romantic vision "deeply implanted in the national consciousness" and one of "greed and economic exploitation," and that even today, Canadians have retained "much of the traditional mythology, including its basic split between development goals and idealism."⁹ Conflicting images of north have persisted, causing confusion and debate as to the degree of influence and meaning,¹⁰ but most concede that Canada's north has inspired a sense of national unity by creating an unique identity in an American dominated continent.

Most northern myths were based on images of land and climate that varied according to the cultural traditions of the observers. With qualification owing to overlap, several categories arise: the aesthetic and philosophical images, the frontier or nation-building myths, and the "north as homeland." Over time, European and American perspectives were adapted and integrated into a more truly Canadian outlook: often vague, at times contradictory, and further fragmented by the north's own regionalism. Each of these myths saw the north as a distinct entity, a place beyond the lands settled by the French, British, Americans and Canadians. Most were rooted in first hand experience, then moulded by idealism, regionalism and the cultural baggage of new immigrants, until finally transmitted to future generations through literature, music and art. The myths were often concurrent, some coalesced. All have been cited as part of "our northern heritage," an amorphous, obscure, yet recurrent theme in Canadian nationalism. When viewed as a whole, the "myth of the north" is full of contradictions; when considered in its parts, it has been a source of celebration, pride and promise.

Perhaps the oldest and most enduring perception of the north is one shared by the indigenous peoples long before Europeans set foot on the shores of the western hemisphere. There are many cultures and sub-cultures among the Indian and Inuit of northern Canada, but they share similar attitudes towards the land, derived in part from the long experi-

ence of survival in what many southerners consider a hostile environment. The image of the north as a "homeland" is essentially a southern expression for the intensely spiritual concept of land held by northern natives. To the Inuit, it is called *Nunassiaq*, meaning the beautiful land. Fred Bruemmer, who has lived and travelled extensively in the Arctic, describes the deeper meaning of *Nunassiaq*:

He (an Inuk) was a part of it; it brought him sorrow and it brought him joy, and he lived in harmony with it and its demands, accepting fatalistically, its hardships, exulting in its bounty and beauty.¹¹

Prior to European contact, everything within the Inuit's natural world had a spiritual connotation, a sanctity which must be respected. The infinite space and majestic grandeur of the Arctic "gave northern man a special awe for the might and mystery of the world, impressed upon him his own insignificance, and made him both mystically-inclined and humble." This feeling of impotence was also the basis for the Inuit's belief in shamans to act as "intermediaries between the world of man and the world of the spirits." Any life form or inanimate object which had a sense of permanency was thought to have had a spirit or soul, a belief which explains his profound respect for nature.¹² He was not a separate entity arriving on earth; he was always there, at one with, and a part of the natural world.

The Dene Indians of the Northwest Territories have similar beliefs, perhaps more estranged due to a more prolonged and intensive contact with western man. Significantly, there is no word for wilderness in the Athapaskan dialects. Wherever they travelled, it was simply "home." In the words of one Dene, the land represented "the very spirit of the Dene way of life. From the land came our religion . . . from the land came our life . . . from the land came our powerful medicine . . . from the land came our way of life."¹³ There was also a strong mother image attached to the land and waters, which fed and protected them from adversity. To the Aborigines of the north, their land was never "owned" in the sense of western man. It was always there. Only with the intrusion of strangers who did not understand the bond between man and nature was there a disorientation in the symbiotic balance between humans, animals, plant life, and the earth. There was never an idea of frontier or imperial design. The land belonged to the Creator, and in the Dene expression, only borrowed for their children's children.¹⁴

The first European observations of North America understandably were coloured by national ambitions. For the French in the early 17th century, the prospect of territorial expansion and trade potential was

further enhanced by belief in a "divine mission" to expand Catholic society throughout the world. Most journal entries of this period described vast inhospitable lands, inhabited by savages. By the mid-1700s, however, the missionary zeal had all but disappeared and the fur trade became more important as a means of staking claim to a region than for its economic value to France.¹⁵ By contrast, British interest in the far north was inspired initially by its commercial potential: at first, related to the search for a direct route to the riches of the Orient, and later, because of the profitable exploitation of fur, maritime, and mineral resources in and around the "Great Bay of the North." Thus, when the Hudson's Bay Company was granted a charter in 1670, it was to prevent unnecessary competition in the fur trade, not in expectation that the region had any settlement potential. As described in a recent account, "from the very outset, the whole business of the Company was business, not the dissemination of the British way of life or the proclamation of the gospel of Christ."¹⁶

During the 18th century, both Britain and France anticipated economic benefits from increased mercantile trade with their North American. The British, in particular, were committed to imperial expansion, as reflected in Bishop Berkeley's famous line of 1752, "westward the course of Empire takes its way."¹⁷ Yet most Europeans still perceived the sub-Arctic and Arctic as a cold, mysterious and alien land, inhabited by strange and primitive people. Published journals of the early British polar explorers tended to be factual accounts of access routes, weather conditions and potential resources. The French appeared more interested in overland explorations, especially after reports of British intrusion into the interior. Yet the far north inspired little interest when there were still profits to be made from a lucrative fur trade in the near north. In New France, the songs and tales of *coureurs de bois* conjured up an exciting image of the wilderness compared to the staid reports of Catholic priests. These recalcitrant entrepreneurs were considered of questionable character, despised by the missionaries and distrusted by government officials, but they also represented adventure and challenge. As a result, the colonists acquired conflicting notions about the *pays d'en haut*: the image of a resource-rich but remote, hostile, and godless wilderness, yet at the same time symbolic of excitement and freedom, a place where one could escape from the regulated society of the French regime and make a fortune in furs. The Hudson's Bay Company were content to report only profits and expansion plans. Agricultural settlement in Rupert's land was discouraged lest it destroy the wilderness upon which the fur trade depended.

Following the Conquest, the *voyageurs* hired by the Nor'Westers gave further credence to established fur trade myths. These men toiled endlessly without complaint, proud of their strength and skill, joyous of their freedom and relative independence. Following the amalgamation of the two major rivals, the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, the term "voyageur" was commonly used to describe most participants in the fur trade, portraying a romantic image similar to that of the *coureurs de bois*, "living lives of perilous adventure, gruelling labour and boisterous camaraderie." As a result, the *voyageur* and his canoe became fully integrated into both English and French versions of our cultural heritage and an integral part of the romantic image of the north.

Much of our present knowledge of the fur trade history has come by way of the day books and diaries of fur traders. Their attention to detail and the desire to relate their impressions and emotional experiences have provided succeeding generations of writers and scholars with an authentic mirror on the past. An almost magical connotation was attributed to the *voyageurs* by a former Hudson's Bay employee who described the thrill of hearing the "the wild romantic song" and seeing a brigade of twenty or more canoes rounding a promontory, "half shrouded in the spray that flew from the bright vermilion paddles."¹⁸

Visual images of the northern fur trade have also been faithfully preserved in the dramatic paintings of John Halkett, Frances Hopkins, Arthur Heming and others. Similarly, many French Canadian folktales focused on the tragedies or heroic feats encountered in the north. While the characters and details were original, many plots were adaptations of European fables. The tale of the "Chasse-Galerie" is a classic example, based on the threat of eternal damnation for having sold one's soul to the devil. One French Canadian version describes a flying canoe as having transported lonely men from a remote northern lumber camp to their loved ones in Montreal. Alas, the canoe was sterned by none other than the devil himself, and its eager occupants paid dearly for their escape from the fearful isolation of the northern wilderness.¹⁹ The *voyageur* songs, on the other hand, were quite original. Singing and chanting in time to the dip of the paddles was a means of keeping a steady pace and relieving the monotony of long stretches of lake travel. Yet the message would vary to fit the mood or occasion, sometimes reinforcing the paddlers' quest for freedom and adventure, while ridiculing the life left behind; on the return voyage there would more likely be nostalgic reminders of those back home. Among the favourites were "En Roulant ma Boule," "C'est L'Aviron," and "Youpe Youpe sur la Rivière."²⁰ Thus

in folktales, art, and music, an image of the northern wilderness has been indelibly linked to freedom, adventure and challenge.

Ironically, in the early 1800s the *voyageur* legends had seemingly little effect on the better educated French Canadians, who were perhaps too preoccupied with re-orienting their own society and politics to be overly concerned with images of the north. But they were kept alive in the near north — the Laurentians, Lac St. Jean, Rimouski and the upper Ottawa valley — where isolated lumber camps offered employment to sons of the poorer habitants. Here, the tales and songs of the *coureur de bois* and *voyageur* were added to those of the *forestier* to help while away the long winter nights. The myths that emerged were neither elitist nor intellectual; they were simply perceptions of common folk, passed on in the oral tradition. French Canadian literature, on the other hand, increasingly focused on the agrarian myth and the “civilizing mission,” no doubt influenced by a growing sense of Quebec nationalism and the dominance of the Catholic Church.²¹

Following Confederation, French Canadian politicians and the Catholic hierarchy were only moderately successful in promoting settlement in northern Quebec with their promise that “*notre ouest c’est le nord*”. On the other hand, efforts by mission priests to attract French-speaking settlers to the Northwest were in most cases a dismal failure. The hopes that the French nation could be extended northward and westward was a product of an elitist imagination and not one shared by the vast majority who found little appeal in the idea of an alien land, remote from family and friends.²² Accepting the agrarian myth as the ideological basis for a predominantly rural society, most viewed the near north as a frontier which much be tamed or conquered; the far north attracted only the foolhardy and most daring.²³ As Jack Warwick explained in *The Long Journey*, “the *pays d’en haut* at their best are a state of mind into which the boldest spirits can run to seek their self-completion.”²⁴

While it is clearly evident that the fur trade created one of the first romantic images of the north, there were other myths emerging that would be equally significant. By the early 19th century, the political and industrial revolutions in Europe gave birth to changes in social and intellectual ideas. In Britain, the age of romanticism was accompanied by an increasing fascination with the relationship of mankind to the natural environment. It was the era of Wordsworth and Byron, of Turner and Constable, and other writers, poets, and artists who began to express their perceptions in terms of either the “sublime” which accentuated the mystery and grandeur of nature, or the “picturesque” which denoted a more harmonious relationship between man and nature.²⁵

Thus when British explorers brought home their first hand observations of North America, they were re-interpreted and refined by the old world intellectual community. By the 1830s American painters, such as Thomas Cole, began to use the "sublime" technique, but with emphasis on a hostile, forbidding environment; others including Frederic Church, Albert Bierstadt, and Thomas Moran followed a few decades later, introducing a warmer more inviting interpretation of the landscape. The aesthetic image of wilderness was primarily the perception of an educated elite, preserved, imported, and passed down to succeeding generations of Canadians through countless books and paintings.

In Victorian England, the published journals of fur traders and polar explorers were read by countless youths thirsting for excitement and adventure. By the late 18th and early 19th century, both the "sublime" and the "picturesque" were frequently deployed to give colour and depth to the author's descriptive passages. Alexander Henry, an American-born Northwesterner, used the former technique when he compared a rock slide in the Northwest to "the scene for the warfare of the Titans, or for that of Milton's angels."²⁶ By contrast, Alexander Mackenzie described the northern wilderness in more pastoral terms:

I beheld my people, diminished, as it were to half their size, employed in pitching their tents in a charming meadow, and among the canoes, which, being turned upon their sides, presented their reddened bottoms in contrast with the surrounding verdure.²⁷

The educated English of Upper and Lower Canada also began to write of the northern wilderness: Anna Jameson, Sir John Galt, Major John Richardson, Susanna Moodie, and Catherine Parr Traill among others. But the pioneer image of "north" was usually that of a near north, an image synonymous with hardship and challenge that bore little resemblance to the descriptions of explorers who were awestruck by the immenseness of the landscape. Termed by Gaile McGregor, a "Shaftesbury-Wordsworthian image," nature was described with a focus on the foreground, on the flowers, trees, and woodland paths.²⁸ In most cases, the wilderness beyond was perceived as fearful and hostile, a perception that gave inspiration and substance to Northrup Frye's concept of the "garrison mentality." For most settlers, the polar regions were still very much a place of the imagination, known only to whalers and explorers.

Although the whalers from New England and Scotland had penetrated into Davis Strait by the mid 1700s, the arctic islands themselves were considered of little value, merely an annoying obstacle in the

pursuit of a shorter route to the Orient. Only after Napoleon's defeat and exile did the British Admiralty begin a serious assault on the Arctic. The leaders of these expeditions were seasoned veterans of the Royal Navy; some had been knighted for bravery in sea battle; most were well-educated, of upper class birth; many possessed exceptional literary talents; a surprising number were naturalists: zoologists, geologists, botanists, ornithologists, and ichthyologists all rolled into one. Many of their journals were published, recording in detail their observations and fascination with the Arctic. Attention to the particular in describing the unfamiliar was at times almost obsessive, as exemplified in the diaries of Midshipman Robert Hood in which he described his personal views of the Indians and Inuit, the finite details of plant and wildlife, as well as the solitude, mystery and magnitude of the wilderness landscape.²⁹ The eloquent introspection of Hood and others marked the beginning of a more subjective analytical approach in arctic narratives. According to I. S. MacLaren, a professor of english at the University of Alberta, "the discovery of the North entailed a . . . process of identification that combined human expectation and fact, illusion and empirical reality."³⁰

From 1845 onward, the disappearance of the Franklin expedition added a further dimension to the mystery of the Arctic. Joining the British Admiralty in the search were Danes, Germans and Americans, all publishing accounts of their adventures.³¹ Most employed the "sublime" to its outermost limits. Icebergs grew to gigantic proportions, spewing forth unimaginable colour and sparkle, as did the land and sea. The impression was multi-dimensional. Some authors added even greater depth and colour through expression of their own emotion, as illustrated by the writings of Joseph René Bellot who asked "what pen could describe the thousand sensations experienced by the intellect and heart?"³² Similarly awestruck, the American Elisha Kent Kane wrote of the Arctic as "more dream-like and supernatural than any combination of earthly features. . . . It is a landscape such as Milton or Dante might imagine — inorganic, desolate, mysterious."³³ Others, too numerous to mention, repeated the same message to generations of readers in Europe and North America who relived the experiences and impressions of the Franklin searchers, as if time had wrought no change, as if the frozen wilderness were eternal, forever unaffected by technology or industry. This was indeed a north of the mind, representing challenge, adventure, mystery, enchantment, escape, and solitude.

Long after the Franklin mystery was solved, the magnetic quality of an arctic experience continued to fascinate even the explorers. Hardships were soon forgotten and detailed plans for their return were often made

well before the journey home. As the leader of the Wellman Polar Expedition explained, "the glamour of the Arctics [sic] is cast over every man who visits the region of eternal ice and snow."³⁴ In attempting to explain their inner emotions, polar travellers of the 19th century effectively transformed the north from a geographical location into an emotional experience. The Arctic became the "Ultima Thule".

As the later arctic explorations became increasingly more scientific oriented, journal entries were more instructive and less subjective. Soon there were few mysteries to solve: the North Pole had been reached and the Northwest Passage navigated. Yet the Arctic myth born of British adventure and intellect endured, even though its impact on Canadians was not readily apparent until the nationalist writers and painters of the 20th century began to probe the relationship of mind and place in the search for a unique Canadian identity.

By the 1870s, another myth of the north emerged, one that inspired Anglo-Canadians to new heights of self-confidence and expectation. In the exuberance and celebration of Confederation, patriotic sentiments inspired by the visions of George Brown and John A. Macdonald ran high among Canadians. From the image of a nation stretching from sea to sea grew the idea "that Canada's unique character derived from her northern location, severe winters and heritage of 'northern races',"³⁵ Although the concept was not entirely without precedent, this myth appears to have its roots in a lecture entitled "We are the Northmen of the New World" delivered in 1869 by R. G. Haliburton who was one of the original founders of the Canada First Movement. The social Darwinian concept was adopted and vigorously promoted by the Canada Firsters in hopes of inspiring national unity. Eventually, it became a recurrent theme in Canadian nationalist rhetoric. Exploited fully in the boosterism of the western expansionist movement, it appeared again as the main thesis in Vilhjalmur Stefansson's *The Northward Course of Empire* in 1922, re-emerged with new vigour in the mid-forties as part of a campaign to develop a "New North," was alluded to in Prime Minister Diefenbaker's 1958 "Visions of the North," and later in Richard Rohmer's mid-Canada campaign.³⁶ It was an enduring myth, as was the aesthetic myth of British origin. It was also shamelessly exploited for political purposes, when the original concept was translated into a promise of more immediate prosperity through exploitation of northern resources.

The resource myth was deployed to its fullest in the political propaganda of the western nation-builders. Douglas Owram's study of the expansionist movement concluded that prior to 1900 most Manitobans

sought accelerated settlement and development as a vehicle for provincial and regional imperialism, rather than national benefit. Rapid settlement of the northwest was considered crucial to the dream of Canada becoming the "Britain of the Western World" described in Alexander Morris's *Nova Britannia* published in 1858. Yet the architects of western expansion also incorporated a distinct northern focus into their plans to build major railway connecting Winnipeg to the shores of Hudson Bay. Although the railway promoters stressed the economic advantage to be gained by all Canadians through the exploitation of northern resources, underlying the political rhetoric was the dream that Winnipeg would become the commercial capital of Canada.³⁷

The promotion of northern development was serious business, as seen in the 580 page, gilt-edged, leather-bound volume entitled *Our North Land*, written in 1885 by Charles Tuttle, a prominent member of the western expansionist movement. Based on his experience when he accompanied a government scientific expedition to Hudson Bay, he described the region in minute detail, emphasizing the bountiful resources and the more positive aspects of Arctic topography, the climate, and the indigenous people. The concept of a "north-westerly course of civilization" emerges in the first chapter titled "Attraction of the North". This theme is repeated and expanded to the point of arrogance, with such statements as "the greatest deeds have always been accomplished in high latitudes, because the highest latitudes produce the greatest men."³⁸ Moreover, the reader is continually reminded that exploitation of the north is merely a small part of the nation's great destiny. At one point, Tuttle set down what might best be described as a Canadian nationalist marching song:

Mankind, in all ages, in marching along
The highway of commerce, by mighty and strong
Impulse of progress, invariably throng
A course that leads north-westerly.

'Twas true of the Norseman; 'twas true of the Dane;
'Twas true of the Norman, and the Phoenician,
Also of the Saxon, who came to remain,
With England's gay festivity.

'Twas true of the Pilgrims who built Bunker Hill
And 'tis true of the French at Quebec Citadel,
And Patrick from Cork, who came to instil
A love of his nativity.

The world's march of commerce and science and skill.
In errands of blessing their work to fulfil,
Move in the same course—north-westerly still—
The path of Christianity.³⁹

This vivid example of western boosterism and jingoism concludes with a chapter on the "Growth of Canada and the Imperial Federation." Within this one volume, the original Anglo-Canadian "myth of the north" which stressed the philosophical influence was adroitly transformed into a quasi-American-styled frontier myth which demanded the wilderness be conquered and converted into productive land.

As one might expect, there was little enthusiasm in eastern Canada for a project considered of greater benefit to the West. Ontario and Quebec preferred instead to exploit the mineral and lumber resources of their respective provincial norths. Long after the infrastructures of east-west trade were firmly established, the railway to Hudson Bay was finally completed in 1929, but on a much smaller scale than initially envisioned. One could argue that the northern focus of the western expansion movement was a figment of Manitoban imperialism and its objective to extend the little postage stamp province into one of great size and importance. But in this particular instance, the promise of unexploited northern resources appeared to have a disunifying effect on the country, compared to the more general Darwinian concept of a northern race destined to lead a prosperous nation.

Although reluctant to build the railway, Ottawa did not ignore the possibility of future development in the northern Territories. To this end, a number of surveys and scientific expeditions were conducted from 1876 through to 1910, over and above those sponsored by the special investigation committees of the Senate and House of Commons. As expected, subsequent government reports were quite perfunctory, showing little concern for the aesthetic value of the northern wilderness.⁴⁰ Moreover, actual development was severely limited by the problems of accessibility and high costs of transportation.

Yet another myth of the north was in the formative stages during last half of the 19th century, originating from attitudes in the United States that placed a quite different perspective on the value of wilderness. The frontier myth which viewed land as an object to conquer was increasingly challenged in the published writings of an urban based intellectual community. Just as Canadians had adopted their north as a means of national identification, "wilderness" was declared a symbol of America's uniqueness in the western world.⁴¹ Uninhabited lands were no longer described as fearful or alien, but rather a place of beauty and a psycho-

logical counterbalance to the negative aspects of urban life. Roderick Nash in *Wilderness and the American Mind* argues that this "romantic enthusiasm for wilderness never seriously challenged the aversion in the pioneer mind," but that it did soften the impact. The works of American philosophers such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson added to this interpretation by measuring the value of wilderness in terms of spiritualism and transcendentalism.⁴² It was definitely an urban-inspired idealism, arousing little sympathy among the residents of the frontier — a situation somewhat analogous to the resistance of white northerners to the present day environmental movement.

Once this new perception of wilderness gained general acceptance, it was only a matter of time until concern arose for its preservation. By now the detrimental effects of clear cut lumbering were increasingly apparent in the eastern forests; thus it was not surprising that American foresters, naturalists and the intellectual community subsequently joined forces in a campaign to stem the disappearance of natural wild lands. When the western frontier began to close rapidly toward the end of the century, the conservation movement gained momentum, as reflected in the founding of the Sierra Club in 1892, with transcendentalist John Muir as president. Efforts to preserve large wilderness areas as national parks were accorded the ultimate in political support when President Theodore Roosevelt adopted an active leadership role in the campaign. In his estimation, the preservation of wilderness was necessary to prevent loss of character and manliness through "over-civilization." City life, he claimed, encouraged laziness of body and mind.⁴³

By comparison, the conservation movement which subsequently spread to Canada was more strongly influenced by the proponents of scientific forestry and tourism than by wilderness appreciation enthusiasts.⁴⁴ Accordingly, both Glacier and Banff National Parks were created as tourist attractions, the latter, with its hot springs, was initially promoted as a health spa. As well, provincial parks such as Ontario's Algonquin and Quetico were originally intended to be forest reserves and adapted to recreational use by enterprising bureaucrats.⁴⁵ In J. G. Nelson's view, not only did appreciation of the wilderness develop earlier in the United States, but in Canada "it seemingly appeared only rarely and then usually in the contained and conservative way typical of Canadian reaction to romantic or aesthetic ideas."⁴⁶ The "back-to-nature" ideology developed gradually in Canada,⁴⁷ but without political recognition until the creation of the Conservation Commission in 1909 and the Advisory Board on Wildlife Protection in 1916. As so convincingly argued by Janet Foster in *Working for Wildlife*, the Canadian

movement was not an intellectual or populist phenomenon, but one led by senior civil servants in the interests of forestry and recreation.⁴⁸

In the United States, the wilderness appreciation movement focused their attention on the far north at a much earlier date. By 1890, it was reported that over 5000 American tourists had travelled by steamship to Glacier Bay in Alaska, to enjoy "a wilderness experience."⁴⁹ Others ventured into the Canadian North, some seeking adventure and others hoping to gain scientific knowledge of various wildlife species. Some Americans went on personal expeditions, men such as Frank Russell and Caspar Whitney. They were joined by British adventure seekers: Henry Toke Munn, Warburton Pike and David Hanbury. Following the tradition of arctic explorers, these men also wrote complete narratives of their experiences, describing the hardships, the solitude and the vastness of the landscape, but with more emphasis on wilderness appreciation than earlier raconteurs.⁵⁰ For the most part their travels followed the "quest pattern" adopted by the early polar explorers from the classical tradition set by Prometheus and Jason in Greek mythology.⁵¹ For both the Americans and British, the far North was perceived as a place of adventure and challenge, yet prior to the turn of the century, few Canadians set forth unless it was demanded by their profession.

Canadian apathy toward the far north disappeared in 1896 with the discovery of gold in the Yukon. Roderick Nash argues that the majority of stamperders followed the same quest pattern of the northern adventure-seekers in that most "sought the excitement of wilderness rather than gold. They were not frontiersmen, so much as city folks seeking a frontier experience."⁵² In some cases, the quest motive was fully recognized, prompting one group to christen their hand built scow, *The Argo*.⁵³ Whether American, Canadian or European, they were all caught up in the magic of the gold rush. Vivid descriptions of the landscape, both picturesque and sublime, appeared in all manner of fiction, autobiographical accounts, guide books, poetry, prose, art and photographic collections. Words such as magnetic, majestic, silent, unbelievable, and spiritual were employed with unusual frequency. As a result, the image relayed was one of high adventure, intrigue and mystery, challenge and hardship.

The Klondike literature heralded the Canadian north on the world map, notably through the immortal works of Jack London and Robert Service. The former, a young bank clerk from Scotland, was particularly adept in describing the distinctive lure and magic of the northern wilderness in his immortal "The Spell of the Yukon"

There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting;
 It's luring me on as of old;
 Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting
 So much as just finding the gold.
 It's the great, big broad land 'way up yonder,
 It's the forests where silence has lease;
 It's the beauty that fills me with wonder,
 It's the stillness that fills me with peace.

There's a land where the mountains are nameless,
 And the rivers all run God knows where;
 There are lives that are erring and aimless,
 And deaths that just hang by the hair;
 There are hardships that nobody reckons;
 There are valleys unpeopled and still;
 There's a land—oh, it beckons and beckons,
 And I want to go back,—and I will.

In these sixteen lines, Service captured the magnetism, the quest, the grandeur, the isolation and the awesome spiritual quality of the northern wilderness. For decades, his poems were memorized by school children and even to the present day, they are still recited around the campfires of wilderness canoe trips.

While most gold seekers were caught up in the excitement of the event, a few were critical. Two individuals, the American Dr. Hudson Stuck and Anglican Bishop Bompas, both wrote of the adverse effect on the Indians. From their professional viewpoints; Elihu Stewart, Canadian Superintendent of Forestry, lamented over the denuded forests; whereas William Ogilvie, Commissioner of the Yukon in 1899, referred to two calamities which might befall a nation, "war and the discovery of gold".⁵⁵ Perhaps understandable considering the strength of the American wilderness ideal, it was President McKinley who took the first official action to protect a portion of the Alaskan wilderness from possible abuse by the miners and their camp followers. Acceding to the demands of sportsmen and big game hunters, in 1917 he approved a bill creating Mount McKinley National Park.⁵⁵ There was no comparable concern for the Yukon wilderness. Even game regulations were considered a local matter and left to the territorial government.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the gold rush had brought a more serious political concern to light. Although there was some initial fear that Canadian authority in the Yukon might be challenged by the Americans, Ottawa successfully enforced British law and order with the aid of the Northwest Mounted Police, a handful of government officials, and a company of Royal Canadian Dragoons. The subsequent Alaska boundary dispute,

however, raised a public furore over the issue of sovereign rights. While Canadian claims were tenuous from the start, the aggressive and somewhat arrogant manner in which the Americans handled their case at the tribunal court was strongly resented. Not only were very partial judges selected to represent the United States, but President Roosevelt threatened to use force if American claims were rejected.⁵⁷ There were also rumours that Roosevelt planned to buy Greenland and take over the arctic islands, thus creating a northern flank to advance America's "manifest destiny." The Canadian media responded with outrage, fanning public fears of American intentions; representatives in the House of Commons warned they would go to war if necessary to defend against any American encroachment on sovereign rights.⁵⁸ For the next 40 years, Ottawa's concern about the north was less for its development, than fear lest they lose it.

In terms of political concern for the north, the period from 1900 to 1940 was a somewhat unsettled yet uneventful phase. To effect an appearance of "quasi-occupation", the Arctic Islands Game Preserve was created, arctic patrols were instituted and eventually regularized, scientific explorations continued, and new Mounted Police posts were built in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. A number of books were written by the new government employees in the north, but their descriptions showed little of the subjective emotion expressed by the British explorers or the American adventurers of earlier years.⁵⁹ The issue of northern sovereignty remained a serious concern, although other crises such as labour unrest depression and war claimed higher priority.

After the gold rush subsided, only a few adventure-seekers continued to travel to the far north in search of excitement and fulfilment, but those who did still wrote and published narratives; many conducted lecture tours; a few admitted to being motivated by the Arctic adventure stories read in their youth. Many experienced an emotional disorientation when re-entering the "civilized" world; as described by George Douglas after returning from two years in the Barrrens, "the times had changed, the change in ourselves had no reference to them but made conformity to established usages more than ever, difficult."⁶⁰ Just as the escapades of the *coureurs de bois* represented a refuge from the regulated society of New France, the wilderness adventure was now clearly identified as an escape from urban society. Meanwhile, more and more Canadians acquired new knowledge of their 'northern heritage' by way of the autobiographies, magazine articles and novels written by the twentieth century explorers.

By now, American books and journals extolling the values of a wilderness experience had found their way north of the border into most Canadian homes. The "nature writers" had a definite purpose, described by one such American author as a means of encouraging discovery of "some beautiful and forgotten part of . . . man's own soul."⁶¹ For Americans, wilderness could be found in pockets throughout their land, in New Mexico, northern California, New England and the Everglades. The canoe tradition figured most strongly in the northeastern states, as well as northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. With the possible exception of Maritimers, wilderness meant "north" of everywhere to Canadians. In Gaile McGregor's view, "Canadians embraced enthusiastically a romantic cult of primitivistic wilderness worship" that over time created a deeply ingrained environmental perspective which "still exerts a disproportionate influence on Canadian thinking."⁶²

Following in step with American trends, a number of Canadian authors adopted a similar emphasis on nature and wildlife. Adventures set in wilderness settings quickly gained popularity: the works of P. G. Downes, Arthur Heming and Grey Owl, as well as the unique wild animal stories of C. G. D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton. Canadian magazines continued to carry articles describing northern wilderness experiences, most accompanied by illustrations or photographs. Similarly, advertisements increasingly used pictures of wildlife, canoes, lakes, rocks and pine trees to promote various commercial products or services. Growing popularity of the wilderness ideal also provided the impetus for C. W. Jeffries, Tom Thompson, Emily Carr, and the Group of Seven landscape artists to portray their images of mountains, trees and water as symbols of Canadian nationalist sentiment.

For many Canadians, the wilderness was more than a mental image, since with minimal effort, one could experience it first hand in the "near north." American money built three storey summer hotels, rustic lodges, fishing camps and cottages in Ontario and Quebec's lake country. Canadians followed on their heels, to the Laurentians, the Muskokas, Kawarthas, Temagami, along Georgian Bay, and on through the Lake of the Woods region to the Rockies. The ability to paddle a canoe was considered essential to enjoy a northern vacation, and wilderness canoe tripping inevitably became the ultimate experience in understanding the meaning of Canada. An article appearing in *Rod and Gun* as early as 1915 expressed the sentiment most eloquently.

There is a secret influence at work in the wild places of the North that seems to cast a spell over the men who have once been in them. One can never forget the

lakes of such wonderful beauty, the rivers, peaceful or turbulent, and the quiet portage paths, or the mighty forest of real trees. It is really getting to know Canada, to go where these things are. After having made camps along the water routes, one feels a proud sense of ownership of that part of the country, which must develop into a deeper feeling of patriotism in regard to the whole land.⁶³

By this time the romantic image of “north” had spread into every aspect of the Canadian culture, in much the same way as the appreciation of wilderness was absorbed earlier into the American ethos. Youth camps for both the wealthy and less privileged sprang up in the lake country, providing an opportunity to learn the necessary prerequisites for a wilderness experience: swimming, canoeing, woodcraft, and survival techniques.⁶⁴ They also learned the ways of the Indian, his respect for nature, his legends and rites. New national and provincial parks were created and politicians began to talk more earnestly of the need to preserve wildlife. The message was carried throughout Canada and the United States, in school textbooks, by the Boy Scouts and YMCA, in novels, sermons, hymns and art.⁶⁵

An example of the fervour and moral conviction behind the ideology is found in the 1918 edition of the *Tuxis Boys Manual*. The purpose of the canoe trip was described as not simply to develop a strong physique and moral character, but to see and understand the true meaning of Canada. A “camp log” written by John D. Spence outlined some of the potential benefits:

A brief return to the crudeness of nature; a brief renunciation of the artificiality of business and social life; a brief enjoyment of skies and lakes and rocks and pine trees at their freshest and best. Then, with firmer grip and steadier purpose, back to the work or the waiting, back to the rush and the bustle of the city, to brush shoulders with our fellows in whom we approve the good and censure the selfishness with greater charity because we have been ourselves brought nearer to the trust and truthfulness of our childhood.⁶⁶

Significantly, the conscientious effort to educate the younger generation on the value of the Canada’s north was derived from convictions already held by an adult intellectual elite. To have experienced a wilderness canoe trip was the mark of an educated and enlightened gentleman.

As in the days of the *voyageurs*, once again the romantic image of the north is closely related to the canoe in popular literature, poems and song, whether it be Pauline Johnson’s “The Song My Paddle Sings,” George Marsh’s “The Old Canoe,” or the venerable “Land of the Silver Birch.” Perhaps maudlin by present day standards, “To the North,” appearing in the University of Toronto Songbook seems to sum all it up:

Nor South, nor East, nor golden West,
Can match the Northland's rugged pride,
 The North, the hardy North's the best!
To the North, to the North we go!
To the North, where the pine trees grow.

Then it's ho! for the gleaming paddle;
 And it's ho! for the line and rod,
And the rushing fall, and the pine trees tall,
 And the waters bright and broad,
To the North, to the North we go!
To the North, where the pine trees grow.

In contrast to the fur trade myth, the wilderness myth was a product of both the intellectual elite and the average Canadian.

The Great War appeared to have a sobering effect on those dreams of untold wealth awaiting Canadians in their northern wilderness. Although veteran prospectors still ventured forth, advances in mining technology and the advent of the bush plane gave an added advantage to company ventures backed by greater financial resources. Even the discovery of gold on the shores of Great Slave Lake in 1937 failed to rekindle the enthusiasm of the Klondike years. In the cynical opinion of one long time resident of Yellowknife, "the Dawson rush was like the careering gallop of a wild unbroken stallion, and the Yellowknife rush, like the plodding of a cart horse."⁶⁷ Many still sought instant riches, but the stock market of the 1920s provided more promising prospects, with seemingly less risk and minimal physical effort. When it crashed in the fall of 1929, most Canadians sought stability and security. Canoe trips offered a relatively inexpensive vacation, but only a privileged few could afford extensive time away from work if they were lucky enough to be employed. By the nature of their professions, school teachers and senior academics were among the more fortunate. Meanwhile bush planes were increasing their penetration into the far north, making access less of a challenge and the experience less unique. Similarly, as the near north caught the imagination of urban southerners, the wilderness quality slowly diminished, helped along by a growing number of American tourists.

Still, many Canadians continued to view the canoeing experience as a link to their land and heritage.⁶⁸ As Canadian historian A. R. M. Lower observed after a canoe trip to James Bay,

... only those who have had the experience can know what a sense of physical and spiritual excitement comes to one who turns his face away from men towards

the unknown. In his small way he is doing what the great explorers have done before him, and his elation recaptures theirs.⁶⁹

As such, the northern canoe trip had become more than a holiday; it was a pursuit of one's heritage and as such became a popular pastime among the more intellectually oriented.

By the Second World War, the far north was still a subject of curiosity and still celebrated as an intangible influence on the nation's character — "the true north, strong and free." The bombing of Pearl Harbor, however, transformed the far off romantic image into one of stark reality. In addition to its newly acquired strategic significance, the prolific wartime activities associated with the building of the Alaska Highway, the Canol pipeline, numerous air fields, radar and weather stations brought to light serious concerns related to sovereignty and previous government neglect. By 1943, it was reported that Americans outnumbered the resident population of the two territories. Once alerted, Ottawa took action to ensure that there would be no demands for post-war benefits by compensating the United States for the construction of all permanent facilities. For the time being, at least, the perceived threat to northern sovereignty had been quelled.⁷⁰

Before the war had ended, a number of influential civil servants and private citizens began to pressure Ottawa for major changes in social and economic policies, utilizing all forms of media to publicize their objectives. There was never a formal organization or association, although most were founding members of the Arctic Institute of North America. Their efforts were successful to the extent that within a decade government became the largest single employer in the territorial north.⁷¹ The consequences of their reforms fell far short of expectations. The greater significance here lies in the confusion and contradiction inherent in the message they delivered to the Canadian people.

By all accounts, the arguments and rhetoric employed by the northern promoters of the 1940s appeared to echo the western expansion propaganda of the 1880s. A *Financial Post* headline declared "War Unlocks Our Last Frontier—Canada's Northern Opportunity" and the journalist went on to predict the migration of thousands of young men to a new industrial north. In the same edition, Lt. Col. George Drew, later premier of Ontario, lauded the potential of far north, claiming that "the air could become to Canada what the sea has been to Britain."⁷² Numerous articles appeared in journals and magazines, with repeated reference to "a new north", or "a land of opportunity" and "opening the northern frontier." Yet, there was also a romantic emphasis in some of

the jingoism, as expressed in the title of the *Romance of the Alaska Highway*, or in prose of Lester Pearson's article which spoke of "the unexplored frontier, luring the pathfinder into the unknown."⁷³ Charles Camsell, then Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, wrote of the "lure of the north" as "something inherent in the human heart and the human soul which responds to the appeal of Wilderness." But in the very same article, he also referred to an image of the north comparable to the nationalist rhetoric of the Victorian era:

Just as the map of Canada has for a century been unrolled westward, so now it is northward that "the tide of Empire takes its way." The same racial stock which has carried the flag around the world will also carry it to the farthest north, and we may be sure that they and their sons and daughters will write a record of achievement not unworthy of the race from which they sprang.⁷⁴

Other articles also spoke of destiny and empires. The *Edmonton Bulletin* claimed that the opening of the northwest was "just as important to this age as was the opening of the prairie farmlands to the people forty years ago. . . . An Empire is being born," and *The Times* in London described the Alaska Highway as a "new Northwest Passage."⁷⁵ Quite unconsciously, the lure of the wilderness and the vision of a settled north were being combined into a promise of national identity and modern progress, as part of the war and post-war phase of Canadian nationalism. Despite the obvious contradiction, this message was successful in attracting the attention of a new generation of Canadians to the potential and importance of their north.

Major changes did take place in the northern territories, particularly in the field of social services to the Indians and Inuit. Dr. Hugh L. Keenleyside, a former member of External Affairs and deputy minister in charge of the administration of northern affairs from 1949-1950, was perhaps one of the more enlightened and progressive civil servants of the immediate post-war period.⁷⁶ While social concerns appeared to have higher priority than economic development, Keenleyside was also aware of the intransigent impact of the north in the Canadian conscience. In the stirring conclusion to a convocation address in May 1949, he addressed the concept of freedom in the north in collective terms.

The North has been referred to as the frontier. But the frontier is more than a geographical area; it is a way of life, a habit of mind. As such it plays a most significant role in the national life. . . .

The virtues peculiar to frontier conditions — social and political democracy, independence and self-reliance, freedom in co-operation, hospitality and social responsibility — are virtues of particular importance in national life.

. . . as long as the frontier remains, there will be Canadians who will never succumb to the dogmas of the totalitarian or the power of domestic tyranny. The frontier is a bastion of freedom, and the North is a permanent frontier.⁷⁷

Again, the contradiction and confusion resides in the reference to a frontier which denotes advancement of settlement, and a permanent frontier which implies that there will always be "a place beyond." Not surprisingly, the question of development or non-development of the Arctic has become a topic of contentious debate in more recent years.⁷⁸

Changes in perceptions of the north were inevitable. In the post-war period, particularly, the earlier concept of a northern experience as challenge and character building gave way to the importance of learning skills and safety precautions.⁷⁹ Other interests such as tennis, gymnastics and computer science replaced the traditional woodcraft, canoeing, and nature crafts at summer youth camps. In the near north, modern technology brought new roads, high speed motor boats, hydro, television, and eventually the telephone. With increasing urbanization, the natural world retreated further and further north. Eventually a deep wilderness encounter became a costly endeavour, but one still sought by many intellectual elite.

The concept of "north as homeland" was brought to the attention of southerners by the Hon. Justice Thomas Berger in his report on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, and his words struck the conscience of many Canadians when he warned that "the future of Canada is a matter of importance to us all. What happens here will tell us something about what kind of country Canada is, what kind of people we are."⁸⁰ After 1977, the native rights movement in northern Canada became inextricably intertwined with the environmental movement, a fact that aided in temporarily halting some mega-projects and slowing the pace of others.

The debate continues between the developers and the environmentalists, and there is even disagreement between some environmentalists and the more radical ecological philosophers who would advocate non-development of the remaining northern wilderness areas.⁸¹ Similarly, the concept of wilderness as a means of escaping the ills of urban society has been a topic of increasing study by the social scientists in the past few decades, perhaps with much greater concern in light of the accelerating advance of industrialization into the far north. The noted Canadian author, Wayland Drew, wrote that "only in wilderness is it possible to escape this tyranny."⁸² On the other hand, historian John Wadland laments that many Canadians see the wilderness only as "a detached,

ambiguous and ultimately a romantic space we 'escape' to," rather than one existing for its own value.⁸³ Ultimately in Canada, true wilderness gradually became equated with the far north, as people and industry slowly moved into the few unsettled lands remaining in the southern regions. Yet to those who have travelled extensively in the Arctic and sub-Arctic, even here the wilderness is being eroded by man and industry, and the process is not leisurely. In each myth, the north is measured in terms of value. In the romantic myth of British origin, the aesthetic and spiritual quality was the dominant feature. The fur trade myths envisioned profit, adventure and challenge in the *pays d'en haut*. The pioneers viewed the adjacent unsettled lands in terms of agricultural and resource potential, but were quite fearful of the remoteness and immenseness of the far north; the Anglo-Canadian nation-builders saw the north as both a philosophical influence and a promise of future prosperity; the western expansionists adopted the frontier concept of resource exploitation; the Americans believed the wilderness must be preserved as part of their heritage. To the indigenous peoples, the north was their homeland and the very essence of their being.

Each myth has had its period of ascendancy. Some have been moulded into a distinctly Canadian mosaic, abstract yet revered. The British aesthetic myth blended with the American wilderness myth to reinforce a romantic image of north as expressed first in literature and art, then incorporated into the environmental movement of the 1970s. The French Canadian myths are more complex, yet the primary thrust involves adventure, alienation and promise of resource wealth, perhaps not too dissimilar to the contradictions inherent in the challenge of American frontier or in the pioneering spirit of early Upper Canadians. Certainly a version of the resource myth is still actively promoted by the multinational oil companies, completely and irreconcilably at odds with the wilderness myths. Meanwhile, the spiritual-orientation of the north as homeland has only just begun to impact on the southern conscience. Overriding all the variants is the "core" myth, with an enduring quality that suggests the vast wilderness regions still impart a distinct character to the Canadian nation, its people, and its institutions. As such, the "myth of the north" with all its inherent contradictions continues to explain the intangible meaning of north in the Canadian ethos.

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NOTES

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- ² Robert Bringham, "Myths Create a World of Meaning," *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto: 7 May 1988).
- ³ Louis-Edmond Hamelin, *Canadian Nordicity: It's Your North, Too*. English edition (Montreal: Harvest House, 1978) 15-46.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 30 and 41.
- ⁵ Hugh Brody, *Maps and Dreams*. (Markham: Pelican Books, 1983) 57.
- ⁶ W. L. Morton, *The Canadian Identity*, 2nd edition. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1972) 93.
- ⁷ W. L. Morton, "The 'North' in Canadian Historiography", in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Series IV, Volume VIII* (1970) 40.
- ⁸ Carl Berger, "The True North, Strong and Free . . .", in Peter Russell (ed.), *Nationalism in Canada*. (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson, 1966) 5.
- ⁹ Robert Page, *Northern Development: The Canadian Dilemma*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986) 2 and 23.
- ¹⁰ Bruce Hodgins, "The Canadian North: Conflicting Images, Conflicting Historiography" in *Voyageur: Collected papers and Proceedings of the Work-in-Progress Colloquium, 1979-1980* (Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario.).
- ¹¹ Fred Bruemmer, *The Arctic*. (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1974) 208.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 218. See also *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English*, ed. Penny Petrone (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 202-203
- ¹³ The words of George Blondin, as quoted in *Denendeh: a Dene Celebration*. (Yellowknife, NWT: The Dene Association, 1984) 93.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7-17.
- ¹⁵ John Webster Grant, *The Moon in Wintertime*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984) 63. See also W. J. Eccles, "The Fur Trade and Eighteenth-Century Imperialism" in *William and Mary Quarterly*, Series 3, 40:3 (July 1983) 362.
- ¹⁶ Peter C. Newman, *Company of Adventurers*. (Toronto: Viking Press, 1985) 89-90.
- ¹⁷ George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." (London: 1972)
- ¹⁸ As quoted from R. M. Ballantyne, *Hudson Bay* (London, 1879) in Eric Morse, *Fur Trade Routes of Canada/Then and Now* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2nd edition, reprint 1984) 110.
- ¹⁹ Edith Fowke, *Folktales of French Canada*, (Toronto: NC Press, 1982) 77 and 116-124. Other folktales are found in Joseph-Charles Tache's *Forestiers et Voyageurs*, originally published in 1884 and reprinted by Fides in Montreal, 1946.
- ²⁰ Eric Morse, *Fur Trade Routes of Canada: Then and Now*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press) 13.
- ²¹ Jack Warwick, *The Long Journey: Literary Themes of French Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968) 19-33. Also see Edith Fowke and Richard Johnston, eds., *Folk Songs of Quebec*. (Waterloo: Waterloo Music Company, 1957); and Edith Fowke, *Folktales of French Canada*. (Toronto: NC Press, 1982).

- ²² Christian Morissonneau, *La Terre promise: le mythe du Nord quebécois*. (Montreal: Hurtubise, 1978). Also see A. I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 218-243.
- ²³ Gaile McGregor in the *Wacousta Syndrome* argues that a hostile image of wilderness was inadvertently reinforced by the *voyageur* legends. Although based on speculation rather than substantiation, McGregor claims that "linked as he was with subversion and irreligion, the *voyageur's* [sic] real and symbolic links with nature could only help make the wilderness seem more, rather than less, threatening, if not in physical then certainly in spiritual terms." Gaile McGregor, *The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Landscape*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) 63.
- ²⁴ Warwick, 163.
- ²⁵ I. S. MacLaren, "The Aesthetic Map of the North, 1845-1859," *Arctic*, 38:2 (June 1985) 89-90.
- ²⁶ Alexander Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*. (New York: 1809) 336.
- ²⁷ Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Lawrence, through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, 1789 and 1793*. (London, 1801) 20.
- ²⁸ McGregor, *The Wacousta Syndrome*, 42.
- ²⁹ Stuart Houston (ed.), *To the Arctic by Canoe, 1819-1821: The Diaries of Midshipman Robert Hood*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1972).
- ³⁰ MacLaren, 89.
- ³¹ See Hugh Wallace, *The Navy, The Company and Richard King: British Exploration in the Canadian Arctic, 1829-1860*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980).
- ³² *Ibid.*, 98.
- ³³ As quoted in Bruemmer, 67.
- ³⁴ Walter Wellman, "A Dash for the North Pole," *Fram*, 1:2 (Summer 1984) 728. The article was originally published in *The National Magazine*, 6:6 (September 1897) 485-92.
- ³⁵ Carl Berger, "True North, strong and free . . .", 5. See also Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).
- ³⁶ Richard Rohmer, *Essays on Mid-Canada*. (Toronto: 1970), and his *The Arctic Imperative*. (Toronto, 1973).
- ³⁷ Doug Owsram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).
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- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 111.
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- ⁴¹ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 3rd edition, 1982) 67.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 67-95.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 150. For the complete story see 96-237.
- ⁴⁴ Peter Gillis, "The Ottawa Lumber Barons and the Conservation Movement, 1880-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, IX (February 1974).
- ⁴⁵ J. G. Nelson, "Canada's National Parks: Past, Present and Future," and K. Morrison, "The Evolution of the Ontario Provincial Park System," both in Geoffrey Wall and John Marsh (eds.), *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its Evolution in Canada* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982) 43-45 and 102-107 respectively.
- ⁴⁶ Nelson, "Canada's National Parks," 45.

- 47 G. Altmeyer, "Three ideas of nature in Canada, 1893-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 11 (1976) 21.
- 48 Janet Foster, *Working for Wildlife*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978) 220-223.
- 49 Nash, 281-282.
- 50 Margaret Hobbs, "Purposeful Wanderers: Nineteenth Century Travellers to the Barren Lands," in *Nastaugan*, eds. Bruce Hodgins and Margaret Hobbs. (Agincourt, Ontario: Betelgeuse, 1985) 57-79.
- 51 William James, professor of religion at Queen's University, relates the quest pattern to canoe trip adventures in the Canadian Shield, where the actor sets off to unknown mysterious lands, overcomes numerous trials and tribulations, and returns wiser, changed and in some cases experiences a spiritual rebirth. The pattern was first identified by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York, 1956). See William C. James, "The Quest Pattern and the Canoe Trip" in *Nastaugan*, 9-10.
- 52 Nash, 284-5.
- 53 W. N. Robertson, *Yukon Memories* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Company, 1930) 5.
- 54 See H. Cody, *An Apostle of the North: Memoirs of Bishop W. C. Bompas*. (Toronto: Musson, 1908); William Ogilvie, *Early Days on the Yukon*. (London: John Lane, 1913) 177; Hudson Stuck, *Voyages on the Yukon and its Tributaries*. (New York: Scribner's 1917); and Elihu Stewart, *Down the Mackenzie and Up the Yukon in 1906*. (London: John Lane, 1913).
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- 67 Ray Price, *Yellowknife*. (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1967).

- ⁶⁸ See James Benidickson, "'Idleness, Water and a Canoe': Canadian Recreational Paddling Between the Wars," 163-187, and Bruce Hodgins, "The Lure of the Temagami Based Canoe Trip," 189-202. Both articles found in *Nastawgan*.
- ⁶⁹ A. R. M. Lower, *Unconventional Voyages*. (Toronto: 1953) 24.
- ⁷⁰ For more details of the WW II period, see Shelagh D. Grant, *Sovereignty or Security? Government Policy in the Canadian North, 1936-1950*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988).
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- ⁷⁵ As reported in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, 23 June 1943, and *The Times* 5 July 1943.
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- ⁷⁸ As an example, see John Livingston, "Introduction to the Arctic Debate," in *Arctic Oil: Destruction of the North?* (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1981) 13-20.
- ⁷⁹ Franks, 60-63.
- ⁸⁰ Thomas Berger, *Northern Frontier: Northern Homeland*, Volume 1 (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1977) 1.
- ⁸¹ As an example, see John Livingston, *Arctic Oil: The Destruction of the North?* and similar arguments advanced in *The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation*.
- ⁸² Wayland Drew "Killing Wilderness," *Ontario Naturalist*, 12 (September 1972) 22.
- ⁸³ John Wadland, "Wilderness and Culture," *Park News*, 19 (Summer 1982) 13.