

« *Nord Canadien* ». Collection Louis-Edmond Hamelin,
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Colin-Véronèse, Montréal et Paris, 1966, 2 livres (I –
Moyen-Nord. 24 diapositives.) (II-Grand-Nord. 24 diapositives.).

Pierre Cazalis

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In its effort to be acceptable to everyone, this dictionary is bound to please no one. Definitions which are designed to please most and to be understandable to the uninitiated are certain to be unsatisfactory to the specialist. Exception can be taken to virtually every definition by an informed person in the field in question, at least the present writer could certainly find fault with the definition of every term he looked up. The most vulnerable definitions are of course those of general but controversial terms, such as «region,» «geography,» and the various branches of geography. However, definitions are a particularly thorny problem in geography, and in this review it would serve no useful purpose to find fault with individual entries.

One of the most unfortunate aspects of the book is the lack of equilibrium or, more precisely, the overemphasis on geomorphology at the expense of the other branches of physical geography as well as human and economic geography. This bias no doubt reflects the personal interest and competence of the author, who admits in the preface the greater weight given to geomorphology, with the rather weak excuse that it is necessitated by «the modern development of Geomorphology» (p. iii). We have become accustomed to the priority status accorded to geomorphology in most manuals of geography, but there is no reason that we should not deplore it. Naïve indeed is the geomorphologist who fancies that «industrial complex» or «site» (biogeographical sense), neither of which are listed, are less worthy geographical terms than «mud-pot» (p. 210) or «misfit river» (p. 205).

So far as biogeography is concerned, the listing of terms is fairly complete, but the entries are usually either extremely abbreviated or given a position of inferiority with respect to geomorphological definitions. The word «biogeography» itself receives 3 lines, less space than is accorded «berm» and «bioherm,» while «bird's foot delta» receives 3 inches of column space including an illustration (pp. 38-39). «Ecosystem» is accorded only 9 lines while «kame» and associated features occupy $\frac{3}{4}$ page; yet the ecosystem is much more fundamental to biogeography than are kames to geomorphology. The geological definition of «succession» comes before the botanical definition, and animal succession is not mentioned at all. The soils definition of «horizon» is the last one given; and, as noted, the biogeographical definition of «site» is not given.

The interested reader will never grasp the distinction between hydrology and hydrography by means of this dictionary. Hydrology is said to be a science mainly concerned with inland waters while hydrography is concerned with the oceans «mainly and essentially from the point of view of navigation» (p. 161).

Even climatology, which usually receives considerable attention in general works of geography, fares badly.

One of the best points of the volume is the maps and diagrams. That one picture is worth a thousand words is certainly borne out by the illustrations in this book. Skillful block diagrams and tiny but very legible maps show us everything from barchan dunes to Mercator's projection. The clarity and ingenuity of the minuscule maps and diagrams are almost unbelievable, and the author and his assistants are to be complimented upon them. Unfortunately there are no photographs.

In conclusion, this geographical dictionary will be a handy reference for some and a source of constant frustration for others. In the opinion of the present writer the greatest fault of the book is the overemphasis on geomorphological terms. In short, what might have been a rather good dictionary of *geomorphology* has turned out to be a distinctly incomplete and unbalanced dictionary of *geography*.

John M. CROWLEY

LE NORD DU CANADA

«Nord Canadien». Collection Louis-Edmond Hamelin, coédition Centre de psychologie et de pédagogie et Colin-Véronèse, Montréal et Paris, 1966, 2 livrets (I – Moyen-Nord. 24 diapositives.) (II – Grand-Nord. 24 diapositives.)

L'enseignement de la géographie au Québec échappe enfin à sa dépendance traditionnelle du matériel pédagogique étranger qui, malgré sa qualité, n'a jamais été adapté aux exigences de l'étude de notre milieu.

Après l'excellente et imposante collection Casanova-Rivard,¹ consacrée à l'ensemble du Canada, la Centrale audio-visuelle publie 48 diapositives de Louis-Edmond Hamelin, directeur du Centre d'Études nordiques et professeur à l'université Laval, sur le *Nord canadien*.

Le *Nord canadien*, dont la présentation matérielle est celle de la série Casanova-Rivard, se divise en deux cahiers de 24 diapositives, assortis de livrets de commentaires. La distinction entre *Moyen-Nord* (cahier I) et *Grand-Nord* (cahier II) est établie « à partir d'un indice nordique global basé sur dix critères d'ordre à la fois physique et humain... » Rappelons que l'indice de nordicité fut conçu par L.-E. Hamelin en 1962.

Le Moyen-Nord illustré ici

«... s'étend de l'Atlantique à l'Alaska, possède certains traits subarctiques et... est l'objet d'une exploitation pionnière de type ponctuel ; plus de 50,000 personnes résident d'une façon permanente dans cette zone de nordicité moyenne. »²

Ses limites, de même que les points de prise de vue, figurent sur la carte de repérage de la diapositive n° 1,1. Pour sa part,

« Le Grand-Nord est le pays de la toundra, du pergélisol, le froid annuel dépassant 6,500 jours-degrés F. (au-dessous de 32°F.), et d'un *pack* d'environ dix mois. »³

Louis-Edmond Hamelin en exclut l'Extrême-Nord, « c'est-à-dire les glaciers et le *pack* permanent. » (4). Les limites en sont indiquées sur la carte de repérage de la série II.

Bien qu'il occupe plus de la moitié de l'espace canadien, et que des études nombreuses, en toutes disciplines, lui aient été consacrées, le Nord n'est encore connu que de rares initiés. La collection de Louis-Edmond Hamelin vient à propos, puisqu'elle nous en offre un des premiers outils de vulgarisation.

En gros, les 46 diapositives (nous excluons les cartes de repérage) illustrent trois types de phénomènes : paysages physiques, activités et aménagements économiques, habitat et aménagements sociaux. L'auteur attribue 6 diapositives aux paysages physiques du Moyen-Nord, mais 14 à ceux du Grand-Nord, insistant ainsi sur la part prépondérante des facteurs physiques dans le complexe géographique de ce dernier domaine. Par contre, 14 photographies représentent l'homme et ses aménagements au Moyen-Nord, qui est beaucoup plus « humanisé » que le Grand-Nord (8 photos) : tandis que fer (diapositive I,3), pétrole (I,15), or (I,24), bois (I,8), élevage des rennes (I,17) constituent les assises économiques du Moyen-Nord et y suscitent des aménagements urbains (I,10, 19, 22...), ferroviaires (I,21), routiers (I,23), portuaires (I,12), de même que l'implantation d'un fort peuplement blanc aux côtés des groupes autochtones indiens et esquimaux (I,6, 11, 18...), le Grand-Nord n'est que bouclier quasi nu (II,3, 4, 5, 19), toundra chétive (II,11, 16, 19), domaine de solifluxion et de gélifraction (II,12, 13, 17), ou de *pack* et de manteau nival pérennes (II,10, 18) ; ici, l'œcoumène esquimau s'étire tout au long d'un littoral démesuré, continental ou insulaire, alors que le blanc n'est venu que tout récemment, et provisoirement peut-être, à des fins stratégiques (II,2, 8, 14) ou météorologiques (11).

En 46 photos, donc, l'auteur livre un essai de géographie régionale comparée remarquable et d'autant plus probant que l'image est d'une rare qualité, à la seule exception de la diapositive I,15. On sait pourtant que l'intensité de l'éclairement est difficile à mesurer à haute latitude. À vrai dire, nous n'avons relevé qu'un défaut technique, imputable à l'éditeur : un montage défectueux laisse voir autour de la plupart des images une frange noire qui excède largement le demi-millimètre habituel.

À la haute valeur scientifique et technique de l'image s'ajoute l'intérêt du commentaire contenu dans le livret correspondant à chacune des deux séries. Commentaire dense, précis, mais trop bref, peut-être, pour l'utilisateur non-géographe (il domine encore, hélas, dans notre enseignement secondaire), qui n'est point familier avec les phénomènes de gélivation, de déglace-

¹ Cf. Compte rendu de Louis-Edmond HAMELIN, dans *Cahiers de géographie de Québec*, avril 1966, n° 19, pp. 184-187.

² I — Moyen-Nord. Livret-commentaires, 1.

³ II — Grand-Nord. Livret-commentaires, 1.

ment, de *bogbacks*, d'ennoyage... à vrai dire, l'image est si explicite et la collection si complète que la connaissance de notre Nord est maintenant à la portée de tout apprenti-géographe de langue française. Puisse le *Nord canadien* être bientôt édité et diffusé hors des pays d'expression française, et M. L.-E. Hamelin nous offrir, en d'autres séries, quelques dizaines des plus remarquables documents de sa *photothèque*.

Pierre CAZALIS

L'OUEST AMÉRICAIN

POWELL, John Wesley. **The Exploration of the Colorado River**, New York, Anchor Books : Garden City, 1961, Foreword, 171 pages, \$1.25.

POWELL, John Wesley. **Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States**, ed. by Wallace Stegner, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1962.

One of the most significant figures in the history of the American West was John Wesley Powell for as Wallace Stegner points out he was a « multi-purpose American. » Powell is unique for he not only had a love for adventure, but was able to correlate his field findings with theoretical knowledge which resulted in his gaining a comprehensive view of the American West which was certainly unequaled in the nineteenth century.

John Wesley Powell developed his interest in natural history while teaching school in Illinois and on his many specimen collecting trips in the adjacent region. However, the Civil War interrupted his studies, and he played an active role in that conflict rising from private to brevet lieutenant colonel in the course of which he lost his right arm at the battle of Shiloh. At the close of the war he accepted a professorship of geology at Illinois Wesleyan University, and in the following year he took a similar post at Illinois State Normal University.

But it was not in the lecture hall but in the field that Powell gained his early reputation. In 1867 he led his first expedition under the sponsorship of the Illinois State Natural History Society to the Rocky Mountains, and in 1868 he led a second expedition to the Rockies which explored west of the Continental Divide and wintered on the White River in western Colorado. These two expeditions set the stage for Powell's navigation of the Colorado in 1869 which brought him lasting fame.

In 1869 Powell and a party of ten men in four boats navigated the Green and Colorado rivers, this being the first such attempt by Caucasian or Indian on record. The expedition followed the Green River (the main channel of the Colorado River and not a tributary) from Green River, Wyoming, to the mouth of the Colorado and even the Grand Canyon itself had been known since the days of Coronado, Alarcón, and Cárdenas in the sixteenth century, and Spanish priests and tracers of New Spain had followed in their wake in the succeeding period, virtually no understanding of this plateau-canyon country existed until Powell traversed it in 1869. All previous expeditions, with the exception of Alarcón in the Gulf of California, were made by land and the parties were generally forced to avoid the canyon country, thus knowledge of the Colorado and the lower reaches of its tributaries were limited.

The real significance of Powell's 1869 navigation of the Colorado is that it gained for him national recognition which readily accorded him Congressional support for further exploration of the Rockies in 1870, and in 1871-72 it visited the canyons again. Doubleday's Anchor Books in conjunction with the American Museum of Natural History present in paperback form for a very reasonable price Powell's famous journal of his navigation of the Colorado. *The Exploration of the Colorado River* is composed primarily of the diary of the 1869 trip, but observations and place names from the second expedition are included in the guise of original journal entries and disagreements with his men and certain events are either omitted, condensed, or, in some cases, exaggerated. Nevertheless, Powell's *Exploration* is fascinating and enlightening reading not only for the student, but for the general reader. The excitement of the voyage, the uncertainty and apprehensiveness regarding the course of the rampaging Colorado, and the vivid descriptions of the topography of the country are rewarding. The naming of rivers and other natural phenomena