

Minet, A., Bastin, B. et Noel, R., *À la découverte de la Laponie, Jeunesse scientifique de l'enseignement catholique*, Louvain, Nauwelaerts, 1969, 188 pages.

Cynthia Wilson

Volume 16, numéro 37, 1972

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/021048ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/021048ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Département de géographie de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0007-9766 (imprimé)

1708-8968 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Wilson, C. (1972). Compte rendu de [Minet, A., Bastin, B. et Noel, R., *À la découverte de la Laponie*, Jeunesse scientifique de l'enseignement catholique, Louvain, Nauwelaerts, 1969, 188 pages.] *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 16(37), 182–183. <https://doi.org/10.7202/021048ar>

changes increases considerably in certain geographical areas, possibly denoting preferred times of significant changes in the patterns of the 700-mb circulation.

In using and interpreting these maps, a number of basic questions are raised. Firstly, as to whether the atmosphere can be considered to fluctuate normally about the mean, or whether the large-scale synoptic situations tend to group themselves into regimes, lasting from a few days to a week or so. Furthermore, if such regimes do exist, what is the nature of the change from one to the next? For mid-latitudes and the Arctic, there is considerable evidence in support of persisting large-scale patterns followed by short periods of abrupt break-down and reorganization. Secondly, there is the question as to the reality of singularities. Are certain atmospheric situations related to certain specific dates on the calendar, forced perhaps by solar or terrestrial events external to the atmosphere itself. In averaging over arbitrary periods, whether of 5 days or a calendar month, it may happen that the significant large-scale patterns in time, and the changes, are being lost. The successful application of these maps in long range probability forecasting, and in the synoptic typing of weather elements, as well as their contribution to the understanding of the atmosphere, depend to a large extent on the answers.

The authors are hoping to extend the series to other atmospheric levels. Unfortunately, the previous series of maps of the surface pressure distributions are not strictly compatible with the present 700-mb charts, owing to the different periods and quality of the data employed. The surface normals were compiled from 20 years of data, from 1907 to 1913, and 1925 to 1937, in which there was little or no coverage for sub-arctic and arctic regions. In addition, there were marked secular changes in the climate in many regions of the Northern Hemisphere between these earlier years of the century and the period from 1951 to 1965.

The format of the 700-mb Atlas is much more convenient in size and lay-out than that of the earlier publication, and the maps are very clearly and attractively presented. These two publications, together with the Atlases of wind characteristics for the 500 and 300-mb levels published by the same group, offer a large and important body of information for the study of the climatology of the large-scale circulation of the atmosphere.

Cynthia WILSON
Centre d'Études nordiques
Université Laval

MINET, A., BASTIN, B. et NOEL, R., *À la découverte de la Laponie*, Jeunesse scientifique de l'enseignement catholique, Louvain, Nauwelaerts, 1969, 188 pages.

This is an account of a field work experiment undertaken by two professors and ten young school students in collaboration with the Jeunesse scientifique de l'enseignement catholique, in Belgium. The organization was founded in 1963 to interest young people in scientific research by giving them closer contact with the pure and applied sciences. The scientists, MM. Minet and Bastin, were chosen because their interests ranged over a number of fields — Geography, Geology, Climatology, Agronomy and Botany. The choice of such a distant and relatively inaccessible region, although based partly on Monsieur Minet's familiarity with the area, was influenced above all by the spirit of adventure: « Qui, dans sa jeunesse, n'a pas rêvé d'aller mettre le pied au Cap Nord, l'extrémité septentrionale du Finmark, cette province infiniment lointaine et étrangère... ». Packed into two small *camionnettes*, the party set out from l'Institut Saint-Joseph de Couvin and covered 10 000 km (6 200 miles) in the 6-week expedition; three of these weeks were spent under canvas, studying the geology, periglacial geomorphology and botany of the coastal region of the Varanger Fjord and Peninsula.

À la découverte de la Laponie contains brief geographical comments on the regions crossed on the outward and return journeys by Minet, a short account of the journey as seen by one of the students (R. Noel), and more substantial sections on the scientific results at Varanger, by Minet and Bastin. The results include a description of periglacial phenomena in East Finmark, where there is evidence of former permafrost, and a description of plant types (list appended) and plant habitats in this area of coastal tundra. The work is illustrated by 96 photographs, mostly in black and white; while the photographs are interesting, the black and white reproductions show too little contrast to do justice to such detailed, small-scale phenomena. Bibliographies are given.

As a whole, this is a strange blend of material, and it is difficult to see to which group of readers it is primarily directed. If it is meant for teachers in High School or CEGEP, it is lacking in practical or methodological information. The core of the scientific results, on the other hand, would seem to belong rather in a suitable scientific publication. It is perhaps designed for the students themselves — to encourage those who will not normally be lucky enough to take part in such a venture while at school, but who may come across this book by chance on the library shelves and be caught up not only by the enthusiasm of the authors, but by the fascination of the things that were studied. If this is the criterion by which the book is to be judged, then to this reviewer, while it does not seem to make the most of its opportunities, it is a useful contribution. Given the restless spirit of adventure expressed by so many young people today, there is a desperate need for the very best books of this kind, to catch their imagination and curiosity.

Cynthia WILSON
Centre d'Études nordiques
Université Laval

ZASLOW, Morris, **The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914**, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, The Canadian Centenary Series, 1971, 339 pages, cartes, bibl., index.

Cet ouvrage, qui a certainement été difficile à écrire, est le onzième à paraître dans une collection historique remarquable dirigée par MM. Morris et Creighton. L'auteur a choisi de traiter son sujet à l'intérieur de cadres régionaux. Une grande partie de l'espace canadien est couvert vu qu'en 1870, « anything beyond Lake Nipissing was termed North ». Nos travaux personnels à partir d'un indice nordique appliqué à la situation canadienne de 1880 donnent raison à M. Zaslow. Aussi l'auteur discute-t-il des « Prairies » (Alsama), de la Colombie, des Abitibis québécois et ontarien, de la vallée du MacKenzie, du Yukon (surtout en ce qui concerne le Klondike), enfin de l'Archipel arctique. La grande partie de l'ouvrage concerne ce que nous désignons par les régionalismes de Pré-Nord et Bas Moyen-Nord.

Le titre du livre mérite explication car il ne s'agit pas d'un « opening » proprement dit; pour ne mentionner que 2 groupes d'événements antérieurs, de célèbres explorations étrangères et deux siècles d'activités de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson (excellents ouvrages de E. E. Rich) avaient déjà « fait du Nord ». L'auteur veut nous faire comprendre qu'après 1870, le Nord va s'ouvrir à la canadienité et à l'action des gouvernements. M. Zaslow dit justement que les prétentions étatsunienues ont précipité l'engagement du Fédéral dans le Nord; l'administration Laurier en donnerait un exemple.

C'est un livre fait avec soin. Les références, les index et la bibliographie remplissent plus de 50 pages de texte très serré. Les citations françaises portent les accents appropriés. Cet ouvrage de référence est rempli de détails; nous avons cependant relevé une imprécision sur les cartes; au cours de la période étudiée, Fort Chimo au Nouveau-Québec était situé sur la rive droite du Koksoak et non sur la rive gauche.