

## Book Reviews

**THE SHORE WHALING STATIONS AT SOUTH GEORGIA: A STUDY IN ANTARCTIC INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.** Bjørn Basberg. 2004. Oslo: Novus forlag. 226 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 82-7099-394-8. NOK298; EUR36.30. doi:10.1017/S003224740521481X

The story of whaling, with its gross overexploitation of stocks and cruel methods of killing, is not a happy chapter in human history. However, as Professor Basberg writes in his preface: 'although the story did not have a happy ending, it is also one of exploration and adventure. It is difficult not to be fascinated by the skills and courage of the Antarctic whalers who continued an old tradition of crossing the high seas in search of oil.' There is an appeal in the stories of human ingenuity and courage that found ways of despatching and processing such huge creatures, often in adverse conditions far from home. Basberg has investigated one part of the story and describes the land whaling stations on South Georgia, where small communities of men processed whale carcasses into oil, meat-and bone-meal, and other products. His research project was entitled 'Industrial archaeology at South Georgia,' but the Norwegian name 'Hvalfangstminneregistrering på Syd Georgia' — 'Registration of remains of whaling on South Georgia' — is more descriptive.

South Georgia was the centre of the Antarctic whaling industry from the founding of the whaling station at Grytviken in 1904 until the closing of the last shore station, Leith Harbour, in 1965. In the heyday, there were six stations on the island, but after 1925 they found it difficult to compete with the pelagic factory ships that could roam the seas in search of whales. Ocean Harbour was dismantled after it closed and Prince Olav Harbour partly dismantled, while Stromness was modified for the role of ship-repair yard. The remaining three, Grytviken, Leith Harbour, and Husvik, were left ready to operate again. When the idea of a survey of the stations was first mooted in the late 1970s, these three were still largely intact despite the ravages of weather, looting, and vandalism. They were therefore good candidates for a systematic survey of the functional relationships of the various processes that took place in these complex, outsize abattoirs.

The need for the survey was brought into focus in 1982 when there was an attempt to remove the huge amounts of metal and machinery from the whaling stations as scrap. This came to naught, as the operation became embroiled in a small war, but there were also reports of increasing deterioration. During the 1990s some of the buildings were becoming unsafe, and it is lucky that Basberg was able to lead three expeditions to South Georgia and carry out extensive surveys of all the whaling stations, except

Ocean Harbour and Prince Olav Harbour, between 1990 and 1997. Not long afterwards, in 1999, the government of South Georgia was forced to close the stations because of the increasing risk to human health and safety from loose asbestos, sheets of corrugated iron flying in the wind, and other hazards. Grytviken has subsequently been made safe through a very expensive clear-up operation but, although most of the major items of equipment have been left *in situ*, they are only the bare bones of the factory. They may give a casual visitor an impression of the scope of the factory operation, but the details needed by an archaeological survey have gone. Basberg's project was, therefore, carried out in the nick of time.

The account usefully starts with an overview of the relatively new discipline of industrial archaeology and whether a survey of twentieth-century Antarctic shore whaling stations fits into it. Industrial archaeology developed as the study of the remains of the British Industrial Revolution, but has broadened in time and space, and, from the analysis of artefacts, there is now an emphasis on the interpretation of sites and landscapes as 'contextual archaeology.' Basberg states the argument of Gordon and Malone (1994) that, firstly, a study of an industrial plant shows how the industrial process was carried out more clearly than written records; secondly, it may be difficult to determine whether maps are simply generalised plans; and, thirdly, 'A historical description of a manufacturing operation begins to make sense for the first time when we stand before the actual machine and see the spatial arrangement of controls, feed mechanisms, and belt drives.' Compared with other topics, the whaling stations of South Georgia fall outside the traditional timeframe of industrial archaeology, being not only twentieth century but mostly dating from post-World War II. Nevertheless, the development of the South Georgia stations can be traced to those built during the nineteenth century in the Northern Hemisphere. There is also the important consideration that even modern structures form the 'archaeology of the future' and should be recorded for posterity.

It might seem that the workings of South Georgia's whaling stations could be adequately studied from the mass of archived documents, photographs, and films, but Basberg points out that these sources do not readily show precisely how the processing of the whales and the accommodation of the workers were organised. The bulk of this book describes the surveys and documentations gained by the study. With limited time and resources, fieldwork had to be constrained to constructing accurate maps of the stations, and measuring and photographing rooms, machinery, and other equipment, with the aim of establishing their functional relations. All the stations are described and the production processes of the

factory — flensing, cooking, refining, transporting, storing, etc — are reviewed, together with the ancillary subjects of power supply, workshops, and living conditions. There is an increasing interest in the last subject, and later chapters demonstrate what life was like on a whaling station: the barracks, laundry, pigsty, cinema, ski jump, hospital, cemetery, and even the two 4-inch guns that guarded Grytviken and Leith Harbour in World War II.

Basberg's study of the South Georgia whaling stations, of which this book is the culmination, is a vital record of the major component of South Georgia's heritage. Whaling dominated the island for 60 years and the whalers gave support for exploration of the island and provided the rationale for the *Discovery* Investigations. A unique opportunity has been seized to gather information on the industrial landscape of shore whaling. Gradually, attitudes towards the whaling stations have shifted 'from (their) being seen as mere scrap to being considered cultural heritage,' as Basberg put it. However, the fate of the whaling stations is unclear. There is a conflict between some environmentalists pressing for a complete removal and clean-up, and the requirement for cultural heritage to leave as much as possible on the site. Much depends on financial implications. Grytviken had to be cleaned up to protect people living at the nearby British Antarctic Survey station at King Edward Point. It is about to be reopened (at the time of writing) as an open-air museum, but its massive artefacts will eventually decay without conservation. It is difficult to see funds for clearing up the other stations becoming available before they collapse totally. So anyone interested in the history of South Georgia, of whaling, or even of twentieth century factory life, should be grateful that Basberg took the initiative and carried through the essential survey of the shore whaling stations, both to record their past operation and to guide their future conservation. (Robert Burton, 63 Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots, Huntingdon PE28 9AW.)

#### Reference

Gordon, R.B., and P.M. Malone. 1994. *The texture of industry: an archaeological view of the industrialization of North America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

**RUSSIAN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT: THE PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH IN THEORY AND PRACTICE.** Geir Hønneland. 2004. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers (Publications on Ocean Development volume 43). xvi + 190 p, hard cover. ISBN 90-04-13618-5. \$US99.00; EUR69.00.

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Geir Hønneland has written the most authoritative account of contemporary Russian fisheries management available in Western literature. Anyone who has wanted to understand developments in fisheries following the break-up of the former Soviet Union will find this book fascinating. Transition from the Soviet-era global fisheries to the much scaled-down exclusive economic zone (EEZ) fisheries has clearly been a stormy sea with different regional

manifestations under the Federation. While the influence on other regions is discussed, the clear focus of the book is on the federal government's management principles and practice as seen in 'the northern fishery basin.' The fleets that fish this area are based out of Murmanskaya Oblast' and Arkhangel'skaya Oblast', the Republic of Karelia, and Nenetskiy Natsionalnyy Okrug. Because of the proximity of these fishing ports to the Barents Sea, the interaction between Russia and Norway provides a bilateral management lens from which to view Russian fisheries management.

The material for *Russian fisheries management* is from deck experience as an interpreter and fish inspector for the Norwegian Coast Guard in the Barents Sea 1988–93; more than a decade of research on original sources, legal documents, and interviews with hundreds of persons occupying various positions throughout the management system; and the author's direct experience as a translator for the Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission and the Permanent Russian-Norwegian Committee for Management and Enforcement Co-operation within the Fisheries Sector. From this unique composite perspective, Hønneland more than most other writers on fisheries management is able to take the reader inside the post-Soviet fisheries in Russia. Many observers tend to dismiss Russian fisheries management as a corrupt system. Hønneland's depth of research, understanding, and approach is reflected in his own text, 'While I deny that the Russian system for fisheries management is little more than an organization run by gangsters, it does not mean that people otherwise known as highly moral individuals might not occasionally — or even regularly — try to get what they perceive as a rightful piece of the fisheries revenue cake.' Also, 'More than anything, I wish to add substance to the debate.'

The substantive information Hønneland supplies is remarkable. At the time he wrote there was still no federal law governing fisheries besides cursory mention in the EEZ legislation (1998) and Maritime Doctrine (2001). Tracing what rules or principles were in effect at any given time is difficult enough. Hønneland must then tackle the added difficulty of determining how and why certain decisions were made and what effect that had on practice.

Hønneland steps carefully into this treacherous sea. In Part I, he briefly discusses the fisheries and their environment, derives the 'precautionary approach' that he uses as a metric for Russian fisheries management performance, and discusses other methodological considerations affecting information gathering and analysis. He then outlines the Russian legal and administrative arrangements at the federal and regional levels. Part II covers the main principles for fishery management and the organizational structures utilized in management. Part III identifies the practice of fisheries management in the northern fishery basin with prime attention to formulation of scientific advice, quota-setting, quota allocations, technical regulation, and enforcement. Each of these topics is presented in detailed and rigorous prose. This

information fills enormous gaps in understanding of the Russian system as it developed and provides tantalizing insights into the contexts under which that development occurred.

It is not surprising (Part IV) that Hønneland finds that the precautionary approach is not being applied in recent management despite Russia's signing the relevant international documents and participating in bi- and multilateral agreements that accept the precautionary approach. Domestic legislation does not contain the concept. Scientific advice and quota-setting have been incautious, with total allowable catches being set far above scientific recommendations. Quota allocations appear to be based on the push and pull of federal and regional political economy rather than being set on the basis of specific criteria and transparent processes. Technical regulation and enforcement may have actually declined in effectiveness until recent reforms were implemented.

Hønneland does much more than document the failure to be precautionary. He endeavors to explain these outcomes from the Russian point of view. Individuals and institutions face completely new incentive structures and must adapt to new practices. The amount of catch, the price it commands, and the costs of fishing are new variables that have to be balanced in order to stay in business. In the past, it was possible to earn a comfortable living from fishing but not become wealthy. Now the potential for quick personal gains exists. Institutional infighting in the period of transition was fierce, with control of many fisheries functions being shifted among agencies and some of the responsibilities — for example, enforcement — being handed over to other agencies entirely. This sort of turbulence would complicate achievement of rational fisheries objectives and goes far to confirm the impressions that other observers could report but not explain.

Russia has provided some interesting experiments despite its growing pains of transition. For a brief period a significant portion of the fish quotas was to be allocated through an auction process. Market-oriented economic theory pointed to auctions as a revenue maximizing and 'fair' way to allocate scarce fish resources. When imposed on top of the overall unpredictability of the fisheries management system and various end runs of the system, the auction process was vigorously denounced and quietly abandoned. In contrast, there is a broad requirement for Russian fishing vessels to carry devices that allow vessel location to be monitored by satellite systems — a practice that is only recently being mandated in United States fisheries and not required in most other world fisheries. The lack of political will or ability to resolve the difficulties of incorporating scientific advice into quota-setting, developing science-technical regulations, and enforcing them (in favor of a precautionary approach) may be an accurate assessment for Russia. Unfortunately, this criticism applies equally well in many fisheries management contexts. Until the political will is found to implement effective command and control for top-down

fisheries management or, alternatively, develop bottom-up participatory processes that create proper incentives for precautionary approaches, fisheries management seems caught in a downward spiral.

Hønneland's systematic examinations of principle and practice in Russian fisheries are exceptional in terms of a very well-informed analysis and explanation. In a way, they set a standard for studies of other regional fisheries that I hope others follow. It would be of real benefit for qualified scholars in the other four regions of Russian fisheries (Pacific Far East, Western region, Caspian and Azov seas, and the Black Sea) to carry out parallel studies. Their results would likely mirror those of Hønneland, but they would shed additional light on the tensions between central and regional controls and on regional differences. (David Fluharty, School of Marine Affairs, University of Washington, 3707 Brooklyn Avenue NE, Seattle, Washington 98105-6715, USA.)

**CARIBOU RISING: DEFENDING THE PORCUPINE HERD, GWICH-'IN CULTURE, AND THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.** Rick Bass. 2004. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. xii + 164 p, hard cover. ISBN 1-57805-114-2. \$19.95.  
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Rick Bass, provocative author of 20 books, here turns his love-hate concerns to a people and an animal both on the edge of vanishing, about both of which he greatly cares, and to the corporations and politicians that jeopardize them, which he intensely dislikes. The Gwich-'in (or Gwitchin), an indigenous people, and the Porcupine caribou herd both live on the Arctic edge, and both must hang tough. Both hang together, and their fate depends on preserving the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Bass blends his own adventure-seeking to kill a caribou — just one from 130,000! — with his encounters with the Gwich-'in in an Arctic village, who also hunt the caribou, which migrate annually but unpredictably over their tribal territories and calve in the Refuge.

The text is conversational, often streams of consciousness — Bass' own or those of the Gwich-'in. There are many stories, and the whole adventure is pithily written. But readers must be warned that this is a polarizing book: the Gwich-'in are romanticized; their opponents are demonized. There is much overkill. Exxon executives and Alaska politicians, one Gwich-'in reports, are 'a bunch of crooks that operate in this goddamned state' (page 24). Bass accepts that, and is more concerned to defend the natives. The Gwich-'in in the Arctic are not 'barbarous savages'; a better place to look for those is 'in the Oval Office and the Department of the Interior' (page 6). Bass ends the book: 'Year by year, in Congress, the debate rages, being cleaved and decided always by only one or two votes — like wild animals fighting over tendrils, ligaments, scraps' (page 154).

Bass' points are well made rhetorically; they sting. He can be right on target: 'Since 1996, Congress has bowed

to auto-industry pressures to block new fuel economy standards that would save more oil than Alaska could ever dream of finding' (page 29). But the rhetorical overkill could become counterproductive. Surely Sierra Club, who published the book, does not desire to intensify that wild fighting. Even if one is resolutely convinced (as I am) that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Porcupine herd should be conserved, is there never another side that one ought to hear about the intentions and integrity of the opponents?

There is a deeper problem here that Bass never confronts. The Gwich-'in are 'fifteen bands of hunter-gatherers living scattered above the Arctic Circle' (page 4). They live a life of 'utter freedom and a life of deep spirituality' (page 66), 'the last people of the Americas who remain a hunter-gatherer culture utilizing wild caribou' (page 71). What a pity to snuff out their culture, a 'fantastic existence' (page 19) that has been ongoing, like the Porcupine caribou herd, for 20,000 years (pages 4–5). The Gwich-'in are 'more ancient than anything of mankind left on this green earth' (page 6). They have a 'twenty-thousand year worldview' (page 17). More rhetoric; the truth is, of course, that nobody knows, including the Gwich-'in, what their worldview was 20,000 years ago.

Elsewhere, we find that they have snowmobiles, guns, fossil fuels, diesel generators, solar panels, and computers (pages 22, 73, 83). There are 'satellite dishes outside nearly every house' and the TV sets are rarely turned off (page 38). When Bass and his guide meet a boatload of lost Gwich-'in hunters, their most urgent frustration is not that they have run out of food; they could fish. They have run out of cigarettes! (page 94). Also with the coming of the West, they got 'alcohol and Christianity' (page 8). One of Bass' principal acquaintances there is named 'Calvin'; another is 'Gideon.' The deeper problem, if we too may put it rhetorically, is that a 20,000-year lifestyle with a satellite computer is an oxymoron.

'The next world will be a vastly different one from the present. In the meantime, however, the Gwich-'in and the caribou are still, barely, wedded' (page 43). It is not only the oil, nor the greedy oil industries with their 'store-bought senators' (page 84) that threaten the Gwich-'in. Their real threat is modernity (or, if you prefer, post-modernity).

Bass recalls the Gwich-'in dancing in the skins of the caribou with a 'real eerie' wail 'asking the caribou to give themselves to the Gwich-'in' (page 47). Such traditional dances are mixed in with the Episcopal service on Sunday. There the priest, one of the few in the village who had killed a caribou that year (the migration was delayed), related how he prayed up on the mountain promising that if God gave him a caribou he would share it with the village, and suddenly 'a caribou came from out of nowhere and hurried toward me' (page 59).

The Gwich-'in have been 'carved by the landscape' and to jeopardize the caribou herd is 'as if killing the very rootstock of where they came from' (page 95). But maybe

it is not all that desirable — maybe it is not even possible in today's world — to have caribou as the rootstock of one's being. That does not sound like any life of 'utter freedom and deep spirituality.' To be Gwich-'in is 'to be wedded so completely to place that, when it is destroyed, one's self is lost' (page x). 'To imagine a future without the caribou . . . would almost surely be a feeling like being abandoned by one's God' (page 90).

What Bass fails to analyze is this: the Gwich-'in and the caribou are tied together, but the threats are different. Animals have no option but to live by nature, their genetically endowed behavior. Caribou are tied completely to place; if the Refuge is compromised, the caribou are lost. But the Gwich-'in have options. Caribou can be left ongoing and ancient; humans cannot. Caribou cannot be educated; Gwich-'in ought not to be kept in ignorance of their options beyond the caribou-eating lifestyle. The Gwich-'in, as Bass recognizes, have one foot in the past, one foot in the present (page 40); that gives them an uncertain future. Maybe one cannot carry into the future a 20,000-year lifestyle. My own ancestors were, I know not what, 20,000 years ago; less than a thousand they were Druids. Much of my own past has become irrelevant to my future.

The caribou eat the lichen; the Gwich-'in (which means 'people of the caribou') eat the caribou (page 6). But it isn't as simple as that. The caribou must eat the lichen; the Gwich-'in also eat what comes from Safeway. Some 70% of their food does come off the land (a surprisingly high figure so far north); 30% is flown in (page 38). Maybe already they are only 70% hunter-gatherers; those proportions will shift in the future.

But they do not want this change; here we confront their mythology: wild meat 'fills them with a physical strength and vigor they can find in no other food' (page 10). 'Any other kind of meat doesn't give us the same energy' (page 15). This might be psychologically true for those psyched up this way, but it is probably not nutritionally true that meat has to be wild to be fully nutritious. Remember those hunters desperate for cigarettes.

Bass shares this mythology, celebrating his own longbow hunting in Montana, and he too is on the hunt for a caribou (pages 12–13). Really he is almost an anachronism himself: he is the primordial hunter with his 'innate genetic disposition' to hunt, one 'in whom the blood's call for that activity still runs strong' (pages 50–51). He still feels those Pleistocene urges from 20,000 years ago. Then too, maybe some of this is a Montana hunter's social construction of his identity, bred in that wild-west culture.

The caribou are primordial; we humans do need the wild configured into our lives. Americans jeopardize a world heritage when they threaten the Porcupine herd. Not only the Gwich-'in, but all of us would be the poorer for that loss. But it is hard to keep people in a museum, hard for people to keep themselves in a museum; indeed it is unethical to make people a museum piece. (Holmes

Rolston III, Department of Philosophy, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, USA.)

**ANTARCTIC MARINE PROTISTS.** Fiona J. Scott and Harvey J. Marchant (Editors). 2005. Kingston: Australian Biological Resources Study and Australian Antarctic Division. 572 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-642-56835-9. \$Aus95.00.  
doi:10.1017/S0032247405244819

This single volume describes a myriad of algae, cyanobacteria, and protozoans, which are collectively known as protists. Oh, to have had this book on a recent sea-ice drift station (ISPOL) in the Weddell Sea. It would have helped considerably in our attempts to identify the organisms responsible for the biogeochemical processes we were measuring within the sea ice and surrounding waters. Instead we had to labour through numerous volumes and offprints, many of which were not specific for the Southern Ocean. In this encyclopaedic work, Fiona Scott and Harvey Marchant have compiled a resource for which there has been a desperate need for many years.

The two editors have managed to cajole a highly credible team of 10 other authors to join them in this ambitious project. Many of the authors are leaders in their fields, and their immense experience has led to the compilation of a wealth of information that is a must for all those studying the primary production, microbiology, or biological oceanography of the open waters of the Southern Ocean and/or sea-ice habitats.

Following a short introduction, there are 14 chapters devoted to the detailed descriptions of the various groups of protists. The largest chapters are the ones covering diatoms (189 pages) and ciliates (102 pages), whereas others are considerably shorter, such as the one-page chapter on the chlorophytes or the two-page chapter on the cryptophytes. This is not a criticism; rather it simply reflects the relative amounts of information presently known about these different groups of organisms. Presumably in future editions these short chapters will expand. This point highlights a significant problem for books such as this: the field is moving on swiftly, especially with the development of molecular techniques in conjunction with better microscopy. However, the fact that this volume is still citing the pioneering works of Ehrenberg in the 1840s may indicate that 'out of date' is a relative term.

There is a very useful glossary, which is absolutely vital if the non-specialist is to get to grips with the text or even understand the legends to many of the figures. Considerable effort has also been expended in compiling an extensive bibliography, which covers the literature from works published in 1806 through to recent 2004 publications. Even on its own this list of references is a valuable research tool.

Naturally, on first glance one's attention is immediately drawn to the images, the quality of which is simply stunning. The authors and publishers deserve great praise

for the obvious efforts that have been taken to reproduce the highest quality images although there are one or two instances (for example, Figs 2.29f, 2.28f) where it is not so clear what is being illustrated. This is vital for a book like this. However, no matter how good the images, they are only half the story. The texts accompanying the images are well written and informative. Not only do they provide valuable taxonomic details for each organism, there are useful descriptions of where the organisms have been found together with other ecological notes.

A slight quibble is that there is a paucity of light microscope images (except for the diatoms). Unquestionably electron microscope images are the most useful for the specialist and taxonomist. However, for many observers it is the light microscope that most will be using for the first look to identifying these organisms. Good quality light microscope images are notoriously difficult to obtain, especially in a form that is useful for taxonomic differentiation. Such images, at least for some species, are available; see the website of the editors ([www.aad.gov.au/default.asp?casid=3381](http://www.aad.gov.au/default.asp?casid=3381)). The inclusion of some of these would have been a bonus for those of us not so familiar with these organisms.

The book has a high-quality, strong binding. A book such as this needs to have a home in the laboratory next to the microscopes, and surely copies will be packed as a staple ship-based expedition item for many marine biologists. In these instances the quality of the binding becomes an important feature. The stitching looks substantial, the paper is of high quality, and together with the decent hard cover the book looks as though it will tolerate substantial misuse.

Of course, the main readership for the book will be marine biologists and/or biological oceanographers. However, I am convinced that even a cursory glance will bring pleasure to non-biologists. One of the motivations for looking down a microscope is the immense beauty of the organisms. Although not a primary aim of the book, many of the images are simply captivating by the intricate complexity of their form, and beguiling patterning. (David N. Thomas, School of Ocean Sciences, University of Wales-Bangor, Menai Bridge, Anglesey LL59 5AB.)

**SHAMANISM IN SIBERIA: RUSSIAN RECORDS OF INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITY.** Andrei A. Znamenski. 2003. Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers. viii + 371 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-4020-1740-5. £87.00; US\$138.00; EUR125.00.  
doi:10.1017/S0032247405254815

This volume is a fascinating but somewhat unorthodox summary of Russian-language sources of Siberian ritual practitioners ('shamans'). The author, Andrei Znamenski, has published several important and fundamental works on Siberian Christian and shamanistic religious movements in the past few years. This book represents a glimpse into this specialist's notebooks. Znamenski

represents this work as a bibliography (page 31), but it is in fact a series of short review articles of 104 books, book chapters, journal articles, and a few archival manuscripts published roughly between 1860 and 1999. The reviews are between one and five pages in length and are organised into three sections representing the Tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet periods. The author styles his reviews as a 'golden medium' (page 32) between a collection of translations and an annotated bibliography. In each review he presents what are for him the most interesting highlights of a particular work, and he provides page references to the locations in the work where key arguments are presented. However, readers should mind this health warning: none of the reviews give a sketch of each work as a whole. The texts are presented as if they are summaries of works, but they are in fact interpretations. The author's interpretative framework is sketched out in a very insightful introductory essay at the front of the book.

Although the presentation of the bibliographic material is unusual, the book is interesting and useful both for students and specialists. Reading it from cover to cover is intriguing since Znamenski takes care to spice some selections with interesting stories retold in English from key works. The work is useful since it not only provides accessible English-language summaries of Russian-language studies but access to some editions and manuscript collections that are very difficult to find even in Russian libraries. Through reading the reviews, the reader gets a good feel for the psychological and cultural stereotypes that have been applied to Siberian ritual specialists in various epochs of state power. This book has a good bibliography on representations of Arctic 'hysteria,' cultural evolutionism, 'black and white' forms of belief, Siberian regionalism, and even recent New Age romanticism. The book is particularly noteworthy for the fact that it records the variety of local terms that are used for 'shamans.' I have already recommended the book to postgraduate students and have been pleased that they return with good overviews of 150 years of interpretations on Siberian shamanism. Following from the book's historical approach, the reader gets an insight into the somewhat arbitrary way that Siberian indigenous ritual has been categorised by outside observers. Nevertheless, for an anthropologist, the selection of articles and the reviews give the impression that 'shamanism' can easily be recognised within any society. From my point of view, it would be nice to have a somewhat broader set of reviews that contextualises ritual performances in particular societies. As the book stands, the reader has to combine his or her own implicit knowledge of, say, Evenki society to contextualise the descriptions.

The material in the volume is surprisingly well-distributed, but it shows a similar regional bias as the literature on Siberian spirituality: a bias towards Altaic and Tungus forms of ritual. There are few reviews from Western Siberia, the Russian north, and the Far East.

On the whole, the volume is well-edited. However, the use of the term 'tribe' gives the book an interesting

nineteenth-century feel that does not sit well with the term 'indigenous.' I am surprised by the spelling of local names, which although consistent within the book do not show any affiliation to any particular system. For the most part the author uses the Russian-language plural stems, but sometimes anglicizes them and sometimes not (Tuvinians vs Nentsy vs Yukagir). Otherwise, there are only very rare errors in the transliteration of Russian and other terms spelled in Cyrillic. The index is detailed and accurate, allowing readers to search by author, scholarly work, and some important thematic keywords related to shamanism. Geography is not one of the criteria. What is surprising for a work of this nature is the lack of a single bibliography. The author no doubt would argue that the book itself is a bibliography, but it is difficult to use it as such since the references are organised alphabetically by author within each of the three historical subsections. There is also no exact table of contents that allows the reader to see the titles on one page. In order to find a bibliographic citation to a work cited in the introductory chapter, one has to flip to the index to look up the author, and then flip to the page where the review of that work is presented. The introductory chapter also makes reference to other works that are not reviewed in this volume. The citations to those works are in the endnotes. One does not necessarily know ahead of time whether one should look in the endnotes or in the index. This is a significant flaw given that the author wishes readers to use this book as an entry point to the original works.

This book is a welcome addition to a new generation of analytical work on forms of indigenous spirituality. It is a particularly useful introduction to the literature for those who do not read Russian. But the book must be used cautiously. It would enjoy a wider readership and would be more useful to students if the publishers would issue it in a lower-cost paperback edition. (David G. Anderson, Department of Anthropology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen.)

**FROZEN OCEANS: THE FLOATING WORLD OF PACK ICE.** David N. Thomas. 2004. London: Natural History Museum. 224 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-565-09188-3. £22.00.

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Few people have life experiences that provide perspective regarding the remarkable physical and biological phenomena that occur in the regions of the world covered by pack ice, and even fewer have the opportunity to view or experience first-hand any of the world's frozen oceans. This fundamental lack of reference often makes it difficult to communicate current knowledge regarding the importance of the polar regions to societies or individuals throughout the world. Many people do not understand what sea ice actually is — let alone that its annual expansion and retreat is one of the largest, seasonally dynamic, geophysical phenomena on Earth. This process drives and shapes the ocean's circulation, mitigates energy

balance, and provides a seasonal habitat for a productive ecosystem that continues to have great societal and economic importance.

Books have been written about the exploration of the polar regions, and there have been several specialized publications regarding the physics of sea ice and the ecology of the Southern Ocean. Only a few of these publications, however, have targeted physics and ecology of sea ice as their primary focus. Until now, none has been very effective in presenting these topics in a manner that is readily accessible to the general public.

In short, *Frozen oceans* by David N. Thomas is a valuable compilation of material that provides an accessible and encyclopedic review of the physics, chemistry, biology, and ecology of the zones on Earth that are perennially or seasonally covered with floating sea ice. This book provides an introduction to the definition of pack ice (chapters 1 and 2) and the regions of the world that contain pack ice (chapter 3), and then a structured description of the polar organisms, food webs, and ecosystems associated with pack ice (chapters 4 to 8). The author then effectively covers in two chapters some of the history of the exploration of the polar regions and how sea ice continues to be investigated in the present day (chapters 9 and 10). Note that although this volume is not suitable for rigorous citation, it represents the author's authoritative collection of insights and perspectives covering the body of scientific knowledge regarding pack ice.

*Frozen oceans* is packed with images taken by the author and many of his colleagues (despite being marketed as a collection of the author's photographs on some websites and announcements). It is to be commended for this collection, which illustrates the varied talents and perspectives of the many scientists engaged in sea-ice research. Some of the more informative and perspective-building photographs include the following: different stages of pack-ice development (page 18, D. Thomas), algae in frazil and pancake ice (page 73, J. Plötz), a scuba diver under sea ice (page 83, R. Budd), an ice-pitted surface (page 89, J. Raymond), a hunting snow petrel (page 173, J. Plötz), an ice-covered ship deck (page 186, D. Thomas), and sampling through ice holes (page 192, D. Thomas). Some of the images may be difficult to interpret, however, due to a lack of scaling features (for example, ice crystals, pages 20–21; frost flowers, page 24; and ice sheets and finger rafting, pages 19, 40–41).

Many of the chapters are structured in a frequently-asked-question (FAQ) format that allows the author to provide insights into ice physics and ecology. This format is effective for several topics. For instance, the first chapter — entitled 'What is pack ice?' — is structured to define differences between icebergs and sea ice as well as the difference between land-fast and pack-ice sea ice. Several questions are effectively posed and answered addressing the amount of sea ice, how organisms survive in the ice, and what we might expect to find on Europa and beyond. The FAQ format is not overused and nicely complements more traditional modes of presenting encyclopedic topical

information (for example, topical descriptions of bacteria, krill, and emperor penguins).

*Frozen oceans* provides a great resource for advanced elementary school to high school students as well as for members of the public who wish to learn more about the polar regions. Readers should gain insight into regions of the world that are little understood and vastly underappreciated. I wish this book had been available to my family the first time that I went to Antarctica. It would have answered many of their questions. I will likely send them my copy, in case they still have questions that I have not been able to answer during the past decade. (Christian H. Fritsen, Division of Earth and Ecosystem Sciences, Desert Research Institute, 2215 Raggio Parkway, Reno, NV 89512, USA.)

**ICELANDIC ICE MOUNTAINS: DRAFT OF A PHYSICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF ICELANDIC ICE MOUNTAINS ON THE BASIS OF A JOURNEY TO THE MOST PROMINENT OF THEM IN 1792–1794.**

Sveinn Pálsson. 2004. Edited by R.S. Williams Jr and O. Sigurðsson. Reykjavik: Icelandic Literary Society. xxxvi + 183 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 9979-66-146-1. \$US56.00.

doi:10.1017/S0032247405274818

Reading about the extraordinary achievements of Sveinn Pálsson (1762–1840) has been a revelation to me. What enabled me to delve into the remarkable work of Pálsson, a visionary natural historian and pioneering glaciologist, was the glacier treatise he wrote in 1795. It is available today in a new annotated and illustrated English version edited by Richard S. Williams Jr and Oddur Sigurðsson. Pálsson's original manuscript, 'Draft of a physical, geographical, and historical description of Icelandic ice mountains on the basis of a journey to the most prominent of them in 1792–1794,' of which this is a contemporary translation, could have been, but never was, a foundation for modern glaciology.

From the editors' introduction we learn that Pálsson left Iceland in 1787 to continue his medical studies in Copenhagen. He returned to Iceland in 1791 with a grant from the Natural History Society to conduct field research over a four-year period. During this period, Pálsson described the setting of Icelandic ice caps and used his observations to deduct fundamental aspects of glacier dynamics. He correctly identified the position of snowline altitudes and touched on the concept of mass balance. He realised the effects of isostasy and accurately described the formation of medial and terminal moraines. From studies of crevasse opening and closure, he contemplated both brittle and ductile aspects of ice deformation. He knew about sliding. It is possible (but apparently not certain) that he understood the concept of regelation, which is otherwise attributed to a lecture by Michael Faraday in 1850. Louis Agassiz published his *Études sur les glaciers* in 1840. Although Pálsson appears

to have had a 50-year intellectual lead on most European colleagues, the sad fact is that the Natural History Society in Copenhagen never published his ground-breaking glacier treatise, which is no less than a supreme display of deductive reasoning. Had the Society done so, it would have made him one of the earliest founders of glaciology or, as the editors state, maybe even a ‘father of glaciology.’

*Icelandic ice mountains* is fascinating reading. The manuscript has four parts, with a short introduction followed by three chapters, each of which is divided into sections. In the first chapter, ‘Ice mountains in general,’ Pálsson presents a classification of glaciers. The second chapter, ‘On the ice mountains in particular,’ is devoted to descriptions of the most prominent glaciers in Iceland. The third chapter, ‘On the eruptions and devastations by the ice mountains,’ is an account of volcanic activity and its interaction with ice caps and outlet glaciers. Clearly, Pálsson studied his field sites diligently and enthusiastically. His observations commonly addressed glaciological phenomena that are primary research targets even today. For instance, he described reservoirs of supraglacial water and used response times to deduce correctly the presence of complex englacial and subglacial meltwater pathways. He also understood that subglacial volcanism is the triggering mechanism of the violent hlaups of Skeiðarárjökull. Highlights for me were the detailed descriptions from Breiðamerkurjökull and Skeiðarárjökull. Shortly before writing this review, I visited both of these sites and it was captivating to read about the behaviour of these glaciers more than 200 years ago.

Pálsson had a sharp scientific rationale. In his introduction he wrote: ‘it would seem not only redundant but to even indicate arrogance on my part, if, in a desire to contradict or simply to write for the sake of writing, I were here to describe these glaciers anew, where they are located, without any concern about their natural characteristics . . . .’ Clearly Pálsson wanted to understand glaciological processes rather than simply map glaciers for the sake of exploration. He was also quick to realise the scientific danger of relying on incorrect or even false material. Thus, in the introduction, he continued, ‘But I, on one hand, have come to realize that the accounts by [others] are somewhat lacking in completeness and coherence. On the other hand, I am of a different opinion on certain observations . . . .’; a few pages later he wrote, ‘without debating other people’s points of view to any extent, I will put down my own ideas with respect to their cause, and do so with a great deal of frankness.’ Although this approach does not comply well with scientific methods of today, it is striking to realize how advantageous it was to Pálsson’s work. After all, his glacier treatise does include errors, but rarely are these caused by poor judgement. They are, more often than not, caused by the unfortunate reliance on an unreliable source of information.

The new translation of *Icelandic ice mountains* from Danish to English is carefully crafted. The cover features a

wonderful photograph of Örafajökull and a superimposed inset composed of a Landsat image of Vatnajökull next to a digital scan of one of Pálsson’s maps. This compilation exemplifies a recurrent theme of the book, historical facts put in a modern context. Pálsson’s text is well illustrated by the editors with a combination of historical black-and-white photographs and modern colour photographs, even satellite imagery. The book is printed on high quality paper. The near-quadratic format is slightly bulky, but handy because a wide inner margin is left for figure captions and key notes by the editors. The latter is very convenient, as it enables the reader to browse easily through the book and identify sections of particular interest, for example, specific localities or phenomena described by Pálsson. The book is also accompanied by more than 400 endnotes inserted by Williams and Sigurðsson. Whereas colourful imagery yields a modern context for Pálsson’s work, these endnotes provide a scientific framework. They are very useful to the reader because they contain historical and scientific comments to Pálsson’s observations. They are subtle and blend in nicely with the original text without appearing obtrusive.

*Icelandic ice mountains* is a historical document and not a textbook. Readers who simply want up-to-date information on Icelandic ice caps may want to look elsewhere. The book is, however, a tremendous read for the historically inclined. The unfortunate neglect of Pálsson’s glacier treatise by the Natural History Society may leave him as a historical outsider, but the spirit of his work no doubt leaves an inspirational legacy. Thanks to the new English translation, this legacy can finally be delivered to a worldwide audience. The book is a good investment for anyone interested in Icelandic glaciers or historical aspects of science. I recommend that university libraries purchase a copy. Pálsson’s *Icelandic ice mountains* is, after all, a unique piece of natural history. (Poul Christoffersen, Centre for Glaciology, Institute of Geography and Earth Science, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB, UK.)

**ATLAS OF ANTARCTICA: TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS FROM GEOSTATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SATELLITE RADAR ALTIMETER DATA.** Ute Christina Herzfeld. 2004. Berlin, Heidelberg, and New York: Springer-Verlag. xxvi + 364 p + CD-ROM, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 3-540-43457-7. £115.00; \$US159.00; EUR149.95.

doi:10.1017/S0032247405284814

Despite its title, this volume is more a textbook on geostatistical analysis and its application to Antarctica than an atlas of topographic maps *per se*. The first three chapters discuss the Antarctic ice sheet and its role in the global system, satellite remote sensing, and the data analysis methods applied in the Antarctic atlas. The core of the book, an atlas of black-and-white elevation maps, occupies 177 pages (of which 20 are blank sheets). A



further chapter develops the idea of monitoring changes in the Antarctic ice-surface topography using altimeter data of the Lambert Glacier/Amery Ice Shelf system as an example; another provides detailed maps of selected Antarctic outlet glaciers and ice shelves. The final chapter introduces maps derived from a combination of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) imagery and radar altimeter data.

Tables at the beginning of the atlas section list the latitudinal bands of the maps, and a schematic figure shows their geographical relationships. Because of its orientation on the page, the figure is difficult to use in conjunction with the maps in the book; curiously, there is no reference in the text to the larger, and more user-friendly, pull-out version of the same figure at the end of the volume. Index maps, with the chosen tiling scheme superimposed on a map of Antarctica, occur 40 pages earlier, in a different chapter. The map numbering scheme adopted is complex, and makes individual map numbers difficult to remember: an example is m105e97-113n67-721. A simple, sequential system of unique numbers for the maps, with a page reference for each one included on the schematic figure, would have been preferable.

For the latitudinal bands north of 72.1°S, there are two maps for each map sheet in the atlas: one is derived from GEOSAT data (1985–86) and the other from ERS-1 data (1995). Maps in the main part of the atlas are at a scale of 1:5,000,000 and purport to provide the highest resolution, uniform series of elevation maps of Antarctica available today; more detailed maps of selected areas occur later in the book. The map projection used throughout is Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM). However, Polar Stereographic is the projection preferred by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) for small-scale maps of Antarctica, and it is the one adopted by the major cartographic organisations involved in mapping the continent. By using UTM, the maps lack a standard geographical grid and it is difficult to compare them with existing topographic maps of Antarctica. More importantly, the atlas is not a seamless collection of maps. In trying to locate a feature on adjacent map sheets, I discovered that the contours are not identical in the area of overlap; such differences are in the detail but which map should one believe? It is not impossible to construct a seamless, tiled scheme of topographic maps of Antarctica, as proven by the SCAR Antarctic Digital Database (ADD), first published in 1993 and now revised regularly on the internet. Sadly, this comprehensive topographic database has been overlooked by the author.

The objectives of the *Atlas of Antarctica* are to map the entire continent and study variations in coastal features with time using surface elevations derived from satellite altimetry. Despite the use of grey-scale layer tinting, the elevation data on the maps are not easy to decipher in the 'busy' areas around the grounding line. Superimposing an inferred ice-shelf limit and simplified grounding line on the maps, either interpreted from the altimetry data or incorporated from another source (such as the ADD), would have made detection of variations easier. The most

instructive maps in the book are the final two (pages 338–339), where ERS-1 and SAR data are combined; the underlying SAR imagery provides a visual context for the surface elevations derived from ERS-1. That this approach was not adopted for more of the maps in the atlas is regrettable.

The text below the pairs of GEOSAT and ERS-1 maps compares and contrasts the contours derived from the two data sources, and includes information on place-names and geology relevant to the individual map sheet. Initially, I was charmed by the inclusion of such details but after I had read the same facts (and errors) several times, either repeated on the same page or copied verbatim, sometimes as several paragraphs, later in the book, I became disenchanted. Moreover, place-names mentioned in the text are of no consequence unless they are identified on the associated map: in this atlas there are too many unlocated names, and they add nothing to our understanding of the maps.

Factual errors in the early chapters in the book made me uneasy, but it is the repetitions and mistakes in the text associated with the atlas section that detract most from the effort expended in the development and creation of the maps. The errors are too numerous to list (I stopped counting after 50) but relate to out-of-date geographical facts (for example, Vinson Massif is 4897 m in height, not 5140 m), the history of exploration (for example, in 1895 Borchgrevink made the fourth landing in Antarctica, not the first; Appendix I.3 provides the correct information), geological details, and inconsistency in spelling place-names. Such extensive mistakes suggest that those parts of the book were lightly researched. Regarding place-names, the author follows the American spellings and translations adopted by the US *Geographic names of Antarctica* (1995) rather than those in the SCAR *Composite gazetteer of Antarctica* (CGA), prepared by international collaboration and published in 1998. In the CGA, updated quarterly on the internet, names appear not only in their original language of designation but also in their translated form; SCAR encourages the use of the original version.

Begun in 1988, the author notes that research for the project was undertaken by many people, which, perhaps, led to cracks in the coverage of relevant and on-going research. There is no reference to the US Geological Survey's series of 'Coastal-change and glaciological maps of Antarctica' (first sheet published in 1997), nor to the SCAR ADD, and few of the references cited have been published since 2000. The book is aimed at students, research workers, and tourists, but it is not a stand-alone publication (several other books and maps need to be at hand when reading it), and I cannot recommend it to any but the most experienced of researchers. A tourist studying the ERS-1 map of Graham Land would find it difficult to agree with the author's claim that it gave 'a largely realistic picture of the Antarctic Peninsula's topography.' To my mind, the book is poorly organized (maps of Lambert Glacier appear in four places in the volume) and

grossly over-length; text is repeated so frequently that one loses interest in reading further. By rigorous editing, the blank pages would become unnecessary, the typographic and formatting errors corrected, and the whole volume reduced to well under 300 pages. The CD-ROM provided is not referred to until inside the back cover and not all files were accessible on my PC. (J.W. Thomson, Stone House, North Yorkshire, DL8 3AW.)

**THE NORTHERN UTOPIA: BRITISH PERCEPTIONS OF NORWAY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.** Peter Fjågesund and Ruth A. Symes. 2003. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi. 413 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN: 90-420-0846-6. US\$100.00; EUR84.00. doi:10.1017/S0032247405294810

Every so often important books fly beneath the radar of the popular press. This is one such book. For students and scholars of Arctic history and literature, the significance of travel literature has assumed a growing importance as a source of evidence for understanding how our perceptions of the Arctic have been formed and shaped. Of course, the Arctic understood as a homogeneous, harsh, but fragile, physical and cultural region, doesn't exist in reality, although it remains a powerful image or symbol for many audiences other than regional specialists and northern residents. This disjuncture between perception and reality reminds us how important 'imaginary geographies' are for the understanding of landscapes and the homogenizing work done by regional labels. Amongst the most contested of northern landscapes in the geographical imagination are those often labelled 'sub-Arctic': those places like Labrador, northern Norway, the Russian Steppes, that seem distant and cold, and yet too near to be 'truly' Arctic. Uncovering the genealogy of these 'not quite' Arctic regions is itself a central task for cultural studies of the Arctic. For it is in the definition of boundaries that we most often discover how reputations and powerful images are made and lost.

*The northern Utopia* examines the British love affair with the Norwegian people and landscape, its eighteenth-century origins, and its nineteenth-century legacy. Norway, I had long assumed, was for many British travellers an Arctic country in its own right. Growing bored with the Grand Tour to the European continent, learned travellers in the Georgian period — like Joseph Banks, Thomas Malthus, Linnaeus, and Edward Daniel Clarke, to name only a few of the most celebrated — sought somewhere altogether more challenging than the obligatory route around Europe's classical sites (which Banks once famously quipped was intellectually suited to 'blockheads'). Enter the Scottish Highlands, Norway, Iceland, Spitsbergen, Greenland, and Russia, new ports of call in northern Europe's own backyard. British travellers, prevented by war in the 1790s and early 1800s from visiting the continent, turned their sights northwards in growing numbers.

Britain's relationship with Norway, the authors point out, was marked above all by contrast and incongruity, the

former nation an industrialising power, the latter a peripheral population of traditional farmers and fishermen. In the late eighteenth century, romantic travellers inspired by Rousseau, searching for an Arcadia, found amongst Norway's Lutheran rural peoples and her rugged landscape, a people and geography that corresponded to this ideal of simplicity free of moral corruption. 'Picturesque travel,' the authors explain, was the dominant way and pace of travelling, going horseback or taking a coach, to experience and enjoy the idyllic mood, rather than to race through it. All that had changed by the mid-nineteenth century, when the construction of railways across Europe ushered in an era of speed, timetables, and efficiency. These dramatic changes to travellers' experience of time and space affected how they organised their itineraries, including those in Norway. As travellers were abandoning romantic pretences about the Norwegian people, the focus of their idealism increasingly shifted towards the physical sights and challenges of Norway's rugged landscape. These themes are explored by the authors, who draw on close readings of contemporary British travel literature.

The book is primarily a study in the interpretation of approximately 200 travel texts to show how British perceptions of Norway were created as well as received. The authors situate this work methodologically as a project in 'imagology' or 'image studies' (the book is part of a series, *Studia Imagologica*), with its roots in mid-twentieth-century comparative literature, and reinvigorated by the growing recognition that travel literature has been a seriously neglected part of literary studies. Although I was not personally familiar with 'imagology' *per se* — the analysis of textual conventions and representation in travel literature — I recognised this type of analysis as what has become a familiar part of the landscape of literary and cultural studies broadly conceived.

The book has four chapters. 'More the rage every year' introduces the phenomenon of British travellers to Norway and sets the stage for the book as a whole. Chapter 2, 'Back to his forefathers' house,' examines the romantic search for an Anglo-Saxon, Teuton, and Viking past, an antiquarian project with a complex and poorly understood legacy that was to become important for the birth of archaeology in the second half of the nineteenth century. Chapter 3, 'Nature's noblemen,' excavates the extensive descriptive analyses from travel accounts of the manners, customs, and habits of Norwegians, to illuminate the British fascination with the egalitarian, rural, peasant, property-owning class, relatively free of social distinction, a social Utopia appealing to a certain kind of reform-minded traveller. Norwegian women in particular were made to embody an ideal of female naturalness (voluptuous, clear skin, healthy, and fertile — but lacking in fashion sense) in the descriptions of male British writers, an image set against the strict norms governing their female contemporaries, particularly amongst the social elite of Britain's polite culture. For readers interested in the representation of Sàmi, however, the kind of implicitly enlightened critique of the place of

women in Britain is absent from what reads as a depressingly familiar account of displacement, marginalisation, and prejudice. The northern inhabitants of the Norwegian lands were increasingly denied their traditional economic and cultural opportunities and traditions associated with reindeer-herding. The final chapter, 'A peculiar savage grandeur,' offers an analysis of the descriptive language of the rugged landscape in relation to aesthetics, and in particular the sublime.

The authors' stated ambition is that the book will encourage further studies, and will serve as a bibliographical as well as analytical resource for other scholars. Their enthusiasm is felt in the tone of the writing, and communicated by quoting extensively to the texts they present. Readers will feel that they have had a chance to dip into many new sources, and may be motivated to go on to read some of the full original sources. This compensates for certain weaknesses inevitable in the structure of the book: the flavour of the texts is at the cost of some repetition of themes and arguments, and the sacrifice of a certain amount of context and subtlety in order to cover such an extensive period of travel literature. Overall, however, this is a stimulating and scholarly book that deserves to be known widely by readers researching the history of northern travels. (M.T. Bravo, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

**THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST: A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.** Josh Newell. 2004. McKinleyville, CA: Daniel & Daniel Publishers. xx + 468 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-880284-76-6. US\$99.95.

doi:10.1017/S0032247405304815

This is a comprehensive overview about a very dynamic region that has undergone rapid economic, social, and environmental change in the last 15 years. As the author admits, it was not written in order to be read straight through as a book, but more to use as something between a reference guide and a regional overview with an encyclopaedic character.

The structure of the book could not be simpler: an introduction to the Russian Far East (RFE) in general is followed by 10 chapters, each presenting one region, from Primorsky Krai (capital Vladivostok) to Sakhalin Oblast, which has received a great deal of media attention recently because of its hotly contested off-shore oil development. All the chapters are structured similarly, consisting of subchapters such as 'overview,' 'ecology,' 'biodiversity hotspots,' 'economy,' 'toward sustainable development,' 'indigenous peoples,' 'legal issues,' and 'perspective.' Even though such a structure is not necessarily stimulating or original for the reader, it organises the information in an easily accessible way. Moreover, this was probably the only way to organise the diverse information provided by more than 90 Russian and western co-authors into a consistent form that makes regional chapters comparable.

The overview chapter is the masterpiece of the book, where the lead author succeeds in addressing many general problems treated by individual contributions drawn from the various regions. Here the reader feels most strongly Josh Newell's longstanding expertise in this field, paired with a wider vision for the general issues of sustainable development and conservation. Here is where the main arguments of the whole book are laid out, which keep returning in the regional chapters.

Most importantly of these arguments, the authors criticise the orientation of the RFE economy, which chooses to export raw materials rather than diversifying and investing in processing and sustainable development. However, they do not forget to mention that this happens mainly due to an apparently indefinite hunger of the far eastern economies of Japan, China, and Korea for cheap, high-quality sea food, wood products, and mineral resources. While they agree that foreign investment is needed in the region, they criticise the fact that the RFE is changing from a resource periphery of the Soviet Union to one of Japan, China, and Korea. The example of other regions relying on resources and failing to diversify their economy should warn the RFE of a 'resource curse,' although the authors admit that so far the performance of resource-rich regions in Russia has been better than in resource-poor ones. On the other hand, the authors repeatedly emphasise the danger of a concentration on resource-extraction for the preservation of the unique nature of the region.

While this criticism is not new and certainly not unique to the RFE, the regional chapters introduce the reader to the particular processes leading to environmental degradation. Environmentally dangerous practices of commercial logging and fish-poaching have brought the sensitive flora, fauna, and habitats of the RFE in some places to the verge of irreparable damage. In some regions, notably Sakhalin, oil and gas development threatens not only the fragile ecosystems, but also the fishing industry, one of the key sources of income. Moreover, wasteful and inefficient use of energy is another important obstacle for sustainable development.

The book gives an introduction to some of the main concepts of nature protection, conservation, and the regulation of land use in Russia. The development of environmental policies and institutions since *perestroika* is useful background to know. However, for specialists in the region and those familiar with Russian politics, this may be of minor interest; they want more in-depth information and a more thorough discussion of the sometimes conflicting lines of protecting nature and protection of local communities. For example, many indigenous people find themselves excluded from *zapovedniks*, nature parks where any human activity is forbidden. Sometimes, as in the economy section of the overview chapter, the author seems to take an ecosystems approach to the region without including local people as part of that ecosystem. It would be desirable to have more consistency in providing Russian terms: while the reader is introduced

to *zapovedniks*, he is left to wonder what Russian category the authors mean by 'restricted forest.' Even so, for readers within the rapidly growing community of western NGOs working in the region, the overview gives an essential understanding of the political and institutional background of environmental issues.

The same is true for the often-mentioned corruption of the area. While specialists know this, for potential 'newcomers' to Russia, it is important to understand the ways in which laws and rules are 'creatively' interpreted. The need to build up social capital in long-term relations with people in the region cannot be overemphasized. The book describes this particularly well in the section on fishing economy, the development of which depends heavily on often corrupt practices and politics of quota allocation. It is through these descriptions that the reader gets insights into the local dynamics of power. It is both helpful and entertaining to read the accounts based on real fieldwork, for example, about the workers of small logging companies working with fake export certificates. It would be enjoyable to have even more such illustrative accounts, perhaps in separate textboxes — a layout feature widely used for other topics in the book.

An important aspect of the book is the impressive collection of data on economy, ecology, nature protection, and pollution. Readers with experience of working in Russia will be able to appreciate the huge amount of time, personal initiative, and energy that the collectors of this material must have invested in order to reach this high level of data consistency throughout the region. This has to be stressed, because in many places bureaucrats are still convinced that the free flow of information is dangerous and potentially damaging for one's own reputation. Not quite so reliable — but extremely interesting — are the data on illegal fishing and over-harvesting of fish stocks, which are compared with the officially allowed figures. However, the authors' immediate policy recommendations for this seem to cure more the symptoms rather than addressing the roots of the problems. While they rightly call for more money to implement control on illegal logging and fishing, more support is also crucial for local communities, which in the absence of any other sources of income often have no choice but to engage in poaching.

The regional chapters are very diverse, since they were written by many different authors. Therefore, some of them are stronger than others. This becomes obvious when looking at the sections on indigenous minorities. In the Khabarovsk chapter, indigenous land-use, with its legal and political implications, is well described; the example of how traditional territories are protected against unsustainable logging in the Khutu watershed gives the reader a good idea how social and environmental protection can go hand in hand. In the Koryakia chapter, a sensible description of fluent cultural boundaries among indigenous peoples is combined with an analysis of the legal possibilities these minorities have today to protect their land, followed by a section about the difficulties of implementation.

By comparison, the Sakha chapter is rather disappointing. Since the many particularities of this republic are mentioned in chapter 1, the reader waits for an elaboration and more in-depth information. Instead, even explicit mistakes remain uncorrected or uncommented upon. To mention a few, ethnic Yakuts were not settling in Sakha in the third century AD along with the Tungus, but came to the north down the Lena river only in the middle ages from the more southern steppes, a few centuries before the Russians arrived in the region. The reader gets the impression that ethnic Yakuts are an indigenous people, and therefore are left to wonder why there are no figures presented for the Yakuts in Table 1.13 on the indigenous peoples. Insiders know that this is because Yakuts do not appear in the official list of indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation. In addition, reindeer herding is mentioned as an important basis for the live of indigenous people, but the figure of more than 300,000 domestic reindeer in Sakha stems from old Soviet statistics. Since then, it has gone down and is now below 200,000. Unlike in many other chapters, the regional government in Sakha is praised for its progressive environmental politics, but there is not much mentioned about the sustainability of communities, which in Sakha is more than elsewhere connected to the ethnic fabric of the population. The reader does not get to know that in Sakha it is mainly the Russians controlling the economy, whereas politics and administration are very much in hands of the ethnic Yakuts. This situation could lead to social tension in the future, especially since oil, gas, gold, and coal reserves in Sakha will be extracted in the future.

The organisational and logistical challenge to bring all the diverse materials together in a consistent manner must be admired. Therefore, one can forgive smaller mistakes, for example, the two-fold reproduction of the same map on indigenous land use in Magadan Oblast' (maps 7.2 and 7.3). However, it would have enhanced the overall quality if seemingly contradictory statements by different authors had been clarified. For example, Kamtchadals are categorised as a palaeo-Siberian indigenous tribe in chapter one, whereas the Kamtchatka chapter introduces us to them as people who were born and lived in Kamtchatka regardless of their ethnic origin. Generally, more cross-referencing between the different regional chapters would be helpful for the reader. Perhaps a short RFE-wide concluding chapter by the lead author in the same spirit as the excellent first chapter would have solved such problems.

However, these remarks should not spoil the overall positive impression of the book. This is underlined by the good quality of the printing and paper, lots of high-quality colour and b/w photographs, graphics, maps, and diagrams, which contribute to make the information presented easily accessible. Consulting this book is a must for anybody with an interest in working with environmental, economy, or development issues in the Russian Far East. (Florian Stammer, Scott Polar

Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

**INTO THE ICE SEA: BARENTS' WINTERING ON NOVAYA ZEMLYA – A RENAISSANCE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.** Jaapjan Zeeberg. 2005. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers. 317 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 90-5170-926-9. EUR29.50.  
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One suspects that it is unique for a reviewer of a book to refer to the last line on the back cover blurb as the first comment in the review. But in this case it is simply irresistible. The reader is informed that 'This book will make you happier and wiser,' which is no mean claim from an author or a publisher. The success of the first proposition depends, of course, on the personality of the reader. With regard to the second, one is reminded of the famous exchange in court in which the judge said, at the end of a long speech by counsel, that, following it, he was none the wiser. The withering rejoinder, 'Perhaps not, my Lord, but I trust that you are better informed' has gone into history!

There is no doubt that this is an idiosyncratic and, for this reviewer, oddly and badly constructed book. It presents accounts of expeditions during five summer field seasons in Novaya Zemlya designed 'to provide an observational and analytic basis to the historical record,' largely de Veer's well-known journal of Willem Barents' expedition of 1596. 'By retracing the voyage' with this journal in hand 'we present a view of the Arctic through the eyes of a sixteenth century explorer.' These expeditions had three main aims: to conduct investigations around the 'Saved House' in which Barents' party wintered, to locate and recover remains of the ship, and to attempt to recover the bodies of Barents and one other member of the expedition.

The first chapter sets the scene for much of what is to come. It is a highly anecdotal account of the initiation of the first of the five expeditions, which apparently arose because of a visit paid to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam by Dimitri Kravchenko in March 1991. Kravchenko, 'with pallid beard and sunken face,' an archaeologist and 'investigator of Barents' wintering,' was seeking support for more field research. Volunteers from the Marine Academy in Enkhuizen were secured, and the rest of the chapter consists of extracts from their diaries during their travels in the Russian Arctic that summer.

The second chapter, by contrast, is a sober, detailed, and most interesting account of the discovery of the 'Saved House,' and this is followed by an analysis of Dutch expansion in the sixteenth century. This is very broad brush indeed, as it includes mention of the voyage of the *Liefde*, which succeeded in reaching Japan by sailing westwards. En route, the expedition wintered in the Straits of Magellan, where many perished, and for which important relics have not been found. Then there is mention of Henry Hudson, including a long extract from a letter to Henry IV of France from his Ambassador in the

Netherlands relating to Hudson's visit to that country and his meeting with the East India Company.

But then, unfortunately (this reviewer struggled to avoid using this word but failed), one is pitched back into the diaries, this time of the participants in the 1993 summer expedition and of those that followed it. Much of this is simply not worth reading, as large sections comprise what amount to insignificant personal comments and observations. And on it continues with fairly aimless triviality. But embedded within this mass of writing are sections that are of interest relating to previous travellers in the area and to specific aspects of the Barents expedition.

At the end of the book is a series of appendices that are useful. These include generous extracts from van Linschoten and de Veer. Those illustrations in the book that are taken from sources closely contemporary to Barents and those that show relics secured from archaeological investigations are numerous and excellent, and the maps are very good. Those that show people and incidents from the five expeditions are of as little interest as are the sections of text that present the diaries.

There are a number of slips. The reader is informed that 'no traces' of the Franklin expedition were found by the rescue expeditions (page 39), that San [*sic*] Thomé is in the Azores (page 70), and that Arthur Conan Doyle participated in Leigh Smith's 1881–82 expedition (page 143). Suffice it to say that there is no mention of him in the famous ground plan of 'Flora Cottage,' in which the sleeping place of each of the participants in the expedition is indicated. This is, however, reproduced in Susan Barr's book on Franz Josef Land, which is included in the references in the present work (Barr 1995: 64).

The plan of this book is fundamentally flawed, in that the writer does not appear to have had a rational conception concerning what he was trying to achieve. It would have been possible, on the one hand, to have written an excellent account of the work, and its results, of the five field parties, which could have included much of the introductory material, and, on the other hand, to have written a 'popular' account of them with brief notice of the historical background. This book appears to be trying to incorporate both approaches at the same time and to succeed in neither. It is too 'heavy' for the casual reader, who might be attracted by the 'human' aspects of the expeditions, for example, clashes between members of different nationalities, while being overall too trivial for those with serious interests in Barents. This is irritating because the author clearly has much to say with regard to Barents and the more recent expeditions, but the saying of it is flawed. He would have benefited from strong editorial advice, and a better book could easily have resulted. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

#### Reference

Barr, S. (editor). 1995. *Franz Josef Land*. Oslo: Norsk Polarinstittutt.