NEW ZEALAND'S ROSS DEPENDENCY

ANTARCTICA: THE ROSS SEA REGION. Hatherton, T. (editor). 1990. Wellington, DSIR Publishing. 287 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-477-02586-2. Mail order price NZ$89.95, US$89.95

Hurried negotiations in the early 1920s, necessitated by C. A. Larsen's first whaling expedition to the Ross Sea, landed New Zealand with a huge slice of Antarctica. Extending from the Southern Ocean to the South Pole, the Ross Dependency had already proved a gateway to the inner secrets of the continent, even to the Pole itself. But New Zealand during the 1920s and '30s had neither wealth nor enterprise for land exploration. The gateway was exploited mainly by whalers and by successive US land expeditions. Richard Byrd used it before World War II: from 1946 US naval operations *Highjump* and *Windmill* moved in.

Challenged by the Transantarctic Expedition and the International Geophysical Year, and stirred on by the enthusiasts of her own Antarctic Society, New Zealand finally began to take part in 1957. Once involved, the Kiwis took Antarctica seriously. From Scott Base young New Zealanders rode agricultual tractors to the South Pole, made long and productive dog-sledging journeys, and contributed substantially to the IGY. Prominent among them were Trevor Hatherton who edited this book, Sir Edmund Hillary, who wrote the introduction, and the wise, much-loved and sadly-lamented Sir Holmes Miller, to whom *Antarctica: the Ross Sea region* is dedicated.

This book celebrates both the Dependency itself, and the work of New Zealand and other expeditions that have contributed to its study, mostly since the 1950s. The 16 chapters by New Zealand writers cover everything from history and politics to climate, sea ice, biology, geology, glaciology and international relations. This is not the first time the format has been used: produced as it is by a governement department in association with other government departments, this book could have proved monumentally dull. However, just as David Walton's *Antarctic Science* showed the lively side of research in the maritime Antarctic, Trevor Hatherton's does a similar and more colourful job for the Ross Dependency.

Hatherton knows well that the Ross Sea region is different in many exciting ways from the rest of Antarctica, in its relatively snow-free mountains and volcanos, for example, its dry climates, oasis valleys, ice sheets, clearly-demonstrated geology and high-latitude wildlife. His team, many of them representing the newer generation of polar Kiwis, have responded well, realizing a book that is elegant, informative, evocative, superbly illustrated, and highly readable both for scientists and for the lay public. If it is also expensive, librarians may rest assured that, despite its attractive appearance,this is a worthy book and very good value for money. (Bernard Stonehouse, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

ANTARCTIC ECOSYSTEMS

ANTARCTIC ECOSYSTEMS: ECOLOGICAL CHANGE AND CONSERVATION. Kerry, K. R. and Hempel, G. (editors). 1990. Berlin, Springer-Verlag. 427 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 3-540-52101-1. DM148.

The fifth SCAR Symposium on Antarctic Biology was held in Hobart, Tasmania on 29 August to 3 September 1988. This volume, slender in comparison with recent SCAR geological symposia but nevertheless substantial, is the record of its proceedings. Of the 80 papers and 93 posters presented, only 45 appear here — those which the steering committee deemed most relevant to the theme *Ecological change and conservation of Antarctic ecosystems*. It would be difficult to quarrel with their choice: it was a memorable meeting and selection cannot have been easy. Nor is it easy to summarize so comprehensive a volume in limited space.

Papers are grouped under five headings: 'Long- and medium-term changes in Antarctic environments', 'Seasonal changes in sea ice zones and off South Georgia', 'Ecological and population changes in sea birds and mammals', 'Actual and potential fisheries', and 'Human impacts on terrestrial and marine systems'. Broadly, however, they fall into two categories — those few that advance evidence of changes in Antarctic environments, and the many that report and comment on changes in Antarctic ecosystems and populations. Among the first are P. G. Quilty's assessment of evidence for change in Antarctic marine environments over the last five million years and A. Clarke's summary of changes in Southern Ocean temperatures throughout the Tertiary. The latter are legion, covering both seasonal changes and long-term population trends, in a wide range of organisms from lichens and mosses to whales.

The final summing-up, by Gotthilf Hempel with help from four others, is a most useful summary of perceived changes under six headings — sea ice biota, phyto- and zooplankton, benthos, fish, birds and mammals, and terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems — with an assessment of knowledge gained and future research needs in each category. His final paragraphs, under the heading 'Research needs in Antarctic ecology', points out that the main stream of public interest, and hence of national funding, is currently toward environmental protection rather than resource development, and the role of the Antarctic region in global climate. Both are fields in which ecologists can shine, in in which much work remains to be done, so prospects for the Antarctic ecology as a discipline are bright.

SAAMI CULTURE AND POLITICS

READINGS IN SAAMI HISTORY, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE. Broadbent, N. (editor). 1989. Umeå, Center for Arctic Cultural Research (Miscellaneous Publications 7). 146 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISSN 0283-9687.

NORDIC PERSPECTIVES ON ARCTIC CULTURAL

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AND POLITICAL ECOLOGY. Broadbent, N. (editor). 1989. Umeå, Center for Arctic Cultural Research (Miscellaneous Publications 9) 184 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISSN 0283-9687.

These two publications from the energetic leader of the Center for Arctic Cultural Research are welcome additions to the growing English language literature on the Sámi. They also illustrate the length of the continuum between independent research, unattached to a particular political agenda, on the one hand, and the 'committed' analysis of individuals, often not themselves members of the minority group, who have taken on the task of representing these people in disputes with national authorities. It is difficult to document this range in a short review. The first volume has a number of fine historical studies, most notably from Roger Kvist, which enable one to see the changing nature of contact between the Swedish govenment and the Sámi. The fine historical records of a country not involved in war for almost 200 years, and not fought over for rather longer, enable the scholar to follow the administrative changes by which a group of hunters evolve into reindeer herders, or in other parts of the Sámi domain become small-scale farmers. Nobody could categorize this process as painless; in the long evolution there have been many setbacks to the legitimate aspirations of the Sámi minority. However *Readings in Saami History, Culture and Language* does, though its various contributors, show the real concerns that have been expressed from time to time by the national government concerning the fate of the Sámi.

The second symposium is much more strident in its tone, stemming from an Inter-Nordic symposium in Helsingør, Denmark, in 1988. The various papers illustrate changes in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Greenland. An appendix provides a 'Nordic statement of principles and priorities in Arctic and northern research', with a translation into Russian. This is often quite unexceptional, especially when stressing the fragility of Arctic ecosystems, which must be protected. However when it is stressed that research proposals and results should be translated into the languages of the people who are affected, we are moving on to idealistic but often impractical ground. If the requirement were limited to 'people most closely affected' I would not be concerned. But the implication of such far-reaching requirements could mean that much northern research should be translated into 15 or 20 minority languages — patently impossible. Judge Berger's procedure, in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, of consulting directly those affected is attainable, but Canadians (for example) are well familiar with the difficulties and expense of providing editions of many documents in the two languages. To start publishing studies of sea ice conditions in Inuktitut, in Chukchi, in Nentsy, or in Sámi — to mention just four groups — is altogether beyond practicality.

There are some interesting papers on Iceland, which, however, has little in common with the other areas, except an Arctic climate. A particularly controversial paper is that of Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, who has discovered the new crime of 'linguicism'. As she herself insists of writing about 'the United Kingdom/Queendom', some of us may be excused wondering whether that sort of nonsense also requires legislation, if only to reduce the amount of printer's ink and paper expended. My own personal view is that this second collection of papers is itself an excellent documentation of the impracticalities which many academics espouse. (Ian Whitaker, Department of Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC, Canada V5A 1S6.)

MUMMIFIED GREENLAND ESKIMOS

THE MUMMIES FROM QILAKITSOQ: ESKIMOS IN THE 15th CENTURY. Hart Hansen, J. P. and Gulløv, H. C. 1989. *Meddelelser om Grønland: Man and Society* 12.

This is a first-rate collection of papers dealing with the eight mummified Eskimo found in the Uummannaq district of Northwestern Greenland in 1972. The intensive examination of the bodies, as well as of their clothing, presents a scientific landmark. The majority of the analyses were non-intrusive, involving X-rays, dermatological studies, analysis of collagen and glycosaminoglycans, electron microscopy, histopathological studies of the eyes, study of faeces and bone mineral content, histomorphometric analysis of cortical and trabecular bone, and trace metals in hair. The subjects of the study died about 1475, just at the time when the Viking settlements in Greenland were either being abandoned or died out. The studies of fungi, head lice and mineral grains also tell us about environmental factors present. The tattoos on some of the bodies help to amplify the relatively sparse ethnohistorical material on this practice. An analysis of diatoms in the bodies unfortunately is inconclusive about the cause of death: it must be presumed from the disposal of the corpses that the individuals all died within a brief time-span. All in all this fine book shows what may be learnt by post-mortem procedures conducted with care and respect upon mummified remains. We may expect other opportunities, either from burials in permafrost, or, as here, in climatic conditions that promote mummification. The results are far more wide-ranging that the professional labels of the researchers imply. (Ian Whitaker, Department of Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC, Canada V5A 1S6.)

ALASKAN EXCAVATIONS

THE 1981 EXCAVATIONS AT THE UTQIAGVIK ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE BARROW ALASKA. Hall, E. S. and Fullerton, L. (editors). !990. Barrow Alaska, North Slope Borough Commission on the Inupiat History, Language, and Culture (IHLC). Three volumes, 1254 p, illustrated. Soft cover, US$60.00.

In 1981 the City of Barrow initiated a cultural resource mitigation project in response to the proposed construction of a natural gas line through a district known to contain numerous proven archaeological features. Essentially a collection of 60 anthropogenic mounds — elevated com-

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