

the totemic quality of cetacean remains and man's fascination with these giants of the sea. Sometimes a stranding or the accidental discovery of bones would be regarded as a portent of evil and this probably explains the frequency with which ribs and miscellaneous bones were brought to a church, to purge them of any malevolent powers. They were often thought to be the remains of a mythical monster, a dragon, or of a vanished race of giants which made them objects which could amaze both high and low, and an essential component of every prince's *wunderkammer*.

Germany also gives us the first example in history of the 'touring' whale when an entrepreneur displayed the mounted skeleton of a whale washed ashore at the mouth of the Rhône. Starting in 1620 it was shown in Augsburg, Nürnberg and Strasbourg before being dismantled in 1625 and the pieces sold off. A contemporary print to advertise the attraction is the earliest representation of an articulated skeleton.

In the eighteenth century with an abundant supply of bones from an expanding European whale industry whale bone arches became popular and whale shoulder blades were hung up as shop and inn signs, some of them beautifully painted. Especially on the island of Föhr in Schleswig Holstein, once home to many whalers, bones were commonly used for a variety of practical purposes, to support the winch for a well bucket, in rows to form a fence or boundary, and, uniquely, sandstone headstones were bolted to jawbones set up in the churchyard. Another survival there is a row of cut down jaw bones forming the wall of a pig sty. In Hamburg a pair of jaw bones formed part of the equipment of a ropery.

Of special note from earlier times is a vertebra known as Martin Luther's footstool. This is first noted in 1574 and is

displayed in the Luther-Zimmer in the Wartburg at Eisenach where he made the first full translation of the New Testament into German.

In the other countries the author mainly records whale skeletons of more modern vintage displayed in museums and universities but there are a few surprises from these landlocked nations. In the Czech Republic a jaw bone, rib and scapula in the church of St. Frantisek Serafinsky at Golcuv-Jenikov, serves to remind us of the significance with which these relics were once endowed; they were brought by General Martin Goltz from Stralsund as booty of the Thirty Years War. In Austria part of one of the bones which formed an arch outside the Restaurant zum Walfisch in the Prater, Vienna, is still preserved and a whale rib of unknown origin hangs in the passageway leading to the Universitätsplatz, Salzburg. Rapperswil, Switzerland, was the home of Jerg Zimmerman who arranged the touring of the whale skeleton in the early seventeenth as described above.

This informative and well illustrated volume provides interest for the anthropologist, folklorist, social historian, zoologist and anyone who enjoys exploring the story of the cetacean tribe and the wonder it has generated amongst mankind over countless generations. It is completed by a bibliography, index of place names and people, index of categories of whalebone and location maps. (Arthur G. Credland, 10 The Greenway, Anlaby Park, Hull HU4 6XH).

Reference

Redman, N. 2004. *Whales' bones of the British Isles*. Teddington: Redman Publishing.

HOKKAIDO: A HISTORY OF ETHNIC TRANSITION AND DEVELOPMENT ON JAPAN'S NORTHERN ISLAND. Ann B. Irish. 2009. Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company. vii + 370 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 978-0-7864-4449-6. US\$55.

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The polar regions are, of course, extremely difficult to define. This reviewer was once informed by a *doyen*, now sadly deceased, of polar studies that a simple rule of thumb was that they included anywhere where the sea froze. That is sufficient justification for inserting brief notice of this book in *Polar Record*, because the sea on the northern coasts of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island, most definitely does freeze each winter as indeed it does frequently on the other coasts as well. Add to this the prodigious snowfall that the island experiences and we have a double justification for inclusion.

A third reason is that there are very few works in English, and certainly none as accessible as is the present volume, on the island in question. Part of the reason for this might be that Hokkaido is a borderland in the strict sense of the word adjacent as it is to Russia to the north. Moreover while ethnic Japanese people, or Wajin, have lived on the country's other three main

islands, Honshu, Kyushu, and Shikoku, for many centuries, they only started serious immigration into Hokkaido in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

This book tells the story of Japan's aboriginal people, the Ainu, followed by that of foreign explorers and ethnic Japanese pioneers. The book pays close attention to the Japanese-Russian disputes over the island, including cold war confrontations and more recent clashes over fishing rights and over the once Hokkaido-administered islands (the southern parts of the Kuril chain and Karafuto, southern Sakhalin) seized by the U.S.S.R. in 1945.

The author is absolutely open about the fact that her ability in the Japanese language is limited and that the book depends largely on English language sources. This is, of course, a disadvantage as is the lack of engagement with Russian sources but her diligence in unearthing almost anything written in English about Hokkaido and the surrounding areas has been remarkable. The bibliography is a testament to the amount of sheer hard work that she has invested in this book. Moreover the writer's style is pleasant and easy to read. The result is a wholly satisfactory compilation, slanted obviously by the restricted nature of the sources, but one that presents a convincing portrayal of Hokkaido from the nineteenth century onwards. It is warmly recommended. (Ian R. Stone, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)