

Reviews

NORTHERN WATERS

THE SOVIET MARITIME ARCTIC. Brigham, L. (editor). 1991. London, Belhaven Press and Scott Polar Research Institute. (Polar Research Series). 336 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-85293-169-8. £37.50.

This book is based primarily on the proceedings of a workshop held at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Massachusetts, USA, May 10–13 1987 (see *Polar Record* 24: 131–32, 1988). At that time a Woods Hole Technical Report WHOI-88-5 was issued, containing mainly abstracts of the formal papers and a summary of ensuing discussion.

Though in normal circumstances four years between submission of papers and their publication undermines the overall value of a symposium volume, this book clearly gained from the hiatus, for two good reasons. First, all authors were given opportunity to adapt their papers to the rapidly changing Arctic setting, as witnessed during the past couple of years. Since this normally involved more than adding one or two sentences, the book as it stands forms an updated state-of-the-art treatment of the subject. Secondly, and more important for the value of the book, to the western point of view expressed by the 1987 workshop have been added complementary views from the east. Apparently *glasnost* and *perestroika* had made it possible, by the end of the 1980s, for three Soviet researchers to express their views on the Soviet Arctic in a western publication.

The book contains 17 high-level contributions concerning a wide variety of topics, ranging from past and present exploration, through physical environment and navigation, to legal and geopolitical aspects of the matter. It is well documented with maps and tables and contains, as an appendix, translations of recent Soviet statements and enactments on the subject.

The Soviet Maritime Arctic is the first book in the new Polar Research Series published by Belhaven Press in association with the Scott Polar Research Institute. This carefully edited edition, which is simply a must for anybody concerned with the Arctic, certainly bodes well for the volumes to follow. (Erik Franckx, Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussel, Belgium.)

WHY STUDY ANTARCTICA?

WHY STUDY ANTARCTICA? Beck, P. J. 1991. Surrey, Apex Centre, Kingston Polytechnic. 65p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-873152-15-9. £9.00.

Peter Beck aims to demonstrate not only 'the region's intrinsic academic interest but also the manner in which Antarctic studies illuminate global problems'. The result is a brief yet comprehensive overview. Beck sorts through various disciplines, noting for each the current level of attention to Antarctica and elucidating the topic's potential

for additional study. Embedded within this description are a useful review of the literature and thought-provoking suggestions for specific lines of further inquiry.

Dr Beck is Reader in International History at Kingston Polytechnic and has published extensively on the role of Antarctica in international relations. He naturally focuses his study on development of the Antarctic Treaty system, particularly in the past decade, and raises a series of questions concerning sovereignty, organisational and policy analysis, the Treaty as a model for other regimes, resource development, and international environmental diplomacy and politics. Science and geography receive briefer treatment, with the emphasis placed upon the continent's key position in the study of global systems and processes. The imaginative literature of the south polar regions commands a scant two pages, the visual and performing arts a paragraph, demonstrating the relative paucity of research in these fields.

Following the fifty-page text of this study, Dr Beck provides a summary outline of the Antarctic Treaty, a selective bibliography, and a guide to academic programmes offering formal Antarctic studies. He also poses 125 topical questions of varying complexity for discussion and further study; these augment his many suggestions embodied in the text.

Why study Antarctica? demonstrates that Antarctic research may be fruitfully pursued from within many disciplines. This book is recommended as an introduction to the part played by Antarctica in current thought, as a learning resource for schools and universities, and as a source of inspiration for academic research. (Janice Meadows, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

NORTHERN REGIONS COMPARED

THE CHALLENGE OF NORTHERN REGIONS. Jull, Peter and Roberts, S. (editors). 1991. Darwin, North Australia Research Unit, Australian National University.

This excellent compilation pulls together contributions from Australia, Norway, Canada and the USA on aspects of each of their northern regions. There are many useful comparisons to be made between them in terms of history, political development, economic and social characteristics. Several of the pieces, such as those by Brantenburg on the Sami and Jull on the Northwest Territories, describe in great detail the history and context of their subject so that the reader can develop a much deeper understanding of why certain conditions prevail now.

The emphasis of the collection is on problems of constitutional development for aboriginal peoples, and the differences between European-based and native systems. One would expect compromise to be inevitable in the settlement of land claims, and the development of aboriginal constitutions within larger national ones. However, it