

policy, the transition from trading post to settlement, relations between Inuit and white Canadians, and the politicisation of Inuit culture. But again, the reader also learns about Matthiasson arriving in the Arctic as a young anthropology student and about his life with an Inuit family.

Very few books about the north written by anthropologists have made an outstanding contribution to general anthropological theory. Many, however, have added to the vast literature of popular accounts of Arctic peoples. Neither of these two books makes any theoretical claims, nor are they intended to; indeed, Matthiasson says that he 'shied away from discussion of anthropological issues of theory and methodology' (page 158). However, both are good examples of the kind of anthropological literature contributing to an ever-increasing popularisation of anthropology, and will perhaps raise methodological questions about ethnographic writing. This should not be taken as criticism — they are well worth reading. (Mark Nuttall, Department of Human Sciences, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH.)

THE NATURE OF RUSSIA. John Massey Stewart. 1992. London: Boxtree Limited. 192p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-85283-138-3. £18.99.

Throughout the Cold War, reports and rumours of long-term abuse of the Russian countryside by the Soviet government were a cause for concern in the west. It appears that these concerns have been justified, and the true horror of environmental destruction and misuse is beginning to emerge. As recently as April 1993, Russia officially admitted to the dumping of radioactive waste in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. John Massey Stewart's book, based upon three one-hour episodes of 'Survival' shown on ITV in 1992, addresses some of these issues, while at the same time managing to convey a sense of the beauty of Russia and its many indigenous species of plants and animals.

The first chapter gives an overview of Russian history as it has affected the land — from the use of fur-bearing animals as a source of tax beginning in the ninth century (the fur-tribute system began in 859 and lasted for almost 1000 years), through the slash-and-burn techniques used by the first agriculturalists, to the disastrous collectivisation of farms initiated by Stalin in the 1950s. The remaining seven chapters take distinct types of habitat (tundra, taiga, steppe, the Caucasus mountain ranges, the volcanic Kamchatka Peninsula, the Russian far east with its monsoon-like summers and bitter winters, and lakes and rivers). In each, the wildlife is carefully described, and information from history is used to compare the status of flora and fauna today. The author describes the chequered history of the *zapovedniki* (reserves) and *zakazniki* (reserves with limited protection) under a variety of regimes: the first conservation order for game in Russia was in the eleventh century; Peter the Great (1682–1725) ordered afforestation schemes in the southern steppe; Catherine

the Great (1762–1796) abolished these (although she banned hunting between March and June); by 1917, the first six nature reserves were established; in 1951 and 1961, many reserves were abolished; in 1990, there were around 160 reserves, some of which are protected under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme.

However, the book not only concerns itself about the effect of humans on the Russian environment, but about the diversity and size of the country and its unexploited wildernesses. The quality of the illustrations in the book is outstanding, and, although this is a book for the general public, the text is informative, detailed, and well-written. (Liz Cruwys, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

GLACIAL MARINE SEDIMENTATION: PALEOCLIMATIC SIGNIFICANCE. John B. Anderson and Gail M. Ashley (Editors). 1991. Boulder: Geological Society of America (Special Paper 261). viii + 232 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-8137-2261-6. US\$47.50.

This Special Paper produced by the Geological Society of America arises from a symposium on glacial marine sedimentation held in Denver in 1988. It consists of 14 papers with the overall aim of elaborating the main differences between glacial marine sedimentation in high polar and more temperate latitudes. The main conclusion is that, although local glacier variability often confuses the issue, there are broad contrasts in the environment of deposition, which are reflected in the sediments. In temperate environments, glacial marine sedimentation is characterized by the presence of tidewater glaciers and abundant meltwater; these produce deltas, fans, stratification, and a dominance of suspension deposits. In polar environments, glacial marine sedimentation is dominated by the presence of floating ice shelves, and there is a near absence of meltwater; thus, there are few deltas, and fans and deposits are typically massive, laminated units dominated by sediment gravity flows.

These conclusions are based on an interesting mix of papers. One group of papers looks at present-day sedimentation in Antarctica and Alaska. Highlights are the various models of sea-shelf sedimentation in Antarctica and the high rates of sedimentation focused at the termini of Alaskan tidewater glaciers ($24 \text{ g cm}^{-2} \text{ d}^{-1}$). Also, it was remarkable to discover that graded sediment couplets form as frequently as twice a day in response to tides. Other papers look at glacial marine sedimentation during the warming stage of the last glaciation in the Canadian high Arctic and the Gulf of Maine. The Maine papers are particularly interesting for their insight into the large volume of sediments associated with the retreat of the Laurentide ice margin as it withdrew from the late-glacial sea, the big eskers, and sub-aqueous fans, and the evidence that the esker deposits within one ridge must be time-transgressive. Finally, there are papers looking at glacial marine sedimentation in the late Cenozoic (Alaska) and detailed discussions of two late Precambrian and two late

Palaeozoic examples in North America, Antarctica, southern Africa, and Australia.

All in all, the editors have displayed a nice balance in the volume. The papers are good, some excellent, and they are neatly brought together by a foreword and an overview. The volume is a significant step forward in bringing together a wide variety of empirical evidence from polar and cool-temperate environments, and in putting forward models based on this evidence. (David Sugden, Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh, Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9XP.)

BRIEF REVIEWS

ACROSS THE TOP OF THE WORLD. David E. Fisher. 1992. New York and Toronto: Random House. 256 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-679-41116-X. US\$25.00.

Subtitled 'To the North Pole by sled, balloon, airplane and nuclear icebreaker,' this is primarily an account of the author's journey as a tourist aboard the Soviet nuclear-powered icebreaker *Sovetskiy Soyuz*, during the first-ever surface voyage across the Arctic Ocean via the North Pole. Fisher, a nuclear physicist, had hoped to combine oceanographic research with his tourism. Foiled by Soviet bureaucracy, instead he combined tourism with history: the references to sled, balloon, and airplane cover the secondary function of the book, which is to present a series of jaunty and strongly opinionated accounts of earlier journeys toward the Pole by explorers from John Franklin to Wally Herbert.

Fisher has done his homework and writes well: on both travel and historical scores this is an entertaining book. The icebreaker left Murmansk on 27 July 1991, visited Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, reached the Pole on 4 August, called at Ostrov Bennetta and Ostrov Genriyetty, skirted Ostrov Vrangelya (more bureaucracy prevented a scheduled landing), landed briefly on Ostrov Arakamchechen (to meet 500 walrus and one Russian), and reached Provideniya on 16 August. Though travelling in luxury, Fisher does not give an impression that the journey was joyful: there was a great deal of noisy icebreaking, much fog, and many fellow-passengers, few of whom come across attractively. However, the reader is not overburdened with cruise details; at every second or third page Fisher digresses into history, and the reader travels instead with Franklin, Nansen, Cook, or Peary. There are a few colour prints and informative end-plate maps, but beware: according to the arrows on the cruise plot, *Sovetskiy Soyuz* crossed the Arctic basin backwards.

THE ISLAND OF SOUTH GEORGIA. Robert Headland. 1992. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xv + 293 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-521-42474-7. £19.95; US\$39.95.

This is the paperback edition of the 1984 publication that was the first truly comprehensive examination of one of the most remote islands in the world. To a certain extent,

it is written in the style of the classic nineteenth-century, natural history tome, with sections considering geography and administration; travel and communications; flora and fauna; and geology, glaciology, meteorology, and other physical sciences. Despite these excellent generalist accounts, its primary emphasis is definitely the history of the island: from its discovery in 1675 through the first landing on and claiming of it, by Captain James Cook, a century later; its prominence as a centre for Antarctic sealing; its role in the great maritime adventures of Ernest Shackleton; its economic rebirth as a whaling centre; and concluding with the British–Argentine conflict of 1982.

The book is abundantly illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps, and it includes 10 valuable appendices. Regrettably, however, these appendices, like the main text of the book, are not adequately referenced. This problem is not resolved by the relatively brief bibliography, which ignores the substantial literature on the island with the comment that it 'is scattered and much is difficult to obtain' (page 270).

Despite this, and that it has not truly been updated since its first publication, it is, as it was almost a decade ago, a work of considerable value.

TRADITIONAL GREENLANDIC MUSIC. Michael Hauser. 1993. Sisimiut: Forlaget Kragen/ULO. 294 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 87-89160-01-0.

Music has traditionally played an integral role in Greenlandic communal life, most notably in the form of drum-songs, in which one person sings, drums, and dances simultaneously. These were used to ward off evil spirits, to quieten children, as a duelling method where two people mocked each other in a ceremonial argument, and to guide an individual's behaviour.

At the end of the nineteenth century, missionaries attempted to suppress all manifestations of paganism in Greenland, including drum-songs. The results were the disappearance of certain types of drum-song, a general loss of interest among Greenlanders in their traditional music, and a strong Euro-American influence on contemporary Greenlandic music.

This substantial book represents the culmination of the author's work on Greenlandic and Inuit music, which goes back for more than 30 years. The author presents 55 songs, by region, with notation, text, and comments, representing all types of traditional Greenlandic music, but mainly drum-songs. These offer an insight into the lives and customs of Greenlanders, past and present, and also, by comparing their characteristic structures with those of Inuit songs in Canada, they throw light on migration patterns and the effects of outside influences.

Although this is clearly an in-depth study of the subject, the author is aiming to interest a wide audience, through the inclusion of many black-and-white photographs depicting the Greenlandic people and their traditional way of life. However, given the amount of the book devoted to musical analysis, this book would best be