

Arctic or the Antarctic. (Beau Riffenburgh, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

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BELOW THE CONVERGENCE: VOYAGES TOWARD ANTARCTICA, 1688–1839. Alan Gurney. 1997. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company. xii + 315 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-393-03949-8. £18.95.

In *Below the convergence*, Alan Gurney has produced an interesting work on the history of Antarctic exploration before 1839. Although generally a work of value, it does have a number of weaknesses. Do read on, however; the book merits attention.

The book is intended for the general audience as a popular account of the early voyages to the far south. However, when an author assumes the role of historian, he should take on the obligations of that profession, and this duty has not been fulfilled throughout this work. Four weaknesses must be noted. Chapter one is a disaster — and I strongly urge readers to skip it so as not to mar an otherwise valuable book. Standard practice requires that when one writes about the past, the past tense is used. The use of the present tense — as in this book — frequently marks an account as sophomoric and barely even worth the general reader's time. The second problem concerns sources. Even in a popular — as opposed to a scholarly — retelling, the historian has an obligation to provide sources. Mathematicians cannot be taken seriously without proof, historians without sources. Often while reading this volume, one feels that Gurney has a particularly interesting quote or reference, but the reader is left in a void because only rarely is a hint of authorship given. Third, Gurney falls into the trap of only rarely reminding the reader of the year. In a work that covers 150 years, written for the general public, the old rule regarding broadcasting a baseball game is best kept in mind — give the score every three minutes. Finally, Gurney was not well served by those that read the manuscript before publication — too many confusing antecedents, weak sentence constructions, and verb-tense difficulties remain. Given the merits of the volume, Gurney deserved better.

On the other hand, if the reader begins the book with chapter two, the story of exploration in south polar waters is well told with an occasional flash of literary grace. Although the material in chapter two might have been

placed to better advantage in chronological order, the discussion of the basics of navigation before the mid-nineteenth century will clarify some points to readers. Those people who have read Dava Sobel's *Longitude* will find little that is new in the discussion of the problem associated with the development of the chronometer and may gain an appreciation for why Sobel's book has been so well received. Strangely, although Sobel's book was published in 1995, was widely reviewed, and made several best-seller lists, Gurney does not include it in the bibliography for that chapter.

Gurney launches into a discussion of scurvy — or, as he terms it, the plague of the sea — taking the reader through the history of the fight to control the disease while also describing the standard diets aboard ships in the period. Readers who know the outline of this problem in Antarctic exploration will appreciate this succinct explanation.

The departure into natural history to discuss the inhabitants of the regions — seals, flying birds, and penguins — will be welcomed by those whose knowledge of this subject is limited, as Gurney ably summarizes essential details to provide the reader with a good introduction to this part of the story.

The author provides a clear presentation of Edmond Halley's role in the period before the discovery of Antarctica. Halley's life and contributions to science are clearly and concisely presented, and many readers will gain a better appreciation of his contributions to the science of his day.

At last the story arrives at James Cook, a point that many would see as a viable opening for Antarctic history proper. Acknowledging the unparalleled value of the contributions of J.C. Beaglehole to this topic, the author provides a fine abbreviated account of Cook's life, and places his Antarctic work in the context of both Cook's activities and the scientific work of his times. The account of the southern voyage of *Resolution* and *Adventure* is an admirable short summary of this enterprise, often seen as the beginning of modern Antarctic exploration.

Building on this material, a lengthy chapter takes the reader through several interrelated stories. The sad story of the expansion of sealing into south polar waters and the decimation of the fur seal is recounted. Then, the lesser known but unquestionably great exploits of Thaddeus Bellingshausen are given fair and appropriate treatment. The question of who can claim credit for discovering Antarctica is even-handedly answered.

In turn, the story of James Weddell's fortuitous great southern voyage in which he reached 74° 15'S is related. Weddell's exploits and those of Matthew Brisbane, who commanded the second ship in Weddell's expedition, are discussed in two chapters. Gurney then takes up the rather less-well-known exploits of John Biscoe, who made the third circumnavigation of Antarctica while in the service of the firm of Enderby Brothers, one of the most famous companies involved in exploiting Antarctic waters. His

balanced account also acknowledges the firm of Daniel Bennett and appears to reflect the scholarship of A.G.E. Jones on that issue. The exploits of Peter Kemp and John Balleny are covered in ample detail, and the author shows a real appreciation for the interconnections between various nineteenth-century explorers.

H.R. Mill's *Siege of the South Pole* has remained the classic account of this period for more than 90 years, and while that work has not been superseded by the current volume, Gurney has produced a fine and readable introduction to the history of Antarctica to 1839, a worthwhile introduction for the novice, and a handy review for the serious Antarctic history buff. (T.H. Baughman, History Department, Benedictine College, Atchison, Kansas 66002, USA.)

THE NORTHERN COPPER INUIT: A HISTORY. Richard G. Condon with Julia Ogina. 1996. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. xxii + 216 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-8020-0849-6. \$Can45.00.

This volume is a fitting last contribution by one of the most prolific anthropologists to have worked among Canadian Inuit in recent years. *The Northern Copper Inuit*, despite its sub-title, is in every sense a true work of ethnohistory, documenting the recent past of the *Ulukhaktokmiut* (the people of present-day Holman) as much as possible through the work of their elders. Unlike most such works, which often lean overheavily on archival and published sources, here Dr Condon and Ms Ogina nicely interweave such information with the interview material they developed with Holman's elders.

The first two chapters cover the pre-European archaeology and early contact relations of the Copper Inuit bands that lived on western Victoria Island and northeastern Banks Island with outsiders. This material is set out in a manner that can be appreciated by specialist and non-specialist alike and well prepares the ground for what are the strongest elements of the book, the perceptions (and perspective) of the community's oldest members on their culture from the end of the contact period to the growth of modern Holman. In four chapters that take the reader from the late traditional period of Copper Inuit society through the fur trade and early government era to Holman life in the mid-1980s, the authors skillfully blend the voices of the oldest living *Ulukhaktokmiut* generation with each other in a way that adds important texture to the ethnographic and historical detail gathered on the Western Inuit by Jenness, Stefansson, Rasmussen, Damas, and Usher. Indeed, the final chapter, which covers much of Condon's own time in Holman, provides as encompassing an overview of a modern Canadian Inuit community as may be found in the contemporary literature.

The Northern Copper Inuit is written in a clear, jargon-free style, reflecting in no small part the first author's deep belief that the information researchers develop about Inuit should be as much for them as for non-Inuit. In addition, an abundance of ethnographic photographs (including

some of Condon's own of the present community), several black-and-white reproductions of paintings by Cresswell and Adams, and numerous Holman Inuit art prints (unfortunately, these historical and art graphics are not in color) illustrate the text.

While various specialists may find points (and there are a few) with which to quibble, the many strengths of this volume far outweigh the odd error or omission. Clearly, *The Northern Copper Inuit* demonstrates how the incorporation of the voice and view of native northerners about their own history and contemporary life can contribute to our larger understanding of the Inuit. What this book further marks, as Nellie Cournoyea's foreword notes, is how Richard Condon also saw research as meaning more than the objectification of Inuit. This is a book that should find a place in the libraries of every student of Inuit culture and can also serve as an excellent undergraduate text. (George Wenzel, Department of Geography, McGill University, 805 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2K6, Canada.)

MANAGEMENT, TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY IN THE ARCTIC (THE NORTH). Lise Lyck and V.I. Boyko (Editors). 1996. Dordrecht, London, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers. xvi + 491 p, hard cover. ISBN 0-7923-4023-X. £169.00; \$US249.00; Dfl 375.00.

'Mega biblion, mega kakon,' wrote Callimachus of Alexandria in the third century BC, and these wise words, literally 'big book, big bad,' could well be applied to the work under review.

Size alone does not contribute to a book's badness; one must also approach its assessment from the point of view of use value. The editors of *Management, technology and human resources policy in the Arctic (the north)* proclaim their work as a special contribution to the field of northern studies and insist upon the reader's awareness of this: 'please be aware of the uniqueness in many respects of this book....Being aware of the uniqueness of this book will give you the possibility to think a little deeper of the aspects being raised and it can, furthermore, serve as a useful background information for your understanding of the articles' (page xv). The editors then go on to describe the book as:

interesting, foresighting [*sic*] and promising for the future Arctic socio-economic scientific cooperation and for the cooperation between the NATO countries and Russia which the NATO Scientific and Environmental Affairs Division took initiative to and supported this advanced research....It is a proof of a profound understanding of cooperation and socio-economic development as a peace and welfare creating activity. (pages xv-xvi)

Whew. These two excerpts give a taste of what is to come, both topically and linguistically. Apparently language is unimportant in a book on human-resources policy, especially to those eager to see their names in print: 'As comprehensive language corrections would have delayed