

time-honored, handed-down and modern knowledge?

The book is also about emerging indigenous-rights discourses in Russia, and here lies its formidable strength. It urges effective representation of indigenous peoples not only on the regional level but also in the highest levels of power; respectful and just social solutions to issues of territorial property rights; federal and legal support for the creation of economic market relations for indigenous communities with other national and international communities; and state support for indigenous economic self-sufficiency and political sovereignty. Within the context of the Russian nation-state, the authors argue, debates around ethnic identity and indigenous political participation must include freedom from political and economic domination by others; free and agreed-upon political and legal relations with the government of their own country; control over economic development and cultural, linguistic, and spiritual life; and the right to govern their own territories and lands. Indigenous peoples in Russia, as culturally distinct societies, should be in possession of their own representative political bodies and institutions. Yet by arguing for special minority or differentiated citizenship rights, the authors encounter the difficulty of legitimizing such demands to a multi-national public in Russia. And, maybe more importantly, they encounter the double-edged nature of human-rights discourse not grounded in universality, but based on cultural distinctiveness. On the one hand, the argument for special rights is based on the recognition and affirmation of indigenous traditions and the rights that follow from them. On the other hand, the authors find themselves in the dilemma that they can only endorse and support special rights if these rights infringe not upon the rights of all people. It is precisely this (moral) predicament that creates one of the greatest stumbling blocks for the recognition and legal endorsement of indigenous rights.

The book raises another important issue, that of sovereignty. The authors argue that it is crucial to formulate indigenous law codes in such a way that they are compatible with existing legal state norms (page 31). Again, an issue, connected to the implicit dilemma of indigenous-rights discourses emerges. After all, if indigenous laws need to be congruous with national laws, whose sovereignty comes first? Can indigenous communities be truly sovereign if they have to accommodate their own laws within the national law? Whose sovereignty, then, is served, protected, and maintained?

*Neotraditionalism in the Russian north* is a significant book, appearing at a crucial moment in time. Its importance concerns not only indigenous communities in the Russian north but extends into much broader debates on indigenous and human rights, sovereignty, and the democratic polity. It is a critical reflection of the current predicaments faced by indigenous peoples in the Russian north, a marvelous treatise on some of the most crucial issues faced by northern Russian indigenous communities, and a strong challenge to think about the legal and social problems in

the Russian north. I sincerely hope that the opening that this book has created, and the discussion that it has initiated, will not stop here but will propel indigenous activists, communities, and social scientists to find new ways to think and communicate about these issues in less divisive, more cooperative, and allied ways. (Petra Rethmann, Department of Anthropology, McMaster University, Chester New Hall, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4L9, Canada.)

**ESKIMOS AND EXPLORERS.** Wendell H. Oswalt. 1999. Second edition. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press. xiii + 341 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-8032-8613-9. £13.50.

This is the second edition of Oswalt's well-known work that first appeared in 1979, and, as such, it will be well-known to readers of *Polar Record*. Most of the text is identical to that of the original, but the final chapter, 'Before and after explorers,' has been revised, quite radically in places. These revisions include the incorporation of recent work on prehistory and on language classification, and on recent developments relating to political status. The writer includes in the preface a robust defence of his title in the face of attacks on the use of the word 'Eskimo' on the grounds that it is not the 'self identification' of the peoples in question. He points out that the word is of long incorporation into English and that there is no one single word that includes all the peoples concerned save 'Eskimo.'

Be that as it may, and it seems certain that the writer will be subject to criticism for persisting with what is perceived as an anachronism, this is a fine book as was the first edition. The strategy adopted by the writer is to deal with descriptions by outsiders of the peoples included within his definition both chronologically — starting with 'The Norse experience' and moving through the contacts made by searchers for the Northwest Passage and for the old Norse colony in Greenland — to a more regional description of the West Greenlanders, polar peoples, East Greenlanders, and so on, concluding with the Alaskan Inuit and Yuit. He points out that the modes of life of these peoples were a great deal more varied than is usually assumed, some, for example, being more or less exclusively fish-eaters. This lengthy survey comes before the rewritten final chapter, which is essentially a review bringing the whole up to date.

Some of the explorers were more astute observers of the peoples they encountered than others, and, of course, permanent residents had a much greater opportunity for learning the language and culture than did mere seekers for the Passage or for Franklin. To that extent, the most satisfactory descriptions are those by the residents of West Greenland, prominent among whom was Hans P. Egede, who wrote the first major work about Eskimos, *A description of Greenland*, in 1745. Oswalt devotes 14 pages to an analysis of Egede's book and proceeds to a statement of those areas of culture which Egede 'underemphasised or

ignored.' These include giving little information on artifacts and manufactured items apart from boats and clothing. David Crantz, the next major observer of the scene, was a Moravian missionary, and he gave much more information about several subjects, for example the attitudes of the people and concerning their weapons. His book *The history of Greenland* (1767) devoted some 100 pages to his description. But, of course, some explorers made valuable contributions to the knowledge of the peoples in question, and Oswalt singles out in this respect George F. Lyon, William Edward Parry, Gustav Holm, Lavrentiy A. Zagoskin, and Elisha Kent Kane, among officers, and John Simpson among medical men.

Oswalt's text provides a comprehensive overview of such contacts and its value is greatly increased by the fact that each chapter is followed by a bibliographic commentary providing full details of the sources, not only by expedition or writer but also by subject. For example, in the section following the chapter on the search for the Northwest Passage, 'The perfect craze,' there is a paragraph on the question of whether the Eskimos were fat. Oswalt mentions those who wrote on either side of the question and refers to the autopsy of an Eskimo by Edward Doddinge in 1577. Other topics mentioned in such sections include 'Arctic hysteria,' the hunting techniques of polar bears, and trade markets.

The book is very well illustrated. There are no fewer than 69 pictures, all of which are taken from works referred to in the text. This assists the reader to appreciate the points being made by the writers. An example of this is the picture taken from Crantz depicting several different types of weapons used against aquatic species by the inhabitants of West Greenland. The preparation of this picture was no mean task. It must have involved many hours of observing how each weapon was used, what its adaptations were to the particular prey for which it was intended, and not least a certain artistic dexterity in the draftsmanship. Another observer who was interested in weapons was Henry Ellis, who sailed with William Moor in 1746, and a beautiful illustration from his book published in 1748 is presented. This shows 'The great harpoon for whales,' with six labelled parts and 'The small harpoon, its bladder & barb, with the instrument to dart it at the seals.' Of course, not all the pictures are as sophisticated as these. Some of the earlier ones, for example that showing the first illustration of hostilities between explorers and Eskimos in 1577, are little more than caricatures, but this in itself is interesting since it demonstrates the image of the peoples presented to those who read the explorers' records. The book also has two maps that are, unusually in this cost-conscious age, of the foldout type. One is entitled 'Aboriginal population and distribution of tribes,' and the other is of the placenames referred to in the text. This, however, also includes the explorers whose names are associated with particular areas.

There are two appendices — one relating to the first map and the other to 'The Eskimo culture area' — a full bibliography, and two indices.

To sum up: a worthwhile second edition of a book that has long been known as a valuable introduction to the subject. Those who read the first edition when it came out should certainly refresh their memories with this new edition. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

**ANTARCTIC ODYSSEY.** Graham Collier and Patricia Graham Collier. 1999. London: Robinson Publishing. xiv + 194 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-84119-104-3. £19.99.

*Antarctic odyssey* is a cleverly crafted book in which the authors' seven visits to the Antarctic have been seamlessly molded into two cruises. The first leaves from Punta Arenas, crosses the Drake Passage, and spends some time at Deception and Elephant islands. The various aspects of the journey are graphically described, giving the reader a good feel for the 'tempestuous seas and howling winds and pounding surf and the petrels and albatrosses that carve great spatial arabesques as they sweep the sky.' Once ashore he wanders through penguin rookeries and in amongst seal wallows before recalling the exploits performed there by the men of the heroic era of Antarctic exploration. From Elephant Island and Shackleton's epic boat journey, the authors take the reader down the western coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, through the picturesque Gerlache Strait into the Bellingshausen Sea and on to Peter I Island for an all-too-brief sojourn ashore, registering in the process only the ninth recorded landing.

From Peter I Island it's full speed ahead to the Ross Sea, Ross Island, and on to Cape Adare. Here the book earns its subtitle — 'In the footsteps of the South Polar explorers' — as the better-known stories of various polar parties, including Douglas Mawson's lone trek after the loss of Mertz and Ninnis and the privations suffered by Victor Campbell's northern party, are recalled.

The second cruise follows Mawson's British, Australian and New Zealand Antarctic Research Expeditions of 1929–31 from Cape Town to the sub-Antarctic islands of Crozet, Kerguelen, and Heard, on to Klua Point on the Mawson Coast, then along the coast across Prydz Bay to the vicinity of the Vestfold Hills, before sailing north to Fremantle. The format is as before, with comparisons drawn between the two sides of the Antarctic; Mawson is the major explorer here, and emperor penguins dominate the last chapter. During the course of their travels, the authors visited several Antarctic bases, and I was disappointed that they did not investigate these further.

The book is lavishly illustrated with many full-page photographs, all of which follow the text admirably, although there is nothing spectacular about any of the wildlife photos. Indeed, the rear view of a pair of macaroni penguins going for a walk gives the impression of all-too-brief a time spent ashore. There are nine maps that cover both historical and geographical points, but several of them appear to be crammed in and have lost the explanatory key. *Antarctic odyssey* is a small coffee-table book suitable