

benchmark for discussion of ice-sheet volumes, but Siegert's book will undoubtedly remain the most useful undergraduate text on the subject and a useful reference for researchers.

In terms of balance, there are the usual leanings towards an author's research area: the Antarctic ice sheet is well covered and is very up to date. Similarly the book provides one of the few textbook accounts of glacial sedimentation of continental shelves and is extremely current, incorporating much recent work from the northern European and Greenland margins. The Eurasian ice sheet is also discussed in detail, and provides a helpful starting point to enter into this difficult literature. Chapter 13, which is an account of the dimensions and dynamics of the smaller ice sheets and ice caps (for example, Patagonia, New Zealand, Iceland, and Tibet), is noticeably less current than the other chapters. Although volumetrically less significant, these ice sheets and ice caps are becoming increasingly important to understanding the mechanisms of environmental change. For example, study of the behaviour of the Patagonian ice sheet provides a marvellous opportunity to investigate a long latitudinal transect through southern South America, but some of the more recent work is not referred to (such as the work of Lowell and others 1995). Iceland is covered best in this chapter, and Siegert acknowledges its key role next to the Nordic seas region of deep water formation, which means that it is increasingly important to understand its potential impacts on (and response to) changes in North Atlantic circulation. However, of the regions discussed, certainly New Zealand, mainland Europe, and Patagonia could be significantly updated. The basic principles of glacial geology and geomorphology are rather rushed in chapter 4, but are well backed up by references.

In general the production quality is high and most diagrams have been redrawn or (in the case of line diagrams) reproduced at a high resolution. However, there are a few notable exceptions where reproductions are of low quality for a modern textbook (Figs 10.6, 11.4, 11.6, and 13.3) and should be updated in any future editions. In a number of cases the figure caption does not adequately explain the full range of symbols on the diagram (for example, there is no explanation of the various ocean current acronyms in Fig. 8.4).

I recommend this book to anyone interested in Late Quaternary ice sheets, as it provides an excellent back-up to some of the basic undergraduate texts on Quaternary environmental change, with cutting-edge ideas and challenging hypotheses that could be used to stimulate students during the later years of undergraduate Quaternary courses. (Mike Bentley, Department of Geography, University of Durham, Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE.)

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THE RACE TO THE WHITE CONTINENT. Alan Gurney. 2000. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company. x + 320 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-393-05004-1. £19.95; US\$26.95.

'To make out precisely where the different expeditions went, what they wanted, and what they effected, is no easy task' (*The Saturday Review* 1859).

The above words were written in connection with the final stages of the Franklin search, but they could equally well apply to the main subject of Alan Gurney's latest book: the three great national expeditions of the late 1830s and early 1840s. These, of course, were French under Jules Sébastien César Dumont d'Urville in 1837–40, American under Charles Wilkes in 1838–42, and British under James Clark Ross in 1839–43.

Gurney's first book, *Below the convergence: voyages toward Antarctica, 1699–1839*, was published in 1997. The present volume is the sequel foreshadowed in the final chapter of that book. *Below the convergence* was reviewed in this journal by Professor T.H. Baughman who, while having a generally favourable opinion, subjected it to fairly severe criticism on four grounds. These were that the author avoided the past tense, that he 'rarely reminded the reader of the year,' that he did not cite his sources adequately, and that the editing of the work had been poor (Baughman 1997: 251). The present reviewer's conclusion is that the author's work with regard to the first two points is definitely better, but that, concerning the other two, the situation is, if anything, even worse. This is a real pity, since Gurney has written a work of high quality and one that could so easily have been *the* book on the subject, meeting the needs of both the general reader with Antarctic interests and the more specialist historian for years to come.

Gurney certainly does not believe in pitching straight into his subject, and, indeed, the reader only arrives in the Antarctic, so to speak, after about 140 pages. But much of the preceding text is very interesting, as the author provides a series of discursive background essays on subjects such as the world as known in 1830, and the advances in exploration from the eighteenth century, with pertinent character sketches of the main participants both at home and at sea. The chapter entitled 'Blubber hunters and traders' is a very interesting account of the whaling trade, with a concentration on New England, and ends with comment on the immense efforts made in hydrography by the Royal Navy in the period following the Napoleonic

wars, in contrast with those of the United States, which were effectively nil. The two following chapters, 'The sea surveyors – French' and 'The sea surveyors – British,' cover such expeditions as those led by d'Urville in 1826–29, La Perouse, Bougainville, de Kermadec and d'Entrecasteaux, Baudin, and, in particular, that of de Freycinet, which is illustrated by frequent reference to the journal kept by his wife Rose, who had been, in effect, smuggled aboard. The British chapter concentrates on Cook and Flinders, with due mention of, among others, George Bass, Vancouver, and Bligh, and this leads directly into the next, entitled 'Terra Australis.' This concentrates almost entirely on Flinders and seems to have little directly to do with the subject of the book, save for the fact that John Franklin had been one of Flinders' midshipmen, and that he was governor of Van Diemen's Land in the late 1830s. This was when Hobart was visited by d'Urville and Ross on their expeditions, and it was there that Ross heard of the discoveries made by Wilkes. Gurney points out that of the three expeditions Wilkes' was the largest and had 'been the longest in gestation and birth,' and uses this as a lead in to the next 90 or so pages, which are a masterly account of the Wilkes expedition, from inception to arrival home.

Before arriving at the Wilkes expedition, however, the book has had much to confuse the reader, particularly if he or she is a non-specialist. Frequently the expeditions are not introduced in chronological order, and the text jumps from one to the other. This was a defect noted by Professor Baughman in his earlier review. The author has attempted to place the expeditions in their context — pointing out, for example, that the search for La Perouse was 'the Holy Grail' of French exploration — but his comments on that expedition, which started in 1785, follow his account of d'Urville's 1826–29 expedition. One conclusion to be drawn from this is that the reader would have been greatly helped had the author had the benefit of serious editorial advice or, at the very least, had there been an appendix consisting of a simple chronological list of all the expeditions mentioned in the book, with the names of the vessels, commanders, and other significant persons associated with them. One would have thought that this might have been an obvious suggestion by the editor.

However, the section about Wilkes is the best in the book, and it is excellent. Gurney has accomplished a large amount of original research, especially with regard to the inception and planning of the expedition, and he makes it clear that the latter was almost too dignified an expression to describe what went on in the very long period between the original idea and the departure of the ships. His portrayal of Wilkes himself is convincing, and his deficiencies as a leader are made explicit. Due credit is given to the work of the expedition, often in conditions of much greater severity than those of the French or British expeditions. That these were often the result of inadequate planning or selection of a leader in no way reduces the admiration one feels for the work and determination of the subordinate officers and crews of the vessels, all of which

is clearly appreciated through Gurney's lucid account.

Following the account of Wilkes is one of d'Urville's expedition, starting with a description of his early life. This, it should be recalled, is some 150 pages after the introduction of d'Urville in the context of his 1826–29 expedition. While valuable and very interesting, the entire section is shorter than that concerning the Wilkes expedition, and the author provides much less information concerning the background to it.

From then on it is virtually all Ross. And again the description is very good, although the story is much better known than that of the Wilkes expedition, and it is clear that the author has had to do rather less original research in compiling it. He provides an excellent account of the 'Magnetic Crusade' and full details of the discoveries and scientific work undertaken by the expedition. He comments with point on the 'dispute' between Wilkes and Ross concerning the 'land' sighted by the former, over which the latter subsequently sailed.

The work concludes with a summing-up concerning the events following the expeditions — which in Wilkes' case included being court-martialled and in d'Urville's being killed in a railway accident — and an assessment of their achievements. Finally, Gurney refers to the 1845 expedition of *Pagoda* under T.E.L. Moore. This had a magnetic objective, as did the first scientific expedition, that of Halley in *Paramore*. Therefore, 'With pleasing symmetry both voyages had set out on a tide of magnetic curiosity.'

The illustrations, mostly from contemporary accounts of the different expeditions, are well chosen, and the maps, which are together at the end, are based upon the same principle as those of the author's first book, being mostly track charts upon a polar projection.

The first general comment concerning the book relates to the title. This is remarkably bland. The author states that his original intention was that it should be entitled 'Stirrers abroad,' a direct quote from Richard Hakluyt, no doubt with an appropriate sub-title. This would have stirred the interest of the present reviewer, and, he suspects, of more potential readers than the existing title, but it was removed at the instigation of the editor. Criticism is also due for the blurb on the inside of the dust cover. This claims *inter alia* that the three expeditions were 'launched simultaneously.' This is no doubt designed to stimulate the interest of the potential reader by stressing the 'race' of the title. But it is simply nonsense: d'Urville's ships returned to Toulon on 6 November 1840; Ross' departed from Margate on 6 September 1839.

The whole work demonstrates the vast amount of reading that the author must have done in preparation for the writing of it. However, as in his previous work, the referencing is virtually non-existent, and this renders the book much less valuable than it could have been. Indeed the situation is worse than before. In the earlier book, the works in the bibliography were at least grouped by chapter, but in the present book there is simply one, albeit impressive,

list at the end. One cannot understand the editorial policy here. A series of footnoted references in small type would cover, perhaps, 20 pages. As it is, anyone who wishes to follow up one of the author's points will have to do a considerable amount of work to get to it.

The author's prose style is light and pleasant, and it is enlivened by some colourful phraseology. Thus there is 'eldritch screaming' (page 149), 'booming south' (page 267), 'crump through the ice' (page 250), 'pawky Scottish surgeon' (page 220), 'a woolding of canvas and pitch' (page 144), 'peacocking around London' (page 76), and 'ploutering through the atlantic swells' (page 136). This makes for entertaining reading, and, in truth, the book is very difficult to put down.

Moreover, there seem to be remarkably few slips considering the enormous breadth of the material covered by the author. It is, of course, the Treaty of Waitangi (page 201), Deception Island is surely to the west not east of the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula (page 142), Flinders surveyed northwards along the east coast of Australia not the west (page 79), and if Bellingshausen is to be called Thaddeus then Krusenstern should be called Ivan not Adam (page 36).

In summary, this is a very good book that will well repay the reading. Professor Baughman, in his review of Gurney's earlier work commented that he 'was not well served by those that read the manuscript before publication' and indicated that the book was of such worth that the author deserved better. The present reviewer can only concur with that judgement in the present context. This book is a very fine effort on which the author is to be congratulated. One hopes that, if he continues his work in Antarctic history, he will seek more efficient editorial assistance. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

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NUNAVUT: INUIT REGAIN CONTROL OF THEIR LANDS AND THEIR LIVES. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks, and Peter Jull (Editors). 2000. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 223 p, soft cover. ISBN 87-90730-34-8.

The colorful and elaborately choreographed ceremonies that inaugurated the creation of the Nunavut Territory of Canada in 1999 attracted an enormous amount of international media attention. As the editors of this volume claim in the introduction, this historic event also generated much confusion and even scorn about Nunavut, which means 'our land' in Inuktitut, one of the Territory's three

official languages. This volume aims to identify the defining features of Nunavut, treating it both as an innovative governmental structure and as a homeland for some 21,000 Inuit. The editors' main objectives are to present an accurate portrait of how Nunavut was created and to identify the challenges that lie ahead of it. As the book's title asserts, Nunavut represents more than a partitioning of Canada's geopolitical boundaries. It represents a dramatic reversal of Canada's official stance towards Inuit, which until the late 1970s was dominated by policies of assimilation and western-style modernization. In short, Nunavut symbolizes a major political transformation.

The introduction, which summarizes the book's major themes, is followed by an essay by one of Nunavut's political elite, Josie Kusugak. Kusugak recalls the highlights of the negotiations that led to the signing of the Nunavut Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) in 1993. From the moment they began to press for a settlement of land claims, Inuit leaders stressed that a new territory had to be created as well. The Nunavut Act established the legal and political framework for dividing the Northwest Territories into two territories and for creating a non-ethnic based parliamentary government. The Agreement provided Inuit with a lump sum of \$1.148 billion, 350,000 square kilometres of land (about 20% of the total lands within Nunavut), and 38,000 square kilometres of subsurface mineral rights 'over large areas of the most promising geological formations as indicated through mineral research' (page 21). In exchange, Inuit agreed to extinguish their claim to the remaining 80% of the lands within the Nunavut Territory.

Was this a good deal for the Inuit? Kusugak certainly thinks so. But it was a good deal for Canada as well, as Kusugak asserts. Kusugak believes that the negotiation process moved more quickly than expected because Canada 'was anxious to demonstrate a breakthrough on aboriginal issues in one major region of the country' (page 25). Inuit always made it clear that they were working to create a stronger Canada and not a separate Inuit state.

The third essay, which chronicles the evolution of the Nunavut government, brings to light some of its more innovative features, including a series of co-management boards (or 'institutions of public government') that make regular recommendations to federal and territorial ministers. These ministers, in return, are obliged to take these recommendations into consideration in their decision-making processes. The co-management boards are composed of both government-appointed and Inuit-appointed members. The next essay provides a more critical perspective on the Nunavut government. Nunavut's politicians have a tough set of issues to tackle, including high levels of unemployment, poor healthcare availability, and a high high-school drop-out rate. Peter Jull wonders whether the sharp divisions that exist in Nunavut society threaten the overall effectiveness of the politicians to deal with these problems equitably and efficiently: 'Today there are already reports of unseemly squabbles between communities and among