

taking shape and place in the interplay of a wide range of different actors from the local to the global levels in different situational settings.

In the eighth chapter of the report, attention is turned to concerns associated with health and well-being in the circumpolar north. Meanwhile, chapter nine complements the discussions on education in the first *AHDR* through extending the focus to both informal education and human capital. The last two chapters provide an attempt to knit together the broader picture of human development in the north from two different perspectives: while chapter ten investigates the globalising forces (page 49) shaping communities and societal life (also) in the Arctic region, the eleventh chapter discussing community viability and adaptation takes an interest in the interplay of different aspects of human development at the local level and in the context of Arctic communities.

As a whole, the report is an extraordinary endeavour as it addresses both historical trends, contemporary developments and potential future trajectories in the complex context of human development in a geographically, demographically and culturally diverse circumpolar north. Despite the magnitude of this challenge, the volume succeeds remarkably well on several fronts: the content chapters not only provide detailed and up-to-date information on different aspects of human, social and societal life in the north, but also highlight the diverse manners in which developments in the Arctic region are influenced by global processes and flows and, equally importantly, vice versa. Furthermore, the publication of the second report also brings added value to the first *AHDR*: together, they not only capture the situation of human development in the north in a given point of time but also allow for monitoring and comparison.

While the report manages to vividly illustrate the diversity of the human dimension and the disparity of human development in the circumpolar north, also some concerns remain. Despite the frequent emphasis on the relevance of the report to all Arctic communities, especially the case studies tend to lean towards highlighting the challenges and concerns faced by indigenous populations of the region. In a similar manner, the integration of the 'common threads' (page 43) of gender,

globalisation and climate change to each thematic chapter remains in some occasions rather superficial or even artificial, although other chapters perform remarkably well in this respect. Some case studies presented in the chapters might also seem to reflect more the personal research interest of the contributing authors than the most pressing issues faced by the communities in the north; on the other hand, the diversity of topics touched upon in the report can at the same time contribute to a more nuanced overall picture of the broad spectrum of phenomena shaping Arctic societal life.

While the second *AHDR* is a scientific report, it is also aimed to serve a broad range of audiences and stakeholders from Arctic Council officials to local politicians and students in the field of Arctic studies. The clear and structured organisation of the report, including the summary of policy-relevant conclusions, as well as the detailed and comprehensive manner in which the concepts that are applied are defined, genuinely support achieving this goal. Curiously enough, what must be noted is that the key notion of *development* is not extensively problematised. Instead, the terms (sustainable) development, sustainability, quality of life and well-being are deployed nearly interchangeably in a rather promiscuous manner throughout the report. However, all in all the second *Arctic human development report* is a good read for anyone interested in gaining a comprehensive understanding the human dimension in the circumpolar north. The decision to have the report available online in open access format makes its results genuinely accessible also to the wider public. The report can be accessed here: [norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:788965/FULLTEXT01.pdf](http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:788965/FULLTEXT01.pdf). (Hanna Lempinen, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, PO Box 122, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland ([hanna.lempinen@ulapland.fi](mailto:hanna.lempinen@ulapland.fi))).

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**SWISS ALPS TO ANTARCTIC GLACIERS: THE JOURNALS OF DR XAVIER MERTZ, AUSTRALASIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1911–1914.** Anna Lucas (editor). 2014. Melbourne: Fineline Studios. xiv + 206 p, illustrated, softcover. ISBN 978-0-9925623-1-1. Aus\$39.50. doi:[10.1017/S0032247415000327](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247415000327)

For a century, Xavier Mertz and Belgrave Ninnis have been remembered simply as the two men who left on the Far Eastern Journey with Douglas Mawson during the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE, 1911–14), but, tragically, did not return. Ninnis died by falling down a crevasse in December 1912, and, a little more than three weeks later, Mertz died during a desperate effort to reach the base at Commonwealth Bay, leaving Mawson to continue alone on what became one of the greatest stories ever of Antarctic survival (Riffenburgh 2011). Sadly, not a great deal more than this has been widely known about Ninnis or Mertz, despite the latter being the sole member of the expedition not representing the British Empire, as well as

the first Swiss to winter in the Antarctic. This omission has now been remedied by this valuable production of Mertz's journals.

Mertz was born in Basel, Switzerland, in 1882, and became an accomplished mountaineer, a ski champion, and a successful lawyer who helped run the family's manufacturing business. In 1911 he applied to join the AAE. He was accepted and placed jointly with Ninnis, a lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers, in care of the expedition's dogs. The two were the only members of the Antarctic land party to make the long voyage from Britain to Tasmania on the expedition ship *Aurora*, during which they became fast friends; Ninnis began more and more to look up to and model himself after his older and more-experienced comrade. The two continued in charge of the dogs, including breaking them in for sledging, when the expedition's main base was established at Cape Denison, which, unfortunately for those working outside, proved to be the windiest place on Earth (Wendler and others 1997).

The longest of the planned sledging journeys was to be made by the Far Eastern Party: Mawson, Ninnis, Mertz, and 17 dogs. The goal was to race over the Plateau, going some 350 miles to Oates Land, an area discovered from Robert Falcon

Scott's *Terra Nova* in 1911, thereby linking the AAE's discoveries with those made previously. The party made relatively good time until, approximately 300 miles from the main base, Ninnis, his sledge, and his dog team were lost down a 'hell hole', a seemingly bottomless crevasse, after Mertz and Mawson had safely crossed over it. It was later suggested that Ninnis was walking next to his sledge, and that his weight, without being distributed by skis or the sledge, caused him to break through the ice thinly covering the crevasse. Ninnis' team included those dogs that were in the best condition, and his sledge held the vast majority of the party's food. With no depots established on the way out, Mawson and Mertz had little option but to race back to Cape Denison, killing the remaining dogs one at a time for food. Unfortunately, they both began to suffer from hypervitaminosis A, a medical disorder caused by excessive intake of vitamin A, which had been stored at high levels in the dogs' livers. Enduring numerous unpleasant symptoms, Mertz grew progressively weaker and eventually died far from base. Somehow, Mawson managed to struggle on and reached Cape Denison successfully, although it took him months to recover from his privations.

From the day he joined *Aurora* in London, Mertz kept a journal of the expedition. In it, he recorded the health, behaviour, and relationships among the dogs; described the weather, sea conditions, and the scenery on land; reported daily events; and candidly mentioned other members of the expedition. The journal is thus a key addition to the story of the AAE as told in the diaries and journals of other expedition members at the main base, some of which have published in recent years, including, for example, those of Ninnis (Mornement and Riffenburgh 2014), John Hunter (Hunter 2011), Cecil Madigan (Madigan 2012), and Frank Stillwell (Hince 2012), and others that have long been held at the Mitchell Library, the State Library of New South Wales, in Sydney (such as those of Walter Hannam, Frank Hurley, Charles Laseron, Archibald McLean, and Eric Webb).

Mertz also carried a smaller sledging diary with him on field trips, including on the Far Eastern Journey. Following Mertz's death, Mawson tore out the blank pages at the end of this diary in order to lighten his load so that he could bring it back with him. Mertz's sledging diary is arguably even more valuable than the main journal, as it is the only account other than Mawson's of the events of that disastrous journey (for Mawson's account, see Jacka and Jacka 1988). Both the main journal and the sledging diary are included in this book.

Yet either all or parts of Mertz's record of the expedition, originally written in German, have previously been translated into English several times (for details, see Lucas and Leane 2013). So what makes this version so valuable? The answer is, first, that unlike the other translations, this one has actually been published, meaning it is now available to the public, rather than just being able to be found in archival holdings. And second, and more importantly, is the rich historic and linguistic context that Anna Lucas, the editor and translator, was able to bring to this translation. The original two journals, after being returned by Mawson to the Mertz family, long ago disappeared, other than copies of two pages that had been photographed to be reproduced in Mawson's expedition account, *The home of the blizzard* (Mawson 1915). Before the journals disappeared, however, two separate transcripts in German were produced. It was these transcripts that were the basis of the current translation,

although they differed considerably at points due to 'a daunting mix of German and English words, some phonetically spelt, some misspelt. Many words and phrases commonly used one hundred years ago, in German, Swiss-German, and in English, are not always familiar today; colloquialisms and the idiosyncratic lexicon of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition added to the confusion, making errors inevitable' (page v). These issues, which had plagued all earlier transcriptions and translations, were resolved with the help of Swiss and German scholars who had a clear understanding of those early-twentieth-century languages and dialects; by the editor's familiarity with the language used in the huts at Cape Denison; and by her knowledge of the events described by Mertz due to being able to compare his accounts with those of the other expedition members. All of this allowed for a translation that not only places Mertz's details in greater historical context, but that maintains as closely as possible his own 'voice.'

This fresh and accurate translation of Mertz's journals makes for fascinating reading, marked throughout by Mertz's humour and keen observations. Equally interesting, in its own way, is the book's account of previously little-known occurrences affecting Mertz's journals and correspondence after the expedition, including how the early transcripts came to exist and to be available to scholars. This detailed explanation is a fitting conclusion to an effort that seemingly required the skills of a detective as much as of a scholar in order for the project to come to fruition.

In summary, this book will be extremely valuable to anyone interested in the AAE or the 'Heroic Age' of Antarctic exploration in general. Xavier Mertz was a significant member of Mawson's expedition, and bringing him back to life, in a sense, with the publication of his diary, is a service to the entire polar community. (Beau Riffenburgh, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER ([bar10@cam.ac.uk](mailto:bar10@cam.ac.uk)))

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