

INUIT BEHAVIOR AND SEASONAL CHANGE IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC. By RICHARD G. CONDON. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983. Studies in Cultural Anthropology, No. 2. 217 p. incl. tables, figs. and maps, bib., index. Hardcover. No price indicated.

Dr. Condon spent a continuous period of 17 months at the settlement of Holman on Victoria Island and later returned for another stay of 11 months and is to be complimented on this degree of commitment. The title and initial programmatic statements lead the reader to expect the bulk of the volume to be devoted to examination of the effects of seasonality on Inuit behavior. However, after a short chapter on the environment, about 40 percent of the book deals with historical, ethnographic, and medical background information. It is only in the summary chapter that we learn that there is a dual purpose: "to provide a complete ethnographic description of contemporary settlement life" and the study of "the effects of extreme seasonal change upon physiological functioning, activity rhythms, birth seasonality, and social stress", objectives that by then had been met in detail and in general had been discussed with considerable insight.

The book will not prove to be entirely satisfactory to social anthropologists, for Condon regards Jenness's statement that Copper Eskimo society had been significantly altered by the time of contact as justification to avoid discussion of both traditional and contemporary kinship and voluntary associations.

Linguists will be disappointed in Condon's orthography of Inuit words, which could have benefitted from an emerging literature on Inuit linguistics. An example of oversimplification is ignoring the contrast between the "k", or velar sound, and the "q", or uvular sound.

For the general reader the above criticisms will not be crucial but some of the English vocabulary will be obscure. While Condon has taken pains to define a number of terms that are largely the jargon of the geographer rather than the anthropologist, some like "acrophase" and "inceptical", as well as a large number of medical terms, are not explained.

The sections describing the life cycle, child-rearing practices, and Inuit personality will find consensual support among experienced observers. Condon's arguments concerning seasonality in health, activity rhythms, and demographic responses to seasonality appear to me to be supported by his investigations. Briefly, he found that factors of decreased daylight, increased cold combined with wind, as well as the social factor of intense human contact resulted in higher sickness and death rates during the winter. Reproductive patterns also appear to show the effects of seasonal factors. However, with respect to his analysis of social stress, I find difficulty in his correlations with seasonality.

Condon admits with creditable honesty that his hypothesis that social stress would be greatest during the dark part of the year did not bear up. Instead he inferred from his data that stress was most intense during the early fall, with a secondary peak being reached in May. He measures social stress according to number of criminal offences, which is correlated to alcohol consumption. Increased consumption is, in turn, linked to periods of relative immobility and in-gathering before and after the summer period of population dispersal. In assigning secondary weight to availability of cash to purchase liquor during the early fall, I feel that Condon misses what may be the crucial factor. At \$35 a quart, cost of liquor must be vital. I would submit that the early fall is not necessarily a period of greater social stress than other times but rather that stress is expressed more openly when alcohol is abundant. Ultimately this thesis must be checked by intra-areal comparison. His attempt at comparison is incomplete. Condon cites RCMP statistics that show, indeed, that "actual offences" reach a peak during the third quarter of the year, and probably in September, throughout the Northwest Territories. However, I have observed that alcohol consumption is considerable at that period in arctic communities where the pattern of summer dispersal is not nearly so pronounced as it is at Holman. Not only is more cash available for purchase of liquor because of summer and early autumn

employment in these communities, but often large quantities of beer reach the settlements on annual supply ships at that time.

The book supplies fine insight into contemporary life in the smaller centralized communities of the North as well as some important findings regarding seasonality and Inuit life. It should be added to university libraries and used in courses dealing with life in contemporary Inuit communities as well as in those treating environmental effects on human behavior. It is handsomely bound and displays a high quality of printing, with only a few typographical errors.

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INUA. SPIRIT WORLD OF THE BERING SEA ESKIMO. By WILLIAM A. FITZHUGH and SUSAN A. KAPLAN. National Museum of Natural History. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982. 295 p., 366 captioned figs. Softcover. US\$15.00.

This book is about the Bering Sea Eskimos and their material culture, but it also is a tribute to the American naturalist Edward William Nelson. In 1877 Nelson was appointed to serve with the United States Army Signal Service at its meteorological station in St. Michael, on the Bering Sea coast of Alaska. During his three-year stay he travelled widely through the Norton Sound and lower Yukon River region. The aboriginal inhabitants of that area, the Bering Sea Eskimos, were still relatively unacculturated at that time, as the major impact of white civilization was being felt along the coasts bordering the more northerly whaling grounds. Although he was by vocation a naturalist, Nelson made efforts to understand these people and described what he observed and experienced in a classic anthropological treatise *The Eskimos About Bering Strait* (Nelson, 1899).

While in Alaska, Nelson assembled a huge ethnological collection for the Smithsonian Institution. *Inua: Spirit World of the Bering Sea Eskimo* can be modestly described as a catalogue to accompany an exhibit of the same name that was assembled from the Nelson collection. But it is more than that. As explained in the Introduction, in the traditional world view of the Bering Sea Eskimos each of the artifacts made by man possessed a spirit, or *inua*. Fitzhugh and Kaplan have succeeded in demonstrating the exceptional quality and character of Bering Sea Eskimo material culture — its *inua* — by placing it within the context of nineteenth-century Bering Sea Eskimo life, stories, religion, and art that Nelson encountered. The result is a book providing a comprehensive visual and literary portrait of the Bering Sea Eskimo that is itself an important contribution to anthropology.

The volume includes sections by several contributors that complement the anthropological overview prepared by Fitzhugh and Kaplan. Anthony C. Woodbury provided an oral history recounted by Tom Imgalrea of Chevak, Alaska, which tells about the old ways as they are remembered today. Henry B. Collins prepared a biographical sketch of Nelson's experiences in Alaska. Thomas Ager wrote a chapter describing the natural environment that shaped Bering Sea Eskimo Culture. Dorothy Jean Ray describes and analyzes a traditional art form unique to the area — engravings on bow drills — and Saradell Ard Frederick discusses the contemporary art.

Inua is a high-quality production. Care has been taken in selecting the artifacts which are illustrated in pleasing layouts. The writing is clear and comprehensive while not being unduly technical, and maps, graphs, and line drawings are used to convey information where confusion might otherwise arise. Serious students of arctic ethnology will still study Nelson's monograph. However, this volume will appeal to a wider audience that otherwise would not have the privilege of being exposed to the culture of the Bering Sea Eskimos.

REFERENCE

NELSON, E. W. 1899. The Eskimo about Bering Strait. 18th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. 3-518.

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TRADITSIONNOYE MIROVOZZRENIYE OKHOTNIKOV
TAYMYRA (na materialakh Nganasan 19 - nachala 20 stoletiya).
[Traditional world-view of Taymyr hunters and gatherers based on
data gathered on the Nganasans of the 19th - beginning of the 20th
centuries.] G.N. GRACHEVA. Leningrad: Nauka, 1983. 176 p. 1 r
50 k (North American price unknown). (In Russian.)

To my knowledge this is the first Soviet research that addresses the questions of relationships between man and the environment, with emphasis upon Nganasan hunters and gatherers of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. It uses the environmental-psychological method of analysis, which is relevant to microeconomics (economic behaviour) on the one hand and to ethnoscience or "new ethnography" on the other.

Gracheva's analysis is an attempt to describe the behaviour of a rational economic unit in its pursuit of certain objectives within the framework of its environment. Of course, it is quite conceivable that not every firm or consumer acts as rationally as we assume in our analysis, either because of a lack of knowledge or perhaps a lack of desire. It is, therefore, quite appropriate to think of some of our findings as a set of rules designed to instruct the decision maker in the pursuit of his objectives. Thus, Gracheva's investigation and its conclusions depend directly on what she assumes about both the objective and the environment of the decision maker.

She takes the view that the actions of the Nganasans can be rationalized in terms of their desire to maximize their own satisfaction. Therefore, the author focuses her research on the strategic behaviour of people in making choices and modifying patterns. She uses the cognitive, decision-making processes of man as a theoretical basis, thus advancing toward elucidation of ultimate causes of human behaviour rather than remaining at the descriptive level. In her study, Gracheva demonstrates the ecological and sociological implications for analysis of Nganasan material culture and their world views on the basis of their ecological adaptations derived from rules of individual decision. In short, Gracheva's methodological approach rests on a set of assumptions concerning the relationship among language, cognitive rules, codes and categories that the native himself must know in order to understand the social situations confronting him in daily life and closely approximating the "truth" of cultural reality.

Concerning the traditional world views of the Nganasans, the author examines four aspects of their lifestyle. They are their (1) world view on environment, (2) world view on man, (3) burial customs and (4) shamanism. In the course of her analyses, in which she relies on archaeological, ethnographic, folkloristic and linguistic data, an attempt is made to demonstrate subjective (etic) native notions about their world and then to make objective (emic) interpretations.

The research is well done. However, the printing is not. Soviet publishers should try to improve format, quality of paper and illustra-

tions in publishing scientific literature. Improvement of the publication quality would also serve to present Soviet scholarship in a much better fashion.

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ARCTIC AND ANTARCTIC — A MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL
SYNTHESIS. By DAVID SUGDEN. Oxford: Basil Blackwood, 1982.
ISBN 0-631-13085-3. 473 p. incl. illus., tables, maps. Hardcover.
\$84.25.

David Sugden, Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of Aberdeen, has worked in Greenland, Arctic Canada, and Alaska, as well as Antarctica. Though his special field is geomorphology, his polar interests are very wide, and in *Arctic and Antarctic* he attempts "to describe and interpret the polar environment, to explore the problems associated with economic and social development, and to provide a framework for a better understanding of the overall geography of the polar regions". This area covers a fifth of the land surface of the world and presents an enormous task that few would dare to tackle. To do it so well is a noteworthy achievement.

The author adopts a systems approach, examining how the systems associated with the land, the atmosphere, the oceans, the native people, and industrial society operate in the arctic and antarctic regions and how they interrelate. He begins with plate tectonics and climate, as the two global natural systems responsible for the special characteristics of the polar regions, and then discusses them in relation to the three polar environments — namely, permanent ice covering land or sea, land that is not covered by ice, and the oceans. A concluding chapter in the section on natural systems considers the changes that occur in these systems on four time scales: over millions of years, over periods of 100 000 to 10 000 years, over periods of 1000 to 10 years, and over decades.

The section on human systems begins with a general chapter on the evolution of man in the polar regions, covering the original penetration of the north by nomadic people, the development of reindeer herding, the Norse colonization of southwest Greenland, and the exploration of the Arctic and Antarctic. It is followed by a chapter on the Inuit, a term Dr. Sugden uses to include the Yuit, and how they lived as hunters and gatherers. The next five chapters consider the intrusive Western society on a regional basis: Greenland and Svalbard, Arctic Canada, Alaska, the Soviet Arctic, and Antarctica. The final chapter draws conclusions.

This method of treatment is unusual and is at first rather difficult to follow, but it is logical and permits a great deal of material to be considered in a rational and comprehensible manner. It also presents the polar regions in a rather different light and in a way that stimulates thought. This reviewer, however, felt somewhat uneasy with the models of regional development adopted throughout the book. That on network and node evolution by Taaffe, Morrill and Gould is based on transportation patterns in Ghana and Nigeria, and it requires too many explanations and adjustments in each of the five polar regions, where conditions are so very different, to carry any conviction. That on resource frontier regions and downward transitional areas, applied by Friedmann to the situation in Venezuela, also needs too much manipulation to be an acceptable fit for the north. Neither model seems to serve much purpose. Perhaps this is because the United Kingdom is much farther from the frontier than is North America, and especially Canada. Models are useful to explain and illustrate the unfamiliar, but their shortcomings are more obvious to those who deal with the subject on a daily basis.