

the growing political and ecological challenges. From Scandinavia and Siberia to Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, circumpolar peoples have succeeded in organizing and reasserting control over northern developments through political action, education, and persistence in the face of great social and environmental devastation. The final chapter (13) brings the book to a close in a streamlined three pages and seeks to reestablish a sense of the romantic in the now less *imagined* Arctic.

In summary, this book shows us how the Arctic has been redefined (or re-imagined) over the course of 2000 years, and especially over the last 600 years. While the book accomplishes many useful goals, one of its most significant contributions is the humanization of the Arctic as a place with history, a place with real people, and a place whose romantic image has long been fueled more by southern ambition and willful ignorance than by any inherent property of Arctic people and places. In this light, the Arctic becomes a place that we can understand, identify with, and become sympathetic towards, regardless of where we live.

The writing meanders in a pleasant way through reflections, historical details, and analyses. The chapters in turn are arranged somewhat eclectically, shifting back and forth from region to region, while generally (though not always) moving forward in time. There is some repetition from chapter to chapter. And yet, for these few distractions, the book as a whole carries the reader to a series of forceful conclusions about the ways in which outsiders have viewed the Arctic and how these views have served the agendas of southern nations at the expense of the aboriginal inhabitants and the natural environment.

The Last Imaginary Place is comfortably written and compellingly argued. I recommend it as a good read with an important message. The book is not written as a textbook, but chapters may be useful in classes. Beyond the classroom, the casual reader with an interest in the Arctic will be richly rewarded by the lucid prose, historical summaries, and insightful arguments.

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ARCTIC HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT. Edited by NÍELS EINARSSON, JOAN NYMAND LARSEN, ANNIKA NILSSON and ORAN R. YOUNG. Akureyri: Stefansson Arctic Institute. 2004. ISBN 9979-834-45-5. 242 p., maps, colour illus. Softbound. US\$28.00 + s&h.

The last few years have seen the appearance of several assessments mandated by the Arctic Council, each charged with summarizing the state of some aspect of the

circumpolar Arctic, such as pollution (AMAP, 1997, 2002), flora and fauna (CAFF, 2001), reindeer husbandry and hunting (Jernsletten and Klokov, 2002; Ulvevadet and Klokov, 2004), climate (ACIA, 2005), and this volume on Arctic human development (AHDR). At a minimum, these books serve as excellent teaching tools for undergraduates and those graduate students seeking to broaden their horizons beyond their chosen disciplines. However, they are also clearly intended to serve as solid introductions for the public at large and especially for policy makers. In this respect, the global hoopla surrounding the release of ACIA has far surpassed that for any of the other Arctic Council reports released to date. Notwithstanding the comparative lack of media coverage, the AHDR is a milestone in the realm of Arctic science in general and the social sciences in particular.

Social scientists constitute the bulk of the report's authors. Although I am primarily a biogeographer and ecologist, my academic training also encompassed exposure to a broad interpretation of 'northern studies.' At the same time, my chosen area of research—anthropogenic and natural disturbance regimes in tundra and boreal ecosystems—led me into close and ongoing cooperation with Arctic indigenous peoples. Thus much of the report material and many of the trends were already long familiar to me. Still, there were a few surprises. I hope this review will highlight the overall utility of this impressive volume for a diverse readership.

From several authors we hear that, despite long-standing intercultural contacts among northern peoples, the interpretation of the Arctic as a distinct geopolitical region is relatively recent (arguably beginning with Mikhail Gorbachev's speech in Murmansk, in October 1987). This view contrasts with the perspective of biogeography, which for well over a century has recognized the circumpolar distributions of a diverse array of organisms as a salient feature of the Arctic. The book is not intended as a presentation of research results, but rather as an up-to-date overview of available information, with an eye to highlighting recent trends and future projections, exposing gaps in our knowledge, and drawing policy-relevant conclusions. These are too diverse and numerous to list here. The text is divided into sections on Orientation (two chapters), Core Systems (four chapters), Crosscutting Themes (six chapters), and one concluding chapter. These sections cover everything from demography to legal, health, and education systems, to resource governance, gender issues, and community viability. Societies/cultures, economics, and international and political relations are, of course, covered individually, but also feature prominently throughout the volume. The caliber and diversity of the authorship are key strengths of the book, and the contributions are all well written in an accessible style.

Chapters in this and its companion volume (ACIA, 2005) are fewer, somewhat longer and more in depth than those in, say, the CAFF book. Still, some chapters dig deeper than others, and readers will likely appreciate that the supporting literature is well documented. Contribu-

tions have anywhere from 30 to 100 references, most chapters containing 50 or more citations, the vast majority from works produced since 1990, including several available on the Internet. Somewhat surprisingly, ACIA is rarely mentioned (chapters 1, 9, and 12), and only a couple of chapters (chapters 7 and 12) delve at all into the implications of climate change for Arctic human development. From a Russian perspective, this is perhaps less consequential. People in Russia are justifiably more concerned about other, more immediate survival matters in the post-Soviet era. In Western countries, however, there is ample evidence that northern residents are already observing (Krupnik and Jolly, 2002) or anticipating (Turi, 2000) climate change and are keen to cooperate with scientists in this regard. Perhaps a future edition will more clearly link those trends reported in ACIA that bear most heavily on human communities to examples from around the circumpolar North.

In terms of omissions, Russian participation and coverage in this volume are not really proportional to Russia's role in Arctic geography, demography, cultural diversity, and economy. By my count, only 2 out of 29 members of the AHDR Steering Committee were from Russian institutions. Similar ratios were evident in the writing effort, with 8 of 89 contributing authors and only 2 of 23 lead authors from Russia. Having long been an active participant in joint research projects with Russia and ostensibly circumpolar fora, I know firsthand the difficulties in recruiting meaningful Russian participation and in getting past the inevitable language issues that bedevil the editors of such multinational volumes. Still, I was hoping for a more balanced telling of the human development story from the Russian perspective, which is admittedly complex. I hope that this gap can be filled in a future edition that is produced under less pressing time constraints and with the financial wherewithal to attract Russian lead authors and experts who perhaps cannot spare the time necessary for such writing without due compensation.

One of the trend summaries cited in chapter 7 observes the "strong trend toward recognizing and formalizing property rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples" (p. 127). This is actually not the case in Russia. As we learn in chapter 6, in terms of legal systems, "Russia is very different from the rest of the Arctic" (p. 115). In important ways, Russia stands apart from other countries in many if not all of the chapters. Similarly, the other positive trends concerning resource governance cited at the end of chapter 7 are notable for the fact that, judging by the information cited throughout the AHDR, almost none of them seem to apply to Russia. Examples cited in the assessment include lower life expectancy, fewer rights for indigenous peoples, more women than men, and a huge outflow of population from the North. This difference in virtually every respect from the other circumpolar nations seemed to emerge as a crosscutting theme of sorts.

One of the few bright spots was a case cited in chapter 8, in which "Erv," one of the family-based reindeer herd-

ing cooperatives of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, managed to improve its well-being through assiduous entrepreneurship and cultivating better contacts with oil companies. Herders were even afforded a degree of nominal participation in land-use planning, which they hoped might help to minimize the negative effects of oil extraction on reindeer herding. However, in a sign of how quickly such fortunes can change, these hopes have since been considerably diminished by the loss of some 20 000 ha of prime coastal pasture since 2002 (Meschtyb et al., 2005). During the same period, Erv has regularly encountered difficulty negotiating a suitable helicopter support agreement, essential for reliable and productive herd management, and the Erv leadership has become more skeptical about the oil industry. Nonetheless, members of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and their cohorts in the Duma continue to labour toward the goal of formalizing property rights.

My own long-standing research interests in Russia drew my special attention to these and other trends and statistics, for example, the generalization that "most indigenous peoples have been living at least since the 1970s in settled communities surrounded by most of the paraphernalia of modern life" (p. 50). Exceptions to this trend are perhaps worth highlighting. For one, the tundra Nenets reindeer herders of Yamal largely defy this characterization. They remain fiercely proud of their relatively Spartan nomadic existence and vigorously defend it, even as the economic means to support it have generally shifted from state-sponsored regional meat distribution subsidies to sales of antler velvet in Southeast Asia (Stammler, 2002). One misleading statistic oft repeated by both Russian and Western sources is that in the oil and gas fields of northwestern Siberia, "personal incomes are about four times the average personal incomes in the poorest regions of Russia" (p. 78). While this is true, in reality most of these jobs are held by skilled labourers from southern Russia and former Soviet republics. The reindeer herders, fishers, hunters, and others who live in and around these burgeoning communities are actually among the poorest groups in Russia in terms of personal income. Their perceptions of these and other rapid developments, even including climate warming, are relatively poorly understood. I therefore concurred with the observation that "research has focused so far too little on local perceptions of change" (p. 50).

Reference to the "the weak increase in demand for petroleum over the past few years" (p. 79) was also somewhat curious. This statement contradicts all the data on oil I have seen. In the former east bloc countries, a major slump in production and consumption occurred in the early to mid 1990s, related to the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, in the following decade, global oil consumption mushroomed, from about 65 million barrels per day to more than 82 million in 2004 (EIA, 2005; see also NEP, 2001). Rapid increases in consumption have been particularly pronounced in the United States, but also in China and Japan. The latter two have waged public and

pitched battles for access to the rich oil reserves of eastern Siberia. The next paragraph correctly states that “world gas consumption has been growing” (p. 79). These combined trends have profound implications for social and ecological systems in select regions of the Arctic (Forbes, 2004).

One of the gaps in knowledge cited in chapter 3 is our lack of understanding of cumulative impacts, which adds to the “weak predictive potential of current knowledge” (p. 65). This raises the question, should we really be trying to predict social and cultural change? It seems like stating the obvious, but Arctic scientists trying to model future scenarios must be firmly grounded in the timelines and genuine concerns of local people. Only in this manner can we improve such modeling. I say this because many Western scientists apparently assume that climate change is foremost in peoples’ minds in the Russian Arctic, whereas, as mentioned earlier, this is often not the case. However well informed the projections, a useful complementary strategy is surely working closely with communities to develop their resilience to negative systemic shocks and their ability to reorganize effectively. Although the language of vulnerability and resilience is more or less absent, the essential concepts are evident in some of the examples given. A key point in chapter 7 is that “effective governance of arctic resources requires management regimes that have strength in influencing human behavior to achieve agreed-upon goals, durability over time, and a robust capacity to survive destabilizing forces” (p. 121). This capacity effectively defines resilience, and it is a laudable objective not only in resource governance, but in other spheres as well. The caveat, which no doubt many *Arctic* readers have experienced firsthand, is that “what works in one setting may be entirely inappropriate in another” (p. 121) (cf. Forbes et al., 2006).

The text is refreshingly free of typographical and grammatical errors, evidence of tight editing. Perhaps inevitably in a volume embracing renderings of so many different languages into English, there were one or two wee oddities, such as Kautokeino (misspelled as Kautokaino, p. 106), and the declaration that “The Saami are spread out across the northern countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland)” (p. 75). These countries, along with Iceland and Denmark, are normally referred to in English as “Nordic” countries. In fact, the reference to ‘Saami’ was itself somewhat inconsistent, generally appearing as ‘Sámi’ in references and notes and ‘Saami’ within the volume’s main chapter texts. The reference to Sámi and Nenets as “reindeer breeders” (p. 81) seems a bit restrictive, in that they tend to refer to themselves more broadly as “reindeer herders” (cf. Turi, 2000). Having little economic background, I was unfamiliar with the acronym “PPP” (purchasing power parity), which is used throughout chapter 4 but is defined only at the end of the chapter, deep within a footnote that is not tied to the first use of the acronym.

A couple of slight twists of rhetoric kept me on my toes. Near the beginning of chapter 11, we read that the “perception of the Arctic being a male world is ... compounded by

the fact that Arctic peoples’ lives depended on hunting, trapping, and husbandry of reindeer” (p. 187). My own understanding is that Arctic peoples’ lives have depended equally on women, who design, make, and repair clothing, manage cooking-fuel stores, handle and prepare food, and not least, raise children and encourage them to follow in their parents’ footsteps. My view is supported by the subsequent content of the chapter, making the “male world” statement at the outset somewhat incongruous.

I was similarly interested to read early in chapter 3 that “local empowerment does not in and of itself reduce vulnerabilities” (p. 51). This is true, since it depends very much on who is empowered to do what. Just by coincidence, I read this at home late one evening after I had jointly chaired a public seminar on global change with a Finnish member of parliament from the Green party. One of my key recommendations had been that local people become more involved in policy-relevant research in an effort to reduce their vulnerability to rapid change. It is always a joy to have one’s own perceptions challenged, and so I read eagerly onward. However, at the end of the chapter, the authors assert that “In the long run, the transfer of decision-making powers from central to local authorities might be the most important factor in helping reduce social and cultural problems associated with rapid change” (p. 64). Along with “the larger process of decolonization” (p. 105), the relatively recent devolution of power to communities and regions has actually been a common thread across much of the North, with the notable exception of Russia. The consensus appears to be that this ongoing process is beneficial to most parties.

This report lacks some of the illustrative verve of the ACIA volume, which made excellent use of graphics to render many complex matters considerably more digestible for a lay audience. This lack is understandable, given that ACIA was developed over a period of four years, whereas AHDR had only two years. The volume could have used a bit more in the way of synthetic tables, figures, and photos to convey the issues at hand. Some of the chapters (e.g., 5, 6, 10, and 11) seemed to be composed of almost unbroken text, including summary “boxes,” a few of which covered entire pages. Given the sheer density of text, and with so many overlapping themes, an index would be most welcome in a second edition. However, these are but minor quibbles and hardly detract from the overall high quality of the volume’s information content, editing, and printing. To be sure, several of the graphic images were impressive. For example, the two photos of Sámi children (p. 145 and 241) were particularly evocative. Dating from 30 years ago, they implicitly raise questions. Where are these still relatively young people now? Who have they become as individuals, and how have their respective communities developed in the interim?

According to the editors, “The AHDR will succeed to the extent that it proves helpful to the activities of the Arctic Council’s Sustainable Development Working Group” (p. 22). The report will easily achieve this and more. It should

also succeed admirably as a comprehensive introduction to the topic for a broad audience of Arctic scholars, residents, administrators, and policy makers. With so many dozens of authors, contributing experts, and reviewers, having accomplished all of this within the near-impossible deadline of 24 months must be deeply rewarding to the participants. They, and the Arctic Council, are to be commended on producing a fine product. At such a reasonable price, it is also easily within reach of students. The anticipated Russian translation, which I hope will benefit from the same attention to editorial detail and quality devoted to this edition, will expand this audience considerably.

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CIULIAMTA AKLUIT, THINGS OF OUR ANCESTORS: YUP'IK ELDERS EXPLORE THE JACOBSEN COLLECTION AT THE ETHNOLOGISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN. By MARIE MEADE and ANN FIENUP-RIORDAN. Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press in association with Calista Elders Council, Bethel, Alaska, 2005. ISBN 0-295-98471-6. xxvi + 420 p., map, b&w illus., bib. Softbound. US\$25.00.

and

YUP'IK ELDERS AT THE ETHNOLOGISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN: FIELDWORK TURNED ON ITS HEAD. By ANN FIENUP-RIORDAN. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005. ISBN 0-295-98464-3. xx + 337 p., b&w and colour illus., notes, glossary, bib., index. Hardbound. US\$50.00.

In 1877–81, Edward W. Nelson made his famous artifact- and information-collecting trip to Western Alaska that led to the publication of his epoch-making *The Eskimo About Bering Strait* (Nelson, 1899). Only a couple of years after Nelson, in 1882–83, Johan Adrian Jacobsen made a similar trip to much the same area, which resulted in an enormous collection of artifacts. Jacobsen's collection is housed in Germany, rather than in America, and the collector himself lacked the scholarly depth and attitude that illuminate Nelson's written accounts. Perhaps this is why Jacobsen's work is less known than Nelson's. Now, in this magnificent new pair of books, Ann Fienup-Riordan and Marie Meade, working with the Yup'ik elders Catherine Moore, Wassilie Berlin, Paul John, Annie Blue, and Andy Paukan, have brought Jacobsen's collection of Yup'ik material culture to a prominence rivaling that of Nelson.

The design of the books deserves comment. Starting some 20 years ago with *Cauyarnariuq* (Mather, 1985), a book in Yup'ik without translation on pre-missionary Yup'ik ceremonial life, a number of books have been produced that were designed to allow Yup'ik people, particularly Yup'ik elders, to tell their own story in their own way. The elders are guided in discussing certain topics, and these discussions are tape-recorded and then transcribed, edited, and published, generally with facing-