

on his successful use of the lighter-than-air dirigible. Sir George Nares did not himself plant the British flag above 83°N., as Mr. Langnas says; this was done by a member of his expedition, Albert Markham, on a sledge trip. It appears from the dates given for the Soviet explorers Sergei and Vladimir Obruchev, that Vladimir was born two years later than his son — a “first” that even the Russians are unlikely to claim. In the sketch of Peary we read “a journey of the *Roosevelt*, 1905-6, brought him to 87°6’N.” This triumph of navigation, if true, would have been a more remarkable feat than the attainment of the pole on foot; actually the ship wintered at Cape Sheridan (82°28’N.). In reading about Sir Hubert Wilkins one gathers that the Canadian Arctic Expedition lasted only from 1913 to 1914, rather than for four years longer.

The biography of Vilhjalmur Stefansson (both of whose names, it is pleasing to note, are spelled correctly) is especially confused. Stefansson’s third expedition, as stated, did indeed reach “the northernmost point of Prince Patrick Island”, but Stefansson also discovered three important islands beyond Prince Patrick Island on a journey to the northeast of about 300 miles. Following this we read that “his ship drifted for 11 months until he was rescued at Wrangel Island”. Stefansson’s ship, the *Karluuk*, had foundered in the ice near Wrangel Island near the beginning of the expedition. Some men were rescued there, but Stefansson was not among them, being otherwise occupied. We read further that “in 1921 expeditions under his command explored Alaska and northeastern Siberia”. The Wrangel Island expedition had nothing to do with exploration of Alaska. Its object was to claim for the British crown an island that was unoccupied and that was not then actively claimed by the Soviet Union. That “Stefansson now lives in New York City, where he has founded the Stefansson Library”, will come as a surprise to many of us who had believed that this residence was terminated a decade ago and that his books now form a special collection of the Dartmouth College Library.

The dust-cover of this volume claims that, among other neglected men, “justice is done to a remarkable group of Jewish explorers. . . .” Everyone is pleased to see justice done, but in such a short dictionary it is questionable whether to mention many minor figures of Jewish extraction is a better justice than to omit several important explorers about whom the reader might expect information. Nor is the reader greatly edified to learn of Sven Hedin, a Swedish explorer, that in his retirement

“He became a strong supporter of the Nazis, who paid him the compliment of ignoring his quarter-Jewish origin. In the middle of World War II, while Hitler was exterminating his fellow-Jews, he travelled to Munich to receive an honorary doctorate.”

Many errors in the book could have been avoided by more careful proof-reading, but there remain some important mistakes in fact. As it exists the book is too sketchy and too unreliable to be more than casually useful. *Webster’s Biographical Dictionary* would be a better investment.

ALAN COOKE  
Stefansson Collection

#### THE NEOLITHIC AGE IN EASTERN SIBERIA

By HENRY N. MICHAEL. *Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, Vol. 48, Part 2, 1958; 11¾ x 9½ inches; 108 pages, 7 maps, 100 text figures; paper. \$2.50.*

This excellent monograph surveys all important Soviet archaeological research on the Neolithic period of eastern Siberia to about the year 1950. Its geographical scope is confined to the official administrative territory of “Eastern Siberia”. This includes the region east of the Yenisey River as far as the watershed between the Pacific and Arctic oceans, and from the Mongolian Republic north to the arctic coast. Hence it is not concerned with the Pacific

littoral region that comprises the Soviet Far East. It is a work that will have enduring value for American scholars who are interested not only in that specific region but also in the general problem of New World cultural origins, and most particularly for those who are unable to study the original reports in Russian.

The book begins with a clear statement of aims and limitations and then proceeds to a discussion of the various classification systems that have been used in the past to order the culture sequence in the Lake Baikal area. Next the cultural-stratigraphic analysis of the Angara River burials is carefully traced out, for this is fundamental to the Soviet chronology of the Siberian Neolithic and Bronze ages. The following chapters elaborate the significant characteristics of these burials and further treat problems of correlation and chronology. For additional refinement a separate chapter is devoted to an analysis of each of the major cultural periods, i.e., *Khina*, *Isakovo*, *Serovo*, and *Kitoi*, and finally there are area summations of the archaeological sequences in the middle Lena River valley, the lower Lena, and the arctic coast. With the exception of the arctic coast region there are adequate maps showing the location of all sites reviewed, the text is profusely illustrated with reproductions of artifact drawings that originally appeared in various Soviet publications, and several helpful summary tables are included.

In essence Michael's translation and distillation derive from the work of one man, A. P. Okladnikov. This is no cause for alarm, however, because Okladnikov on account of his extensive record is probably the most energetic archaeologist in his country today and he is also a scholar who works with skill, painstaking method and reasonable detachment when it comes to the interpretation of his data. Nevertheless, some balance of opinion is achieved through Michael's consideration of Soviet operations in areas that are peripheral to Eastern Siberia.

The one serious drawback of the monograph is no fault of the author's, for his main work was completed in

1954, some four years in advance of publication. Aside from several references to recent articles in Soviet journals, as well as pertinent reports of late date in American journals, it deals with Soviet materials that are prior to the 1950's. Since that time there has been a shift in certain key opinions and D. B. Shimkin, in a recent technical review of Michael (*Am. Antiquity* 24: 436-7, 1959), has listed the Soviet works of later date that should be consulted by the specialist who wishes to supplement Michael with more modern information. For example, whereas Okladnikov once asserted that the Palaeolithic Age in Eastern Siberia was an entirely autochthonous development, since the time of Michael's publication he has admitted that its early stages were of European origin. These initial events occurred in the Lake Baikal area and thence there was a steady diffusion northward down the valley of the Lena. In fact, the Russians stress that all early movements of man into the Eurasian arctic zone took place in a meridional direction from various southern centres of origin.

In this connection Michael lays some stress on the arctic zone of Eastern Siberia as the source from where the Palaeo-Eskimos of the Bering Strait region derived many of their significant culture traits. To some extent this energizes the moribund concept of an ancient circumpolar culture complex, but the problem of the origin of Eskimo culture certainly cannot be discussed satisfactorily without reference to the Soviet Far East and the Bering Strait coastal areas. Russian evidence does indeed point to circumpolar connections between Europe and western Siberia, and between Eastern Siberia and Bering Strait, but so far as is known now these concerned tundra cultures and appear to have been relatively late in time. Moreover, west of Bering Strait along the arctic coast the direction of the diffusion of Eskimo culture is not definitely known. As for the early components of Eskimo culture, the Russians believe, as Michael notes, that the roots of sea-mammal

economy are to be found well south of the arctic zone, along the littoral of eastern Asia.

Increased Soviet work in the Far East will ultimately serve to bridge the gap that now separates the archaeology of the Old World from that of the New.

Probably not until then will the real potential of the prehistory of Eastern Siberia be appreciated. In the meantime Michael has served his colleagues well by making this extensive body of material available to them.

ELMER HARP, JR.

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### Award of Institute Grants

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BARNES, C. A. University of Washington, Seattle, Wash., U.S.A.

Review, analyse and interpret existing oceanographical data for the Arctic Ocean at the library of the University of Washington.

CARTER, J. C. H. McGill University, Montreal, P.Q., Canada.

Study of the ecology of the cod population of a brackish lake approximately 10 miles west of Nain, northern Labrador.

CHANCE, N. A. Harvard University School of Public Health, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

Study the effect of winter conditions on the adjustment process of the Eskimos living at Barter Island, Alaska.