

AND POLITICAL ECOLOGY. Broadbent, N. (editor). 1989. Umeå, Center for Arctic Cultural Research (Miscellaneous Publications 9) 184 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISSN 0283-9687.

These two publications from the energetic leader of the Center for Arctic Cultural Research are welcome additions to the growing English language literature on the Sámi. They also illustrate the length of the continuum between independent research, unattached to a particular political agenda, on the one hand, and the 'committed' analysis of individuals, often not themselves members of the minority group, who have taken on the task of representing these people in disputes with national authorities. It is difficult to document this range in a short review. The first volume has a number of fine historical studies, most notably from Roger Kvist, which enable one to see the changing nature of contact between the Swedish government and the Sámi. The fine historical records of a country not involved in war for almost 200 years, and not fought over for rather longer, enable the scholar to follow the administrative changes by which a group of hunters evolve into reindeer herders, or in other parts of the Sámi domain become small-scale farmers. Nobody could categorize this process as painless; in the long evolution there have been many setbacks to the legitimate aspirations of the Sámi minority. However *Readings in Saami History, Culture and Language* does, though its various contributors, show the real concerns that have been expressed from time to time by the national government concerning the fate of the Sámi.

The second symposium is much more strident in its tone, stemming from an Inter-Nordic symposium in Helsingør, Denmark, in 1988. The various papers illustrate changes in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Greenland. An appendix provides a 'Nordic statement of principles and priorities in Arctic and northern research', with a translation into Russian. This is often quite unexceptional, especially when stressing the fragility of Arctic ecosystems, which must be protected. However when it is stressed that research proposals and results should be translated into the languages of the people who are affected, we are moving on to idealistic but often impractical ground. If the requirement were limited to 'people most closely affected' I would not be concerned. But the implication of such far-reaching requirements could mean that much northern research should be translated into 15 or 20 minority languages — patently impossible. Judge Berger's procedure, in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, of consulting directly those affected is attainable, but Canadians (for example) are well familiar with the difficulties and expense of providing editions of many documents in the two languages. To start publishing studies of sea ice conditions in Inuktitut, in Chukchi, in Nentsy, or in Sámi — to mention just four groups — is altogether beyond practicality.

There are some interesting papers on Iceland, which, however, has little in common with the other areas, except an Arctic climate. A particularly controversial paper is

that of Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, who has discovered the new crime of 'linguicism'. As she herself insists of writing about 'the United Kingdom/Queendom', some of us may be excused wondering whether that sort of nonsense also requires legislation, if only to reduce the amount of printer's ink and paper expended. My own personal view is that this second collection of papers is itself an excellent documentation of the impracticalities which many academics espouse. (Ian Whitaker, Department of Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC, Canada V5A 1S6.)

MUMMIFIED GREENLAND ESKIMOS

THE MUMMIES FROM QILAKITSOQ: ESKIMOS IN THE 15th CENTURY. Hart Hansen, J. P. and Gulløv, H. C. 1989. *Meddelelser om Grønland: Man and Society* 12.

This is a first-rate collection of papers dealing with the eight mummified Eskimo found in the Uummanaq district of Northwestern Greenland in 1972. The intensive examination of the bodies, as well as of their clothing, presents a scientific landmark. The majority of the analyses were non-intrusive, involving X-rays, dermatological studies, analysis of collagen and glycosaminoglycans, electron microscopy, histopathological studies of the eyes, study of faeces and bone mineral content, histomorphometric analysis of cortical and trabecular bone, and trace metals in hair. The subjects of the study died about 1475, just at the time when the Viking settlements in Greenland were either being abandoned or died out. The studies of fungi, head lice and mineral grains also tell us about environmental factors present. The tattoos on some of the bodies help to amplify the relatively sparse ethnohistorical material on this practice. An analysis of diatoms in the bodies unfortunately is inconclusive about the cause of death: it must be presumed from the disposal of the corpses that the individuals all died within a brief time-span. All in all this fine book shows what may be learnt by post-mortem procedures conducted with care and respect upon mummified remains. We may expect other opportunities, either from burials in permafrost, or, as here, in climatic conditions that promote mummification. The results are far more wide-ranging than the professional labels of the researchers imply. (Ian Whitaker, Department of Anthropology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC, Canada V5A 1S6.)

ALASKAN EXCAVATIONS

THE 1981 EXCAVATIONS AT THE UTQIAGVIK ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE BARROW ALASKA. Hall, E. S. and Fullerton, L. (editors). 1990. Barrow Alaska, North Slope Borough Commission on the Inupiat History, Language, and Culture (IHLIC). Three volumes, 1254 p, illustrated. Soft cover, US\$60.00.

In 1981 the City of Barrow initiated a cultural resource mitigation project in response to the proposed construction of a natural gas line through a district known to contain numerous proven archaeological features. Essentially a collection of 60 anthropogenic mounds — elevated com-