

Palaeozoic examples in North America, Antarctica, southern Africa, and Australia.

All in all, the editors have displayed a nice balance in the volume. The papers are good, some excellent, and they are neatly brought together by a foreword and an overview. The volume is a significant step forward in bringing together a wide variety of empirical evidence from polar and cool-temperate environments, and in putting forward models based on this evidence. (David Sugden, Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh, Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9XP.)

BRIEF REVIEWS

ACROSS THE TOP OF THE WORLD. David E. Fisher. 1992. New York and Toronto: Random House. 256 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-679-41116-X. US\$25.00.

Subtitled 'To the North Pole by sled, balloon, airplane and nuclear icebreaker,' this is primarily an account of the author's journey as a tourist aboard the Soviet nuclear-powered icebreaker *Sovetskiy Soyuz*, during the first-ever surface voyage across the Arctic Ocean via the North Pole. Fisher, a nuclear physicist, had hoped to combine oceanographic research with his tourism. Foiled by Soviet bureaucracy, instead he combined tourism with history: the references to sled, balloon, and airplane cover the secondary function of the book, which is to present a series of jaunty and strongly opinionated accounts of earlier journeys toward the Pole by explorers from John Franklin to Wally Herbert.

Fisher has done his homework and writes well: on both travel and historical scores this is an entertaining book. The icebreaker left Murmansk on 27 July 1991, visited Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa, reached the Pole on 4 August, called at Ostrov Bennetta and Ostrov Genriyetty, skirted Ostrov Vrangelya (more bureaucracy prevented a scheduled landing), landed briefly on Ostrov Arakamchechen (to meet 500 walrus and one Russian), and reached Provideniya on 16 August. Though travelling in luxury, Fisher does not give an impression that the journey was joyful: there was a great deal of noisy icebreaking, much fog, and many fellow-passengers, few of whom come across attractively. However, the reader is not overburdened with cruise details; at every second or third page Fisher digresses into history, and the reader travels instead with Franklin, Nansen, Cook, or Peary. There are a few colour prints and informative end-plate maps, but beware: according to the arrows on the cruise plot, *Sovetskiy Soyuz* crossed the Arctic basin backwards.

THE ISLAND OF SOUTH GEORGIA. Robert Headland. 1992. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xv + 293 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-521-42474-7. £19.95; US\$39.95.

This is the paperback edition of the 1984 publication that was the first truly comprehensive examination of one of the most remote islands in the world. To a certain extent,

it is written in the style of the classic nineteenth-century, natural history tome, with sections considering geography and administration; travel and communications; flora and fauna; and geology, glaciology, meteorology, and other physical sciences. Despite these excellent generalist accounts, its primary emphasis is definitely the history of the island: from its discovery in 1675 through the first landing on and claiming of it, by Captain James Cook, a century later; its prominence as a centre for Antarctic sealing; its role in the great maritime adventures of Ernest Shackleton; its economic rebirth as a whaling centre; and concluding with the British–Argentine conflict of 1982.

The book is abundantly illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps, and it includes 10 valuable appendices. Regrettably, however, these appendices, like the main text of the book, are not adequately referenced. This problem is not resolved by the relatively brief bibliography, which ignores the substantial literature on the island with the comment that it 'is scattered and much is difficult to obtain' (page 270).

Despite this, and that it has not truly been updated since its first publication, it is, as it was almost a decade ago, a work of considerable value.

TRADITIONAL GREENLANDIC MUSIC. Michael Hauser. 1993. Sisimiut: Forlaget Kragen/ULO. 294 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 87-89160-01-0.

Music has traditionally played an integral role in Greenlandic communal life, most notably in the form of drum-songs, in which one person sings, drums, and dances simultaneously. These were used to ward off evil spirits, to quieten children, as a duelling method where two people mocked each other in a ceremonial argument, and to guide an individual's behaviour.

At the end of the nineteenth century, missionaries attempted to suppress all manifestations of paganism in Greenland, including drum-songs. The results were the disappearance of certain types of drum-song, a general loss of interest among Greenlanders in their traditional music, and a strong Euro-American influence on contemporary Greenlandic music.

This substantial book represents the culmination of the author's work on Greenlandic and Inuit music, which goes back for more than 30 years. The author presents 55 songs, by region, with notation, text, and comments, representing all types of traditional Greenlandic music, but mainly drum-songs. These offer an insight into the lives and customs of Greenlanders, past and present, and also, by comparing their characteristic structures with those of Inuit songs in Canada, they throw light on migration patterns and the effects of outside influences.

Although this is clearly an in-depth study of the subject, the author is aiming to interest a wide audience, through the inclusion of many black-and-white photographs depicting the Greenlandic people and their traditional way of life. However, given the amount of the book devoted to musical analysis, this book would best be