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LA ANTÁRTICA Y EL AÑO GEOFÍSICO INTERNACIONAL: PERCEPCIONES DESDE FUENTES CHILENAS, 1954–1958. M. Consuelo León Wöppke, Mauricio Jara Fernández, Jason Kendall Moore, Nelson Llanos Sierra, and Pablo Mancilla Gonzalez (Editors). 2006. Valparaíso, Chile: Editorial Puntángelos Universidad de Playa Ancha. 218 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 956-310-324-6.
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There is a lively and productive group of Antarctic historians working in the twin cities of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar on Chile's Pacific coast. The latest publication by these scholars is *La Antártica y El Año Geofísico Internacional*, a collection of Chilean source materials dealing with Antarctica around the time of the International Geophysical Year (IGY) of 1957–58. The book was presented at the second SCAR History of Science Workshop, held in Santiago, Chile, in September 2006.

This book is a valuable contribution to understanding the IGY, since it offers a different perspective of this massive international research endeavour. As the introduction states—and as many of the documents attest—Chile often struggled in reconciling its genuine interest in Antarctic science with economic constraints. This relatively small South American country simply could not afford to take part in the IGY on the same scale as several of the other participants. Nevertheless, the Chilean press proudly reported Chile's scientific contributions to the IGY, and kept the public up to date with the country's activities in Antarctica. It was with sadness that, in March 1958, Chilean newspapers had to report that a fire started by a petrol stove had destroyed Base Risopatrón, the only station that Chile constructed specifically for the IGY. *La Unión de Valparaíso* stoically declared that Chilean scientists would continue their research at the nearby Base O'Higgins. Taken together, the documents leave the impression that there was a growing interest through the period among the Chilean public in Antarctic science for its own sake. Numerous articles triumphantly reported scientific discoveries, without regard for the nationality of the scientists involved.

Despite the genuine interest in Antarctic science, the political aspects of the IGY were never far from the surface. There was an ongoing preoccupation with Soviet activity in Antarctica, and even a worry that the communists might conduct nuclear tests in Antarctica (*El Diario Ilustrado* 17 February 1956). But even in the face of these threats, Chilean newspapers maintained a sense of

humour. Under the headline 'Cold Reception for Russians in a Region Untouchable to the Reds,' *La Estrella de Valparaíso* reported not the establishment of a communist military submarine base, but the reaction of a colony of king penguins to the presence of photographers from a Russian expedition. As Chilean journalists got caught up in the drama of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1955–58, they seem to have forgotten the lingering hostilities caused by the sovereignty dispute with Great Britain and Argentina. When Fuchs completed his epic traverse of the Antarctic continent, *La Estrella* proclaimed him the 'conqueror of Antarctica.'

This book is, in many ways, a continuation of the extremely useful *Antarctica: Testimonios Periodísticos 1947–1957*, published by Consuelo León and Mauricio Jara in 2003. But whereas the earlier work was limited to newspapers published in Valparaíso, this new book includes newspapers from Santiago, primary documents from the Foreign Ministry and the Navy, an extensive biography, and 10 pages of photos and maps taken from various sources. The inclusion of government documents alongside newspaper reports is a particularly welcome addition to this volume, which will hopefully be continued in any future publications.

The Foreign Ministry documents are taken from various files of diplomatic correspondence. There is a particular focus on letters from Juan Bautista Rossetti, the Chilean Ambassador in Paris, concerning the third IGY planning meeting held in Brussels in 1956. These documents reveal official fears that the IGY might somehow undermine Chilean sovereignty, and they show that Chilean diplomats recognized that they had to defend their country's rights. Correspondence with Chilean diplomats in Australia concerns the threat of continued Russian involvement in Antarctica and the possibility that Russia might be building submarine bases there. Although they took these threats seriously, the Chileans seem to have been a little less concerned by the communist presence in Antarctica than were their Australian colleagues. As the IGY came to an end, it looked increasingly like some form of international solution would be imposed upon Antarctica. A particularly interesting internal Foreign Ministry circular from February 1958 discusses the Chilean response to internationalisation. Alberto Sepúlveda, the Foreign Minister, formulated a list of objections to these plans, concluding: 'the Government of Chile must reject any proposition that implies internationalization, or the creation of a condominium, in any part of its national territory, whether in Antarctica, America, or in the Islands of the South Pacific' (page 191). Such an attitude reveals that the discussions that would lead to the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 were not universally popular.

The handful of documents from the Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico de la Armada are particularly valuable since foreign researchers are not always permitted access to this archive. These documents reinforce the idea that the Chileans struggled to pay for their participation in the IGY. For example, in a letter to the

head of the Chilean IGY committee written in May 1957, the Commander in Chief of the Navy presented a detailed list of the debts incurred by IGY personnel on board his ships. Three months later the Naval Commander had to write again to complain that these debts were still unpaid. The naval communications provide valuable insight into the practicalities of sending expeditions to Antarctica, and future volumes might usefully include a greater number of such documents.

Coming on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the IGY (as well as the 2007–08 Polar Year), *La Antártica y El Año Geofísico Internacional* is a timely contribution to the understanding of the history of international science in Antarctica. Above all, it shows that the IGY can be viewed from multiple perspectives, and ought not to be seen as a simple narrative of triumphant science. It is to be hoped that this book will provide a stimulus for further studies of South American participation in the IGY and in the Antarctic Treaty negotiations that followed. (Adrian Howkins, History Department, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712-0220, USA.)

THE BEST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD: ADVENTURES IN CANADA'S HIGH ARCTIC. Jim Lotz. 2006. East Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia: Pottersfield Press. 224 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-895900-76-X. \$Can19.95.

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Jim Lotz was a member of the Operation Hazen expeditions that did so much to study northern Ellesmere Island in the late 1950s under the leadership of Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith. They were part of Canada's contribution to the International Geophysical Year of 1957–58. As the list of dedicatees set out at the start of the book indicates, many members of the expeditions have sadly passed away, and Lotz is one of a dwindling band of Arctic veterans that remain from that heroic period of exploration. This volume is, therefore, very welcome as an autobiography of his life up to the date of the first expedition, together with an in-depth, but highly anecdotal and discursive, account of the expeditions themselves.

As well as the Hazen expeditions, he also participated in the Canada–United States Ellesmere Island Ice Shelf Expedition in 1959, a 'miserable experience' according to Lotz, during which he resided for four months in a trailer 'several kilometers north of Ward Hunt Island.' He returned to the Gilman Glacier, close to Lake Hazen, with Hattersley-Smith in 1960 for a final visit.

The author is a Liverpoolian and his extensive travels have not erased the legendary bluntness of natives of that fair city, which he apparently 'hated.' This is reflected in the prose of the book, making it always entertaining and easy to read if, one suspects, deliberately provocative at times. It starts with an account of Lotz's youth in Liverpool and of his appointment, after securing a Geography degree at Manchester University, to the United Africa Company as a graduate trainee. He worked in

Nigeria, largely engaged in the peanut trade, that staple which was, and is, an important export of the northern part of the country. He appreciated that he was part of a 'dying social order' and so resigned and decided on emigration to Canada. After a variety of short-term jobs, he became a weather observer at Schefferville, in the Ungava Peninsula, and this led to an invitation to join Operation Hazen. This was done in 'typical British fashion . . . someone asked me if I wanted to serve on it.'

Lotz introduces Ellesmere Island with an account of the early explorations in the area, including those of Nares, Greely, and Peary, and then touches on the Oxford University expedition of 1934–35. He concludes with the observation that Operation Hazen, 'would be the first major intrusion into this harsh, austere land.'

Those were the days! Not only did the members of the party have no psychological tests to determine their suitability for work in the north but also, apparently, no medical examination. This section develops into a discussion of leadership, with the almost obligatory 'dig' at Scott as a conspicuous part of it, and the conclusion that Hattersley-Smith was 'superb.'

The author presents detailed information of the 'flying-in' of the expedition to its area of study and of air operations generally in the north, and devotes long sections to a discussion of the various members of the expedition, who appear to have formed a singularly harmonious group. In the words of Hattersley-Smith: 'I could not have wished for better balanced or more congenial teams during the two summers.' Lotz then passes to a description of 'Companions – canine,' a long account of the important position of dogs on the expedition, and then on to 'Life on the ice' and 'Discoveries and mysteries' an account of the achievements of the expedition, especially its work on the Gilman Glacier, which was surveyed both topographically and geophysically, in great detail.

The end of the expedition is described with some modest pathos, and there is an epilogue describing what happened to the various members in later life.

The writer's style is congenial and the book is suitable for reading through in one session. This is not to imply that the account is trivial or that it does not contain a large number of thought provoking points. It is simply that the lightness of touch of the prose enables one to skim rapidly from page to page. Moreover the candour of the writer is attractive. There are few books of this nature in which the writer openly admits to having had murderous thoughts about the colleague with whom he was living in enforced and cramped surroundings, but such is the case here, with regard to his companion in the trailer on the Ice Shelf expedition.

One is, however, brought up short by a few curious and simplistic judgements and minor errors of fact that the book contains. These relate to the background material, that on exploration at large, and not to the specifics of the volume. For example, we have William Wellman, not Walter (page 65), and Peary reaching the North Pole (page 53) but also failing to do so (page 100). Also, as