

Review

Climatic Change in the Historical and the Instrumental Periods

Edited by

Rudolf Bradzil

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Price 60 DM (Hard Bound)

The book with the main title 'Climatic Change' written in bold letters on a pleasantly designed cover page has the potential of attracting large number of readers. However, the contents are disappointing. The book is basically a compilation of the papers presented in the international conference on Climatic Change in the Historical and the instrumental period which was held in Brno University, Czechoslovakia during 12-16 June 1989. The editor himself has stated explicitly in the preface "The individual contributions were not reviewed prior to publication nor were they corrected from the language point of view". In view of this, the book is full of errors of this category.

The most striking omission is the absence of figures from the book altogether, though the text suggests that there ought to have been good number of figures and illustrations. A clue to this glaring omission is found in the introductory Chapter by the editor where he states "Graphical supplements to the individual papers are attached to the Proceedings as an independent attachment of the Journal *Scripta Fac. Sci. Nat., Univ., Purk. Brun., Vol. 20, Geographia 1-2 Brno 1990.*" Whatever this may mean, the book is incomplete and loses its value to a large extent due to non inclusion of figures but retaining reference to them in the text. It is improper to call such a publication a book. It is only a publication of extended Abstracts of symposium papers under a hard cover.

In addition to the introductory chapter the papers are classified in to six parts, namely;

(i) Climatic Change — Global View,

- (ii) Impact of Climatic Change,
- (iii) Indirect and historical data sets,
- (iv) Instrumental data sets and methods of analysis,
- (v) Regional Climatic Changes — Europa,
- (vi) Regional Climatic Changes — other regions.

The book in all contains 75 papers. On the average each paper has a running text of about 4 pages. The only exception being the comprehensive article by Prof. Wilfred Bach on global warming. The paper discusses many important aspects of the problem and provides valuable data.

Despite the editorial shortcomings the papers contain some useful material. The historical sketch entitled "Climatology at Brno University in 70 years of its existence" unfolds many facts hitherto unknown to the world Climatologists. Important among these are the Pioneering work initiated by the climatologists at Brno University and in most of the cases tragic end to their young careers during the second world war period. The papers in general have three main points of merit : (i) good amount of useful climatological data particularly the rare instrumental data of the past has been used in many papers, (ii) the regional climatology of eastern Europe is a valuable addition to the meager knowledge of ciimatology of the region to the readers particularly from the Asian region, and (iii) some of the methods of data analysis are very useful for research workers and graduate level students in statistics and climatology.

The book is priced at 60DM (Rs. 850) which is not too high a price keeping in view the present escalation in the book prices; one has to dig for the worth of his money and perhaps imagine the illustrations.

— G. B. Pant