

are the hazards from earthquakes, and landslides and erosion. Seismically, this area is relatively stable; but, earthquakes do occur, such as the 1939 Accra earthquake which killed 16 people. The effects of slope failure, on the other hand, are considered to be an increasing problem.

Most of the material about Lake Nyos is the subject of a thematic edition of the *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research* published in 1986; thus a full description and discussion of this topic by the authors of chapters in this book is already available. In addition, the chapter on seismic monitoring of Lake Nyos is almost word for word, the same as a chapter by the same authors in *Geo Hazards Natural and Man-made*, published by Chapman and Hall, also in 1992. Even within the book under review, there is an undesirable degree of repetition which should have been edited out. Considering that the Cameroon Volcanic Line runs straight through the area under discussion, it is surprising that volcanic activity, other than gas emissions, gets only the briefest of mentions as a hazard in the region.

As the editors rightly point out, more people died as a result of catastrophic natural disasters in this area during the 1980s than in the whole of recorded history. A contributory factor is the increase in population causing people to live in areas of potential hazard such as the area around Lake Nyos, previously unoccupied. Indeed this is a world problem recognised by the United Nations in the International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction. As a new contribution to the discussion which could help mitigate the risk posed by natural disasters, this book does not achieve its objective.

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Thakur, V. C. *Geology of Western Himalaya*. Oxford (Pergamon Press), 1992. xvi + 363 pp., 50 maps. Price £345.00

This volume reviews the geology of the Himalaya from western Pakistan to the western end of Nepal. Apparently a coloured geological map of the Western Himalaya complements the volume, but was not available with my copy. As the author states, it attempts to compile and synthesise the geological data of the Western Himalaya since publication in 1964 of Gansser's classic work 'The Geology of the Himalayas'. For descriptive purposes the mountain range is divided into five sections: the Outer, Lesser, Higher, Tethys and Trans-Himalayan Zones. There is a final section on Tectonic Synthesis which includes crystalline

nappes, the Main Central Thrust, subduction-related magmatism, blueschists, obduction, collision tectonics, metamorphism, gravity anomalies, seismicity and crustal structure. Unfortunately more space in the book is devoted to stratigraphy, rather than tectonics, magmatism, metamorphism and geophysics. For example there are at least 130 pages (out of 320 pages of text) detailing lists of sedimentary rock types in their series, formations and groups together with lists of their fossils; it would have been better to put much of this information in tables in an appendix. The geology of the Himalaya is without doubt fantastic and fascinating. It is a pity that Dr. Thakur makes it so boring. I don't find much enthusiasm in the writing. Even where there are interesting controversies (e.g. age of ophiolite obduction, relative age of formation of sutures) little effort is made to evaluate, critically or otherwise, the different points of view. I would like to have seen more space devoted to the problems of inverted metamorphic isograds, $P-T-t$ paths, crustal shortening, uplift versus exhumation, and isotopic information on petrogenesis.

Many of the maps, structural sections and stratigraphic sections are very difficult to read, because they are over-ornamented, overpacked with data, and over-reduced. Also it would have been better for the text to have been examined by a native English speaker before publication. Although there are not many spelling mistakes, there are many annoying grammatical weaknesses; e.g. 'Trans Himalaya' as a noun, 'north dipping', 'ripple marked', and 'subduction related' as compound adjectives should be hyphenated; 'Geology of Western Himalaya' as the title of the book and 'Tectonic evolution of Himalaya' as a section heading require a definite article before Himalaya; and 'blue schists' should be one word. Like most compilations this one does provide useful data, but also, alas, like most compendia, it makes very dull reading. Nevertheless, I think individuals and research groups working in the Himalaya should have a copy; it will be a useful source of information.

Unbelievably, the price of this book is £345.00, which must make it the most expensive geological book in the world. I can see no reason for such an exorbitant price. The paper is not of the most high quality and noticeably, nearly all of the figures have been reproduced from older publications and not redrawn for this book. At 363 pages, the book is not unduly large. At this price, I cannot believe any institution library or individual will buy the book and that market forces will stop this overpricing of books.

B. F. WINDLEY