

whether the Dene will benefit or lose. Both groups will get more from published government reports. All will have to wait for what the future will be.

What this means is that Kevin Krajick can easily gather new information for a follow-up volume. If this gets published, the editor should get the name of the Hudson's Bay Company correct. From 2 May 1670, the day it was chartered, to the present, the oldest incorporated joint-stock merchandising company in the English-speaking world has kept its "s".

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SACRED HUNT: A PORTRAIT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEALS AND INUIT. By DAVID F. PELLY. Vancouver: Greystone Books and Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001. ISBN 1-55054-885-9. xv + 127 p., 2 maps, b&w and color illus., bib., index. Hardbound. US\$27.50; Cdn\$34.95.

Since the heyday of the seal protest, it seems almost required that any work about seals or seal hunting have a title that, if not actually florid, is certainly eye-catching (see, for example, Lamson, 1979; Busch, 1985; Wenzel, 1991; Lyngé, 1992)—not to mention that many (but excepting the above) are too often more polemic than reasoned thought. While this book was more conservatively titled, I began my reading with more than a little wariness.

To say that *Sacred Hunt*, written by freelance journalist and longtime Nunavut resident David Pelly, overcame my initial concern is an understatement. Interspersing anthropological (Jenness, Rasmussen) and ethnohistoric (Iglolik Oral History Project, Avataq Cultural Institute) statements with information received directly from Inuit, he has produced an excellent ethnography of Inuit sealing. More, while by no means monographic in structure or approach, this book is not only descriptively rich, but also captures the sociocultural and ecological complexities (the Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*) of this relationship.

Briefly, following a foreword by the Honourable Peter Irniq, the author's preface, and a short introduction that loosely locates sealing in a circumpolar context, the body of *Sacred Hunt* divides into three main sections about Inuit and seals, each of which opens with some commentary by Pelly. The first, "Respect for the Seal," informs about the place of seal(s) in the oral traditions and folklore of peoples as far-flung as North Alaska Inupiat and Faroese fishers, as well as about the Sedna-Nuliajuk beliefs of Canadian Inuit. Given the book's title, this cosmological element receives only modest attention. However, less is probably more (see, for instance, Fienup-Riordan's [1983,

1994] analytical treatment of Yu'pik Eskimo cosmological relations).

"Hunting the Seal" forms the heart of Pelly's endeavor and is the longest section (76 p.) in what is a very short work. (In fact, some 40 of the book's 127 pages are devoted to photographs.) Here, Inuit guide the reader, via nicely selected quotes supplemented by excellent early photographs and Pelly's own occasional observations, through the details and process of seal hunting. Winter and spring sealing are illustrated mainly from Canadian Arctic sources and informants, while the material on open-water sealing relies heavily on Greenlandic information. Pelly has skillfully woven carefully chosen excerpts from both published and unpublished sources so that the "portrait" of his title is very ethnographically and personally complete.

Pelly's last section is his shortest and amounts to a remark on seal(skins) as an item of trade and, with the 1983 European boycott, an object of abhorrence to some people. While I suspect that the "Euro seal ban" was the catalyst for *Sacred Hunt*, Pelly was wise not to dwell on this aspect of the relationship between Inuit and seals. However, it is here that I find myself with some disagreement.

The first such point is whether the demise of the commercial sealskin trade removed "...the heart of the Inuit economy" (p. 114). I suspect that Pelly means this rhetorically and not as absolute fact. Otherwise, the social and cultural, not to mention dietary, import of seals, and most especially *natsiq*, the ringed seal, that the preceding section speaks to so well, and which most observers agree remains more than less intact, would be nothing but reminiscence.

My other disagreement goes to what effect, other than moral, a re-opening of Europe or a relaxation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), or both, would really have for Canadian Inuit. The sealskin trade that now exists is based on luxury fashion wear, so profits go to those who "add value"—if only by virtue of designer name. My point is one I have made before—namely, that even if markets should revive, in none but the most technicolored dreams will the Inuit who do the hunting and preparing receive anything but slight compensation. In fairness, my argument about this is not with Pelly or this book; it is with the distraction the MMPA creates, diverting attention from much more contentious problems that Inuit now face, or soon will.

Sacred Hunt is not an academic work in which Inuit sealing and subsistence are analyzed in any formal anthropological sense. It is, however, an ethnography that vividly brings the process by which Inuit and seals interrelate to the reader. Oddly, while so much of this book is quotation, it is not just a "quote-mine" for last-minute term papers. This is because there is much more in these pages than words (hence, my earlier reference to Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*). For this reason, I think the audience that may well best appreciate *Sacred Hunt* will be those able to read beyond the words themselves.

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DAUGHTER OF STRANGERS. By MARJORY GORDON. Ottawa, Ontario: Oberon Press, 2001. 144 p., glossary, two maps. Hardbound, Cdn\$31.95; Softbound, Cdn\$15.95.

For years I have wished that Canadian archaeologists would follow the practice of some of their international colleagues and write accessible stories based on their fieldwork. Peter Schledermann's recent novel, *Raven's Saga*, opened the doors on his Norse and Inuit discoveries; now Marjory Gordon presents the results of husband Bryan's 30-odd years of work in the Barren Grounds.

Time travel stories are hard to get right. H.G. Wells and Diana Gabaldon created credible situations involving distant times and people, but at least both were dealing with people presumably of their own culture. Gordon adds another twist with her novel *Daughter of Strangers*. In this story, an adolescent girl from Ottawa is thrown into a world nearly 2000 years earlier but also many worlds away from the language and culture of her friends and family. That Gordon pulls it off in thrilling style in her first novel is a credit both to her imagination and to her in-depth knowledge of this territory and its prehistory.

A reluctant Amy has been brought by her parents to work on her father's archaeological dig in the Barrens of the Northwest Territories for the summer. She has spent many of her school holidays in this manner and, like a typical 13-year-old, has decided she hates both the isolation and the physical work. Nor is she interested in learning about her heritage as a part-Native Dene. Her adoptive father is far more interested in her ancestry than is Amy.

But she secretly loves the Barrens—its clear sight lines, its pristine lakes, and its magnificent, colourful life.

Gordon wisely does not waste a great deal of time trying to set up or explain the phenomenon of travel through time. After an outburst, Amy has wandered off from the archaeology camp and is watching a group of migrating caribou through her binoculars:

On the left flank of the herd, in a shadow too deep for the lenses to penetrate—another motion—a tern soared in front of the lenses, blocking her view. Her head went spinning, like it did when she swam a long way under water. Her body seemed to fling itself as through water and space.

Amy finds herself 1600 years in the past, on the opposite side of the river from her parents' camp and the archaeological site, in the midst of a caribou hunt by the Middle Talthelei ancestors of the Dene. To The People, she appears suddenly in the midst of the herd, and her arrival in this manner creates a mystery around this "daughter of strangers," which is exacerbated by her strange clothing and appearance and her near-complete lack of necessary survival skills. Her Dene looks and her apparent magical power, which brings hunting success, save her from death or slavery.

Thrown into such a situation—with hostile, suspicious men watching every move, strange, foreign food, camp discomforts taken to prehistoric levels, unable to understand the language or to exhibit skills she is expected at her age to have mastered—most people would despair, let alone a teenager. But as the resilient daughter of field researchers, Amy has been brought up to deal with situations as they arise. Her natural strength of character surfaces and eventually gains her the admiration and confidence of several of the women, especially her adopted "grandmother," who seeks to protect the girl and undertakes her tutelage in tribal ways.

Amy tries to escape, of course, and is rescued by a young hunter in a canoe as she is immobilized by cold while trying to swim across the freezing and rapid waters of the river to her family. Her near-success wins her further respect and admiration, and she is anointed with a new name. Now *Nombeeae*, the Otter, she is no longer the "daughter of strangers," but an heiress of the spirit of a highly respected animal. She is accepted.

Amy spends several months with the tribe, joining in the caribou hunt, the butchering activities, and the making of new clothing for the winter. Along with her, we learn the skills necessary to survive. When an elder dies, she witnesses the ceremonies honouring the dead and helps her people move the camp away from the now-dangerous spirit. Gordon brings us into these scenes as participants and observers, both of Amy and of The People, who no longer seem so distant from us. Along with Amy, we feel the irritation of the hordes of blackflies and mosquitos, we squirm with the nuisance of lice, and learn the pain and exhaustion of eking out a living in an unforgiving environment: