

plot may vary, but the essence is the same in many of the regions he visits. The reader must envision Rasmussen recording stories as unobtrusively as possible as he sat perched on skins inside a steamy hut or clammy igloo, inhaling the aroma of smoke and sweat, and tasting all manner of strange foods. As Terrence Cole remarks, “the intellectual and spiritual life of the people themselves were his primary interests, not simple geographical discovery, and thus even when following the tracks of previous explorers, he found uncharted territory” (back cover). The whole three-year expedition is best summed up in Rasmussen’s own words: “It is good sometimes to feel the power of Nature over one. You bend in silence and accept the beauty without words” (p. xvi).

I highly recommend this book to any person with a love for the Arctic. It engages the most casual reader in the stark realities of the polar regions, the harshness amidst the romance.

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ANCIENT HARPOON HEADS OF NUNAVUT: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE. By ROBERT W. PARK and DOUGLAS R. STENTON. Pangnirtung, Nunavut: Parks Canada, 1998. Text in English and Inuktitut syllabics. 108 p., map, b&w illus. Softbound. Cdn\$20.00

ANCIENT STONE TOOLS OF NUNAVUT: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE. By DOUGLAS R. STENTON and ROBERT W. PARK. Pangnirtung, Nunavut: Parks Canada, 1998. 118 p., maps, b&w illus. Softbound. Cdn\$20.00.

The foundation of modern archaeology rests on the scientific approach to data retrieval and analysis. Having completed an excavation, following precisely formulated procedures and methodologies, the archaeologist is faced with the equally important task of analyzing the data. Most often, two questions must be answered before further cultural insights can be gained from the material on hand: approximately when was the archaeological site occupied, and by whom? During the past 80 years of field research, Arctic archaeologists have gathered enough evidence to put together a picture of the many cultural developments that have occurred in the Arctic during the past 4500 years. Although this picture is far from (and may never be) complete, the major pieces of the cultural puzzle are in place, and the most important or diagnostic artifacts have been identified. Diagnostic artifacts are those whose shape and method of manufacture gradually change through time in such a way that a particular version or type reflects not only a specific cultural episode, but also the temporal stages within such a period. In other words, diagnostic artifacts are prehistoric time markers.

The first of the two books, *Ancient Harpoon Heads of Nunavut*, appropriately presents an illustrated sequence of one of the most important diagnostic artifacts for archaeological analysis. The first part of the book describes and illustrates harpoon technology, which incorporates a number of elements such as a throwing shaft, foreshaft, finger rest, line and often an ice pick. English and Inuktitut terms for the different elements of the harpoon are presented, along with a very brief description of different sea mammal-hunting methods. An equally brief summation of Nunavut Palaeo- and Neoeskimo prehistory follows, accompanied by a chart showing temporal changes in harpoon head styles during the past 4200 years.

These brief introductory remarks and illustrations are followed by a more in-depth description of harpoon heads under the heading “Harpoon Heads and Arctic Archaeology.” Perhaps a more appropriate heading would have been “Harpoon Head Attributes,” since the section describes material, metric, functional, stylistic, and symbolic attributes of harpoon heads. The “attribute” section is an illustrated description of some of the common types of harpoon heads from archaeological sites in Nunavut. The authors correctly point out that the harpoon head types shown are by no means an exhaustive listing, but rather a sampling of known types within Nunavut. The English section ends with a brief paragraph about harpoon heads today, a statement about the importance of protecting the Nunavut archaeological heritage, and a guide to further reading and cultural organizations. The second half of the guidebook is a translation of the first half into Inuktitut, written in the eastern Arctic syllabic script.

As a companion volume to the harpoon head book, *Ancient Stone Tools of Nunavut: An Illustrated Guide* deals with prehistoric stone tools found on archaeological sites in Nunavut. After a brief introduction, the authors present a short synopsis of Nunavut prehistory illustrated by a chart depicting the temporal sequence of prehistoric periods, including Independence I, Pre-Dorset, and various stages of Dorset and Thule cultures. The presentation of different types of tools is preceded by a discussion of the importance of stone tools in the interpretation of human activities on a given site in a given region, and by a description of raw lithic materials used by ancient toolmakers. In many instances, stone tool fragments and debitage are the only cultural elements that the inhabitants left behind on a site, or that have survived the ravages of time. The description of raw materials leads the reader to a discussion of the manufacturing techniques of stone tools and includes terms used both in English and in Inuktitut for the different attributes, such as ventral and dorsal sides of flakes, or percussion and pressure flaking techniques. These lithic attributes are the elements used to classify stone tools into useful categories for site analysis. Attributes, typologies, and debitage analysis are presented in a discussion about how archaeologists use such data to reconstruct the lives of prehistoric peoples. Drawings illustrating the distribution of lithics within excavated

dwelling features show how such analyses can lead to interpretations about the use of interior living space by men, women, and children.

Some of the most common stone tool types are described and illustrated in the final section of the book. These tools are of course not merely common: they also represent the best of the diagnostic attributes among various stone tools, some of which (like the burin) are essentially toolmaking tools. Endblades for arrows and harpoon heads, knife blades, sideblades, microblades, and scrapers are among the tools described in this section, which is followed by a brief discussion of stone tool changes over time, the need to protect Nunavut's archaeological heritage, and a guide to further reading. As in the illustrated guide for harpoon heads, the second half of the stone tool guide is presented in Inuktitut, using the eastern Arctic syllabic script.

The two volumes are fairly well what they set out to be: illustrated guides to ancient tools found on sites within the Nunavut Territory. The illustrations, drawings, and maps are excellent. The accuracy of the Inuktitut translations I cannot judge; however, I would have liked to know something about the translation process—the people responsible for the translations and the extent to which they represent various dialects within the Nunavut Territory. As the authors state, the books were produced to complement existing and often highly site-specific resources dealing with the prehistory of Nunavut. The authors have provided individuals, Native or non-Native, with two valuable guides to a better understanding of what is presently known about Nunavut prehistory and, more importantly, how this knowledge is obtained. I highly recommend a wide distribution, in the North and South, of these two books.

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NATIVE LIBRARIES: CROSS-CULTURAL CONDITIONS IN THE CIRCUMPOLAR COUNTRIES. By GORDON H. HILLS. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1997. ISBN 0-8108-3138-4. xv + 361 p., bib., appendices, index. Hardbound. US\$59.50.

This has to be one of the most sensitive and insightful volumes written on the challenges facing the North. Hills' analysis of the cultural impact of a Euro-American institution in North America or a European institution in Greenland and Siberia is imaginative and all encompassing. While the author's own experience is in the State of Washington and with a small community in Alaska, he has

observed firsthand the cultural catastrophe facing the aboriginal peoples of the circumpolar North. Native libraries both contribute to the destruction of these cultures and offer hope for their sustenance. The book ends in a note of resigned despair. Hills concludes that aboriginal cultures will not be able to sustain themselves in an information economy, which is dependent on a few dominant languages in their written form. He also looks at other communication media like television, which, while it seems on the surface to be compatible with oral traditions, is equally insidious in its impacts.

The book is divided into eight chapters or sections. The most insightful, which have relevance well beyond the sometimes narrow world of libraries, are "Preservation and Continuity of Heritage," "Oral and Written Traditions," and "Literacy and the Native Orthographies." The book's extensive bibliography and the notes that follow each chapter are a great treat and full of surprises. While the author may have moderated some of his opinions in the text, there is no doubt as to his perspective in the notes. The bibliographies also reveal the idiosyncratic nature of the research. The citations on Native culture and indigenous orthographies are hardly complete, but the inferences Hills draws from the literature he does cite are often profound. This is not meant as a criticism of the book. Rather, it reinforces the author's sometimes eccentric journey of the mind and the physical world.

The book is a clear reflection of the author's own experience. He worked widely amongst the Native peoples of Washington and Alaska; consequently, his perspectives are heavily tainted by these experiences. He is extremely cognizant of the impact that "print" and a librarian can have on aboriginal communities. While the book is refreshingly candid and introspective, it is not without issues. In his chapters on "Orthographies," for example, Hills is correct to look to the missionaries as the "originators" of orthography. But he could have gone further. In the Canadian North, for example it can be proven that the Reverend Henry Bird Steinhauer, an Ojibway missionary, and his Cree wife, Betsy, were the real inventors of the alphabet. There is further evidence that mixed-blood women may well have been the go-betweens, the link between Native and European cultures that acted as the catalyst. It was not a simple case of missionary-enforced print literacy.

The author's most important ruminations are about the impact of the European concepts of literacy and cultural transmission and their storehouse, the library, on aboriginal peoples. He has great insight into how these have eroded oral tradition and the wisdom of the elders. He makes a call for the integration of the aboriginal concept of community learning and states the importance of transmission of knowledge through elders into "knowledge" centres or "libraries" in aboriginal communities. He points out some issues that should be critical to all "marginalized" cultures, particularly to those interested in the advancement or even survival of the unique languages that are their underpinnings. He argues that without books and continu-