

can be achieved in using a combination of archaeology, ethnography, oral history, and historical records; indeed, it comes close to touching the past directly when it identifies specific families and their association with two of the sites. However, in its consideration of the Okak site, it also illustrates how quickly elements of local knowledge can be lost. Overall, the book is a significant contribution to Subarctic anthropological studies, and one which I, as an archaeological specialist in a northern Athapaskan area of Canada, am very pleased to see.

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**BECOMING VISIBLE: INDIGENOUS POLITICS AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.** Edited by TERJE BRANTENBERG, JANNE HANSEN and HENRY MINDE. Tromsø: Centre for Sami Studies, University of Tromsø, 1995. 247 p. Softbound. NOK200.

As we enter the third year of the United Nations' International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, international agencies, national governments, and organizations representing indigenous peoples have begun, often tentatively, to develop cooperative arrangements that recognize the special situation of the many indigenous minorities of the world. A number of initiatives have taken place in the Nordic countries, notably with respect to the policies of the governments of Norway, Sweden, and Finland toward their respective Sami minorities. Since the governments of these three countries have each chosen to respond differently to the demands of the Sami minority, it is difficult to discern a common Scandinavian policy on Sami-related issues. While the five Nordic countries have taken considerable steps to develop common programs and legislation on labour, health benefits, social welfare, and a number of other matters, there does not exist, at this time, any coordinated Nordic approach for addressing demands by the Sami as to their situation as an indigenous people. Nor does such a common Nordic approach appear likely for quite some time. However, a number of interesting developments in this region bear closer study.

In recent years, Norway has become a front-line advocate of indigenous rights at the international level and, with respect to its Sami minority, at the national level as well. It was a major proponent in the discussions leading to the adoption by the International Labour Organization of ILO Convention 169, the *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention*, and was the first country to ratify it. Norway has also been a centre for public dialogue on indigenous rights, and a number of academic studies have attempted to address this situation. Norway is the only one of the three Nordic countries in which Sami activists, during demonstrations against the Alta-Kautokeino hydroelectric power project of

1979–81, directly confronted their government. This confrontation led to the establishment of a royal commission, which published its first (and to date, only) report in 1984. Recommendations from this report led to an amendment to the Constitution respecting the obligation of the Norwegian state towards its Sami minority and to the establishment of a Sami Parliament. The Sami Rights Commission has its third chairman and is currently examining Sami land title rights in the county of Finnmark. The fact that the commission has yet to publish its second report was noted in the remarks of several of the papers published in *Becoming Visible*.

In connection with the UN's International Year of the World's Indigenous People held in 1993, the Centre for Sami Studies at the University of Tromsø arranged a conference of scientists, politicians, students, and others with the theme "Indigenous Politics and Self-Government." Participants from Norway, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Guatemala and officials of the United Nations made presentations. This collection of the proceedings is well-presented and contains a number of excellent papers on indigenous rights issues.

Henry Minde, one of the organizers of this conference, tackled the very difficult task of writing an overview of the emergence of indigenous rights activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, examining events in Canada, Australia, Scandinavia, and the United States and at the international level. Professor Minde skillfully weaves a common thread throughout his analytical narrative. Terje Brantenberg, another of the conference organizers, contributes a passionate analysis of current Norwegian policies with respect to Sami rights issues. The 1992 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Rigoberta Menchu Tum, provides an uplifting address on indigenous rights developments at the international level—tempered by descriptions of the ruthlessness employed in many parts of the world for suppressing indigenous peoples.

There is an excellent summary on the development of Sami rights since 1980 by Carsten Smith, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Norway, who from 1980 to 1985 served as the first chairman of the Sami Rights Committee. Erica-Irene Daes summarizes how the UN has dealt with the concerns of indigenous peoples over the past 25 years. Douglas Sanders contributes a succinct analysis of how some states deal with their respective indigenous minorities and the potential impact of the UN *Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

There are also a number of fine papers on specific situations of interest to circumpolar scholars, notably, Frank Cassidy's analysis on indigenous rights and the Crown in Canada; Terry Fenge's overview of the 1993 Canadian legislation that will establish the territory of Nunavut as a homeland for the Inuit of the central and eastern Arctic regions of the present Northwest Territories; papers on the situation of aboriginal women by Connie De Vall and Cindy Polchies; and Harald Eidheim's presentation on the organization of knowledge in Sami ethnopolitics.

Some papers disappoint. A presentation of a somewhat gaffly quality by Peter Jull, "Through a Glass Darkly: Scandinavian Sami Policy in Foreign Perspective," proves

remarkably shallow. The title is misleading, in that it claims to be examining “Scandinavian” policies with respect to the Sami when, in fact, all of Jull’s references deal only with the situation in Norway. More troubling, however, is Mr. Jull’s apparently compelling need to lecture Norwegians and Sami on how to resolve their differences. While such admonishments might have served some use during the Alta demonstrations, when there was a crisis in relations between Sami and non-Sami, one questions whether, in 1993, the presenter was telling his audience anything they did not already know. The Sami leadership in each of the three Nordic countries is very knowledgeable on the international situation with respect to indigenous rights—and more than capable of espousing their own point of view. Indeed, the presentations by a number of Sami at this conference bear testimony to this.

A more substantive complaint for this reviewer is that several papers were published in the Norwegian and Swedish languages and, therefore, are not available to a wider international audience: presentations by Ragnhild Nystad of the Sami Council; Ole Henrik Magga, President of the Sami Parliament in Norway; Ingvar Åhrén, chairman of the Sami Parliament in Sweden; the late Aslak Nils Sara, a longtime proponent of indigenous rights at the international level; Alf Nystad, a member of the Executive Committee of the Norwegian Sami Parliament. I met each of these Sami during the course of my study on the Sami land title issue, and their opinions deserve a wider audience. While a full translation might have led to delays and additional costs, the editors could surely have provided a summary.

Overall, readers interested in Arctic indigenous rights issues will find much that is useful in this excellent compilation of what appears to have been a most dynamic conference.

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**VOICES IN STONE: A PERSONAL JOURNEY INTO THE ARCTIC PAST.** By PETER SCHLEDERMANN. Calgary: The Arctic Institute of North America, 1996. Komatik Series, No. 5. ISBN 0-919034-87-X. 221 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., notes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$25.00.

In his new book *Voices in Stone*, archaeologist Peter Schledermann writes a hitherto unknown chapter of world history: the cultural history of Ellesmere Island, High Arctic Canada. Archaeological information from excavations and surveys of prehistoric sites and personal experiences from his fieldwork form the starting point of Schledermann’s remarkable book. A synthesis of research into 4500 years of Native and Norse prehistory at the gateway to Greenland is presented for lay as well as learned readers.

With a few exceptions, professional archaeological research on Ellesmere Island has been carried out only during

the past two decades. Patricia D. Sutherland is working in the northern part of this huge island, whereas Peter Schledermann and Karen McCullough have concentrated their research on the central and southern east coast of Ellesmere Island, in particular the Bache Peninsula region. The results of their surveys and excavations were presented in two books (McCullough, 1989; Schledermann, 1990) aimed at professional archaeologists. *Voices in Stone* represents, in a sense, the overall conclusions of these scientific volumes, and thus it is welcomed by students and researchers. However, this third book of the “Ellesmere trilogy” is written also for a broader audience.

The linguistic style and structure of the book make it as exciting as a novel. Schledermann elegantly weaves together dramatic experiences from fieldwork under harsh conditions, personal feelings and considerations as an explorer of the Arctic past, and interpretations of archaeological data. He succeeds in constructing a personal, but also convincing and coherent model of the culture history of Ellesmere Island from the days of the Palaeo-Eskimo pioneers 4500 years ago until the present.

The first chapters of the book deal with Schledermann’s fascination with the High Arctic environment and the small-scale human societies that were playing their part on this great ecological scene. The author considers himself a human ecologist, and questions on the influence of climatic change and human (over-) exploitation of game resources are main themes. The reader is briefly introduced to archaeological methods, for example, excavation strategy and Carbon 14 datings, and to the use of analogies from ethnology and experimental archaeology. Chapter 3, “The Search,” tells the quite fascinating story of how the author’s career in Arctic archaeology finally led him and his crew to the geographical “gateway to Greenland”—east central Ellesmere Island. The importance of the rich resource areas at the polynyas of the Bache Peninsula region is emphasized: probably every human migration across Smith Sound into Greenland has left an archaeological trace there.

The following five chapters deal with the Palaeo-Eskimo prehistory of the area. Schledermann interprets each archaeologically defined culture—Independence I, Saqqaq, Pre-Dorset, and Dorset—as a separate people or ethnic group, in some cases overlapping in time. This starting point sets the stage for a story covering three millennia, in which migrations triggered by climatic changes, encounters between cultures, amalgamation, and discontinuity and abandonment are key ideas. The well-documented finds of “West Greenland Saqqaq” sites in the Bache Peninsula region are remarkable, and so are the late Dorset massive constructions—the longhouses—and the accompanying figurines. Schledermann’s thoughts, memorable moments, and the enthusiasm of the crew in the search for and excavation of the archaeological sites are transmitted to the reader. I myself recognize the many blessings of fieldwork in the Arctic from twenty seasons in Greenland.

Schledermann draws attention to discontinuities in the cultural sequence of the study area. During long periods—