

and tourists, the contents of 14 chapters include issues on safety of operations, physician qualifications, medical supplies, medical emergencies, standardization of supplies and equipment on board tour vessels, and varieties of medical ailments and emergencies encountered on tours.

The conference was organized by Dr. John M. Levinson, M.D., past president of the Explorers Club (N.Y.) and founder and president of Aid for International Medicine. Both he and co-editor Dr. Errol Ger are experienced ship's physicians. The conference was attended by 22 physicians and 18 others, including prominent polar explorers and scientists. The physicians included several from Antarctic Treaty Party nations, as well as those who have served as physicians on tour vessels. Formal presentations were made on two days, and a follow-up day was scheduled for discussions and preparations for a proceedings volume. Some of the original presentations were included intact in this volume, and others were synthesized and rewritten by the editors to provide more comprehensive coverage of selected topics. Thus, authors of some chapters are not identified; instead, a list of 29 contributors provides credit to those who submitted papers or offered some of the content.

The grist for the conference is given in the Foreword by Dr. Bernard Stonehouse, polar biologist at Scott Polar Research Institute, who discusses the basic issues to be included—the types of patients that comprise the wide variety of tour passengers encountered; operational safety; responsibility; appropriate treatment; medical facilities aboard; networks of advice and support; and the outcome of the conference (this book, ultimately). The chapters start with a brief history and description of the polar regions, and a history of polar tourism. Tourism visits to the Arctic are not well documented, but those for Antarctica since 1957 are known with reasonable certainty from records kept by tour companies now under the aegis of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO). From 1957 through the 1997–98 austral summer, a total of about 89 000 tourists traveled to Antarctica, most by ship but about 2300 by air. With numbers increasing each year (nearly 11 000 tourists are estimated for the 1998–99 summer), and more vessels, many of them Russian, being chartered to accommodate the demand, it is no wonder that safety of operations and medical facilities have become more important.

A chapter on the historical perspectives of polar medicine includes the problems related to diet, nutrition, and scurvy, a serious issue in all early expeditions before lemon juice and vitamin C became known for the prevention of scurvy. Most of the rest of the book presents practical aspects, namely medical capabilities at Antarctic bases; safety on the ship, on zodiac-type craft, and on helicopters; communications, disasters, and evacuations; physician qualifications, medical equipment, and medical supplies for a tourist ship; hypothermia and cold injuries; medical emergencies; personal accounts by ship's physicians; liability issues; and personal accounts by tourists.

The final chapter includes advice for tourists prior to booking a cruise, what to expect on board (and what not to expect), and tips on safety, clothing, and travel on land. Some of the detail on the practical (medical) aspects of the book is moderately technical, though understandable in layman's language, and designed for the physician-readers. A primary objective stated throughout the book is that tour operators should achieve a standardization of medical equipment and supplies, and employ ship's doctors that have a wide range of experience in medical emergencies. This responsibility falls mainly on IAATO, the organization of which virtually all companies that charter tour vessels are members, and steps have been taken since its founding in 1991 to ensure that proper facilities are provided for all vessels. Some of the Appendixes in the book contain the guidelines that tour operators follow, as enacted by the Treaty Parties, including aspects of not only environmental practices but also preparation, safety, contingency plans, and self-sufficiency. Improvements made annually by tour operators will add to the safety of operations and ensure that tourists are taken care of in polar regions as well as they are in other, less remote parts of the world.

This book is required reading for all physicians who are employed on tour vessels in polar regions, tour operators and their management and shipboard staff, tourists who plan trips and are unsure of what to expect on a cruise, and others interested in wilderness travel. The book includes black-and-white photographs, references to relevant literature, and an index.

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LES INUIT. CE QU'ILS SAVENT DU TERRITOIRE. By BÉATRICE COLLIGNON. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996. 255 p., maps, b&w illus., bib., appendices. Softbound.

*Les Inuit. Ce qu'ils savent du territoire* ("The Inuit. What they know of the territory") is a slightly reworked version of Béatrice Collignon's doctoral dissertation on the geographical knowledge of the Inuinait, a group of Inuit of the Canadian Arctic who now live mainly on Victoria Island and along the coast of Coronation Gulf, but whose original territory extended as far west as Banks Island. In her introduction, Collignon states that she hopes to contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics involved in the cultural and identity redefinitions of the Inuit, and that geography is at the heart of collective identities. Well aware that all Inuit groups are presently going through deep cultural mutations, Collignon wants to explore how these changes also affect the nature and content of their geographical knowledge.

Chapter 1 gives a historical overview of Inuinait social structure and their seasonal round. We learn that the

Inuinnait have a flexible system of territorial exploitation that has changed over the last two centuries. In the 19th century, land resources (mainly caribou and fish) were used by individual families in the summer, while the sea ice pack was occupied in the winter by numerous families hunting seals. With the introduction of the fur trade in the 1920s, the seasonal pattern was reversed: during winter and spring, individual families lived on the land trapping foxes, while small groups of families gathered during summer and fall to hunt seals in the sea. At the end of the 1950s, a seminomadic system was associated with the settlement of the Inuinnait into small permanent villages. In the winter, women and young children stayed in the community, while men and male teenagers trapped foxes and hunted caribou. In the spring, individual families went fishing on the land, and in early June they hunted geese and ducks along the coast. When the ice pack was gone, individual families hunted seals and fished along the coast. Although the separation of sexes was a new element, Inuinnait society was still traditional. In the mid-1970s, with the spread of cash income, the land/sea seasonal round collapsed. According to Collignon, today's hunting, trapping, and fishing territory is more a food reserve than a way of life, especially for the younger generations.

Chapter 2 presents the methods the author used to collect data on the geographical knowledge of the Inuinnait, as well as other sources she used during the study. More than a thousand toponyms were collected, and 779 were located on a map. The information collected went beyond listing place names and their translations. Collignon encouraged her informants to share with her complementary information that they deemed essential, and thus she was able to collect stories from the oral tradition and personal incidents linked to the toponyms. The chapter concludes with the author's concern that some of the information collected might be false. She notes that most Inuit have a bad opinion of researchers: they see them as people who come into their community for a short time, ask a lot of questions, and then go back south to write a book which will make them famous and upon which they will likely build a career. Hence, some informants could have presented her with some unreliable anecdotes. However, she feels that because people were proud that the toponyms were to be put on government maps, they gave the best information they could provide.

In Chapter 3, Collignon explains that the geographical knowledge of the Inuinnait is based on the merging of practice and discourse. As nomadic hunters, the Inuinnait associate geography with traveling and hunting, which are considered two faces of the same knowledge. In practice, this includes orientation, recognition of the land (what is important for the Inuinnait is to remember how different locations articulate together), and mastering of specific geographical vocabulary (e.g., terminology of ice) which is epitomized by the use of numerous locatives in their language. In discourse, Inuit rarely theorize about their geographical knowledge. Learning about the land is done

through observation and experience, but narratives about places are numerous, and history is intimately linked to toponymy. Although cultural features such as cairns, caches, and traps can be seen, many invisible marks are also present through the stories associated with the land. What may seem empty land to a foreigner is actually full of stories about the humans, animals, and spirits which inhabit it. At the end of this chapter, Collignon notes that the geographical knowledge of women, who usually do not participate in hunting activities, is similar to random points on a map between which the traveling lines are not well known. In contrast, the men know these lines very well through their constant travels and hence their perception of the land is much more elaborated.

Chapter 4 is about the toponyms collected and the method used for their interpretation. From her reading of the literature on Inuit toponyms and her initial observations, Collignon at first thought that the function of toponyms was to help people while traveling. Her hypothesis was that toponymy was tightly linked to knowledge about hunting, and hence all active hunters must have known the toponymy of their territory. However, in practice, this was not the case. Although those who knew many toponyms were hunters (hence travelers), the reverse was not true; not all hunters knew many toponyms, even if they were experienced travelers. Collignon underlined the paradox to her Inuit informants and was told that there was no link between knowledge of how to travel and knowledge of the toponyms. Orienting oneself and toponymy belonged to different domains; there is no need to name the space to be able to travel through it without getting lost (p. 115). Collignon then had to reevaluate her initial hypothesis about the function of toponymy in Inuit culture. She understood that toponyms are essential not for traveling or survival, but to the integration of humans in their milieu, which then becomes humanized, a place where cultures can flourish. Place names are used more in the oral tradition as the keepers of memory, anchor points of history (p. 116). The traveler who knows the toponyms will use them not to get oriented, but to be connected to the land in a familiar way.

Given these premises, Collignon used two typologies to classify the data she had collected. In the first typology, she grouped the place names in relation to the types of entities they represented (e.g., inland versus marine element). The results showed that inland and marine toponyms were almost evenly represented. In the second typology, the toponyms were organized in relation to their meaning. Two major categories were used: physical milieu and humanized milieu. This time, the results showed that 60% of the toponyms belonged to the physical milieu. The descriptive nature of the majority of these toponyms seems to contradict the statement that one did not need to know the toponyms to travel. Aware of the contradiction between the explanation of the Inuit regarding their toponyms and the results of her typology, Collignon completes her chapter with a critical reflection on the opposition that she

used between “physical milieu” and “humanized milieu.” She concludes that her analytical system does not reflect the Inuit perception of their land. Many toponyms that could have been interpreted as either “physical” or “humanized” were included with the “physical” category. She now thinks that they should have been part of the “humanized milieu,” since only this category is close to the Inuit perception of their territory. At first, such a turnaround might appear as an attempt to fit the data with the hypothesis, but Collignon’s self-criticism brings her to a better rendition of Inuit reality. She concedes that her initial categories might be useful for foreign researchers but are not relevant to the Inuit, for whom the very fact of naming entities integrates toponyms into the humanized milieu. In other words, there should be only one big category, the humanized one.

Chapter 5, certainly the core of the book, is about the characterization of Inuit geographical knowledge. Here Collignon discusses “magic thinking,” which is very much part of the Inuit perception of their territory. Even with the introduction of Christian religion among the Inuinnait in the 1920s, animism remains strong in the perception of the territory, and words are still very powerful. Words from a dream, or thoughts about getting a specific resource, are understood as means to influence events to come. For Collignon, it is mainly in context (i.e., in the field, while being practiced) that the fragments of knowledge (*connaissances*) which are part of holistic knowledge (*savoir*), can be observed. Since there is no organized discourse on geographical knowledge, it seems to be an ephemeral construction, endlessly rebuilt, a momentary thought rather than a permanent structure. There is, however, a common model which is in operation when similar fragments of knowledge (*connaissances*) are mobilized to form geographical knowledge (*savoir*). None of the *connaissances* that are part of the geographical *savoir* are specifically attached to it. The *savoir* is a matrix, an articulation mode of the *connaissances*, which exists in permanence in a latent state and is actualized only when a situation needs its mobilization. Without a context, it is an empty structure (p. 154).

As in the Inuit language, where the meaning of a word can change depending upon where it is placed, there is no hierarchy in ordering the *connaissances*; it all depends on the context. Collignon makes more parallels with linguistics to explain how Inuit geographical knowledge is articulated by quoting Ronald Lowe (1991:201) who, using Gustave Guillaume’s classification, describes the Inuit language as one where words are not pre-constructed but rather to be constructed within the discourse. For Collignon, this is exactly what is happening with the elements that compose Inuit geographical knowledge. She concludes her chapter with a presentation of operating categories derived from Inuit geographical knowledge, in which she states that for the Inuinnait, space is relation and relativity, and is very subjective. Contrary to what has been observed in other cultures, the bases of Inuit geographical knowl-

edge hold together with an awareness of this subjectivity. The only discourse on geographical knowledge is a personalized discourse. One place can have many names, depending on the position of the person who sees it or speaks about it.

Chapter 6 concerns the influence of contemporaneous mutations on Inuinnait geographical knowledge. In the 1990s, teenagers see the territory as a leisure place where hunting is an amusement. Hence, hunting is done in the best conditions, when it is good weather and days are long. In fact, young people rarely go out of their village. Young adults (20–35) are not much more familiar with the territory than teenagers. When out on the land, they try to be with their parents or grandparents to learn from them, but their travels are of short duration and the transmission of knowledge is rather limited. For those under 35, the territory is limited to a few points where one goes hunting for one’s family. These points are linked to the villages by lines which resemble modern highways and which cross regions where specific locations have been forgotten (p. 193). Furthermore, since they think in English, the young generations have difficulty reading the territory with the operating categories of their parents. The result is a crisis in the geographical knowledge, and the women are the first ones to be affected. Indeed, women live mainly in the village and, with the exception of a few fishing trips in the spring, they have less occasion to be on the land. Despite such a grey portrayal of the geographical knowledge of the young generations, Collignon thinks they are in the process of elaborating a new kind of geographical knowledge where new spaces, such as the villages, have become important.

Despite a few typos, two missing references in the bibliography, the unusual use of the invariable term “eskimo” in a French text (although justified by the author on page 7), and an overestimate of Yellowknife population (30 000 rather than 18 000), the book is very well written and should appeal not only to human geographers, but also to researchers of oral history and Inuit linguistic and social change in the Arctic. Hopefully it will soon be translated into English, so that one of Collignon’s initial goals, to share her work with the Inuinnait, will be accomplished.

#### REFERENCE

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