

## Compte rendu

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DAHL, Jens, 2000 *Saqqaq: An Inuit Hunting Community in the Modern World*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 277 pages.

par George Wenzel

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2000 *Saqqaq: An Inuit Hunting Community in the Modern World*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 277 pages.

From its title, *Saqqaq* may appear to be in the tradition of the old Holt, Rinehart and Winston's *Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology* (and, more recently, some of the offerings available from Waveland Press)—solid ethnography. In point of fact, however, Jens Dahl provides much more than a basic overview of a contemporary Greenlandic settlement. *Saqqaq* is a work of ethnological analysis that examines a range of issues that should be of interest to all who work among modern Inuit.

Dahl concentrates on matters that, at first glance, may seem pertinent only to Greenland. These include competition for resources between users of different means, and sometimes different modes, of production and how the rules of economy have evolved in order to accommodate this phenomenon, inter-community territoriality, and the tensions resulting from a system which differentiates Inuit into classes through a formal licencing system. Dahl's analysis is always trenchant, thoughtful and conducted from a firm theoretical base, but also tempered by expansive knowledge of *Saqqaq* and Inuit realities.

I did find a number of things that I think require broader examination. One is the heavy reliance on Sahlins in relation to understanding hunting as a mode of production and, thus, the analytic utility of a material "calculus." Another is the focus on the household as the principal socio-economic unit (it must be noted that other Greenland researchers [see, for instance, Hovelsrud-Broda 2000] take a similar view) in contrast to the literature on Inuit subsistence from Alaska and Canada. Indeed, there are a number of places in *Saqqaq* in which the economic interactions appear to be more kinship-based (and more like the westerly cousins of the *Saqqammiut*) than the overview that is presented admits.

These are things for some future discussion; none detract in the least from the ethnological quality or value of this book. To go further, I can think of no other work

on Inuit since Brody's *The Peoples' Land* that combines conceptual insight, depth of field experience and readability. *Saqqaq* is a study not only grounded in longitudinal research, but also in longitudinal perspective.

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FIENUP-RIORDAN, Ann (ed.)

2003 *Qulirat Qanemcit-llu Kinguvarcimalriit, Stories for Future Generations: The Oratory of Yup'ik Elder Paul John*, Bethel, Calista Elders Council, and Seattle, University of Washington Press, stories translated by Sophie Shield, 778 pages.

This usual method of speaking, the method of giving guidance to someone, apparently is like medicine which can heal a person's body and mind [...] This method of giving advice and guidance is unquestionably the right way (Paul John in Fienup-Riordan 2003: xxxix-xl).

*Stories for Future Generations* is a collection of narratives performed orally by Yup'ik Elder Paul John in February of 1977 during a two-week period at the newly built Nelson Island High School as one of the first elders in residence. In the course of those two weeks, Paul John performed over 60 narratives, representing both *qulirat* (legends of tales told by distant ancestors) and *qanemcit* (historical narratives related by known persons). While all of these narratives derive from a single source, the focus of the volume is not on Paul John himself. As Fienup-Riordan (2003: lv) points out, Paul John's intention, "[...] was not to use the stories to explain past events in his own life, but to use stories to shape the future lives of his young audience. [...] Paul's goal