

NUUSSUARMIUT – HUNTING FAMILIES ON THE BIG HEADLAND: DEMOGRAPHY, SUBSISTENCE AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN NUUSSUAQ, UPERNAVIK, NORTHWEST GREENLAND. By KELD HANSEN. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2008. ISBN 978-87-635-1084-4. *Meddelelser om Grønland, Man & Society* 35. 239 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., bib., appendixes. Hardbound. DKK 298, 30£, 40 Euros, US\$60.00.

Between 1966 and 1968, Keld Hansen, then a student assistant in the Ethnology department of the National Museum of Denmark, undertook a study of the material culture associated with hunting in the small community of Nuussuaq (formerly Kraulshavn), between Upernavik and the south end of Melville Bay on the west coast of Greenland. Even 40 years ago, ethnographers focusing on material culture were a rare breed, as the author remarks at the beginning of this book, but we should be grateful that he did, for he has preserved a detailed picture of the evolving technology of a group of Greenlandic hunters at a significant period in their history.

During his time in the Upernavik district, Hansen had the good fortune to work as an apprentice hunter, training particularly with two men he describes as “two of Nuussuaq’s most able hunters” (p. 13). Under their tutelage, he learned to make his own equipment, train a dog team, and hunt on the sea ice and from a kayak. He participated in extended hunting trips at various times of the year, as well as in activities in and around settlements. During his time there, Hansen also worked on archaeological excavations at Nuugaarsuk, and assisted a team of doctors engaged in an international research project. Forty years later, thanks to a leave of absence from his position at the Viking Ship Museum and the support of SILA, the Greenland Research Center at the National Museum of Denmark, Hansen has written up the results of this fieldwork, in some cases updating it with new information.

The book is organized in a straightforward manner, beginning with a brief chapter outlining the history of the Upernavik district, followed by more detailed chapters describing the community of Nuussuaq, its ecosystem, and the annual cycle as experienced by the author. Despite the subtitle, demography plays a relatively small role in the book. Rather, Hansen focuses on the material culture, with a strong emphasis on subsistence: hunting and associated technologies, such as clothing and transport. Other chapters deal with women’s work, housing, and recreation. As these chapter headings and the focus on material culture suggest, this is very much a descriptive ethnography. Each of these key chapters is rich with illustrations of tools and techniques used in everyday activities, along with English translations of Greenlandic terms for each item. (For easier reference, there is also an appendix listing all the Greenlandic words used in the book, with both Danish and English translations.) Hansen describes activities, most of which he actively participated in, and comments on technological

changes through time. For earlier times he relies on historical accounts such as records from the local trading stations, and archaeological data from excavations at Innusuk and Nuugaarsuk. Some more recent data from published and unpublished sources are also included.

In the late 1960s, hunters in Nuussuaq had adopted significant elements of industrial technology while trying to maintain as much of a traditional lifestyle as possible. A historical trend towards larger settlements focused on trading stations had begun in the region in the 1920s, and by the 1960s, a policy of community concentration contributed to this movement, but many hunters continued to live in smaller, more traditional, settlements. They used motorboats to transport kayaks to important hunting and fishing locations, and of course firearms had largely (but by no means completely) replaced other hunting weapons, the chief exception being the harpoon and associated elements such as floats, still a necessity in open-water hunting. Hansen describes this newer technology along with traditional items, including detailed drawings and a discussion of how and why they are used. From the point of view of an archaeologist or museum curator, this section is by far the most valuable part of this monograph. Indeed, the detailed discussions of individual pieces of complex gear—such as towing gear for a kayak (Plate 14, p. 120), or floor plans for both prehistoric and contemporary houses (Figs. 136 and 140a, b, and c)—resemble the discussions found in archaeological reports rather than those found in modern ethnographies.

Hansen is attuned to the impact of changes in technology, but his emphasis on material culture also leaves many intriguing questions unanswered. Regarding the use of motorboats, for example, he comments on the extension of the hunting range and changes in settlement patterns made possible by such boats, but only briefly. Similarly, he notes that women and children in Nuussuaq rarely have clothing suitable for extended outdoor activities in winter, although clearly this was not always the case. In an appendix, he describes interviews with two women who had travelled and hunted extensively with their husbands. Here is a significant change (related to the changes in settlement pattern made possible in part by such things as motorboats), but the implications for family relations and household economy are not even touched upon.

The monograph is lavishly illustrated with line drawings and both black-and-white and color photographs, as befits a largely descriptive work. Accompanying figure captions are detailed and informative. Editorially the book has some failings. Figures and plates are distinguished by their origin—plates being drawings made, identified, discussed and corrected in the field, while figures were drawn afterward. This distinction is noted, but easily missed, in the table of contents, and since it follows no editorial convention that I know of, it was the source of some initial confusion. Some of the maps (particularly Fig. 5 on p. 17) are difficult to use, largely because the numbers used to identify locations do not stand out from the map itself. I searched for a long time

before I found the '30' that represents Nuusuaq—color, or bold font, would have helped considerably. Figures and tables are not always differentiated; for example, on pages 26–27, a table of weather data for the region is Figure 13, while hunting statistics on the next page are Table 1. A table of historic populations of the different settlements in the region on the same page is unlabeled.

Overall, this is a valuable book. Although at times one would like a more extended discussion of the social implications of technological change, for example, or of the role of religion in a relatively recently Christianized society, these absences are made up for by the wealth of information on material culture and everyday activities. For those interested in technological change, the data in this book are a very useful contribution to a literature that stretches back some distance, but rarely encompasses the 20th century, at least in such detail. For anyone interested in Greenlandic history or anthropology, the snapshot of a year among the traditional hunters of Nuusuaq that Hansen provides in his narrative and descriptions is worth reading. I know I will be referring to it frequently in my research.

Genevieve LeMoine
Curator/Registrar
The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum
and *Arctic Studies Center*
Bowdoin College
9500 College Station, Brunswick,
Maine 04011-8596, USA
glemoine@bowdoin.edu

GLACIERS OF NORTH AMERICA—GLACIERS OF ALASKA. By BRUCE F. MOLNIA. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2009. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 1386-K. ISBN 0-607-98291-8. xxvi + 525 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., references, appendixes. Available from U.S. Geological Survey, Information Services, Box 25286, Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225, USA.

In the Preface, this book is referred to as a 'chapter'; it is the eighth released by the USGS as part of Professional Paper 1386: *Satellite Image Atlas of Glaciers of the World*, a series of 11 chapters. Remotely sensed images, principally from Landsat 1, 2, and 3, are employed in a study of the glacierized regions of the world produced under the series editorship of Richard S. Williams Jr. and Jane G. Ferrigno.

The Landsat images were acquired primarily during the mid to late 1970s and were used by an international team of glaciologists to study the various glacierized regions of the world and to discuss glaciological topics. Thus the present publication is one part of an immense project. Chapter 1386-K includes sections entitled "Columbia and Hubbard Tidewater Glaciers," by Robert M. Krimmel; "The 1986 and 2002 Temporary Closures of Russell Fiord by the Hubbard Glacier," by Bruce F. Molnia, Dennis C. Trabant, Rod

S. March, and Robert M. Krimmel; and "Geospatial Inventory and Analysis of Glaciers: A Case Study for the Eastern Alaska Range," by William F. Manley.

In addition to the large number of satellite images, reproduced in both various forms of colour and monochrome, and the excellent maps derived from them, there are hundreds of oblique photographs taken from low-flying aircraft and from the ground. There are also historical photographs, many of them replicated during recent field visits. Together, this superb coverage provides the ultimate representation of Alaska's glaciers and, for most of them, illustrates their progressive thinning and retreat from the mid-19th century to the 21st century.

The wide range of reproductive techniques employed includes false-colour infrared image mosaics, digital enlargements, annotated Landsat 7 ETM+, and standard colour and black-and-white photography. The great majority of the images are nothing short of spectacular, providing not only a vital glaciological tool, but also a collection of great aesthetic beauty. Furthermore, the figures are supported by lengthy captions that contain a wealth of factual and interpretive detail.

In his introductory passages, author Molnia points out that Alaska has an area of 1 530 693 km² of which 5% (about 75 000 km²) is presently covered by glacier ice. While there is no absolute count, the number of Alaska's glaciers exceeds 100 000, even though a number have melted away completely in recent decades.

Part 1 of the book includes a section on 18th and 19th century glacier observations listed under well-known explorers, such as Vitus Bering, James Cook, Alexandro Malaspina, and George Vancouver. As coverage approaches the end of the 19th century, the available detail increases markedly. The Alaska-Canada Boundary Surveys between 1893 and 1920 produced an invaluable source of glacier photographs, as did the National Geographic Society Expeditions that began in the 1880s. This section continues through the work of William O. Field, Bradford Washburn, Austin Post, up to the present period, exemplified by Robert M. Krimmel.

Part 2 provides a series of individual essays on tide-water glaciers, surge-type glaciers, jökulhlaups (glacier outburst floods), and debris-covered glaciers. Each essay is illustrated by photographic examples.

Part 3, the main part of the book (pages 84 to 467), provides detailed descriptions of Alaska's 14 glacierized regions. It is followed by an exhaustive list of references cited (pages 487 to 504) and four useful appendices. Appendix A is an index of the 1:250 000-scale USGS topographical quadrangle maps of Alaska that show glaciers. Appendix B lists the 1:63 360-scale USGS topographical quadrangle maps cited in the text. Appendix C, an index of all Alaskan glaciers that have been given official names by the United States Board on Geographic Names, also includes each glacier's latitude and longitude and the map sheet name (1:250 000) on which it appears. Finally, Appendix D provides a chronological list of pre-20th century