

## Preface

Archaeological research in the North American Arctic and Subarctic has long been a co-operative effort between U.S., Canadian, Danish and other European scholars. Throughout the history of this international collaboration, publications resulting from scholarly meetings and conferences have contributed greatly to our understanding of Arctic prehistory.

The Society of American Archaeology (SAA) symposium, *Prehistoric Cultural Relations Between the Arctic and Temperate Zones of North America*, edited by John M. Campbell (1962), the Calgary conference, *International Conference on the Prehistory and Paleoecology of Western North American Arctic and Subarctic*, edited by Scott Raymond and Peter Schledermann (1974), the School of American Research Advanced Seminar, *Eastern Arctic Prehistory: Paleoeskimo Problems*, edited by Moreau S. Maxwell (1976), and *Thule Eskimo Culture: An Anthropological Retrospective*, edited by Allen P. McCartney (1979) are probably the best known examples. The most recent gathering in this tradition was a joint Canadian Archaeological Association/Society for American Archaeology (CAA-SAA) symposium held in Vancouver, B.C. on April 25 and 26, 1979, subtitled "Recent Research in Eskimo Archaeology."

Following the meeting in Vancouver all symposium participants were invited to submit their manuscripts for publication in a special issue of the journal *Arctic*. All manuscripts were sent out for review according to the normal procedures used by *Arctic*.

The past decade has seen a tremendous increase in arctic archaeological research. The current rate of data gathering almost defies attempts at synthesis. It may be a long time before researchers can thoroughly review the results of this burst of archaeological activity and assess the overall theoretical gains from these endeavours. In the meantime, we trust that the publication of many of the papers presented at the joint Vancouver symposium will help to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of current events in northern archaeology.

The papers in this volume cover a vast geographical area and show a variety of theoretical orientations and methods. In the past most arctic researchers have worked under traditional museum or university sponsorships; today, however, government and industry sponsored research related to resource management and regulatory processes is growing rapidly. Archaeological resource management and protection is a topic of major and urgent concern and an increasing number of arctic specialists have become involved with the development of more effective management and control of northern cultural resources. Included in this volume are several papers dealing with research in an applied setting.

This volume presents a useful sample of current research which will provide the reader with a perspective on the "state of the art." With many authors from a variety of backgrounds and a broad geographical, topical and methodological scope, the symposium conveys a lively sense of both the strengths and the weaknesses of current work. The papers also offer suggestions for new

directions in arctic research by providing clues to potentially weak and incomplete areas in current research.

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