

The North Atlantic focus of the collection is obvious, and a unifying thread is the importance of the so-called sea-road or the highway of the western seaways, which, in the maritime societies of the Viking and medieval world, provided so much unity to regions that are otherwise often written off in modern historical writing as “marginal” or “peripheral.” Among the important lessons from the collection, then, is the danger of projecting such a land-based perspective into the past. Ridel’s contribution on the Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings is an entirely appropriate reminder of this within the framework of the volume.

All of the contributions are of a uniformly high standard and there is a good deal of new research here. In fact, the necessarily brief glimpses afforded by some papers, like Beverley Ballin-Smith’s examination of the probable early Viking settlement at Norwick in Unst, Shetland, leave us eagerly awaiting more detailed forthcoming publications which have the potential to revolutionize our understanding of the subject. Some of these papers are tours-de-force in their own right and many of them will become essential reading (e.g., Abrams, Barrett). Certainly, the collection as a whole is a tremendously important resource for students and scholars of medieval Scandinavian expansion and settlement and Scandinavian contacts with Europe and Scotland.

If there is one thing to be regretted about the book it is that its price—it currently retails at around CAD \$200—will put it out of reach of most private individuals and possibly even all but the most serious research libraries. It is a shame that the publisher, whose Northern World series (to which this title belongs) is so valuable, is unable (or unwilling) to produce more affordable books.

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***Hummocks: Journeys and Inquiries Among the Canadian Inuit.* By Jean Malaurie. Translated by Peter Feldstein. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007. xxvi + 386 pp. Appendices, notes, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index.**

Born in 1922, the geographer Jean Malaurie visited four principal regions of the Arctic during expeditions staged between 1948 and 1997: north Greenland, the Canadian central and eastern Arctic, Alaska, and Chukotka. The original, French-language edition of *Hummocks* was published in 1999 and included two volumes totalling more than 1250 pages as well as

hundreds of photographs, drawings and tables. By contrast, the recently published English-language translation by Peter Feldstein focuses more narrowly on Malaurie's voyages to the Canadian Arctic between 1960 and 1967 and includes only about one-third of his original recollections. Of particular note, the author's visit to Clyde River on Baffin Island in 1987–1988 is not included in the new translation, which contains only five chapters, six appendices, and no conclusion. It is unfortunate that the detailed table of contents in the original French edition has not been included in the English translation, which retains only the title of each chapter. Also, the list of illustrations and photographs is missing in the 2007 English publication. Thankfully, the three separate indexes included in the original French version (listing authors, place names, and themes) have been combined into a single comprehensive index in the later publication. Similarly, the English edition has a comprehensive bibliography which was limited to Inuit/Arctic titles in the original French edition.

Hummocks examines traditional practices among the Inuit, such as adoption, female infanticide and wife swapping, as well as contemporary Inuit concerns, including suicide, forced relocation, assimilation, and poverty. It contains short methodological sections, which are welcome contributions, and descriptive sections dealing with the Arctic environment. The preface and second and fourth chapters address geopolitical issues, including Inuit self-governance, globalization, and mineral development in the Arctic. A significant portion of the last of these chapters is dedicated to the conversion of Inuit to Christianity. The author's detailed ethnographic accounts of his experiences among the Canadian Inuit during the 1960s are presented in parts of the opening chapter and in chapters 3 and 5.

Malaurie is a scholar who studies both the physical environment of the Arctic and its inhabitants, and thus identifies himself as an "anthropogeographer." Over the years, his research has focused on a wide range of topics, including sacred places, demography, and economic surveys. His contribution to polar research and Inuit ethnography has sometimes been overlooked by British and North American scholars, yet Feldstein's translation will help to address this oversight. Among other accomplishments, Malaurie has authored *Les derniers rois de Thulé* (1955) [*The Last Kings of Thule*], which was translated into twenty-three languages and produced as a film in 1970. Subsequently, he produced a film series entitled "Inuit," which depicts the cultural heritage and political struggles of Indigenous peoples in the four regions included in *Hummocks*. This film series likely served as an inspiration for his comprehensive 1999 French-language memoir.

Hummocks brings together observations on Inuit culture and identity, political statements supporting minority groups, references to European classic literature, and reflections on aboriginal education and religion in the circumpolar world. Given its eclecticism, it should perhaps not be surprising that this book contains many sources of distraction. For example, a reference to the French author Flaubert and a 1967 Greenland Inuit drawing are both inserted in a section depicting Malaurie's first encounter with the Netsilingmiut of the central Canadian Arctic in 1961 (87). More disconcerting, it appears that similar references or anecdotes have been added and deemed significant only belatedly. While an experienced arctic anthropologist will be able to sort out fact from fiction in Malaurie's accounts, undergraduate students trying to understand life in the region during the 1960s may be confused by a scholarly book peppered with so many personal reflections. Moreover, this eclectic style makes *Hummocks* hard to classify. The book is neither a standard ethnographic monograph, a novel, nor a scientific contribution, although it contains elements of all these genres. Rather, it is perhaps best described as an auto-ethnography and a work of art that reveals Malaurie's deep empathy for his Inuit hosts and companions as well as his spiritual connection to the Arctic.

When taking stock of the strengths and weaknesses of the English translation of *Hummocks*, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the author, the translator, or the editor should be praised or blamed. For example, the Feldstein edition incorporates a long passage written by John Ross, a nineteenth century Arctic explorer who was forced to winter among the Inuit during an attempt to find the Northwest Passage (82–83). The excerpt depicts Inuit eating habits in 1830–31. However, when the passage is compared with its counterpart in the original 1999 French edition, it becomes apparent that the order of the paragraphs in the more recent edition has been changed and that the expression "chacun de ces naturels en dévora deux" (318) has been rendered incorrectly as "these voracious animals had devoured two each." "Naturel" in French actually means "Indigenous," which makes one wonder why the more disparaging language was used.

This book is a must-read for ethno-historians, anthropologists, geographers, and educated readers with interests in the circumpolar world. It is well researched and depicts ecological and human relationships in an artful way. Although it has its weaknesses, one of its strengths is that it was clearly written by someone humbled by the vastness of the Arctic environment and deeply concerned with the impacts of globalization, cultural erosion, and environmental destruction in the region.

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***Encounters on the Passage: Inuit Meet the Explorers.* By Dorothy Harley Eber. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. xxii + 168 pp. Appendices, illustrations, bibliography, notes, index.**

The Canadian Arctic is a land haunted by the past. The popular imagination swells with well-rehearsed narratives gleaned from the logbooks and journals of northern exploration: perilous journeys, ice-locked ships, the mysterious locations and remains of vanished expeditions. Amongst Inuit populations, an equally poignant remembrance of history prevails, with oral accounts of traditional culture and “the way things were” continuing to inform and impact everyday life. For centuries, these two brands of Arctic history—the written and the spoken—have remained largely independent of one another, circulating within their often exclusive social and cultural spheres. However, the recent push of scholarship to reconcile these mediums has resulted in the emergence of a new scholarly practice in which the multiple voices of indigenous communities are revealed and explored alongside the established historical canon.

Dorothy Harley Eber’s *Encounters on the Passage: Inuit Meet the Explorers* typifies this new trend. Having already demonstrated her proficiency in documenting and preserving Inuit oral tradition through such well-known works as *When the Whalers Were up North* and *Pitseolak: Pictures Out of My Life*, Eber now assumes the daunting task of using these narratives to reinvestigate the history of Inuit-explorer contact in the Canadian Arctic. Her work juxtaposes the widely recognized texts of Arctic explorers with a series of parallel Inuit accounts collected over twelve years of interviewing in various Nunavut communities. While the goal of the book is ultimately to foster a new and more holistic understanding of cross-cultural encounter, Eber’s narrative also contains a theoretical subtext that addresses the perseverance, reliability, and mutability of indigenous oral tradition. As one of her Inuit informants, Tommy Anguttitauruq, admitted during an interview, “Every time the stories are told, maybe they’re a little bit different; there’s a little bit added and maybe some things left out” (xviii). Questions regarding the past, present, and future of oral tradition as a medium for preserving historical narratives weigh heavily throughout this text.