

grounded theoretical position about the importance of power relations in understanding something as complex as traditional laws in contemporary First Nations society.

Renée Fossett. *In Order To Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550 to 1940*. University of Manitoba Press, 2001.

Reviewed by Robert MacDonald, The Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary

Recent years have seen a growing interest in aboriginal history. In piecing together this history, in the absence of indigenous written record (particularly for the distant past where oral history falters), scholars and others have to use European and Canadian sources, recognising the ethnocentric limits of these materials. For the Arctic, Richard Condon's *The Northern Copper Inuit: A History*, and more limited Lyle Dick's recent *Muskox Land: Ellesmere Island in the Age of Contact* are illustrative of this trend. Renée Fossett's study of the Central Arctic or Nunavut (except the Copper Inuit) fits well into this area of scholarship. Using archaeological studies on pre-contact history, and explorers' accounts from Frobisher to Schwatka, she attempts to craft a history of The Inuit. Important are the fur traders' accounts, especially those of the Hudson's Bay Company. Occasionally Inuit stories from the area and elsewhere are used to substantiate concepts. The focus of the book is the Central Arctic but while some material is drawn from the Baffin area, Labrador and Ungava, and the Hudson Strait, even Alaska and the Mackenzie Delta, the emphasis is really on the Keewatin region to King William Island, Boothia Peninsula, Melville Peninsula and Somerset Island. This is not surprising given the explorers' literature (including the search for Franklin) and HBC records. Fossett herself lived in the region for some time.

Essentially the book's thesis is that the Inuit and their predecessors adopted several means of survival and transition, in response initially to physical/environmental changes and later also to the European/Canadian presence. It tries to identify those aspects of society they chose to change, and why practices were adopted or rejected (p. xiv). Before contact, the archaeological record suggests transition to a new environment by aban-

donment of areas, mobility of communities, and new strategies to obtain shelter and game. Some discussion is given regarding the relationship between cultural groups, especially Dorset and Thule. After contact, Fossett indicates several basic strategies: hostility (to protect resources), trade (for new resources), migration, increased production (especially if the climate favoured this), and expansion of territory. She later suggests strategies of mobility, storage, diversification, and technical innovation (when there was a benefit to change) (p.199). Overarching these strategies is the climate change which she suggests is a catalyst for social change.

In discussing the element of hostility, where there is a threat to resources, the author challenges the concept of the friendly Arctic and Inuit (such as projected by Stefansson). As early as Frobisher and Davis, there are examples of hostile action, though some incidents reflect curiosity and trade: even at this time Inuit employed what the anthropologist John Matthiasson called a "wait and watch" attitude, one of cautious observation. Hostility or goading of strangers, whether in Alaska, with the early explorers or later with Chipewyan, occurred particularly if there was a sense of superiority of arms: but action was not to overwhelm but to protect resources. Later, in the nineteenth century, the aggressiveness of the Netsilik is explained by the desire to protect spoils from the abandoned *Victory* of John Ross or the abandoned *Erebus* and *Terror* of the last Franklin expedition. Even whalers, it is suggested, were initially opposed in Cumberland Sound.

The second strategy was trade, which was also present in pre-contact times. As early as Frobisher this occurred, though Best's account also speaks of theft of desired objects. In the eighteenth century, the Inuit of the western Hudson Bay took advantage of the trading sloops plying the coast from Churchill. In exchange for surplus furs, tools sought had the advantage of enhancing subsistence. As the climate grew colder later in the century, Inuit were more likely to come to the posts for trade. A century later the HBC records confirm the shifting nature of trade to become a more regular pattern of cyclical life. Included were jobs in the fur trade (and whaling).

Migration and relocation also figure in strategies of survival. Inuit in Labrador as well as around Hudson Bay employed the strategy as climate changed bringing them into conflict with neighbouring Cree, for example. The dialectical distinctiveness of the people of the Keewatin

coast is explained in terms of abandonment and relocation. During the cold of the nineteenth century, Inuit in the Keewatin moved inland in the summer (abandoning summer sealing for winter sealing), while in mid-nineteenth century, Somerset was depopulated and areas of southern Keewatin were deserted as game disappeared. Along with relocation was the shift to smaller hunting groups. The migratory strategy helps to explain the splitting of the Keewatin Inuit into distinct groups, namely Padlirmiut, Ahiarmiut, Hauniqtormiut, Harvaqtormiut, and Tassiujormiut (pp.185-6). A corollary of relocation was the need to reassess and adjust to the new flora and fauna and topographic features. Incidentally the experience foreshadows the challenge to those relocated in the 1930s and 1950s.

An alternative to relocation was increase in production, both for survival and for trade. In mid-nineteenth century in Boothia, this took the form of hunting over a large area. Earlier along Hudson Bay, new sources of food, namely muskox and caribou, were sought, especially as the seals in the estuaries were less plentiful, and sealing became more of a winter occupation. Of course, increase in production had its limits, especially during the stages of the "Little Ice Age". Moreover increase in production was limited by game populations which also fluctuated such as declining caribou herds in the Keewatin in the nineteenth century (which had an effect on number of dogs).

Finally the strategy, as Fossett presents it, included expansion of territory. Closely associated with relocation, it also included the expansion of the Netsilik to King William Island to protect the newly-found resources of the *Erebus* and *Terror* wrecks. It was this expansion that explains the reluctance of the people in Pelly Bay to accompany John Rae west during his search for Franklin.

Fossett divides the narrative and analysis into distinct periods, from the pre-contact to the Elizabethan-Stuart contact, and then, during the cooling period from 1670 on, various multiples of decades namely 1670-1700, 1700-1790, 1790-1830, 1830-1860, and 1860-1940. The real strength of the treatment probably lies in the period from 1790 to 1860, especially from 1790 on when records of explorers and traders are more extensive, and the effect of climate clearer.

Although the title suggests to 1940, in effect the detail of the study does not go much beyond 1900, a time when Inuit became much more integrated in the fur trade with the trapping of the Arctic fox. Use of oral

history on whaling, such as Eber's *When The Whalers Were Up North*, might have been used to strengthen the treatment. As well, by and large the religious intrusion of the Euro-Canadians, which was occurring later in the nineteenth century and which intensified in the Central Arctic in the period to 1940 (leading to some "hysteria") tends to be omitted from the study. Also the role of the police in bringing law and order during the early twentieth century is not indicated. From Fossett's perspective this was a period not of autonomy but of colonisation.

The title suggests a history. In large measure it is an economic history of Inuit groups in the area. To some extent this is understandable for, as the author notes, the traders (and whalers) were less interested in ethnographic studies, though the explorers from Best and Davis (who compiled one of the first lexicons) to Ross and Hall made extensive commentary on the societies, as did whalers such as Ferguson. After the great detail in earlier chapters, the final chapter deals with the social organisation and world view, drawing on earlier sources and particularly studies by Franz Boas and Knud Rasmussen's Fifth Thule Expedition. The oral tradition is used to illuminate kinship, leadership, attitude to strangers and relationship to nature, though the Frobisher-Davis skirmishes suggest institutionalised leadership was not entirely absent.

Not only does the book illustrate adaptive strategies through history, but the discussion gives insights into suicide, infanticide, famine, cannibalism in times of shortage, sharing, and reliability of information. Illustrations, partly integrated to the text, also give insights into Inuit history. But as Fossett acknowledges, more work on available rich resources is necessary for a comprehensive history.

Ron F. Laliberte, Priscilla Sette, James B. Waldram, Rob Innes, Brenda Macdougall, Lesley McBain, F. Laurie Barron, eds. *Expressions In Canadian Native Studies*. University of Saskatchewan Extension Press, 2000.

Reviewed by Joseph (Jay) H. Stauss, University of Arizona.

The editors of this text which is aimed, primarily at the university student market have produced a somewhat uneven collection of scholarly