

KAISER, Ulrike, 2006 *Die Inuit: Ein Volk der Arktis*, Zurich, Verlag Pestalozzianum und Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, 142 pages (and a CD).

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the other use of *qariyit*, for community celebrations and rituals, and the issue of identifying these two functions: workshop and community center, in the archaeological record. Despite its problems, archaeologists, ethnohistorians and anthropologists will find this book a source of ideas and approaches for conducting gender research in the North.

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KAISER, Ulrike

2006 *Die Inuit: Ein Volk der Arktis*, Zurich, Verlag Pestalozzianum und Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, 142 pages (and a CD).

Bringing cultural anthropology into primary and secondary schools in German-speaking countries has been increasingly successful in recent years. The work of the organization "Ethnologie in Schule und Erwachsenenbildung e.V." (Muenster, Germany) provides an excellent example for the success of this movement. Ulrike Kaiser has contributed to these endeavours with *Die Inuit: Ein Volk der Arktis*. This book primarily addresses teachers and in parts also pupils. It gives an overview of Inuit culture, society, history, and contemporary situation in the first part. The second part provides the teacher with thematic ideas for the lesson plan, text materials and a CD with a large sample of photographs, Inuit art and music. A commented bibliography offers guidelines for further reading.

The book has decidedly weak (part 1) and strong (part 2) aspects that I will discuss in this order. While emphasizing its aim to deconstruct the standard pre-conceptions of Inuit culture (such as: Inuit still live in igloos), the first part does not entirely achieve this goal. A somewhat dry and boring overview of "traditional" Inuit culture leaves very little space for contemporary Inuit ways of life. While the reader will take away a more nuanced view of life in the pre-Christian, pre-settlement and pre-western technology past from his readings, s/he will have no better idea of how Inuit live today nor of how the past is relevant for the present. S/he will complete this reading with the

impression of a culture frozen in time. I think that this is a particularly negative result for a publication intended to contribute to anthropological thinking in the context of primary and secondary school education. Even though the focus on the past is clearly reduced in the second part, the first part sets an unfortunate reactionary tone.

While the ethnographic description is rather sound otherwise, some, probably minor, ethnographic information are questionable, such as stating that usually marriage was based on tender feelings (p. 15), while actually pre-arrangement may have played a much larger role. On page 16, Sila is dealt with as a female goddess (“Luft-Gottheit”), while there is some debate about the gender of *sila* and *nuna* (‘earth’; not mentioned at all in this context), and the fact that *sila* is most often associated with maleness. Writing on the Christian mission to the Arctic, Kaiser (p. 18) omits to mention the Catholic missions in Canada.

More worrisome in respect to the objectives of the publication is Kaiser’s discussion of the integration of modern technology into Inuit society (p. 20). Discussing the import of items such as rifles, cooking pots and cotton clothing, she points exclusively to the negative consequences of such change in the material culture. In her view, the new elements “verdraengen” (‘crowd out’) indigenous technology, and Inuit have grown dependent on those new items and lost their abilities to use their traditional implements. While this view of the detrimental effects of western technology on indigenous people is often intuitively shared in western culture, it does not very well reflect Inuit perceptions. Today, Inuit clearly see the detrimental effects of some of the new elements, such as television, but many other elements that help to make life in the Arctic safer and easier were and are welcome. Indeed, the integration of useful new elements is a feature of Inuit tradition. Notably at this point, just like in the entire first part of the book, the author does not address sufficiently how the past is of relevance for the present— a topic that should be of high relevance in teaching on other cultures. Students should learn to understand the complex dynamics of change and continuity in history and within their contemporary globalising world. A world that has and will have to deal with the drastic impacts of climate change on the environment and ways of life. The topic of climate change (in the Arctic) is not addressed at all in Kaiser’s book while featuring prominently in contemporary research, the media and in the International Polar Year 2007-2009 agenda. Especially the material on human-nature relationships presented in the second part of the publication could have been used fruitfully to address this theme.

The strength of this publication, thus, lies in the second part— the suggestions of lesson themes and materials. Starting with the pre-conceptions and experiences of (Swiss) children, Kaiser addresses in three chapters Inuit subsistence economy (and in depth: hunting and igloo building), the contemporary situation (e.g., art production), and other aspects of culture (religion, music, games). She recognises in an accessible way that Inuit of the past and present perceive and practice their connection to nature and other human beings differently than western people. At no point does the “other” become exotic or unapproachable in her descriptions. The information and large variety of working material and theme-suggestions provided for each area help to achieve this difficult task. The materials and texts are thoroughly researched, attractively presented

and engaging for the class-room situation, especially if the teacher makes use of the material on the CD that contains also images of Inuit contemporary society. The Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich also offers an accompanying exhibition “treasure box” that will allow even more hands-on dealing with the themes under discussion in class. There could have been, however, a little more background information on Inuit mythology to guide the teacher in myth-specific text interpretation. The Inuktitut transcriptions and the Inuktitut alphabet are devastatingly wrong and of no use whatsoever.

I would like to recommend the book to any teacher, educator, parent or older pupils as a thorough source for learning about Inuit ways of life. None-German speakers may find the graphics and the picture and audio material provided on the CD as well as the annotated reference list very useful in teaching. I would recommend to use the first part as background information and as a mirror for comparison when dealing with the much richer material provided in the second part.

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KJÆRGAARD, Kathrine et Thorkild KJÆRGAARD

2003 *Nuummi Noorliit 1733-2003*, Nuuk, Ilisimatusarfik, 146 pages.

2003 *Ny Herrnhut i Nuuk 1733-2003*, Nuuk, Ilisimatusarfik, 140 pages.

Ces deux titres d'un même ouvrage publié en versions groenlandaise et danoise témoignent de l'intérêt des Groenlandais d'aujourd'hui pour leur histoire écrite et orale. *Nuummi Noorliit / Ny Herrnhut i Nuuk 1733-2003* («Les frères moraves à Nuuk 1733-2003») est publié sans nom d'auteur. On y apprend cependant à la page 4 qu'il a été écrit en danois par Kathrine et Thorkild Kjærgaard, et traduit en kalaallisut par nul autre que Robert Petersen, fondateur et ancien recteur de l'université du Groenland (Ilisimatusarfik). C'est d'ailleurs cette université qui a publié l'ouvrage en 2003, pour commémorer les 275 ans de la ville de Nuuk, capitale du Groenland, ainsi que le 270<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'arrivée des missionnaires moraves.

Ilisimatusarfik avait de bonnes raisons de commander la publication de ces deux volumes. Depuis 1987 en effet, l'université du Groenland occupe — mais plus pour longtemps — le lieudit Ny Herrnhut («Nouveau Herrnhut»), c'est-à-dire le bâtiment construit en 1747 par les moraves — ou Herrnhuter, du nom de la ville de Herrnhut en Allemagne, siège de leur Église — pour y loger leur mission. Originellement situé à l'extérieur de la colonie danoise de Godthaab, Ny Herrnhut se retrouve maintenant au centre même de Nuuk (quoiqu'à l'écart de l'artère principale), l'urbanisation ayant étendu de beaucoup les limites de la ville.