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- 1971 *My Life with the Eskimo*, New York, Collier.
- 1990 *Hunters of the Great North*, New York, Paragon House.

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TERSIS, Nicole et Michèle THERRIEN (dir.)

- 2000 *Les langues eskaléoutes, Sibérie, Alaska, Canada, Groënland*, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 365 p.

There are fourteen articles in this collection, a selective survey of the state of the art in Eskaleut linguistics at the turn of the century. Such a broad project must have demanded much thought in its conception and development. For the reviewer, restricted to two pages, it presents a daunting task if he is to avoid a series of disjointed summaries. One way out of the dilemma is to target a particular audience. I think I can disregard those who are active in the field. One look at the contributors (a Casablancian list of the usual suspects) and you know what to expect. Instead, I intend to aim at younger students at the beginning of their careers, challenged by the hints they have heard of these intriguing languages in their general courses, and keen to find out a little more at a greater depth.

Start with the introduction. Stop skimming and start your serious reading at the section headed *Tendances générales des langues eskaléoutes*. That will give you an overview of the topics that will be dealt with in detail later. But be cautious of the word *fluidité* in the heading *fluidité des catégories et des niveaux syntactiques*. The glide from noun to verb or vice versa in mid stride may seem liquidly chameleon when you first encounter it, but such changes are handled with the precision that is the hallmark of this language. It is linguists who have trouble with the "imprecise frontiers between morphology and syntax," not the speakers of the language.

From there go straight to the first article, Louis-Jacques Dorais's *Présentation géolinguistique et sociolinguistique de la famille eskaléoute*. If you don't get the geography straight from the start then you will get lost in the superficial differences between dialects. From there I would move to Michael Fortescue's *Parenté génétique des langues eskaléoutes*. Now you have a broad picture of the whole language family in space and time.

In the detailed articles that follow, four contain excellent preliminary overviews of specific language systems. Lawrence Kaplan's contribution, *L'inupiaq et les contacts linguistiques en Alaska*, for example, has two introductory sub-sections: *Systèmes phonologiques* (This sub-title appears in the list of contents, but not in the actual text) and *Caractéristiques de la grammaire inupiaq*. The remainder of his article deals with

the effects of contact between Inupiat and Yupik speakers. At this stage it may be a little arcane for you, but there are some obvious lexical examples, some familiar phonological effects at the segmental level, and a more intriguing discussion of prosodic effects (not usually a feature of the Inuit language). Ronald Lowe's *Systématique du mot inuit*, as its title suggests, deals mostly with morphology, which in Inuktitut extends far into the mechanisms dealt with by syntax in French and English, and for that matter Chinese and Malay as well. Lowe's work has been with the dialects of Inuinnaqtun, on the Canadian arctic coast, but his clear and ordered exposition is among the best introductions to the morphology of the language that I have come across. In fact, those of you who like to start with detail before overview might prefer to plunge in right here. In *Indérvation en kalaallisut*, Karen Langgård focuses on one particular feature of Inuktitut as spoken in Greenland, but her two-page section *Aperçu sur le kalaallisut* covers the nature of Inuktitut succinctly. By this stage you may be ready for the more complex processes of Yupik. Osahito Miyaoka's *Morphologie verbale en yupik alaskien central* is a detailed step by step description of the morphology of that language, including the relationships among rhythmic accent, vowel length and tone, prosodic features that tend to overwhelm those of us who have led a sheltered life working with Inuktitut. Miyaoka's article has another level. He takes time to mention how older speakers take pride in their oratorical ability to exploit the morphological richness of a polysynthetic language.

I would like to expand on this topic for a moment. It is understandable that for linguistic purposes a collection of sentences is simply a corpus of material for analysis. However, occasionally, when some stirring fragment from a legend is being industrially dissected and analyzed, one is reminded of the forensic autopsy of a golden youth laid out stiff and cold. It is pleasant when the obvious enthusiasm that linguists have for the languages they work on appears in the course of a scientifically rigorous paper. One paper in which this human element is in fact the focus is Michèle Therrien's *Nouvelles terminologies en inuktitut*, wherein she analyzes neologisms created by professional Inuit translators. What we get here is an insight into the intellectual processes that are fostered in its speakers by the nature of this language. Incidentally, if this interests you, lay your hands on the book Therrien refers to: Louis-Jacques Dorais's *Lexique analytique du vocabulaire inuit moderne au Québec-Labrador* (titled *Uqausigusiqtaat* in its English version).

The other papers in this collection focus on the favourite topics mentioned in the introduction, such as ergativity, the nominal / verbal dichotomy, and the boundaries between morphology and syntax. Two writers venture beyond current orthodoxy, Jerry Sadock with his strict division into four separate and distinct levels of analysis, and Nikolai Vaxtin with his application of the concepts of polypredication to Siberian Yupik. Despite all this coverage there is still room for young linguists out to make their mark. One topic that is surprisingly neglected by most linguists is the grammar of discourse in Inuktitut. It seems to me that there is a difference between the strictly regulated, easily analyzed grammar of the sentence as an isolated unit, and the much more subtle patterns displayed in discourse, where normally subordinate moods seem to be promoted in order to keep the discourse flowing. That leads to another topic, the role of context as a grammatical determinant. There are choices made in conversation

that are too subtle for me to emulate. I wish someone would explain them to the rest of us.

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TUBORG, Hanne et Birger SANDELL

1999 *Paleo-Eskimo Settlement in Scoresby Sund, Northeast Greenland*,
Copenhagen, Danish Polar Center, 149 p., ill., bibl.

Cette publication rend compte de plusieurs saisons de reconnaissances archéologiques dans une région relativement limitée du milieu de la côte orientale du Groenland, mais qui s'étend sur quelques centaines de kilomètres. Cette région était restée jusque-là en grande partie ignorée des archéologues, mais non des ethnologues. Les recherches dont rend compte cette publication sont d'ailleurs le fruit de la persévérance d'un couple d'ethnologues danois qui s'est intéressé à l'archéologie après s'être intégré, à partir de 1971, à la vie quotidienne d'une communauté de chasseurs dans la région de Scoresbysund pour en étudier l'organisation sociale et les conditions de chasse. Dès 1980, les deux ethnologues se font déposer en hélicoptère avec deux mois de vivres aux endroits d'où ils entreprennent pendant l'été, parfois à leurs frais, des reconnaissances archéologiques systématiques en canot, pagayant autour de la Terre de Jameson, dans les fjords et le long des côtes de part et d'autre de Scoresby Sund. La Terre de Jameson est délimitée au sud et à l'ouest par Scoresby Sund et son prolongement vers le nord, et à l'est par la mer qui la pénètre par de nombreux fjords. C'est une région peu habitée aujourd'hui, particulièrement sauvage, accidentée et austère, mais qui ne manque pas d'attraits pour ceux qui aiment ce genre d'environnement. Les conditions atmosphériques y sont instables en raison du foehn qui peut subitement élever la température en hiver et causer des dommages à la faune. Par contre les polynies, surtout la plus grande qui se maintient tout l'hiver à l'embouchure de Scoresby Sund, rendent cette région attirante pour les chasseurs.

Les reconnaissances, entreprises au départ dans le prolongement d'un inventaire archéologique préalable à l'exploration pétrolière de Scoresby Sund, révélèrent surtout d'abondants vestiges de l'occupation néoesquimaude, les plus visibles. Ceux qui témoignent du Paléoesquimau, période encore mal attestée jusqu'alors dans la moitié sud de la côte orientale, n'apparurent ou ne furent reconnus qu'après plusieurs années de reconnaissances. Comme ils contribuent à combler une lacune des connaissances sur la préhistoire du Groenland, et par extension de l'Arctique oriental, c'est à eux qu'est consacré le rapport de Hanne Tuborg et Birger Sandell.

Le rapport s'ouvre par une courte, mais suffisante, introduction géographique qui présente au lecteur le paysage, le climat, les ressources en faune, en bois flotté et en minéraux de la région étudiée. Elle est suivie d'un bref historique des recherches archéologiques, qui est l'occasion de résumer le cadre des connaissances à l'échelle du Groenland et de situer les problèmes. Ensuite, dans la partie principale (III), viennent les descriptions des reconnaissances et des sites identifiés ainsi que de leur contenu. Le