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Louis-Jacques Dorais

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L'influence de Marcel Mauss
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STERN, Pamela and Lisa STEVENSON (eds)

- 2006 *Critical Inuit Studies. An Anthology of Contemporary Arctic Ethnography*, Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska Press, 302 pages.

This book stems from a session held at the American Anthropological Association meetings in 2001. As stated in Lisa Stevenson's Introduction, its principal objective, is to show various ways of understanding Inuit society, as seen through the eyes of various anthropologists whose common characteristic is to make use of an ethnographic method. The editors were drawn by a desire to reintroduce American anthropology to Inuit Studies and to the Inuit in general.

The book is divided into 15 chapters (written by a total of 16 authors) distributed into three parts. Part 1 deals with "Figuring method." Texts by Molly Lee, Carol Zane Jolles, Michael J. Kral and Lori Idlout, Murielle Nagy, and Edmund (Ned) Searles describe various cultures of research in Inuit Studies. Through various examples, they show that social and political changes in academy, as well as in the communities, have contributed to new ways of conducting research. The central conclusion of the chapters is that research must be collaborative, but that it is not always easy to find out how this collaboration can be implemented.

Part 2 of the book is titled: "Reconfiguring Categories: Culture." With chapters by Pamela Stern, Nancy Wachowich, Nelson Graburn, Peter Kulchyski and Lisa Stevenson, it aims at explaining how culture, here defined as a form of practice, has been reworked for political and ethical ends by researchers and Inuit alike. Part 2 shows that far from being neutral, Inuit studies are influenced by and have had an influence on the social and cultural conditions of people involved in them. Among all three sections, Part 2 is the one that justifies the most the "Critical" component of the book's title.

Finally, Part 3 ("Reconfiguring Categories: Place") includes texts by Béatrice Collignon, Nobuhiro Kishigami, Ludger Müller-Wille and Linna Weber Müller-Wille,

Frank James Tester, and Pamela Stern. It reconsiders the paradigm of space and place, and its role in Inuit lives and in the history of Inuit Studies. The last chapter (“From Area Studies to Cultural Studies to a Critical Inuit Studies”), by Pamela Stern, offers a good description of the recent history of Inuit studies in the United States, though it fails to mention the role played by *Études/Inuit/Studies* and the biennial Inuit Studies Conferences in the development of the field at the international level. Moreover, from a Canadian or Greenlandic point of view, Stern's assertion (p. 263) that “the push for some form of indigenous self-governance [...] is based on the presumption that Inuit cultural difference cannot be accommodated within a modern liberal democracy” sounds rather strange. Home rule in Greenland, as well as Canada's Nunavut, are precisely examples of modern liberal democracies (amongst other characteristics, their governments are popular rather than ethnic) which were established in order to accommodate Inuit cultural and social difference.

The book is generally good, with, as it is normal, a few chapters weaker than the others. It should nevertheless make a useful textbook for undergraduate students in northern anthropology, geography or sociology. The authors constitute an interesting sample of contemporary specialists of Inuit studies, most of them American or Canadian, but with the addition of two scholars from the Old World, one French and one Japanese. The sample includes several specialists from the younger generation, though it is somewhat distressing to this reviewer to realise that these “young” scholars have already reached their forties and early fifties.

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WHITE, Patrick

2004 *Mountie in Mukluks: The Arctic Adventures of Bill White*, Maderia Park, B.C., Harbour Publishing, 248 pages.

Over the past 20 years there has been an increasing number of memoirs and collections of stories published by nurses, teachers and Mounties reflecting upon their government service in the Canadian Arctic. Most of these date back to the 1950s and 1960s when the Canadian government vastly increased its official presence as part of the incorporation of northern Canada into the modern social state. There are fewer however that go back to the pre-war period. This was a time when non-aboriginal people were rare in the Arctic, when the first tentative contacts between different cultures were made. Bill White, by his own account irascible and cantankerous from his youth, served with the RCMP on the *St. Roch* ship and at Cambridge Bay for four years in the early 1930s. *Mountie in Mukluks* is Bill's story.