counterparts. The mental state and discipline needed to produce the laborious, meticulous, painstaking stitchery required for the making of watertight kamiks (boots) are not evident in Irene’s work. Yet that work pattern is also perhaps her strength. By being so fast and prolific, she has been able to convey a sense of spontaneity and playfulness to her images. She has very adeptly compensated for her lack of traditional skills. She is fortunate, in that she has been able to use the narrative aspects of her traditional lifestyle in her images to survive and succeed in her transitional and present lifestyle! So what Irene has said about her lack of traditional sewing skills is extremely important and significant to her development and growth as an artist. Had she lived her life entirely on the land, and had her family been totally reliant on her sewing for survival, they might never have survived, and we might never have seen the richness of this particular artist’s work.

Irene’s productivity has also been bolstered by her daughter Nancy’s involvement in the sewing process. This practice of employing others in the making of artwork when one has reached a certain level of fame has long been a tradition in western and eastern society, but for Inuit artists this is rare. I am aware of only one other Inuit artist, Nuna Parr, the famous carver from Cape Dorset, who has many people working for him. The problem arises, if indeed it is viewed as a problem, of distinguishing how much of a particular work was made by the artist. In Irene’s case, however, the creative images are hers and hers alone. To my knowledge, Nancy (unlike her brothers, who are artists in their own right) does not engage in making art of her own.

Nasby assumes her readers’ ready appreciation of Avaalaaqiaq’s graphic style. However, I believe it takes a certain sophisticated and particular aesthetic appreciation to embrace her work. Avaalaaqiaq’s body of work is very distinctive and recognizable. It is dramatic and despite its content, the stories and legends, it is schematized, possessing a stark simplicity and strength. I have found that people either love her work or do not. I have found this to be true of other Inuit art as well. Most people embrace artwork that tends towards realism. It is easy to “read,” as it is straightforward and exactly what it purports to be. Work that has narrative content, with simple, but strange, almost hypnotic, figures in dramatic colours transforming themselves into something else, attracts those with catholic taste and a wide range of artistic appreciation.

For those who already have an appreciation of Inuit art but want to learn more about the art and people of the Kivalliq Region, I would highly recommend this book. For those who are just acquiring such an appreciation, such as new collectors, students or just interested parties, Myth and Reality is a must. The book provides a good insight into the life and work of a Baker Lake woman artist. Nasby has successfully compiled all the various and disparate information into a cohesive body, an extremely painstaking process. Her bibliography is also extensive, and the index and list of photo references help readers to find specific material quickly. Both the quality and the selection of the visual material are excellent, and the layout and organization of the material, extremely professional. This book would make a welcome addition to any library.

REFERENCE


Kyra Vladykov Fisher
P.O. Box 54
Kimmirut, Nunavut, Canada
X0A 0N0
cedkimm@nunanet.com


With the recent upsurge of interest in Sir Ernest Shackleton’s Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition on board Endurance (1914 –17), which has manifested itself in books, documentaries, and feature films, the details of that expedition will be known to many readers. To summarize, the expedition sailed from England on board Endurance on 8 August 1914 with the aim of crossing Antarctica from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea. The ship became beset in the ice of the Weddell Sea on 18 January 1915 and was crushed and sank on 21 November. The entire ship’s company (28 men) drifted north in a camp on the ice, until they took to three of the ship’s boats at 72° S. After travelling northward some 110 km, they landed on barren, inhospitable Elephant Island on 15 April. The party improvised a shelter from two of the overturned boats, and on 24 April Shackleton, with four companions, set off to sail the third boat, James Caird, to South Georgia.

A theme common to most recent accounts of the expedition is that Thomas Orde Lees, a captain in the Royal Marines hired primarily to look after the expedition’s motor transport (motor sledges and an aero-sledge), was the least popular member of the expedition. Having been put in charge of stores once the ship became beset and subsequently during the ice-drift, the boat journey, and the protracted sojourn on Elephant Island, Orde Lees kept the party on tight rations, and for this reason alone he was less than popular, especially among the crew. As the only serving officer in H.M.’s forces, he tended to be “on the outside,” not fitting in well with any of the groups that
thomson has summarized the material at various points where there was little of interest in his journal, Orde Lees found himself engaged in a strange battle of wits with Frank Wild, Shackleton’s second-in-com-
mand, who had been placed in charge of the party left on the island. Given their precarious food situation, Orde Lees argued that all seals and penguins that came ashore should be killed for food and fuel, anticipating that few, if any, would come ashore once winter arrived. Wild, on the other hand, felt that the men might get despondent if they thought that preparations were being made for a wintering. For example, when 200 penguins came ashore on 9 May, Wild would allow only 50 to be killed, and on 10 May when 300 landed, only 30 were allowed to be killed. Orde Lees’ view was that “we do not need to be bolstered up and encouraged with optimistic utterances [as to an early rescue] which more often than not have not so far been realized” (p. 207), and “I think it culpable not to secure the food when providence sends it like this. It is taking quite unjustifiable risks” (p. 220). In an editor’s note, Thomson comments very sensibly that “Wild’s decision not to kill everything in sight for a food reserve seemed a triumph of optimism over commonsense” (p. 205). The result was that on 26 August, only four days before the Chilean tug Yelcho arrived to rescue them, the party had only eight days’ food left. There would probably have been even less of a reserve, or even none at all, without Orde Lees’ nagging. It says much for both men that despite these tensions, Orde Lees noted that “on other matters we often argue amicably” (p. 252). And it says even more for Orde Lees that after the rescue he argued that all seals and penguins that came ashore should be killed for food and fuel, anticipating that few, if any, would come ashore once winter arrived. Wild, on the other

 Antarctica collection. The book is handsomely produced, and I found no typographical errors. It represents a major contribution to the literature of the Heroic Age of Antarctica, and, importantly, it shows Orde Lees in his true colours for the first time.

REFERENCES


William Barr

The Arctic Institute of North America

University of Calgary

2500 University Drive NW

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

T2N 1N4


Emerging from a session on Indigenous Peoples at the Seventh Circumpolar Universities Co-operation Conference held in Tromsø, Norway, in August 2001, this volume assesses the outcomes of the struggle for indigenous rights in recent history. While some of the chapters cover general issues of indigenous rights in international law and in nation-states such as Canada and Australia, other contributions focus on specific groups, such as the Sami in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and northwest Russia; the Maori of New Zealand; and the Rama of Nicaragua. Six of the fifteen chapters focus on Sami resource rights in Norway and Finland. These chapters show that the status of indigenous groups with regard to property rights, co-management authority, and resource allocation generally has improved in the last couple of decades, but progress has been uneven. For example, as María Luisa Acosta notes in Chapter 11, the inclusion of the Rama people in a Nicaraguan commission in 2001 represented “the first time that traditional indigenous community leaders have been permitted by law to participate in a governmental commission at such a high level” (p. 227). In contrast to Nicaragua’s stance toward indigenous groups, Norway’s treatment of the Sami changed from assimilation to recognition because of successful Sami political mobilization in the 1970s and 1980s. As an example of a Norwegian response to Sami pressure, Norway established a Sami fisheries commission in the 1990s to recommend protections for the small-scale Sami fjord fisheries (Nilsen, p. 180).