

## REVIEW

### NUNAMTA ELLAMTA-LLU AYUQUCIA / WHAT OUR LAND AND WORLD ARE LIKE: LOWER YUKON HISTORY AND ORAL TRADITIONS

*Translated and transcribed by Alice Rearden. Edited by Ann Fienup-Riordan, 2014. Calista Elders Council, produced in cooperation with the Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks. Paper, 656 pages, photos, maps. ISBN 978-0-615-86633-8; \$35.00.*

Reviewed by Barbara Cellarius

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*Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia / What Our Land and World Are Like* is a collection of oral histories from the lower Yukon River. This collaborative project involved elders and other community members from Kotlik, Emmonak, Alakanuk, and Nunam Iqua, along with translator Alice Rearden and anthropologist Ann Fienup-Riordan. It was part of a larger effort by the Calista Elders Council—a nonprofit heritage organization for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region—to document Yup'ik oral traditions as “knowledge systems with continuing relevance to today’s world” (p. xxviii). The project was funded by the National Science Foundation, Office of Polar Programs, as part of the Yup'ik Environmental Knowledge Project.

The book begins with nearly eighty pages of introductory material. In addition to a list of contributors and acknowledgements, a roughly fifty-page introduction by Fienup-Riordan provides background on the people and places of the lower Yukon and the process through which the oral histories were collected. The oral histories are described as conversations among close friends and relations, not facts elicited during interviews. These conversations took place during four week-long trips by elders, youth, and collaborating scientists on the lower Yukon during summer 2011—one week for each village—along with village meetings and several elder gatherings in Anchorage in 2011 and 2012.

More than 100 illustrations are interspersed throughout the text. In addition to historic photos, there are numerous contemporary photographs of people and places

taken during the elder gatherings and trips on the lower Yukon. In addition to an overview map of the Yukon River delta, eight place-name maps, organized in pairs, help to orient the reader to the region. One map in each pair shows the names of historic villages and camps; the names for rivers and other waterways are shown on the other. The first pair of maps provides an overview of the lower Yukon, followed by three pairs of more detailed maps for the Kotlik area, the Emmonak and Alakanuk area, and the area south of Alakanuk and Nunam Iqua.

The bilingual body of the book is made up of edited transcripts from the discussions—in Yup'ik—with the elders and other community members. The transcribed Yup'ik text is presented on the right-hand page, while English translations of the text appear on the adjacent left-hand page. The conversations are organized thematically into eleven sections presenting “topics and places they thought were important for other community members as well as non-Natives to know about” (p. lxxiii).

The first section, “Our Land,” is also the longest. It presents local history, traditional tales, and personal experiences about the places visited during the trips in summer 2011. The second section, “They Say All Things Are Aware,” includes stories that Fienup-Riordan and colleague David Chanar recorded while talking to brothers Thomas Chikigak and Camille Joseph in 1987, stories that are described as no longer being told today. A central theme of the third section, “Some People Give Offerings of Food and Water,” is respect for the environment as shown through offerings of food and water for the

deceased and for the land. "Our Yup'ik Way of Living," the fourth section, includes instructions that guide the way of life, for example how to treat others. The fifth section, "These Women Had Admonishments for Women Only," focuses on the experience of Yukon women growing up, becoming women, in marriage and childbirth, and raising children. Many of the lessons in this section address relations with others. The importance of sharing is a central theme of the sixth section, "They Say Things They Give Away Get Replaced." The seventh section, "There Are Many Instructions about the Wilderness," includes advice about hunting on the ocean and traveling on the land. In the eighth section, "These Things from the Wilderness Are Amazing," encounters with unusual and amazing things while traveling on the land are discussed. The ninth section, "Animals Feel Displeased and Disappear When People Break Admonishments," discusses rules and activities related to treatment of the dead. Yup'ik dancing traditions of the lower Yukon are the focus of the tenth section, "That Person Said That We Shouldn't Stop Having Dance Festivals." The book concludes with "Our Ancestors Made a Path For Us," which is intended "to guide contemporary young people toward a healthy life" (p. lxxv).

*What Our Land and World Are Like* is the result of an ambitious project to document the history of and stories from the lower Yukon River. The introduction to the area is accessible, and the extensive discussion of the project methodology is helpful in explaining how the information presented in the body of the book was collected, organized, and transformed from spoken to written words. Alice Rearden did an impressive amount of work to transcribe and then translate the conversations presented in the book. The oral histories will likely be most useful to the book's intended audience of younger people from the communities of the lower Yukon. Researchers working in the region will also find it of interest for its discussions of the Yup'ik way of life and local traditions. The introductory section on the project methodology may also be of use to scholars, and even other communities, interested in documenting local stories, especially those that relate to the land. An index, which the volume lacks, would have come in handy; however, the very detailed table of contents is helpful for identifying where particular places or topics are discussed. Yup'ik terms were generally translated upon first use, but there were many to keep track of. A glossary of the Yup'ik words that commonly appeared on the English pages would have been helpful.

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## ARROWS AND ATL ATLS: A GUIDE TO THE ARCHEOLOGY OF BERINGIA

*E. James Dixon, 2013. Shared Beringian Heritage Program, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. Paper, 321 pages, photos, line drawings, maps, index. ISBN 978-0-9853948-2-0 (paper).*

**Reviewed by Joshua D. Reuther**

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James Dixon's *Arrows and Atl Atls* was conceived with the objective of providing a clear, concise synopsis of the history of scientific archaeology and the development of cultural historical models across the diverse landscapes and cultures of Beringia. The project received support from the Shared Beringian Heritage Program of the National Park Service, which published the volume. *Arrows and Atl Atls* is written by a scholar who has spent the majority of his career in the dual role of producing work for academic and public institutions, in this case museums. This book succeeds in its intention of reaching a diverse readership, including students, avocational archaeologists, and anyone generally interested in archaeology and Beringia.

Chapter 1 gives a short summary of the history behind the concept of Beringia and definitions of its geographic extent. This chapter sets the structure for the rest of the book based on the author's three regional divisions of Beringia: western, central, and eastern. These divisions are based on similarities in cultural development, climate, and environment of each region. Western Beringia covers the vast expanse between the Verkhoyansk Range, western Chukotka, Kamchatka, and the New Siberian Islands. Central Beringia covers the majority of Chukotka, the islands and submerged lands of the Bering and Chukchi Seas, and western, northwestern, and northern Alaska. The areas of interior Alaska, the Gulf of Alaska, the Aleutians, and the unglaciated areas of western Canada and the northwest coast of North America comprise Eastern Beringia.

Chapter 2 is a short but concise summary of the history of archaeology in Beringia, specifically focusing on eastern Beringia, and the methods and theoretical frameworks that archaeologists use to learn about the past, including the use of ethnographic analogy, methods of dating sites, and the development of cultural historical organizational systems. The end of this chapter provides a summary of three technologies central to the cultural historical framework presented by the author: atl atls, microblade insets, and bow and arrow technologies. It also sets up a later discussion on the dichotomy of two technologies that make the eastern Beringian archaeological record so unique: microblade and nonmicroblade (usually implicitly and explicitly equated to bifacially reduced projectile points). Ideas about whether these two technologies represent different cultural groups, variation within weaponry systems of a single group, differential responses to raw material conservation, or task-specific uses pervade the literature on the terminal Pleistocene and Early Holocene Beringian archaeological record. As in Dixon's previous works, *Arrows and Atl Atls* summarizes these ideas quite well and expands upon his earlier models of the distinctly Old World and Far East Asian nature of microblade technologies (possibly related to the earliest uses of bow and arrow technologies), while bifacially reduced projectile point technologies, associated with atl atls, are predominately an outgrowth of Paleoindian weaponry systems from the regions of North America south of the ice sheets. This line of inquiry follows the idea that these two types of technologies were

developed by separate cultural groups, and coalesced in eastern Beringia.

The subsequent chapter (Chapter 3) describes the process and distribution of glacial advance during the Last Glacial Maximum, the significant lowering of global sea levels during this time, and the exposure of now submerged lands in the Bering and Chukchi Seas regions that created the vast plains of central Beringia. This summary sets the tone for a discussion on the potential pathways for human migration from the Russian Far East into eastern Beringia, and southward into the more southerly latitudes of the Americas. The two potential routes outlined here for the earliest human migrations into the Americas are the interior route (i.e., the expanse of land exposed between retreating Cordilleran and Laurentide ice sheets) and the coastal route (i.e., exposed land along the Beringian coastlines of northwestern North America).

Chapters 4 through 8 outline the complex nature of the archaeological record and development of cultural historical models for the three regions of Beringia. Dixon could have relegated his summaries within each chapter to the terminal Pleistocene and earliest of the Early Holocene archaeological records, when land connections between the two continents (and technically Beringia) still existed. However, he chose to summarize the entire archaeological record of each region, recognizing that over 14,000 years of cultural connections did not necessarily end with the inundation of the Bering platform. Each chapter is illustrated with line drawings and plates of artifacts from important sites within each region; diagrams of key technologies (e.g., harpoon technologies); photographs of excavations, landscapes, and people; and schematics for each region's cultural historical framework.

Chapter 9 summarizes many of the central themes in Beringian archaeology: colonization of the Americas

via Beringia, the author's ideas of specific culturally derived traits from Asia and North America, environmental change and cultural development, and the increase in sedentism along the coasts in the later Holocene. There is also a discussion of a growing view amongst a faction of Beringian archaeologists that there was a northward migration or migrations of Paleoindians into eastern Beringia, once the interior corridor was established. This would explain the appearance of bifacially reduced projectile points and atlatls in a region that had previously been dominated by microblade, and possibly the bow and arrow, technologies.

A section near the end of the book entitled "Pioneers of Beringian Archaeology" provides biographic information on numerous scholars who have made important contributions to furthering anthropological and archaeological research on Beringia. This section adds a nice personal touch to the historical background on the development of Beringian archaeology presented in *Arrows and Atlatls*. However, as the author notes, it is not meant to be an exhaustive list of scholars, and several living archaeologists who have made important contributions to Beringian research declined to be represented.

All in all, this book marks an exceptional effort and, as the author admits, a humbling one, to distill an immense amount of cultural, biologic, and geologic information across the incredibly diverse landscapes of Beringia. *Arrows and Atlatls* achieves its goal in providing a clear and concise summary of the history and state of Beringian archaeology and is an excellent accompaniment to Dixon's earlier books, *Quest for the Origins of the First Americans* (1993) and *Bones, Boats, and Bison: Archeology of the First Colonization of Western North America* (1999).

## REVIEW

### MAMMALS OF UNGAVA AND LABRADOR: THE 1882–1884 FIELDNOTES OF LUCIEN M. TURNER TOGETHER WITH INUIT AND INNU KNOWLEDGE

*Lucien M. Turner. Edited by Scott A. Heyes and Kristofer M. Helgen, 2014. Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press and Arctic Studies Center, Washington DC. Lii + 384 pages; color and black & white photos, line drawings, maps, appendix, glossary, bibliography. ISBNs 978-1-935623-21-2 (hardcover; \$49.95); 978-1-935623-28-1 (electronic; \$49.95)*

#### Reviewed by Erica Hill

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*Mammals of Ungava and Labrador* is a beautifully produced book that sets a new standard in the publication of ethnohistory and ethnobiology. The volume is nominally the anthropological and zoological field notes recorded by Lucien M. Turner (1847–1909) during a late nineteenth-century expedition to northern Quebec and Labrador. His notes include oral narratives by Inuit and subarctic Innu, the latter comprised of Montagnais and Naskapi, as well as additional accounts collected by editor Scott Heyes during fieldwork in Nunavik. This brief description fails to do justice to a complex work that includes archival photos, artifact illustrations, ethnolinguistic data, and detailed, taxon-specific observations of animal behavior, hunting techniques, rituals, and beliefs.

Lucien M. Turner may be familiar to Alaska anthropologists as a naturalist and proto-ethnographer who documented life in the Aleutian Islands (*An Aleutian Ethnography*, edited by Ray Hudson, 2008). As a result of his Alaska work (1874–1881), Turner brought a comparative perspective to his two-year stint (1882–1884) at Ft. Chimo (now Kuujjuaq), a trading post on the north coast of the Ungava Peninsula. Using Ft. Chimo as a base, Turner explored the region, making observations of Inuit and Innu practices, technology, and language and collecting mammals, birds, fish, and botanical specimens. These materials are now curated at the Smithsonian, along with the ethnographic objects he purchased. (An appendix lists each mammal specimen with accession data; several are

type specimens, which are the basis for the first description of a particular species.)

The introductory materials provide background on Turner's life and career and detail the circumstances of his expedition to Ungava. An excellent map (pp. 12–13) tracks Turner's two-month journey from Montreal to Ft. Chimo and is accompanied by Turner's notes and historic photos of the voyage. Turner recorded his experiences in a distinctive prose style and abundant detail, describing, for example, his attempts to collect caribou specimens:

Nothing will induce some tribes of Indians to deliver a living reindeer to a whiteman [sic] lest the guardian spirit of the deer be offended and cause all the remaining deer to forsake the country. The Eskimo, on the contrary, have no hesitancy in disposing of the living deer as their shamans are able, at their own pleasure, to call the spirits of the deer, already slain, to the earth where they immediately assume a material form ready to be again slain and as often resume the earthly form (p. xxxviii).

The species accounts (Fig. 1) follow the introductory material and comprise the majority of the book. Each account is a wealth of information, containing Turner's written descriptions, plus Inuit and Innu narratives, distribution maps, and photos of specimens and watercolor illustrations, many in color. Turner discusses each animal's appearance and behavior as observed by him and reported by informants. Regarding the lemming, for ex-

ample, he dryly notes that: “The white people of Labrador term these creatures ‘Mountain Mice’ and assert that they throw themselves on their back and kick and squeak on the approach of danger. I have never heard them utter a sound” (p. 146).

Turner also describes hunting tools and techniques and the processing and use of skins, oil, and sinew. Particularly extensive are the accounts of beluga, caribou, ringed and bearded seals, walrus, polar bear, and the “Eskimo dog.” The accounts of seals include descriptions of clothing, tents, and kayak and umiaq use and construction and are accompanied by photos of museum objects, such as a seal intestine parka and a kayak model. Historical photos document sealskin preparation and tent and watercraft construction.

Oral narratives are incorporated into the account of each animal. Some were recorded by Turner himself (e.g., “Scaring of the Seals”); others were recorded by Scott Heyes during his ethnographic fieldwork. Inuit narrator Tivi Etok, who is extensively quoted by Heyes, illustrated his stories with pencil drawings, reproduced here. Tamasi Morgan also contributed several beautifully rendered illustrations (pp. 211, 226), each a deft vignette of hunting life. Along with the illustrations, Heyes’ color photos demonstrate that, while many practices have changed or disappeared since Turner’s time, hunting and consumption of animals are still very much parts of twenty-first-century Inuit life in Nunavik. While Innu narratives and terms are components of many species accounts, documentation of Inuit terms, beliefs, and practices is much more extensive.

Heyes and mammalogist Kristofer Helgen have precisely documented every quotation from Turner’s reports and papers, scrupulously recorded catalog information,

and provided Inuktitut terms in the forms used by Turner, as well as syllabics and current Roman orthography, thanks to the work of linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais and oral historian John MacDonald. Extensive focal vocabularies in Inuktitut are included for seals and caribou; terms describe the animals’ life stages, appearance, and movements as well as the tools and clothing made from their skins and hides.

Turner’s accounts, accompanied by the narratives collected by Heyes, provide a well-rounded picture of each animal’s role in Inuit life, illustrating not just the function of rabbit-fur mittens or a caribou antler ice scoop, for example, but also how humans interacted with and perceived animals. Seals, as Tivi Etok recounts, “love fresh, soft snow” (p. 219), but dislike noise (p. 215). The fur of hares is suitable only for women. “No man would debase himself by wearing a particle of the fur” of such “timid creatures” (p. 170). These details demonstrate not just how fundamental animals were to Inuit daily life, but also how they informed language, gender roles, hunting taboos, and perception of the environment.

*Mammals of Ungava and Labrador* was made possible by several scholars, artists, and funding sources, including universities, Native organizations, and research institutes. While ethnohistorians are the primary audience for the book, it will also interest ethnobiologists and zooarchaeologists seeking sources on Native hunting and use of specific animals in the North American Arctic. *Mammals of Ungava and Labrador* also has much to offer general readers interested in Canadian and Arctic history and the history of science. A significant contribution to the natural and ethnohistory of Eastern Canada and its aboriginal peoples, this accessible and engaging book deserves a broad readership.





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### KAL'UNEK, FROM KARLUK: KODIAK ALUTIIQ HISTORY AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE KARLUK ONE VILLAGE SITE

*Edited by Amy Steffian, Marnie Leist, Sven Haakanson Jr., and Patrick Saltonstall, 2015. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks; 384 pages. Color photos, line drawings, maps, tables, index. ISBN: 978-1-60223-244-0 (hardcover; \$50.00)*

**Reviewed by Robert E. Kopperl**

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The Karluk One site (KAR-001) on southwest Kodiak Island is iconic, so much so that it has become part of the fabric of Alaskan archaeology. Despite the attention drawn since its first coordinated investigations in the 1980s, little well-published information is available regarding these studies or the collections they generated, except site chronology and zooarchaeology of its fish remains (West 2009, 2011; West et al. 2012). Before that, accessible site information was limited to a chapter in a volume of the Aurora Monograph Series (Jordan and Knecht 1988) and an unpublished dissertation that described portions of the artifact assemblage (Knecht 1995). In a manner that has become typical for Alutiiq Museum publications, this book makes up for the dearth with a scholarly scope and content that is beautiful to look at. The authors do the heavy lifting of constructing the narrative, but cameo sidebars from researchers who have been involved in work at Karluk in the past round out the presentation of information. Commendable emphasis is placed on the cultural and historical context of the site as part of the fabric of the book.

The preface clearly states that it is not a site report, yet the wealth of technical information and original insight in this volume is worthy of primary reference. The volume format echoes that of most site reports by providing background on the natural and cultural setting of the Karluk River basin, a history of previous investigations and persistent research themes, a descriptive review of the Karluk One collection, and finally a series of chapters that interpret that material and other data sources in ways that paint a picture of Alutiiq economic, domestic, and spiritu-

al life. Chapter 1 weaves together Karluk archaeology and the evolving sociopolitical landscape of the rural Kodiak community, including experiences of participants in the excavations and the cultural revival that was ongoing by the time Bryn Mawr College archaeologists first broke ground. The memoirs-in-brief convey the time and the place, while the overall narrative provides details of choices made by archaeologists during the various Karluk One investigations that are not available elsewhere. Details of the site and its investigations have been rather apocryphal until now, making these anecdotes invaluable.

The next three chapters describe the environment, cultural history, and material culture of the Karluk One site. Chapter 2 combines a landscape-scale overview of the Karluk River basin with the established Kodiak culture-historical sequence, and describes how archaeological research along the Karluk River informs what we know of Kodiak's broader pre-contact history. To the authors' credit, they are not afraid to incorporate more theoretical modeling of settlement and land use into language understandable to a general audience. One minor issue with this approach is unneeded repetition of some of the main points throughout the text as a result of distilling some of the theoretical nuances for a broader audience. Chapter 3 is essentially a narrative of the life and death of the physical setting of Karluk One. The historical accounts of Karluk Village from the past two centuries shift towards more of a taphonomic and site-formation focus by the end of the chapter, and a clear sense of loss is conveyed by accounts of the final and complete erosion of Karluk One by the start of the new millennium. Chapter 4 describes a different



kind of site history—how Karluk material culture found its way into collections far beyond Kodiak, starting well before the modern era of curation marked by the Alutiiq Museum. The challenges of both physical conservation and intellectual and organizational maintenance over a large collection generated by a complex series of investigations are highlighted.

The last three chapters cover broad topics of economic, household, and social/spiritual life of Karluk's residents. Chapter 5 describes the Karluk River basin's archaeology, paleoecology, ethnography, deeper-time oral tradition, and historical accounts of subsistence practices to draw a picture of how people once made a living here. Various elements of the Karluk One site assemblage are tied to subsistence patterns and the traditional seasonal round through review of artifacts and anecdotal accounts by archaeologists who studied Karluk artifacts and faunal remains.

Chapter 6 explores precontact households of Karluk, exemplified by excavation of superimposed and extraordinarily well-preserved house-floors spanning several centuries. These findings are summarized at several scales, from village organization, to form and construction methods of the houses, to spatial organization and composition of materials within each house. Enough archaeological and historical research has been conducted elsewhere on Kodiak that comparative approaches are possible when discussing village-scale household organization. In contrast, information from the well-preserved Karluk house-floors is unparalleled in this region and therefore serves as a benchmark instead of a comparative dataset at the household scale.

Chapter 7 describes social dimensions of traditional life at Karluk. An ethnographic and historic summary of the social dimensions of Alutiiq communities is followed by exploration of the facets of Karluk material culture through this lens. Alutiiq artifacts such as incised pebbles, labrets, armor, and gaming pieces are some highlights. The chapter closes with discussion of traditional Alutiiq spirituality and ritual as seen through some of the more iconic items in the collection, such as masks.

This book is both aesthetically pleasing and technically useful, making it relevant to many audiences. The visual appeal of the book cannot be overemphasized—abundant archival photographs are combined with beau-

tiful artifact photography and informative diagrams of implements, house structure, and other material aspects of life at Karluk. Traditional Alutiiq naming conventions are highlighted throughout the book, culminating in a glossary prefaced by a fascinating account of how contemporary Alutiiq language names were applied to artifacts. This kind of treatment of and respect for the Karluk One site is long overdue, but worth the wait. Many of us who are familiar with the collection will enjoy becoming reacquainted with it through this volume, while those who are discovering Alutiiq culture, Kodiak archaeology, and the Karluk One site for the first time will find this book a rich, welcoming introduction.

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