

*The Arctic Promise: Legal and Political Autonomy of Greenland and Nunavut.* By Natalia Loukacheva. Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 2007. xii + 255 pp. Maps, notes, bibliography, index.

In November 2008, a referendum on self-government in Greenland resulted in a majority decision in favour of increasing autonomy. The results of the referendum were given force the following year when Greenland extended its Home Rule through several measures, including the declaration of Greenlandic as its exclusive official language, demands for the recognition of Greenlanders under international law, reforms to its oil revenue-sharing arrangement with Denmark, and the assertion of control over its constabulary forces, courts, and coastguard. Two months earlier, the Nunavut and Canadian governments signed the Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Protocol, which increased the responsibility of the Inuit of the eastern Canadian Arctic over the territory's lands and resources in an effort to promote local economic development. The origins of these two events can be traced back to the introduction of Home Rule in Greenland in 1979 and the creation of the territorial government of Nunavut in 1999. Extensively researched and clearly argued, Natalia Loukacheva's *The Arctic Promise* is a valuable tool for understanding the history and evolution of these efforts to create and deepen autonomy in northern regions.

The concept of autonomy can be defined in various ways and refers to numerous different practices and ideas. For Loukacheva, the concept is basically equivalent to self-government, understood as a form of self-determination within the modern nation-state. Based on this view, *The Arctic Promise* argues that Greenland and Nunavut are evolving jurisdictions which display new forms of autonomy not normally accounted for in international or comparative constitutional law. Instead, a "bottom-up" understanding of autonomy rooted in *de facto* practices is required to capture the dynamic nature and meaning of law and politics in the two jurisdictions. Grounded in this approach, Loukacheva's central contention is that Inuit in Greenland and Nunavut have transformed *de jure* formal territorial autonomy into what she calls *de facto* Inuit governance, and have therefore avoided the need for any special forms of indigenous autonomy.

The comparative methodology of this book is noteworthy and fits well with the current academic and political emphasis on circumpolar cooperation. Throughout the text, Loukacheva seamlessly compares the governments of Nunavut and Greenland with respect to their

constitutional and institutional structures, legal jurisdiction, and roles in international affairs—all without sacrificing analytical depth. Of particular note, her comparison of the legal and political autonomy of the two jurisdictions examines the law in three distinct ways: through its practice in these changing societies; through legislation and juridical literature; and as it is understood in the minds of legislators, activists, and residents of Greenland and Nunavut. Loukacheva refers to these approaches as contextualist, textualist, and jurisprudential, respectively. In addition, the book's methodology opens up new ways of studying northern areas that do not centre on the role of international regimes or a single jurisdiction—as does so much of the contemporary literature on the politics of the circumpolar north.

Loukacheva begins her analysis in Chapter One with an overview of the history of Greenland and Nunavut, arguing that traditional forms of Inuit social regulation and organization—forms which pre-dated European contact—have made the Inuit adaptable to different forms of governance. This historical overview provides essential context for the discussion in Chapter Two, which explores the movement towards autonomy in the two regions through an analysis of Greenland's Home Rule campaign and the development of the Nunavut territorial government. This second chapter highlights Inuit views about self-governance and autonomy and argues that legal protections enshrined in constitutional arrangements such as the Greenland Home Rule Act (1979), the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (1993), and the Nunavut Act (1999) can provide the foundation for further autonomy efforts. Chapter Three then examines the historical development of these arrangements by explaining the structure of political institutions in Greenland and Nunavut, and by highlighting the importance of Inuit mobilization via political parties and other social and political organizations in each jurisdiction. Loukacheva notes that these forms of Inuit agency have been crucial in securing political autonomy at both a functional and a normative level.

The next two chapters discuss the lack of formal authority that Greenland and Nunavut hold in both their justice systems and foreign affairs. Rather, Denmark and Canada are vested with these powers (though the program for extended Home Rule in Greenland will increase local control over the courts in the future). Loukacheva argues in these chapters that some responsibilities should be transferred to the governments of Nunavut and Greenland since the devolution of authority over judicial and foreign affairs would not pose a threat to Danish or Canadian sovereignty. In Chapter Four, she examines the interaction of indigenous ideas and

values with Western legal thought and practice, demonstrating how hybrid legal systems have emerged in both regions. She also addresses the substantive meaning of justice in Inuit communities, and gives several examples of how it is at odds with western meanings. Still other examples of the value of Inuit forms of conflict management and dispute resolution bolster Loukacheva's argument that local involvement and jurisdiction should be increased within the legal systems of Nunavut and Greenland.

Greenland's 1979 Home Rule Act, the 2005 Danish Authorization Act, the 1993 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), and the 1999 Nunavut Act do not grant Greenland or Nunavut jurisdiction over defence or security policy. Therefore, on the surface of things, these regions seem fundamentally different from sovereign states like Denmark or Canada and appear to lack the authority to engage in international affairs. Yet, as Loukacheva demonstrates, this issue is far more complex than it appears. Indeed, Chapter Five charts the engagement of the Nunavut and Greenlandic governments in international relations through various forms of cooperation and activism, including their participation in the Arctic Council, the Northern Forum, and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, as well as through Greenland's relationship with the European Union—all of which are portrayed as indications of the increased political autonomy that Greenland and Nunavut have achieved in recent decades. Despite this attention to international activism, some further discussion of the prospects for greater autonomy in these regions during the current "scramble" for Arctic resources—and of the politics of oil, gas, and mineral development more generally—would have been helpful in this chapter. While certainly not a serious flaw in the book, a greater focus on the impact of this activism on the Danish and Canadian governments and on the ways Inuit internationalism has reshaped the politics of the Arctic region would have been welcomed by this reviewer.

A central argument in *The Arctic Promise*—that power not typically associated with sub-national entities should be devolved to Nunavut and Greenland—is helpful for understanding recent events in these regions. Greenland in particular has experienced great change since the publication of this book, and Loukacheva deserves praise for her efforts to contextualize current events there and in northern Canada. Overall, *The Arctic Promise* is a well-written, informative comparison of two jurisdictions. It is backed up by substantial academic scholarship and extensive use of primary materials. Its success in underscoring the similarities between Greenland and Nunavut, as well as its clarity and organization, are commendable. Students and scholars of indigenous

politics, Canadian politics, Greenlandic/Danish politics, comparative politics, comparative law, international relations, and international law will find its arguments and methodology sophisticated, but approachable. Those with more general interests in northern politics and law will also find this book useful for understanding the dynamics of the quest for self-government in the Arctic.

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***Kiumajut (Talking Back): Game Management and Inuit Rights, 1900–70.***  
**By Peter Kulchyski and Frank James Tester. Vancouver: UBC Press,**  
**2007. xii + 316 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.**

In recent years, there has been no shortage of historical books detailing conflicts between Native hunters and government wildlife conservation programs in North America. In the United States, historians such as Louis Warren, Mark David Spence, and Karl Jacoby have all traced the impact of national parks and hunting regulations on Native (and non-Native) people living in hinterland regions. In Canada, the work of scholars such as Tina Loo, Bill Parenteau, and Alan MacEachern, as well as my own work on national parks and the Canadian North, has echoed the Americans' assertion that the advent of wildlife law and regulation in the early twentieth century represented an assertion of state power over people living at the margins.

A new and valuable addition to this body of work has appeared in the form of Peter Kulchyski and Frank Tester's *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, a study of Inuit conflicts with state wildlife conservation programs in the Eastern Arctic from 1900 to 1970. According to the authors, *Kiumajut* is intended as a companion volume to their much lauded *Tammarniit (Mistakes)* (UBC Press, 1994), a critique of the federal government's program to relocate Inuit from northern Quebec to the High Arctic and from the Keewatin interior to the coast of Hudson Bay in the 1950s. *Kiumajut* covers much of the same thematic ground as its predecessor, highlighting the federal government's effective colonization of Inuit subsistence cultures, in this case through the administrative medium of wildlife conservation.

The first section of the book details the advent of state regulation in the fur trade during the early decades of the twentieth century. It then moves to a detailed historical overview of the now infamous caribou crisis of the 1950s and 1960s, a wildlife emergency built on thin scientific evidence that federal wildlife officials nevertheless used as a pretext for implementing a