

ESKIMO

North Slope Eskimos

Peoples of the Sea - Tareumiut

People of the Land - Nunamiut

Separate niches - same language

*treeless tundra: scattered foraging population

*coast: hunt whale, walruses, seals, polar bears

*inland: hunt caribou, grizzly bears, mountain sheep, moose

-adequate food for 1 person per 20 sq. miles

-wide seasonal fluctuation in availability

-unpredictable annual variations

-most important animals - whale and caribou

SPRING - whale and caribou migrate, time of abundance

SUMMER - migration ends

game scatters

snow melts - dry, 6" precipitation per year

landscape - maze of bogs and pools on permafrost

for 2 months, 24 hours of sunlight

August: 1st snow, by end September: frozen

FALL - smaller migrations

WINTER - "hungry time" -10 to -30 degrees

foot travel easier and sled travel, time for socializing

hunting difficult

animals migrate or hibernate

game widely scattered

PEOPLE OF THE LAND - NUNAMIUT

food supply depends on successful caribou hunt

men: hunt

women: firewood (scarce), fetch water, manufacture clothing, prepare food

most of year - roam in independent families/camping extended family camps

SPRING and FALL - several family camps together

cooperative hunting: caribou drive

dry the extra meat for future

DILEMMA for Nunamiut-

on one hand- want to remain the vicinity of other families

- people are required to share food

- you won't starve if your neighbors have food

on other hand- scarce supplies (firewood and game) inconvenient

- and have to share if you have food

- isolated family may not find food for weeks: starve to death

no warfare

but homicide -> revenge -> feuding

problem: hostile to strangers/ need good trade relations

PEOPLE OF THE SEA - TAREUMIUT

Economy centered on whaling (and a little caribou hunting)

especially summer and fall - whaling

permanent villages 200-300 members

far apart on coast

successful hunt in spring bring in 15 or more whales, hundreds of tons

dig in permafrost - freeze food

Adults eat 7-8 lbs meat per day, and dogs to feed

30 people eat 18,500 lbs meat in 75 days

Two groups - bound together by trade:

Tareumiut (SEA) need caribou for tents, clothing

Nunamuit (LAND) need seal oil, whale blubber

So trade over great distances

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION for both groups

nuclear family, basic residential unit

unit production and consumption

2 or 3 families build next to each other, common entrance

EMPHASIS- harmony and unity

kin ties strong - visit kin and ask help, if live nearby- ties are stronger

SHARING and EXCHANGE

*Nunamiut (land) have rules that require sharing food

but ownership is carefully noted, hunting weapons identified

LOCAL GROUPS

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named home territory, 200-300 people

each household - unique set of friendships - gifts, trade items

sexual access

ties in neighborhood

also important ties outside neighborhood

T and N have trade partnerships with each other

meet in summer at designated place

up to 500 together trading

trading big quantities

T (Sea)- village economy

cooperative whaling and distribution of food

whalers form boat group of kinsmen

->voluntary associations (common interest association)

leadership -> "boat owner" - organizer of the labor

maintain boat, has weapons

Leadership among Tareumiut (Sea People) =

boat owner- knowledgeable and successful whaler, helmsman, harpooner

must trust because if capsize boat, no survivors

proper butchering, distribution

Leader provides security for his followers

each family ice cellar to store meat - Leader has bigger ice cellar

Leader has more meat, followers get supplies

Leaders trade with people beyond the village-

security ties with other boat owners IN the village if run of bad luck

Tareumiut (Sea People) - stay together all winter

more food security than Nunamiut (Land people)

Feasting if surplus

- invites leaders from other villages - competitive generosity

distributes large surpluses

reciprocation later

COMPETITION- give away a lot, brag that beat-> respected

Nunamiut person is respected if honest and patient

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calm, hardworking, generous

don't wish to be above others

Nunamiut: no one can tell them what to do - only give advice

controlling aggression is very important

if hostile feeling then leave for awhile

hostile men are ostracized

survive because they share

if homicide victim's kin seek revenge

creates interfamily feuding

once feuding starts it is hard to stop

because no political control beyond family

SUMMARY

N and T belong to same cultural and linguistic group

Sea People - cooperative, multifamily whale hunting
have leaders coordinating activities
survival depends on cooperation
cooperation necessitates a leader

Land People - families hunting caribou
big groups only twice a year, caribou drive groups
temporary situational leadership during hunt
feuding problem due to lack of leadership
no food security

CONCLUSION:

Necessity of cooperation leads to permanent leadership