

The end of the World



by
Keld Jensen

The end of the World

We are close to the outermost edge. The distance to the big, full of fish and other animals, underwater banks in the Davis Strait is only 20 kilometres, but towards west I can only see infinite space of sea. It seems as if I am at the end of the World, and out there to the west is something I will never reach.

Out here the marine nature rules. The extreme gales in The Davis Strait hit the unprotected coasts. When the huge gales are raging, even the hardened seabirds take the flight into the archipelago or into the fjord.

Out here, the human beings move for millennia in their wanderings along the west coast of Greenland or hunting at the underwater banks in the Davis Strait. In the past, they used primitive, small boats and kayaks. Later in modern ships of all kinds equipped with electronic navigation instruments. Despite the new, advanced technology this water continues to make ships to shipwrecks and give loss of life.

Once in the past a group of people choose to settle on the island Kangeq. A natural harbour in the cliffs of the island gave a good starting point for

hunting and fishing in the archipelago and at the fish banks out in the Davis Strait.

I arrived by boat to Kangeq a summer day in August. Despite the mild weather the limited vegetation on the cliffs gave the impression of the often harsh weather out here. At low tide, most rocks are swamped by the yellowish-brown seaweed. It is difficult to get a firm foothold in the slimy, slippery seaweed. You have to be extremely vigilant. If you stumble into the ice cold sea water, you will quickly be cooled, and there is very deep right up to the cliffs.

The abandoned houses of the former settlement can already be watched in the mouth of the small cove. An old wharf and the grey houses where the paint has long since peeled away, are giving the immediate impression of something that is naked and abandoned.

Further on, one can see that the windows of the houses are without glass and they appear as empty blind eyes. The roofing felt of several of the front houses has many years ago been ripped

off by passing storms. The rafters are naked and exposed to the sky. The houses have felt into ruins over the past thirty years.

Between the houses and the surrounding rocks I can see older graves. They appear today as grass covered humps in the landscape. The dead were originally buried only covered with stones and turf on top of the rocky ground. The peeled white crosses are thrown on top of graves. A few older boats made of wood lay on the ground. They are completely collapsed, but you can still see the outline of the original boat.

Down by the creek, you can see the grass covered remnants of kitchen midden of the past inhabitants. Small, white bones are sticking out of the long-decomposed manure.

Up in the rafters, I spot the ruins new residents. The snow bunting is leaving the nest inside the ruins, tearing along to look for food for the nestlings.

The Nature is quietly taking over its original role as ruler out here near to the end of the World.

































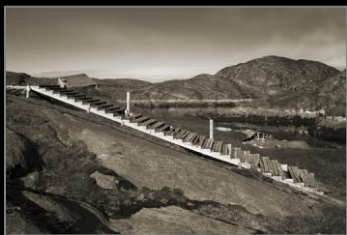






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