Études Inuit Studies

Inughuit Nipaan: The Future of Archaeological Partnerships in Avanersuaq
Inughuit nipaan : L'avenir des pratiques de partenariat en archéologie à Avanersuaq
Inughuit nipaan: Avanersuarmi itsarnisarsiornermik suleqatigiinnerup siunissaa

Mari Kleist, Matthew Walls, Genoveva Sadorana, Otto Simigaq and Aleqatsiaq Peary

Volume 46, Number 2, 2022

Voix Inuit : Archéologie communautaire dans l'Arctique nord-américain
Inuit Voices: Community-Based Archaeology across the North American Arctic

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1106902ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/1106902ar

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Centre interuniversitaire d'études et de recherches autochtones (CIÉRA)

ISSN

0701-1008 (print)
1708-5268 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Kleist, M., Walls, M., Sadorana, G., Simigaq, O. & Peary, A. (2022). Inughuit Nipaan: The Future of Archaeological Partnerships in Avanersuaq. *Études Inuit Studies*, *46*(2), 17–34. https://doi.org/10.7202/1106902ar

Article abstract

Inuit across the Arctic regions have for generations echoed a wish for a greater involvement in research and have voiced the need for direct partnerships that include Indigenous perspectives. As a consequence, researchers are becoming increasingly aware that studying other people's past and heritage is not an inherent academic right but rather involves developing close Indigenous partnerships. Accordingly, partnership research frameworks are now being recognized as essential foundations to decolonize research practices in the Arctic, as vocalized by Inuit communities. In this paper, Inughuit community members share their personal and shared thoughts and reflections and present how they envision future partnership research approaches, how they can determine the objectives of partnered research, and what archaeology can ultimately contribute in a changing Arctic.

Inughuit Nipaan: The Future of Archaeological Partnerships in Avanersuaq

Mari Kleist[i], Matthew Walls[ii], Genoveva Sadorana[iii], Otto Simigaq[iv], and Aleqatsiaq Peary[v]

ABSTRACT

Inuit across the Arctic regions have for generations echoed a wish for a greater involvement in research and have voiced the need for direct partnerships that include Indigenous perspectives. As a consequence, researchers are becoming increasingly aware that studying other people's past and heritage is not an inherent academic right but rather involves developing close Indigenous partnerships. Accordingly, partnership research frameworks are now being recognized as essential foundations to decolonize research practices in the Arctic, as vocalized by Inuit communities. In this paper, Inughuit community members share their personal and shared thoughts and reflections and present how they envision future partnership research approaches, how they can determine the objectives of partnered research, and what archaeology can ultimately contribute in a changing Arctic.

KEYWORDS

Inughuit voices, community members, developing research relationships, partnership visions, heritage, Indigenous knowledge, arctic archaeology, decolonization

RÉSUMÉ

Inughuit nipaan: L'avenir des pratiques de partenariat en archéologie à Avanersuaq

Depuis des générations, les Inuit des régions arctiques ont exprimé le souhait d'être davantage impliqués dans la recherche et la nécessité d'un partenariat direct incluant les perspectives indigènes. En conséquence, les chercheurs sont de plus en plus conscients que l'étude du passé et du patrimoine d'autres peuples n'est pas un droit académique inhérent, mais qu'elle implique le développement de partenariats autochtones étroits. En conséquence, les cadres de recherche en partenariat sont de plus en plus reconnus comme des fondements essentiels pour

i. Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland. makl@uni.gl

ii. University of Calgary, Canada. matthew.walls@ucalgary.ca

iii. Community member, Qaanaaq, Avanersuaq, Greenland.

iv. Hunter, Qaanaaq, Avanersuaq, Greenland.

v. Hunter, Qaanaaq, Avanersuaq, Greenland. alpeary@yahoo.com

décoloniser les pratiques de recherche dans l'Arctique, comme l'ont exprimé les communautés Inuit. Dans cet article, nous présentons des membres de la communauté Inughuit qui partagent leurs pensées et réflexions personnelles et communes, et qui expliquent comment ils envisagent les futures approches de recherche en partenariat, comment ils peuvent déterminer les objectifs de la recherche en partenariat, et ce que l'archéologie peut finalement apporter dans un Arctique en mutation.

MOTS-CLÉS
Voix des Inughuit, membres de la communauté, développement de relations de recherche, visions de partenariat, patrimoine, savoir indigène, archéologie arctique, décoloniser

ABSTRAKTI

Inughuit nipaan: Avanersuarmi itsarnisarsiornermik suleqatigiinnerup siunissaa

Issittumi nunat immikkoortuini Inuit ilisimatusarnermut peqataatinneqarnerunissamik kinguaariit ingerlaneranni arlaleriarlutik kissaateqartarsimapput nunallu inoqqaavisa isiginnittaasiannik peqataatitsilluni toqqaannartumik suleqatigiinnissamik pisariaqartitsineq oqariartuutigisarlugu. Tamatuma kingunerisaanik allanut qanga pisimasunik kingornussassaannillu misissuinerit ilisimatuussutsikkut pisinnaatitaaffiunnginnerat ilisimatusartunit eqqumaffigineqarnerujartulerpoq, aallaqqaataaniillu qanimut suleqatigiinnerit ineriartortinneqarnissaat ilaatinneqalerluni. Ilisimatusarnermik suleqatigiinnernut sinaakkutit Issittumi ilisimatusariaatsit nunasiaataajunnaarsarneqarnerannut pingaarutilimmik tunngaviunerat taamaammat akuerisaajartuinnarpoq, soorlu Inunnit tamanna oqariartuutigineqarsimasoq. Pappiaqqami matumani Inughuit ilaasa namminneq ataatsimullu eqqarsaataat ilisaritippagut, siunissamilu suleqatigiilluni ilisimatusariaasissat qanoq takorloorneraat, suleqatigiilluni ilisimatusarnernut anguniagassat qanoq aalajangersinnaaneraat, kiisalu Issittumi allanngorartumi itsarnisarsiornerup qanoq ilanngussaqarsinnaanera saqqummiullutigu.

OQAATSIT QITIUSUT
Inughuit niipaat, inuiaqatigiinneersut, ilisimatusarnermi attaveqaatinik ineriartortitsineq, suleqatigiinnermut takorluukkat, kingornussat, nunat inoqqaavisa ilisimasaat, Issittumi itsarnisarsiorneq, nunasiaataajunnaarsaaneq

******

In the last two decades or so, the voices of Indigenous community members and Arctic representatives have considerably increased at meetings, seminars, and conferences on Arctic subjects, calling for the cooperative inclusion of local populations in research projects and the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives (e.g. Inuit Tapiriit Kanadami 2019; Pikialasorsuaq Commission 2017). This growing wish to be heard and included in research projects stems from the intergenerational experience of not being made partners and not being provided a platform to contribute

local knowledge (Desmarais et al. 2021). For centuries, it has been a normal praxis to take away Indigenous heritage—including knowledge from its original and appropriate context—without considering the values of the people they belong to (see also Fromm 2016; Bravo and Sörlin 2002). To avoid repeating history, reconsideration of the form and context of conducting research in Indigenous homelands is crucial. Arctic researchers must be cognizant of this need to include and engage Indigenous partners and their perspectives in scientific research projects.

In 2017, the Inughuit Creativity and Environmental Responsiveness (ICER) project was initiated to study the process of how environment relationships are shaped by this Inuit community over the long term. Inughuit live in the Avanersuaq region of northern Greenland, and their traditional territory extends to areas of Umimmattooq (Ellesmere Island), Canada, including the landscapes that surround a polynya called Pikialasorsuaq (Figure 1). Polynyas are areas of Arctic Ocean that do not freeze over in the winter, creating localities where sea mammals and other migratory species thrive. Pikialasorsuaq, which means the "great upwelling"

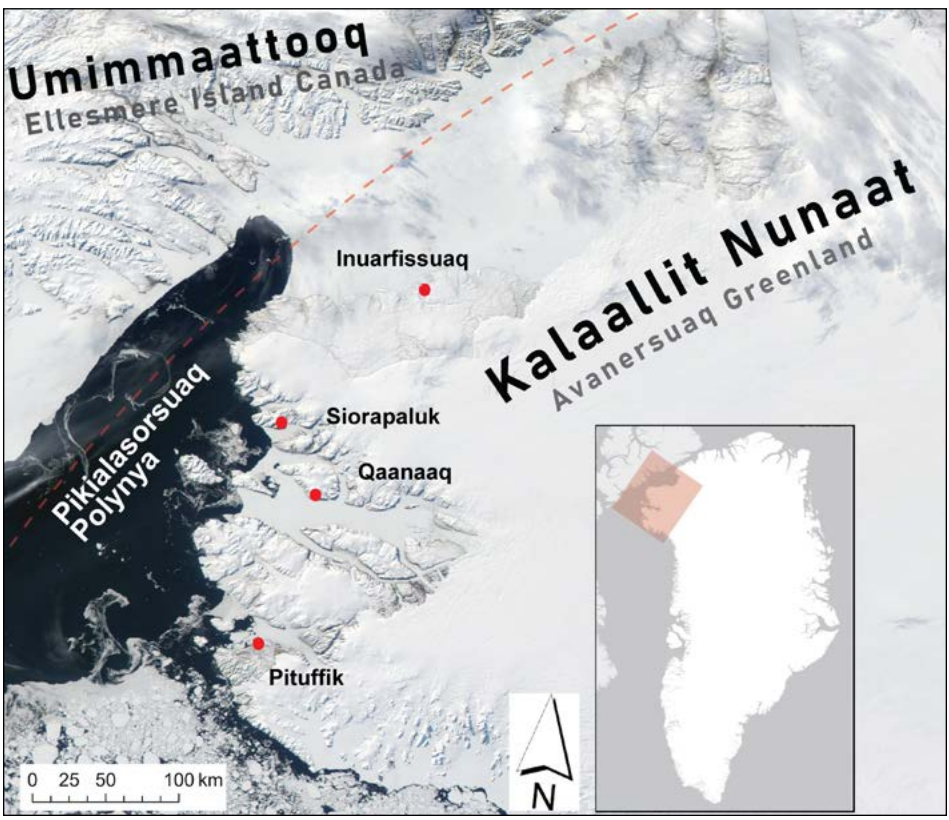

Figure 1. Map of Avanersuaq

in Kalaallisut, is the largest such polynya in the Arctic and comprises an ecologically rich but precarious environment. The ICER project has thus far included five seasons of fieldwork conducted to assess changes to archaeological landscapes and to survey previously unrecorded sites identified by Inughuit community members as being important in the present. The project is built on an ethics framework that was assembled with community members during interviews, meetings, and presentations. In this continued research, primary objectives co-produced with the Inughuit community include assessing the impact of climate change-related processes on archaeological landscapes and developing a framework for responsive efforts that prioritize sites according to Inughuit knowledge and needs.

This paper presents, in their own words, some of our Inughuit partners' reflections about cultural heritage, the process of working with archaeologists, and the relevance partnered research has in the present.

Avanersuaq and Inughuit

To understand Inughuit livelihoods and relationships with research in their homelands, it is necessary to take into account not only past decades of research but also local history in Avanersuaq. In the context of climate change, Avanersuaq has become a focal point for international environmental science and political advocacy. With increasing global attention on the Arctic (Pikialasorsuaq Commission 2017; see also Powell and Dodds 2014), Inughuit communities are often overlooked in decisions that impact governance of their homeland, despite their deep historical entanglement and continued management of ecological relationships (see also Kawelu 2014).

More so than any other Arctic topic, research on climate change and its effects on environments and biodiversity has direct consequences for Inuit communities. This is largely because the impacts of temperature change have had dramatic and immediate effects on Arctic ecology. Inughuit are also directly impacted by this continuous rise of global attention and the discourses of top-down political decisions on policies that do not always take local knowledge and history into account (Hayashi and Walls 2019; Powell 2008, 2010). As such, it is a critical moment to emphasize Inughuit perspectives of environmental change and long-term stewardship (see Crate 2011; Gearhead et al. 2013; Hastrup 2018a; Nuttall 2009). Archaeological sites and features are important to the community, as they document the Inughuit history of the Pikialasorsuaq area, which is often taken for granted in climate change research as being "natural" or separate from Indigenous histories of stewardship. Indeed, Inughuit have lived in the landscapes that surround Pikialasorsuaq since their ancestors first explored and settled the High Arctic about 800 years ago (ca. 1250 AD) (Alix 2009; Appelt et al. 2015; Darwent et al. 2007; Friesen and Arnold 2008; Hastrup et al. 2018a; LeMoine and

Darwent 2016; McGhee 1996; Moltke et al. 2015; Schledermann and McCullough 2003; Tackney et al. 2016). These earliest Inughuit ancestors inherited a position within ecological relationships that had first been established by Paleo-Inuit communities during the genesis of Pikialasorsuaq about 4500 years ago (Jackson et al. 2021; Hastrup 2018a; Lyberth and Egede 2013; Schledermann 1990; Sørensen and Diklev 2019).

Through time, the Pikialasorsuaq region saw long-distance trade and contact, became an important site of regional interaction during the colonial period, and remains a fishing and hunting ground for the modern Inughuit community (Flora et al. 2018; Hayashi 2017; LeMoine and Darwent 2010). As a result, the region has a rich archaeological landscape which has vital importance. Indeed, the most recent understandings of Pikialasorsuaq's environmental history indicate that its genesis about 4500 years ago coincided with the arrival of the first Paleo-Inuit peoples, meaning that archaeological landscapes attest that its complex ecological relationships do not have a "Pre-Inuit" stage of development (Jackson et al. 2021). This is in stark contrast to the ahuman environment that typifies how Pikialsorsuaq is portrayed in discourse on its governance (Pikialasorsuaq Commission, 2017; Sine 2022).

Historically, Inughuit and their environment have been portrayed in different ways by research projects they have supported and in which they have participated. Early studies of the region through the 19th and early 20th centuries were dominated by "discovery" and the search for the origins of Inuit as a race (Hastrup 2010; Thisted 2010). Expeditions were driven by the idea of discovering an untouched people in a pristine environment (Hastrup 2010, 2016; Rasmussen 1905; Thisted 2010), and the interactions between early explorers and Inughuit are an example of this quest. In the context of Danish and Canadian colonial expansion, Pikialasorsuaq and the Inughuit homelands were divided by the modern border during the first half of the 20th century and were eventually confined to what is today the Avanersuaq region of North Greenland (Gilberg 1971). Inughuit were further displaced to make room for Pituffik, the Thule Air Base, in the 1950s, which continues to impact their livelihood, access, and movement in the present. Through time, it was an area that was imagined, explored, studied, represented, intellectualized, and explained from an outsider's perspective. The region was continuously visited by Danish, British, and American explorers and scholars (see also Gilberg 1971; Hastrup 2015; Hastrup et al. 2018b) who played a significant role in the interpretation and description of the area and of Inughuit livelihood. Indeed, Western knowledge of Inughuit and their environment influenced geopolitical formations that continue to shape Inughuit life today (Saammaateqatigiinnissamut Isumalioqatigiissitaq 2016). Importantly, they were produced through a Western value system and perspectives, ultimately reflecting Western ideologies—not those of Inughuit.

Not surprisingly, over the last couple of decades, Inughuit have continuously expressed the need and importance to be engaged by those who study their region and cultural heritage, and to have agency in the questions and practices involved in research projects (Saammaateqatigiinnissamut Isumalioqatigiissitaq 2016). Most recently, Inughuit participated in the Pikialasorsuaq Commission organized by the Inuit Circumpolar Council, which clearly documents the impact that research has on community ambitions for self-autonomy in environmental governance. A core theme in the 2017 Report of the Pikialasorsuaq Commission is that the history of Inughuit stewardship in polynya ecology is often subverted by environmental sciences, in turn influencing conservation policy built on an assumed division of nature and culture (Hayashi and Walls 2019; Kleist and Walls 2019; Sine 2022; see also Nadasdy 1999 and Wilson et al. 2020 for resonances with political ecology). Between externally imposed regulations and the limits on movement imposed by the modern border, self-governance of Pikialasorsuaq is vital to Inughuit perceptions of the future, because capacity to respond to climate change is constrained. The contemporary importance of archaeology as a field that can highlight the deep relationship between Inughuit and the polynya is therefore clear in this context and is the foundation that supports the ICER project.

Inughuit Archaeology and the Wish to Mobilize Co-created Research

The ICER project builds on the outcomes and recommendations of the Pikialasorsuaq Commission and on long-term discussions on community-partnered research in Arctic archaeology. It was initiated by Pauline K. Knudsen and Matthew Walls and is co-directed with Mari Kleist and Naotaka Hayashi. The intent was that the premise of the project, its research objectives, practices, and intended outputs should all be co-created with and directed by community partners from the start. It was thus imperative from the very beginning that we assemble a research team comprised of both Inuit/Inughuit scholars and Inughuit community members. Partners from Greenland included Inuit archaeologists (Knudsen and Kleist), Inuit students from Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland, Inughuit community members (Sadorana, Simigaq, Peary, and many others), and researchers and students from the University of Calgary (Hayashi and Walls). Partners and participants from Greenland and Calgary speak or understand Inuktun, an Inughuit dialect, and Kalaallisut, a West Greenlandic dialect— making it easier to communicate, share, and co-create knowledge. As some partners and students from Calgary are at a beginner's level in Kalaallisut, we made sure to work together and translate when needed in order to conduct all community interactions in either Inuktun or Kalaallisut.

Approaching local collaboration in the practice of archaeology has many advantages, as we have discovered through this work. A collaborative approach actively involving Indigenous community members helps bring marginalized voices to the forefront, thus producing possibilities for richer narratives of the past (see also Atalay 2006; Caxaj 2015; Hogan and Topkok 2015; Tuck and Yang 2012). As with any other field-based research efforts, our project required funding, and necessarily started with a carefully prepared project description, with research goals and questions that were crafted initially from "campus" separated from the community. However, while undertaking dialogues, meetings, surveys, and in-field interviews, the project quickly adapted around community priorities.

We thus began in 2017 with pilot work that consisted of recorded unstructured and semi-structured interviews and meetings in Inuktun and Kalaallisut to understand why archaeological landscapes are so important to the Inughuit community in the present, and to identify community priorities on which a partnership could be developed. Concern for site damage and destruction related to climate change was immediately identified as a primary concern. Many community members were aware of archaeological sites impacted by coastal erosion and other processes; they had a firm sense of why research on these places matters in relation to community efforts toward environmental autonomy in the present. As we were to discover, archaeological destructions are extensive and appear to be accelerating (Walls et al. 2020). It became clear from the outset that it is not practical to conserve all sites; this opened an important first objective which was to develop a prioritization framework to direct archaeological efforts toward questions that contribute to community efforts at environmental autonomy in the present.

We let this concern for site damage and the need for a prioritization framework determine the early questions and methods of what we intend will become a long-term project with successive generations of work. In 2018, 2019, and 2022, we conducted field seasons that consisted primarily of survey activities at locations that were selected because they were identified by community members as being of immediate concern or interest. Sites of concern were selected either because of observed damage or because they invoke histories of management of key species such as walrus, narwhal, thick-billed murre, etc., which are at the center of governance disputes today. We traveled with hunters and their families to document sites while recording information they wanted to share about past historical events, ecological significance, and continued relevance in the present. We have found that damage and impact to archaeological landscapes is an important part of how the community apprehends the scale and magnitude of environmental change relative to the Inughuit history of this environment. As a result, we feel it is important to document the progress of our project and present "in

their own words" emerging community perspectives on the question: Why partner with archaeologists?

An important characteristic of how this work has progressed is that Inughuit community members are very passionate about their past and care very deeply for the sites that are part of their ancestors' stories. In many cases, and particularly for Elders who still live in the community, important life events and hunting experiences are connected to what might be perceived in other contexts as ruins. Our Inughuit community partners shared their knowledge about areas they identified as being important sites under threat, with the assertion that sites are necessary for the future preservation of knowledge. The narratives and deep knowledge that are shared, retold, produced, and co-constructed between generations reveals how Inughuit skills and land use have developed and changed through time. In reflecting on project development, it appears to us that this process of participants recommending and directing which sites they want to visit, examine, and record is crucial. It is in this context that the Inughuit community began to co-set and co-lead the research agenda while expressing the interest to co-create future research. In this way, the Inughuit community could, in a more direct sense, not only actively take part in the research but also have a say in which direction a research project should go, including formulating research questions.

The following passages are compiled reflections and opinions collected from our conversations and interviews with key Inughuit partners regarding the nature of archaeological work in Qaanaaq between 2017 and 2022. The conversations and interviews were conducted in either Inuktun or Kalaallisut, and the passages below have been translated into English by Mari Kleist and Pivinnguaq Mørch. Recordings and transcriptions have been presented and discussed with the community in successive trips to Qaanaaq. Their reflections are a clear indication of why archaeology is such a prominent feature of discussion in daily life for Inughuit and why it is part of both memory and perceptions of the future.

Genoveva Sadorana was born in 1957 in Aannartoq. Today, she lives in Qaanaaq with her family and works with her husband Inukitsoq teaching how to make and use the qilaat (drum). Initially, Genoveva participated as an informant in 2017 and participated thereafter in survey trips in 2018 and 2019 as a field assistant and knowledge holder.

> I was born in a time where hunting families lived moving from place to place. Moving around, I have seen many places with old ruins, sites, and settlements such as Inuarfissuaq [a site that features prominently in Inughuit history]. Therefore, ever since I was young, I have been very interested in wanting to know more about these things and what their

stories are like. I once saw what I believe used to be a huge house nearby Siorapaluk, where I lived during my childhood. It was further above the beach ridge, and it was very strange, but I did not investigate it carefully just out of respect. But I remember it seemed big and different, and I always wanted to know more about this old structure. Who did it belong to? What is the story of this place and how was it used? What did people do in this big house?

I always had so many questions and things I wanted to know more about. I have always been interested in knowing more about our ancestors and the first people's way of living. When I first started participating in this project [ICER], I said that I wanted to learn more about those things and about our cultural heritage. That is the very reason I wanted us to look for this place where I once saw this, what I believed, big house structure. I was not sure if I or we could find it again, but we did (Figure 2). I was all thrilled when I found the house structure and even more so when told it was a longhouse structure that belonged to the Torngit [the Dorset people]. This is what I have always wanted to do. To look for these sites and structures and learn more about their related story. It is our cultural heritage and the knowledge of our ancestors that are like frozen in time, and I feel so privileged to be able to locate sites that have remained since time immemorial, and this way share my knowledge but also learn more about them.

Figure 2. Genoveva Sadorana standing in the Dorset longhohuse she found.

We see scholars doing research and even cruise ships with the tourists traveling in our lands and we rarely know anything about them. We often do not know who they are, and we do not know what their purpose of visit or research is. We are not included in any of their traveling or doing research in our region. Sometimes individual hunters work with these researchers, but we have no say in how the research should be formed or what it should be about, such as what we would like to know more of and is of interest for us as Indigenous to this land. This can be very frustrating at times—especially when you are interested, and you want to take part in the work and the research process. We suspect that many people, both tourists and scholars, are scavenging both our material culture and natural resources, things that rightfully belong to us Inughuit.

I think it is important to work with Inughuit in research projects and it should be made mandatory to be included, as we are Indigenous to this land. Not everyone is interested in archaeology, but we are interested in our history and want to know more about our ancestors. When we talk about our cultural history and heritage, we get to be very proud of our ancestors and we want to know more about them. Therefore, it is very giving to work with archaeology and be able to tell what we would like to know more about and which sites we find important to examine. This way we would also get more and more used to working with archaeology, and future generations will be able to take part in controlling archaeological research and perhaps even conduct research formed by ourselves.

We live in a remote place compared to those who have direct access to education, universities, and the like. If scholars started to include us in the research projects, they would work with us directly and we would get the opportunity to learn how, for instance, archaeology is being conducted hands on, like we have learned through the last years. I hope in the future that more and more researchers from different disciplines will start including Inughuit community members as partners in their projects more and more.

Otto Simigaq was born in 1961 in Siorapaluk. He is a hunter and lives with his son and his family in Qaanaaq. Otto has been a partner since the beginning of the ICER project in 2017, and has previously worked closely with other research groups and films (e.g. Shari Gearheard).

I grew up to be a hunter and have, since childhood, lived as a hunter. I was raised by my aatarraa and aanarraa [grandparents] who lived as hunters, and I learned by watching, and when I was twelve years old, I got my own dog sledge. As time passed, I learned more and became

more independent and developed my own hunting methods and went to different hunting grounds with other hunters. So, I have been to many places and seen many old hunting grounds and settlements during the course of time. The past years, I have observed many old settlements or houses that used to be accessible disappearing due to erosion. We have seen change in the climate and sea ice conditions in the region [Avanersuaq], some places more than others. Some turf houses at certain old hunting grounds are lost or about to be lost soon.

I have always noticed our ancestors' hunting grounds and settlements and how they shape the landscape in a specific way, as these are part of our memories. We grew up listening to stories told by our ancestors. It was either about specific hunting grounds, people, and places, but I have not always been very good at remembering the exact stories the way they are told. I typically remember pieces of the stories. So, I find it important to have these specific sites, places, or ruins and their related stories recorded (Figure 3) so our descendants can always have access to our ancestors' knowledge, as it is our heritage. We have few Elders left who are knowledge bearers about these specific places, people, and animals and their related stories. Therefore, I have an interest in collecting information about these things and to have them recorded so we can have access to them for future generations. Many sites have already been eroded and lost, as we have seen when we surveyed, and their related stories will only be left in our memories if we do not record them.

Figure 3. tto Simigaq telling a story that took place at a key archaeological site, while archaeologist Pauline K. Knudsen listens.

I enjoy and find it rewarding working with archaeology. I get to point out which sites we find important and pass on what I and others have observed, and then to have these sites documented so we can save and pass information for future generations. Hopefully, Kuutak [his youngest son, who is also a hunter, lives in Qaanaaq, and has taken part in the research project since 2018] will continue participating; I am certain he will, as he has seen so many sites and knows so many places already, since he travels a lot when hunting. I am not a man with many words or strong opinions, but I would say that it is important that we can get to lead the way when taking part in research projects, since it is conducted in our lands, and it is our history.

Aleqatsiaq Peary was born in 1983 in Qaanaaq. He is a hunter and lives with his family in Qaanaaq. Aleqatsiaq has participated in the ICER project since 2019 and has become an important voice in shaping the future of the project.

I think a lot about our cultural heritage and especially the old turf houses that are now left as ruins in the landscape. People, institutions, or scholars, such as archaeologists, and other gatekeepers tend to want them protected and kept unchanged, as it is our cultural heritage. I dare to say that we are actually losing them—just because we want them to be kept as ruins, unchanged and untouched. But considering that our ancestors used to build and reuse materials and houses for centuries, we should be doing the same. This way we would start an actual protection from deterioration while preventing further loss. Not just leaving them to be preserved and untouched. Our ancestors always kept rebuilding and reusing the turf houses from generation to generation, this way they knew how to build these structures. We should start to do the same, I mean rebuild and reuse; then we could learn how to build and how to use them like our ancestors did for millennia.

If Inughuit were directly included as partners in research projects, these would be some examples that would have been developed over time, I think. If we were allowed to rebuild and reuse these sites and houses, we could learn more about how our ancestors lived—even until recently in the last century, when some of these types of houses were still in use. Then we could demonstrate to people from here and from abroad how our turf houses used to look and how they were built. We could then proudly tell people about our traditions inherited from our ancestors and be able to say that we now rebuild and reuse them like they did. If we only treasure the old turf houses and sites to be looked at from a distance and try to keep them untouched, then we will not be able to transmit our history and knowledge to future generations. Then

we will for sure lose what our ancestors left behind for us to use. If we, on the other hand, started reusing and rebuilding these turf houses and sites, they will once more become useful, and we will get to be even more proud of our cultural heritage.

We would know more about specific sites like who used to live there, and which purpose did this place have. We have Elders who have lived in some of these houses and who were even born in turf houses. Being able to tell that some turf houses were built 500 years ago and still being able to see these are rebuilt and reused would give the younger and future generation a sense of being proud but would also be able to gain more or new knowledge about our cultural history. This way, it would also give us a sense of cultural revitalization. Today, we—and even the younger generation—do not know enough about our cultural heritage, as we never get to examine how these turf houses look like and how they were built or even get to get inside to inspect them.

I think it is important that we are being included in the process of planning and conducting research projects as it is about our homelands, livelihoods, perspectives, cultural history and heritage, and so forth. We have our own knowledge and perspectives. Therefore, we should be involved, as we are the only ones who can tell what we need, what we would like to have, and what we would like to know more about, since we are the ones who live here in our homelands.

Future Considerations and Concluding Remarks

In our current work, we have experienced that direct consultation and partnering with Inughuit community members has led us to important archaeological sites and research questions that were not initially included in our plans. We have experienced how partnering with Inughuit community members who share their deep and detailed knowledge about the particular use of sites, features, landscapes, and seascapes can change our perspectives, insights, theories, and purpose as archaeologists. Inuit voices and knowledge that we, as academics, have typically read about from written ethnographic sources, should not be uncritically used, as these were collected and interpreted through a Western value system (see also Stewart-Harawira 2013). Therefore, partnering directly with local communities will in many respects be not only more fruitful but also more involving, legitimate, and respectful. What we may have learned during our academic training and work—even as Indigenous researchers—can rightfully be challenged by traditional knowledge of which only Indigenous communities have a deep understanding. As voiced by the partners in this paper, communities have a continued need for academic archaeological work, particularly when they are able to participate

in guiding objectives and the character of research. Therefore listening, observing, prioritizing community perspectives, and making Indigenous partnerships relevant in research projects will certainly reduce potential misconceptions, increase engagement, and generate greater awareness and respect for Indigenous wishes (see also Atalay 2006; Baird 2014; Caxaj 2015; Hogan and Topkok 2015; Kawelu 2014).

If the goal is to develop equal partnerships and decolonize archaeology and heritage research practices that have played a role in colonization (see also Atalay 2006), we as archaeologists must ensure that the results of our research benefit the communities in which we work. It is important that we listen to Indigenous interests and concerns and acknowledge that trusting relationships take significant investment and time to build (see also Hogan and Topkok 2015). Although we encountered no community members who were opposed to engaging with the research project, we emphasize that any opinions from community members are always to be taken seriously and respected. Indeed, we have faced challenges keeping up with community enthusiasm to build ICER into a multi-generational and long-term project. Long-term planning can in fact be difficult due to limitations in funding support and the short-term periodicity of grants. Working in Avanersuaq involves high travel costs, logistical challenges due to weather, challenges in sustained digital communication, and of course, our initial phases were significantly disrupted by the global pandemic. In these efforts, we have found that working to maintain and improve partnership is always beneficial, as communication and collaborative efforts engender inclusiveness and transparency.

If we are to decolonize our discipline and make it more inclusive and beneficial for Indigenous communities whose ancestors and culture are the focus of study, there is a need for reflection and self-awareness, which can be best achieved by learning about Inuit perceptions of archaeology. In our experience, flexibility and having an open mind are key while also avoiding the assumption that archaeologists have an inherent authority over the past of others. Partnered research is, rather, a privilege, and with this in mind, it is of the utmost importance that we continuously rethink our academic research practices in the Arctic.

At the very least, we must promote Indigenous community engagement, partnership, and ownership, and reconsider the way we plan and conduct academic research. As researchers, we have an obligation to write for and with Indigenous communities whose livelihood and heritage we are studying, and we must ensure that research outputs are not only directed at academic audiences. Moreover, we should strive to find ways to co-produce interpretations with Indigenous community members. In the context of the ICER project, this is increasingly important, as the deep history of Inughuit management and ecological creativity come into focus. If archaeological

research can be mobilized to challenge imposed environmental regulations—or even the border that limits Inughuit responses to climate change—it is vital that Inughuit voices be foremost in telling their archaeological story. It is through mindful partnership that archaeologists can prioritize Indigenous perspectives and start focusing more on what community members find important for archaeological processes to achieve. This is where true partnership between Indigenous communities and academic archaeologists can begin. As voiced by participants in this paper, emphasis on quality, standards, and empirical rigor in archaeological work can represent core values of partnered work if Indigenous partners have equal voice in creating the objectives and purpose behind the research.

Acknowledgements

Qujanaq to the Inughuit community members who shared their knowledge and provided advice over time. Special qujanaq to the listed partners of contributors Otto Simigaq, Genoveva Sadorana, and Aleqatsiaq Peary for supporting and taking time to participate in the project, and to Pauline K. Knudsen, Pivinnguaq Mørch, and Pia Egede. We are grateful for the funding that was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada (IG 435- 2018-0449) and by Naalakkersuisut (Namminersorlutik Oqartussat/The Government of Greenland – Tips- og Lottomidlernes Pulje C).

References

Alix, Claire. 2009. "Driftwood, Timber and Shrubs! Wood Used by Ruin Islander Thule at Skraeling Island, Eastern Ellesrere Island, Canada." In *On the Track of the Thule Culture from Bering Strait to East Greenland – Papers in Honour of Hans Christian Gulløv,* edited by B. Grønnow*,* 149–166. Copenhagen: Danish National Museum.

Appelt, Martin, Jens Fog Jensen, Mikkel Myrup, Henning Haack, and Michelle Taube. 2015. "Himmelsk og jordisk jern i Grønlands forhistorie – ny teknologi og gamle problemer [Heavenly and earthly iron in Greenland's prehistory – new technology and old problems]." *Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark*, 116–131.

Atalay, Sonya. 2006. "Indigenous Archaeology as Decolonizing Practice." *American Indian Quarterly* 30 (374): 280–310.

Baird, Melissa F. 2014. "Heritage, Human Rights, and Social Justice." *Heritage & Society* 7 (2): 139–155.

Bravo, Michael, and Sverker Sörlin. 2002. *Narrating the Arctic. A Cultural History of Nordic Scientific Practices.* Canton, MA: Science History Publications USA.

Caxaj, Susanna C. 2015. "Indigenous Storytelling and Participatory Action Research: Allies Toward Decolonization? Reflections From the Peoples' International Health Tribunal." *Global Qualitative Nursing Research* 1–12.

Crate, Susan. 2011. "Climate and Culture: Anthropology in the Era of Contemporary Climate Change." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40: 175–194.

Darwent, John, Christyann Darwent, Genevieve LeMoine, and Hans Lange. 2007. "Archaeological Survey of Eastern Inglefield Land, Northwest Greenland." *Arctic Anthropology* 44 (2): 51–86.

Desmarais, Danielle, Lesley Howse, Mari Kleist, and Letitia Pokiak. 2021. "Accountability in Arctic Archaeology: A Continuing Conversation for Change." Unpublished paper presented at the 86th Annual Society for American Archaeology meetings. Session on Arctic Pasts: Dimensions of Change. San Francisco, CA, April 15–17.

Flora, Janne, Kasper Lambert Johansen, Bjarne Grønnow, Astrid Oberborbeck Andersen, and Anders Mosbech. 2018. "Present and Past Dynamics of Inughuit Resource Spaces." *Ambio* 47 (2): 244–264.

Friesen, T. Max, and Charles D. Arnold. 2008. "The Timing of the Thule Migration: New Dates from the Western Canadian Arctic." *American Antiquity* 73 (3): 527–538.

Fromm, Annette B. 2016. "Ethnographic Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage Return to our Roots." *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures* 5: 89–94.

Gearheard, Shari Fox, Lene Kielsen Holm, Henry Huntington, Joe Mello Leavitt, Andy Mahoney, Margaret Opie, Toku Oshima, and Joelie Sanguya. 2013. *The Meaning of Ice: People and Sea Ice in Three Arctic Communities*. Hanover, NH: International Polar Institute.

Gilberg, Rolf. 1971. "Polareskimoerne i Thule Distriktet, Nordgrønland: Økologiske beretninger over Bosætning og demografi [The Polar Eskimos in the Thule District, North Greenland: Ecological Accounts of Settlement and Demography]." Unpublished manuscript. The Library of the Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland.

Hastrup, Kirsten. 2010. "Vinterens hjerte. Knud Rasmussen og hans tid." [The Heart of Winter.

Knud Rasmussen and His Time]. *Historisk Tidsskrift* Bind 110 Hæfte 2. Copenhagen: Gads Forlag.

———. 2015. *Thule på Tidens Rand*. [Thule on the Edge of Time]. København: Lindhardt & Ringhof.

———. 2016. "A History of Climate Change: Inughuit Responses to Changing Ice Conditions in North-West Greenland." *Climatic Change* 1–12.

Hastrup, Kirsten, Astrid Oberborbeck Andersen, Bjarne Grønnow, and Mads Peter Heide Jørgensen. 2018a. "Life Around the North Water Ecosystem: Natural and Social Drivers of Change over a Millennium." *Ambio* 47 (2): 213–225.

Hastrup, Kirsten, Anders Mosbech, and Bjarne Grønnow. 2018b. "Introducing the North Water: Histories of Exploration, Ice Dynamics, Living Resources, and Human Settlement in the Thule Region." *Ambio* 47 (2): 162–174.

Hayashi, Naotaka. 2017. "The Human Dimension of Climate Change Research in Greenland: Towards a New Form of Knowledge Generation. The Greenland Ice Sheet and its Interaction with the Climate System." *Low Temperature Science* 75: 131–141.

Hayashi, Naotaka, and Matthew Walls. 2019. "Endogenous Community Development in Greenland: A Perspective on Creative Transformation and the Perception of Future." *Polar Science* 4: 52–57.

Hogan, Maureen P., and Sean A. Topkok. 2015. "Teaching Indigenous Methodology and a Iñupiaq Example." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4 (2): 50–75.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanadami. 2019. *National Inuit Strategy on Research Roundtable Summary Report*. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ITK_NISR_Roundtable_11.pdf.

Jackson, Rebecca, Anna Bang Kvorning, Audrey Limoges, Eleanor Georgiadis, Steffen M. Olsen, Petra Tallberg, Thorbjørn J. Andersen, Naja Mikkelsen, Jacques Giraudeau, Guillaume Massé, Lukas Wacker, and Sofia Ribeiro. 2021. "Holocene Polynya Dynamics and Their Interaction with Oceanic Heat Transport in Northernmost Baffin Bay." *Scientific Reports* 11 (1): 10095.

Kawelu, Kathleen. 2014. "In Their Own Voices: Contemporary Native Hawaiian and Archaeological Narratives about Hawiian Archaeology." *The Contemporary Pacific* 26 (1): 31–62.

Kleist, Mari, and Matthew Walls. 2019. "Najukkami Ilisimasat Inughuarnillu Suleqateqarneq." [Local Knowledge and Inughuit Partnership]. *Actes de colloque du 21e Congrès d'études Inuit/Proceedings of the 21st Inuit Studies Conference*, edited by Ghyslain Cantin-Savoie, Matthew Schuurman, and Richard Compton, 49–60. Montréal, QC: URL.

Lemoine, Genevieve, and Christyann Darwent. 2010. "The Inglefield Land Archaeology Project: Introduction and Overview." *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography* 110 (2): 279–296.

———. 2016. "Development of Polar Inughuit Culture in the Smith Sound Region." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Prehistoric Arctic*, edited by T. M. Friesen and O. K. Mason, 873–896. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lyberth, Bjarne, and Parnuna Egede. 2013. *PIKIALASORSUAQ – Bridging the Bay Workshop Report*. Inuit Circumpolar Council, Greenland. http://pikialasorsuaq.org/en/About/the-project.

McGhee, Robert. 1996. *Ancient People in the Arctic*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Moltke, Ida, Matteo Fumagalli, Thorfinn S. Korneliussen, Jacob E. Crawford, Peter Bjerregaard, Marit E. Jørgensen, Niels Grarup, Hans Christian Gulløv, Allan Linneberg, Oluf Pedersen, Torben Hansen, Rasmus Nielsen, and Anders Albrechtsen. 2015. "Uncovering the Genetic History of the Present-Day Greenlandic Population." *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 96 (1): 54–69.

Nadasdy, Paul. 1999. "The Politics of TEK: Power and the 'Integration' of Knowledge." *Arctic*

Anthropology 36 (1-2):1–18.

Nuttall, Mark. 2009. "Living in a World of Movement: Human Resilience to Environmental Instability in Greenland." In *Anthropology and Climate Change: From Encounter to Actions*, edited by S. A. Crate and M. Nuttall, 292–310. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Pikialasorsuaq Commission. 2017. *Report of the Pikialasorsuaq Commission—Nov 2017. People of the Ice Bridge: The Future of the Pikialasorsuaq*. Inuit Circumpolar Council. http://pikialasorsuaq.org/en/Resources/Reports.

Powell, Richard C. 2008. "Configuring an 'Arctic Commons'?" *Political Geography* 27 (8): 827-832.

———. 2010. "Lines of Possession? The Anxious Constitution of a Polar Geopolitics." *Political Geography* 29 (2): 74–77.

Powell, Richard, and Klaus Dodds. 2014. *Polar Geopolitics? Knowledges, Resources and Legal Regimes*. Cheltenham Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Rasmussen, Knud. 1905. *Nye Mennesker*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.

Saammaateqatigiinnissamut Isumalioqatigiissitaq. [Reconciliation Commission]. 2016. *Status Report 2016*.

Schledermann, Peter. 1990. *Crossroads to Greenland: 3000 Years of Prehistory in the Eastern High Arctic*. Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary.

Schledermann, Peter, and Karen McCullough. 2003. *Late Thule Culture Developments on the Central East Coast of Ellesmere Island*. Copenhagen: Danish National Museum/Danish Polar Center.

Sine, Mary. 2022. "Knowledge Production and Policy in the Arctic: The Political Ecology of the Thick-billed Murre." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Calgary.

Sørensen, Mikkel, and Torben Diklev. 2019. "Thuleområdets palæo-eskimoiske bosættelse." *Rapport fra arkæologisk rekognoscering i Avanersuaq i 2018*. [Paleo-Eskimo settlement of the Thule area. *Report from Archaeological Reconnaissance in Avanersuaq in 2018*].

Stewart-Harawira, Makere. 2013. "Challenging Knowledge Capitalism. Indigenous Research in the 21st Century." *Journal of the Society for Socialist Studies/Revue de la Société d´études socialistes* 9 (1): 39–51.

Tackney, Justin, Joan Coltrain, Jennifer Raff, and Dennis O'Rourke. 2016. "Ancient DNA and Stable Isotopes: Windows on Arctic Prehistory." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Prehistoric Arctic,* edited by T. M. Friesen and O. K. Mason, 51–80. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thisted, Kirsten. 2010. "Voicing the Arctic: Knud Rasmussen and the Ambivalence of Cultural Translation." In *Arctic Discourses*, edited by Anka Ryall, Johan Schimanski, and Henning Howlid Wærp, 59–81. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. 2012. "Decolonization is not a Metaphor." *Decolonization Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.

Walls, Matthew, Madisen Hvidberg, Mari Kleist, Pauline Knudsen, Pivinnguaq Mørch, Pia Egede, Gillian Taylor, Niki Philips, Shintaro Yamasai, and Tatsuya Watanabe. 2020. "Hydrological Instability and Archaeological mpact in Northwest Greenland: Sudden mMass Movement Events Signal New Concerns for Circumpolar Archaeology." *Quaternary Science Reviews* 248: 106–600.

Wilson, Katherine J., Trevor Bell, Andrew Arreak, Brian Koonoo, David Angnatsiak, and Gita J. Ljubicic. 2020. "Changing the Role of Non-Indigenous Research Partners in Practice to Support Inuit Self-determination in Research." *Arctic Science* 6 (3): 127–153.