



U.S. AIR FORCE



## ARCTIC RESOURCE COMPILATION

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### Family and Religion in the Arctic Region

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## Preface

This report creates a catalog of resources for use on the topic “Family and Religion in the Arctic Region.” This catalog of resources is in response to a request by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) Air University (AU) Academic Centers, USAF Culture and Language Center (AFCLC) at Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Alabama and is in support of the AFCLC mission.

The mission of the AFCLC is to serve as the USAF focal point for creating and executing programs that sustain career-long development of Linguistically, Regionally, and Culturally competent Total Force Airmen to meet the Service’s global mission. In addition to providing subject matter expertise and support for Air Force Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) governance, the AFCLC accomplishes this mission by designing, developing and delivering: 1) LREC familiarization education to AU officer, enlisted, and accessions programs; and 2) pre-deployment training and training products.

As a Research Analyst for Metro Accounting and Professional Services, the researcher has identified open source material on Family and Religion in the Arctic Region by using multiple sources during his research. This catalog includes academic journal articles, books and other legitimate peer-reviewed, academic resources. Sources are categorized by topic and broken down into relevant sub-topics based on the request of the AFCLC representative or on the discernment of the researcher. Catalog entries include Title, Author, Source, Date and Content Abstract, Summary or Overview that gives the end user a sense of what the author has to say about the selected topic and sub-topic. **The text used in this compilation is taken verbatim from the source, and none of this information is intended to be viewed as a product of AFCLC or Metro Accounting and Professional Services. Inclusion in this compilation does not constitute endorsement of the source by AFCLC.**

## **Arctic Region Overview:**

**“Basic Information About the Arctic,” Arctic Centre University of Lapland [1]**

<https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion>

### Overview:

The Arctic region, or the Arctic, is a geographic region spreading around the North Pole. There is no single correct definition of the region as the southern boundary varies.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Key ways to define the Arctic:

- The Arctic Circle (66 ° 33'N) delimits the Arctic in terms of solar radiation. In theory, areas north of the Arctic Circle have at least one day without daylight in the winter and at least one night-less night in the summer. In practice, this does not happen everywhere because the surface of the earth is uneven, and the light refracts in the atmosphere.

- Based on temperature, the monthly average temperature in the Arctic is below + 10 ° C throughout the year, even in summer.

- The forest line follows a temperature-defined area. The forest line is not a narrow line but a zone tens of kilometers wide between the northern coniferous forest and the tundra. In this demarcation, the Arctic is predominantly wooded tundra and glaciers.

- Permafrost increases the area of Russian Arctic compared to the other delimitations. Permafrost is soil that stays frozen for at least two consecutive years.

- The ice cover determines the Arctic nature of marine areas. Sea ice is highest in February-March and lowest in September. The surface of the Arctic ice is monitored almost in real time by satellites. (see The National Snow and Ice Data Centre)

- Culturally defined, the Arctic covers the homelands of northern indigenous peoples.

- Political delimitations vary according to how they serve, for example, the interests of states or international cooperation.

As the climate warms, the Arctic shrinks if defined by temperature, forest line, permafrost, or ice cover. Cultural and political boundaries also vary. The Arctic Circle is the most permanent of the delimitations, although also the polar circle moves very slowly due to the variation of the Earth's axial tilt.



Arctic Region defined by the Arctic Human Development Report. [See more maps on how the Arctic Region is defined.](#)

**“Arctic: Facts,” World Wildlife Fund [2]** <https://www.worldwildlife.org/places/arctic>

Overview:

The Arctic is a region like no other in the world and it’s warming twice as fast, bringing with it rapid change impacting life on land and at sea.

About 4 million people live in the Arctic, spread out over eight countries, including the United States. Diverse landscapes—from the sea ice to coastal wetlands, upland tundra, mountains, wide rivers, and the sea itself—support abundant wildlife and many cultures. Of all the wildlife in the Arctic, the polar bear is the most fitting icon for this region. It’s amazing adaptation to life in the harsh Arctic environment makes it an impressive species.

Within America’s Arctic, the remarkably productive waters of the Bering Sea attract marine mammals, such as gray whales, which travel great distances to forage and

raise their young. Almost half of the fish caught in the United States comes from here making fisheries vital to local livelihoods. Across the Bering Sea in Russia, the Kamchatka Peninsula's river systems produce up to one-quarter of all wild Pacific salmon. The salmon provide nourishment to other wildlife, including the Kamchatka brown bear.

The Arctic, including the Bering, Beaufort and Chukchi seas, now faces an uncertain future due to climate change, mining, shipping, oil and gas development, and overfishing.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### Living in the Arctic

In the Arctic, nature operates at extremes. The climate is intense, landscape often treacherous and weather can be brutal. No matter the season, everyday life for the 4 million people living in the region is inextricably linked to the environment.

As a rapidly warming climate brings on new conservation challenges, these problems impact both people and the nature. Shrinking sea ice forces polar bears to spend more time on land, and people and bears can come into conflict. New ambitions to drill for oil and gas bring never-before-seen risk to regions that are home to some of the most pristine habitats (or landscapes) and unique wildlife on the planet.

Arctic indigenous peoples are acutely aware of these growing tensions. They've lived off the land and hunted animals for food, clothing, and other essential uses for generations. Such a way of life is threatened almost daily by climate extremes.

The Arctic Council reports that roughly 400,000 indigenous people live throughout the Arctic. They speak over 40 languages, some of which have few remaining speakers. Still, estimating numbers of Indigenous people in the Arctic is difficult. Not everybody collects the numbers, and different countries define "indigenous" differently.

**"Arctic Region," U.S. Department of State [3]** <https://www.state.gov/key-topics-office-of-ocean-and-polar-affairs/arctic/>

#### Overview:

##### Arctic Council

Established by the Ottawa Declaration in 1996, the Arctic Council is the preeminent intergovernmental forum for addressing issues related to the Arctic Region. The members of the Arctic Council include the eight Arctic States (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Russian Federation, and the United States). The Arctic Council is not a treaty-based international organization but rather an international forum that operates on the basis of consensus, echoing the peaceful



and cooperative nature of the Arctic Region. The Council focuses its work on matters related to sustainable development, the environmental protection; its mandate explicitly excludes military security. Traditionally, the Council is chaired by the foreign minister of the country holding the chairmanship. Its day-to-day work is carried out by the eight Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) and six PP representatives, with input from working groups, expert groups, and task forces.

The United States held the rotating chairmanship of the Arctic Council from 1998-2000 and 2015-2017.



**AGREEMENT ON ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION**

**NON-BINDING ILLUSTRATIVE MAP**

This non-binding illustrative map shows the approximate extent of the Identified Geographic Areas described in Annex 1 of the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation. It is intended for illustrative purposes only and does not form part of the Agreement.

- Approximate Extent of Identified Geographic Areas
- 62°N
- - - Arctic Circle
- Additional areas covered voluntarily by Canada

\*Continental shelf areas are not depicted.\*  
U.S. Department of State, OES/OPA, April 12, 2019

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Arctic Science Agreement (2017)**

In May 2017, the eight Arctic States signed the [Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation](#) during the 10th Arctic Council Ministerial in Fairbanks, Alaska. This is the third legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council. The agreement facilitates access by scientists of the eight Arctic States to Arctic areas that each State has identified, including entry and exit of persons, equipment, and materials; access to research infrastructure and facilities; and access to research areas. The agreement also calls for the parties to promote education and training of scientists working on Arctic matters.

The geographic area, as defined by the [Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984](#), covered by this agreement in the United States includes territory north of the Arctic Circle and north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers; the Aleutian chain; and adjacent marine areas in the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort, Bering, and Chukchi Seas.

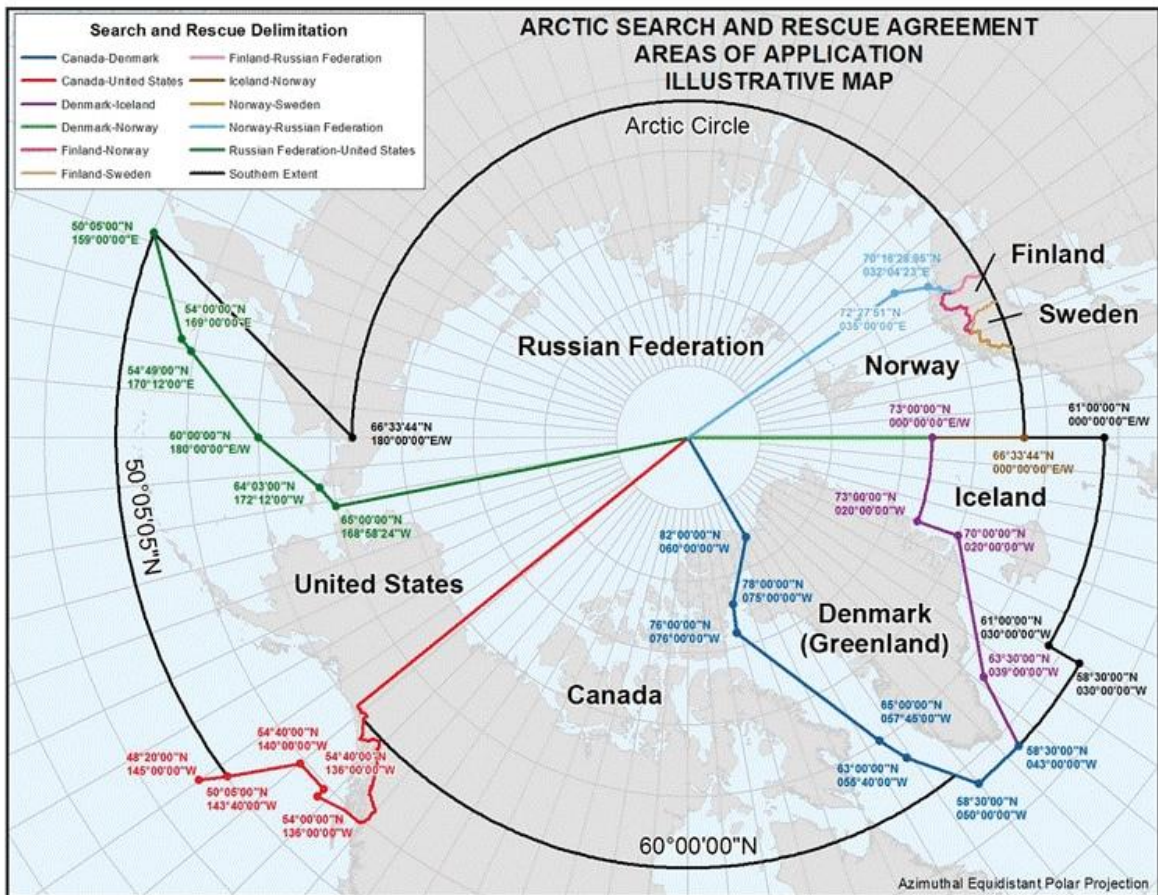
### **Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Agreement (2013)**

In May 2013, the eight Arctic States signed the [Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic](#) during the 9th Arctic Council Ministerial in Kiruna, Sweden. This is the second legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council. The agreement strengthens cooperation, coordination, and mutual assistance among Arctic nations on oil pollution preparedness and response in the region to protect the marine environment. The agreement is helping to forge strong partnerships in advance of an oil spill so that Arctic countries can quickly and cooperatively respond before it endangers lives and threatens fragile ecosystems.

### **Arctic Search and Rescue (SAR) Agreement (2011)**

In May 2011, the eight Arctic States signed the [Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic](#) during the 8th Arctic Council Ministerial in Nuuk, Greenland (Denmark). This is the first legally binding agreement negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council. It coordinates life-saving international maritime and aeronautical SAR coverage and response among the Arctic States across an area of about 13 million square miles in the Arctic. The SAR Agreement will improve search and rescue response in the Arctic by committing all Parties to coordinate appropriate assistance to those in distress and to cooperate with each other in undertaking SAR operations. For each Party, the Agreement defines an area of the Arctic in which it will have lead responsibility in organizing responses to SAR incidents, both large and small. Parties to the

Agreement commit to provide SAR assistance regardless of the nationality or status of persons who may need it.



## Key Documents

2016 Implementation Framework for the National Strategy for the Arctic

Executive Order on Enhancing Coordination of National Efforts in the Arctic (2015)

Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for the Arctic Region (2014)

National Strategy for the Arctic Region (2013)

Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee

“Arctic: Northernmost Region of the Earth,” Terence Edward Armstrong, et al., Encyclopedia Britannica, 19 April 2022 [4] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Arctic>

Overview:

Arctic, northernmost region of the Earth, centered on the North Pole and characterized by distinctively polar conditions of climate, plant and animal life, and other physical features. The term is derived from the Greek arktos (“bear”), referring to the northern constellation of the Bear. It has sometimes been used to designate the area within the [Arctic Circle](#) —a mathematical line that is drawn at latitude 66°30’ N, marking the southern limit of the zone in which there is at least one annual period of 24 hours during which the sun does not set and one during which it does not rise. This line, however, is without value as a geographic boundary, since it is not keyed to the nature of the terrain.

While no dividing line is completely definitive, a generally useful guide is the irregular line marking the northernmost limit of the stands of trees. The regions north of the tree line include Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat), Svalbard, and other polar islands; the northern parts of the mainland of Siberia, Alaska, and Canada; the coasts of Labrador; the north of Iceland; and a strip of the Arctic coast of Europe. The last-named area, however, is classified as subarctic because of other factors.

Conditions typical of Arctic lands are extreme fluctuations between summer and winter temperatures; permanent snow and ice in the high country and grasses, sedges, and low shrubs in the lowlands; and permanently frozen ground (permafrost), the surface layer of which is subject to summer thawing. Three-fifths of the Arctic terrain is outside the zones of permanent ice. The brevity of the Arctic summer is partly compensated by the long daily duration of summer sunshine.

International interest in the Arctic and subarctic regions has steadily increased during the 20th century, particularly since World War II. Three major factors are involved: the advantages of the North Pole route as a shortcut between important centers of population, the growing realization of economic potentialities such as mineral (especially petroleum) and forest resources and grazing areas, and the importance of the regions in the study of global meteorology.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The People of The Arctic**

The Arctic, or circumpolar, peoples are the indigenous inhabitants of the northernmost regions of the world. For the most part, they live beyond the climatic limits of agriculture, drawing a subsistence from hunting, trapping, and fishing or from pastoralism. Thus, climatic gradients, rather than simple latitude, determine the effective boundaries of the circumpolar region, and these gradients have their counterparts in the major environmental transitions. Of these transitions, the most important is the tree line, which marks the northern margin of the coniferous forest, or taiga. Between this limit and the coasts of the Arctic Ocean, the land consists of open tundra, though, in regions of high altitude, pockets of tundra lie enclosed within the forest zone.

Arctic environments are commonly imagined to be barren and inhospitable, habitable only by virtue of the extreme physical endurance and technical virtuosity of the peoples who dwell in them. Though their possession of these qualities is not in doubt, this view of the far north rests on a misconception. The image of the remote wilderness, to be conquered through a struggle for survival, belongs to the language of the alien explorer, not to that of the native. For indigenous people, the circumpolar environment is neither hostile nor forbidding but familiar and generous, offering the gift of livelihood to those who would treat it with consideration and respect.

Though there are indeed seasons of scarcity, these alternate with periods of extraordinary abundance. The continuous daylight of the warm Arctic summer, coupled with ample surface water from melting snow, allows for a phenomenal rate of growth of surface vegetation, and this in turn attracts a multitude of animals, many of them of migratory species. Warm ocean currents around some of the Arctic coasts are likewise conducive to an abundance of marine fauna. It is not, then, scarcity that characterizes the Arctic environment but rather its seasonality. The resources available for human subsistence—which are primarily faunal rather than vegetable—tend to occur in great concentrations at particular times of year, rather than being widely dispersed and continuously available. These fluctuations naturally affect the settlement patterns and movements of human populations, as do the marked seasonal variations in the length of day and night and in the opportunities afforded by the landscape for transport and travel.

**“Arctic,” National Geographic [5]**

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/arctic/>

Overview:

The Arctic is the northernmost region of Earth.

Most scientists define the Arctic as the area within the Arctic Circle, a line of latitude about 66.5° north of the Equator. Within this circle are the Arctic ocean basin and the northern parts of Scandinavia, Russia, Canada, Greenland, and the U.S. state of Alaska.

The Arctic is almost entirely covered by water, much of it frozen. Some frozen features, such as glaciers and icebergs, are frozen freshwater. In fact, the glaciers and icebergs in the Arctic make up about 20% of Earth’s supply of freshwater.

Most of the Arctic, however, is the liquid saltwater of the Arctic ocean basin. Some parts of the ocean’s surface remain frozen all or most of the year. This frozen seawater is called sea ice. Often, sea ice is covered with a thick blanket of snow.

Sea ice helps determine Earth’s climate. Sea ice has a very bright surface, or albedo. This albedo means about 80% of sunlight that strikes sea ice is reflected back to space. The dark surface of the liquid ocean, however, absorbs about 90% of

solar radiation. Due to thermohaline circulation, the Arctic's thick, reflective sea ice moderates ocean temperatures around the world.

The Arctic experiences the extremes of solar radiation. During the Northern Hemisphere's winter months, the Arctic is one of the coldest and darkest places on Earth. Following sunset on the September equinox, the Earth's tilted axis and its revolution around the sun reduce the light and heat reaching the Arctic until no sunlight penetrates the darkness at all.

The sun rises again during the March equinox, and increases the light and heat reaching the Arctic. By the June solstice, the Arctic experiences 24-hour sunshine.

### Current & Relevant Information:

People in the Arctic

#### *Indigenous Cultures*

People established communities and cultures in the Arctic thousands of years ago, and continue to thrive today. They have all developed smart, innovative ways to adapt to the unique challenges posed by the region's severe climate.

Housing or other shelter, for example, poses unusual challenges for Arctic peoples. Thick blankets of seasonal snow and lack of abundant trees for lumber historically limited the development of wood or stone structures common in subarctic climates.

Inuit bands in Canada and Greenland, for example, engineered "snow houses"—more commonly known as igloos. Igloos were circular structures made of stacked ice (often sea ice), insulated with snow. The rectangular blocks were stacked in tight spiral pattern, giving the igloo a domed shape. Igloos could hold as few as two and as many as 20 people.

Igloos were just one type of Inuit dwelling. Inuit communities also built tents with poles crafted from driftwood and whale bones or baleen. Animal hides covered these poles, and snow provided excellent insulation.

The historically nomadic Sami (an indigenous people of Scandinavia and northwestern Russia) also built temporary tent-like structures, called lavvu. Instead of relying on driftwood, however, Sami communities had access to the rich taiga, or boreal forests, of the European subarctic.

More permanent Sami structures included storehouses, where foods, textiles, and other valuables could be stored for later use or trade. These storehouses, which resemble log cabins, are notable for being elevated on stilts, centimeters or even meters from the ground. Elevation protected the valuables from excess rot due to snow or water seeping into the storehouse, as well as vermin such as mice or rats.

Today, Arctic cultures such as the Inuit and Sami have access to high-quality building materials and sophisticated structural engineering plans. Still, buildings

throughout the Arctic are reliant on efficient insulation and weatherization. (Weatherization is the process of protecting a dwelling from extreme temperature changes, precipitation, and wind.)

### *Challenges of Indigenous Cultures*

Rights to land and natural resources are an important part of contemporary culture and survival of indigenous peoples in the Arctic. Indigenous Arctic communities face tremendous challenges, often the result of colonization and exploitation of land and energy resources.

For hundreds of years, for instance, European and Asian explorers interacted with Inuit communities in the Canadian Arctic, searching for the North Pole and the elusive “Northwest Passage.” (The Northwest Passage is a sea route connecting the North Pacific and North Atlantic Ocean basins.)

Increased contact with Europeans and European Americans often came with conflict. Inuit social structure, schools, and language were replaced with Western traditions.

Starting in the late 20th century, regional, national, and international organizations increasingly recognized the political and cultural sovereignty of Arctic peoples. Rights to land and natural resources are an important part of this sovereignty.

An agreement between the government of Canada and Inuit bands, for instance, ultimately resulted in the creation of the territory of Nunavut in 1999. Nunavut, Canada’s largest territory, stretches far into the central Canadian Arctic. More than half the population of Nunavut identifies as Inuit, and Inuktitut is the most-spoken language.

### *Exploration*

European and Asian exploration of the Arctic began with Viking settlement of northern Scandinavia and Iceland in the 900s. Russian explorers navigated the “Northern Sea Route” of the Northeast Passage and the Siberian Arctic, eventually crossing the Bering Strait in the 1600s.

The pursuit of the Northwest Passage, which would save untold time and money in trade between Europe and Asia, drove Arctic exploration during the Age of Discovery. Explorers such as John Cabot, Martin Frobisher, and Henry Hudson all failed to find an open-water route. The Northwest Passage was not completely navigated until 1906, when legendary Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and his crew made the voyage from Greenland to Alaska. Shifting sea ice made the trip hazardous; it took about three years, and required a relatively small ship (a converted fishing vessel).

**“All About Arctic Climatology and Meteorology,” National Snow & Ice Data Center, 4 May 2020 [6] <https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/arctic-meteorology/arctic.html>**

## Overview:

### What is the Arctic?

The region surrounding the North Pole consists of a large ocean surrounded by land. This ocean, called the Arctic Ocean, is like no other ocean on Earth; and because of its special location and climate, the lands that surround it are unique.

Most commonly, scientists define the Arctic as the region above the Arctic Circle, an imaginary line that circles the globe at approximately  $66^{\circ} 34' N$  (dashed blue circle in the map below). The Arctic Circle marks the latitude above which the sun does not set on the summer solstice, and does not rise on the winter solstice. At the North Pole, the sun rises once each year and sets once each year: there are six months of continuous daylight and six months of continuous night. At lower latitudes, but north of the Arctic Circle, the duration of continuous day and night are shorter.





The above map shows three definitions of the Arctic: the tree line; the 10 degrees Celsius isotherm, and the Arctic Circle at 66° 34' North.

But other people use different definitions when talking about the Arctic. Some scientists define the Arctic as the area north of the arctic tree line (green line in map above), where the landscape is frozen and dotted with shrubs and lichens. Other researchers define Arctic based on temperature. Using this definition, the Arctic includes any locations in high latitudes where the average daily summer temperature does not rise above 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit).

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### Arctic People

The extreme Arctic climate makes the region a forbidding place to travel and a challenging place to live. Even so, people have found ways to explore and live in the Arctic. Indigenous peoples have lived in the Arctic for thousands of years. Explorers, adventurers, and researchers have also ventured into the Arctic to explore its unique environment and geography.

In the winter, cold Arctic temperatures and extreme wind chills make it dangerous to venture outdoors without proper clothing and gear. Strong storms can make travel difficult. And heating a home can be challenging and expensive without trees to cut for firewood. However, people have found ways to adapt, survive, and thrive in the Arctic.

#### *Indigenous People*

Residents of the Arctic include a number of indigenous groups as well as more recent arrivals from more southern latitudes. In total, only about 4 million people live in the Arctic worldwide, and in most countries indigenous people make up a minority of the Arctic population.

Archaeologists and anthropologists now believe that people have lived in the Arctic for as much as twenty thousand years. The Inuit in Canada and Greenland, and the Yu'pik, Iñupiat, and Athabascan in Alaska, are just a few of the groups that are native to the Arctic. Traditionally, Arctic native peoples lived primarily from hunting, fishing, herding, and gathering wild plants for food, although some people also practice farming, particularly in Greenland. Northern people found many different ways to adapt to the harsh Arctic climate, developing warm dwellings and clothing to protect them from frigid weather. They also learned how to predict the weather and navigate in boats and on sea ice. Many Arctic people now live much like their neighbors to the south, with modern homes and appliances. Nonetheless, there is an active movement among indigenous people in the Arctic to pass on traditional knowledge and skills, such as hunting, fishing, herding, and native languages, to the younger generation.

## *Arctic Exploration*

Compared to indigenous people who have lived in the Arctic for thousands of years, European explorers are relative newcomers. Europeans started venturing north into Arctic regions of Scandinavia and Russia only around a thousand years ago, with much exploration taking place in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Vikings from Scandinavia traveled to Greenland around A.D. 930, during an unusually mild period throughout most of the Northern Hemisphere. They settled for a time along the south and southwest coasts, the only habitable part of Greenland. For nearly five centuries the Norse settlements persevered, depending on their cattle, sheep and goats, as well as on seal and caribou hunts.

Contacts between the Norse settlements and the outside world ceased in the late 1400s. We now know that as the weather got steadily colder and the pasture and farming lands shrank under the advancing ice and snow, the inhabitants suffered a painful annihilation. The rapid cooling that signaled the beginning of the Little Ice Age in the early 1300s caused sea ice to expand over the North Atlantic, which made it impossible to navigate between Greenland and Iceland, trapping people in their settlements and halting trade.

Russians began exploring the northern regions of their country in the 11th and 12th centuries, and by the 17th century they had explored many Arctic islands. During the 1800's, many explorers searched for a Northwest Passage. Irish explorer, Sir Robert McClure, is credited with finding it in 1851. The first reported person to reach the North Pole is American explorer, Robert Edwin Peary. He accomplished this in 1909, however there are some doubts as to whether he actually made it or not.

## *People in the Modern Arctic*

Many people in the Arctic today live in modern towns and cities, much like their neighbors to the south. People also work in the Arctic, extracting oil and gas from rich deposits beneath the permafrost, working in tourism, or conducting research. Other people in the arctic still live in small villages much the way their ancestors did.

Arctic people today face many changes to their homes and environment. Climate change is causing sea ice to melt and permafrost to thaw, threatening coastal villages with bigger storms and erosion. And the declining sea ice means that the Arctic Ocean could open up for commercial shipping or tourist cruises.

**“Arctic Region,” Library of Congress, November 2011 [7]**

[https://www.loc.gov/today/placesinthenews/archive/2011arch/20111109\\_arcticregion.html](https://www.loc.gov/today/placesinthenews/archive/2011arch/20111109_arcticregion.html)

### Overview:

The Arctic Region covers the northernmost area of the earth and is centered on the North Pole. The arctic regions are not coextensive with the area enclosed by the

Arctic Circle (latitude 66° 30'N). The regions include the Arctic Ocean; the north reaches of Canada, Alaska, Russia, Norway, and the Atlantic Ocean; Svalbard; most of Iceland; Greenland; and the Bering Sea. The Arctic Region is one of the world's most sparsely populated areas.

Current & Relevant Information:

In the center of the Arctic Region is a large basin occupied by the Arctic Ocean, which is slightly less than 1.5 times the size of the United States. The basin is nearly surrounded by the ancient continental shields of North America, Europe, and Asia, with the geologically more recent lowland plains, low plateaus, and mountain chains between them. Surface features vary from low coastal plains (swampy in summer, especially at the mouths of such rivers as the Mackenzie, Lena, Yenisei, and Ob River) to high ice plateaus and glaciated mountains. Tundras, extensive flat and poorly drained lowlands, dominate the regions. The most notable highlands are the Brooks Range of Alaska, the Innuitians of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, the Urals, and the mountains of east Russia. Greenland, the world's largest island, is a high plateau covered by a vast ice sheet except in the coastal regions and smaller ice caps are found on other Arctic islands.





**“Arctic region briefing - The European environment — state and outlook 2015,”**  
**European Environment Agency, 11 May 2020 [8]**  
<https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer/2015/countries/arctic>

Summary:

The Arctic region consists of the partly ice-covered Arctic Ocean and land areas of the surrounding eight Arctic states; Canada, Denmark (including the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and the US (Alaska) as well as their shallow sub-regional seas. The Arctic is home to and provides livelihoods for four million people, most of whom live in northern Scandinavia and Russia. This includes three indigenous peoples; the Sami, the Inuit and the Nenets in the European part of the Arctic. The Arctic region is an area of growing strategic importance in terms of increasing access to natural resources and new transport routes as ice and snow conditions are undergoing rapid change. Economic developments are accelerating which can be beneficial for the region and the global economy, yet they will also have repercussions on the Arctic's fragile environment if not managed with care. The Arctic has therefore been identified as a focus region for the European Union (EU) in the 7th Environment Action Programme (7th EAP). In the Arctic context, the EU maintains strategic partnerships with Canada, Russia and the USA, and has close partnerships with Greenland, Iceland and Norway.

The region is varied in many aspects and many parts are characterized as being relatively clean and remote. The high Arctic has an extreme environment and many areas lack infrastructure. An exception to this can be found in the more populated and developed parts of northern Scandinavia and northwest Russia. The overall level of economic activity is still relatively low although it has been increasing in recent decades in certain areas. The region's economy and resources now play a role in a global perspective. This role could increase if the region's potential in natural resources, shipping and tourism are exploited further. This may lead to improved local living conditions and create growth and jobs. Arctic states and international partners are working to ensure a prudent development that limits further Arctic warming or jeopardizing ecosystem resilience. The sensitive Arctic environment is already challenged by rapid changes such as climate change, biodiversity loss and hazardous substances transported over long distances that influence human health. Arctic warming affects traditional ways of life of indigenous peoples, puts stress on ecosystems and can have global implications. Climate change is therefore a threat in terms of Arctic ecosystem resilience and functions. It is also a challenge with regards to ensuring timely adaptation measures, while mitigation efforts are strengthened at a global scale. The EU has increasingly recognized that European activities affect the Arctic environment and that Europe in turn will be influenced by the changes that occur in the region.

In 1991, environmental cooperation in the region was formalized in the Environmental Protection Strategy for the Arctic which in 1996 became the Arctic Council, composed of the eight Arctic states and six Permanent Participants that represent indigenous peoples. It has six working groups coordinating assessments and studies which contribute towards the overall vision of promoting sustainable development in the region. Five member countries of the European Environment Agency (EEA) are members of the Council and seven are observers. The EU is allowed to observe proceedings in the Council until a final decision is made on its application to become an observer. The key challenges facing the region, which are also reflected in the 7th EAP and the EU's Arctic policy (currently under development) can be summarized as follows:

- increasing economic development of the Arctic;
- global climate change and its rapid effects on the Arctic;
- policy developments and international cooperation related to the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

What are the main problems/threats related to the Arctic region?

Major economic activities take place in the region. Sub-regional Arctic seas now represent more than 10% of global marine fisheries, including large catches in the European part. Similarly, the production of hydrocarbons has increased, including in the Barents and Norwegian seas, and about 22% of the world's natural gas and 10% of oil are produced in the Arctic. In 2012, Russia and Norway alone provided more than half of the EU's oil and gas imports, much of which was produced in the Arctic region. Arctic shipping is increasing, most significantly to and from Arctic ports but also in trans-Arctic voyages. The Northern Sea Route along the Russian coast has seen an increase from four trips in 2010 to 71 in 2013. Meanwhile, the Northwest Passage through Canadian waters increased from two trips in 2009 to 18 in 2013. In certain areas, Arctic cruise passenger ships are also increasing in numbers and size. These ship numbers are small when comparing globally but with retreating sea ice, there is potential for an increase in trips with shorter travel routes for parts of the year. Sea-based activities in the Arctic are challenging due to waters with varying ice-cover, lack of sea charts, light conditions in winter and remoteness in case of accidents. Remoteness is also a problem when tackling potential pollution incidents.

The region plays a vital role in the Earth's climate system and energy balance. As reflective snow and ice diminish, due to Arctic warming or black carbon deposits, solar energy is increasingly absorbed in the ocean and land area. The Arctic is experiencing rapid warming compared to other parts of the globe causing extensive loss of sea ice which in addition to ocean warming has implications for ice-dependent species and for ocean acidification since open waters absorb more CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. The increase in average temperatures since 1980 has been twice as high over the Arctic as it has been over the rest of the world. As a

consequence, snow cover has been declining up to 53% in summer and the Greenland ice sheet has been losing mass at an accelerated rate (almost tenfold in the past two decades). This massive loss of ice from the Greenland ice sheet contributes to global sea-level rise which over the next century will leave coastal areas at risk with regards to people, economic assets and coastal ecosystems, including in Europe.

Warming conditions thaw permafrost damaging infrastructures and transport systems. Melting permafrost is also a significant source of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane to the atmosphere and these emissions can be of significance with regard to keeping global temperature change below a 2 °C increase, as agreed under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The region is home to a number of sensitive marine and terrestrial ecosystems, some of global importance, as the Arctic is a breeding ground for a number of migrating species. More than half of the world's wetlands are in the Arctic and sub-Arctic region. Climate change is the most serious threat to Arctic biodiversity, not least as the UNFCCC upper limit of 2 °C global warming is projected to result in a temperature increase of 2.8 to 7.8 °C in the Arctic, with severe impacts to biodiversity. Arctic species and ecosystems are also affected by pollution (especially persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and mercury) and marine litter from long-range transport and local sources. Some pollutants accumulate in the food web, as cold conditions slow down the degradation processes, while others are absorbed in fatty tissues and released into the animals during the natural seasonal starvation. Local communities with a diet derived mainly from local marine food items are exposed to these pollutants with subsequent health implications.

International efforts have been made in Arctic observation and monitoring, such as the ongoing Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) and the Trends and Effects Monitoring Programme, along with the associated pollution assessments under the Arctic Council and the recent International Polar Year. However, there are still many unknowns when it comes to growth in economic activities, forecasting the rate of change, assessing ecosystem responses or understanding the interactions between various drivers of change and their cumulative impacts.

**“Changes in the Arctic: Background and Issues for Congress,” Congressional Research Services, 24 March 2022 [9] <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41153.pdf>**

Summary:

The diminishment of Arctic sea ice has led to increased human activities in the Arctic, and has heightened interest in, and concerns about, the region's future. The United States, by virtue of Alaska, is an Arctic country and has substantial interests in the region. The seven other Arctic states are Canada, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark (by virtue of Greenland), and Russia.

The Arctic Research and Policy Act (ARPA) of 1984 (Title I of P.L. 98-373 of July 31, 1984) “provide[s] for a comprehensive national policy dealing with national research needs and objectives in the Arctic.” The National Science Foundation (NSF) is the lead federal agency for implementing Arctic research policy. The Arctic Council, created in 1996, is the leading international forum for addressing issues relating to the Arctic. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets forth a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world’s oceans, including the Arctic Ocean. The United States is not a party to UNCLOS.

An array of climate changes in the Arctic is now documented by observing systems, with more expected with future greenhouse gas-driven climate change. Observed physical changes in the Arctic include warming ocean, soil, and air temperatures; melting permafrost; shifting vegetation and animal abundances; and altered characteristics of Arctic cyclones. A monitoring report of the Arctic Council concluded in 2019 that “the Arctic biophysical system is now clearly trending away from its previous state [in the 20th Century] and into a period of unprecedented change, with implications not only within but also beyond the Arctic.”

Following the end of the Cold War, the Arctic states sought to maintain a tradition of cooperation, low tensions, peaceful resolution of disputes, and respect for international law in managing Arctic affairs. The emergence of great power competition between the United States, Russia, and China has introduced elements of competition and tension into the Arctic’s geopolitical environment. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine beginning in late February 2022 has substantially affected U.S., Canadian, and Nordic relations with Russia in the Arctic.

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the Coast Guard are devoting increased attention to the Arctic in their planning and operations. Whether DOD and the Coast Guard are taking sufficient actions for defending U.S. interests in the region is a topic of congressional oversight. The Coast Guard has two operational polar icebreakers and through FY2021 has received funding for procuring two of at least three planned new polar icebreakers.

The diminishment of Arctic ice could lead in coming years to increased commercial shipping on two trans-Arctic sea routes—the Northern Sea Route close to Russia, and the Northwest Passage close to Alaska and through the Canadian archipelago—though the rate of increase in the use of these routes might not be as great as sometimes anticipated in press accounts. International guidelines for ships operating in Arctic waters have been updated.

Changes to the Arctic brought about by warming temperatures will likely allow more exploration for oil, gas, and minerals. Warming that causes permafrost to melt could pose challenges to onshore exploration activities. Increased oil and gas exploration and tourism (cruise ships) in the Arctic increase the risk of pollution in the region. Cleaning up oil spills in ice-covered waters will be more difficult than in other areas,



primarily because effective strategies for cleaning up oil spills in ice-covered waters have yet to be developed.

Large commercial fisheries exist in the Arctic. The United States is working with other countries regarding the management of Arctic fish stocks. Changes in the Arctic could result in migration of fish stocks to new waters, and could affect protected species.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Population of Arctic**

According to one estimate, about 4 million people, or about 0.05% of the world's population, live in the Arctic, of which roughly half (roughly 2 million) live in Russia's part of the Arctic, and roughly 500,000 belong to Indigenous peoples. Another source states: "Approximately two and a half million of Russia's inhabitants live in Arctic territory, accounting for nearly half of the population living in the Arctic worldwide." Another source, using a broader definition of the Arctic, concluded that just over 10 million people live in the Arctic, including 7 million in Russia's Arctic.

#### **Eight Arctic States, Including Five Arctic Coastal States**

Eight countries have territory north of the Arctic Circle: The United States (Alaska), Canada, Russia, Norway, Denmark (by virtue of Greenland, a member country of the Kingdom of Denmark), Finland, Sweden, and Iceland. These eight countries are often referred to as the Arctic countries or Arctic States, and they are the member states of the Arctic Council, which is discussed further below.

A subset of the eight Arctic countries are the five countries that are considered Arctic coastal states because they have mainland coasts that front onto waters north of the Arctic Circle: The United States, Canada, Russia, Norway, and Denmark (by virtue of Greenland).

**"Arctic Indigenous Peoples," Arctic Centre University of Lapland [10]**  
<https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion/Arctic-Indigenous-Peoples>

#### Overview:

Indigenous peoples have inhabited the Arctic for thousands of years. The proportion indigenous people are estimated to be about 10 percent of total population living in arctic areas. There are over 40 different ethnic groups living in the Arctic. **Map with fact boxes on Indigenous peoples** who are permanent participants at the Arctic Council.

Arctic indigenous peoples include for example Saami in circumpolar areas of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Northwest Russia, Nenets, Khanty, Evenk and Chukchi in Russia, Aleut, Yupik and Inuit (Iñupiat) in Alaska, Inuit (Inuvialuit) in Canada and Inuit (Kalaallit) in Greenland. All of the above-mentioned countries

except Iceland have indigenous peoples living within their Arctic territory. Official statistics do not necessarily recognize indigenous populations separately, although differences occur. The number of indigenous people is not accurate because of the definition of indigenes. See the map [Demography of indigenous peoples of the Arctic based on linguistic groups](#).

There is a great variation of cultural, historical and economic backgrounds among the groups. However, a common feature for most of the indigenous communities in the Arctic is that they have already undergone substantial changes due to the globalization of the western way of life, state policies, modern transport and the introduction of mixed economy.

In general, indigenous people have a specific connection to land that they have inhabited. Other features, for example distinct language, culture and traditional livelihoods such as reindeer herding, fishing and hunting are characteristics of indigenous people in the Arctic. Industrialization, social change and environmental problems such as climate change, however, present threats to the continuity of these livelihoods and culture.

Recently, political organization of indigenous peoples has led to international recognition and clarification of human and political rights concerning indigenous populations. Rights to land and natural resources are an important part of the culture and survival of indigenous peoples in the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Settlement in the Arctic regions**

Arctic areas are inhabited approximately by four million people according to the AHDR definition (Arctic Human Development Report) of the Arctic. The settlement area is divided between eight Arctic countries; Canada, United States, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark. The circumpolar region is extremely sparsely populated. Using more broad definition, according to the University of the Arctic Atlas, there are approximately 13.1 million people living in the area of the circumpolar North, see the map [Indigenous population in the Arctic](#).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the number of Arctic people started to grow rapidly because of improved health care for indigenous populations and the discovery of vast natural resources located in North which led to a large influx of immigrants. Recently population growth in the Arctic has slowed down in general and in some cases (e.g., Russian North) the total population has been even declining. It is estimated that two thirds of the total population live in relatively large settlements. The settlement of the indigenous peoples living in circumpolar countries is characterized by small, widely scattered communities.

##### **Climate change poses a new threat for all of the indigenous peoples**

Regardless of underlying causes, the Arctic is undergoing a period of significant change that is likely to continue well into the next century, if not longer, and affect all sectors of the circumpolar North. People in the Arctic are worried about contaminants, land use, climate, security and access in the form of rights to land and sea. Arctic peoples often point out that their environment has always been dynamic and that constant adaptation to 'change' is simply a part of what they do and who they are.

Climate change significantly impacts the traditional harvesting activities of indigenous peoples. Rapid weather changes and occurrence of thin ice and severe weather conditions (e.g., strong winds and storms) makes hunting more dangerous. Furthermore, disappearing sea ice affects many species that are subject to harvest, for instance polar bears, seals, whales and some fish stocks depend on ice cover. Additionally, the ice plays an important role in sea temperature regulation and primary productivity. As a result, the livelihoods connected with hunting, fishing and herding are under threat. Indigenous peoples have an especially strong bond with nature and the changes in harvesting activities may have implications on the economy, society, culture and health.

Eventually, the survival of many groups as distinctive peoples is endangered. Additionally, housing, infrastructure and transport connections of coastal indigenous communities are seriously affected by climate changes, with rising maintenance costs and sometimes even the necessity of relocation.

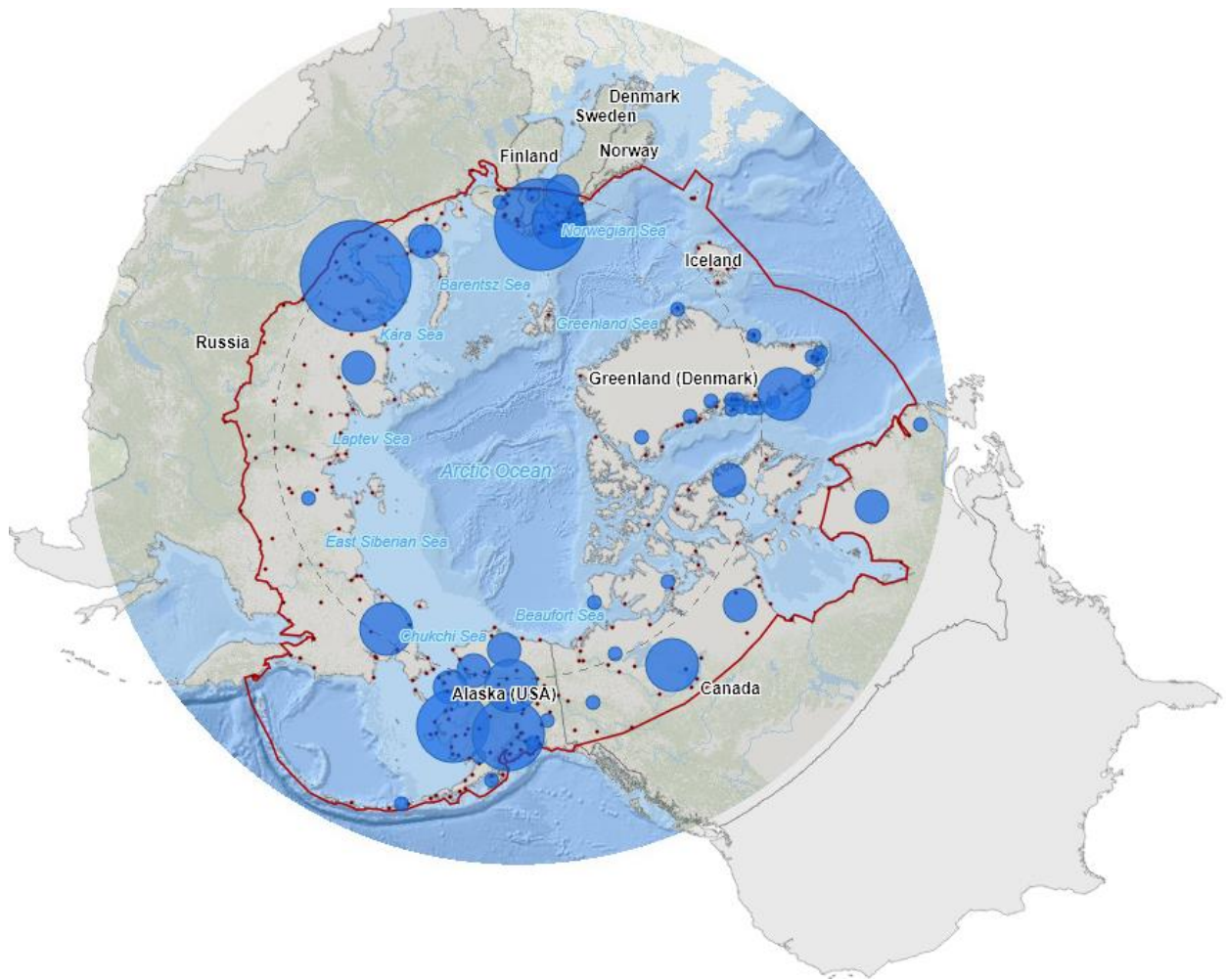
**“Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic,” John Crump, Levi Westerveld, and Rob Barnes, GRID-Arendal [11]**

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=2228ac6bf45a4cebafc1c3002fef0c4>

Overview:

Indigenous Peoples have lived in their Arctic homelands for millennia. The land and waters of the Arctic anchor indigenous societies. They provide resources upon which their cultures continue to survive.

Map showing the Indigenous population distribution in the Arctic (blue circles) by region and the Arctic boundary (red) according to the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP). Sources: AMAP, Natural Earth.



### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The Arctic Council and the Permanent Participants**

The [Arctic Council](#) is an intergovernmental cooperative forum focused on environmental and sustainable development issues. Its founding document is the [Ottawa Declaration](#), a political agreement. The Council is unique in that it provides a place for the Arctic states, Arctic Indigenous Peoples and other inhabitants to discuss Arctic issues. The Arctic Council is not a treaty-based organization and operates by consensus. It makes recommendations to governments but has no power to enforce action.

#### **Aleut International Association (AIA)**

There are about 19,000 Aleuts in the United States and Russian Federation living on a chain of islands that stretch between the North Pacific and Bering Sea from southwest Alaska to Russia. They speak mostly English and Russian. Eastern Aleut is the dialect of the Aleut language with the most speakers, with several other endangered or extinct dialects. The Aleut International Association was formed in

1998 to address the environmental and cultural concerns of the Aleut People who have been living in the Bering Sea region for millennia.

### **Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)**

AAC was formed in 2000 and represents approximately 45,000 people who traditionally live inland in a vast stretch of taiga and tundra. Their region has been continuously occupied for the last 10,000 years. AAC was established through a treaty signed by indigenous representatives from Alaska, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada.

### **Gwich'in Council International (GCI)**

Approximately 9,000 Gwich'in live in small communities scattered across the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska. GCI was established as a non-profit organization in 1999 by the Gwich'in Tribal Council to ensure all parts of the Gwich'in Nation in the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska are represented at the Arctic Council.

### **Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)**

The Inuit Circumpolar Council represents 160,000 Inuit living in four countries. Founded in 1977, ICC was one of the three original Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council (along with the Saami Council and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North).

### **Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)**

Indigenous Peoples live in approximately 60% of the territory of the Russian Federation, from Murmansk in the west to Kamchatka in the east. There are 40 different groups of Indigenous People in the Russian north with a total population of 244,000. The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North was founded in 1990 at the First Congress of Indigenous Peoples of the North of USSR and is an umbrella organization for 35 regional and ethnic organizations of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Saami Council International**

The Saami Council was established in 1956, making it the oldest Indigenous Peoples Organization in the Arctic. The Saami Council was one of the three original Permanent Participants and represents approximately 100,000 in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland the Kola Peninsula in Russia.

### **Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS)**

IPS was established in 1994 under the auspices of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), the forerunner of the Arctic Council. The role of the secretariat is to facilitate contributions from the Permanent Participants to the cooperation of the eight Arctic states and to assist the Permanent Participants in

their work, and provide them with necessary information and materials. IPS is now based in the offices of the Arctic Council in Tromsø, Norway.

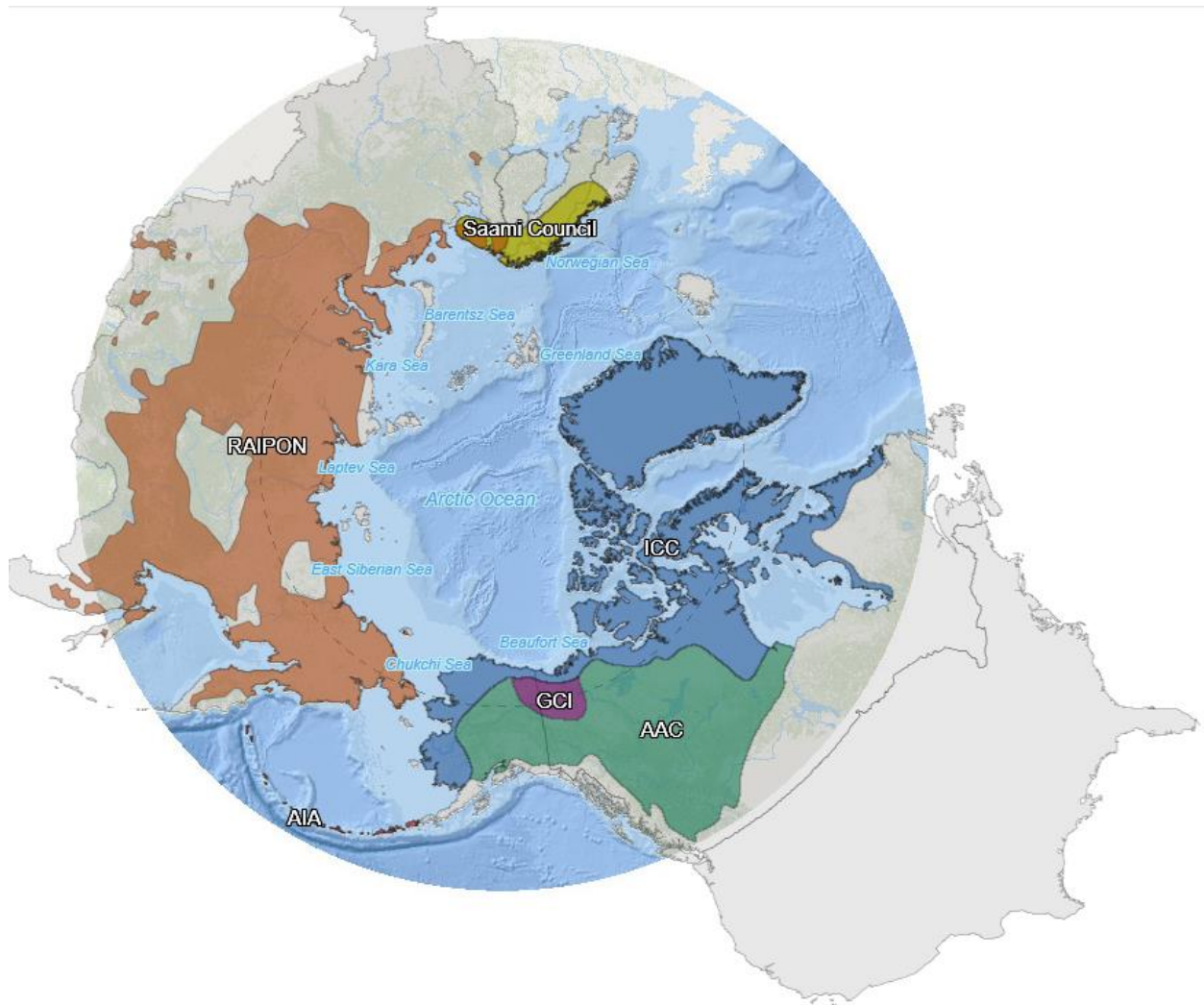
### Map

The Arctic Council is unique in that it provides a place for the Arctic states, Arctic Indigenous Peoples and other inhabitants to discuss Arctic issues.

This map shows the approximate regions of the 6 Permanent Participants which include: Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), Saami Council, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), Aleut International Association (AIA), Gwich'in Council International (GCI), and Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC).

Sources: Philippe Rekacewicz - GRID-Arendal





## The Arctic as an Indigenous Homeland

Indigenous Peoples have lived in their Arctic homelands for millennia. Their cultures have adapted and evolved along with their understanding and appreciation of their world. Indigenous societies have imbued the land with meaning; every feature is named and linked to the history and spiritual lives of the people. The land and waters of the Arctic anchor indigenous societies. They provide resources upon which their cultures continue to survive.

The diversity of the Arctic's peoples is reflected in many ways – in material culture, music, dress, and how people relate to the land and environment. And while it is a mistake to think that all indigenous cultures are the same, there are many similarities. Among these are continued social, economic and spiritual ties to the land and environment. This is not a romantic notion, but a result of millennia of adaptation that has produced a vast quantity of data and knowledge about the environment and the world in which people in the Arctic live. This knowledge is key to identity and cultural survival and the Permanent Participants have developed a

number of principles to guide the Arctic Council's understanding of traditional knowledge.

### **“Who lives in the Arctic?” Arctic Science Ministerial [12]**

[https://www.arctic-science-ministerial.org/arctic/en/science/who-lives-in-the-arctic/who-lives-in-the-arctic\\_node.html](https://www.arctic-science-ministerial.org/arctic/en/science/who-lives-in-the-arctic/who-lives-in-the-arctic_node.html)

#### Overview:

4 million people are believed to be living in the Arctic today, but only very few live in the iciest regions. Cities on the greener and warmer mainland are more attractive for everyday life, offering everything from schools and doctors to more diverse jobs.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

About 12.5 percent of the Arctic population of four million is indigenous peoples: Aleuts, Athabascans, Gwich'in, Inuit, Sami, and the many indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic. They inhabit three different continents, usually in coastal regions, and are separated by geographical barriers.

Climate change poses a threat to the natural surroundings of many indigenous peoples: higher temperatures are melting ice-covered surfaces and thawing the permafrost. It is threatening the livelihood of man, flora and fauna. Melting ice cover, for example, is hampering traditional seal hunting and robbing many natives of a precious source of income. At the same time, the growing expanses of water are becoming fishing grounds which provide a source of food and income.

#### **Life in the Arctic ice**

Many indigenous peoples still live in remote areas albeit in permanent, modern housing. Yet a number of traditions have persisted, for example reindeer herding, which is still an important factor for the autonomy of the Sami people. In the past they followed the migrating herds on foot – nowadays they own modern snowmobiles. This fact has made their original nomadic lifestyle virtually obsolete since it is now possible to cover greater distances more quickly and transport heavier loads, too.

### **1. Canada:**

**“Canada,” Arctic Council [13]** <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/canada/>

#### Overview:

#### **Arctic and North Territory**

Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern parts of numerous provinces, including Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Québec

#### **Arctic and Northern Population**



Approximately 150,000

### **Permanent Participants with Canadian constituents**

Arctic Athabaskan Council, Inuit Circumpolar Council, and Gwich'in Council International

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Canada and the Arctic region**

Nearly 40 percent of Canada's land mass is considered Arctic and Northern, consisting of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and the northern parts of several provinces. Canada's Arctic is home to approximately 150,000 inhabitants, of which more than half are Indigenous. Although Canada's Arctic region is vast, less than one percent of Canada's population lives there.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous Permanent Participants who live in Canada include the Athabaskan, Inuit and Gwich'in. The Athabaskan and Gwich'in peoples in Canada live primarily in the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Inuit in Canada live in 53 communities across Inuit Nunangat – the northern regions of Canada. Canadian Arctic Indigenous peoples are represented in the Arctic Council through three Permanent Participants organizations: Arctic Athabaskan Council, Inuit Circumpolar Council and Gwich'in Council International.

**“Canada: People,” The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [14] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/canada/>**

#### Overview:

Politically, Canada's Arctic encompasses the three northern territories—Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut—as well as the northern portions of Québec (Nunavik) and Labrador (Nunatsiavut). Sparsely populated compared to the rest of the country, the region is home to about 142,000 people, representing 0.38% of Canada's total population. Whitehorse (32,308) and Yellowknife (21,888), the capitals of Yukon and the Northwest Territories respectively, are the two largest cities in the region. Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, is the third largest with a population of 7,740. To give a sense of scale, a majority of Canadians live in a thin line straddling the country's southern border and are concentrated in the three largest metropolitan areas: Toronto (6.47 million), Montreal (4.32 million) and Vancouver (2.69 million).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

According to Statistics Canada, while just over 6% of the Canadian population identifies as having Aboriginal ancestry\*, about 4 of every 10 people in the Canadian Arctic do (90% in Nunatsiavut, 91% in Nunavik, 86% in Nunavut, 50% in the

Northwest Territories, and 24% in Yukon). Inuit Nunangat—stretching internationally from Alaska in the West to Greenland in the East—is today home to roughly three quarters of all members of the eight main Inuit groups in Canada. Northern Canada is also home to First Nations peoples and Métis whose traditional homelands, like those of the Inuit, are often divided by provincial, territorial, or even international borders; for example, Denendeh, the homeland of the Dene Nation, stretches from Alaska’s north coast east across Canada’s three Territories to nearly the shores of Hudson Bay. Today, the municipalities and hamlets across Canada’s remote north are notable for their vibrant and unique local culture. For example, Cape Dorset in Nunavut has national and international acclaim as a hub for Inuit artists since the 1950s; further to the west, Yellowknife draws thousands each summer to the Northwest Territories for its folk music festival. In terms of languages, as illustrated by the latest (2016) national census, over 70 Aboriginal languages known by Canadians were counted countrywide, with about 30 of which being used by people in the Arctic regions. However, in spite of initiatives aimed at language revitalization, the disappearance of many of these languages is a serious concern. While this deeply impacts cultural identity and social well-being, it also translates to an inability for some people to access services like healthcare in their own language: a historic problem in the north that remains today.

Indeed, to say that Indigenous peoples of the Canadian Arctic and the country as a whole are faced with pressing challenges would be an understatement. In 2019, a UN report on Indigenous housing excoriated Canada for the cramped and unsafe conditions under which many Indigenous Canadians are living, including in the Arctic. Rates of substance abuse and domestic violence remain high; poor mental health is another longstanding concern, with youth suicide, among many other things, shaking communities. These issues, as well as others, have added up to what the Correctional Investigator of Canada identified in a January 2020 report as the “historic high” proportion of Indigenous people in the prison system of 30%.

**“Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework,” Government of Canada, 18 November 2019 [15] <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587>**

#### Overview:

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is a profound change of direction for the Government of Canada. For too long, Canada's Arctic and northern residents, especially Indigenous people, have not had access to the same services, opportunities, and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. There are longstanding inequalities in transportation, energy, communications, employment, community infrastructure, health and education. While almost all past governments have put forward northern strategies, none closed these gaps for the people of the North, or created a lasting legacy of sustainable economic development.

In her 2016 Interim Report on the Shared Arctic Leadership Model, Minister's Special Representative Mary Simon said, "the simple fact is that Arctic strategies throughout my lifetime have rarely matched or addressed the magnitude of the basic gaps between what exists in the Arctic and what other Canadians take for granted."

Co-developing the new framework became a bold opportunity to shape and direct change in the region by collaborating with governments, northerners and Indigenous governments and organizations. Consultation was not enough to meet the challenges and harness emerging opportunities in the Arctic and North. In a significant shift, the federal government, Indigenous peoples, Inuit, First Nations and Métis, 6 territorial and provincial governments (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, and Manitoba) contributed to this framework together.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Views expressed through the engagement sessions varied widely, but for many participants the theme of "strong Arctic and northern people and communities" was seen as the most central to the development of the new Arctic and Northern Policy Framework for Canada. Institutions and services rooted in local cultures and language were a widespread prescription for addressing social challenges, and for building strong people and communities. There was concern about the erosion of Indigenous languages, and a demand for programs that would assist with the revitalization of language and culture.

- In 2014, about 22% of Northwest Territories households indicated that they often or sometimes worried that food would run out before they had money to buy more
- Just under 70% of Inuit households in Nunavut are food insecure

Life expectancy is considered one of the most fundamental indicators of the overall health and wellness of a population, given that it is influenced by a range of factors including access to health care, nutrition, living conditions and lifestyle. Gaps are stark and striking. For instance, life expectancy for Inuit in Canada is 72.4 years versus 82.9 years for Canada's non-Indigenous population.

- 52% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat live in crowded homes, which are associated with high rates of communicable disease such as tuberculosis, as well as other challenges, compared to 9% of Canadians overall
- In 2016 18% of Northwest Territories households required major repairs compared to the Canadian rate of 6.5%

References to social challenges, and especially those affecting the Indigenous peoples of the region, were common during the framework engagement sessions. Statistics make it clear that not everybody is similarly disadvantaged. For instance,

income inequality does not only exist between the Arctic and the North and the rest of Canada; there is also considerable income inequality within the region itself. The median before-tax individual income for Inuit in Inuit Nunangat is 75% lower than for non-Indigenous residents.

While some of the highest median and average incomes in Canada are found in the region, this should not mask the fact that the costs of living and the rates of poverty and food insecurity are also among the highest in the country. In 2017, for instance, the Nunatsiavut Government Household Food Security Survey identified that food insecure households in Nunatsiavut are over 4 times the level reported in Newfoundland and Labrador, and over 5 times the level of food insecurity in Canada overall.

The deep and ongoing impact on Indigenous peoples of the residential school experience and the broader colonial legacy were consistent themes at regional roundtables, especially when participants spoke of language and culture, education and Indigenous knowledge. Some participants called upon the framework to support the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. Links have been made between the intergenerational trauma caused by the impacts of the residential school system and the high rates of substance abuse and suicide in Indigenous populations.

Education and skills development, including early childhood education, improvements in elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, access to higher education as well as the need to enhance opportunities for local higher education in the region, were raised in regional roundtables and other forms of engagement. In written submissions and during stakeholder roundtables, industry representatives talked about the need for more qualified local workers, and about matching education and training with job opportunities. Youth similarly saw education as a path to participating in the local economy, and called for higher-quality education. Participants in engagement sessions described how students from the region graduating with high school diplomas found that their available selection of high school courses or levels of knowledge did not match the requirements of post-secondary education.

- 34% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat aged 25 to 64 have a high school diploma compared to 86% of Canadians aged 25 to 64 with a high school diploma
- In 2016, nearly three-quarters, 74%, of 25- to 64-year-old Northwest Territories non-Indigenous residents had a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree compared to 43% of Indigenous peoples

The provision of health-care services can be challenging in the Arctic and the North due to the lack of infrastructure and trained professionals, the small populations spread out over vast distances and the need to deliver services in an inclusive,

culturally appropriate and responsive manner. Access to health care in the region is currently not comparable to the average Canadian's access to high quality care.

- Hospitals and specialized health services are often not locally available
- Many people are forced to fly out from their home communities to access specialized care, or to give birth

In addition to facing barriers to care, people face disproportionate health challenges.

- In 2014, the rate of new or retreatment cases of tuberculosis was almost 50 times higher in the Inuit population than in the Canadian population overall

Mental health facilities and services are also generally lacking. The severity of mental health challenges in Arctic and northern communities, including the unacceptably high rate of suicide among Indigenous peoples (particularly youth), was a common theme at regional engagement sessions. For example, the rate of self-injury hospitalizations in Labrador is 231 per 100,000. That is more than 3 times the Canadian average. These health outcomes are further complicated by social determinants of health, such as overcrowded housing, high unemployment and low formal education levels.

**“Canadian Arctic Sovereignty,” W.R. Morrison, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 27 October 2021 [16] <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/arctic-sovereignty>**

Overview:

Arctic sovereignty is a key part of Canada's history and future. The country has 162,000 km of Arctic coastline. Forty per cent of Canada's landmass is in its three northern territories. Sovereignty over the area has become a national priority for Canadian governments in the 21st century. There has been growing international interest in the Arctic due to resource development, climate change, control of the Northwest Passage and access to transportation routes. As Prime Minister Stephen Harper said in 2008, “The geopolitical importance of the Arctic and Canada's interests in it have never been greater.”



Current & Relevant Information:

### High Arctic Relocation

Also, amid Cold War tensions in the postwar era, the Canadian government decided to populate Ellesmere and Cornwallis islands with Inuit, even though both areas were uninhabited. In 1953 and 1955, the RCMP moved a total of 92 Inuit from Inukjuak (formerly Port Harrison) in northern Quebec, and Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) in what is now Nunavut, to settle two locations on the High Arctic islands: Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord. The government ordered the relocations to establish sovereignty in the Arctic. It promised improved housing, education and living conditions. The Inuit were assured plentiful wildlife, but soon found that they had been misled, and endured hardships. Though Inuit were promised an option to return home after two years, they were not permitted to do so. ([See Inuit High Arctic Relocations in Canada.](#))





**“The Arctic Is Ours”: Canada’s Arctic Policy - Between Sovereignty and Climate Change,” Petra Dolata-Kreutzkamp, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 26 June 2009 [17]**  
<https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/usa/06874.pdf>

Overview:

- Arctic policy is not new to the political landscape of Canada. However, an increased level of public and international interest has been observed in the past few years.
- Canadian Arctic policy is found to span national debate from regional, social, and environmental policy on one side to foreign policy on the other.
- Contemporary Canadian Arctic policy can be found to stand squarely under the motto “Arctic Sovereignty” – which lends legal, military, and security policy overtones to the changes currently taking place. This discourse has developed over time and is an important part of Canadian national identity. The discourse also addresses Canada’s most significant economic and security partner: the U.S.
- Ottawa’s most recent Arctic policy has been based on non-federal stakeholders. This strengthens the position of the Provinces, which have taken the lead on coordination in the Arctic region.
- The Canadian government is emphasizing the cooperative motif of their contemporary Arctic policy. As evidence, one can look at their cooperative



relationship with the Arctic-abutting states. In addition, Ottawa supports related international and Arctic Circle institutions.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

International Developments: The Arctic, Re-Discovered.

Climate change has changed the Canadian Arctic, and above all, it has made it more accessible. Studies predict a sizeable rise in temperature and an ice-free Arctic in the next decade, a navigable Northwest Passage could shorten the shipping route from Europe to Asia by 30-40% in comparison to the current route through the Panama Canal. Nations including China, Japan, and South Korea have therefore begun their own ambitious programs to build icebreakers, Arctic-ready container ships and tankers. Additionally, the Arctic holds vast natural resources, including oil, gas, minerals, and valuable metals. According to a study by the U.S. Geological Survey, the entire Arctic region could hold up to a quarter of the world's undiscovered oil and gas resources. Finally, because of melting ice, the ocean currents as well as the water temperature could change – meaning that in the future, fish stocks in the Canadian arctic could increase.

Along with the economic prospects that accompany better accessibility come many problems. The Arctic ecosystem is very fragile. Increased transit volume and exploration opportunities could severely disturb the sensitive ecological balance. A tanker accident in this region would be catastrophic – as tragically shown by the example of the Exxon Valdez in 1989. Change in the Arctic region also changes the living space and conditions for the indigenous populations. Traditional forms of survival and community living are threatened. At the same time, these changes could mean new opportunities for economic, social, and political participation.

Further challenges can be identified in the realm of classical security policy. In the future, it could be easier for criminals, smugglers, illegal immigrants or terrorists to reach North American soil. In fact, there are already examples of this. In summer 2007, a group of Norwegians affiliated with the illegal group Hells Angels succeeded in infiltrating Canadian territory, undiscovered, by sailing through Cambridge Bay. Only recently, studies have been completed that deal with potential terrorist attacks on energy production facilities and transport infrastructure such as pipelines and tankers.

**“The US is picking a fight with Canada over a thawing Arctic shipping route,” Zoë Schlanger, Quartz, 27 June 2019 [18] <https://qz.com/1653831/the-us-is-picking-a-fight-with-canada-over-an-arctic-shipping-route/>**

#### Overview:

The Northwest Passage is one of just two possible shipping routes through the Arctic. “Possible” is generous: The icy landscape is treacherous for all but the

burliest ships. Because the passage is of limited use, countries have rarely clashed over its ownership.

But the climate crisis may change all that. As its ice thins and winters warm, the Northwest Passage will become a major shortcut for commercial shipping, particularly to and from Asia. The newly-valuable route is bound to incite tension between nations—and a recent meeting of Arctic countries suggests it already has.

Canada has long maintained a territorial claim to the Northwest passage. In May, at a meeting of the Arctic Council, United States secretary of state Mike Pompeo called that claim “illegitimate,” invoking a dispute that’s been left well alone for nearly three decades. The swipe was unexpected, but not without motive: Pompeo referred to the Arctic’s melting sea ice as opening “[new opportunities for trade](#).”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Since 1988, the United States and Canada—Arctic neighbors and partners in NATO and NORAD—have operated under the comfortable compromise of the Arctic Cooperation Agreement. Canada has always taken the view that the waters of the Northwest Passage are internal, because they say they’re within the waters of the nearly 20,000 islands of the Canadian archipelago. Their claim is supported by thousands of years of Inuit use of the sea ice. “The Northwest Passage is part of Inuit Nunangat, our Arctic homeland,” Monica Ell-Kanayuk, the president of Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, said in a [news release](#). Sea ice bridges the land and the islands of the archipelago for most of the year.

The US, on the other hand, regards the waters as an “international strait,” where the freedom to navigate through them is guaranteed to anyone. “We view Canada’s claim that the waters of the Northwest Passage are internal waters of Canada as inconsistent with international law,” a State Department spokesperson wrote in an email to Quartz.

Under the 1988 treaty, the US doesn’t officially recognize the Northwest Passage as Canada’s, but it agrees to ask for permission to pass through it. Canada, in turn, agrees in advance to always grant permission.

**“Canada & the Arctic,” Andrea Charron, Arctic Yearbook, 2017 [19]**

[https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2017/Commentaries/8 Canada & the Arctic.pdf](https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2017/Commentaries/8_Canada_%26_the_Arctic.pdf)

#### Overview:

Making sense of the world these days is a bit like trying to drink from a fire hose; overwhelming doesn’t begin to describe the result. Questions about what are the options for Canada with respect to the Trump Presidency are often framed using victim-like language: Canada is at the mercy of its much bigger neighbor. However,

Trump's presidency poses potential opportunities for Canada and one such area is with regards to joint issues of concerning facing the Arctic.

Current & Relevant Information:

The good news is that the latest U.S. Department of Defense Arctic strategy starts with the statement "The Department of Defense (DoD) remains committed to working collaboratively with allies and partners to promote a balanced approach to improving security in the Arctic region". While written under the Obama Administration, there is no indication that this sentiment won't continue under the Trump Administration primarily because it is focused on other issues (such as North Korea and football protests) and because the Arctic is not a priority for the President. Many of the eight Arctic states are allies of the U.S. and the biggest Arctic power, Russia, commands notice by Trump. Ultimately, the U.S. wants the Arctic to remain a secure and stable region where U.S. national interests are safeguarded, the U.S. homeland is defended, and states work cooperatively to address challenges.

And Trump, in line with his "grand" strategy, wants to achieve this by spending more on the military. This is to the benefit of Canada in so far as it might encourage the U.S. to contribute financially and via research and development to a replacement/upgrade of NORAD's North Warning System – one of the main sources of air and aerospace warning information for both states. Furthermore, U.S. military objectives support national interests which encompass a wide range of activities, including economic activities such as resource extraction, fishing and trade, as well as scientific research, aid to community resupply, search and rescue as well as national defense. Indeed, the NORAD exercise "Vigilant Shield" in 2016, focused on Canadian and U.S. forces working together with the assistance of refueling services in Thule, Greenland in joint surveillance roles in Arctic waters to improve Arctic maritime domain awareness. U.S. military involvement in the Arctic does not mean armed-to-the-teeth military vessels steaming down the Northwest Passage.

**"Identity and the evolving relationship between Inuit women and the land in the eastern Canadian Arctic," Martha Dowsley, Polar Record, 2015 [20]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Martha-Dowsley/publication/264895523\\_Identity\\_and\\_the\\_evolution\\_relationship\\_between\\_Inuit\\_women\\_and\\_the\\_land\\_in\\_the\\_eastern\\_Canadian\\_Arctic/links/53f4a7560cf2fceacc6e95b4/Identity-and-the-evolving-relationship-between-Inuit-women-and-the-land-in-the-eastern-Canadian-Arctic.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Martha-Dowsley/publication/264895523_Identity_and_the_evolution_relationship_between_Inuit_women_and_the_land_in_the_eastern_Canadian_Arctic/links/53f4a7560cf2fceacc6e95b4/Identity-and-the-evolving-relationship-between-Inuit-women-and-the-land-in-the-eastern-Canadian-Arctic.pdf)

Abstract:

Academic discussions around Inuit identity once focused on acculturation. These have mainly been replaced by concepts of adaptation to new living conditions. Yet, Inuit in the eastern Canadian Arctic still frame identity concerns around their land activities and are wary of becoming too much like 'Qallunaat' or southerners. This paper examines what material and non-material goods (for example psychological

goods) Inuit seek from the land today in order to understand what traditional aspects of their relationships with the land persist and what new ones might have emerged recently. It then discusses the implications these have for Inuit identity. The study found a decrease in the procurement and use of material goods from the land compared with previous generations. Concomitantly, the acquisition of non-material goods has become more formalized and distinctly identified in discussions of land excursions. The non-material goods are clearly linked to Inuit ideology and traditions, rather than to southern ideas. The desire for, and acquisition of, non-material goods is developing both from a top-down or group consensus and bottom-up or individual decision, illustrating an interplay between the construction of group and individual identities in relation to the land. Inuit in the eastern Canadian Arctic are transforming their relationship with the land in a way that demonstrates an emerging identity as community Inuit who are rooted in their own local history and geography and also consciously subscribe to a larger Inuit culture that is premised on values such as sharing and building harmonious relationships.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Being on the land is widely interpreted as key to Inuit cultural identity, both for individuals and groups (Boas 1888; Brody 1975; Rasing 1999; Dahl 2000; Gombay 2005; Searles 2010). Dorais (1997) lists three fundamental aspects of local identity for Inuit: family and kinship, language, and religion; noting that these are all considered to be best expressed through going on the land. Similarly, Nuttall (2001) stressed the sense of belonging that arises from interacting with other people while on the land, from remembering previous land-based events and from the story-imbued geography of the local area. These observations emphasize the construction of Inuit identity through land-based activities and interactions with others. Yet for Inuit, participation in land-based activities has changed markedly over the past few decades.

The increasing interactions between Inuit and outsiders throughout the 20th century led to an expectation that Inuit participation in land activities would decline as they became more behaviorally similar to non-Inuit through wage labor and settlement life. Acculturation models, developed by both non-Inuit researchers, and by Inuit themselves, predicted that Canadian Inuit would become like southern, non-aboriginal Canadians or Qallunaat (the terms will be used interchangeably here) (Hughes 1965; Vallee 1968; Rasing 1994). Such models begin their analysis with an original Inuit identity, which is often labeled 'Inummariit' (real or genuine Inuit. compare Brody 1975). This 'traditional' identity has been assigned since at least the mid-20th century to Inuit who live close to the land in outpost or traditional seasonal camps and conduct subsistence activities as their primary economic focus. Their exclusive use of the Inuktitut language, maintenance of pre-settlement cultural

traditions and behaviors, and their considerable knowledge of, and reliance on, the local natural environment set them apart from Inuit living full time in settlements. This life style and identity however, appear to be largely economically untenable and socially undesirable under modern conditions, since few Inuit have embraced them in recent decades.

The opposing identity discussed in acculturation models, 'Qallunaamariit' (real or genuine people of the non-Inuit people. compare Rasing 1994; Searles 2008), depicts Inuit as essentially the same as southerners, except for their aboriginal parentage. This identity can be seen as the persistence of an ethnic identity for Inuit, but a loss of cultural identity (compare Dorais 1994; Oosten and Remie 1999). One weakness of the Qallunaamariit identity idea is that it neglects the unique geographic location of the Inuit, and supposes a break from their own history. The acculturation model uses these two identities, Inummariit and Qallunaamariit, to represent the ends of an identity spectrum, and assumes intermediate positions are ephemeral and tied to the first generation to live in settlements.

Most researchers today recognize the complex aspects of modern Inuit identity as sitting somewhere between these two extremes, and the intermediate positions are seen as viable long-term identities (Nuttall 1992; Dorais 1997; Searles 2008). In fact, many consider that middle ground to exemplify adaptation to modern living conditions, but with connections to the past and the landscape. Acculturation is seen as the extreme situation, in which that link is broken. Wenzel (2001: 44) however, notes that researchers have found evidence of both adaptation and acculturation, and suggests instead that adaptation and acculturation 'seem to have concurrent and, perhaps, coeval validity'. He suggests they are two characteristics of the same system, in which adaptation confers system stability and resilience, while acculturation offers self-transformation, and notes that the same data may sometimes be interpreted as supporting either adaptation or acculturation. Perhaps the most telling example of these contrasting interpretations are the papers by Condon and colleagues (1995) and by Stern (2000) which rely on the same data, but provide different perspectives on the role of subsistence activities in the lives of young Inuit men at Holman (Ulukhaktok), N.W.T. Wenzel's 2001 analysis allowed discussion of Inuit identity to move on from this classic dichotomy, to (re)join more recent and broader understandings of culture, space and colonial influences (compare Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Appadurai 1996).

However, the fear of acculturation continues to haunt Inuit communities, as one of the participants expressed in this study:

In 50 years, people won't hunt and camp as much, since they don't get involved now. They're losing it, becoming more Qallunaat (Mary Killikti, Qikiqtarjuaq, personal communication, 28 June 2012).

The idea of being less 'Inuit' because of a decline in land activities persists in the minds of Inuit. Therefore, the Inuit-land relationship, as an elemental aspect of identity, continues as a relevant line of inquiry for northern anthropologists and geographers. This paper then, while reporting on what Inuit (especially Inuit women) do on the land and their level of participation in said activities, is also about how Inuit in remote eastern Canadian Arctic communities construct their identity today. It examines more closely what cultural movement along the Inummariit-Qallunaamariit continuum would look like, and contrasts that with the movement away from that continuum that is exhibited by Inuit today through their choice of activities and how they think about themselves and their communities.

In addressing this topic, two other weaknesses in the academic literature are examined. The first is the combining of many aspects of the Inuit-land relationship under the umbrella of hunting. Certainly, hunting served as the central economic activity of Inuit life on the land, and remains of major interest to Inuit today (Condon and others 1995; Rasing 1999; Dahl 2000). It has also been a favorite topic of research since Boas (1888), particularly during the mid-20th century as part of the idea of cultural evolution with hunting being perceived as the 'original' lifestyle of humans, and Inuit as the quintessential hunting culture (Lee and Devore 1969). The term 'hunting' is often treated as synonymous with trips on the land (Rasing 1999) and thus other forms of procurement (compare Shannon 2006) or reasons for going on the land were neglected. Further, the understanding of the term by non-Inuit readers may neglect the holistic aspect of Inuit understandings of hunting that encompass much more than the physical capture of animals. These include, for example, spiritual and psychological relationships between humans and animals, and relationships within the human community as well (Smith and Wright 1989; Stairs and Wenzel 1992; Dowsley 2010; Searles 2010). The fact that the Inuit concept of hunting is sometimes misunderstood by non-Inuit audiences underscores the possibility that neglecting other facets of the Inuit-land relationship may cause us to overlook some important features of Inuit identity and world view. This paper tries to explore further the Inuit-land relationship by organizing the analysis around the division of the suite of goods acquired from the land into the broad categories of material and non-material goods. This reduces the focus on hunting, without attempting to exclude it from the analysis.

The second weakness that this paper aims to address is the gendered nature of Inuit-land research. This is closely linked to the focus on hunting, which, as primarily a male activity, neglects the relationship between women and the land. Most land/hunting research has been conducted by male researchers with Inuit men as the main or only participants (compare Freeman 1976; Condon and others 1995; Rasing 1999). This male bias has been due to the biases of southern societies which saw far more male researchers set off for the north, the southern cultural misunderstanding of the Inuit concept of hunting, and the historic, and often still persistent, Inuit division of labor which sees men as the main leaders on the land

(through their navigational and hunting skills) while women's traditional work has been more in support and in social roles, such as the processing and distribution of harvests (Boas 1888; Guemple 1986; Reimer 1996; Matthiasson 2002; Williamson 2006; Duncan 2010). This is, however, not always the case. For example, in berry picking, men frequently serve as the supporters while women organize and conduct the harvest, and in ice fishing, men do more of the heavy physical work, such as drilling holes in the ice, while women support the group through setting up camp and preparing food, but both sexes devote equal energy to the actual harvesting of fish (Shannon 2006). In order to contribute to a more holistic understanding of the Inuit-land relationship, this paper explores how Inuit women interact with the land and how their relationship with the land have changed. This alternate perspective also supports the focus on an assessment of the acculturation model of community change and the ways in which the study participants are constructing their identities today.

This paper reports on field research that focused on how women relate to the land, and links that research with the predominantly male-focused literature, in order to gain a fuller understanding of how goods from the land are selected and accessed for both sexes under modern conditions. This focus on women and concomitant focus away from the physical acts of hunting, also assists in teasing apart the material and non-material goods that derive from the land, but which are often combined in studies of Inuit (male) hunting. The discussion uses this information to put to rest Inuit concerns about acculturation occurring if land-based activities decline. It then turns to the ways in which Inuit culture is being transformed through new activities that are built on past activities and an Inuit worldview. It concludes that although land-based activities of all types are valued and important in identity construction, a new identity is being forged that relies more on how Inuit think and act, than in what specific activities they do on the land.

#### A. Family:

**“Examining the impact of Euro-Canadian architecture on Inuit families living in Arctic Canada,” Peter C. Dawson, Space Syntax, 2003 [21]**

<http://www.spacesyntax.net/symposia-archive/SSS4/fullpapers/21Dawsonpaper1.pdf>

#### Abstract:

Recent ethnographic fieldwork in the Canadian Arctic has revealed differences in the patterns of housekeeping practiced by Inuit and Euro-Canadian families. These differences are reflected in the types of activities Inuit families carry out, and how these activities are distributed within houses. The majority of Inuit family activities occur in integrated spaces such as living rooms and kitchens, because daily activities provide an important context for social interaction among family members. The use of space syntax analysis to examine houses built over the past 50 years in the Canadian north indicates a trend towards floor plans with narrow view fields and

a greater number of smaller rooms. This trend reflects the increasing importance of individualism and privacy in Euro-Canadian society, and is not compatible with the more collective forms of social interaction that characterize Inuit families. These results should be of importance to architects and planners interested in designing and building houses that better reflect the cultural values and lifestyles of Inuit families.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

Life in an Inuit community does not parallel life in southern Canada. Daily activities like hunting, fishing, the upkeep of rifles, fishing nets, snow machines, as well as family values, and entertaining and visiting habits define cultural values that differ considerably from those of Euro-Canadian society. Yet, since the 1950s, northern housing policy and urban planning have focused primarily on providing cost-effective, durable Euro-Canadian style houses and efficiently serviced communities to Inuit peoples. The unique economic and cultural configurations of Inuit families have been largely left out of the design and planning process. As a result, we might expect the patterns of housekeeping practiced by Inuit families to differ radically from those of their Euro-Canadian counterparts. This seems to have been the case 30 years ago, when several studies were initiated by Canadian Federal Government agencies to examine how the switch to western housing had impacted on Inuit family life. At the time, fieldworkers documented families butchering animals in living rooms, storing seal meat in bathtubs, drum dancing in living rooms, and using kitchens to repair engines and firearms. But is this still the case today? Do Inuit families continue to graft their unique activities and cultural values spatially onto the Euro-Canadian style houses they currently occupy? And, if so, then what affect has this had on domestic life, social interactions among friends and family members, and the adequacy and durability of northern housing? Can new design principles be developed from the documentation of such differences that could assist in designing future houses that better reflect the lifestyles and cultural values of Inuit families?

The objective of this paper is to examine these important questions through space syntax analysis and the results of field research conducted in the Inuit hamlet of Arviat, Nunavut, during the summer of 2002. Observations of the domestic activities of Inuit families were mapped onto the floor plans of northern houses. Space syntax analysis was then used to analyze and interpret these observations. A relational database of information on space use by Inuit families was also constructed using Microsoft Access to serve as a decision-support system for architects and planners working in the Canadian north. Results indicate that Inuit families differ from Euro-Canadian families in both the types of domestic activities they engage in, and how these activities are distributed within the house. The observational approach used in this project could be considered as a form of Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit (knowledge of all areas of life) because it provides Inuit families with a means of “educating”



architects and planners about the spatial requirements of their unique activities and cultural values.

**“The Inuit: Family,” Canada’s First Peoples, 2007 [22]**  
[https://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp\\_groups/fp\\_inuit6.html](https://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_groups/fp_inuit6.html)

#### Overview:

- Family groups were the most important social unit in Inuit culture.
- They usually lived in family groups of around 5-6 people.
- Then each family would live and hunt together with 6-10 other families.
- Marriage was important for the Inuit people. Some marriages were arranged, but most were by choice.
- There was an obvious division of labor in a marriage:
  - Men: built the houses, hunted, and fished
  - Women: cooked, dressed the animal skins, made clothing, and looked after the children

#### Current & Relevant Information:

- The Inuit lived in smaller family groups with no real leader or Chief, unlike other First Peoples groups in Canada.
- During the winter, families would live and hunt together in larger groups (several families), but during the summer they would split up to follow the hunt.
- Loose alliances would occur between different families (non-relatives), forming larger 'bands' or groups.
- There was a sense of community in Inuit culture. Food sources, game and fish, were considered to be community property, and it was expected that individuals always help one another and share any wealth.

**“Inuit parent perspectives on sexual health communication with adolescent children in Nunavut: “It's kinda hard for me to try to find the words”,” Gwen Healey, International Journal of Circumpolar Health, 2014 [23]**  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3402/ijch.v73.25070>

#### Abstract:

##### **Background**

For Inuit, the family unit has always played a central role in life and in survival. Social changes in Inuit communities have resulted in significant transformations to economic, political and cultural aspects of Inuit society. Where the family unit was

once the setting for dialogue on family relations and sexuality, this has largely been replaced by teachings from the medical community and/or the school system.

### **Objective**

The purpose of this study was to explore Inuit parent perspectives on sharing knowledge with teenage children about sexual health and relationships.

### **Method**

A qualitative Indigenous knowledge approach was used for this study with a focus on Inuit ways of knowing as described in the Piliriqattigiinniq Community Health Research Partnership Model. Interviews were conducted with 20 individual parents in 3 Nunavut communities in 2011. Parents were asked about whether and how they talk to their children about sexual health and relationships. An analytical approach building on the concept of Iqqaumaqatigiiniq (“all knowing coming into one”), which is similar to “immersion and crystallization,” was used to identify story elements, groupings or themes in the data. The stories shared by parents are honored, keeping their words intact as often as possible in the presentation of results.

### **Results**

Parents shared stories of themselves, family members and observations of the community. Fifteen of 17 mothers in the study reported having experienced sexual abuse as children or adolescents. Parents identified the challenges that they have and continue to experience as a result of forced settlement, family displacement and the transition of Inuit society. They expressed a desire to teach their children about sexual health and relationships and identified the need for emotional support to do this in the wake of the trauma they have experienced. Parents highly valued elders and the knowledge they have about family relationships and childrearing.

### **Conclusion**

There are powerful, unresolved healing issues in Inuit communities. The traumatic experiences of the settlement and residential school era continue to have an impact on present-day family relationships. To support parent–child dialogue on sexual health and relationships, parents identified a need to repair relationships between youth and elders, and to provide culturally sensitive support to parents to heal from trauma.

### **Current & Relevant Information:**

In 2009, Nunavut reported high rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea, both of which are sexually transmitted infections, (3,772/100,000 and 1,588/100,000, respectively), compared to Canadians (259/100,000 and 33/100,000, respectively) (1). Concerns about these high rates and the high rates of teen pregnancy in Nunavut (161.3/1,000 compared to 38.2/1,000 in the rest of Canada) prompted community members in Nunavut to ask questions about how parents and their children talk about sexual

health (2–4). The family unit was once the setting for dialogue on family relations, reproductive health and sexuality, and this has largely been replaced by teachings from the medical community and/or the school system. The purpose of this study was to explore Inuit parent perspectives on sharing knowledge with adolescent children about sexual health and partner relationships.

Family is the primary context in which a child grows, develops an identity, is socialized, is hurt and healed, and navigates physical and social development (5). The family is a naturally occurring unit and the context in which most behavior-shaping experiences can occur. In recent years, increased attention has been given to the role of the family in predicting and understanding the sexual behavior of adolescents in the literature (6–9). Family factors, such as communication, availability of parents, spending time together outside the home and engaging in activities together can have an impact on the extent to which behavior problems or choices endure and become part of a healthy or unhealthy lifestyle (5, 7) (10). For example, adolescents who reported positive relationships and shared activities with parents were less likely to initiate sex (7). Parental communication about sex and condom use has been shown to directly relate to adolescent sexual behavior (8). Whitaker and Miller (8) found that peer norms were more strongly related to sexual decision making among adolescents who had not discussed sex or condoms with a parent. The authors suggest that results indicate that a lack of communication may cause adolescents to turn to peers and that peers may then influence their behavior. Parental discussions have been associated with less risky sexual behavior among adolescents, less conformity to peer norms and a greater belief that parents provide the most useful information about sex (6, 8) (11). Research has shown that adolescents are more likely to use birth control when there is parental support to do so (12). In addition, research has shown that some teens want to have discussions about sex with their parents and other caregivers, more so than others, to help them understand sexuality and to guide them in their own decision making (13). Parent–teen discussions about sexual health topics are important because they (a) provide information to teens, (b) they reinforce parental values and (c) they buffer teens from peer pressure (8). Parental closeness and monitoring, rather than the actual specifics of parent–child communication, may also play a role because parents who talk to their children about sex or condoms may have already established closer relationships with their children (8, 11).

For Inuit, the family unit has always played a central role in life and in survival (14). Inuit kinship extends beyond familial affiliation to other non-biological affiliations including adoption, friendship, marriage or partnership, and namesake (15–18). Every person had a specific and essential role to play in making contributions towards family survival and the education of young children and adolescents (16, 19) (20). Before contact, small groups of Inuit families travelled together to different camps and hunting grounds, in *ilagiit nunagivaktangat*. Each person within a kinship group was valued for his or her contribution to the group's well-being and success. A

child's earliest learning occurred as they observed and made meaning from the actions of their parents and extended family in the camp (22, 23). Children learned valuable behaviors, such as self-restraint, patience, non-aggressiveness, generosity and responsibility, by watching their family members lead by example (16, 24) (25).

When Inuit lived in family-based nomadic camps, teaching about sexual health and relationships was part of a dialogue between children and their parents or extended family, which occurred as part of the sharing of knowledge on a variety of topics. Painngut Peterloosie (26) highlighted the importance that was placed on the openness of the relationship dialogue between romantic partners in discussing, for example, menstruation, sex or sexual satisfaction. After the settlement era in the 1950s, during which time Inuit settled into communities, were sent to residential school and/or were sent away to Canadian cities for medical treatment, parent–child–extended family interaction changed significantly because many families were separated and displaced (21, 27) (28). Today in Nunavut, as in many other jurisdictions, parents and family are no longer the sole source for information about sexual health knowledge and behaviors, if they are a source at all (24, 29–33). The school system, peers, television, Internet, media, community members, teachers and others now play a role in the transmission of attitudes, knowledge and beliefs about sexual health behaviors (29, 33) (34). In a study of the perspectives of 53 Inuit women on teen pregnancy, some respondents identified less parental control over young people and greater influence on behavior from other individuals outside of the family as a worrisome trend in larger communities compared to pre-settlement times (29). In a review of determinants of sexual health among Inuit adolescents, Steenbeek, Tyndall (32) asserted that Inuit parents and grandparents did not feel competent to instruct their own children in sexual health. Trauma experienced during and after the settlement and settlement era in the Eastern Arctic (35, 36); the loss of accumulated Inuit wisdom, knowledge, teachings and practices regarding life cycle, reproductive health and family planning that occurred as a result (21, 30) (32, 37) (38); and the changing nature of northern communities (28, 29) (39) could be factors contributing to the lack of confidence reported among parents.

### **“The Inuit,” Canada’s First Peoples [24]**

[http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp\\_groups/fp\\_inuit1.html](http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_groups/fp_inuit1.html)

#### Overview:

The people of the Canadian Arctic are known as the Inuit. They used to be called Eskimos, which came from a Native American word for 'eater of raw meat'. Now the Arctic people are officially known as the Inuit, which means 'the people', or singularly, Inuk, which means 'the person'.

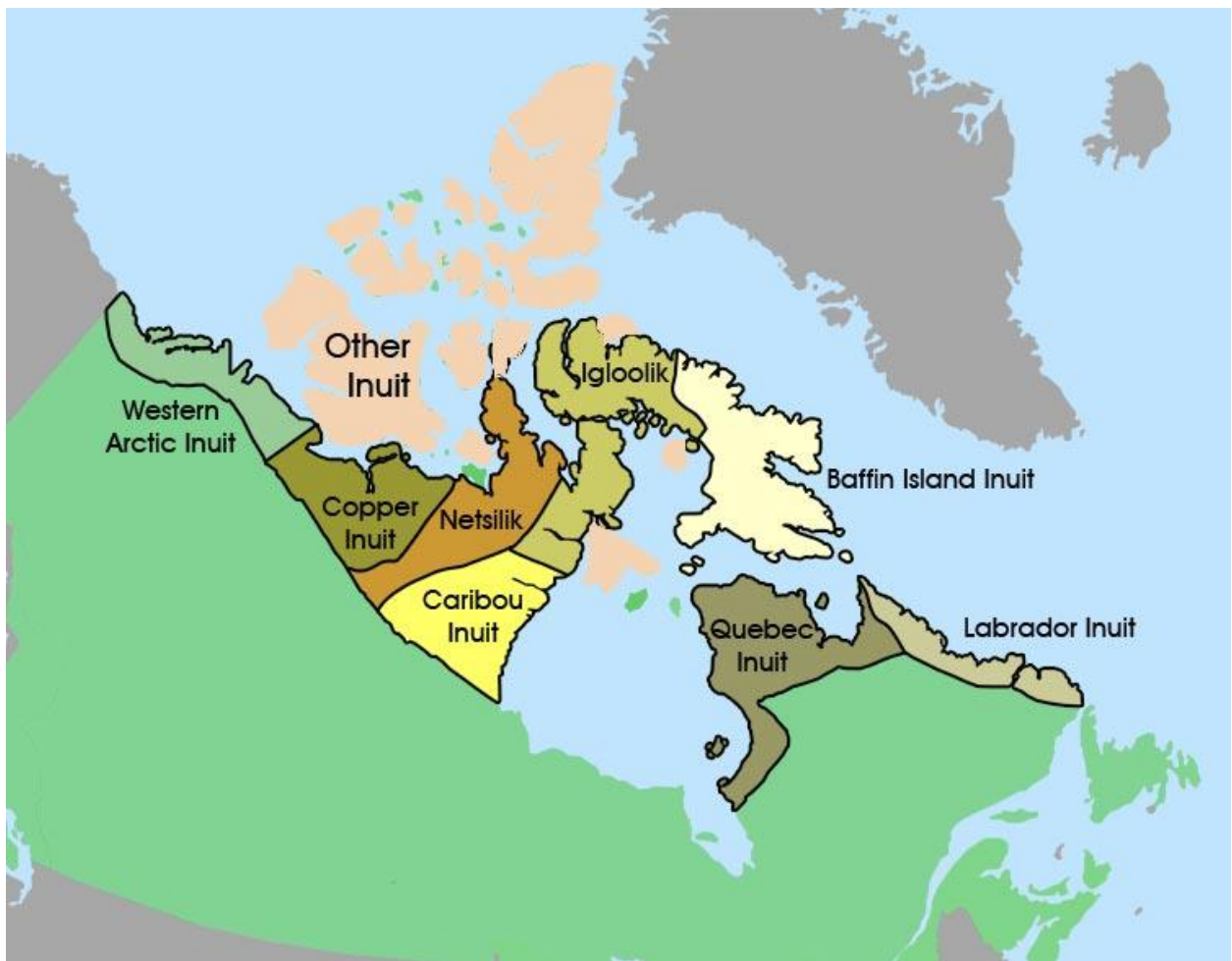
#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Inuit were the last native people to arrive in North America. All the good land to the south was already occupied by hostile Indians so they settled in the Arctic.

Nobody else wanted it because it was one of the most extreme climates in the world. But the Inuit were masters at adapting to sustain their people over thousands of years.

The Inuit lived in an area comprising a large part of northern Earth, including Northern Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Siberia.

The Inuit have a distinct culture and appearance from other First Peoples groups in Canada, which really set them apart. Historically, the Canadian Inuit were divided into eight main groups: Labrador Inuit, Ungava or New Quebec Inuit, Baffin Island, Igloolik, Caribou, Netsilik, Copper and Western Arctic Inuit.



**“Family Structures: Inuit,” Canadian Geographic: Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada [25] <https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/article/youth-and-elders/>**

#### Overview:

Inuit methods of raising children differ considerably from those in Southern Canada. To the outside observer, Inuit children enjoy a substantial amount of freedom, as indicated by the fact that when not in school, children stay up much later than

southern children, are often fed when they are hungry and not according to a set meal schedule, and are disciplined in a different manner by their parents. To the uninformed observer, Inuit parents may appear indifferent or overly lax with their children, though this misconception is largely due to cultural differences.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Naming Customs**

Inuit believe that when a child is born, the “soul” or spirit of a recently deceased relative or community member is taken on by the newborn. The newborn is then named after this person. This “soul” manifests in the child in a variety of ways, including certain physical characteristics, skills or personality traits. Since the child is, in a sense, part of the person whom they were named after, the child is deserving of the same respect and treatment their namesake received while alive. It would be considered inappropriate, under these circumstances, to tell a child what to do, as this would be the equivalent of ordering an Elder or another adult about, in violation of important social values in Inuit culture.

These beliefs regarding children have resulted in Inuit parents allowing their children a much greater degree of freedom than most non-Inuit would be comfortable with. As long as they do not harm themselves or other people, or damage important items such as food or hunting equipment, there are few limits placed on the activities of children. This should not be interpreted as the parents being overly permissive, because the practice includes certain limitations as well. For example, a child may receive affectionate cuddling or choice bits of food when he requests it. However, a child who is pouting or throwing a tantrum may be ignored, and to do otherwise would be considered intrusive and could possibly slow the development of the child’s ability to reason.

This does not mean Inuit children are not disciplined. Young children will be restrained if they persist in a potentially dangerous activity. Subtle verbal cues by older members of the family indicate to children when their behavior is inappropriate. Teasing is used as an effective means of drawing attention to a child’s poor behavior. Older children are rarely physically disciplined, but when this does occur it is, as in many cultures, more often an expression of the parent’s frustration or anger than a real effort to change the child’s behavior. A more effective means of guiding an older child is to talk to another person about the child’s behavior within hearing distance rather than to have a direct confrontation.

### **Birth of a Child**

Traditionally, the mother was often assisted in giving birth by an older woman experienced in childbirth. This older woman might also look for clues that would indicate the future and character of the child. After the baby was born, the child assumed its place on the family sleeping platform next to the mother. From the day

of birth, the baby was in almost constant contact with the mother, either in the pouch beneath the hood of her amauti (a special parka with a large hood, used to carry the baby on the mother's back) or nestled in the front of the amauti for feeding. The baby would spend much of its early life tucked into the amauti and remain the favorite of the family. Older girls often assumed some of the duties associated with raising young children.

### **Breastfeeding**

A child would traditionally be weaned when the mother became pregnant with her next child. This was three years on average, but it was not uncommon to have children as old as five years still being suckled if there were no younger siblings to displace them. Weaning was a difficult time for children, as it heralded an end to the period when they were the center of the family's attention.

Once weaned, the child was gradually encouraged to develop more adult behaviours such as self-control, patience, generosity and consideration for others. Instruction in these behaviors was carefully directed towards younger children. Children were expected to become more helpful around the home and to begin learning skills that would help them later in life. In general, girls were introduced to these responsibilities earlier than boys and were expected to begin to assume responsibilities towards their younger siblings as early as four years of age. Children were also taught to show respect to Elders by being sensitive to their needs and listening to their advice. As the children matured, they were allowed to either accept or reject the advice of older people without fear of criticism.

### **Adoption**

The bonds between children and adults are fluid in Inuit society in comparison with those in the larger Canadian society. Children are commonly seen darting around visiting various households, staying for quick visits and then dashing off to visit another home. Any adult can exercise authority in terms of discipline, instruction and disapproval for inappropriate behaviour, though the responsibility for children generally rests with the immediate family.

This fluidity of bonds between adults and children extends into adoption practices. A child who loses his parents carries no stigma in Inuit society. Orphans are readily accepted into another household, usually that of a close relative. If a couple are unable to have children themselves, they could ask another couple who have had several children to adopt their next child. If this avenue proves fruitless, they could ask more distant relatives or friends. Once adopted into the new family, children know who their biological parents are, but their primary loyalty is to the adoptive parents. The biological mother often retains a very special relationship with the child and plays an active role in the child's life.

**“Seeing like an Inuit family: The relationship between house form and culture in northern Canada,” Peter C. Dawson, *Etudes/Inuit/Studies*, 2006 [26]**

<https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/etudinit/2006-v30-n2-etudinit1994/017568ar/>

Abstract:

In his classic essay *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo*, Marcel Mauss argued that a strong relationship exists between the spatial organization of traditional Inuit house forms and the social morphology of the families they shelter. These observations anticipate later works in anthropology that examine how cultural processes are reflected in, and sustained by, the built environment. Such ideas are important when considering the effects of post-war housing programs on Inuit families in the Canadian Arctic. During the 1960s, attempts were made to restructure the routines of Inuit families through Euro-Canadian architecture and home economics classes. Recent ethnographic observations of Inuit households in operation, however, reveal that many continue to use their houses in traditional ways. By doing so, Inuit families are attempting to adapt to dwellings designed around another culture's concept of homemaking and family life. Mauss' ideas are therefore a poignant reminder of the need to take cultural factors into account when developing aboriginal housing policy.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Marcel Mauss was arguably the first anthropologist to draw attention to the relationship between house form and culture in Inuit and Eskimo societies. These observations were contained in an essay entitled *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo*. The essay was published in 1906, roughly six decades before Inuit in the Canadian Arctic were introduced to western-style housing, during a time Damas (2002) has referred to as the settlement era. High modernist ideas, based on the notion that human life could be improved through technology and progress, inspired many government programs in the Canadian Arctic during this period. Social housing programs, and the movement of Inuit into settled communities, were prominent among these modernist schemes. However, the degree to which they actually improved the lives of Inuit is debatable. It was certainly true that families living in settled communities had better access to outside supplies. Euro-Canadian houses also made life easier for those Inuit involved in wage labor employment, and Qallunaat schooling (Tester 2006: 240). However, because these new houses had not been designed with the lifestyles of Inuit in mind, families often used them as if they were traditional dwellings. Seal oil lamps, for example, were used to offset the high annual heating costs of oil stoves and furnaces (Condon 1996: 140-141). Families were also observed butchering seals in living rooms, storing the meat in bathtubs, and repairing mechanized hunting equipment in living rooms, bedrooms,



and kitchens, all of which created obvious health risks (Bruce 1969; Collings et al. 1998; Condon 1996; Thomas and Thompson 1972).

In response, home economists, armed with educational materials, were sent to the Arctic to try and alter Inuit patterns of homemaking, so that they matched those of Euro-Canadian families (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1968). While these experiences did resonate among some members of Inuit society, many families continued to use the spaces in their homes in ways that outsiders often found unorthodox. Currently, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the Inuit-run Nunavut Housing Corporation, are attempting to develop new house designs and housing policies that better accommodate the lifestyles and cultural values of contemporary Inuit families. Unfortunately, these initiatives have been hindered by funding shortages and a lack of baseline information on the spatial requirements of Inuit families, many of whom currently practice a mix of traditional and Western lifestyles (Dawson 2003, 2004).

Mauss' observations of the necessity of 'fit' between house form and household raise several interesting questions: What happens when individuals are forced to inhabit houses that are designed around another culture's concepts of family life? Do they alter their lives to match those of their new architectural surroundings? Or do they rigidly adhere to their traditional routines and practices in order to retain their cultural identity? The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine the extent to which Inuit families continue to use their houses in traditional ways. Ethnoarchaeological fieldwork, undertaken during the summer of 2002 in the community of Arviat (Nunavut) was used to document the activities of a sample of Inuit households over a period of three months. The domestic practices of Inuit families were then charted and quantified using an analytical technique called space syntax analysis. Space syntax maps differences in room accessibility within a dwelling, allowing the researcher to examine how domestic practices are structured relative to culturally derived concepts of public and private space (Bafna 2003; Batty and Rana 2004; Hanson 1998; Hillier 1996; Millier and Hanson 1984; Hillier et al 1996). Results indicate that Inuit households continue to use space in accordance with the requirements of traditional activities, and the collective nature of their domestic lives. These patterns of space use appear unorthodox to outsiders because the houses that Inuit currently occupy have been designed around another culture's concept of home-making and family life.

There are many reasons for housing shortages in Canadian Arctic communities, including high birth rates, and the increasing presence of nuclear family households. An absence of culturally appropriate housing further exacerbates these shortages because Euro-Canadian dwellings are easily damaged by many traditional practices. Consequently, Mauss' observation that architecture mirrors social life has important implications for the development of northern Aboriginal housing policy in the 21st century.

**“Arctic Indigenous Peoples in Canada,” Milton M.R. Freeman, Zach Parrott, and Michelle Filice, The Canadian Encyclopedia, 27 October 2021 [27]**  
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-arctic>

### Overview:

The term Arctic peoples in Canada generally refers to the Inuit population, descendants of the Thule people, who lived in the Arctic from 400 to 1,000 years ago. The Inuit refer to their homeland as Inuit Nunangat. In 2011, there were nearly 60,000 Inuit in Canada, 73 per cent of whom lived in Inuit Nunangat.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Who are Arctic Indigenous Peoples?**



Indigenous peoples in Canada, both historical and contemporary, have inhabited six cultural areas that, unlike provinces and territories, do not have strict boundaries, and instead refer to areas in more general terms. The Arctic is one of these cultural areas. The others include the Plains, Plateau, Subarctic, Northwest Coast and Eastern Woodlands.

Referred to as Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland comprises those inland and coastal areas north of the tree line. It is for this reason that the terms Inuit — itself a generic term — and Arctic peoples are often used interchangeably.

There are nine main Inuit groups in Canada:

- Labradormiut (Labrador Inuit)

- Nunavimmiut (Nunavik Inuit or Ungava Inuit)
- Nunatsiarmiut (Baffin Island Inuit)
- Iglulingmiut (Iglulik Inuit)
- Kivallirmiut (Caribou Inuit)
- Netsilingmiut (Netsilik Inuit)
- Inuinnait (Copper Inuit)
- Qikirtamiut (Sanikiluaq Inuit)
- Inuvialuit (Western Arctic Inuit or Mackenzie Delta Inuit)

A tenth group, the Sallirmiut (Sadlermiut), are no longer in existence.

In 2011, there were nearly 60,000 Inuit in Canada, 73 per cent of whom lived in Inuit Nunangat.

The Inuit are not the only northern Indigenous peoples in Canada. In areas close to the tree line, Indigenous peoples, including some Innu, Dene and Cree nations, have traditionally occupied similar environments to the Inuit (though rarely at the same time), and have hunted and fished similar game species. These northern Indigenous peoples have lived in parts of the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Québec and Labrador.

### **Society**

Historically, Inuit communities contained 100 –1,000 members. These regional bands were the most important social and political unit. Band members often congregated for short periods during the winter months, when people gathered in sealing or hunting camps.

Several regional bands made up the larger Inuit groups. Marriages occurred within these larger groups and all members spoke a similar dialect.

During the rest of the year, Inuit lived in smaller bands, often composed of two to five families. Each household generally consisted of a married couple and their children, though elderly or unmarried relatives might also be present. Many economic and social activities involved inter-household co-operation, and widespread sharing was, and still is, a fundamental characteristic of Inuit social life.

Most families who chose to live together were closely related, with leadership of the group generally assumed by the family heads. In some groups, the isumataaq, an informal leader who was often a young man with proven hunting and leadership skills, also held authority on social matters, such as adoption and marriage.

### **Family Structure**

Marriage was nearly universal among Inuit and customarily took place in early adulthood; it was common for the young couple to reside close to the parents of one or the other spouse. Many households included adopted children; an indication of the high value accorded to children. Children were an important means of establishing valued inter-family relationships through adoption, engagements, adult-child relationships established at birthing ceremonies, and naming practices. The family was an important economic unit, relying on a decided division of responsibilities among all household members, including children and elderly relatives.

Inuit society associated birth with several socially significant rituals. Among some groups, in addition to an attending midwife, there was another adult who served as the child's ritual sponsor, assuming responsibilities for the child's moral upbringing. Throughout life, special terms of address were used. For example, according to a Netsilingmiut elder interviewed in 1991 for Betty Isssenman's *Sinews of Survival* (1997), a godfather calls his goddaughter *arnaliaq*, which means "making you a woman," while she calls him *sanajiarjuk*, "dear little maker." Naming occurred at birth and had special significance, as Inuit names included part of the identity and character of the name bearer.

The arrangement of children's future marriages could occur at any time, even before birth. Young people promised to each other used a special form of address, and their families related in ways appropriate to the future relationship. Marriage, an exceptionally stable institution among Inuit, was customarily preceded by a period of trial marriage. Polygyny, having multiple wives, and more rarely polyandry, having multiple husbands, also occurred, but were not common practices.

**"The Arctic As A Homeland: Family Life," Piers Vitebsky, [TheArctic \[28\]](http://www.thearctic.is/articles/overviews/homeland/enska/kafli_0202.htm)**  
[http://www.thearctic.is/articles/overviews/homeland/enska/kafli\\_0202.htm](http://www.thearctic.is/articles/overviews/homeland/enska/kafli_0202.htm)

#### Overview:

Though families of parents and children generally live in separate houses or tents, they also depend on a wide range of relatives and even other people whom they call relative. They share and help each other as part of daily life.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Earlier, children always learned adult tasks through watching their fathers hunt or their mothers preparing meat and skins. Now some of them live in towns and must learn town skills. But for those who live in the tundra and forest, there is a problem. In order to learn to survive in the modern world as well, they must go to school.

But the schools are often in villages and towns, far away from where their parents live. So, the children must live away from their parents much of the time in boarding schools. There they learn subjects which have little to do with their life at home and they lose touch with the world of their parents. They are also often taught in English,

Russian or Danish and so lose the ability to speak their own language Among the Eveny, for example, children leave the village to join the herds only for the summer holidays, and so they never learn how to herd reindeer through the winter months.

## B. Religion:

**“Arctic Indigenous Peoples in Canada,” Milton M.R. Freeman, Zach Parrott, and Michelle Filice, The Canadian Encyclopedia, 27 October 2021 [29]**

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-arctic>

### Overview:

The term Arctic peoples in Canada generally refers to the Inuit population, descendants of the Thule people, who lived in the Arctic from 400 to 1,000 years ago. The Inuit refer to their homeland as Inuit Nunangat. In 2011, there were nearly 60,000 Inuit in Canada, 73 per cent of whom lived in Inuit Nunangat.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Religion and Spirituality**

Prior to contact with Europeans, Inuit religious leaders were shamans, who underwent lengthy and arduous training. Shamans were intermediaries between the Inuit and the various spiritual forces that influenced activities. Inuit life required strict adherence to various prohibitions and rules of conduct, so the role of the shaman was usually to determine wrongdoers and to prescribe appropriate punishment or compensation.

Early missionary activity was similarly constituted, with many new rules and prohibitions introduced and penitence demanded after sinning. In the 20th century, the intensive efforts of missionaries led many Inuit to adopt Christianity; ordained Inuit clergy or catechists serve many communities.

Inuit mythology, a system based on oral traditions and used to explain and instruct daily life, has experienced resurgence as a vehicle for cultural vitality. Programs exist to support the oral traditions and encourage interaction with traditional stories through youth and elders. Young Inuit are expected to learn by example, through close association with adults. Many of the values and beliefs of the society are demonstrated implicitly in behavior. For instance, the constant sharing of food and other commodities exemplifies the value of generosity and co-operation, and discourages stinginess, greediness and selfishness. Stories that elders like to tell, especially to children, reinforce these important lessons.

**“Religion and Spirituality of Indigenous Peoples in Canada,” Derek G. Smith, Zach Parrot, and Michelle Filice, The Canadian Encyclopedia, 9 July 2019 [30]**

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/religion-of-aboriginal-people>

### Overview:

First Nation, Métis and Inuit religions in Canada vary widely and consist of complex social and cultural customs for addressing the sacred and the supernatural. The influence of Christianity — through settlers, missionaries and government policy — significantly altered life for Indigenous peoples. In some communities, this resulted in hybridized religious practices; while in others, European religion replaced traditional spiritual practices entirely. Though historically suppressed by colonial administrators and missionaries, especially from the late 19th- to mid-20th centuries, many contemporary Indigenous communities have revived, or continue to practice, traditional spirituality.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Definition**

There is no definitive and overarching “Indigenous religion.” Spiritual beliefs vary widely, as do the cultural practices of contemporary Indigenous peoples in Canada. However, there are commonalities among Indigenous spiritual traditions, including the presence of creation stories, the role of [tricksters](#) or of supernatural beings in folklore and the importance of sacred organizations. Additionally, traditional ways of life are often intermingled with religion and spirituality. Activities such as hunting, clan membership and other aspects of daily life may often be imbued with spiritual meaning. This article attempts to discuss broadly similar themes and practices, but is by no means exhaustive or authoritative. More specific information may be found through further reading, or the guidance of community elders.

#### **Religious Institutions and Practices**

Different Indigenous nations have their own religious institutions and sacred practices. Many Plains Indigenous peoples participate in the [Sun Dance](#), while [Coast Salish](#) peoples typically engage in sacred winter ceremonies. The [Haudenosaunee](#) celebrate the Green Corn Ceremony, and some follow the [False Face Society](#). Among the [Ojibwe](#), the [Midewiwin](#) is a spiritual society and essential part of the Anishinaabe world view. [Medicine bundles](#) — objects of ritual that are specific to the person carrying them — are common among the spiritual traditions of various Indigenous peoples, including the [Siksika](#), [Cree](#) and Ojibwe.

Institution stories tell about the origins of these cultural practices. Ritual tales, on the other hand, serve as detailed texts for the performance of institutions, ceremonies and rituals. Fertility, birth, initiation and death rites are often clearly stipulated in spiritual traditions. [Shamanic](#) performances may also be described. Such ceremonies are often preceded by stringent purification rites, such as [sweat lodges](#) or baths (common for Salish, Siksika and [Eastern Woodlands peoples](#)), fasting and sexual abstinence. Feasting is also a common feature of these ceremonies.

**“Akutaq: The Impact of Colonialism on Inuit Religiosity and Literature,” Rita Nándori, *Eger Journal of American Studies*, 2020 [31]**  
[http://real.mtak.hu/121501/1/61\\_77\\_N%C3%A1ndori.pdf](http://real.mtak.hu/121501/1/61_77_N%C3%A1ndori.pdf)

Overview:

“Above each hut waved a little white flag—signs that the inmates had relinquished their old heathen faith and become Christian” (Rasmussen 118). The shaman Aua had explained to Knud Rasmussen that traditions based on experience and generational knowledge are what the Inuit adhere to. The harsh Arctic life is reflected in Aua’s description of Inuit beliefs. The shaman explains that fear is the primary guiding force of life:

“We fear the elements with which we have to fight in their fury to wrest out food from land and sea.

We fear cold and famine in our snow huts.

We fear the sickness that is daily to be seen amongst us.

We fear the souls of the dead of human and animals alike.” (Rasmussen 130)

This summary of Inuit faith is not foreign to Christianity where god-fearing is an often-used term. All of the things feared by Aua—such as illness and a variety of hardships—are feared by Christians as well. While Christians believe that everything is governed by the will of God, the Inuit are less certain why things happen the way they do (Rasmussen 129-130). The existence of the spirit world—something divine that is beyond the material world— that intertwines all is not unknown to Inuit faith. To be a good person is what the Christian commandments teach people, similarly Inuit teachings rest upon proper behavior and avoidance of evil doings (Piercey-Lewis 252-253).

Current & Relevant Information:

Riding the wave of this mutual comparability, a variety of Christian faiths attempted to spiritually colonize the Canadian Arctic: Moravian, Pentecostal, Holy Alliance, Anglican, Roman Catholic all sent their brothers to learn about and evangelize the Inuit (Whidden 1). Sometimes many different Christian religions were present in one community. According to Oosten and Remie, in the case of the Pelly Bay (present-day Kugaartuk) settlement, which was reached by Catholic missions, the Oblates of the church were more invested in warding off Anglican influences than making sure if Inuit converts of the faith really believed and practiced their new religion (109). Naturally, the Natives of the vast tundra implemented Catholicism to their arctic realities as it best fit them, creating a sort of religious mixture or akutaq in their spiritual tradition adapting elements from Christianity and in a way that best fit the already existing Inuit system of belief. However, evidence points to the fact that missionaries in Kugaartuk believed themselves to be superior to the Inuit by way of

spiritual intelligence transmitted through Christianity (Oosten, Remie 3) and were largely oblivious to the actual religiosity of the Inuit they thought to have converted. It is possible that the protection of the Inuit from their own paganism or the influences of non-Catholic missionaries barred the Oblates from inquiries into the spiritual lives of those to be converted to see if there was compatibility between the two religious traditions. This is of no surprise and is a common method of a culture thinking of themselves as better in some way than the inhabitants of the land it arrives to colonize. However benign the motivations of these missionaries were, it can easily be seen, how a certain sensitivity was missing from their approach.

Unlike in other historical examples of colonial efforts, in the case of the Arctic, not only did Christian missionaries learn Inuktitut to deliver the message of the Bible to the Inuit, but they gave them writing through introducing Cree syllabics. The purely oral culture of the Inuit thus transitioned into a written period, altering the shape of how Inuit traditional knowledge, qaujimagatuqangit is delivered. The first things written down—even before Inuit traditions—were religious hymns translated from German into Inuktitut by the Moravian Brethren. Music, dance and poetry are intertwined in Inuit tradition; thus, for the purposes of this study, I will treat hymns and song lyrics as poetry—similarly to Rasmussen and Boas, who identified Inuit songs as poems (Martin 165).

**“Inuit Arctic Policy,” Inuit Circumpolar Council, 2010 [32]**

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/236381814.pdf>

Overview:

If you look at a globe from on top, you get a surprising view. Inuit own or have jurisdiction over half the entire Arctic, stretching over half of the world’s circumference; we are, in fact, the largest landholders in the world. Yet, we number only about 155,000 in four countries Russia/Chukotka; US/Alaska; Canada/Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut and Denmark/Greenland. The Arctic has been our home and our sustenance for centuries.

By 2010, Inuit Nunaat, our homeland, has become a major force in international and national politics, in climate change research and science, in culture and arts, in minority human rights and models of indigenous self-government. Arctic Sovereignty is one of our main concerns and is now also an international concern.

Thirty years ago, when the process of formulating a comprehensive Inuit Arctic Policy began, it was almost a novelty to speak of Inuit rights and some regarded the first document as unattainable. But people have underestimated our adaptability and resilience. “We were a rag-tag and young group of Inuit”, as Mary May Simon, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, recently said in a speech, “but we were determined”.



She was right, we were determined to improve our living conditions and safeguard our land. We are a culturally-anchored people who not only created principles for a policy but also managed to get many of them implemented; today many of our early pioneers, who worked so tirelessly, against almost impossible odds, are distinguished national or international leaders. In those thirty years, the Inuit world has changed profoundly; the Inuit Circumpolar Council and its Arctic Policy principles have played an important role in this development.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Religious Freedoms**

1. The spiritual expression of a traditional Inuit culture is part of its greatest treasures, if not the very inspiration of cultural development. The right of all peoples to have the widest possible exercise of spiritual expression must be respected and protected. At the same time, this right must be balanced with the necessary principle of non-interference with the rights of others.
2. Religious beliefs are not limited to organized religions. Persons may genuinely hold beliefs as a matter of religious conviction, even if their beliefs do not necessarily form a part of any particular religion.
3. In regard to Inuit, spiritual identity continues to be derived from their relationship with the land and its wildlife resources. Although Inuit religious practices have, in many instances, undergone some change, this spiritual connection remains an essential part of Inuit culture and religious beliefs. Moreover, the right to profess and practice their own religion or beliefs is a part of Inuit indigenous rights.
4. Religious freedom is closely linked with other human rights, particularly freedom of thought, conscience, and assembly. If exercised responsibly, freedom of religion or belief can contribute to the attainment of the goals of peaceful relations among Inuit and other people.
5. It is important to have the freedom to manifest one's religion or belief, in private or public. This should include the following freedoms, among others:
  - a. to worship, alone or in a group, and to establish and maintain places for such purposes;
  - b. to establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;
  - c. to make, acquire, and use articles and materials necessary for the performance of prescribed rituals;
  - d. to write, publish, and disseminate information on a religion or belief, in a reasonable manner so as not to impair the rights of others to maintain their own religion or beliefs;
  - e. to assign places for burial and to perform funeral or commemorative rites for deceased persons, according to their own religion or beliefs;
  - f. to have gravesites protected from interference by outsiders;
  - g. to have marriage rites performed according to one's religion or beliefs;

- h. to teach a religion or beliefs in places suitable for such purposes;
  - i. to train interested personnel to become religious leaders, as may be required by a particular religion or beliefs;
  - j. to observe days of rest and to celebrate religious or commemorative holidays, according to one's religion or beliefs; and
  - k. to establish and maintain communications, in matters of religion or beliefs, at national and international levels.
6. Consistent with the Inuit Arctic Policy objectives towards global peace, the principle of conscientious objection to military service should be recognized in all circumpolar regions. Exemptions should be granted to all genuine objectors by state governments.
  7. No one should be compelled to take an oath in a manner that is contrary to the rules or principles of his or her religion or belief.
  8. In the workplace, equality of opportunity and treatment of individuals must not be adversely affected on the basis of their religion or beliefs.
  9. Parents should have the right to determine the religion or beliefs and moral education in which their children should be brought up. When a child attains an adequate degree of understanding, her or his wishes should be taken into account. In all cases, the best interests of the child should be the paramount and guiding principle. In no instance should the practices of any religion or belief be injurious to the physical or mental health of children or to their full development.
  10. Dissemination of hate literature, incitement to violence, and other forms of promoting racial, religious, or other prejudices must be effectively prohibited throughout the Arctic.
  11. Education programs and other means should be used to promote acceptance of the principle of non-discrimination, as well as understanding, tolerance, and respect for different religions and for religious freedoms.

**“The Inuit: Religion,” Canada’s First Peoples [33]**

[http://www.firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp\\_groups/fp\\_inuit5.html](http://www.firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_groups/fp_inuit5.html)

Overview:

- The Inuit believed in animism: all living and non-living things had a spirit. That included people, animals, inanimate objects, and forces of nature.
- When a spirit died, it continued living in a different world- the spirit world.
- The only people who had enough power to control the spirits were the powerful religious leaders called the Shamans or 'Angakoks'. Shamans used charms and dances as a means to communicate with the spirit world.
- Shamans also wore carved masks-mostly representing animals- while performing their rituals. It was believed that masks had powers that enabled them to communicate with the spirits.

- To appease the spirits the Shamans would make recommendations. They would suggest offering gifts to the spirits, moving away, and sometimes would fine the person for breaking the rules and angering the spirits.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The Spirits**

- Bad weather, illnesses, and a bad hunt were all blamed on displeased spirits.
- There were certain guidelines that the Inuit were supposed to follow to make the spirits happy.
- They had rituals for hunting and eating food to deal with the spirits that lived in the animals.
- They had to pay a deep respect to the spirit of the animals that they hunted, so that the spirit reappeared in another animal that could sacrifice its life again. If they did not pay their respects to the spirit, the spirit would reappear as a demon.
- Humans also had souls that could be lost or stolen (causes of illness and madness). The belief was that humans were made of three parts: a body, a name, and a soul. When a person died, it was only the body that died, the spirit and name could continue living in a new body. The names of dead relatives were given to babies, ensuring that the soul and name could continue living.

#### **Rules of the Spirit World**

- Here are rules that needed to be followed in order to appease the spirits:
  - Women were not allowed to sew caribou skins inside igloos on sea ice during the winter.
  - The Inuit people did not eat sea mammal and land mammal meat at the same meal.
  - A knife used for killing whales had to be wrapped in sealskin, not caribou skin.
  - After killing a seal, melted snow had to be dripped into its mouth to quench the spirit's thirst.
  - The Inuit saved the bladder of the hunted animals, because the belief was that the spirit was found inside.

#### **Sedna, Goddess of the Sea**

- One of the most important spirits in Inuit culture was Sedna, the Goddess of the Sea.
- She lived at the bottom of the ocean and controlled the seal, whales and other sea animals.

- The belief was that if Inuit made her happy, she would continue to provide them with food.

**“Inuit,” New World Encyclopedia, 24 July 2021 [34]**

<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Inuit&oldid=1055683>

#### Overview:

Inuit (plural: the singular, Inuk, means "man" or "person") is a general term for a group of culturally similar indigenous peoples inhabiting the Arctic regions of Alaska, Greenland, and Canada, and Siberia. There has been a remarkable homogeneity in the culture throughout these areas, which have traditionally relied on fish, marine mammals, and land animals for food, pets, transport, heat, light, clothing, tools, and shelter. The Inuit language is grouped under Eskimo-Aleut languages. Inuit and Aleut are considered separate from other Native Americans.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, and even after their arrival since their homeland was so inhospitable, Inuit lived a traditional semi-nomadic lifestyle of subsistence hunting and fishing, with the extended family as the unit of society, their own form of laws passed on through oral tradition, and a spiritual belief system of rituals that were integrated into the daily life of the people. In the twentieth century, particularly in Canada, Christianity was imposed upon them together with a system of law that they did not understand, in an effort to assimilate them into the dominant Western culture. While their shamans are now gone, and they live in modern houses, much of what defines the Inuit has been preserved. The establishment of Nunavut as a separate territory in Canada, in 1999, provided both land and autonomy for a large segment of the Inuit population.

Today, Inuit work in all sectors of the economy, including mining, oil, and gas, construction, government, and administrative services. Tourism is a growing industry in the Inuit economy. Many Inuit derive part-time income from their sculpture, carving, and other crafts as well as hunting. Inuit culture is alive and vibrant despite the negative impact of their twentieth century history. Just as explorers and others have benefited from Inuit skills in the past, for example their kayaks and use of dog sleds, Inuit people continue to have much to contribute to the world-wide human society.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Gender roles, marriage, and community**

The division of labor in traditional Inuit society had a strong gender component, but it was not absolute. The men were traditionally hunters and fishermen. The women took care of the children, cleaned huts, sewed, processed food, and cooked. However, there are numerous examples of women who hunted out of necessity or as a personal choice. At the same time, men who could be away from camp for several days, would be expected to know how to sew and cook.

The marital customs among the Inuit were not strictly monogamous: many Inuit relationships were implicitly or explicitly sexually open marriages; polygamy, divorce, and remarriage were fairly common. Among some Inuit groups divorce required the approval of the community, if there were children, and particularly the agreement of the elders. Marriages were often arranged, sometimes in infancy, and occasionally forced on the couple by the community. Marriage was common for men when they became productive hunters, and for women at puberty.

The extended family was the social unit. Family structure was flexible: a household might consist of a man and his wife or wives and children; it might include his parents or his wife's parents as well as adopted children; or it might be a larger formation of several siblings with their parents, wives and children; or even more than one family sharing dwellings and resources. Every household had its head, an elder or a particularly respected man.

There was also a larger notion of community, generally several families who shared a place where they wintered. Goods were shared within a household, and also to a significant extent within a whole community.

A pervasive European myth about Inuit was that they killed elderly and unproductive people; although this is not generally true. In a culture with an oral tradition, elders are the keepers of communal knowledge, effectively the community library.

Given the importance that Eskimos attached to the aged, it is surprising that so many Westerners believe that they systematically eliminated elderly people as soon as they became incapable of performing the duties related to hunting or sewing.

It had been presumed by anthropologists that Inuit cultures routinely killed children born with physical defects. However, excavations at the Ukkuqsi archaeological site revealed several frozen bodies (now known as the "frozen family"). Autopsies were performed, and they were interred as the first burials in the Imaiqsaun Cemetery south of Barrow. Years later another body washed out of the bluff—that of a female child, approximately nine years old, who had clearly been born with a congenital birth defect. This child had never been able to walk, but must have been cared for by family throughout her life. That body, dated at about 1200 C.E., suggests that Inuit culture has long valued children, including those with birth defects.

### **Traditional Beliefs**

Inuit religion was closely tied to a system of rituals that were integrated into the daily life of the people. These rituals were simple but held to be necessary. The harshness and randomness of life in the Arctic ensured that Inuit lived with concern for the uncontrollable, where a streak of bad luck could destroy an entire community. By believing that all things, including animals, have souls like those of humans, any hunt that failed to show appropriate respect and customary supplication would only

give the liberated spirits cause to avenge themselves. To offend a spirit was to risk its interference with an already marginal existence.

### *Mythology*

While the dominant religious system of the Inuit today is Christianity, many Inuit still hold to at least some elements of their traditional religious beliefs. Some see the Inuit as having adapted traditional beliefs to a greater or lesser degree to Christianity, while others would argue that it is rather the reverse that is true: The Inuit have adapted Christianity to their worldview.

Inuit mythology has many similarities to the religions of other polar regions. It is a narrative about the world and the place of people in it. In the words of Inuit writer Rachel Attituq Qitsualik:

The Inuit cosmos is ruled by no one. There are no divine mother and father figures. There are no wind gods and solar creators. There are no eternal punishments in the hereafter, as there are no punishments for children or adults in the here and now.

Indeed, the traditional stories, rituals and taboos of the Inuit are so tied into the fearful and precautionary culture required by their harsh environment that it raises the question as to whether they qualify as beliefs at all, much less religion. Knud Rasmussen asked his guide and friend Aua, an angakkuq (shaman), about Inuit religious beliefs among the Iglulingmiut (people of Igloodik) and was told: "We don't believe. We fear." Living in a varied and irregular world, the Inuit traditionally did not worship anything, but they feared much.

### Anirniit

The Inuit believed that all things had a form of spirit or soul (in Inuktitut: anirniq - "breath"; plural anirniit), just like humans. These spirits were held to persist after death. The belief in the pervasiveness of spirits has consequences. According to a customary Inuit saying the great peril of our existence lies in the fact that our diet consists entirely of souls. By believing that all things, including animals, have souls like those of humans, killing an animal is little different from killing a person. Once the anirniq of the dead, animal or human, is liberated, it is free to take revenge. The spirit of the dead can only be placated by obedience to custom, avoiding taboos, and performing the right rituals.

For the Inuit, to offend an anirniq was to risk extinction. The principal role of the angakkuq in Inuit society was to advise and remind people of the rituals and taboos they needed to obey to placate the spirits, since he was held to be able to see and contact them.

The anirniit were seen to be a part of the sila - the sky or air around them - and were merely borrowed from it. Although each person's anirniq was individual, shaped by

the life and body it inhabited, at the same time it was part of a larger whole. This enabled Inuit to borrow the powers or characteristics of an *anirniq* by taking its name. Furthermore, the spirits of a single class of thing - be it sea mammals, polar bears, or plants - were in some sense held to be the same, and could be invoked through a sort of keeper or master who was connected in some fashion with that class of thing. In some cases, it is the *anirniq* of a human or animal who became a figure of respect or influence over animals or things through some action, recounted in a traditional tale. In other cases, it is a *tuurngaq*, as described below.

Since the arrival of Christianity among the Inuit, *anirniq* has become the accepted word for a soul in the Christian sense. This is the root word for a number of other Christian terms: *anirnisiaq* means angel and God is rendered as *anirniak* - the great spirit.

### Tuurngait

Some spirits were by nature unconnected to physical bodies. These figures were called *tuurngait* (singular *tuurngaq*) and were regarded as evil and monstrous, responsible for bad hunts and broken tools. They could also possess humans, as recounted in the story of *Atanarjuat*. The *angakkuq* could fight or exorcise them, or they could be held at bay by rituals.

*Tuurngaq* has, with Christianization, taken on the additional meaning of demon in the Christian belief system.

### Other deities

A number of other Inuit myth figures were thought to hold power over some specific part of the Inuit world. These include such deities as *Sedna* (or *Sanna*), the master of sea animals, *Nanook* (or *Nanuk*), the master of polar bears, and *Tekkeitsertok* (or *Tuktusiaqtuq*), the master of caribou.

### *Shamanism*

The Inuit practiced a form of shamanism based on animist principles. Among the Canadian Inuit, the shaman was known as an *Angakkuq* (also *angakuq*; plural *angakuit*). The *Angakkuq* of a community of Inuit was not the leader, but rather a sort of healer and psychotherapist, who tended wounds and offered advice, as well as invoking the spirits to assist people in their lives, or as often as not fighting them off. His or her role was to see, interpret and exhort the subtle and unseen. *Angakkuq* were not trained; they were held to be born with the ability and to show it as they matured. Rhythmic drums, chants and dances were often used in the performance of the duties of the *angakkuq*. Illumination (Inuktitut: *qaumaniq*) was often used by the *angakkuq* to describe a spiritual aura, the removal of which could, in their opinion, result in death.

Caribou Inuit shamans performed fortune-telling through qilaneq, a technique of asking a qila (spirit). The shaman placed his glove on the ground, and raised his staff and belt over it. The qila then entered the glove and drew the staff to itself. Qilaneq was practiced among several other Eskimo groups, where it was used to receive "yes" or "no" answers to questions.

According to Aua (an informant and friend of the anthropologist Rasmussen), one of the shaman's tasks among the Iglulik Inuit is to help the community in times when marine animals, which are kept by the Sea Woman (Takanaluk-arnaluk) in a pit in her house, are scarce. If taboo breaches that displease her lead to the failure of sea hunts, the shaman must visit her. Several barriers must be surmounted (such as a wall or a dog) and in some instances even the Sea Woman herself must be fought. If the shaman succeeds in appeasing her the animals will be released as normal.

Shamans also were reported to have the ability to see themselves as skeletons, naming each part using the specific shaman language.

The function of the angakkuq has largely disappeared in Christianized Inuit society.

#### *Amulets*

Amulets were part of the traditional daily life of the Inuit. They were worn for protection, to bring success in hunting, and generally to invoke the support of guardian spirits:

While the human soul was considered to be powerful and the main source of all women's and men's strength, inevitably difficulties arose that could not be resolved by mortals alone. Each Inuk therefore had a helping spirit or 'familiar,' who aided the hunt and other ventures and protected the person from sickness and accidents. The familiar could be embodied in items worn on or in clothing, such as a carving, animal tooth, claw, or piece of skin, or an unusual objet trouvé.

In particular, for the Netsilik Inuit (Netsilingmiut - People of the Seal) who live in a region with an extremely long winter and stormy conditions in the spring where starvation was a common danger, the general hardship of life resulted in the extensive use of such measures; even dogs could have amulets. People might have large numbers of amulets, and sometimes took numerous names from their ancestors to invoke protection.

**“Religion, Land and Democracy in Canadian Indigenous-State Relations,”**

**Nicholas Shrubsole, University of Waterloo, 2013 [35]**

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/144146527.pdf>

#### Abstract:

Many indigenous communities perceive an intimate connection between land and religion, and land has, and continues to remain, at the heart of indigenous-state



relations. This dissertation examines how philosophies of land and religion in correlation with histories of dispossession and differentiation contribute to socio-political structures that threaten the religious freedom of Aboriginal peoples and the very existence of indigenous religious traditions, cultures, and sacred sites in Canada today. Through a political-philosophical approach to ethical concerns of justice as fairness, national minorities' rights, and religious freedom, I examine court decisions, legislation, and official protocols that shape contemporary indigenous-state relations. I identify philosophical and structural issues preventing Canada from protecting the fundamental rights guaranteed to indigenous peoples and all Canadians.

More specifically, I examine the historical manifestations of concepts of land and religion in philosophies of colonization, emphasizing their effects in contemporary indigenous-state relations. I analyze the impacts of secularization, socio-economic expansion, and the dispossession of Aboriginal traditional lands on the protection of indigenous cultural rights and off-reserve sacred sites. Based on this analysis, I discuss communicative democratic theory and the potential benefits and limitations of the "Duty to Consult and Accommodate"—the most recent framework for indigenous-state relations—for the protection of indigenous religious traditions and the importance of the inclusion of indigenous peoples in administrative and decision-making processes. Finally, I explore indigenous representation, religious revitalization and the politics of authenticity, authority, diversity and cultural change.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

#### *The "Odd Story" of Indigenous-State Relations*

One day a white man approached an Indian, as he was sitting on the end of a log. "Sit over," said the white man; "surely there is room for us both on the log." Politely the Indian allowed the white man to take a seat beside him. Soon the white man began to complain of being crowded and shoved the Indian over. Again, the Indian moved, and the white man took his place. Then the white man shoved again, and kept on shoving until at last the Indian was at the other end of the log. "I am still crowded," complained the white man; "I must have more room." By his next move he pushed the Indian clean off the log. "Now it's all mine," he said, with satisfaction.

In 1923, Canadian historian Mabel Burkholder wrote a book of "Indian legends and stories" entitled *Before the White Man Came*. The above "legend" appears in her chapter of general legends common to all indigenous peoples, under the title "How the White Man Treats the Indian." To conclude the legend, Burkholder writes, "This is an odd story among the Indians, for they all think it represents fairly the attitude of the white man toward his Indian neighbor" (309).

Burkholder's book begins, "The Indian has had his home in all parts of Canada. On the shores of both oceans, through the mountains, across the prairies, along all the rivers and lakes of this broad land, he has left his mark." She continues, "For every mysterious manifestation of nature he has invented a story. Whenever he was impressed by a curiously shaped rock, by a lonely lake, by a crashing waterfall, he tried to explain the wonder according to his religious belief". The important connection between religion and place fascinated Burkholder, who asserted that the aim of the book was "to collect the most attractive and important legends cherished among the Indians, especially those told in connection with well-known places". The purpose of this task was the entertainment of the non-indigenous traveler, who, "visiting for the first time a new part of the country, will find his interest quickened and his pleasure increased by reading the ancient stories the Red Man wove about lake, forest, or mountain, and which have been handed down from generation to generation since the world was young". Burkholder calls many indigenous "legends" foolish, unimportant, and even "repulsive, bestial, and hideous". She also expresses her concern for the oral tradition of indigenous peoples and the impossibility of understanding "the pure legend in its original form". While it should come as no surprise to those familiar with the dominant colonial, Euro-Canadian perspective of indigenous peoples at this time, Burkholder's tone is overtly racist, denigrating to indigenous peoples and their cultural practices, and yet nostalgic, like Hesiod looking back upon the Golden Age.

It is tempting to use postcolonial and liberal theory to highlight the injustice inherent in Burkholder's portrayal of indigenous peoples. However, an analysis of Burkholder's book through the lenses of postcolonial and liberal theory would be a frivolous enterprise, similar to building a straw person, only to tear it down with ease. One can explain, not justify, her views as characteristic of an older Canada, seeking to assimilate, civilize and, yet, save the memory of indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, one can discern a number of important trends in Burkholder's work. She acknowledges Canada as the indigenous homeland in her use of the present perfect tense, but glosses over that fact as she conveys her interest in entertaining the Canadian traveler with stories of an ancient, mysterious world. She acknowledges the important connection between space and religion for indigenous communities, but seems confused by indigenous perspectives of Euro-Canadian territorial seizure and expansion. She almost praises indigenous religious difference, only to insult it. She acknowledges that these perspectives continue among indigenous peoples and that they even change over time, but labels them as "ancient" and challenges the authenticity of modern beliefs. These points are important not because they depict injustices of the early twentieth century, but rather because many of these perspectives on indigenous religious traditions, their connection to space, and the politics surrounding land, continue to upset indigenous-state relations into the twenty-first century.

For a long period of Canadian history, the state actively sought to destroy indigenous cultures and religions while simultaneously displacing indigenous peoples and appropriating their traditional homelands. This coordinated, public-policy effort to civilize indigenous peoples began to fade with the state's embrace of liberal democratic principles. Indigenous suffrage and the Bill of Rights in 1960, the reassessment of Aboriginal title and the institution of modern land claims negotiations in the early 1970s, the recognition of group-specific rights for indigenous peoples in the Constitution Act in 1982, the removal of assimilationist policies in 1985, a royal commission on Aboriginal peoples in the mid-1990s, and an official embrace of the duty to consult in the first decade of the twenty-first century, have been important steps in demonstrating, to some degree, Canada's commitment to the pursuit of a just society. In addition, the embrace of self-government as an Aboriginal right, protected under section 35 of the Constitution, demonstrates, to some degree, the state's interest in shedding the imperialism of their colonial legacy. Despite these steps, the assertion that Canada is an "unjust society," continues to echo in the writings of indigenous and non-indigenous academics, lawyers, and leaders.

For indigenous communities who practice indigenous religions, land, belief and practice remain intimately connected. At the same time, land lies at the heart of the indigenous-state relationship and remains one of its most contentious subjects. For this reason, one should not separate the subject of the protection of indigenous religious traditions, ceremonies, and beliefs, from contemporary political debates regarding indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. With the recognition of Aboriginal rights, indigenous peoples occupy the ambiguous place of "citizens plus" in the Canadian political landscape. The state understands them as different, but equal; dependent, yet independent; and simultaneously, subjects and partners.

Scholars, indigenous-and non-indigenous alike, continue to make an argument already well articulated in the literature on indigenous-state relations: justice remains elusive for indigenous peoples in Canada. My dissertation contributes to this general argument through a focus on the subject of religious freedom and the protection of culture, the former a constitutionally protected right and, the latter, one of the most important facets of liberal theory. In making this general argument, I develop a number of arguments specific to the relationship between indigenous religion, land, and the state. For instance, I argue that philosophical concepts of religion and land in correlation with histories of dispossession, assimilation, subordination, and even liberal democratization, contribute to complex socio-political structures that threaten the existence and persistence of indigenous religious traditions and sacred sites today. I make the case that Canada can overcome these inequalities in some form through more deliberative democratic approaches to governance, the inclusion of indigenous peoples in decision-making processes, and the institution of a partnership between indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. With some regret,

I also concede to the fact that Canada may simply never overcome some of these structural issues.

In many ways, this dissertation begins where Aboriginal rights lawyer, Michael Ross, leaves us in his foundational work *First Nations Sacred Sites in Canada's Courts* (2005). Ross' legal overview and analysis of indigenous peoples' attempts to protect their sacred sites in Canada's courts is an excellent introduction to the importance of sacred sites for indigenous communities, and the relatively little success they have found in protecting those spaces. Ross identifies a serious problem for indigenous religious traditions. Although he provides some rudimentary answers as to why this problem exists, the purpose of his book is the identification of how First Nations approach the subject of sacred sites in the courts, and not the reasons behind why those sites are under threat. Ross' work is unable to provide any adequate answers to the important question, which I focus on in this dissertation: Why are Aboriginal religious traditions under threat in Canada?

I build upon Ross' largely descriptive work to provide an explanation that stretches far beyond the courtroom. I expand the foci to include history, legislation, treaties, and the modern processes of indigenous-state relations. I unpack Ross' claim that secularization may have something to do with the unfavorable court decisions First Nations communities have encountered. Moreover, I go beyond Ross' work to address the effects of religious diversity among Aboriginal communities, and the diachronic nature of those traditions on the protection of indigenous religious traditions and their sacred sites.

### *"Indigenous Peoples," "Religion" and "Spirituality"*

Although my primary interest lies in the state, I also focus on "indigenous peoples." This term requires some clarification. Can we or should we even talk about "indigenous peoples" in the singular? The term risks the homogenization of the multiple and diverse communities of indigenous populations in North America. Iris Marion Young (2000a) provides a discussion of group difference that is helpful in answering this question. She explains that structures of power may contribute to the creation of social groups, which one should understand relationally. She elaborates:

Before the British began to conquer the islands now called New Zealand, for example, there was no group anyone thought of as Maori. The people who lived on those islands saw themselves as belonging to dozens or hundreds of groups with different lineage and relation to natural resources. Encounter with the English, however, gradually changed their perceptions of their differences; the English saw them as similar to each other in comparison to the English, and they found the English more different from them than they felt from one another.

Following Young's example of the Maori, I think we can speak about the collective experience and structural treatment of the diverse communities of indigenous populations who now live completely or partially within the borders of Canada. While

particular experiences may be different, indigenous peoples who live, or have lived in, in colonial situations share many common experiences. In another example, the United Nations has declared that no universal definition of indigenous peoples is necessary, but one is generally accepted:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system (United Nations 2004, par. 2).

Young (2000a) notes, however, “Group members may differ in many ways, including how strongly they bear affinity with others of the group. A relational approach, moreover, does not designate clear conceptual and practical borders that distinguish all members of one group decisively from members of others” (90). For this reason, I use the term indigenous peoples in reference to the broader implications for policies related to indigenous peoples. When speaking about particular communities, I do so by their community’s name when applicable.

Two other terms require some attention: religion and spirituality. Peter Berger (1967) appropriately notes, “Definitions cannot, by their very nature, be either ‘true’ or ‘false,’ only more useful or less so” (175). Regardless of this observation, the definition of terms can have serious political and legal implications. I have chosen to identify indigenous religious traditions, belief in sacred sites, and ceremonial practices as “religion” as opposed to “spirituality” or “spiritualities.” Although the politics surrounding semantics can be very important, they are beyond the scope of this dissertation. I have chosen “religion” because it holds legal-political value as a protected right in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Quite simply, the Charter protects “freedom of religion and conscience” and not “spirituality.” If Aboriginal peoples seek the protection of their sacred sites, “religion” will be the category of discussion within which it occurs.

This does not mean that one cannot understand spirituality within the rubrics of a less regimented definition of religion. After all, there are correlations between religion and spirituality. This important discussion also falls outside the scope of this dissertation; however, it requires some commentary. Enzo Pace, an Italian sociologist and author of *Religion as Communication* (2011a), describes the differences and similarities between religion and spirituality in these terms:

Spirituality is the exceeding meanings and senses produced by individuals in the socio-religious environment – that is, in tension with a system of belief.

Therefore, the relation between a religious system and its socioreligious environment could be studied as the tension between power (of communication and meanings for the system) and empowerment (the relatively friendly chain of communication created by individuals) in spirituality's realm. In the case of an organized system of religious belief the empowerment is constantly scrutinized, directed in an orderly way according to the power of communication exercised by authority, specialists in holy matters and holy doctrine. The aim is to avoid not only any deviation from orthodoxy, but also to affirm the existence of the border between religion and magic, the purely symbolic and objective order of communication, on one hand, and the individual, changeable and unpredictable set of meanings that individuals could subjectively attribute to the same event or symbol treated by the former (2011b, 24).

For better or worse, the Canadian state has not defined "religion," and for this reason, whether one terms indigenous spiritual practices and beliefs as "spiritual" or "religious" is of little consequence for the Constitution and past legal interpretations of it. For example, *Syndicat Northcrest v. Amselem* (2004) explicitly identifies sincerity and not authenticity, religious affiliation, institutional recognition, or any other qualifier, as the means by which a claim to violations of religious freedom ought to begin. In short, I use the term "religion" to avoid the politics of semantics in the legal realm and not to avoid the conversation in the theoretical arena.

## **Conclusion**

I began this dissertation with a brief analysis of the preface to Mabel Burkholder's *Before the White Man Came* (1923) and her short re-telling of an "Indian legend" regarding indigenous views of the European appropriation of land. The explicitly racist, dismissive and ignorant tone of the work was characteristic of a Canada nearly one century into its official policy attempts to assimilate indigenous peoples. My intention there was to introduce perspectives of indigenous peoples, land, and religious beliefs that would no doubt be unacceptable in our modern liberal democratic society. Albeit in very different ways, I argue that these perspectives persist into the twenty-first century of indigenous-state relations.

At the foundation of this dissertation is an already well-articulated history of the exclusion of indigenous peoples from colonization through to today. However, there is more to this "odd story" than historical circumstances of dispossession and political exclusion. Since this is the first detailed examination of indigenous religious freedom in Canada, my intention has been to point to three broader issues for the protection of indigenous sacred sites and religious traditions, and one philosophical framework in an attempt to address some of these issues. Although this framework lacks clarity in contemporary indigenous-state relations, it exists within that relationship and provides inroads toward resolving some of the primary issues facing indigenous religious traditions today.

The first of these issues is the very nature of liberal democratic engagement on matters of religious significance in a secular state. Religion is not simply an intellectual endeavor or a legal concept for indigenous peoples. Belief may be connected to particular spaces and the compromise and negotiation of those spaces may mean the destruction of particular religious traditions. Second, the consultation doctrine provides a meaningful framework for the inclusion of indigenous peoples, but disproportionate power at the administrative level ultimately means that indigenous peoples hold little control over land. For indigenous religious traditions, this means that communities for whom a site is sacred may not have enough power to influence the fate of a space. Third, religious diversity among indigenous peoples and the politics surrounding that complexity poses a significant problem for the protection of indigenous religious traditions and sacred sites. If indigenous religious traditions cannot grow, change, and adapt as they always have, in a way that maintains a close connection with land, then not all indigenous peoples can expect to have religious freedom.

Within the historical context of political exclusion and dispossession, these three subjects, secularization, contemporary indigenous-state relations and power, and indigenous religious diversity, provide serious challenges to a state that guarantees religious freedom for all its citizens, and one that has guaranteed cultural rights for indigenous peoples. Deliberative democracy provides some avenues of redress for these social and structural issues. Although they are not fully developed, one can find many deliberative democratic principles in the modern indigenous-state relationship. The framework provided by deliberative democracy may, as argued throughout, provide meaningful change in relation to inclusion, the dispersal of power, broadening social knowledge and, ultimately, justice.

**“Inuit Religious Traditions,”** [encyclopedia.com](https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/inuit-religious-traditions), 25 April 2022 [36]  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/inuit-religious-traditions>

#### Overview:

The Inuit (Eskimo) live in the vast Arctic and sub-Arctic area that stretches from the eastern point of Siberia to eastern Greenland. Of the approximately 105,000 Inuit, 43,000 live in Greenland, 25,000 in Arctic Canada, 35,000 (plus 2,000 Aleut) in Alaska, and 1,500 (plus a small number of Aleut) in Russia. Language has been used as the basic criterion for defining the Inuit as an ethnic group. The "Eskimo languages" (as they are invariably referred to) are divided into two main branches, Inuit and Yupik. Inuit is spoken from northern Alaska to eastern Greenland, forming a continuum of dialects with mutual comprehension between adjacent dialects. Varieties of Yupik are spoken in Siberia and in southern Alaska as far north as Norton Sound.

The word Eskimo seems to be of Montagnais origin and has been erroneously believed to mean "eater of raw meat." The word Inuit means "people." Inuit as a self-designation is used primarily in Canada and, to some extent, in Greenland (where the more common self-designation is Kalaallit). Yupik means "a real person," just as Inupiat, which is the self-designation in northern Alaska, means "real people." Inuit, however, is the common term used to designate themselves collectively by the members of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, an organization established in 1977 by representatives from Greenland, Canada, and Alaska.

Traditionally the Inuit are divided into many geographic groups. The members of each group, or band, were connected through kinship ties, but the band was without formal leadership. The nuclear family was the most important social unit, but the extended family often cohabited and worked cooperatively. Dyadic relationships, such as wife-exchange partners and joking partners, were also common.

Today, most Inuit live in the so-called Arctic area, north of the tree-line and the 10° Celsius July isotherm. The Inuit were hunters who adapted to the seasonal availability of various mammals, birds, and fish. Hunting sea mammals with harpoons was characteristic, but hunting inland during the summer was also part of the subsistence pattern of many Inuit. A few groups in northern Alaska and in Canada have spent the entire year inland, hunting caribou and fishing for arctic char. In southern Alaska, the wooded valleys along the long rivers were inhabited by Inuit who relied upon the great run of the fish as well as the migrations of sea mammals and birds.

Most Inuit in Canada lived in snow houses during the winter; others settled in winter houses built of stone and sod or wood. Stone lamps that burned blubber were used for heating, lighting, and cooking. Skin boats and, except in southern Greenland and Alaska, dog sledges were used for transportation; kayaks were used for seal hunting and large, open umiaks for whale hunting. Although some Inuit are still hunters and fishermen, today's Inuit societies are modernized. Money economy has replaced subsistence economy; modern technology and education have been introduced; television plays an important role; and so on. Except for the small population in Siberia, the Inuit have become Christians, and even the Inuit in Siberia no longer observe their religious traditions.

Historically, the Inuit held many observances to ensure good hunting, and in the small and scattered hunting and fishing communities many local religious practices were observed. Generally, ritual life was more elaborate in Alaska than in Canada and Greenland. In Alaskan settlements there were usually one or more big men's houses, called qarigi among the Point Barrow Inuit and qasiq among those of the Bering Sea, where people gathered for social and religious feasts. In Canada, the Inuit built temporary festival snow houses, but no eyewitness accounts exist of festival houses in Greenland.



## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Relations between Men and Animals**

According to eastern Inuit religious tradition, each animal had its own inua (its "man," "owner," or "spirit") and also its own "soul." Within the western Inuit religious tradition, the inua seems to have been identical to the soul. The idea of inua was applied to animals and implements as well as to concepts and conditions (such as sleep). Lakes, currents, mountains, and stars all had their own inua, but only the inua of the moon, air, and sea were integral to the religious life of the Inuit.

Since the Inuit believed that the animals they hunted possessed souls, they treated their game with respect. Seals and whales were commonly offered a drink of fresh water after they had been dragged ashore. Having received such a pleasant welcome as guests in the human world, their souls, according to Inuit belief, would return to the sea and soon become ready to be caught again, and they would also let their fellow animals know that they should not object to being caught. When the season's first kill of an important species of seal was made, the meat was distributed to all of the inhabitants of a settlement. This practice divided the responsibility for the kill among the entire community and increased the possibility of good hunting.

Inuit rituals in connection with the polar bear are part of an ancient bear ceremonialism of the circumpolar regions of Eurasia and North America. In southern Greenland, for example, the head of a slain polar bear was placed in a house facing the direction from which the bears usually came so that the bear's soul could easily find its way home. During the five days that the soul was believed to require to reach its destination the bear was honored: its eyes and nostrils were closed so that it would not be disturbed by the sight and smell of human beings; its mouth was smeared with blubber; and it was given presents.

Whaling was of great social, economic, and ritual importance, especially among the North Alaska Inuit. In the spring, all hunting gear was carefully cleaned, and the women made new clothes for the men. The whales would not be approached until everything was cleaned. During the days before the whaling party set out, the men slept in the festival house and observed sexual and food taboos. The whaling season terminated with a great feast to entertain the whales.

### **Taboos, Amulets, and Songs**

Unlike cultic practices in connection with the deities, which had relatively minor significance, taboos, amulets, and songs were fundamentally important to the Inuit. Most taboos were imposed to separate the game from a person who was tabooed because of birth, menstruation, or death. A separation between land and sea animals was also important in many localities, reflecting the seasonal changes in hunting adaptation. An infringement of a taboo might result in individual hardship (for example, the loss of good fortune in hunting, sickness, or even death), but often, it

was feared, the whole community would suffer. Usually, a public confession under the guidance of the shaman was believed sufficient to reduce the effect of the transgression of a taboo.

Amulets, which dispensed their powers only to the first owner, were used primarily to secure success in hunting and good health and, to a lesser degree, to ward off negative influences. Parents and grandparents would usually buy amulets for children from a shaman. Amulets were usually made up of parts of animals and birds, but a wide variety of objects could be used. They were sewn on clothing or placed in boats and houses.

One way to increase the effect of the amulets was through the use of food totems and secret songs. Used primarily to increase success in hunting, secret songs and formulas were also used to control other activities and were often associated with food taboos. Songs were either inherited or bought. If a song was passed on from one generation to the next, all members of the family were free to use it, but once it was sold it became useless to its former owners.

### **Rites of Passage**

In many localities in Canada and Alaska, women had to give birth alone, isolated in a small hut or tent. For a specified period after the birth, the woman was subjected to food and work taboos. Children were usually named after a person who had recently died. The name was regarded as a vital part of the individual, and, in a way, the deceased lived on in the child. The relationship resulted in a close social bond between the relatives of the deceased and the child.

The family celebrated particular stages in a child's development, especially in connection with subsistence activities. For example, when a boy killed his first seal, the meat was distributed to all the inhabitants of the settlement, and for each new important species a hunter killed, there was a celebration and ritual distribution.

Death was considered to be a passage to a new existence. There were two lands of the dead: one in the sky and one in the sea (or underground). The Inuit in Greenland considered the land in the sea more attractive because people living there enjoyed perpetual success in whale hunting; those in the sky, on the other hand, led dull existences. It was not the moral behavior of the deceased that determined the location of his afterlife, but rather the way in which he died. For example, men who died while whaling or women who died in childbirth were assured of an afterlife in the sea. Conceptions of the afterlife, however, differed among the Inuit. The Canadian and Alaskan Inuit believed the most attractive afterlife was found in the sky. Some Inuit had either poorly conceptualized beliefs in an afterlife or no beliefs at all.

While death rituals usually included only the nearest family members and neighbors, the Great Feast of the Dead, celebrated in the Alaskan mainland from the Kuskokwim River to the Kotzebue Sound, attracted participants even from

neighboring villages. The feast was given jointly, and the hosts' social status was demonstrated by the quantity of food, furs, clothing, and implements that were given away.

The Bladder Feast, an important calendar feast celebrated in Alaska from Kodiak Island to Point Hope, was held in midwinter. At this feast, the bladders of all the seals that had been caught during the previous year were returned to the sea in order that their souls might come back in new bodies and let themselves be caught again. The skins of all the small birds and animals that the boys had caught were displayed in the festival house, and gifts were given to human souls, to the souls of the seals, and to those who were present.

### **Shamans**

In Greenland and Canada, the shaman (angakkoq) played a central role in religion. In Alaska, however, where it was common for an individual to become a shaman as the result of a calling, many rites did not demand the expertise of the shaman. Prospective shamans often learned from skilled shamans how to acquire spirits and to use techniques such as ecstatic trances. In Greenland and Labrador, the apprentice was initiated by being "devoured" by a polar bear or a big dog while being in trance alone in the wilderness. After having revived, he was ready to become master of various spirits.

Shamans in Greenland always used a drum to enter a trance. Masks were also instrumental, especially in Alaska, both in secular and religious connections. The shaman might summon his familiar spirits to the house where a séance was taking place, or he might go on a spiritual flight himself. The Canadian shaman might, for example, go down to the inua of the sea, that is, the Sea Woman, to get seals. In Alaska, a shaman on Nunivak Island would go to the villages of the various species of animals in the sea. In the Norton Sound area, he would go to the moon to obtain animals for the settlement.

Although shamans were the principal revealers of unknown things, some other people could also acquire information from the spirits by using a simple technique called qilaneq. It required that an individual lift an object and then pose questions, which were answered affirmatively or negatively according to whether the object felt heavy or not.

Shamans also functioned as doctors. For example, they would suck the sick spot where a foreign object had been introduced or try to retrieve a stolen soul. Sorcerers—often believed to be old, revengeful women—were also common, and shamans were sometimes called to reveal them. There were instances, however, in which the shaman himself was accused of having used his power to harm someone; in such cases the shaman could be killed.

### **The Deities**

The Inuit of Canada and Greenland believed that the inua of the sea, the Sea Woman, controlled the sea animals and would withhold them to punish people when they had broken a taboo. Franz Boas (1888) transcribed the name given to her by the Inuit on Baffin Island as Sedna, which probably means "the one down there."

The Inuit of eastern Baffin Island ritually killed Sedna during a feast that was held when the autumn storms came and whose purpose was to make sealing possible again. The Sedna ceremony included, inter alia, a ritual spouse exchange and a tug-of-war, the result of which predicted the weather for the coming winter.

While Sedna represented the female principle of the world, the inua of the moon, Aningaaq, represented the male principle. An origin myth tells how he was once a man who committed incest with his sister. She became the sun, he the moon. Otherwise, the sun played no part in the religion of the Inuit, but the moon was associated with the fertility of women. He was recognized as a great hunter, and some Alaskan Inuit believed that the moon controlled the game.

The air was called Sila, which also means "universe" and "intellect." The inua of the air was a rather abstract but feared figure; if it was offended when taboos were broken, it would take revenge by bringing storms and blizzards.

The Raven appeared, primarily in Alaska, as a creator, culture hero, and trickster in a cycle of myths that included those of the earth diver and the origin of the light. The Raven, however, played a negligible role in religious practices.

The differences between and sometimes vagueness in Inuit religious ideas may be related not only to their wide and scattered distribution but also to the fact that their societies had a loose social organization and were without a written language before contact with the Europeans. For all Inuit, however, a close and good relationship with the animals on which they depended for their survival was believed to be of vital importance.

## **2. Denmark (Greenland):**

**"Kingdom of Denmark," The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [37] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/denmark/>**

### Overview:

The largest city in the Kingdom of Denmark is the capital Copenhagen, where 1.2 million people call home. Tórshavn, the capital of the Faroe Islands, has a total of 20 thousand citizens and in Greenland's capital Nuuk—which is one of the smallest capitals in the world—there are only approximately 17 thousand people. Altogether, the Kingdom of Denmark has 5.8 million citizens of which just over 55 thousand are living in Greenland (and who, for the most part, are Inuit descendants). Danes constitute by far the largest non-Greenlandic part of the population, while Thai, Filipinos and Icelanders are the largest foreign ethnic groups in Greenland. Of the

total population, 89.3 percent are born in Greenland and more than 86 percent are living in towns. The rest live in small villages along the coast, but due to growing urbanization a declining number of people remain there. The official language is Greenlandic, but Danish is widely used; especially in the largest towns where higher educational institutions and some (usually better paid) jobs require good Danish language skills.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

With only 0.14 people per km<sup>2</sup> in the ice-free area, Greenland has one of the lowest population densities in the world. The number of people living in Greenland is decreasing by 0.5 percent annually due to negative net migration of -449 (2017), while the fertility rate is 2.16 per woman aged 15-49 years (2015). There are approximately 3,000 more men than women and the majority of both genders are between the ages of 45-55. This means that Greenland will likely experience an increasing financial burden due to an aging population. Life expectancy for women is 74.1 years, while men usually die at a younger age: 69.6 years (2018). Sadly, many Greenlanders commit suicide every year, which keeps the average life expectancy low. Since the 1970s, Greenland has experienced approximately 40 suicides annually, leaving Greenland with the highest suicide rate in the world.

The total Greenlandic labor force is constituted of 25,620 permanent residents, aged 18-64, with 10 percent of the population and 22 percent of the labor force unemployed for periods ranging from one day to the whole year (2015). The number varies a great deal throughout the year and generally there are more jobs during the summer months, when the ocean is more easily accessible for fishing, tourism and other outside activities. Like a bear preparing for a harsh winter, money earned during the active summer months should thus last for longer. This is not least the case for the national economy, as the many unemployed put a great deal of pressure on the Greenland welfare system during winter.

The educational level has traditionally been low with very few people finishing any education after elementary school: about half of all 25-64 years old have no education beyond lower-secondary. During the past decade Greenland has, however, experienced a positive development with a 6 percent increase in the number of people finishing another educational level beyond elementary school. As only a few higher educations are offered in Greenland, 40 percent of the students study abroad. In 2017, 39.8 percent of the population older than 16 years had finished some kind of education or vocational training after leaving school.

**“Why does Denmark think it can lay claim to the north pole?” Patrick Barkham, The Guardian, 17 December 2014 [38]**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2014/dec/16/why-denmark-thinks-it-can-lay-claim-to-north-pole>

#### Overview:

How do you carve up a big block of ice? Argumentatively, seems to be the answer. Denmark is the latest country to lay claim to the north pole, jostling with the US, Canada, Russia and Norway for a huge chunk of the Arctic Ocean.

What was once dismissed as a frozen wasteland is now a lucrative prize: the US Geological Survey estimates there is about 22% of the world's undiscovered but recoverable oil and natural gas in the Arctic. Global warming could also open up previously inaccessible shipping routes.

A swath of the Arctic including the north pole currently lies beyond every nation's 200 nautical-mile limit, which, under the UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea, can form a coastal country's "exclusive economic zone". So, nations are making claims to the UN to extend their territories, although Russia infuriated its rivals in 2007 by placing a rust-proof titanium flag on the ocean floor beneath the Arctic.

Denmark's bid for 895,000 sq km of the Arctic Ocean sounds particularly audacious given that this is 20 times the size of Denmark (or 43 times the size of Wales – the country, not the ocean-loving mammal) and the country lies on the same latitude as Britain – more than 2,000 miles from the north pole.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

But Denmark's interest is derived from its autonomous territory, Greenland, and Danish geologists say Greenland's continental shelf naturally continues to form the Lomonosov Ridge, an underwater mountain range which traverses the pole.

According to Jon Rahbek-Clemmensen, assistant professor at the University of Southern Denmark, the economic dimension of this dispute is overstated because this part of the vast Arctic "probably has no resources whatsoever". Instead, he says, the Danish move is to shore up its popularity in independence-seeking Greenland, where the claim is "very, very popular".

"All geological estimates indicate that this particular area has neither oil nor gas – it's just about lines on a map," he says. "For the Greenlanders, it's more about a feeling of nationhood, and being part of the Arctic. It's the same for Russia – it's symbolism."

Thorkild Kjærgaard, head of history and culture at the University of Greenland, agrees that the claim is designed to show the benefits of the union with Denmark: Greenland could never make such a claim on its own.

However, Denmark's foreign ministry admits its claim overlaps with those made by Norway, Canada and Russia, and Kjærgaard cannot imagine a Danish flag rising over the north pole. "It is most unlikely Russia will accept it. Nobody expects it to turn out like that, but Copenhagen wants to demonstrate that they support any Greenlandic claim."

Santa and his reindeer won't need to apply for Danish or Russian passports any time soon: a UN committee is not expected to pronounce on the scientific validity of rival claims for 10 years. After that, competing nations must reach bilateral agreements over how to carve up the north pole.

**“The Arctic,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark [39] <https://um.dk/en/foreign-policy/the-arctic/>**

#### Overview:

The Kingdom of Denmark is centrally located in the Arctic. The three parts of the Realm – Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – share a number of values and interests and all have a responsibility in and for the Arctic region. The Arctic makes up an essential part of the common cultural heritage, and is home to part of the Kingdom's population.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Kingdom and its populations have over several hundred years developed modern and sustainable societies based on democratic principles. The development has affected all sectors of society - from education, health and research to the environment, trade and shipping. At the same time, huge and sweeping changes are taking place today in the Arctic. Due to climate change and technological developments, vast economic potential is becoming more accessible.

With new opportunities come new challenges. The Arctic has to be managed internationally on the basis of international principles of law to ensure a peaceful, secure and collaborative Arctic.

The Kingdom is already a vigorous and important actor in the strategically vital international cooperation on the future of the Arctic and in that connection attaches great importance to creating transparency in and understanding for cooperation.

In the Kingdom's strategy for the Arctic 2011- 2020, the Government, the Government of the Faroes and the Government of Greenland have set out the most important opportunities and challenges as we see them today and in the near future. On that basis we have defined our common political objectives for the Arctic.

We will – through close cooperation in the Kingdom and with our international partners - work towards the common overall goal of creating a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future for the Arctic.

#### [Read the Kingdom's strategy for the Arctic 2011- 2020 here](#)

The Government, the Government of the Faroes and the Government of Greenland are currently working on a new strategy for the Arctic for the period 2021-2030.

**“Denmark's strategic interests in the Arctic: It's the Greenlandic connection, stupid!” Marc Jacobsen, The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security**

**Studies, 4 May 2016 [40]** <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/denmark-interests-arctic-greenland-connection/>

#### Overview:

The only reason why Denmark is an Arctic state is because Greenland is part of the Danish Realm. Without Greenland, Denmark would lose the opportunity of sitting at the table with great powers such as Canada, Russia, and the United States; something which is quite unique for a small state like Denmark. It is of primary importance that Denmark take utmost care of the relationship with Greenland and treat any possible disagreements between Nuuk and Copenhagen with great mutual respect. Through this perspective, it was no surprise that one of Kristian Jensen's first travels as newly appointed foreign minister was to Greenland. During his visit in August 2015 Jensen said: "I am happy that I could come to Greenland this soon. Cooperation with Greenland, the Danish Realm and the whole question of the Arctic is strategically important for me and the government. I am therefore pleased to get well acquainted with the Government of Greenland and expand our close cooperation with Greenland. This cooperation makes us greater in the world".

Two weeks after the visit, Jensen travelled with his Greenlandic counterpart, Vittus Qujaukitsoq, to Anchorage, Alaska, where John Kerry hosted the GLACIER Conference. To the sound of flashing cameras and deafening applause Barack Obama also dropped by. Everyone wanted to exchange words and shake hands with Obama, who became the first sitting US president to visit the Arctic. Jensen's and Qujaukitsoq's speaking time was, thus, very limited. But, when the opportunity finally arose, Jensen seized the chance to invite Obama to Greenland to experience the visible consequences of climate change firsthand. As far as is known, Obama has not yet accepted the invitation, but if he does it would be a scoop for the Kingdom of Denmark. Previously, Hillary Clinton, Sergei Lavrov, and Ban Ki-Moon, among others, have accepted similar invitations to visit Greenland. Visits that not only have offered golden Kodak moments in front of icebergs in the Disko Bay and on top of the inland ice sheet, but also offered incomparable opportunities to strengthen bilateral relations with some of the world's most influential people. Relations, that are of utmost importance for Denmark's strategic interests in the Arctic and beyond.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

The importance of having access to the exclusive company in the Arctic Council and the dynamic Arctic Five should not be underestimated by a small country like Denmark. This connection means Denmark punches above its weight in the Arctic to the benefit of Denmark's position in the international arena in general. The existence of the Danish Realm is what legitimizes Denmark's presence in the Arctic. Thus, it should be an essential part of Denmark's strategy to improve the current relationship



with Greenland. This can be done through a more open, honest, and equal dialogue; more mutual knowledge exchange; emphasizing and encouraging common values and relationships; and by giving higher economic priority to the Arctic. A good place to start would be to expand the Foreign Ministry's Arctic office and to allocate more money to polar research in Denmark and Greenland, hence also improving the kingdom's research diplomacy in the Arctic. If confidence is improved and words backed up with action, the collective Danish Realm can accomplish great things in the Arctic.

**“Denmark to boost defence of Arctic using drones for surveillance,” Jess Sharp, Sky News, 10 February 2021 [41] <https://news.sky.com/story/denmark-to-boost-defence-of-arctic-using-drones-for-surveillance-12214324>**

#### Overview:

The country has committed to spending 1.5 billion Danish crowns on defense in the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Lawmakers in Denmark have agreed to spend the equivalent of £176m on improving its defense capabilities in the Arctic.

The 1.5 billion Danish crown financial boost will see the country increase its surveillance in the region.

Danish broadcaster TV 2 reported the funding would include the use of long-range drones to survey the area.

The government-owned television service also said the various initiatives were expected to be launched in 2023 but it may take a number of years before they were fully implemented.

Russia has also been trying to strengthen its economic and military presence in the region for some time as it vies for dominance with rivals Canada, the United States, Norway and China.

In 2019, the country launched a nuclear-powered icebreaker as part of ambitious plans to tap the region's commercial potential.

The launch was part of a program created by Russian President Vladimir Putin that aimed to increase the number of heavy-duty ships in the country's Arctic fleet to 13 by 2035, with nine of them being powered by nuclear reactors.

Last June, the Russian leader was forced to declare a state of emergency after 20,000 tons of diesel spilled from a power plant into a river within the Arctic circle.

**“The ABCs of Greenland,” Mingming Shi, Over the Circle: Arctic News and Analysis, 27 August 2020 [42] <https://overthecircle.com/2020/08/27/the-abcs-of-greenland/>**

### Overview:

Greenland, (Kalaallit Nunaat in Greenlandic and Grønland in Danish), is the largest island in the world, measuring 2,166,086km<sup>2</sup>. The island possesses the world’s second largest ice sheet, after the one in Antarctica, and is now seen as seriously endangered. Most of the territory of Greenland is located within the Arctic Circle, and approximately eighty-one percent of the country is covered by snow and ice all year round, with only the narrow edge of the island being inhabited and suitable for human activity. Greenland is surrounded by ocean, and has a long coastline with a length of around 44,000 km, with numerous fjords and smaller islands.

For Nordic nations, Greenland is widely viewed as being part of Europe, given the short distance to Iceland, as well as cultural, societal and historical connections. However, in terms of geography, Greenland is connected to North America.

The population density of Greenland is low, with the number of inhabitants at around 57,000, most of whom live in the coastal regions in the southwest. The majority of Greenland’s population are Inuit, (a word which means “people” in the local languages), and most of the rest are Danes, with a smaller number of immigrants from Thailand and the Philippines. According to a report by Statistics Greenland [pdf] in 2018, the rate of emigration from the nation has surpassed that of immigration since the 1970s.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Relations with Denmark**

The ties between Greenland and Denmark are complex. Early in the late fourteenth century, Danish interests in Greenland was accentuated when Denmark and Norway were merged into one united realm between the early sixteenth century and 1814. However, nowadays, it is universally thought that the milestone in the historical link between Greenland and Denmark began in 1721, when the Danish-Norwegian missionary, Hans Egede, landed on the island, heralding the beginning of the colonialist period in Greenland.

In 1953, the colonial phase in Greenland officially ended, and Greenland became part of the Danish Kingdom. Greenlanders have enjoyed most of the same rights as Danes, use the Danish krone as currency and have two seats in the Danish Parliament. In 1979, the Home-rule Act came into force, and then was superseded by the Self-rule Act of 2009. The latter agreement has allowed for greater autonomy rights to Greenland. However, foreign policy and defense remain the supervision of Denmark. There has been a trend towards support for independence within

Greenland. Nevertheless, not every political party or individual Greenlander agrees on the approach, or time frame, of gaining full sovereignty.

### **Economy**

The seafood industry has been one of the pillars of the Greenlandic economy and a significant source of exports, of which prawns make up the lion's share. Abundant amounts of mineral deposits have been discovered, and estimated, in the soil of Greenland. Thus, there are a number of small-scale mining operations on the island, with only a handful of active bigger projects including ruby and anthracite mining. Moreover, Greenland receives annual grants from Denmark, (around 3.5 billion Danish kroner), according to the Self-rule Act, which is fluctuating yearly and may be reduced based on the revenue from mining of the year.

With the Arctic becoming a trendy travel destination, Greenland has been seeking to develop its tourism sector. Sightseeing, outdoor sports, dog sledding and other polar activities are on the top of the list for foreign visitors. Accordingly, infrastructure investment, such as airport expansion and new road building projects, as well as language training have appeared on the agenda of the Greenland government.

In some ways, Greenland may be benefiting from climate change. First, accelerated melting of ice and snow has paved the way to more accessible natural resources. Greenland may also develop as a hub for international marine transportation in the Arctic Ocean.

Second, large deposits of natural resources are becoming more accessible and trade-able, including rare earth elements and other minerals have put Greenland in a prominent position in the international market, which may advance its economic performance greatly.

Third, Nuuk has been considering water exports, thanks to glacial melting and retreating. However, all gains may not come without pain, since the impact on the environment and society, of tourism, glacial retreating, mining operations and other activities have yet to be precisely estimated.

### **Social obstacles**

Greenland had been ranked highest globally in terms of suicide rates. In addition, other societal obstacles include incidents of alcoholic abuse, violence, medical shortage, regional imbalance of development, and labor shortages are waiting to be addressed.

**“Greenland's Premier: "We must work towards independence",” Martin Breum, High North News, 20 January 2020 [43]**

<https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/greenlands-premier-we-must-work-towards-independence>

Overview:

Greenland's premier does not foresee a US take-over and remains committed to Greenland's quest for independence.

Current & Relevant Information:

The loud re-awakening of US interest in Greenland, which culminated last August as president Trump confirmed a wish to buy Greenland – its 57,000 inhabitants included — has not changed Greenland's course towards independence from Denmark, which still holds sovereignty over Greenland. At least not according to Kim Kielsen, Greenland's premier and head of Greenland's Self-Rule government in Nuuk, the capital.

"The mandate we have from our people says that we must work towards independence. There should be no doubt that everything we do is part of this preparatory process. More than 70 percent of our population want us to move towards independence, and it is stipulated in the law on Greenland's Self-Rule how this must happen. That is the mandate we have been given and it has been with us for a very long time," Kielsen told me last week.

**"Greenland," Kevin Hillstrom, Countries and their Cultures [44]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Ge-I/Greenland.html>

Overview:

Greenland was probably originally settled by descendants of the present Inuit culture, who identify the island as Kalaallit Nunaat—meaning "land of the people"—in their native language. It received the name Greenland from Norse explorer Eiríkur Rauðeyrvaldsson (known today as Erik the Red). He sailed from Iceland to the island in 982 C.E. and spent the next three years farming a plot of land along the southern coastline. He returned to Iceland in 986, intent on encouraging others to settle the rugged island. With this in mind, he referred to the island as Greenland, reasoning that a pleasant name would be more likely to attract settlers. Several colonies subsequently were established in Greenland, but these failed to survive. In 1605 King Christian IV of Denmark claimed Greenland for his kingdom. It remained a colony of Denmark until 1953, when it received county status. This change also gave Greenlanders full Danish citizenship. In 1979, Greenland became a self-governing part of the Danish realm after passage of a popular referendum. But it is still subject to the Danish constitution, and Denmark continues to manage the island's external affairs in areas such as defense. Greenland is currently composed of three administrative divisions: West Greenland (Kitaa in Greenlandic), East Greenland (Tunu), and North Greenland (Avannaq, also known as the Thule District).

Today, about 80 percent of Greenland's population is of Inuit or mixed Inuit/Danish heritage. Most of the remainder are of Danish descent, although a small number trace their heritage back to other regions of Europe. Modern Greenland has

undoubtedly been shaped by European values and perspectives, but the island nonetheless features unique Inuit and European cultures that are distinct from one another. These differences in social customs and attitudes do bring tensions, but Greenlanders are united by the commonly held challenges of cold climate and isolation, as well as a genuine affection for the land on which they live.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Greenland is the largest island in the world. It is located 17 miles northeast of Canada's Ellesmere Island, between the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic. The northern tip of Greenland is approximately 460 miles (740 kilometers) from the North Pole, making it the northern most country on the planet. It is approximately 1,660 miles (2,670 kilometers) long from its northern to southern tips, and is about 650 miles (1,050 kilometers) across at its widest point. The total land area of Greenland is about 804,000 square miles (2,175,600 square kilometers), about three times the size of Texas, but 85 percent of the island's land surface is covered by ice. The country includes about 24,800 miles (40,000 kilometers) of coastline.

Greenland is a forbidding, rugged land that nonetheless possesses a stark beauty. Much of the island's interior lies beneath a vast ice cap that in some places is up to 9,800 feet (3,000 meters) thick. Over the years, the weight of all this ice has reshaped the island's interior into a concave, bowl-like basin that has actually sunk below sea level in several areas. The white surface of this vast ice cap is relieved only by the occasional peaks of mountains (nunataks in Greenlandic) jutting into the sky. Glaciers from this great mass of ice extend through mountain valleys and ravines to reach coastline fjords at many points. At the terminuses of these drainages, thousands of icebergs—many of monstrous size—are formed every year.

The inhospitable interior of the island relegates the entire population of Greenland to its rugged coastlines. Most settlements are on the west and southwest coast, including the capital city of Nuuk. This city, originally founded in 1721, is the island's oldest Danish settlement and by far the largest community in Greenland. It holds about 14,000 of the nation's entire population of 59,000 people.

The climate in Greenland is subarctic, with short, cool summers and bitterly cold winters. Along the fjords of the southwest coast, where most Greenlanders live, temperatures average 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius) during the height of summer. But the temperature falls to a mean of 18 degrees Fahrenheit (-8 degrees Celsius) during winter time. Temperatures are much colder in the northern interior.

Hours of sunlight vary dramatically from season to season in Greenland, three-quarters of which lies north of the Arctic Circle. During the summer, Greenland becomes a land of the "midnight sun," with weeks of 24-hour daylight all along its length and breadth. In fact, northern Greenland receives three months of continual daylight during this time. During the winter, however, Greenland's southern ramparts

receive only a meager supply of daylight (several hours each day) and the far north is plunged into darkness for several weeks, bracketed by a month of brief, hazy twilight on either end.

#### A. Family:

**“At the Edge of the Ice,” Minik Rosing, Smithsonian Magazine, May 2019 [45]**  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/modern-traditional-life-at-edge-ice-180971917/>

#### Overview:

Deep inside the Arctic Circle, Inuit hunters embrace modern technology but preserve a traditional way of life.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

When I was a small child in the late 1950s, my family lived on a reindeer farm in the fjords of Greenland. My father, Jens Rosing, had deep roots in the country. Some of his ancestors were Inuit who'd come over from Canadian islands 800 years earlier. Others were Danes who'd arrived in the early 1800s, just after the Napoleonic Wars. In addition to breeding reindeer, my father was painting, drawing and writing books. He also made small pictures of seals, sled dogs, polar bears and other iconic Greenland scenes.

It's a mistake, though, to think of Greenland as isolated. There's a stereotype of Inuit people who live out in the middle of nowhere and go outside to knock some animal on the head and eat it raw. In reality, Greenland has a literacy rate of 100 percent, and its people have plenty of knowledge and opinions about the rest of the world. The major classic novels were translated into Greenlandic and read widely starting in the mid-1800s. Robinson Crusoe ran as a serial in the newspaper. These days, even the most remote houses are usually connected to the internet.

My grandfather Otto Rosing captured the contradiction between remoteness and worldliness back in 1943, when he was a pastor assigned to the Lutheran church in Thule. In a letter around that time, he described an afternoon outing with his family on a small motorboat when a flotilla of ships from Washington, D.C. suddenly appeared, ready to set up a large new weather and radio station. Although my grandfather was just a local pastor, he told the Americans they weren't authorized to make landfall from the United States without government approval. "Greenland is the land of surprises these days," he wrote. "You can live in prehistoric times one day and get entangled in international affairs the next."

There are parts of the world where colonizers forced the local people to change their ways of life. For the most part, Greenlanders have had a lot of freedom to make their own choices, and they've chosen to keep the parts of their own culture that work best for them.

**“Greenland,” Kevin Hillstrom, Countries and their Cultures [46]**  
<https://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Greenland.html>

### Overview:

Greenland was probably originally settled by descendants of the present Inuit culture, who identify the island as Kalaalit Nunaat—meaning "land of the people"—in their native language. It received the name Greenland from Norse explorer Eiríkur RauðeÞorvaldsson (known today as Erik the Red). He sailed from Iceland to the island in 982 C.E. and spent the next three years farming a plot of land along the southern coastline. He returned to Iceland in 986, intent on encouraging others to settle the rugged island. With this in mind, he referred to the island as Greenland, reasoning that a pleasant name would be more likely to attract settlers. Several colonies subsequently were established in Greenland, but these failed to survive. In 1605 King Christian IV of Denmark claimed Greenland for his kingdom. It remained a colony of Denmark until 1953, when it received county status. This change also gave Greenlanders full Danish citizenship. In 1979, Greenland became a self-governing part of the Danish realm after passage of a popular referendum. But it is still subject to the Danish constitution, and Denmark continues to manage the island's external affairs in areas such as defense. Greenland is currently composed of three administrative divisions: West Greenland (Kitaa in Greenlandic), East Greenland (Tunu), and North Greenland (Avannaq, also known as the Thule District).

Today, about 80 percent of Greenland's population is of Inuit or mixed Inuit/Danish heritage. Most of the remainder are of Danish descent, although a small number trace their heritage back to other regions of Europe. Modern Greenland has undoubtedly been shaped by European values and perspectives, but the island nonetheless features unique Inuit and European cultures that are distinct from one another. These differences in social customs and attitudes do bring tensions, but Greenlanders are united by the commonly held challenges of cold climate and isolation, as well as a genuine affection for the land on which they live.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Gender Roles and Statuses**

Division of Labor by Gender. Gender roles in Inuit communities are interchangeable in many respects. Men and women share in many chores associated with their subsistence-oriented lifestyles, although responsibilities related to hunting and fishing still tend to be divided by gender (for instance, men typically do the actual hunting, while women attend to drying the meat, harvesting of the skins, etc.)

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Inuit society has traditionally placed greater value on boys than girls, and these attitudes persist today.

#### **Marriage, Family, and Kinship**

Marriage. "Arranged" marriages are not unknown, but most unions are by choice. Most marriages are monogamous, but some men do maintain marriages with more than one wife at a time.

Domestic Unit. Immediate family units are usually modest in size (average two children per family).

Kin Groups. Extended families are very important in Greenlandic communities. These kin groups treat resources as communal property. For example, food obtained from hunting and fishing is generally divided up equally among families of a kin group. But Inuit families also form alliances outside their kin group. These alliances, which stem from historical—and present-day—concerns about survival, are carefully maintained through rituals of respect and gift-giving.

**“Greenland: Importance of Kinship,” Mark Nuttall, family.jrank.org [47]**  
<https://family.jrank.org/pages/748/Greenland.html>

Overview:

Kalaallit Nunaat, the Greenlanders' Land, is separated from the eastern Canadian Arctic on the west by Davis Strait, Baffin Bay, and Nares Strait, and from Iceland, on the east, by Denmark Strait. Through the ages, peoples from the northern parts of North America, Scandinavia, and Europe have migrated to Greenland, while others, most notably Scottish, English, and Dutch whalers, have frequented the country in times past.

The ancestors of the present-day Inuit, Greenland's indigenous people, first arrived in the country from the Canadian Arctic around 4,500 years ago, hunting land mammals such as musk ox. Successive groups of Inuit migrants continued to harvest the living resources of both land and sea, including caribou, seals, whales, and walrus. Norse farming settlements flourished in south and southwest Greenland, from approximately 985 for almost 500 years. Early English explorers, such as Martin Frobisher and John Davis in the sixteenth century, met with groups of Inuit along the west coast. Pursuing the Greenland right whale, European whalers became regular visitors to the coasts of Greenland starting in the seventeenth century. Greenland was a Danish colony between 1721 and 1953, and an integral part of the Danish Kingdom from 1953 to 1979. During these periods significant numbers of Danes lived and made their homes there, as some 7,000 continue to do today.

As a result of the interactions, intermarriages, and fleeting liaisons between these Inuit, Nordic, and other European migrants and sojourners, a society with a rich cultural heritage has evolved. Greenland is thus situated between the new and old worlds in both a geographical and cultural sense. Today, around 83 percent of Greenland's 58,000 residents are Inuit, a people who share a common language and culture with the Inuit in Canada, Alaska, and the Russian Far East; the remainder



are primarily Danes. In 1979, the people of Greenland achieved Home Rule from Denmark. Presiding over an autonomous territory within the Danish Kingdom, the Greenland Home Rule Government has complete legislative power over Greenland's internal affairs.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Anthropologists have generally agreed that kinship is the very foundation of Inuit social organization. In Greenland, kinship is both the basis for social relatedness and social organization, and the key organizing principle for hunting and fishing, which continue to be major activities for many people. However, in Greenland kinship is not simply biologically prescribed. This is immediately apparent to anyone who tries to collect genealogies, work out an individual's kin reckoning and family relationships, or simply listen to the way people use kinship terms in situations of both reference and address. The boundaries of kindred and descent-based groups, as Greenlanders define them, are shifting constantly, as are the interpersonal relationships that are defined in terms of kinship. Kinship and family relationships may appear to have distinct biological roots, but in practice they are flexible and integrate nonbiological social relationships that are considered as real as any biological relationship.

Kinship and family relationships are not always permanent states, and although it may be possible to talk of a kinship system in Greenland, it is a system that is inherently flexible and that allows extensive improvisation in that people can choose their kin. Throughout Greenland, social relationships tend to be defined in terms of being either kin or not kin. Kinship is multifaceted, embracing genealogy, consanguinity, affinity, friendship, name-sharing, birthday partners, age-sets, the living, and the dead. Kinship is bilateral, and the term for personal kindred or close extended family is *ilaqtariit*. The root of this word, *ila-*, means a part, or a companion, and a member of the *ilaqtariit* is called an *ilaqutaq*, someone who belongs. Individual households are suffixed with *-kkut* (e.g., *Josepikkut*—Josepi's household) and there are usually several *-kkut* in an *ilaqtariit*. People often distinguish between an *ilaqutaq* and an *eqqarleq*, someone who is a genealogical or affinal relative belonging to another *ilaqtariit*. *Eqqarleq* derives from *eqqaq*, meaning the immediate vicinity/area, or close to. As a form of address and reference *eqqarleq* is not necessarily always applied to distant kin, but its use depends on how a person defines his or her relationship with another person. One vitally important feature of kinship in Greenland is that kin and family relationships can be created if individuals choose to regard a nonkin relationship as something similar to a genealogical or affinal link. Just as people work out and define social relationships in terms of being based on kin or not, they can also decide how closely related they feel to someone. Although it may be rare to hear that somebody regards a sibling as an *eqqarleq*, an *eqqarleq* such as a second cousin's spouse may be regarded as a

sibling by somebody and referred to as an *ilaqutaq*, even if those people have no consanguineal or affinal relationship.

Like many other Inuit communities, Greenlanders generally use kin terms in preference to personal names to refer to and address people regardless of any genealogical or affinal connection. To establish and continue a kinship relationship is easy enough—kin terms are simply used for both reference and address, and personal names are avoided in most situations of daily interaction. As forms of address, kin terms are used usually in the possessive: for example, *ataataga* (my father), *paniga* (my daughter). A man or a woman who regards his or her second cousin's (*illuusaq*) wife as a sister will use the appropriate kinship term (a man will call the woman either *aleqa* for older sister, or *najak* for younger sister; a woman will call her *angaju* for older sister, or *nukaq* for younger sister). The woman who is now regarded as a sister will reciprocate by using the appropriate kinship term for brother or sister (*ani* for older brother, or *aqqaluk* for younger brother; *angaju* or *nukaq* for older or younger sister). Such use of kin terms illustrates David Schneider's (1968) argument that the recording and listing of kinship terms does not mean that their designation will follow accordingly. Kin terms are symbols that allow for the imputation of idiosyncratic meaning and form part of a much larger set of symbols and implicit meanings that people use actively and consciously to construct the idea of community (Nuttall 1992).

Kinship and family relationships in Greenland are more accurately described as a complex network and intricate pattern of relationships that includes both the living and the dead (Nuttall 1994). When people die, their names (in Greenlandic *atiit*; singular *ateq*), their kinship relations, and their family relationships carry on in newborn children, so that people retain their social presence despite their physical absence. A person who is named after a dead person is called an *atsiaq* (plural *atsiat*), but the first same-sex child to be born after the death of another person is called that person's *ateqqaataa*. The dead person, who can have more than one *atsiaq*, is known as the *atsiaq's aqqa*. *Aqqa* is another word for name. In many Inuit societies in Alaska, Canada, and Siberia, the name is not tied to either gender, and a child can receive the name of a deceased male or female. But in Greenland all personal names are gender-specific (because they are Danish names), and generally a child can only be named after a person of the same sex. This can cause problems if, say, a man whose name is *Jens* has died, and three girls are then born. Are people to wait until a baby boy is born? There will be concern that *Jens's* name will be cold, lonely, and homeless for too long. People can get around this potentially disturbing situation by calling one of the girls *Jensine* (usually the first to be born, if she has not yet received a name). However, a similar improvisation of naming does not occur if a woman dies, and a baby boy is born shortly after.

**“The World Is Changing for Greenland's Native Inuit People,” Jon Lapidese, Oceanwide Expeditions [48] <https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/blog/the-world-is-changing-for-the-native-inuit-people>**

Overview:

You may know them as ‘Eskimos’, but the people of the Arctic are officially called the Inuit. Historically, they were hunters in the truest sense. For hundreds of years, they survived the world’s harshest conditions, living off their prey of whales, seals, polar bears, muskoxen, birds, fish and reindeer. This has always been their way of life. One that is now changing. The Inuit or “the people” in their native language, were mostly isolated for millennia, until modern times. Now they are adapting but their lives are affected by a contemporary world that is placing limits on how they can hunt and a changing climate that is affecting their environment. There is an element of uncertainty to their culture.

Current & Relevant Information:

**An Ancient People**

The Inuit originally migrated from Siberia to Alaska, through North America and finally arrived at the shores of Greenland in the 13th century. They were sophisticated navigators, using stars to guide their way. Because Greenland is literally covered with a sheet of ice, the Inuit settled around the coastal areas so they could hunt and fish.

Surviving in such a harsh environment required a strong sense of family and community. The Inuit followed a moral code based on ancient myths and legends, which were absolute. Some of these beliefs were expressed in their art as carvings called tupilaq, or “evil spirit objects”.

**“Life in Greenland's polar desert,” Stephen Pax Leonard, The Guardian, 29 October 2011 [49] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/30/life-greenlands-polar-desert>**

Overview:

Stephen Pax Leonard spent the last year studying the language of the Arctic Inugguit. He was ready for the months of darkness, brutal cold and finally the all-day light. What he didn't anticipate was his creeping horror at the way the rest of us live.

Current & Relevant Information:

I had discovered the cold heaven that I came looking for. Here, for a community of 40 hunter-gatherers clinging on in an exceedingly remote place, life was stripped to its basics: subsistence, family and lots of goodwill. Empty huts had been smashed to pieces by unforgiving storms, their entrances lost behind walls of snow 10ft high. Single male hunters whose wives had left them long ago would live in the simplest of

conditions: an oil heater in one corner, a bucket in the other, a bed, television, crucifix, a few family snaps on the wall and no more. The eldest hunter in the settlement and a story-teller with whom I worked, Qaerngaq Nielsen, gave Savissivik 10 years. Climate change has meant that the settlement is almost impossible to get to by dog-sledge and there are few who wish to live in complete isolation in the 21st century with no medical facilities.

**“Greenlandic Inuit,” Swoop Arctic [50] <https://www.swoop-arctic.com/greenland/inuit>**

Overview:

The Inuit are the indigenous peoples of the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions and form the majority of Greenland's population. Visiting will expose you to the culture, traditions and history of a population that have demonstrated an extraordinary adaptation to this vast wilderness environment.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Inuit values of resilience and innovation have been laced into the culture over thousands of years. The spirit of interdependency and a familiarity within communities runs strong, as does the recognition of the importance of nature and the elements.

Communities today continue to be built around family units and subsistence hunting; modern culture a distinct fusion of traditional and new ways of life. While fish hang to dry outside houses, the Inuit settle down to cable TV or tune into the radio, spoken in the Inuktitut language, indoors. Children learn a Western curriculum at school, while the preservation of Inuit traditions is emphasized through teaching and the passing down of survival skills. As modernization has taken place, you'll see how the Inuit have upheld certain traditional options, out of a deep knowledge for their home.

The resourcefulness of the Inuit is at the heart of many traditions. As everything used was either hunted, gathered or made, lifestyles were shaped around this work and each family member had a specific contribution to it.

**“The children taken from home for a social experiment,” Ellen Otzen, BBC News, 10 June 2015 [51] <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33060450>**

Overview:

In the 1950s, a group of Inuit children were taken from their families in Greenland to be re-educated as model Danish citizens. More than 60 years later, they want the Danish government to apologize for an experiment that did enormous damage.

"It was a lovely summery day, when two grand Danish gentlemen showed up at our house," says Helene Thiesen. It was 1951 and she lived with her family in Nuuk, the capital of Greenland.

"They had an interpreter with them and my older sister and I thought: What are they doing here? We were very curious. We were told to go outside while mum spoke to them.

"They asked my mum if she would be willing to send me to Denmark. I would learn to speak Danish and get a good education - they said it was a great chance for me.

"My mum said, 'No,' to them twice. But they kept pushing her and said we think you should send Helene to Denmark, it's only for six months. And she'll get the chance of a bright future - so we think you should let her go."

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Denmark had resolved to improve living conditions in its Arctic colony. Many people still made a living by hunting seal, only a small percentage spoke Danish, and tuberculosis was widespread.

The best way to modernize the island was to create a new type of Greenlander, the Danish authorities decided, so they sent out telegrams to priests and headteachers asking them to identify intelligent children between the ages of six and 10. The plan - formed with the help of the charity Save the Children Denmark - was to send them to foster families in Denmark so they could be re-educated as "little Danes".

Many parents were reluctant to give up their children but eventually 21 families gave in.

#### **“Colonial Categories of Rule – Mixed Marriages and Families in Greenland around 1800,” Inge Seiding, Kontur, 2011 [52]**

[https://kontur.au.dk/fileadmin/www.kontur.au.dk/Kontur\\_22/SEIDING\\_MOD1.pdf](https://kontur.au.dk/fileadmin/www.kontur.au.dk/Kontur_22/SEIDING_MOD1.pdf)

#### Abstract:

Late 18th and 19th century colonial Greenland saw a number of ‘mixed’ families becoming a focal point of the colonial administration. In the intersection between religious and secular interests in the Danish-Norwegian arctic colonial space, these marriages and families across the colonial divide were closely observed, registered and regulated. As such, they became significant elements in the shifting social landscapes of the Greenlandic colonial society, partly because of the unruliness of these relations placing a constant pressure on the colonial administration, partly as result of colonial administrative efforts at social engineering that followed.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

As argued by Danish historian Søren Rud in his recent, yet unpublished, PhD-dissertation, processes of subjectivation through governmental strategies by state as well as non-state actors developed through the 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial Greenland as well as its metropole, Copenhagen. One of Rud’s main points is the fact that in the Greenlandic case, the hall mark of this colonial, governmental management was “the

utilization of the concept of authenticity.” (Rud 2010: 241). The theoretical approach in my studies of intermarriage in colonial Greenland similarly draws, partially, on the Foucaultian concept of governmentality. Slightly out of tune with Rud’s outline of a chronology of the development of this type of colonial management, I apply the concept to 18th/early 19th century management of the colonial subjects who married and founded the families of *blandinger* who in Rud’s dissertation exemplifies the objects of managing the balance of proper civilization – “correct admixtures” – through various educational efforts in the latter half of the 19th century.

Despite dealing with a period marked by the advent of formalized, management strategies of a more mercantile character, a closer look at the shifting administrative strategies surrounding intermarriage and children of mixed parentage shows an intense focus on the individual on defining Greenlandicness, or, rather a desired Greenlandic type of subject. The 1782 Royal Greenlandic Trading Department (RGTD) Instruction and the implementation of it, founded a colonial society of distinct social categorization that classed, gendered and racialized as a direct response to the social and cultural transgression embodied in the marriages between Inuit women and European men. Just as the civilizing projects of the late 19th century were ambiguous, balancing between European virtues and Greenlandic authenticity, the management of the colonial, intimate encounter was one of ambiguity and increasing anxiety. The concerns, I argue here, related to mercantile interests alongside an increasing focus on the social design of the colonial society.

## **In Conclusion**

Colonial administration of the inevitable, intimate colonial encounter resulting in mixed families shows that administrators recognized its inevitability. The question then remained, how these relations could be regulated to create as little ‘damage’ as possible. To the mission, damage was immoral, unchristian behavior and as such the marriages were often seen as part of the Christian tutelage necessary in the Christianization of the Greenlanders. To the secular colonizers, damage was, at a glance, rather the strain on the vulnerable trade economy through the creation of an increasingly unsustainable population of welfare dependents – neither European nor Inuit and thus, out of category. However, as seen above, the administration developed a system of social distinction, that intensified concurrently with the blurring of the distinction between European and Inuit that the many mixed families represented. Stoler argues that colonial control was dependent on racial distinction and classification, more precisely “which children could become citizens rather than subjects”, a differentiation expressed through the control with the conjugal relations in the colonies (2002:43). I find this a fitting description of the governing of sexual relations and marriage in Greenland. Despite the rather unique example of the many and early formal, Christian marriages between Inuit women and European men, the administrative preoccupation with them and, especially, the children they resulted in, shows the inclination to categorize on the basis of social status, race and gender in

the Greenlandic colonies. This categorization and its connected system of rights and obligations, laid the foundation of the social landscape of the 19th century colonial Greenland. Intermarriage was as much a challenge as a facilitator to colonial rule, threatening the social order as well as creating the subjects to maintain it. The late 1700's saw the first, insecure definitions of the outline of the desired Greenlandic subjects and the first attempts to map out the administrative strategies to produce them through fine tunings of regulations and development of new techniques to shape them. Those neither nor, were as such, the first 'strategic micro point of application' of administrative strategies and techniques to create a social category of Greenlanders that would secure trade interests as well as an increasingly stratified social order in the Greenlandic colonies. Inge Seiding has an MA in Social and Cultural History. She is an archivist at the Greenland National and PhD-student at the University of Greenland in Nuuk. She is currently working on a PhD-project about intermarriage and mixed families in 18th and 18th century colonial Greenland.

#### B. Religion:

**“Greenland,” Kevin Hillstrom, Countries and their Cultures [53]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Greenland.html>

#### Overview:

Greenland was probably originally settled by descendants of the present Inuit culture, who identify the island as Kalaalit Nunaat—meaning "land of the people"—in their native language. It received the name Greenland from Norse explorer Eiríkur RauðeÞorvaldsson (known today as Erik the Red). He sailed from Iceland to the island in 982 C.E. and spent the next three years farming a plot of land along the southern coastline. He returned to Iceland in 986, intent on encouraging others to settle the rugged island. With this in mind, he referred to the island as Greenland, reasoning that a pleasant name would be more likely to attract settlers. Several colonies subsequently were established in Greenland, but these failed to survive. In 1605 King Christian IV of Denmark claimed Greenland for his kingdom. It remained a colony of Denmark until 1953, when it received county status. This change also gave Greenlanders full Danish citizenship. In 1979, Greenland became a self-governing part of the Danish realm after passage of a popular referendum. But it is still subject to the Danish constitution, and Denmark continues to manage the island's external affairs in areas such as defense. Greenland is currently composed of three administrative divisions: West Greenland (Kitaa in Greenlandic), East Greenland (Tunu), and North Greenland (Avannaá, also known as the Thule District).

Today, about 80 percent of Greenland's population is of Inuit or mixed Inuit/Danish heritage. Most of the remainder are of Danish descent, although a small number trace their heritage back to other regions of Europe. Modern Greenland has undoubtedly been shaped by European values and perspectives, but the island

nonetheless features unique Inuit and European cultures that are distinct from one another. These differences in social customs and attitudes do bring tensions, but Greenlanders are united by the commonly held challenges of cold climate and isolation, as well as a genuine affection for the land on which they live.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Religion**

Religious Beliefs. The majority of the Greenlandic population is associated with the Lutheran Church, which is the national church of Denmark. But traditional Inuit spiritual beliefs remain strong in many of Greenland's remote communities.

Rituals and Holy Places. Members of Greenlandic communities continue to practice a wide range of rituals handed down from their ancestors. These range from giving ritualistic thanks to bears, whales, and other creatures after they have been slain by hunting expeditions to taboos on mixing food and clothing associated with the winter months with those associated with the summer season.

Death and the Afterlife. The Lutheran religion as practiced in Greenland and other nations is based on a belief in the ultimate authority of God. It places great importance on the life of Jesus and the authority of the Bible, and emphasizes the doctrine of salvation through faith.

**“People Of Greenland,” Rasmus Ole Rasmussen, Britannica [54]**

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Greenland/People>

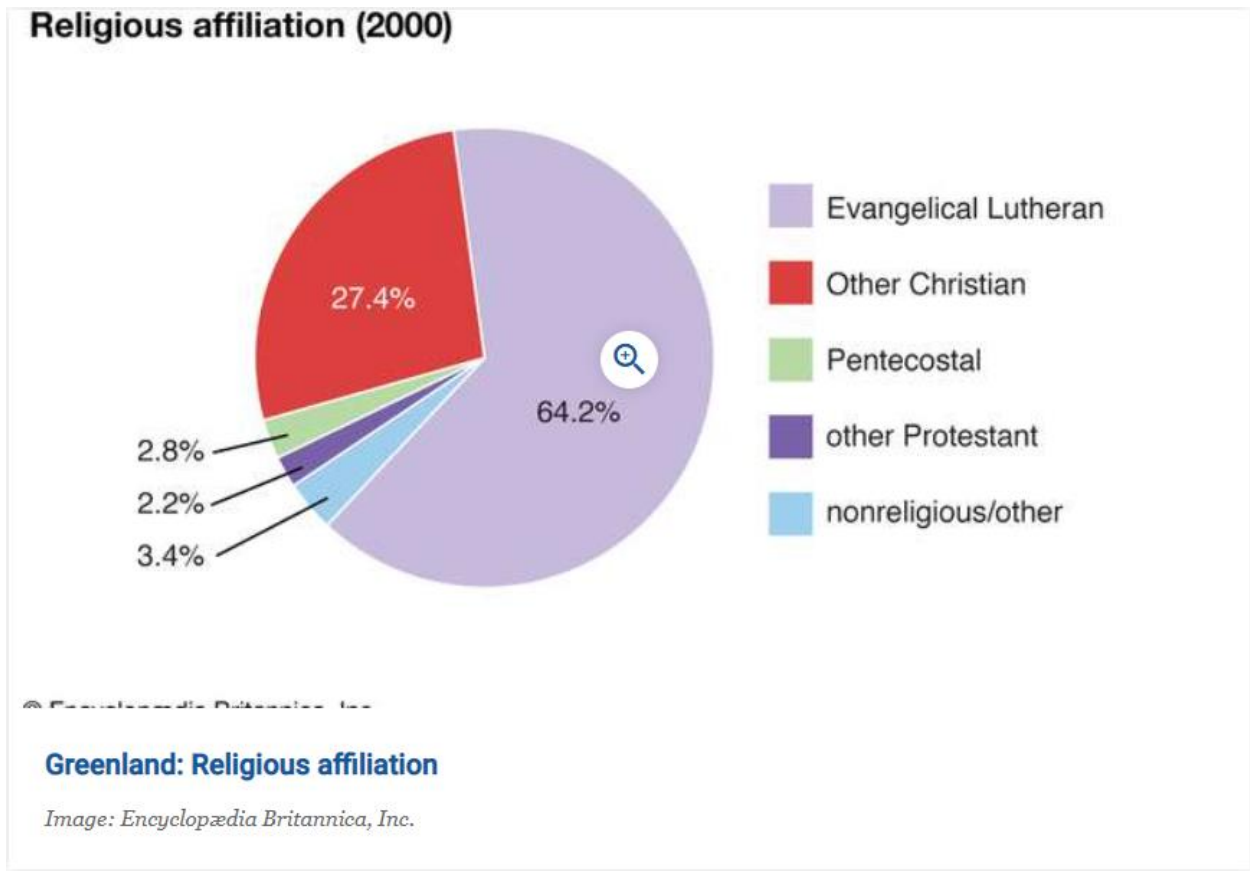
Overview:

Nearly nine-tenths of Greenlanders are principally of Inuit, or Eskimo, extraction. They are very strongly admixed with early European immigrant strains. More than one-tenth of the people are Danish, most of them born in Denmark.

Current & Relevant Information:

Evangelical Lutheranism is the official religion. It is followed by nearly two-thirds of the population; about one-third of Greenlanders follow other forms of Christianity. Traditional beliefs, including shamanism, are still practiced by a small minority.





**“Religious Beliefs In Greenland,” Benjamin Elisha Sawe, WorldAtlas, 7 May 2019**  
 [55] <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/religious-beliefs-in-greenland.html>

Overview:

Greenland is a self-ruling country that is part of the Kingdom of Denmark. It lies between the Atlantic and the Arctic oceans and borders the Arctic Archipelago of Canada. Geographically, Greenland is in the North American continent, but the country is culturally and politically closely tied to Europe especially with Denmark and Norway which were the former colonial powers. Similarly, the territory is also closely associated with the island nation of Iceland.

Greenland is the largest island in the world. As of 2013, the Greenland population was approximately 56,480 making it the world’s least densely populated region. The country's capital city is Nuuk, and almost one-third of the country's population lives in the city. Greenland has had human habitation for at least 4500 years by the arctic people whose ancestors are believed to have migrated from Canada.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Religion In Greenland**

Most people in Greenland are Christians who are followers of the Lutheran denomination with close ties to the church in Denmark. In Denmark, the church was established through the country's constitution and is supported by the state. The current reigning monarch is the circular supreme authority in the church, and this applies throughout the whole of Denmark but excludes the Faroe Islands whose church became autonomous in 2007.

Christianity was introduced in about 1000 AD by the Norse settlers; however, because of the harsh climatic conditions such as the snow storms, the colonists left Greenland. In the 18th C, the same Norse settlers returned, and when Denmark and Norway parted ways in 1814, the territory of Greenland was retained as Danish although it had a certain level of autonomy which was supported by its isolation. Presently, the church in Greenland has some level of autonomy, and it has its bishop and about 19 parishes which are divided among three deaneries and 40 churches.

Other religious groups in Greenland include the Inuit traditional beliefs. The Inuit people are believed to be descendants of people who originated from Siberia and crossed to North America from Asia and settled in Greenland. The Inuit traditional religion emphasized appeasing of a Sea goddess who was believed to be vengeful and was controlling the successful hunts of whales and seals. Other religions which have been established in Greenland include the Bahá'í faith among other groups.

**“Greenland Religions,” Index Mundi, 18 September 2021** [\[56\]](https://www.indexmundi.com/greenland/religions.html)  
<https://www.indexmundi.com/greenland/religions.html>

#### Overview:

This entry is an ordered listing of religions by adherents starting with the largest group and sometimes includes the percent of total population. The core characteristics and beliefs of the world's major religions are described below.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Baha'i** - Founded by Mirza Husayn-Ali (known as Baha'u'llah) in Iran in 1852, Baha'i faith emphasizes monotheism and believes in one eternal transcendent God. Its guiding focus is to encourage the unity of all peoples on the earth so that justice and peace may be achieved on earth. Baha'i revelation contends the prophets of major world religions reflect some truth or element of the divine, believes all were manifestations of God given to specific communities in specific times, and that Baha'u'llah is an additional prophet meant to call all humankind. Bahais are an open community, located worldwide, with the greatest concentration of believers in South Asia.

**Buddhism** - Religion or philosophy inspired by the 5th century B.C. teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (also known as Gautama Buddha "the enlightened one"). Buddhism focuses on the goal of spiritual enlightenment centered on an

understanding of Gautama Buddha's Four Noble Truths on the nature of suffering, and on the Eightfold Path of spiritual and moral practice, to break the cycle of suffering of which we are a part. Buddhism ascribes to a karmic system of rebirth. Several schools and sects of Buddhism exist, differing often on the nature of the Buddha, the extent to which enlightenment can be achieved - for one or for all, and by whom - religious orders or laity.

**Christianity** - Descending from Judaism, Christianity's central belief maintains Jesus of Nazareth is the promised messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures, and that his life, death, and resurrection are salvific for the world. Christianity is one of the three monotheistic Abrahamic faiths, along with Islam and Judaism, which traces its spiritual lineage to Abraham of the Hebrew Scriptures. Its sacred texts include the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament (or the Christian Gospels).

**Hinduism** - Originating in the Vedic civilization of India (second and first millennium B.C.), Hinduism is an extremely diverse set of beliefs and practices with no single founder or religious authority. Hinduism has many scriptures; the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad-Gita are among some of the most important. Hindus may worship one or many deities, usually with prayer rituals within their own home. The most common figures of devotion are the gods Vishnu, Shiva, and a mother goddess, Devi. Most Hindus believe the soul, or atman, is eternal, and goes through a cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (samsara) determined by one's positive or negative karma, or the consequences of one's actions. The goal of religious life is to learn to act so as to finally achieve liberation (moksha) of one's soul, escaping the rebirth cycle.

**Islam** - The third of the monotheistic Abrahamic faiths, Islam originated with the teachings of Muhammad in the 7th century. Muslims believe Muhammad is the final of all religious prophets (beginning with Abraham) and that the Qu'ran, which is the Islamic scripture, was revealed to him by God. Islam derives from the word submission, and obedience to God is a primary theme in this religion. In order to live an Islamic life, believers must follow the five pillars, or tenets, of Islam, which are the testimony of faith (shahada), daily prayer (salah), giving alms (zakah), fasting during Ramadan (sawm), and the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj).

**Jainism** - Originating in India, Jain spiritual philosophy believes in an eternal human soul, the eternal universe, and a principle of "the own nature of things." It emphasizes compassion for all living things, seeks liberation of the human soul from reincarnation through enlightenment, and values personal responsibility due to the belief in the immediate consequences of one's behavior. Jain philosophy teaches non-violence and prescribes vegetarianism for monks and laity alike; its adherents are a highly influential religious minority in Indian society.

**Judaism** - One of the first known monotheistic religions, likely dating to between 2000-1500 B.C., Judaism is the native faith of the Jewish people, based upon the

belief in a covenant of responsibility between a sole omnipotent creator God and Abraham, the patriarch of Judaism's Hebrew Bible, or Tanakh. Divine revelation of principles and prohibitions in the Hebrew Scriptures form the basis of Jewish law, or halakhah, which is a key component of the faith. While there are extensive traditions of Jewish halakhic and theological discourse, there is no final dogmatic authority in the tradition. Local communities have their own religious leadership. Modern Judaism has three basic categories of faith: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform/Liberal. These differ in their views and observance of Jewish law, with the Orthodox representing the most traditional practice, and Reform/Liberal communities the most accommodating of individualized interpretations of Jewish identity and faith.

**Shintoism** - A native animist tradition of Japan, Shinto practice is based upon the premise that every being and object has its own spirit or kami. Shinto practitioners worship several particular kamis, including the kamis of nature, and families often have shrines to their ancestors' kamis. Shintoism has no fixed tradition of prayers or prescribed dogma, but is characterized by individual ritual. Respect for the kamis in nature is a key Shinto value. Prior to the end of World War II, Shinto was the state religion of Japan, and bolstered the cult of the Japanese emperor.

**Taoism** - Chinese philosophy or religion based upon Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching, which centers on belief in the Tao, or the way, as the flow of the universe and the nature of things. Taoism encourages a principle of non-force, or wu-wei, as the means to live harmoniously with the Tao. Taoists believe the esoteric world is made up of a perfect harmonious balance and nature, while in the manifest world - particularly in the body - balance is distorted. The Three Jewels of the Tao - compassion, simplicity, and humility - serve as the basis for Taoist ethics.

**Zoroastrianism** - Originating from the teachings of Zoroaster in about the 9th or 10th century B.C., Zoroastrianism may be the oldest continuing creedal religion. Its key beliefs center on a transcendent creator God, Ahura Mazda, and the concept of free will. The key ethical tenets of Zoroastrianism expressed in its scripture, the Avesta, are based on a dualistic worldview where one may prevent chaos if one chooses to serve God and exercises good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. Zoroastrianism is generally a closed religion and members are almost always born to Zoroastrian parents. Prior to the spread of Islam, Zoroastrianism dominated greater Iran. Today, though a minority, Zoroastrians remain primarily in Iran, India (where they are known as Parsi), and Pakistan.

### **Traditional beliefs**

Animism: the belief that non-human entities contain souls or spirits.

Badimo: a form of ancestor worship of the Tswana people of Botswana.

Confucianism: an ideology that humans are perfectible through self-cultivation and self-creation; developed from teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius.

Confucianism has strongly influenced the culture and beliefs of East Asian countries, including China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Inuit beliefs are a form of shamanism (see below) based on animistic principles of the Inuit or Eskimo peoples.

Kirant: the belief system of the Kirat, a people who live mainly in the Himalayas of Nepal. It is primarily a form of polytheistic shamanism, but includes elements of animism and ancestor worship.

Pagan is a blanket term used to describe many unconnected belief practices throughout history, usually in reference to religions outside of the Abrahamic category (monotheistic faiths like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

Shamanism: beliefs and practices promoting communication with the spiritual world. Shamanistic beliefs are organized around a shaman or medicine man who - as an intermediary between the human and spirit world - is believed to be able to heal the sick (by healing their souls), communicate with the spirit world, and help souls into the afterlife through the practice of entering a trance. In shaman-based religions, the shaman is also responsible for leading sacred rites.

Spiritualism: the belief that souls and spirits communicate with the living usually through intermediaries called mediums.

### **Syncretic (fusion of diverse religious beliefs and practices)**

Cao Dai: a nationalistic Vietnamese sect, officially established in 1926, that draws practices and precepts from Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Catholicism.

Chondogyo: or the religion of the Heavenly Way, is based on Korean shamanism, Buddhism, and Korean folk traditions, with some elements drawn from Christianity. Formulated in the 1860s, it holds that God lives in all of us and strives to convert society into a paradise on earth, populated by believers transformed into intelligent moral beings with a high social conscience.

Kimbanguist: a puritan form of the Baptist denomination founded by Simon Kimbangu in the 1920s in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo. Adherents believe that salvation comes through Jesus' death and resurrection, like Christianity, but additionally that living a spiritually pure life following strict codes of conduct is required for salvation.

Modekngai: a hybrid of Christianity and ancient Palauan culture and oral traditions founded around 1915 on the island of Babeldaob. Adherents simultaneously worship Jesus Christ and Palauan goddesses.

Rastafarian: an afro-centrist ideology and movement based on Christianity that arose in Jamaica in the 1930s; it believes that Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930-74, was the incarnation of the second coming of Jesus.

Santeria: practiced in Cuba, the merging of the Yoruba religion of Nigeria with Roman Catholicism and native Indian traditions. Its practitioners believe that each person has a destiny and eventually transcends to merge with the divine creator and source of all energy, Olorun.

Voodoo/Vodun: a form of spirit and ancestor worship combined with some Christian faiths, especially Catholicism. Haitian and Louisiana Voodoo, which have included more Catholic practices, are separate from West African Vodun, which has retained a focus on spirit worship.

### **Non-religious**

Agnosticism: the belief that most things are unknowable. In regard to religion, it is usually characterized as neither a belief nor non-belief in a deity.

Atheism: the belief that there are no deities of any kind.

**“Greenlandic Inuit Beliefs,” Robert C. Brears, Oceanwide Expeditions [57]**  
<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/blog/the-greenland-inuit-s-belief-of-soul-and-body>

#### Overview:

Greenland is the world’s largest island and with the northern tip around 740 kilometers from the North Pole it is the northernmost country on Earth. The island is around 2,670 kilometers long and is about 650 kilometers across at its widest point. The total land mass is about 2,175,600 square kilometers, 85 percent of which is covered by ice, which can be up to 3,000 meters thick in some places. Geologically, the island has sunk under the ice’s enormous weight with several areas below sea level.

Nonetheless, the scenery is stunning with peaks of the mountains jutting into the sky and glaciers winding their way through mountain valleys to reach coastline fjords. Where the glaciers meet the sea icebergs form, floating out to sea.

The weather is just as dramatic with its sub-arctic location bring short, cold summers and freezing cold winters. Along the fjords the temperature hovers around -8° Celsius during wintertime, however the temperature is much colder in the interior.

Greenland was settled by descendants of the present Inuit culture, who identify the island as Kalaalit Nunaat – “land of the people”: The name Greenland came from the Norse explorer Erik the Red who sailed from Iceland to the island in 982 C.E. and spent the next three years farming a plot of land along the southern coastline.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **The Greenland Inuit’s belief of soul and body**

Traditionally, Greenland Inuit believe that humans as well as animals have both soul and body, where the soul performs the breathing and is independent of the body. In this sense the Inuit believe that the soul continues to live after death.

In the context of where Man came from, Greenland Inuit believe that the first man was called Kallak, created by the first woman out of a tuft of sod. Regarding animals, the Inuit also believe that they too have a soul that is independent of the body and continues after death living. For the Inuit, there is belief that the soul may return to Earth and continue in another body.

### **The upper and underworld**

The Inuit belief-system is centered around the whole visible world being ruled by supernatural powers or 'owners' and is called inua, which means man, and is often used when describing physical locations that have taken on human qualities and passions for example the inua of a certain mountain or lake.

Meanwhile the Earth, with the sea supported by it, rests on pillars and covers the underworld, which is accessible by various entrances from the sea as well as in parts of mountains. Above the Earth an upper world is found with blue sky beyond it. The Inuit believe that the upper world has real land with mountains and valleys.

After death, the Inuit believe that human souls go to either the upper or under world. In fact, the Inuit prefer the underworld as it is warm with abundant food while the souls that go to the upper world will suffer from cold and famine. The Greenland Inuit believe that after death the people can reappear as ghosts. The ghosts make their appearance known by whistling, the next is singing in the ears to ask for food. The dead also act as guardian spirits to their children and grandchildren, especially ones that are named after them.

### **Summoning powers**

To obtain special assistance from the ruling powers Greenland Inuit at times practice the art of summoning, which was practiced and taught from mouth to mouth by people acknowledged or authorized by the community. It was always conducted in secret and always with the object of injuring others and completely favoring the practice. This art is very similar to witchcraft and is based on the principle of divine justice that punishes one person and rewards another.

**“Early Religious Practice in the Greenland Settlement,” Lesley Abrams, Journal of the North Atlantic, October 2009 [58]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232693561\\_Early\\_Religious\\_Practice\\_in\\_the\\_Greenland\\_Settlement](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232693561_Early_Religious_Practice_in_the_Greenland_Settlement)

#### Abstract:

While the beginnings of Christianity in Greenland are very poorly recorded, the settlement has played a prominent role in the discussion of paganism, the

conversion, and early Christianity in the Viking world, thanks to the sagas in which Greenlanders feature. In particular, the range of religious practice that is reflected in the literary representations of the past is very striking; the rituals of the seeress, Thorbjorg, the Christian practice of Eric's wife, Thjodhild, and Gudrid's pilgrimage to Rome and profession as a nun offer contrasting perceptions of lived religion in the late Viking Age. While the absence of other relevant sources relating to Greenland is clearly a disadvantage, it leaves us free to question entrenched assumptions about the early religious life of the community. While, as elsewhere, the conversion to Christianity in Greenland would have had a practical impact, ranging from the creation of political and economic alliances to changes in social custom (including burial and memorialization), I argue in this paper that Greenland might have been somewhat different from other Scandinavian communities overseas. Discussing and drawing on the written and material record, I propose that we might gain from resisting the narrative of Christian convention, which requires sudden, dramatic, and emphatic change, in favor of a different understanding of religious practice. If we entertain the possibility that some societies may have had more room for religious diversity than Christian sources would allow, it could be argued that the early community of Greenland, instead of conforming to Christian stereotype, experienced an extended period of diversity; a mixed society encompassing traditional religious practice and a largely domestic Christianity could have continued for some time until Christianity gained a sufficient degree of institutionalization to impose a more conventional Christian way of life.

**“Indigenous and Religious views on Animals (11): Interview Greenland Shaman Angaangaq Angakkorsuaq,” Pim Martens, [pimmartens.com](https://pimmartens.com), 24 January 2021 [59] <https://pimmartens.com/2021/01/24/indigenous-and-religious-views-on-animals-11-interview-greenland-shaman-angaangaq-angakkorsuaq/>**

Overview:

Our dominant current socio-economic and political systems have become decoupled from the larger ecology of life. Our relationship with the natural environment and animals has changed dramatically over time. My Fellowship ‘Ethics of the Anthropocene’ (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) intends to discuss these past patterns and future pathways with representatives of various indigenous cultures and religious beliefs. Learning from them about our relationship with animals may be a way we can begin to address the sustainability challenges we see today.

**“West Greenland Inuit - Religion and Expressive Culture,” [Countries and their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/North-America/West-Greenland-Inuit-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html) [60] <https://www.everyculture.com/North-America/West-Greenland-Inuit-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>**

Overview:

According to aboriginal belief, every animal had both a soul like a human being and an inua, that is, a man, owner, or lord. The sea, the sun, the moon, a cliff, even



sleep and laughter, also had a human quality expressed by an inua. Numerous taboos were attached to birth, death, and hunting. Violation of taboos caused harm not only to the violator but also to other persons, even the entire settlement. Revealing the taboo violation had a neutralizing effect. The inua of the sea, or Sea Woman (Sedna), the inua of the air (Sila) and the inua of the moon, or Moon-Man, were very sensitive to transgressions of taboos and rituals concerning the animal and life crises. The first missionary arrived in 1721. At present, the Greenlandic Evangelic Lutheran church is nearly universal.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Religious Practitioners.** Most shamans (angakut)—the religious experts—were men, but women might also become shamans. Qilalit were persons, mostly old women, with an ability to get an answer from a spirit by lifting the head of a person lying on the ground. Ilisiitsut, sorcerers or witches, mostly old women, were people who secretly, through magical means, tried to destroy the health or hunting luck of others.

**Ceremonies.** Given that the people's whole existence depended upon hunting and fishing, a good relationship with animals was of vital importance. Technical skills in hunting, as well as observations of taboos and use of amulets and secret songs, were considered necessary to ensure a good hunt. A ritual distribution of the meat of the first seal killed by a boy would ensure his success as a future hunter. The first kill of the season of certain animals was also distributed. During seances, the shaman's spirit-helpers served as informers and as an entertaining element. According to myths, the shaman might undertake a journey to the Sea Woman to make her release the sea animals she was holding back because of People's violation of taboos.

**Arts.** Singing was integrated into many aspects of social life. Most songs were performed by soloists, sometimes accompanied by the audience. The tambourine drum disappeared in most places in the eighteenth century, and music became strongly influenced by European-American music. Story telling was another important part of aboriginal life. The transition from oral to written culture was encouraged by a journal in Greenlandic, *Atuagagdliutit*, founded in Nuuk in 1861. A considerable number of novels, songs, psalms, and the like have been published in Greenlandic.

**Medicine.** In the aboriginal culture, illness was thought to be the result of taboo violations or to be caused by a sorcerer. It was the shaman's task to make diagnoses and bring back the sick person's missing soul. The cause of illness might also be discovered by a qilalik. All this was long ago replaced by a Western understanding of sickness.

**Death and Afterlife.** When a death occurred, the inhabitants of the settlement, primarily the close relatives, fell under various taboos. The soul would live on in the

afterworld either in the sky, which resembled the inland with possibilities for caribou hunting, or in the underworld where the dead hunted marine animals. The last place was the preferred one. It was the way of dying that decided where one would go. Women who died giving birth and those who died at sea went to the lower world. The name of the dead was tabooed until a newborn child was named after him or her. Such renaming is still common in Greenland.

### **3. Iceland:**

**“Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?” Christina Degener, Iceland Unlimited, January 2017 [61] <https://icelandunlimited.is/is-iceland-in-the-arctic-circle/>**

#### Overview:

Iceland is located between Greenland and Norway and is an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. For many people, the name sounds already so “cold” that they assume this island must be close to the North Pole. Have you ever wondered how far North it is actually located? Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **What is the Arctic Circle?**

The Arctic Circle is the imaginary circle around the earth, parallel to the equator, at latitude 66° 33' N. The Arctic Circle marks the latitude on the Earth's surface above which the sun does not set on the summer solstice and does not rise on the winter solstice. Travelers wishing to cross over the Arctic Circle should take note that the Arctic Circle crosses only the countries Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the U.S., Canada, and Greenland. Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle as well? You will learn more about it in a second.

#### **Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?**

The mainland of Iceland is just a few degrees south of the Arctic Circle. The Arctic Circle does, however, pass through Grímsey Island, which lies only 40 kilometers (25 miles) off the North coast of Iceland.

Grímsey is the northernmost inhabited Icelandic territory. Approximately 100 people live on this small island. Grímsey has an area of 5.3 km<sup>2</sup> (2.0 sq mi) and a maximum elevation of 105 meters (344 ft).

Most of the inhabitants live from commercial fishing. There are rich fishing grounds around the island.

Grimsey is not only famous for lying on the Arctic Circle but also for its rich bird life. During the summer, thousands of puffins (and other seabirds) nest on this island.

Watching the cute puffins nesting in 100 meters high cliffs is not only for birdwatchers a unique experience. The puffins are not shy of humans and you can

come very close to them. Grimsey belongs to one of the best bird watching sites in Iceland.

**“Does the Arctic Circle pass through Iceland?” Iceland Magazine, 21 March 2014**

[62] <https://icelandmag.is/article/does-arctic-circle-pass-through-iceland>

Overview:

The mainland of Iceland is just a few degrees south of the Arctic Circle (66°30'N). The Arctic Circle does however pass through Grímsey island, which lies 40 kilometers (25 mi) off the north coast of Iceland. Grímsey is inhabited and according to Statistics Iceland, 86 souls lived there as of January 1, 2013.

Reykjavík, the capital, lies at 64°9', in southwest Iceland, on the southern shore of the Faxaflói Bay. It is the world's northernmost capital of a sovereign state.

**“Iceland: Small but Central,” Alyson Bailes, et al., kas.de, 2014 [63]**

[https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=e861e1f4-bc1f-0c38-efdd-be81f6aeda16&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=e861e1f4-bc1f-0c38-efdd-be81f6aeda16&groupId=252038)

Overview:

If asked whether Iceland should be considered an Arctic or sub-Arctic state, the best answer would be ‘both’ – depending on the context. Geographically, Iceland lies outside the North polar zone proper, with its Northernmost island of Grimsey just grazing the Arctic Circle. Settled around 1000 years ago, it has no ‘indigenous people’. Its vegetation is mostly sub-Arctic, although 11 percent of the land is covered by icesheets. However, in the work of the Arctic Council, such as the preparation of Arctic Human Development Reports (ADHR), Iceland and other territories even further South have been included as they are seen as part of a single environmental and economic complex. Iceland’s economy is still heavily dependent on fishing and more generally on natural resources, which it exploits both for hydroelectric and geothermal power generation and to attract tourists; this gives it more in common with North Norway, Greenland and the Faroes than, say, mainland Denmark.

In terms of conscious identity-framing and policy positioning, Iceland has stressed its Arctic credentials not only by becoming a founding member of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (1993) and the Arctic Council (1996), but by asserting that it is just as much a High Northern ‘littoral’ (coastal) state as are the ‘Big Five’ who actually own land above the Arctic Circle. Overall, Iceland’s attitude is well summed up by its claim to be the only sovereign state lying entirely within the Arctic zone.

This chapter starts by identifying some basics of Iceland’s external orientation as a ‘small state’, then traces the development of its official Arctic policies, and the external relationships and institutional frameworks in which the nation pursues its interests. The full range of Icelandic stakeholders and shapers of Arctic strategy is

then reviewed, from ministries and academia, to private corporations from major economic branches with additional details about the issues at stake. Finally, we stand back from day-to-day politics to consider the nature of Arctic discourse(s) in Iceland, and the (sub) Arctic as a factor in Icelandic identity. A short conclusion speculates on the way ahead.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Arctic issues in Icelandic policy: the starting-point**

With 320,000 inhabitants, Iceland is by far the smallest of the Arctic sovereign states, and its international position and policies are significantly shaped by size as well as location. 'Small state' studies are a branch of International Relations, pursued in Iceland and elsewhere, that focus on the limitations and vulnerabilities of such small entities and on their special opportunities. After the Cold War, for instance, some writers saw Iceland and similar small economies as smart, innovative, resilient and more flexible in responding to global competition. The economic crisis which began in 2008 has however shown how exposed they are to global fluctuations, especially when pursuing high-risk policies in the search for profit. Small societies can also be disproportionately damaged by 'transnational' threats of human origin (terrorism, crime, and smuggling) and of a natural character (pandemics, natural disasters and climate change). Most obviously, small states can be hit hard by the cross-fire when the larger powers surrounding them are in a state of rivalry, destructive competition or even conflict. For a small state positioned as close to the action as Iceland is in the Arctic, avoiding such confrontations in the region (and defending itself against possible consequences) becomes a prime imperative of policy.

A small state with limited resources cannot afford to just observe such first-order threats, however. Like any modern polity, it needs to be aware of all the different aspects of security – military, political, economic or functional – that are crucial for its survival. Since it can rarely find the answers on its own, and its limited internal market also makes its prosperity highly dependent on outside relations, it needs a conscious national strategy to find the external support (or 'shelter') and the openings required at the most reasonable price. In its overall policy since winning the full attributes of a sovereign state in 1944, Iceland has tended to favor relying on US/NATO strategic cover, good relations with other large powers, and Nordic cooperation rather than fully joining in with the European integration process. While participating in EFTA, the European Economic Area and Schengen, it made its first application for EU membership as recently as July 2009. That application was 'frozen' by a Euro-sceptic government who took office in May 2013.

**“Kolbeinsey: Iceland’s Arctic island,” Troels Jacobsen and Ian R. Stone, Research Gate, October 2005 [64] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jeff-Higdon/publication/231920480](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jeff-Higdon/publication/231920480/Observations_of_juvenile_ivory_gulls_Pagophila_eburn) Observations of juvenile ivory gulls *Pagophila eburn***

[ea in Resolute Bay Nunavut Canada August 2005/links/55141ca60cf283ee0834a622/Observations-of-juvenile-ivory-gulls-Pagophila-eburnea-in-Resolute-Bay-Nunavut-Canada-August-2005.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Olafur-Arnalds/publication/298259254_Soils_of_Iceland/links/55141ca60cf283ee0834a622/Observations-of-juvenile-ivory-gulls-Pagophila-eburnea-in-Resolute-Bay-Nunavut-Canada-August-2005.pdf)

Abstract:

Kolbeinsey is a tiny volcanic island to the north of Iceland within the Arctic Circle. It has been much reduced in size in historic times due to erosion. It has considerable geopolitical importance with regard to fishery zones and the exploitation of other natural resources. It is, therefore, in Iceland's interests to ensure that it continues to exist, and measures have been taken to ensure this.

Current & Relevant Information:

Kolbeinsey is located some 74 km (46 miles) northwest of the small, inhabited island of Grimsey, and 105 km (65 miles) from mainland Iceland. It is located at 67°08.9'N, 18°41.1'W, and hence is north of the Arctic Circle and well within the maximum extent of the winter drift ice in the North Atlantic. The island is Iceland's only wholly Arctic island: its other Arctic territory, Grimsey, is bisected by the Arctic Circle. Despite its small size, Kolbeinsey has an interesting history, leading back to the time of the early settlers of Iceland. It also has relevance to present-day geopolitics.

The island, which is now very tiny—as revealed by a photograph taken in 2003—has been much reduced in size by erosion in historic times. In 1616 the bishop at Holar, Guobrandur porlaksson (1571–1621), the father of scientific geography in Iceland, dispatched a team of men on an expedition to the islet. This was a great achievement of the day and although the actual account of the expedition is lost, there exists a poem consisting of 75 verses, written in 1665, about it. The poem states that the dimensions of the island were, in present day terms, 690m (2260 feet) long, 100 m (328 feet) wide, and 100 m (328 feet) high (Einarsson 1665). The height is probably an exaggeration but both width and length are thought to be reasonably accurate (Sæmundsson and Hjartarson 1994). A photograph taken in 1932 reveals the reduction in size suffered by Kolbeinsey during the approximately 300 years since the expedition (Eggertsson 1932), and a comparison shows the continuance of this process to the present day. An Icelandic survey of the island in 1985 showed it to be 40 m (131 feet) by 42 m (138 feet) at low tide, with the highest point some 5 m (16 feet) above sea level (Sæmundsson and Hjartarson 1994). Hence, during the last 400 years the island has lost most of its volume due to erosion.

**“Soils of Iceland,” Ólafur Arnalds, Jokull, 2008 [65]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Olafur-Arnalds/publication/298259254\\_Soils\\_of\\_Iceland/links/56fe54d108ae650a64f71900/Soils-of-Iceland.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Olafur-Arnalds/publication/298259254_Soils_of_Iceland/links/56fe54d108ae650a64f71900/Soils-of-Iceland.pdf)

Abstract:

Icelandic soils are dominated by Andosols when covered by vegetation, Vitrisols in desert areas (Icelandic classification scheme), and highly organic Histosols in some wetland areas. Andosols are not common in Europe but are found in active volcanic areas of the world. They develop distinctive properties such as high organic content, extremely high-water holding capacity and lack of cohesion. Icelandic soils are in many ways special on a global scale due to the environmental conditions for soil development, which include: i) basaltic tephra parent material; ii) steady eolian sedimentation of volcanic materials to the soil surface; and iii) many freeze-thaw cycles acting on frost susceptible soils, causing intense cryoturbation. Iceland has extensive barren desert areas in a cold-humid climate that comprise the largest sandy tephra areas on Earth. Many of the wetland soils have a distinctive combination of andic (volcanic soil properties) and histic (organic) properties. Soil erosion and desertification is more active in Iceland than in any other Northern European country. Erosion has severely degraded many ecosystems with formation of barren surfaces devoid of vegetation in several areas.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Icelandic soils differ from most other soils of Europe and the world because of a unique soil environment. Icelandic soils form in parent materials that are of recent volcanic origin, usually consisting of basaltic tephra. Soils that form in volcanic materials develop distinctive characteristics that separate them from other types of soils as Andosols (FAO, 1998; IUSS Working Group WRB, 2006). Most Icelandic soils are Andosols, making them the largest area in Europe dominated by such soils (Arnalds, 2007). Active eolian processes, frequent tephra deposition events, and a sub-arctic climate with frequent freeze-thaw cycles greatly modify the soils. One of the unique characteristics of Icelandic soil environments is the presence of extensive deserts, in spite of a moist climate in much of the country. Man and nature have inflicted great environmental change since Iceland was first settled about 1200 years ago, which has partly resulted in the development of deserts. Desertification processes still continue to be very active in some areas of the country, but many deserts can be considered, at least in part, as natural deserts at high altitudes and as a result of volcanism.

The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of Icelandic soils and their development, and to describe erosion and desertification processes that characterize the country and modify the soils.

**“Iceland: Outsized Importance for Transatlantic Security,” Daniel Kochis and Brian Slattery, The Heritage Foundation, 21 June 2016 [66]**

<https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/iceland-outsized-importance-transatlantic-security>

#### Abstract:

Iceland, one of the 12 original NATO members, has been an ally and partner to the U.S. for more than 60 years. While the end of the Cold War lowered Iceland's profile as a geostrategic security partner, the failure of the Russian "reset" during the early days of the Obama Administration, and the resurgent belligerence of Russia, underscores that the island nation remains an important partner for safeguarding U.S. security interests. The U.S. must not allow Iceland's small size to obscure its outsized importance for Arctic and transatlantic security.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### Key Points:

- Small in geographic and population terms, Iceland has long played an outsized role in security affairs, serving as a vital Atlantic outpost during both World War II and the Cold War.
- The end of the Cold War lowered Iceland's profile as a geostrategic security partner, but the resurgent belligerence of Russia, and Russian and Chinese interests in Arctic and North Atlantic waters, underscores the importance of the island NATO member to U.S. economic and security interests.
- The U.S. should rebuild its security partnership and strengthen relations with Iceland. This includes increasing America's contribution to the defense of Icelandic air space, deploying more surveillance aircraft from Iceland to monitor Russian naval activity, increasing joint training exercises both bilaterally and with NATO and Arctic Council members, and strengthening economic ties.

**"Iceland and Arctic Security: US Dependency and the Search for an Arctic Identity," Pia Elísabeth Hansson and Guðbjörg Ríkey Th. Hauksdóttir, [overcastcdn.com](https://ams.overcastcdn.com) [67]**

[https://ams.overcastcdn.com/documents/Depledge\\_Lackenbauer - On Thin Ice - Iceland and Arctic Security.pdf](https://ams.overcastcdn.com/documents/Depledge_Lackenbauer_-_On_Thin_Ice_-_Iceland_and_Arctic_Security.pdf)

##### Abstract:

The Arctic ice sheet is melting faster than ever before, while the Arctic region is attracting renewed attention from larger powers. To a small island state in the North Atlantic, this growing interest is welcomed. As a founding member of NATO, albeit without its own military, Iceland relies on its membership within the organization for its protection, complemented by a bilateral defense agreement with the United States. Iceland is concerned about the effects of climate change in the region and their consequences, but at the same time remains hopeful about the possible economic gains associated with the opening of Arctic shipping lanes. The emphasis on Arctic security in Iceland's National Security Policy highlights the region's importance and the country's concerns about its further militarization by larger powers. In addition, the incredibly vast area for which Iceland bears responsibility in terms of search and rescue (SAR) represents an enormous challenge that rests with

the Icelandic Coast Guard. The Coast Guard does not have the capacity to fulfill its duties in this area, which negatively affects Iceland's reaction capability and security.

This chapter explores the changed security environment in the Arctic in the face of renewed large power interest in Iceland, the emergence of Iceland's Arctic identity following the departure of the US from Iceland in 2006, as well as the recent US pressure on Iceland not to cooperate with China and Russia in the Arctic. Finally, we propose policy recommendations to the Icelandic government regarding security issues in the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Iceland's National Security Policy and the Icelandic Coast Guard Iceland was a latecomer to discussions about how to conceptualize Arctic security. The nation's first risk assessment was not released until 2009, and interestingly, the Arctic and Arctic security were not specified as priorities in the assessment. Iceland's National Security Council was only established in 2016, followed soon thereafter by Iceland's first National Security Policy. The policy identifies "environmental and security interests in the Arctic through international cooperation and domestic preparedness" as a security priority. It is therefore evident that the Arctic – and Arctic security – has emerged as a higher priority in Iceland, and a more central part of the nation's identity, in recent years.

Although 'security' is not directly defined in Iceland's National Security Policy, it notes that the policy "extends to global, societal, and military risks and entails active foreign affairs policy, civil security, and defense cooperation with other countries." Moreover, the policy is based on the UN Charter commitments regarding democracy, human rights, and disarmament, as well as the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Iceland's size is specifically addressed within the policy paper. Due to its smallness, Iceland cannot maintain an army, as it has "neither the resources nor the desire." Therefore, the nation's security and defense are provided via "active cooperation, both with other countries and within international organizations." This is in line with Ómarsdóttir's research on Icelanders' views on security. According to her research, when asked what the greatest factor was in maintaining Iceland's security, 41% of respondents considered Iceland's peaceful relations with its neighboring countries as the main factor. Three factors were almost equal in second place: Iceland's smallness, the fact that Iceland has no military, and Iceland's membership in NATO.

Although Iceland does not have an army, it does have an active Coast Guard. The US military assisted the Coast Guard during SAR missions until 2006, but after fully departing from Iceland, the Coast Guard became wholly responsible for SAR while still conducting exercises with NATO members. In a report on SAR in the polar seas conducted by the Ministry of the Interior in 2016, SAR is considered an integral part of maintaining Iceland's security. The Icelandic Coast Guard administers SAR



around Iceland and is responsible for SAR in the expansive area of 1.9 million km<sup>2</sup>. The natural conditions in the Arctic make responding to emergencies especially challenging, and the Icelandic Coast Guard's reaction capability has been assessed as "unsatisfactory." Furthermore, policy suggestions include the enhancement of infrastructure for SAR missions and the establishment of more bilateral agreements with neighboring countries. It is clear that, in order to ensure Iceland's security in the Arctic and enhance Iceland's reaction capability, it is imperative to provide the Coast Guard with the necessary funding. At the same time, the Icelandic government has increased its emphasis on defense and security, as demonstrated by a 37% increase in funding for Iceland's defense from 2017-2019.

**"Iceland: an overview," Arabella Lang, Gavin Thompson, and Oliver Bennett, Library House of Commons, 13 December 2012 [68]**  
<https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/157101/SN06505.pdf>

Abstract:

2012 has seen Iceland gear up for parliamentary elections in 2013, with plans for a new constitution as it emerges from its financial crisis and proceeds with its application to join the EU.

The banking crisis of 2008 has colored almost every aspect of Iceland's politics and economy. It led to the fall from power of the party that had been in government for six decades, and the first trial of a head of state in connection with the financial crisis. The new draft constitution, which is currently before the parliament for approval, involved unprecedented citizen involvement.

Before the crisis, Iceland had enjoyed an economic boom. But the dramatic increase in Iceland's foreign debt ensured that the banking crisis would bring with it a currency crisis and inhibit the Icelandic central bank's response. Iceland is nevertheless emerging relatively unscathed. A major remaining issue from the UK point of view is the Icesave compensation dispute. The British and Dutch governments compensated depositors in Icesave accounts following the collapse of Landsbanki, but agreements to claim this back from Iceland were defeated in two referendums. The court of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), is expected to rule on the case in December 2012. If Iceland loses, the costs could be substantial, although the government has said that there is enough in the Landsbanki estate to cover all depositors.

The Icesave issue could affect Iceland's current application to join the EU, which itself was prompted by the banking and currency crisis. The application is proceeding relatively quickly, despite domestic public and political opposition.

Fisheries and whaling are other areas of dispute with the EU. Iceland is grossly exceeding current scientific advice about total sustainable catches of the regional mackerel fishery, and it resumed commercial whaling in 2006.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Basic facts and figures**

The Republic of Iceland, independent since its union with Denmark ended in 1944, became one of the most prosperous countries in the world. Then the collapse of its banking system in 2008 led to economic and political turmoil, but it is now emerging faster than expected.

Iceland lies just below the Arctic Circle, between Norway, Greenland and Scotland. Most of its 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> are glaciers, lakes and lava fields, and it has more than 200 volcanoes. The population of just over 300,000 is mostly concentrated in the capital, Reykjavik. Traditionally a fishing economy, Iceland now receives more money for exporting aluminum than fish.

#### A. Family:

**“Grimsey Travel Guide,” Guide to Iceland [69]** <https://guidetoiceland.is/travel-iceland/drive/grimsey>

#### Overview:

Grímsey is an island off the north coast of Iceland, nestled across the Arctic Circle. It is, therefore, the only part of Iceland that is truly in the Arctic, and many visitors come to have their passport stamped in recognition of its high latitude.

It is part of the Akureyri municipality, with a population of approximately 100 people living in the one settlement, called Sandvík.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Grímsey’s economy has always been inherently linked to commercial fishing. The island boasts a recently renovated harbor and fertile fishing grounds.

Recently, the economy has diversified with the advent of tourism to the island, thus today, visitors will find Grímsey well equipped with modern amenities. This includes guesthouses, cafes and even an airport, which connects to the one at Akureyri.

Residents also have the necessary amenities to flourish, with a school and community center.

There is a small, wooden church on Grímsey (albeit, within the parish of Akureyri) that is of significant historical interest. An older church had once been constructed in the 11th century by the Icelandic Catholic bishop, Jón Ögmundsson, which was lost to time. The newer church was built in 1867 from driftwood that had washed ashore. The church was renovated in 1932 and displays a local, century-old imitation of a Leonardo Da Vinci painting.

Grímsey also has a famous monument marking the edge of the Arctic Circle: an eight-ton sphere of stone. The shape was designed to represent the rolling

movements of the true Arctic circle, as a rooted monument would not be able to move along with its true location.

As a side note, the boulder may soon have to enter the seas to the north, as the Arctic Circle is moving away from Grímsey. It is expected that by the middle of the 20th Century, it will no longer be considered Arctic territory.

**“Grímsey Island,” akureyri.is** [70] <https://www.akureyri.is/grimsey-en>

Overview:

Grímsey is a gem on the Arctic Circle, just 40 km off the north coast of Iceland. Courageous fishermen live there with their families. The island stands alone far out on the horizon, a blue cliff, surrounded by the wide Arctic Ocean.

Current & Relevant Information:

Grimsey Island - far away in the north: Home of one hundred people - and one million seabirds. The island stands alone far out on the horizon, a blue cliff, surrounded by the wide Arctic Ocean, about 40 km off the north coast of Iceland; it is about 5 square kilometers in area.

The fishermen of Grimsey harvest the rich fishing banks all around the island but often venture in their small motorboats much further north on the Arctic Ocean. An endless ocean which often turns wild, with storms and frost, the waves even 15 m high. Or the polar ice may drift from the north and keep the ocean frozen all around the island. - At other times, such as during summer, the same ocean may be a shining mirror.

The islanders live in a small village by the harbor - a prosperous and fertile community with many children. The chorus of seabirds, never stops during the 24-hour long day - there is no night in Grimsey during the summer, not until late July when twilight begins to descend around midnight. - The birds' nest in the high cliffs that surround the whole island, except by the harbor. Please note: Best time to view the Puffins is from the end of April till the beginning of August. There are no Puffins in Grímsey during winter.

During winter the daylight is very short; most of the sea birds stay far away, out on the open sea. In the village, the families live a modern kind of life today. They are well off, have a good school for their children, the harbor has been improved. A church has been there for eight hundred years. There are two guesthouses as well. A ferry serves the island three times a week. Even an airport has been built for regular flights.

**“Grimsey Island: The Island on the Arctic Circle, North Iceland,” Arctic Adventures** [71] <https://adventures.is/iceland/attractions/grimsey/>

Overview:

Grimsey is a remote island north of Iceland. It's home to fewer than 100 people but over one million seabirds, including famous puffins and dive-bombing Arctic terns. Travelers flock here to cross the Arctic Circle and get their certificate for having just been there. Just 40 km (25 mi) off Iceland's north coast, Grimsey is a day-trip destination you'll remember for a lifetime.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Grimsey is the northernmost inhabited point of Iceland and the only part of the country that lies within the Arctic Circle. This small Icelandic island is only 3 miles (5 km) long and 5 sq km (2 sq mi) in total area. You can easily explore the entire island in one day.

The Arctic island is inhabited by hardy Icelanders, mostly fishermen and their families. They all live in the tiny harbor village of Sandvík, the island's only settlement.

Grimsey's two biggest attractions are birdwatching and crossing the Arctic Circle. Then, of course, there are the exquisite sunsets and incredible Northern Lights shows.

Even though Grimsey might not be the biggest island around, it offers all necessary services for the modern community. This includes a school, a swimming pool, a supermarket, a harbor, internet, and even an airport.

**“One Child Left in Grímsey,” Larissa Kyzer, Iceland Review, 23 May 2019** [\[72\]](https://www.icelandreview.com/news/one-child-left-in-grimsey/)  
<https://www.icelandreview.com/news/one-child-left-in-grimsey/>

#### Overview:

As of this coming winter, there will only be one child living on the island of Grímsey, RÚV reports. There has been a grade school in continual operation on the island since 1904, but as the resident youth reach middle and/or secondary school-age, they have to move to the main island, usually to the town of Akureyri, and board at schools there. When the coming academic year starts, only one five-year-old boy will still live on Grímsey; all of the island's other children will be boarding elsewhere for school.

Grímsey is located 40 km [25 mi] off the northern coast of Iceland and actually straddles the Arctic circle. Less than 30 people have registered full-time residence there, although last fall, this number dropped to around 18 people in the off-season, i.e., from August to December. Last year, there were three young children living on the island, all of whom were schooled there. One family with two young children is, however, about to move away.

Unnur Íngólfsdóttir is mother to four children, including the youngest Grímsey resident. Her next youngest will be starting high school in Akureyri in the fall, just as her older two children did before. Unnur told RÚV that it's doubtful that the

kindergarten will operate in the fall, since she doesn't think that her son will much enjoy being the only child there all day. She's considering ways that she can improve her son's situation, with one idea being that she'll take him to the main island for kindergarten one week a month, which will give him the opportunity to socialize with other children. Although she insists that she's optimistic by nature and loves living on Grímsey, Unnur says that her family has obviously started to consider its future on the island.

Ingibjörg Ólöf Isaksen, the chair of the Akureyri town council's education committee, said it will be hard to keep the Grímsey school open for just one pupil. She said that she hoped that the number of children on the island would increase in the coming years, in which case, there would be no difficulty in reopening the school.

## B. Religion:

**“Iceland,” Encyclopedia.com, 25 April 2022 [73]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/germany-scandinavia-and-central-europe/scandinavian-political-geography/iceland#RELIGIONS>

### Overview:

The Church, the national church, is endowed by the state, but there is complete freedom for all faiths, without discrimination. All of Iceland constitutes a single diocese of the national church, headed by a bishop with his seat at Reykjavík; there are 281 parishes. As of 2004, about 86% of the population were nominally members of this established church, though it is believed that most do not practice actively. A 2003 Gallup poll indicated that 43% of Lutherans did not attend church at all and only 10% said that they attend church one or more times a month. About 4.3% of the population belong to one of three Lutheran Free Churches: the Reykjavík Free Church, the Hafnarfjörður Free Church, or the Reykjavík Independent Church. Another 4.4% (about 13,025 people) belong to one of 21 different denominations that are registered and recognized by the state. The largest of these groups is the Roman Catholic Church (5,582 members); the smallest is the First Baptist Church (10 members). Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhists, Baha'is, Muslims, and Jews are also represented by small congregations.

**“Iceland,” New World Encyclopedia, 11 May 2018 [74]**

<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Iceland#Religion>

### Overview:

Icelanders enjoy freedom of religion as stated by the constitution; however, church and state are not separated and the National Church of Iceland, a Lutheran body, is the state church. The national registry keeps account of the religious affiliation of every Icelandic citizen and according to it, Icelanders in 2005 divided into religious groups as follows:

- 84.1 percent members of the National Church of Iceland.
- 4.6 percent members of the Free Lutheran Churches of Reykjavík and Hafnarfjörður.
- 2.5 percent not members of any religious group.
- 2.2 percent members of the Roman Catholic Church, which has a Diocese of Reykjavík.

The remaining 6.6 percent are mostly divided among 20-25 other Christian denominations and sects, with less than 1 percent of the population in non-Christian religious organizations including a tiny group of state-sanctioned indigenous Ásatrú adherents in the Íslenska Ásatrúarfélagið.

Most Icelanders are either very liberal in their religious beliefs or uninterested in religious matters altogether, and do not attend church regularly.

**“Grímsey – The unique Arctic island,” Icelandic Times, 1 June 2017 [75]**  
<https://icelandictimes.com/grimsey-unique-arctic-island/>

#### Overview:

Grímsey is situated on the Arctic Circle 41 kilometers off the North coast of Iceland. It is 5.3 square kilometers and 5.5 kilometers long. The island is formed by volcanic rock which in places creates beautiful basalt pillars. On the East side the island rises to 105 meters above sea level but is lower on the West side by the island's harbor and village. On a clear day there are spectacular views from the island over to the Icelandic mainland. Grímsey has been inhabited since the Viking settlement of Iceland. Its abundant resources of fish and birds were widely renowned. A legend ties the name of the island to a settler named “Grimur” who sailed from the “Sogn” district in Norway, but there may be other explanations for the name which also occurs in Scandinavia and the UK. In the past the island was owned by monasteries on the northern mainland and the island's farmer tenants had to pay them the annual rent in dried cod.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The Church of Grímsey**

One of the early Catholic bishops of Iceland, Jón Ögmundsson consecrated a church on Grímsey in the 11th century. It was dedicated to St. Olaf, the patron saint of Norway. It was stated that there should always be two priests at the church who should lead mass daily but twice a day on special occasions. The practice of Christianity is less ardent today but there are records of roughly 50 priests who have served there. The present church was built in 1867. It was extended and renovated in 1932. The altar painting is by a local artist painted in 1878 and it is a copy of a

work by Leonardo da Vinci. Pledges and donations made to the church are said to bring good luck.

**“The Church of Grimsey,” akureyri.is [76]** <https://www.akureyri.is/grimsey-en/moya/news/the-church-of-grimsey>

#### Overview:

Miðgarðar is the site of the northernmost church in Iceland. It was consecrated by Bishop Jón Ögmundsson in the early 11th century and was dedicated to Ólafur the patron saint of the Nordic people. At that time two clergymen served the church, and mass was sung daily and twice on holy days. These services have dwindled but 50 clergymen have been recorded as serving the church over the years. The vicar of Dalvík is now in charge of the church.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Miðgarðakirkja was built from driftwood in 1867 on a site near Miðgarðar farm but was moved, by its own length in 1932 due to fire hazard and, at the same time, a choir stall and portico with a steeple were added. The church was extensively renovated in 1932 and reconsecrated in 1956. The altar painting is by a local artist painted in 1878 and is a copy of a work by Leonardo da Vinci.

It was granted conservation status on 1st January 1990, in accordance with the provisions of legislation on ancient buildings.

The church was destroyed by fire late in the evening on the 21st of September 2021. No valuables could be saved from the church, which burned to ashes in only 20 minutes. Many valuable items got lost in the fire that cannot be compensated. The loss is enormous to the local community as the church has been a beautiful symbol of unification through generations for the people so far from the mainland.

## **4. Norway:**

**“Norway,” The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [77]** <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/norway/>

#### Overview:

Tromsø is the largest city in the Norwegian Arctic with 76 thousand inhabitants (2019), followed by Bodø with 52 thousand inhabitants (2019). In total, roughly 480 thousand people live in the three Arctic counties of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark. Another 2,667 people live on Svalbard. Bodø is the regional capital of Nordland; Tromsø the regional capital of Troms; and Vadsø the regional capital of Finnmark. Albeit sparsely populated in a European context, the population numbers are relatively high when contrasted to the North American Arctic. Although difficult to specify exactly, the Sámi population in Norway is between 40–50 thousand, with

most residing in the three northern counties. Karasjok, Finnmark, is the seat of the Sámi Parliament of Norway.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The traditional lands of the Sámi people in Norway, Sápmi, stretch from Hedmark county in the middle of Norway, to the Russian border in the north. Even though the Sámi are a minority in most parts of Sápmi, traditional reindeer herding is still present across the land. Sámi reindeer herding takes place in a total of 140 municipalities. Reindeer herding—and other traditional Sámi livelihoods such as fishing, hunting and gathering—are some of the most important ways in which the Sámi cultural heritage is preserved in Norway. The Sámi languages and traditions are thus part of daily life in Sámi communities, in contrast to other parts of the society where Norwegian culture dominates. At the same time, the Sámi people are a part of modern Norway and are keeping old traditions alive as well as developing the culture. The traditional livelihoods; however, are dependent on land, which at times there are conflicts over in the North of Norway.

Since its opening in 1989, the interests of the Sámi population have been ensured by the Sámi Parliament. The opening of the Parliament was seen as the end of an assimilation policy enforced by the Norwegian government since the 1850s. Norway was subsequently one of the first countries to ratify the ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, which ensures the Indigenous peoples' right to consultation before decisions regarding them are being made. In 2005, the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian government signed an agreement which formalizes the procedures for consultation on all relevant policy issues. The increased focus on business opportunities by actors outside of the Arctic could lead to more pressure on an already endangered culture. It is worth noting the Sámi Parliament's many funding schemes to support small scale businesses and tourism.

**“Norway,” Arctic Council [78] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/norway/>**

#### Overview:

Nearly half of Norway's land mass is Arctic territory, consisting of the two counties Nordland and the combined county of Troms and Finnmark on the mainland, the Svalbard archipelago and the island of Jan Mayen. Norway's Arctic territory is home to around 490,000 people – one tenth of the Norwegian population. The country's Arctic maritime area is approximately 1,500,000 square kilometers, corresponding to the combined land area of France, Germany and Spain.

The Arctic Archipelago of Svalbard is located halfway between mainland Norway and the North Pole. About half the land is ice-covered. The largest island of the archipelago is called Spitsbergen, and until 1925 this name was used for the whole archipelago. The administrative center of Longyearbyen and the other inhabited



areas of the archipelago are located on this island. Svalbard's main industries today are coal mining, tourism and research.

Norway houses the world's northernmost university, the Arctic University of Norway, in Tromsø. It is also home to NORD university in Bodø and the FRAM High North Research Centre for Climate and the Environment, where 500 scientists from 20 different institutions are engaged in research in the fields of natural science, technology and social sciences.

Fishing and marine resources, in addition to livestock husbandry, has for centuries been the cornerstone of the economy in Northern Norway. Today's economy is much more diversified. Today's key industries include:

- Fisheries and aquaculture: This remains the largest export-sector in Norwegian Arctic region. Nordland county is Norway's third largest exporter of marine fisheries and aquaculture.
- Tourism: Norway's broad Arctic region attracts a growing number of tourists, who come to experience dramatic scenery and largely untouched wilderness.
- Sustainable energy: Norway is Europe's biggest producer of hydropower, and one of the country's largest hydroelectric power station in terms of annual production is located in Meløy. Raggovidda wind farm located on the Barents Sea coast in Berlevåg municipality is one of the world's most efficient producers of wind power.
- Power: In Hammerfest, Equinor operates a processing plant for liquefied natural gas from the Snøhvit field in the Barents Sea.
- Mining and transit: Narvik is an important port for the export of iron ore from Swedish mines. One of Svalbard's main industries today also includes coal mining.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### Indigenous Peoples

The Saami are an Indigenous people who live in Sápmi, an area that stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Estimates of the Saami population vary between 50,000 and 80,000, with the most concentrated settlements in North Norway. Since 1989, the Saami in Norway have had their own elected assembly – the Sámediggi – which acts as a consultative body for the Norwegian government authorities.

**“The Norwegian Government's Arctic Policy,” Government.no, 26 January 2021**

[79] [https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic\\_policy/id2830120/](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic_policy/id2830120/)

#### Overview:

Norway's Arctic policy revolves around security, stability and interest-based international cooperation. For us, foreign and domestic policy converge in the Arctic.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

Norway's Arctic policy focuses on the international picture, relations with neighboring countries in the Barents region, the northernmost regions of Finland, Norway and Sweden (known in Nordic countries as the North Calotte), and the development of North Norway. Further developing North Norway as a strong, dynamic and highly competent region is the best way to safeguard Norwegian interests in the Arctic. The region is rich in natural resources that contribute to economic growth for the country as a whole, and the economy and social development of this region are therefore a matter of national importance.

Norway's Arctic policy is based on a long tradition of safeguarding Norway's interests in the north through broad-based international cooperation. The Arctic will continue to be Norway's most important area of strategic responsibility. The Government will maintain its engagement in broad-based, proactive international cooperation in the north and in global arenas where the Arctic is discussed. This includes facilitating cross-border local and regional cooperation in the north.

Some 9% of Norway's population lives north of the Arctic Circle, a greater proportion than in any other country in the world. North Norway accounts for 35% of Norway's mainland territory. The region is home to some of Norway's leading academic and research institutions in areas such as marine research, fisheries and natural resource management, climate change and environmental research, Arctic innovation and sustainable ocean-based industries. For many Norwegians, the Arctic provides both a home and a livelihood.

The white paper does not provide a list of all political initiatives or measures that could conceivably be relevant for or in the Arctic. The Government's aims and ambitions in the white paper will therefore also be followed up in future sectoral and budgetary processes.

The input on which the white paper is based has largely been obtained through dialogue with counties, municipalities, the Sámediggi (Sami parliament) and key stakeholders from the business sector, and various organizations and knowledge institutions in the north. A dedicated youth panel, set up in connection with the preparation of the white paper, has provided a report with recommendations. All these partners have given their perspectives on key challenges and opportunities in the north.

#### **Social development in the north**

In order to promote sustainable communities in North Norway, it is essential that young people and young adults invest their futures in the region. In connection with the preparation of the white paper, the Government set up a youth panel to provide input and recommendations for developing Norway's Arctic policy for the future. The panel's report made it clear that, among other things, young people want to be included more widely in international cooperation in the Arctic and that steps must be taken to integrate the Sami people's way of life as a natural part of Norwegian identity and culture. The youth panel also highlighted the need to enhance the framework for education and skills development in the outlying districts and to improve conditions for young entrepreneurs in the north, including ensuring better access to capital.

The Government supports a number of international networks and programs that facilitate cross-border cooperation between young people in the north, for example within the framework of the Barents cooperation and through EU programs such as Interreg Europe and Erasmus+.

The Government promotes the development of environmentally friendly towns and cities across the country that provide a good quality of life for people and good conditions for businesses. Viable cities and urban centers have important functions, attract people and businesses and promote regional balance. Compact cities and towns with pleasant physical surroundings, a vibrant center, a wide range of good housing options and access to a broad selection of goods and services and cultural and leisure activities are important for several reasons. An attractive regional center can enhance access to labor throughout the region as a whole.

#### Sami language and culture

The Sami language is part of Norway's national cultural heritage. The Sami Act stipulates that the Sami and Norwegian languages have equal status in Norway. Sami art and culture encompass voices and experiences that are an important part of Norway's national narrative. These cultural expressions are of great value to society as a whole and to the ongoing effort to revitalize Sami language and culture. Sami institutions, artists and cultural practitioners play a vital role in disseminating Sami art, culture, cultural heritage and history in Norway, across national borders in Sápmi (the homelands of the Sami people) and at the international level.

#### Kven language and culture

The Kven language is recognized as a minority language in Norway, and it is also protected under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which Norway ratified in 1993. Today, there are few active users of the Kven language, and it is regarded as endangered. However, steps are being taken to revitalize Kven as a language. In January 2018, the Government presented a targeted plan for these efforts for the period 2017–2021.

**“Managing the Arctic: A Norwegian Perspective,” Jens Stoltenberg, Harvard International Review, 23 August 2019 [80] <https://hir.harvard.edu/managing-the-arctic-a-norwegian-perspective/>**

Overview:

To most people the Arctic is a distant realm, almost another world, inhabited by polar bears. They may even think the frigid landmasses and icy seas of the Arctic are irrelevant to daily life farther south.

However, the Arctic is changing rapidly. The melting of the sea ice has thrust the region into the global spotlight as world leaders seek to assess both the environmental threats and economic opportunities of a smaller northern ice cap. Norwegians have long balanced a fierce commitment to environmental protection with our substantial Arctic economic interests, and we are eager to help devise responses to the worrying changes we have all observed.

The Arctic encompasses more than 15 million square miles or about 8 percent of the surface of the Earth, equivalent to four times the extent of U.S. territory. But the human residents of this vast area number only about 4 million, and are spread across eight countries—Norway, Russia, the United States, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark.

In the past 100 years, average temperature rise has increased twice as fast in the Arctic as in the world as a whole. One could say that The Arctic is the world's scientific advance warning. The changes are predominantly the result of climate forces and contaminants like CO<sub>2</sub> and heat-absorbent soot that originate far from the Arctic. And the repercussions are global. A warming Arctic may, for example, affect monsoon weather patterns, and may actually cause extremely cold winters in the United States and the northwestern parts of Europe. Scientists project that ice retraction in the polar areas will coincide with rising sea levels and accelerated global warming.

The Arctic ice melt may also bring opportunities, such as shorter trade routes and increased economic activity in northern waters that previously were covered by ice. Moreover, recent discoveries of oil, gas, minerals and diamonds in Arctic areas have made the region attractive to countries situated far away. In recent years, I have seen many misleading news headlines proclaiming a "race for Arctic resources," suggesting a Klondike-style rush that could spark tension and conflict. The resources are, however, mainly thought to be found in areas that are under national jurisdiction or in areas where jurisdiction will be clarified once the outer limits of the Arctic states' continental shelf have been determined. Fortunately, there are few unresolved jurisdiction issues in the Arctic, and most players appear committed to firmly established international rules.

Current & Relevant Information:

## **Norway: An Arctic Coastal State**

The Arctic has a special place in the hearts of Norwegians. The very name of the country is generally thought to mean "the way north." Our affinity with the Arctic comes from geography, history, economics, and cultural heritage—not the least from the legacy of the Polar explorers, like Nansen and Amundsen.

Half of Norway's territory is north of the Arctic Circle. Thanks to the warm North Atlantic Current, or Gulf Stream, living conditions in the Norwegian Arctic are quite different from those at similar latitudes elsewhere.

Norway is also intimately connected to the sea, with long coastlines on the Atlantic and Arctic oceans. Maritime resources have always formed the basis of our national economy and defined the very identity of our northern coastal communities. In 2005, my government renewed the country's tradition of looking northward by declaring the Arctic our most important foreign policy strategic priority. A major recommitment to the region came in 2011 with publication of *The High North: Visions and Strategies*. This government white paper presents Norway's long-term plan to address the challenges and capitalize on opportunities emerging in the Arctic.

Our overall aims are to enhance knowledge in and about the High North, increase our activity in the region, pursue sustainable economic and social development, strengthen regional cooperation and ensure geopolitical stability and predictability.

## **People in the Arctic**

Arctic inhabitants live in a region rich in natural resources and with a great potential for economic development, but with a harsh climate and long distances between urban centers. The people of the Arctic live far from their national capitals and would gain a lot from better cross-border cooperation and infrastructure.

The Barents Cooperation (consisting of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Iceland and Denmark) has been a particularly innovative way to address a range of cross-boundary issues related to economic growth, environment, education, culture and contact between people in the North.

With the creation of this cooperative system in 1993, a new way of shaping and carrying out foreign policy emerged. People-to-people cooperation is given a central place, and local and regional governments are directly involved.

Recall that during the Cold War this was one of the tensest, most highly militarized regions in the world, with almost no contact over the border between East and West. Now it is a vibrant economic region with fluid cross-border traffic and an unemployment rate of almost zero. The greatest achievement of the Barents Cooperation has been an overall normalization of relations between the Nordic countries and Russia, including ever-growing people-to-people contact. Local and

regional activities have provided a form of "soft security," laying a foundation of trust and confidence between neighbors.

In June this year, when the Prime Ministers of the other Barents countries and I met to celebrate the 20th anniversary of this cooperative venture, we agreed that regional economic development would be the natural focus of its continuation. For the good of the people who live in the Arctic, we must enhance cooperation on education, industry and infrastructure.

**“Arctic Council: Norway and the Arctic: The Importance of Knowledge for Sustainable Development,” Mona Elisabeth Brøther, Northern Public Affairs, 2018**  
[81] <https://www.northernpublicaffairs.ca/index/volume-2-issue-1-september-2013/arctic-council-norway-and-the-arctic-the-importance-of-knowledge-for-sustainable-development/>

#### Overview:

Like Canada, Norway is a country with a strong Northern identity. A significant part of our population lives north of the Arctic Circle. As the name of our country indicates, the Norwegian coast has been the gateway to the High North of Europe since time immemorial. For centuries, the rich fisheries outside Lofoten and in the Barents Sea were the main basis for prosperity under otherwise hard climatic conditions. However, the climate change and increased activity are changing the image of the region. Diminishing sea ice makes possible increased maritime activity around the Arctic, putting Norway strategically on a new sea route between Asia and Europe.

The dynamic developments in the Arctic are not only opening up new opportunities, but are at the same time creating challenges for the environment and for the safety and security of the people living there. We can only tackle these challenges by having access to current, high quality information that can help us predict and respond to development trends. This is the reason why ‘knowledge’ is one of the pillars of Norwegian policy for the High North. Since the first High North strategy paper in 2006, the Norwegian government has systematically promoted the development of knowledge on the North by funding research and strengthening infrastructure at universities, university colleges, and other knowledge institutions.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Indigenous peoples**

Norway is home to the largest population of the Saami speaking peoples of Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula. The preservation and development of Saami culture and society is a priority in Norway’s Arctic policies. Important milestones in Norway- Saami relations include: the establishment of the Saami Parliament and establishment of Saami language educational institutions up to the university college level. The government consults regularly with the Saami Parliament on High North

policies and supports Saami participation in the Arctic Council and the Euro-Barents cooperation, as well as in the international cooperation between reindeer herders. Indigenous issues are an important part of Norway's bilateral cooperation with Russia.

It is important to ensure that economic development in areas with Indigenous populations are undertaken in a balanced and environmentally sustainable way through consultations between all parties, and that new employment opportunities can also be accessible for Indigenous persons.

**“Northern Norway - some facts and figures,” Arctic Travel Company [82]**  
<https://www.arctictravelcompany.com/en/explore/destinations/northern-norway/facts-and-figures>

#### Overview:

Northern Norway is the northernmost geographical region of Norway, consisting of the two counties Nordland, and Troms and Finnmark. The region is the largest and at the same time the most sparsely populated area of mainland Norway. In other words, Northern Norway is the place to go to experience diverse, wild and spectacular nature!

The region has a population of fewer than 500,000 people and its land mass covers an area of approximately 113 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The Arctic Circle crosses mainland Norway at Saltfjellet, thus circumscribing about half of Nordland county, as well as the whole county of Troms and Finnmark within the polar circle.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

International borders on three countries

The region of Northern Norway has borders with three different countries. The municipality of Sør-Varanger lies furthest northeast in Norway and borders on both Finland and Russia. The Swedish border runs alongside the length of Nordland county and the southern borderlands of Troms and Finnmark.

The Sami are indigenous people who live in the far North of all four countries. They are descendants of nomadic people who settled in these areas thousands of year ago. The Sami languages are members of the Uralic linguistic group and are very different from the Scandinavian languages. In addition to the Norwegian and Sami languages, you will also find a few people speaking the Kven language in Northern Norway, which is closely related to meänkieli in Sweden and some Northern Finnish dialects. Somewhere between 2,000–8,000 people speak the language. The Kvens were first recognized as a minority group in Norway in 1998.

**“The Holistic Effects of Climate Change on the Culture, Well-Being, and Health of the Saami, the Only Indigenous People in the European Union,” Jouni J. K. Jaakkola, Suvi Juntunen, and Klemetti Näkkäläjärvi, Current Environmental**

Abstract:

**Purpose of Review.** (1) To develop a framework for understanding the holistic effects of climate change on the Saami people; (2) to summarize the scientific evidence about the primary, secondary, and tertiary effects of climate change on Saami culture and Sápmi region; and (3) to identify gaps in the knowledge of the effects of climate change on health and well-being of the Saami.

**Recent Findings.** The Saami health is on average similar, or slightly better compared to the health of other populations in the same area. Warming climate has already influenced Saami reindeer culture. Mental health and suicide risk partly linked to changing physical and social environments are major concerns.

**Summary.** The lifestyle, diet, and morbidity of the Saami are changing to resemble the majority populations posing threats for the health of the Saami and making them more vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Climate change is a threat for the cultural way of life of Saami. Possibilities for Saami to adapt to climate change are limited.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

From the global perspective, the indigenous people in the Arctic constitute potentially the most vulnerable population to the effects of climate change for two reasons. They live in close interaction with the natural environment and the climate change and its effects to environmental conditions including temperature are most impactful in the Arctic. Therefore, indigenous people could be regarded as the first population indicators of the effects of harmful environmental condition and change. From the perspective of the indigenous people, climate change has been regarded as one of the most extensive threats to health and well-being. In addition to climate change, environmental change related to natural and human-based reasons, continued regional economic development, and prolific utilization of natural resources constitute similar threats to health, well-being as well as to the entire culture.

The average temperature in the Arctic has already risen from the preindustrial period. The effects of climate change in the Polar Regions are expected to be globally the most pronounced. Conditions in the Sápmi region have changed during postindustrial period, including the timing of snowmelt and the length of thermal seasons.

Around 40 indigenous peoples inhabit the Arctic Region forming 10% of the total population in this region. The present article focusses on the Saami (in North Saami: Sámi), the indigenous people living in the northern parts of Norway, Sweden,



Finland, and Kola Peninsula in Russia. Many of the phenomena related to the Saami are likely to be generalizable to the other indigenous populations. On the basis of a priori knowledge, we hypothesized that the effects of climate change are likely to be holistic, influencing not just health and well-being, but the entire culture. Our overall objective was to elaborate the holistic effects of climate change on the Saami. The specific objectives of the study were (1) to develop a framework for understanding the holistic effects of climate change on the Saami people and Arctic indigenous people in general; (2) to summarize the scientific evidence about the primary, secondary, and tertiary effects of climate change to Saami culture and to Sápmi region; and (3) to identify gaps in the knowledge of the effects of climate change on health and well-being of the Saami.

## **Conclusion**

The multidisciplinary methodology presented here to theorize and understand how climate change effects all aspect of Saami life is central for monitoring the effects and finding ways for culturally sustainable adaptation. Cultural well-being in the Saami context depends on social community and kinship structure, environmental relationship, and traditional livelihoods, and ultimately, possibility to maintain Saami ethnicity and language. Loss of language, culture, and living in urban areas expose Saami to lifestyle changes that can have negative implications for mental and physical health.

Saami have been a study object for centuries in different disciplines, nonetheless holistic analysis is missing on the status and capacities of Saami people to survive and adapt in changing climate. The warming climate and new insight call for a new, comprehensive assessment of the effects of climate change to Sápmi and Saami culture and projected outlook for the future. However, climate change has already influenced Saami culture substantially. Outmigration can in future change to climigration and have a profound effect on the Saami culture and viability of traditional Saami home region. Saami population is small and number of Saami that speak Saami as native language is even smaller. Societal changes and assimilation policies have contributed the loss of language and cultural knowledge and made Saami people even more vulnerable to the negative and cumulative effects of climate change.

A crucial challenge for the future of Saami people and vulnerability among the Saami is the small population size, dispersed settlement, and urbanization that limits the possibilities for cultural adaptation in the changing climate.

**“Saami Council,” Arctic Council [84] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/permanent-participants/saami-council/>**

Overview:

Quick Facts

**Territory** Finland, the Russian Federation, Norway and Sweden

**Indigenous Peoples** Saami

**Indigenous Population** 100,000

**Languages** Nine

Current & Relevant Information:

About the Sámi People

The Saami people live in Sápmi, an area that stretches across the northern parts of Finland, the Russian Federation, Norway and Sweden. There are no available statistics on how many Sámi there are, but over 100,000 is the estimate that is used most often. The majority of the Sámi population lives in Norway. There are nine total Saami languages spoken today.

The Saami people traditionally made their living from reindeer herding, fishing, livestock farming and hunting. Since 1989, the Saami in Norway have had their own elected assembly – the Sámediggi – which acts as a consultative body for the Norwegian government authorities.

A. Family:

**“Parental Values and Ethnic Identity in Indigenous Sami Families: A Qualitative Study,”** Cecilie Javo, et al., *Family Process*, 18 August 2004 [85]

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1545-5300.2003.00151.x>

Abstract:

The qualitative study reported in this article is part of a larger multimethod investigation of child-rearing practices and child-behavior problems in indigenous Sami and majority Norwegian populations in the Sami core area in Northern Norway. In the primary quantitative study, we found significant ethnic differences between Sami and Norwegian parents in various areas of child rearing and family structure. Seeking the deeper cultural meaning underlying the parental practices and attitudes that had emerged in the indigenous Sami group, we performed additional in-depth interviews. Four parents, selected from the sample of 134 Sami parents, served as subjects. Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method was used. Data analysis of the interviews identified seven key constituents of Sami child rearing, which in their interrelationships formed a common structure that constitutes the results of this study. These constituents were: (1) Independence, (2) Hardiness, (3) Autonomy, (4) Closeness/Love, (5) Sami Language, (6) Sami Traditions, and (7) Extended Family. The first four constituents are constituents pertaining to child-rearing values, while the latter three are contextual constituents, related to the promotion of ethnic identity. The study discusses the contemporary dilemmas and challenges that face

Sami families in raising their children. It highlights the phenomenon of cultural transition in minority families as an important topic in family research.

**“Sami,” Countries and their Cultures [86]** <https://www.everyculture.com/wc/Norway-to-Russia/Sami.html>

#### Overview:

While the Sami, or Lapps (as they were formerly called), are commonly thought of as the inhabitants of Lapland, they have never had a country of their own. They are the original inhabitants of northern Scandinavia and most of Finland. Their neighbors have called them Lapps, but they prefer to be called Samer or Sami, since Lapp means a patch of cloth for mending and was a name imposed on them by the people who settled on their lands. The Sami refer to their land as Sapmi or Same.

The Sami first appear in written history in the works of the Roman author Tacitus in about AD 98. Nearly 900 years later, a Norwegian chieftain visiting King Alfred the Great of England spoke of these reindeer herders, who were paying taxes to him in the form of furs, feathers, and whale bones. Over the centuries many armed nations—including the Karelians, Swedes, Danes, Finns, and Russians—demanded their loyalty and taxes. In some cases, the Sami had to pay taxes to two or three governments—as well as fines imposed by one country for paying taxes to another!

Today the Sami are citizens of the countries within whose borders they live, with full rights to education, social services, religious freedom, and participation in the political process. Norway, Sweden, and Finland all have Sami parliaments. At the same time, however, the Sami continue to preserve and defend their ethnic identity and traditional cultural values. Until the liberalization instituted by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's government in the late 1980s, the Russian Sami had almost no contact with those in other areas. Sami living in Scandinavia formed the Nordic Sami Council in 1956 to promote cooperation between their populations in Norway, Sweden, and Finland. In 1973 the Nordic Sami Institute at Kautokeino, Norway, was founded to promote the study of the Sami language and culture. In 1989, a Sami College was established there as well. The universities of Tromsø in Norway, Umeå in Sweden, and Oulu in Finland have Sami departments in which Sami topics are taught, both separately and as part of established disciplines.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### FAMILY LIFE

Traditionally, the Sami lived in a group of families called a siida. Today, the nuclear family is the basic social unit among the Sami, and families are close-knit with a great deal of attention paid to the children. The Sami language contains an unusually large number of words that refer to family relationships. Traditionally, the males of the family were occupied with herding, hunting, and making boats, sleds, and tools, while the women cooked, made clothing and thread, and cured the meat.

Each family had its own mark (and children had their own marks as well). Herding families use these marks to distinguish their reindeer from those of other families.

**“Women in Saami Society,” Sarah Andrews, Sami Culture [87]**

<https://www.laits.utexas.edu/sami/dieda/hist/women.htm>

#### Overview:

The Saami are recognized as being an oppressed minority group, and much has been written, mostly by the Saami themselves, about their situation. However, the plight of Saami women is an important issue that has only recently started to gain a noticeable amount of coverage in Samiland. This began with the Saami feminist movement in the 1970s, which opened for discussion the issue of Saami women’s positions in a constantly changing society. Because of the changes the Saami have encountered as a result of modernization and their assimilation into Norwegian culture, Saami women have been forced to reevaluate and redefine their roles in modern society.

Saami women’s issues fall into certain categories that are of particular importance, and I have grouped them accordingly as: women’s roles in society; Christianity and modernization; internalized racism; Saami men’s views of women; men and women’s topics in writing; the Saami feminist movement, including current and future issues; women in reindeer husbandry; and marriage. Even though I tried to separate issues within this paper for the sake of clarity, they are overlapping and therefore several points are mentioned more than once.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Women’s roles in society**

While it is clear that women are generally allowed a certain amount of prestige in a community by virtue of being the primary caretakers of children, Saami women are especially important because they are also responsible for passing on their unique indigenous culture to their children (Brenna, 8). The mother is also in charge of ensuring her family’s survival, and her responsibilities indicate that Saami culture contains a matriarchal element (Bosi, 79). Saami author Rauni Magga Lukkari thinks that Saami women brought up according to tradition have a lot of power. Lukkari says that women’s power is expressed through traditional Saami outlets, such as making clothes. The clothes that Saami women make are necessary for survival in the harsh winter climate, which, according to Lukkari, puts women in a position of power. She does say that this is not as true as it once was, when “sewing clothes took up the better part of women’s daily work” (Helander and Kailo, 108-109).

##### **Saami men’s views of women**

Women interviewed in *No Beginning, No End* have some interesting recounts of how they, and others, have been treated by Saami men. Paltto says that she has been in

situations where men won't talk to her because she is married, and writer Inga Juuso says men have looked down upon her for being divorced, because divorce is only now becoming more common among the Saami (Helander and Kailo, 142).

Saami male authors can also provide insight into how women are viewed in society. While most Saami male authors choose to write about topics such as reindeer herding and maintaining the Saami cultural identity, Saami writer Eino Guttorm has taken a decidedly different path in his writings. He explores the male-female dynamic of relationships and writes openly about women in ways that other Saami authors have not. Guttorm commented on this difference between his and others' works in *No Beginning, No End*. About Nils-Aslak Valkeapaa, who writes mainly about nature, Guttorm says that he is "oppressive. There is too much whining, sun, moon, squeaking, birds' singing and sunshine...Like mother's milk at its sweetest. It is good for sure. But it is not necessarily to everybody's taste" (Helander and Kailo, 65).

In "The Bloodied Path," Guttorm tells the story of a man who kills the mother of the woman he is living with, then lies and says the mother died a natural death. The women in his story are far from the motherly or caring type, and are instead portrayed as manipulative and brazen. Though his representation of women in his writings and in *No Beginning, No End* could be indicative of his feelings toward women, it is also possible that Guttorm's brash commentary on women is nothing more his unique stylistic technique.

Guttorm says that he does not bash women, but he does classify them as either good or bad. He has been criticized for belittling women in his writings. He says:

A woman is prone to saying what's on her mind, a woman nags more easily. A non-stop nuisance, itching everywhere, whining, like a non-stop plague of mosquitoes...Texts by women are marshmallow sweet. They have too many adjectives, complaints, self-pitying, and wailing...Flirting with the readers, crawling in front of them. That doesn't charm the readers. The style smacks of sweetness (66).

### **Men's vs. women's topics in writing**

Furthermore, there are distinct differences in the topics that Saami men and women choose to write about. Men's writings, for example, are often about reindeer, sexuality or society, and tend to be obscener than women's work. Women prefer to write about nature, people, continuity, life and hope. Men are more confident in their writings, while women are doubtful. Paltto thinks that men's confidence is a direct result of Christianity, while women's sense of doubt stems from the oppressive nature of the religion (38).

### **Marriage**

In traditional Saami culture, young men interested in asking for the hand of a woman had to follow certain guidelines. The suitor would first go to the girl's house with someone who would speak in his favor. Custom dictated that the man would ask to make coffee for the family; if the parents agreed and then drank his coffee, they liked him. Meanwhile, if the girl that he was interested in unharnessed his reindeer while he was attempting to impress her parents, it was an indication that she liked him as well (Utsi, 36). At the time of marriage, the husband and wife were given several reindeer, either as presents or as part of the wife's dowry. Although it is a dying industry, at one time the presence of reindeer in a family affected almost all aspects of Saami life, from subsistence and taxation to courting and marriage.

The Sami woman's place in society and at home has changed greatly as a result of changes to the Saami culture. However, it is debatable whether or not Saami women have more or less power than they once did. While it is true that the Saami's oppression has caused a loss of power (such as in reindeer herding or in the home) it is also true that women are still the primary caretakers in Saami society and pass on cultural knowledge to their children. Saami women are involved in both politics and the media, which allows them the opportunity to influence legislation that pertains to the Saami and get their message out via the written word, radio and television. Consequently, women now have access to resources that were once out of their reach. With that comes the opportunity to yield more power and use it in ways beneficial to their society.

**“Experience the Sami culture in Norway,” Norway [88]**  
<https://www.visitnorway.com/typically-norwegian/sami-people/>

#### Overview:

Ancient sounds, traditional handicraft, and a long-standing reindeer culture meet new technology and a modern way of life. Fascinating facts about the Sami – the indigenous people of Norway.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Norway is home to most Sami in the world**

The total population of Sami in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia is estimated to approximately 80,000, and about half of them live in Norway. The vast majority of settlements are located in Northern Norway, primarily the county of Finnmark. There are, however, Sami communities as far south as Trøndelag as well.

##### **Sami Festivals**

Each July, the international indigenous festival Riddu Riđđu Festivála in Manndalen in Troms attracts artists and festival fans from all over the world. With concerts under the midnight sun and a wide range of activities, Riddu Riđđu is definitely a festival out of the ordinary.

The Sami Week in Tromsø celebrates everything Sami in conjunction with their national day on 6 February. Reindeer racing, joik (Sami music), concerts, talks and generous portions of the traditional dish bidos, and national championship in lasso throwing.

Attracting families and people of all ages, the Sami Easter Festival in Kautokeino has become a focal point of their culture. The program is filled with concerts and exhibitions, as well as fun activities like scooter cross and reindeer racing.

Other festivals are the Sami Music Week in Alta, Tana Winter Festival, The Sami Easter Festival in Karasjok, Márkomeannu in Gállogieddi, and Festival Skábma in Lebesby.

### **The Sami Parliament is shaped like a lavvo**

In 1989, the Sami Parliament was opened after numerous protests in the 1970s and 1980s against the construction of a hydroelectric power plant in the Altaelva river in Northern Norway, known as the “Alta controversy”. Since then, the Norwegian Sami have been able to elect representatives to a parliament that solely focus on Sami issues.

The eye-catching piece of architecture located in Karasjok in Finnmark (known as the Sami capital) is shaped as a lavvo – a Sami tent – which has always been a symbol of their nomadic culture.

### **Sami people in Norway speak no fewer than five different languages**

Of the nine different Sami languages in the world, five are in use in Norway. The three most common are Northern Sami, Lule Sami, and Southern Sami. Pite Sami and East Sami are currently going through a revitalization phase in Norway. None of the languages resemble each other, nor are they related to the Norwegian language – or any other Scandinavian language for that matter.

During large parts of the 1900s, the Sami in Norway were forbidden to speak their own language and had to learn Norwegian under strict assimilation policies. As a result, slightly less than half of the Sami in Norway speak a Sami language today. For this, the Sami people got an official apology from the Norwegian government in 1999.

### **Norway is home to more than 200,000 reindeer**

Reindeer has always been a central part of the Sami culture. There is almost no part of the reindeer that isn't used: meat for cooking, fur and skin for clothes and shoes, and the horns are transformed into everything from useful tools to beautiful art.

Norwegian reindeer husbandry is practiced primarily in Northern Norway, Trøndelag, Møre og Romsdal in Fjord Norway, and Hedmark in Eastern Norway. Today, about 3,000 people are involved in Sami reindeer husbandry, 2,200 of them in Finnmark

alone. Herders make a living by selling reindeer products. The meat is sold across Norway and also exported, and the skins are transformed into mittens, shoes, and other leather products.

Unsurprisingly enough, reindeer is also very central in the Sami cuisine. You simply cannot visit Finnmark without tasting reindeer meat, which is a regional specialty. Reindeer is served in all imaginable ways, but the most famous dish is probably bidos, a stew made from carrots, potatoes, and slow-cooked reindeer meat.

**“The Sami of Norway,” Wenke Brenna, ExploreNorth [89]**  
<http://www.explorenorth.com/library/culture/sami-norway.html>

#### Overview:

The Norwegian state was founded on the territory of two peoples - Norwegians and Sami. It is clear that the Sami, as an indigenous people in Norway, have a special right to cultural protection. Norway's Sami policies mark the consolidation of this goal. The name Sami stems from sapmi which denotes both the geographical territory for the traditional Sami settlement areas and the people themselves.

The Sami live in the polar region in what today comprises the northern area of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia's Kola peninsula. Policies toward the Sami have diverged strongly among these four sovereign states. From the south the traditional Sami region extends from Femunden in Norway's Hedmark county to Idre, in Dalarna, Sweden. To the north it stretches to the Kola peninsula in Russia and down to Finland in the southeast. Norway has the biggest Sami population.

The size of the Sami population has been reckoned at 75,000, but estimates vary in accordance with criteria used (genetic heritage, mother tongue, personal wishes, etc.). Official censuses have not given reliable counts. Because of the assimilation process, not all Sami have wished to acknowledge or declare their ethnic identity. For this reason, the Sami parliaments in the Nordic countries have worked out their own criteria for defining Sami from a combination of subjective and objective factors.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Sami background - social life and economics**

The Sami region stretches across a large geographical area with cultural and economic variations and a corresponding diversity in Sami society.

The Sami societies were formerly organized in siidas, which were a form of practical cooperation between several family groups, primarily regarding management and sharing of natural resources and game. The individual siida had a collective right to hunting and fishing within its area. The siida's head, the siida-isit, led the siida council. Among other duties, he oversaw the siida's regulations for use of natural resources, ensuring that hunting and distribution followed rules and traditions. The



expenditure of labor and the sharing of economic burdens were distributed among the siida's members.

The Sami have developed an economy based on a direct relationship to nature and natural resources. Adaptations can be seen as functions of the local resources and natural conditions in the arctic and subarctic areas. This is exemplified by their following reindeer herds and the exchanges between agriculture and fishing practiced by Sami coastal societies.

The societies are also adapted to the prerequisites for production in specific ecological niches, and they are marked by strong integration between production, culture and family. Earlier, they lived off a primary industry based on self-sustenance and a family's own work. Production was generally oriented toward sustaining life rather than making money. This form of organizing labor required that all - women, men and children - performed necessary functions and they were perceived as vital resources for the family and society.

Socialization of children was directly associated with the need for knowledge about nature and survival. The bringing up of children was closely connected with activities applying to making a living, with a nearly involvement and responsibility for chores. Older children were taught parental responsibility, while allodial privilege was given to the youngest child, who was also bound to care for aging parents. Children were tied to a network of relations beyond the nuclear family.

The Sami no aide was a person with strong mental and spiritual power. The no aide functioned as the siida-isit. He was a strong spiritual leader for his society in moral matters and could resolve disputes. He was also a healer, social worker and story teller.

The Samis used both animal and vegetable products in their folk medicine. In cases of where a diagnosis was uncertain, the noiade sought advice by means of his shamanic drum, or runeboimmen. He was capable of transcending states of consciousness and could travel to other spiritual realms to cure sickness or prevent death. The traditional Sami music form yoik and beating on a runeboimmen contributed to such spiritual travels.

This use of yoik is probably the reason why the song form was banned when Christianity appeared. Yet healers continue to operate in several Sami communities today. It is not uncommon for local health personnel and healers to work in unison. A healer's knowledge and authority can have a supplementary function to modern medical practice.

The conditions of Sami social and economic life have changed greatly through the decades. However, growing focus has been given to the potential of combining a development of business activities and developing traditional ways of making a living as a material basis for Sami culture. One sees that the marginal resources in the

Sami areas seldom give sufficient economic nourishment for single occupations. Combinations of jobs yield a more balanced utilization of natural resources, and additional economic support.

**“Saami,”** [Encyclopedia.com, 8 May 2018 \[90\] https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/anthropology-and-archaeology/people/sami](https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/anthropology-and-archaeology/people/sami)

#### Overview:

Saami speak various dialects of the Saami language, and/or the national languages, within northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia's Kola Peninsula, and nominally follow the religions of the dominant society. "Sapmi," or "Same-eatnam," refers to traditional Saami Regions others have called "Lapland." The terms "Lapp" and "Lapland" were used mainly by non-Saami, and the derivations of both "Lapp" and "Saami" are contested. Contemporary areas designated "Finnmark" and "Lappmark" constitute but a small portion of Sapmi.

Saami inhabit much of the tundra, taiga, and coastal zones north of 62° N in Norway and Sweden, 66° N in Finland, and 67° N on the Kola peninsula. These arctic and subarctic regions enjoy a climate moderated by the gulf stream, with winters seldom dipping below —40° C (in the far north, without sun for up to two months), and summers occasionally reaching 25° C (sometimes with midnight sun for up to two months).

There have been no adequate censuses of Saami. Any estimate of their population depends on the operational definition of Saamihood as much as on quality of sampling, but they number very roughly 1 percent of the Populations in their overarching countries. Representative figures around 1982 suggest a total of 40,000 to 60,000 in Norway, 15,000 in Sweden, 4,000 in Finland, and less than 2,000 in Russia—of which about 70 percent speaks Saami and 10 percent breeds reindeer. All in all, the roughly 7,000 Saami dependent on reindeer management as a livelihood herd and husband around 450,000 head. While the majority of Saami resides in the traditional northern regions, the largest concentrations of Saami are today in their national capital cities, to which migration has been most intense in the period since World War II.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Marriage and Family**

Marriage. Marriage is monogamous. Sometimes cross cousins or double cross cousins marry, which is advantageous for nucleation of herding groups. Constraints on marriage include compatibility of the partners' subsistence bases. The merging of two large reindeer livestock holdings or two very small holdings would each be marginally viable arrangements (given some combination of labor requirements, pasturage availability, and herd controllability), as would be the Marriage of two persons having the responsibilities associated with ultimogeniture, or two persons

committed to incommensurable livelihoods. Within these limits, individuals Usually choose their own mates, marrying sometimes after a family has been started. Post-marital residence is neolocal, although flexible, as in the case of an ultimogeniture heir apparent, who remains at home. When a newly formed family continues in the subsistence livelihood of one or another of the spouses, they reside so as to take advantage of their familiarity with the area. Divorce seldom occurs, either formally or informally.

Domestic Unit. The domestic unit is the nuclear family, from which individuals disperse and regroup (also across household lines) owing to activities requiring constant mobility.

Inheritance. In reindeer-breeding families, each Individual, regardless of age or gender, owns livestock. Saami Inheritance is constrained by the various practices of the dominant society. Following Saami tradition, however, inheritance of parental dwellings, plots, livestock, resource-utilization locations, and other wealth—as well as the responsibility of caring for elderly parents—will commonly fall to the youngest child.

Socialization. Children learn at their own pace through opportunistic imitation. They are seldom explicitly instructed or disciplined. Versatility and individuality are rewarded.

**“Older Sami Women Living in the Arctic: A Cultural Background that Breaks with Western Conventions,” Gunn-Tove Minde, Journal of Community and Public Health Nursing, 27 January 2017 [91] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gunn-Tove-Minde/publication/314648299\\_Older\\_Sami\\_Women\\_Living\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic\\_A\\_Cultural\\_Background\\_that\\_Breaks\\_with\\_Western\\_Conventions/links/5b8e4651299bf114b7f0ff22/Older-Sami-Women-Living-in-the-Arctic-A-Cultural-Background-that-Breaks-with-Western-Conventions.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gunn-Tove-Minde/publication/314648299_Older_Sami_Women_Living_in_the_Arctic_A_Cultural_Background_that_Breaks_with_Western_Conventions/links/5b8e4651299bf114b7f0ff22/Older-Sami-Women-Living-in-the-Arctic-A-Cultural-Background-that-Breaks-with-Western-Conventions.pdf)**

Abstract:

This article is about older Sami women living in the Arctic region in Norway. The Sami are indigenous people of northern Scandinavia and northern Russia; Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Sami people have a background that breaks with western traditions. In order to understand their cultural values, beliefs and worldviews anchored in “the living body”, elder care should consider their cultural, ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness. The three older Sami women presented in this text, Maret, Beret and Betty, have lived in close contact with older Sami women throughout their lives. They are particularly sensitive to restrictions that have reduced their freedom and quality of life.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

The article is about elderly Sami women living in the Arctic region in Norway. After more than 20 years of research in collaboration with older people, I offer a picture of life among the older Sami women in Arctic regions in Norway. I have limited myself to two Sami lifestyles: the reindeer-herding Sami and the Coastal Sami. Both of whom lived under much the same historical and cultural conditions in Northern Scandinavia. I will describe the lives of three Sami women: Beret, Maret and Betty. Maret and Betty grew up keeping reindeer, which is a husbandry exclusive to Sami. Betty is a Coastal Sami, and she and her husband, like ethnic Norwegian people in the north who live in rural areas and close to nature, have been self-supporting through the exploitation of natural resources.

Today, Maret, Beret and Betty are pensioners, meaning they receive a retirement pension from the State of Norway as Norwegian citizens.

**“Gender Issues,” Karla Jessen Williamson, et al., Arctic Human Development Report, 2004 [92]**

[http://www.svs.is/static/files/images/pdf\\_files/ahdr/English\\_version/AHDR\\_chp\\_11.pdf](http://www.svs.is/static/files/images/pdf_files/ahdr/English_version/AHDR_chp_11.pdf)

Summary:

Understanding the prevailing power relations is instrumental in making sense of human development in the Arctic. This includes power relations between women and men. However, any discussion of power relations and gender roles must also recognize the social and cultural diversity across the circumpolar North and the fact that many different perspectives can be applied when analyzing these roles.

Some of the authors in this chapter emphasize that the traditional relationships between women, men, children and the land have been paramount for life in the harsh conditions of the North. The gender roles displayed in many Arctic regions are therefore seen as complementary rather than opposing. There may indeed be a commonality of this experience across the Arctic that transcends both culture and nationality.

However, western values, attitudes, structures and regulations were imported from southern societies following the introduction of the large-scale nation state. The paternalistic male bias inherent in these values and structures led policymakers and administrators with little knowledge of the societies they were working with to defer to males when assigning decision-making positions. Increased understanding of situated and traditional knowledge can make us aware of what we are losing by adopting gender roles from other cultural landscapes. Introducing western feminist critique may even be perceived as yet another vestige of post-colonialism. It is seen as more relevant to discuss gender equality in terms of tradition, justice, values, and democratization.

Other authors emphasize issues that have long been reflected in the feminist agenda, including western, non-western and indigenous feminist perspectives. This

includes analyses of women's representation in formal decision-making bodies and a discussion of gendered violence.

In light of the diverse perspectives on the significance of gender and culture in designing power structures in the Arctic, this chapter provides a starting place for further dialogue on gender issues in the Arctic. It is a collection of varying views of gender and culture as a basis for describing Arctic societies. The themes range from a critique of western feminism as contrary to indigenous views and realities, through the importance of acknowledging indigenous men's disenfranchisement, to using the concept of human security as a way of thinking about female out-migration and gendered violence. They also include discussions about women's involvement and representation in political life and natural resource management.

The objective of the chapter is not to present a comprehensive assessment of gender issues in the Arctic. In Arctic research, gender is still an emerging topic, and there is not a fully developed body of literature available for assessment. Therefore, the chapter is more of an exploratory scoping exercise. The aim is to operate as a catalyst for future analysis of how shifting gender roles affect human development in the North.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

An analysis of the situation in the small community of Steigen, Nordland, shows a society with problems. Traditionally a fisherman-farmer community, Steigen with its 3,000 inhabitants faces the same challenges as many other small rural societies. Population and birth rates decline, and changes in the work force, production modes, and education patterns highlight a need for economic and political transformation. Specifically, men and women in the demographically very important 20-39 age group move to the towns and educational centers, and not all move back to where they came from or indeed seek the life offered there.

Strategies for rural development in Norway have traditionally focused on (low-level) blue-collar work and work that does not demand higher levels of education. Modernity, however, has introduced better telecommunications and infrastructure as well as a wider geographical distribution of social relations and of media, making it possible for people to stay in touch and connected independent of distance and location. Also, the dependency on primary resources in rural areas is lessened.

Some political strategies for rural development have focused on women. In the 1980s and early '90s, the strategy was to use affirmative action to give women the same opportunities as men. Focus was mainly on entrepreneurial training and job-creation, not on increasing formal competence. This strategy has been criticized because women were used to fulfill a predefined strategy, and were not given real influence in defining the content of the policy and the development. From the late 1990s, the ideals of gender mainstreaming and integration have dominated the picture. Strategies today are based on a gender perspective, and to a certain extent

take into account a need for more formal capacity building, for decentralized education systems, and flexible models. However, in rural areas this strategy has been difficult to implement as the mainstreaming models maintain the imbalance in development between center and periphery. Rural development policy remains therefore an “in-spite-of” strategy to reduce the consequences of the mainstreaming strategy. As an alternative, we would like to suggest a focus on education.

Traditionally, settlement in the rural areas has

been located where natural resources were available. In coastal areas like Steigen, fisheries and small-scale farming formed the basis for settlement. Exploitation of natural resources and to a certain extent subsistence economy did not require high academic or formal competence. In more recent generations, an increasing number of young people – many from rural areas – have sought higher education. These areas have not had a need for skilled labor, something that has led to a situation where rural areas find they are exporting youth out of the region. The young people who choose not to seek higher education remain in the local community, while those leaving to get more education never come back. This has created a view of “educating oneself away from the rural areas.” From this perspective, knowledge and education become a threat to the periphery.

As for the gender situation, jobs in resource-based industries have to a large extent become male professions, with women’s work being made “invisible” or given lower status. A typical example is that of fisheries. Today, the jobs that the local community can offer young women are mainly in health care services, schools, and public administration. But many young women have other educational plans and wishes for their lives. One illustration of this is the fact that municipalities in Nordland that have schools and university colleges also have more young women than men. In sum, the concept of educating oneself away from the rural areas is even more true for young women.

If the rural areas are to be sustainable societies, the economic, social and political situation in the rural areas needs readjustment and development. Readjustment is competence-intensive. With a higher level of education, both the society and the individuals will be more flexible. Flexibility means people will be more able to adjust to changes, for example in the market. Also, as individuals they will be more able to influence the direction of these readjustments.

Quite a few young and highly educated people look to the periphery for a place to settle and develop what they see as “a good life.” The current generation seeks a diversity of job opportunities, a varied cultural life and a tolerance of different attitudes. Should they choose to settle in a small community, they still demand the right and possibility to be citizens of the world. This is a great challenge to a small-scale community, which traditionally has had the image of conformity, in the sense that most of the citizens have had the same background, and have worked in similar

trades. From our point of view, it is crucial to find a strategy to develop modern and inclusive societies in the periphery.

## B. Religion:

**“Sami,” Countries and their Cultures [93]** <https://www.everyculture.com/wc/Norway-to-Russia/Sami.html>

### Overview:

While the Sami, or Lapps (as they were formerly called), are commonly thought of as the inhabitants of Lapland, they have never had a country of their own. They are the original inhabitants of northern Scandinavia and most of Finland. Their neighbors have called them Lapps, but they prefer to be called Samer or Sami, since Lapp means a patch of cloth for mending and was a name imposed on them by the people who settled on their lands. The Sami refer to their land as Sapmi or Same.

The Sami first appear in written history in the works of the Roman author Tacitus in about AD 98. Nearly 900 years later, a Norwegian chieftain visiting King Alfred the Great of England spoke of these reindeer herders, who were paying taxes to him in the form of furs, feathers, and whale bones. Over the centuries many armed nations—including the Karelians, Swedes, Danes, Finns, and Russians—demanded their loyalty and taxes. In some cases, the Sami had to pay taxes to two or three governments—as well as fines imposed by one country for paying taxes to another!

Today the Sami are citizens of the countries within whose borders they live, with full rights to education, social services, religious freedom, and participation in the political process. Norway, Sweden, and Finland all have Sami parliaments. At the same time, however, the Sami continue to preserve and defend their ethnic identity and traditional cultural values. Until the liberalization instituted by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's government in the late 1980s, the Russian Sami had almost no contact with those in other areas. Sami living in Scandinavia formed the Nordic Sami Council in 1956 to promote cooperation between their populations in Norway, Sweden, and Finland. In 1973 the Nordic Sami Institute at Kautokeino, Norway, was founded to promote the study of the Sami language and culture. In 1989, a Sami College was established there as well. The universities of Tromsø in Norway, Umeå in Sweden, and Oulu in Finland have Sami departments in which Sami topics are taught, both separately and as part of established disciplines.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### RELIGION

In the traditional Sami religion, both living beings and inanimate objects such as trees were thought to have souls. A priest or shaman, called a noaidi, acted as an intermediary between the spiritual and material worlds. He would consult with the

dead while in a trance induced by beating on a magic drum and performing a special kind of chanting called juoigan (yoik) in Sami. Juoigan is the traditional Sami music.

Over the course of time, all of the Sami have converted to Christianity, in large part through the efforts of Lars Levi Laestadius, a nineteenth-century evangelical Congregationalist. Today most Sami practice the dominant Lutheran religion of the Nordic countries in which they live.

## rites of passage

The Sami held on to their traditional ways longer than most peoples in Europe and have yet to fully abandon traditional life for a modern way of life. Still, the dictates of today's world have forced them to follow rituals that would be easily recognized in the Western world. Most Sami, for instance, participate in the major Lutheran rituals even though they sometimes adapt them to their own use. The ritual of baptism and the way the Sami have both used and avoided it offer an interesting illustration of a traditional culture struggling to maintain itself within the industrialized world.

The Scandinavian countries where the Sami live required surnames, and the Lutheran church applied pressure on the Sami to use traditional Christian names for their children. The Sami resisted for years, maintaining their tradition of no surnames and naming their children for recently deceased elders or infants. The Sami reluctantly created a system of surnames similar to the Scandinavian system of adding "son" (sen) or "daughter" (dotter) to the first name of a parent and began using traditional Scandinavian names for baptism. Afterward, however, when the family left the church, they would hold their own baptism ceremony in which the imposed name was "cleaned" away and a "stronger," more traditional name was given to the child.

Similar practices have been applied to other areas of traditional Sami life: a concession is made to modernism, while a connection is maintained to traditionalism.

**“Women in Saami Society,” Sarah Andrews, Sami Culture [94]**

<https://www.laits.utexas.edu/sami/dieda/hist/women.htm>

### Overview:

The Saami are recognized as being an oppressed minority group, and much has been written, mostly by the Saami themselves, about their situation. However, the plight of Saami women is an important issue that has only recently started to gain a noticeable amount of coverage in Samiland. This began with the Saami feminist movement in the 1970s, which opened for discussion the issue of Saami women's positions in a constantly changing society. Because of the changes the Saami have encountered as a result of modernization and their assimilation into Norwegian culture, Saami women have been forced to reevaluate and redefine their roles in modern society.



Saami women's issues fall into certain categories that are of particular importance, and I have grouped them accordingly as: women's roles in society; Christianity and modernization; internalized racism; Saami men's views of women; men and women's topics in writing; the Saami feminist movement, including current and future issues; women in reindeer husbandry; and marriage. Even though I tried to separate issues within this paper for the sake of clarity, they are overlapping and therefore several points are mentioned more than once.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Christianity**

Though Lukkari argues that Saami women have power, this is not the consensus among other female Saamis interviewed in *No Beginning, No End: The Sami Speak Up*. Many believe that Saami women are oppressed because of Christian influence in Samiland. Kirsti Paltto says that Christianity has made women easy to subjugate because it teaches that women should be men's servants (Helander and Kailo, 29). Her short story "Looking Back" is about a young Saami woman who is forced to marry the Christian man who raped her, bear his children and then remain as his obedient wife until he dies. While the story is an extreme example of the potential clash between Saami culture and Christianity, the main idea (fear of a life of servitude, brought about, in part, by Christianity) is clear. Along the same lines, Saami writer Kerttu Vuolab says that her father turned to Christianity and "became a macho man many many times over". Lukkari thinks that while Saami women are held in low esteem because of Christianity, they are not as oppressed as women in the western world are. Her reasoning for this is that "The position of a woman has been so important in a society based on an extended family that several generations will pass before Saami women are in the same position as Western women here".

Before Christianity was introduced into Saami society, the Saami shamanistic religion recognized a variety of gods. For women, the most important of these was Mattarahkko, the primeval mother. Her three daughters, Sarahkka, Uksahkka, and Juksahkka helped women through different stages in life, such as pregnancy and childbirth (Utsi, 18). The importance of women in the early Saami society is made clear through the presence of female deities. This also supports the idea that Saami society once tended to be matriarchal.

**"Saami,"** [Encyclopedia.com, 8 May 2018 \[95\] https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/anthropology-and-archaeology/people/sami](https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/anthropology-and-archaeology/people/sami)

#### Overview:

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There have been no adequate censuses of Saami. Any estimate of their population depends on the operational definition of Saamihood as much as on quality of sampling, but they number very roughly 1 percent of the Populations in their overarching countries. Representative figures around 1982 suggest a total of 40,000 to 60,000 in Norway, 15,000 in Sweden, 4,000 in Finland, and less than 2,000 in Russia—of which about 70 percent speaks Saami and 10 percent breeds reindeer. All in all, the roughly 7,000 Saami dependent on reindeer management as a livelihood herd and husband around 450,000 head. While the majority of Saami resides in the traditional northern regions, the largest concentrations of Saami are today in their national capital cities, to which migration has been most intense in the period since World War II.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Religion and Expressive Culture**

**Religious Beliefs.** The ecstatic shamanic tradition has been subsumed but not utterly eradicated by state churches, who's missionizing nominally converted most Saami by the end of the eighteenth century. Most Saami belong to the evangelical Lutheran faith of the dominant culture, while some retain a nineteenth-century syncretic institution named Laestadianism after its charismatic founder.

According to Saami traditions, various spirits reside in and around prominent geographical locales, such as natural outcroppings and encampment sites. The shamanic drum of old commemorated a host of cosmological forces associated with space, time, weather, animals, and social categories. Saami folklore contains abundant references to people of the underworld and a giant troll-like figure. Other spirits correspond to once-living beings, as do ghosts of infanticide casualties.

**Religious Practitioners.** Male pastors from the dominant society service most Lutheran churches in Saami areas; Laestadian practitioners are usually recruited from the Saami and Finnish populations. Laestadian practitioners also perform in the folk-medicine arena, and are male. Self-styled shamans of both genders serve the medical and sorcery needs of their kin, friends, neighbors, and trading partners. Not all healers are shamans, however, and not all shamans are healers.

**Ceremonies.** The most elaborate ceremony in former times, congruent with that of other circumpolar peoples, was associated with the bear hunt. The Saami observe the regular Christian life-cycle rituals. Laestadian meetings are held in some of the same places as church services and also in secular buildings and homes. Healing rituals, whether Laestadian or shamanic, usually take place in the home of a patient or during a meeting.

**Arts.** Most utilitarian arts and crafts are done by all, while specialists such as knife makers, basket makers, and silversmiths render decorative wares. Summer tourism and year-round exports have become important in the local economy. To protect themselves against imitation, Saami handicraft professionals mark their produce with a special seal. A number of Saami have attained international recognition in nontraditional graphic art forms and literature. The vocal arts are represented by the chantlike yoik, which has become a recognized musical form.

**Medicine.** Indigenous beliefs and practices (such as the stopping of blood) are grounded in the knowledge and skills of the patient, a family member, or a shaman. Remedies are readily available in nature for human, reindeer, and dog maladies. In addition, and within limits, these sparsely settled outlying regions receive medical and veterinary services in line with those of the rest of the country.

**Death and Afterlife.** Saami have a higher-than-average incidence of cardiovascular disease; males in their early years are at risk for accidental death, and in earlier times, a certain toll was taken by childbirth. Barring such mortality, Saami are often active in their 80s. In the past, if burdensome to the family, the elderly boarded with sedentary people, wandered off, or were left behind to die. The funeral and burial follow national custom, usually Lutheran. Saami do not speculate much about afterlife. In pre-Christian and earlier Christian times, when frozen or rocky terrain precluded burial, interment or temporary interment utilized trees and cairns.

**“Older Sami Women Living in the Arctic: A Cultural Background that Breaks with Western Conventions,” Gunn-Tove Minde, Journal of Community and Public Health Nursing, 27 January 2017 [96] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gunn-Tove-Minde/publication/314648299\\_Older\\_Sami\\_Women\\_Living\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic\\_A\\_Cultural\\_Background\\_that\\_Breaks\\_with\\_Western\\_Conventions/links/5b8e4651299bf114b7f0ff22/Older-Sami-Women-Living-in-the-Arctic-A-Cultural-Background-that-Breaks-with-Western-Conventions.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gunn-Tove-Minde/publication/314648299_Older_Sami_Women_Living_in_the_Arctic_A_Cultural_Background_that_Breaks_with_Western_Conventions/links/5b8e4651299bf114b7f0ff22/Older-Sami-Women-Living-in-the-Arctic-A-Cultural-Background-that-Breaks-with-Western-Conventions.pdf)**

Abstract:

This article is about older Sami women living in the Arctic region in Norway. The Sami are indigenous people of northern Scandinavia and northern Russia; Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Sami people have a background that breaks with western traditions. In order to understand their cultural values, beliefs and worldviews anchored in “the living body”, elder care should consider their cultural,

ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness. The three older Sami women presented in this text, Maret, Beret and Betty, have lived in close contact with older Sami women throughout their lives. They are particularly sensitive to restrictions that have reduced their freedom and quality of life.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The spiritual and religious life**

In Sami communities, the belief in powers beyond the control of man was very much alive. Throughout childhood, children were taught to believe in certain superhuman principles that tied man and nature together. This viewpoint of the individual and society created a framework around respect for reciprocity in everyday life where most people shared a foundation of common experience which created a community that reached far beyond the family and neighborhood. Maret, Beret and Betty have a faith where the Læstadian interpretation of the Bible and value basis is an internalized part of their practice. Values such as ordinary good manners, care, concern, honesty, and compassion and respect for all human life are values that are symbolized through their behavior. Beret, Maret and Betty have not always been Christian. Living in close association with nature has developed that which is the essential in life and the conditions for joy in life and the development of life. They live in tempo with their needs and what they feel is right, which is in complete conformity with man and nature. They are one with nature both with the nature outside and with the nature of their deepest selves. This overall understanding of man's existence and nature has shaped them into humble yet proud women.

Neither are they afraid of death and they do not believe that man goes to hell, as espoused by Christianity. "It is earth that is hell just look at all the wars in the world today", says Beret with Maret agreeing.

**“Spiritual Activism. Saving Mother Earth in Sápmi,” Siv Ellen Kraft, Religions, 9 July 2020 [97] <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/11/7/342/htm>**

#### Abstract:

Arctic Shaman Circle was founded in Oslo in November 2018. This article discusses what the Circle's founding document refers to as “spiritual activism”, and how this was translated into action over the year that followed. I will follow one case in particular, which concerns plans for a power plant at the base of the mountain Aahkansjurhtjie in the South Sámi area. Aahkansjurhtjie is a sacred Sámi mountain, the shamans claim, and should be protected accordingly. My focus is on the learning processes that have emerged as the shamans have explored and argued the case, locally and nationally. I examine the negotiations that have happened along the way, in a political climate that has so far been hostile to religious arguments of any sorts, and in this example, involves a group that is

contested among the Sámi. Finally, I look at the role of “indigeneity” in regard to claims, performances and responses to these particular concerns, as these have played out in different parts of the Sámi geography.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

Indigenous people have a spiritual relationship to nature, which commits them to live in balance with Mother Earth. Shamanism is the designation of indigenous peoples’ spirituality. The Arctic Shaman Circle promotes this perception of nature and society (Myrhaug et al. 2019).

Arctic Shaman Circle is the most recent addition to shaman milieus in Norway.<sup>3</sup> It is also the most explicitly indigenous shaman organization to have been established in Norway and Sápmi more broadly and the first that has foregrounded spiritual activism, and positioned societal development over personal development. Let me quote its objectives in full, up front:

- (1) To help all Sami and other indigenous people in the north get back and develop their spiritual cultural heritage, according to U.N.’s human rights.
- (2) To increase knowledge of the connection between nature and cultural landscapes, work and indigenous people’s spirituality.
- (3) To make visible Sámi and other indigenous people’s spiritual knowledge traditions.
- (4) Make ethical rules for shamanistic practice accessible and accepted in society.
- (5) The Arctic Shaman Circle shall create an environment in which the circle is the force.
- (6) The Arctic Shaman Circle shall be a unifying network for all shamanistic workers.
- (7) Develop a circle that includes Sápmi and other countries with indigenous peoples from Arctic regions: Russia, Japan, Alaska, Greenland, Island, Faroe Islands, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway.
- (8) Make shamanistic practice accepted as a profession.
- (9) Help implement spiritual activism: actions for the support and development of indigenous people’s spiritual connection to nature.

In an attempt to shed light on unfolding developments at the intersection of religion, activism and indigeneity, this article deals with the first year and a half of Arctic Shaman Circle (2018–2020). I have been interested in the processes of indigenizing and religionizing, as the shamans have entered novel grounds, and negotiated a position for themselves vis-à-vis the complicated geographies of “Sámi religion” on the one hand and the largely secular spaces of Sámi (and Norwegian) activism on the other. My main case is the protection of Aahkansjurhtjie, a mountain in the South Sámi area, referred to in the first annual report of the Arctic Shaman Circle as its “pilot case” (Arktisk Sjamansirkele 2019). I have followed the life of this case as it has been translated into action, in different contexts, on different scales and for

different audiences, including a community meeting at the Sámi center in Hattfjelldal, a church in Oslo, news-media and online locations. The Facebook groups “Arktisk sjamansirkele” (Arctic Shaman Circle) and “Aahkansjurhttjie: Kjerringtinden–beskytt hellige fjell” (protect sacred mountains) have enabled access to activities and communication along the way, for me and for the people involved, most of whom live spread across Norway and Sápmi.

My methodological approach has been explorative and inductive, based on presence at the events discussed and long-term fieldwork in Sámi areas. The following themes have struck me as significant and will constitute my focus here. First is learning, as the shamans have explored the case, argued the cause and performed their claims, and with implications not only for religion-making on shaman terms but for the revitalization of traditions in Sápmi more broadly. Second is negotiations and diplomacy. The shamans are well aware of the challenges facing them, including the secular premises of activism, and the contested position of shamanism (particularly in the Sámi settlement areas).

Third is the role of “indigeneity” in regard to claims, performances and responses. My approach to this dimension has been shaped by a multi-year comparative project on indigenous religion(s), centered on the relationship between a globalizing discourse and local formations (Kraft et al. 2020; Johnson and Kraft 2017; Alles and Tafjord 2018). By “indigenous religion” I mean a flexible, but fairly standardized, vocabulary of assumed similarities: harmony with nature, healing and holism, antiquity and spirituality, shamanism and animism, along with material and practice-based registers (Kraft et al. 2020). Among my concerns are the ways- and means by which persons, acts and settings become recognizable as indigenous and religious, and the extent to which indigenous religion has become a resource (e.g., politically and in regard to religion-making). Attention to scales and translations is basic to this perspective, along with a focus on performance and display. My concern is not with truths, faults and authenticity. I am interested in what indigenous religion enables, makes possible, and brings into existence, who uses and opposes these registers, and why and with which results.

**“Shamanism in Contemporary Norway: Concepts in Conflict,” Trude Fonneland, Religions, 23 July 2018 [98]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326575291\\_Shamanism\\_in\\_Contemporary\\_Norway\\_Concepts\\_in\\_Conflict/fulltext/5b57218ba6fdcc8dae40af6f/Shamanism-in-Contemporary-Norway-Concepts-in-Conflict.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326575291_Shamanism_in_Contemporary_Norway_Concepts_in_Conflict/fulltext/5b57218ba6fdcc8dae40af6f/Shamanism-in-Contemporary-Norway-Concepts-in-Conflict.pdf?origin=publication_detail)

Abstract:

To choose a terminology for an investigation of shamanism in contemporary Norway is not entirely without problems. Many shamans are adamant in rejecting the term religion in connection with their practices and choose broader rubrics when describing what they believe in. When shamanism was approved as an official

religion by the Norwegian government in 2012, the tensions ran high, and many shamanic practitioners refused to accept the connection between religion and shamanism. This chapter provides an account of the emic categories and connections used today by shamanic entrepreneurs and others who share these types of spiritual beliefs. In particular, the advantages and disadvantages of the term religion and how it is deployed on the ground by shamans in Norway will be highlighted.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

In the late 1980s, shamanism gained a foothold in Norway, at the same time influencing cultural life and various secular and semi-secular currents.

One aim of this chapter is to take the diversity and hybridity within shamanic practices seriously through case studies from a Norwegian setting. Overall, I try to paint a picture of shamanism in Norway in its cultural context and describe the concepts, rubrics, and connections that practitioners deploy to position themselves in a Norwegian cultural and political context. The chapter explores the dynamics through which abstract concepts and ideas find moorings in a local community and in participants' reality here and now, gradually generating distinct cultural fields. The history of shamanism provides insight into Western assumptions about religion and religiosity in general. It stands as an example of how religious labels are formed in ever changing contexts—as a by-product of broader historical processes.

Taking local practices and communities as a starting point offers rich opportunities for getting close to individual practitioners and their beliefs, visions, and creativity. Based on interviews with central persons in the shamanic environment in Norway from 2004 to 2018, as well as on fieldwork at courses, ceremonies, and festivals, this chapter will provide empirical knowledge about which notions of shamanism are used today by shamanic entrepreneurs and others who share these types of spiritual beliefs. As a folklorist and culture researcher, I aim at understanding how people create culture and form systems of meaning that organize everyday life. I seek to track changes, boundary markers, and the complex, procedural, and polysemic meanings people ascribe to their actions.

I have chosen to examine the field of shamanism in Norway ethnographically by focusing particularly on some specific contexts and personalities using interviews, observation, and document analysis as my main research tools. Even though these tools represent different approaches to the field, the combination opened the possibility for more depth as well as understanding.

Cultural analysis forms a central basis for my academic understanding. A culture analytical approach is about understanding and interpreting what is meaningful for members of a culture (Frykman and Löfgren 1979; Ehn and Löfgren 1982). It is

about seeing how meaning is created and re-created. The focus is directed toward everyday reality, to the participants' lives, their experiences, and their meetings and negotiations in relation to dominant discourses. For me, cultural analysis constitutes a tool to highlight perspectives that say something about contemporary shamans' values, attitudes, and interpretations of everyday life, including shamanic activities and experiences.

## **Conclusions**

As James Beckford notes, "Disputes about what counts as religion, and attempts to devise new ways of controlling what is permitted under the label of religion have all increased" (Beckford 2003, p. 1). The Shamanic Association (SA) appears to have been created for the purpose of meeting the criteria required for obtaining the rights of a Norwegian religious community. The national legal framework thus inspired a diverse group of professional entrepreneurs to join forces and organize themselves into a religious association.

Recently, the government has submitted a new law for consultation, "Proposed new law on religious communities". In short, the proposed new law implies that religious communities under 500 members will no longer receive financial support. Several smaller religious communities, such as the Shamanic Association, may disappear if they fail to increase the number of members. The Board of SA has come up with a strong rebuttal against the new law.

The concept of religion is, and has been, imbued with varying connotations and values in different societies and contexts. Why is it so important for the Shamanic Association to maintain status as a religion in view of the fact that the approval challenges some of the most important ideologies within shamanism in contemporary times? One reason can of course be the statutory benefits that the financial support constitutes and the right to perform religious ceremonies. Equally, the process is about gaining acceptance in the Norwegian society. The state approval of SA as a religion implies an acceptance for shamans in the present time, for their activities, attitudes, and beliefs and as such, is a means for SA to reach out to potential members and to gain attention about themselves and their message. The approval by the county governor also makes SA a representative for the Norwegian shamanic environment in the public space, although this does not necessarily reflect the situation within the environment. In other words, the approval of SA as a religion functions in relation to social interests and power relations among practitioners of shamanism and in relation to society.

**"New age, Sami shamanism and indigenous spirituality," Trude Fonneland and Siv Ellen Kraft, Research Gate, January 2011 [99]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Trude-Fonneland-2/publication/291886188 New age Sami shamanism and indigenous spirituality/link](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Trude-Fonneland-2/publication/291886188_New_age_Sami_shamanism_and_indigenous_spirituality/link)



### Overview:

Prior to the late 1990s the New Age spiritualities of Northern Norway differed little from those found elsewhere in the country and in the areas of their origin. Since then, a Sami version of neo-shamanism has been established, along with a new focus on the uniqueness of the arctic north, and expressed through New Age courses and events, as well as through various secular or semi-secular tracks. Reborn as the wisdom of indigenous people in general and the Sami in particular, Sami shamanism caters for spiritual needs, but also for the more mundane needs of tourism, place branding and entertainment, and – last but not least – for Sami nation building and the ethno-political field of indigenous revival.

### Current & Relevant Information:

On one level the story of particular developments in a specific place, Sami shamanism also belongs to broader tendencies in contemporary post-secular society. It will in this chapter serve as a case study through which to explore two issues of general relevance. We are concerned, first, with the interplay between secular and spiritual dynamics, inside and outside of the New Age market. The broader influence of New Age spiritualities tends to be limited to hybrid products – products whose New Age components are open to different interpretations – with or without spiritual references, and which are ascribed at least one function of a more prosaic or secular character (Kraft 2009a). Second, we are concerned with the relationship between New Age spiritualities and indigenous peoples, places and ideas, including what we refer to as indigenous spirituality. We define this as a discourse concerning the essentialized nature and identity of indigenous people and traditions, forwarded by representatives of the indigenous people's movements, the UN and legislation, tourism and popular culture, academics and activists, and New Age and neo-pagan movements. A close and spiritual relationship to nature is crucial to this discourse, along with sacred landscapes, healing and holism, links to a pre-Christian past, and practices such as animism and shamanism.

The discourse of indigenous spirituality has, we argue, contributed in important ways to the framing of New Age innovations among the Sami as a development within an ancient indigenous tradition, and accordingly legitimated as traditional and authentic. These innovations at the same time support the vaguer discourse on a common and pan-ethnic indigenous spirituality, by providing “live” examples of continuity with the “spiritual inclinations” of the past.

### **Conclusion: New Age Indigeneity and Secular Dynamics**

The choice of a narrow versus a broad concept of New Age obviously has crucial implications for evaluations of its present status. In our case a narrow version would

exclude both the touristic and marketing tendencies we have explored, the discourse on indigenous spirituality, and perhaps even Sami shamanism. As to the latter, it is hard, in the landscapes explored in this case, to distinguish clearly between “New Age” and “neo-paganism”, and not necessarily fruitful to do so. These operate on the same market and draw upon similar ideas of self-development and self-realization. Many of them also combine techniques and therapies connected to both New Age (in a narrow sense) and neo-paganism (in a narrow sense). In the case of entrepreneurs like Esther Utsi, the status of her offerings as “Sami shamanism” clearly has more to do with her ethnic background than with her actual practices. We have here a spiritual entrepreneur focusing mainly on self- help therapies such as crystal therapy and healing, and in addition, a tourist enterprise combining elements from local Sami traditions and New Age pilgrimage, and offered to spiritual seekers and “ordinary” tourists alike. In order to make sense of this type of spiritual setting, it is – we have argued – crucial to take into account the interplay between secular and religious elements and include what we have referred to as “hybrid” products.

The development of Sami shamanism and indigenous spirituality calls for similar allowance for hybridity and fluid boundaries. The tendency in scholarly research has been to distinguish rather sharply between the interests of New Age entrepreneurs on the one hand, and the traditional practices of indigenous peoples, on the other. The noble savage, according to this view, depends upon maintaining some distance – be that in geographic or temporal terms (Bowman 1995). It is a concept of New Age discourse, connected to the romantization of primitive “others”, and as such it is a late modern contribution to older traditions of Western colonialization.

There is no shortage of convincing examples to support charges of cultural theft and demeaning practices. Current conditions are, at least in the case of the Norwegian Sami, far more complex than those depicted in the scenario of indigenous victims of New Age abuse. Such a scenario fails to account for the presence of indigenous people within these same scenarios, including Sami shamans and the voices of indigenous spirituality. An example of what Harald Prins has called “the paradox of primitivism”, the reproduction of primitivist themes is no longer limited to “Western” circles. Primitive’s themes are explored also by indigenous actors, some of whom recognize the primitivist formula, and some of whom actively draw on it as a cross-cultural “structure of comprehension and imperatives for action” (Prins 2002: 56). Their motives may be economic, spiritual, connected to the search for a meaningful ethnic identity – or all of the above. Indicative of the hybrid character of New Age spiritualities, they belong to primitivist traditions as well as to recent processes of cultural revitalization and local meaning-making.

**“Nordic Neoshamanisms,” Siv Ellen Kraft, Trude Fonneland, and James R. Lewis, ed., Palgrave Macmillan, 2015 [100]**

<https://dl.uswr.ac.ir/bitstream/Hannan/140968/1/9781349498932.pdf>

Summary:

During the mid-1970s, Ailo Gaup, then a young Sami journalist from Oslo, traveled to Finnmark, the homeland of his ancestors, in search of a Sami shaman. Gaup had studied scholarly accounts of the pre-Christian Sami religion, commonly understood as a form of shamanism, but had not found descriptions of how – in practical terms – to initiate a trance and embark upon journeys. At the Tourist Hotel in Kautokeino, he met Ernesto, a Chilean refugee with the necessary qualifications from South American contexts. Gaup's first visit to the spirit world of his ancestors took place with the help of Ernesto, Chilean traditions, and an African djembe-drum (Gaup 2005:86–98). Over the next decade, he further developed his skills, through training at Michael Harner's Foundation for Shamanic Studies in Esalen, California. By the late 1980s, he was back in Oslo, established as a professional shaman and ready to take up the task of reviving the spiritual practices of his ancestors. There is, according to Harner's perspective, a core content in the multitude of traditions that together constitute "world shamanism." Each of these should be recovered and reconstructed, in order for their richness and complexity to come forth, and each of them offers unique contributions to the common source.

Indicative of the complex interactions behind Nordic neoshamanisms, Gaup's story speaks of global influences as well as local traditions, including – in the case of the Sami – intersections between cultural and religious revival. One aim of this book is to take seriously such interactions, through case studies from Nordic settings. Another aim is to explore the relationship between neoshamanism and New Age spiritualities on the one hand and secular contexts on the other. A third is to take seriously the ethnic dimension of these currents and intersections, through a specific focus on Sami and Norse versions of neoshamanism. Nordic shamanisms have become part of the international scene, but are also "home grown" – on local lands and through the use of local traditions, including the Sami and Norse religions of the ancient past. Both have been central to the shape and inventory of neoshamanism in the Nordic countries, and by 2014 constituted their most active and profiled parts. Together, they offer rich opportunities for watching second and third-generation neoshamanism evolve, and challenge some of the central assumptions of neoshaman and pagan research—for instance, that these religions cater primarily to urban romantics for whom connections to nature have in practice been lost, that the noble savage depends upon distance in time and space, that pagans tend to be either reconstructionist (oriented toward the reconstruction of "their own" pasts and traditions) or eclectic (mixing elements from various traditions, see Srtmiska 2005), and that they differ substantially from New Age spiritualities. Through the chapters in the present book, contributors question these presuppositions. Nordic shamanisms, we argue, attract people in cities as well as in rural areas; the "noble savage" is no longer limited to distant landscapes; the distinction between reconstructionism and eclecticism is difficult to maintain among entrepreneurs like Gaup and his followers, and boundaries between neoshamanism and New Age have become increasingly blurred.

In substantial ways, scholarly research has contributed to the globalization of neoshamanism. Nordic neoshamans, like their colleagues elsewhere, turn to studies by anthropologists and historians of religion in order to revive and reconstruct the religions of their ancient past, both with respect to descriptions of particular religions, and to what – more generally – shamanism is, as an ism. The contemporary study of religion is, as Friedrich H. Tenbruck phrased it, “confronted with the effects of its own systematizations” (cited in von Stuckrad 2003). Neoshamanism is an unusually clear example, as a movement in which

Academic specialists (mostly anthropologists holding a PhD) act as religious specialists on a “shamanic field of discourse,” which cannot be understood without taking into account the formation of euro-American concepts in early modern times. (Stuckrad 2003: 264)

In academic circles, “shamanism” has been highly contested during the past several decades, due partly to these historical trajectories and to their results, including widespread notions of shamanism as an ism (Rydving 2011, Znamenski 2007, Svanberg 2003, Stuckrad 2002). In this book we take as our starting point emic vocabularies, that is, the ways in which notions of “shaman” and “shamanism” are today used by practitioners and others who relate to them, as designations of religious choices, preferences, and lifestyles. Our concern, then, is not with shamanism as an analytical concept or with the issue of whether this concept makes sense historically—outside of the areas of its origin—in Siberia. We are concerned with sensemaking on emic grounds, including ways in which contemporary shamans anchor their practices in ancient pasts, or what they see and experience as ancient pasts. Notions of traditions and authenticity, similarly, are approached from the perspective of ongoing religion making. “Traditions,” as we view them in these pages, are authentic to the degree they are articulated as such. We leave it, that is, for the shamans to discuss and to decide upon what is or is not “authentic,” and relate this issue to their ongoing concerns rather than to matters of historical continuity.

We will return (in chapter 1) to the contribution of Carlos Castaneda and Harner, both of whom began their careers as anthropologists, then gradually went native, shaman style. Harner’s ideas are today contested among practitioners, but many of the pioneers behind Nordic style neoshamanism, including some who are today critical of his ideas, themselves received their first training at Harner’s center in the United States. Ongoing debates and controversies also indicate their continuing relevance.

The US influence was particularly pronounced during the first stages of neoshamanism in Nordic countries. Indian-style shamanism reached this region during the 1980s, along with New Age and occult impulses. The turn to local traditions occurred at different times, notably through the energy and enthusiasm of individual entrepreneurs (Lindquist 1997: 189). A leading figure of Swedish

paganism, Jørgen I. Eriksson, was already criticizing Harner during the 1980s, and encouraged people to search for local traditions. In Denmark, Annette Høst, who had received her initial training from Harner, began including seidr by the early 1990s, a ritual practice known from Norse religion, as a part of her courses. In Norway, as mentioned above, Ailo Gaup established himself as a Sami shaman in the late 1980s.

Our concept of “Nordic shamanism” refers both to the geographical frame (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden), and to historical resources. Estonia, which is represented in one chapter, is widely thought of as a Baltic state, but belongs geographically to Northern Europe, and has historically been connected to what is today considered the Nordic countries, and is regarded by many Estonians as culturally Nordic (see Parks, in this volume). Ties among the Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden, and Denmark) have been particularly close, historically and today. People in these countries speak mutually comprehensible languages (the Sami excepted), have adopted similar welfare systems, cooperate through Nordic political organizations, and their populations are among the wealthiest and best educated in the world. Religious similarities are also substantial. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark share a history of predominantly Christian populations and strong national churches.

All three countries have during the last decades become religiously more diverse, due to immigration, secularization, and the influx of new religions and New Age spiritualities (Christensen 2010). The latter started out as fairly marginal countercultural movements during the 1960s, gradually became established as economic markets, and increasingly catered to mainstream audiences, for secular as well as spiritual orientations, and crisscrossed established religious and secular boundaries. The sheer size and turnover of Nordic New Age markets indicate that mainstream populations are involved. Products like alternative medicine attract clients with various religious and secular mindsets (Kraft 2011, Frisk 2013, Sorgenfrei 2013). New Age-style coaching and mindfulness have been described as contemporary religious revivals (Hornborg 2012), and increasing interests in so-called “paranormal” experiences among Christians are expressed in terms of New Age vocabularies (Henriksen and Pabst 2013). The increasing presence of New Age spiritualities in films, music, and television similarly indicates mainstream appeal – if “only” as entertainment (Kalvig 2013, Endsjø and Lied 2011). In the following, we try to paint Nordic neoshamanism in its cultural context, relating it both to the local mainstream cultures in which they are situated and to contemporary neoshamanism globally.

The development of economic markets may to some extent explain the blurring of boundaries between the sacred and the secular, on the one hand, and New Age spiritualities and neoshamanism on the other. Both the specialization (niche developments) and the hybridization of products (products catering to both religious

and “secular” needs) make sense from the perspective of the market mechanism – of entrepreneurs trying to make a living from their religious interests and talents (Kraft 2011). Many neoshamans specialize in one particular tradition, but allow for combinations, cater to clients with different needs and interests, and offer their products in typical New Age arenas like festivals and fairs. At times, little but the title (shaman) signals an orientation toward “shamanism.” The most publicly-profiled book on “shamanism” to come out of Norway in 2012, *Shaman on High Heels*, was written by a woman who appears to have no interest whatsoever in “shamanism,” but nevertheless chooses to designate herself as a shaman, and is known in Norwegian popular media as such.

Adding to this wide range of products and specializations, both Norse and particularly Sami shamanism are used in various tourism settings, and in festivals and place-marketing strategies, as part of the cultural heritage of particular places. These forms of shamanism are offered by professional Sami shamans and secular agents, and they draw on trends in the spiritual milieu as well as in the experience economy. Secular and spiritual actors and institutions share an interest in landscapes of wilderness and opportunities to experience the past, and they draw – to some extent – upon the same spiritual vocabularies.

Recent developments in the form of organizations reflect the diversity and hybridity referred to so far. The most important among new comers is *Sjamanistisk forbund* (the Shamanistic Association), which in 2012 was established as a Norwegian religion in the legal sense of the term (Fonneland 2014). The Shamanistic Association (SA) has from the start included both Sami and Norse-oriented shamans and shamanistic practices, and combines a view of shamanism as a universal path with an emphasis on local roots and connections. Its goal, according to official statements, is to serve as a tradition keeper for northern neoshamanic traditions, which, according to some of the leading shamans, dates back some 30,000 years, to a time when Sami and Norse paths had not yet diverged.

Although obviously not exhaustive, Nordic Neoshamanism indicates some of the diversity and breadth of the contemporary neoshamanistic setting, as well as important currents and currencies. Sami shamanism is the most complex and multifaceted shamanistic tradition thus far to emerge in Nordic landscapes, and has therefore been granted particular attention. Adding to its position as a “proper religion” and to the typical register of courses and workshops, Sami shamanism has entered experience and entertainment institutions such as museums, festivals, tourist locations, theaters, music, and films, and also comes in a cultural heritage-style version, as part of Sami nation-building and the ethno-political field of indigenous revival (Kraft 2009)

## **Outline of the Chapters**

The book is divided into three parts: “Background,” “Late Modern Shamanism in Nordic Countries,” and “Neoshamanism in Secular Contexts.” The first part begins with a chapter by Olav Hammer in which macro theories are brought into focus, providing readers with a background for the balance of the volume. In chapter 1, “Late Modern Shamanism: Central Texts and Issues,” Hammer reasons about how such canonical texts as Mircea Eliade’s *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1957) and Michael Harner’s *The Way of the Shaman* (1980) mirror the Western postmodern context in which they were created. Both the ethnographic and neoshamanic image of shamanism have become part of the modern human mythical understanding of how humans and the world are constructed. Whether Eliade is considered a “better” scientist than Harner, they are comparable from a different perspective, Hammer argues.

Part 2, “Late Modern Shamanism in Nordic Countries,” consists of seven case studies of particular persons, groups, and institutions, and indicates the variety of contemporary neoshamanism. In chapter 2, “The Rise of Nordic Neoshamanism in Norway: Local Structures—Global Currents,” Trude Fonneland describes key contexts and events behind the rise of a Nordic neoshamanistic milieu in Norway. The article explores the dynamics through which abstract concepts and ideas find moorings in a local community and in participants’ reality here and now, gradually generating distinct cultural fields.

Chapter 3, “The Way of the Teacher,” explores Danish neoshamanic courses rooted in Michael Harner’s teachings. Merete Demant Jacobsen shows how second- and third-generation course organizers create their own understanding, both of the shaman and of the spiritual needs of modern people. The chapter provides insight into ways in which the concept of shamanism is merging with other approaches to the spiritual and other belief systems, and how each teacher creates his or her own conglomerate of spiritual practices.

In chapter 4, “Shared Facilities: The Fabric of Shamanism, Spiritualism, and Therapy in a Nordic Setting,” Anne Kalvig analyzes “shared facilities,” represented by people using and creating spiritual reservoirs marked by neoshamanism(s), spiritualism, and alternative therapy. She describes how this unfolds within the contemporary spirituality scene in Norway, offering insights into the production, consumption, and mediation of contemporary spirituality, under the wide umbrella of Nordic shamanism.

Chapter 5, “Shamanism—a Spiritual Heritage? The Significance of the Past in Shamanic Discourses,” discusses the importance of the past in supplying an anchor and authoritative foundations for spiritual ideas and practices. Torunn Selberg highlights descriptions and narratives relating shamanism to traditions from an ancient past and shows how interpretations of ideas about the past take on sacral and mythological dimensions.

Henno Eriksen Parks' (chapter 6) takes as his starting point Estonian sources, under the title "Metroshamanism: A Search for Shamanic Identity in Modern Estonia." A primary focus is on connections between local traditions of witches, healers, and shamans, all of which fall under the Estonian label of *nõid*. "Metroshamanism" is proposed as an alternative to the problems connected to the "shamanism" in contemporary ethnological and religious research—as it more accurately portrays the religiouscape of modern shamanic practices.

In chapter 7, "New Age Medicine Men versus New Age Noaidi: Same Neoshamanism, Different Cultural-Political Situation," James R. Lewis analyzes the contrast between the contexts of New Age Sami shamanism and New Age Native American shamanism. Relating how the neoshamanism found in North America and the neoshamanism that has taken root in the Nordic region of Europe have come to embody different social significances, he emphasizes the importance of being aware of how new contexts supply new meanings, to avoid the error of essentialism.

Bente Gullveig Alver (chapter 8) tells the story of the Sami woman Ellen Mari Gaup Dunfjeld, and her career as a shaman. Among the issues at stake, as the title of the chapter indicates, are notions of "More or Less Genuine Shamans," in this case connected to complex negotiations of local traditions and traditions from outside; "The Believer in an Exchange between Antiquity and Modernity, between the Local and the Global."

Part 3 deals with neoshamanism in secular contexts—in films, festivals, museum displays, and music. Cato Christensen (chapter 9) discusses the relationship between Sami shamanism and Indigenous film, taking as his empirical starting point *The Pathfinder* (1987) and *The Kautokeino Rebellion* (2008), by the Sami filmmaker Nils Gaup. These films, Christensen argues, have contributed in important ways to perceptions of the Sami religious past, both inside and outside of Sami communities. They belong to a broader international tendency to use feature film to convey and (re)construct indigenous peoples' culture, identity, and history. Several such "indigenous films" promote spirituality as a marker of indigenous groups' ethnic and cultural particularity.

Stein R. Mathisen, in chapter 10, "Contextualizing Exhibited Versions of Sámi Noaidevuohta," investigates and contextualizes attempts to display Sami shamanism—the Sami shaman's drum (*goavddis*) being the most central exhibit, in museums, exhibitions, and other similar touristic displays. Mathisen further discusses how these versions relate to colonizing histories, aesthetic valorizations, and (ethno) political considerations, and not least how they connect to other prevailing (but conflicting) narratives of Sami religion, culture, and identity.

Chapter 11, by Trude Fonneland, "The Festival Isogaisa: Neoshamanism in New Arenas," examines stories, products, and services that take shape as a Sami shaman festival opens its doors to the public for the first time. Fonneland asks what



is included and what is excluded in the marketing of Isogaisa as an attractive happening. She further explores the role the past and Sami pre-Christian religion play in the production of the festival experience, and examines how what is distinctly local at Isogaisa is highlighted on the basis of global structures and organizations to create interest in a chosen product at a specific destination.

Finally, in chapter 12, Siv Ellen Kraft explores the relationship between music and shamanism through a case study of Mari Boine, a leading world music artist and one of Norway's most influential musicians. Titled "Mari Boine—World Music, Shamanism and Indigenous Soundscapes," the chapter explores Boine's connections to the neoshamanistic field and to notions of "indigenous music," as well as the shamanistic content of her texts and performances. A primary argument is that Boine has contributed to a cultural heritage-style version of shamanism, and has helped soften resistance toward shamanism in Sami circles.

## **5. Sweden:**

**"Sweden," Arctic Council** [101] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/sweden/>

### Overview:

The two northernmost counties, Västerbotten and Norrbotten, are defined as Sweden's Arctic territory. This region represents about one-third of Sweden's territory, but is populated with just over half of a million inhabitants – more sparsely populated than the southern parts of the country.

Sweden places a great emphasis on climate-related research in the Arctic. As a result of long measurement series, in some cases up to one hundred years, Sweden has contributed to greater global understanding of climate change. Northern Sweden is home to research stations in Abisko and Tarfala as well as the EISCAT12 scatter radar facility in Kiruna. Access to these modern logistics platforms is crucial for environmental research. The Abisko Scientific Research Station administrates, coordinates and performs experiments and tests for researchers from all over the world. An extensive environmental monitoring program on temperature, precipitation, ice-thaw, flora and fauna in the local area has been in progress there for nearly 100 years. The Tarfala Research Station, located in the Kebnekaise mountains, conducts basic research, glacier monitoring, meteorological and hydrological analyses, snow chemistry and permafrost studies.

Efficient ice-breaking operations are required to promote maritime safety and improve accessibility in frozen waters. Sweden possesses leading expertise as regards shipping in Arctic conditions. Swedish icebreakers are able to support increasing commercial shipping in the Arctic as well as help with both the monitoring of the vulnerable marine environment and also Arctic research. In 2011 Sweden adopted a strategy on the Arctic region, where it promotes economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development.

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Indigenous Peoples**

The Saami are an Indigenous people who live in an area that stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Estimates of the Saami population vary between 50,000 and 80,000, with around 20,000 to 50,000 living in Sweden. In the Arctic region, Sweden strives to ensure that Indigenous peoples have greater scope for preserving and developing their identity, culture and traditional industries and facilitate their traditional knowledge gathering and transfer.

**“Sweden’s Arctic Strategy: An Overview,” Nima Khorrami, The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 16 April 2019 [102]**

<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/sweden-arctic-strategy-overview/>

### Overview:

This article provides an overview of Sweden’s Arctic strategy and is in parts based on the author’s own discussions with Swedish officials.

To Sweden, the Arctic is both a matter of domestic politics and foreign policy. Any attempt at understanding Stockholm’s approach towards its own Arctic region as well as the wider Arctic, therefore, must take into account not only its foreign policy priorities but also its domestic needs and sensitivity to various social, political, environmental, and economic developments that are taking place at an accelerating rate including, among other things, the possibility of an oil leak due to an accident on the sea or at an exploration site and its potential impact on the Arctic’s fragile environment, biodiversity, and its indigenous people. Nonetheless, Sweden’s concerns with regard to the future trajectory of the region on both fronts share a large number of important similarities including effective and inclusive governance, environmental protection, peace and security, and sustainable economic growth.

This article is the first in a series of five exploring and explaining Sweden’s Arctic policy. The objective is to provide a general overview of and/or guideline on the country’s Arctic strategy as stipulated within the larger framework of its foreign and domestic policy making. Future papers will then shed light on and delve deeper into some of the more specific issues touched upon in this article. These include a survey of Swedish businesses in the Arctic and how they are contributing to the economic development of the region; Stockholm’s approach towards a common Arctic policy at the European level; a critical analysis of Sweden’s military neutrality in the High North and whether or not it can keep this position in the long run; and Stockholm’s preferred role for the Nordic Cooperation and Nordic Defence Cooperation in the Scandinavian Arctic.

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Indigenous People – Sami**

Sweden recognized the Sami as an indigenous people in 1977 and hence they enjoy, at least on paper, special privileges and protection under Swedish law. However, prejudices are still prevalent in both the Swedish popular culture and day-to-day practices to the point that the Swedish Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination has admitted the persistence of racist characteristics of the Swedish Sami policy. As a result, Sweden has been the subject of frequent “international criticism for its handling of Sami questions”.

Swedish authorities’ interaction with the Sami dates back to the 14th century when the Crown began colonizing Norrland. A process of taxation was subsequently introduced and intensified in the following centuries, as the Crown began to eye the riches of Lappmark. When the first silver deposit was discovered in Nasafjäll in the 1630s, the Swedish state tightened its hold over Sami affairs even further and embarked upon a forced assimilation process by encouraging mass migration from the south to Sami lands in the north of the country. By the 18th century, the settlers had gradually forced the Sami out and the state had begun to build churches as yet another means of forced integration, promoting its own religion at the expense of the Sami’s. Given the economic importance of the region as a main source of income for the state, the Crown favored the settlers in terms of land ownership.

Current Swedish Sami policy has its roots in the outdated Reindeer Grazing Act of 1928, which “created a basis and a kind of truth for its description of who are to be considered genuine Sami”, assigning the reindeer herding Sami “a special entitlement to that industry and the right to hunt, fish and use the forest on crown land.” However, this classification institutionalized a very narrow and limited definition of who is Sami and therefore paved the ground for further discrimination by giving the state the right to define who is and who is not considered Sami and thus eligible to certain privileges. This discriminatory act is still in practice today, albeit not with the same intensity and force. In conclusion, “[T]he Sami in Sweden have hence been denied the rights that international law grants them as an indigenous people”.

Today, the Sami Parliament, established in 1993, lacks real political power, has no financial teeth, and thus is a weak institution compared to its counterparts in other Scandinavian countries. In fact, prominent scholars of the subject, such as Ulf Mörkenstam from Stockholm University, claim that giving the Sami of Sweden real political power has never been seriously considered by Swedish authorities and that its Parliament is a lame duck institution incapable of doing anything meaningful to ensure the political, economic, and cultural rights of the Sami.<sup>19)</sup> Given the current state of affairs as well as the long history of discrimination, it is no surprise that there is a lack of goodwill towards the Stockholm amongst the Sami, who are an integral part of Sweden’s Arctic region. As such, it seems that the Sami constitute the weakest link in Sweden’s domestic Arctic policy. The good news for Sweden is that the largest Sami population outside Sweden lives in Norway, a close ally, and that its own Sami population is immune from foreign meddling. Had Russia had a sizable

Sami population of its own, it is not far-fetched to assume that Stockholm might have felt the need to address, and indeed compensate for, its past mistakes much more urgently. Still, it is in Stockholm's best interest to strive for devising policies aimed at addressing past injustices, especially if it is to realize the full potential of its Arctic mineral resources, which will not be possible with intense opposition from the Sami.

**“Sweden: People,” The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [103] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/sweden/>**

#### Overview:

Of Sweden's total population, only 5.4% live in the Arctic. With an average age of 41 in the north, Sweden is the second oldest arctic nation, and has seen a moderate decline of population since 2000 that is projected to continue. A testament to the internationalization of place and population in the 21st Century Arctic, each year just over 50,000 seasonal migrant workers from Asia and Eastern Europe are provided temporary work permits for berry picking.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Of all residents in the North, an estimated 17,000 to 20,000 are Sámi, an indigenous Finno-Ugric group that speaks the official minority language of Sámi. Sámi country, known as Sápmi, stretches across the northern parts of Scandinavia and Russia's Kola Peninsula. The Sámi were originally nomads, living in tents during the summer and more sturdy peat huts during the colder seasons. Nowadays Sámi live in modern housing and only use tents as temporary accommodations during reindeer migrations if they do not already own cottages. Oral storytelling and Sámi music have a central role in traditional culture. Yoiking, a distinctive form of singing to recall events, people, and nature, is a core part of this tradition. Today Sámi are able to choose between attending government Sámi schools or regular municipal nine-year compulsory schools, where they can also receive instruction in Sámi. The aim of Sámi education in Sweden is to give the children the same instruction that Swedish children receive in the compulsory school while providing them with schooling that takes into account their own linguistic and cultural background.

Traditionally, their best-known means of livelihood is reindeer herding to provide meat, fur, and transportation. About 10% of Sámi today are connected to reindeer herding. For centuries the Sámi faced discrimination throughout the Nordic countries, often resulting in disputes over grazing rights and logging territories. Since the 1970s and 1980s, however, the Sámi in Sweden have steadily gained special protections and rights. This relative increase in their rights to their land and how it is used reached new height in January 2020 when the Supreme Court of Sweden voted against the government and gave Sámis exclusive rights to hunting and fishing across a swathe of Arctic Sweden

**“The Arctic Part of Sweden,” Tor Kjolberg, Daily Scandinavian, 1 July 2020 [104]**  
<https://www.dailyscandinavian.com/the-arctic-part-of-sweden/>

### Overview:

The organization Swedish Lapland aims to support the traditional Sami way of life while protecting the fragile ecosystem that they inhabit.

The Arctic part of Sweden is located seriously remote. Located on the far northernmost edge of Europe, the region is seriously remote – even for other Swedes. Gothenburg is as close to Munich as it is to Luleå, the region’s gateway city. Known as “Europe’s Alaska”, its landscape is characterized by great swatches of pine, spruce and fir, berry carpeted tundra, white water rivers, teeming with salmon, and rustic lakeside villages. It’s a land where the brown bear and lynx, wolf and wolverine still roam free.

### Current & Relevant Information:

As the only indigenous people in the European Union, the Sami are a geographical anomaly. Their history dates back thousands of years, and Sápmi, as they call their cultural homeland, today spans the borders of Arctic Sweden, Finland, Norway and Russia. There is no census for the Sami, but the current population is estimated to number 80,000, with around 20,000 living in Swedish Lapland, together with 300,000 reindeer.

### **Nomadic reindeer herders**

Traditionally, Sami have been nomadic reindeer herders, but life has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. While 900 Sami are still actively involved in herding, divided among 51 Sami communities, each of which has its own grazing rights, many more are now involved in tourism, food production or other rural activities.

There’s less work for the villagers, promoting many youngsters to head for the city to find employment. The Rewilding Lapland Organization is now working to help select Sami communities preserve their culture of reindeer husbandry by protecting critical grazing land, easing seasonal migration routes and developing various opportunities for Sami-focused tourism.

### **A unique blend of untamed nature and cultural heritage**

Swedish Lapland – Sápmi – is a unique blend of untamed nature and cultural heritage. Here old-growth forests, mountains, glaciers, free-flowing rivers and extensive wetlands co-exist with the indigenous Sami community since millennia. There is no other place in continental Europe with such vast, uninhabited, road-less and original landscapes as Swedish Lapland. The composition of fauna and flora is still largely intact and the functioning of ecosystems unaltered. Here, the large-scale reindeer migration and largely intact river systems shape the ecology and the

landscape as well as people's lives. However, even under such pristine conditions, there are threats and needs to ensure that the uniqueness of the land remains and that some lost components are brought back.

**“Sweden,” Lennart T. Norman, Britannica, 15 May 2022 [105]**  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Sweden>

#### Overview:

Sweden, country located on the Scandinavian Peninsula in northern Europe. The name Sweden was derived from the Svear, or Suiones, a people mentioned as early as 98 CE by the Roman author Tacitus. The country's ancient name was Svithiod. Stockholm has been the permanent capital since 1523.

Sweden occupies the greater part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, which it shares with Norway. The land slopes gently from the high mountains along the Norwegian frontier eastward to the Baltic Sea. Geologically, it is one of the oldest and most stable parts of the Earth's crust. Its surface formations and soils were altered by the receding glaciers of the Pleistocene Epoch (about 2,600,000 to 11,700 years ago). Lakes dot the fairly flat landscape, and thousands of islands form archipelagoes along more than 1,300 miles (2,100 km) of jagged, rocky coastline. Like all of northwestern Europe, Sweden has a generally favorable climate relative to its northerly latitude owing to moderate southwesterly winds and the warm North Atlantic Current.

The country has a 1,000-year-long continuous history as a sovereign state, but its territorial expanse changed often until 1809. Today it is a constitutional monarchy with a well-established parliamentary democracy that dates from 1917. Swedish society is ethnically and religiously very homogeneous, although recent immigration has created some social diversity. Historically, Sweden rose from backwardness and poverty into a highly developed postindustrial society and advanced welfare state with a standard of living and life expectancy that rank among the highest in the world.

Sweden long ago disavowed the military aggressiveness that once involved its armies deeply in Europe's centuries of dynastic warfare. It has chosen instead to play a balancing role among the world's conflicting ideological and political systems. It is for this reason that Swedish statesmen have often been sought out to fill major positions in the United Nations. At peace since 1814, Sweden has followed the doctrine, enunciated in every document on foreign policy since World War II, of “nonalignment in peace aiming at neutrality in war.”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Climate of Sweden**

About 15 percent of the country lies within the Arctic Circle. From about late May until mid-July, sunlight lasts around the clock north of the Arctic Circle, but, even as far south as Stockholm, the nights during this period have only a few hours of semidarkness. In mid-December, on the other hand, Stockholm experiences only about 5.5 hours of daylight; in areas as far north as Lappland, there are nearly 20 hours of total darkness relieved by a mere 4 hours of twilight.

### **Ethnic groups**

Although different groups of immigrants have influenced Swedish culture through the centuries, the population historically has been unusually homogeneous in ethnic stock, language, and religion. It is only since World War II that notable change has occurred in the ethnic pattern. From 1970 to the early 1990s, net immigration accounted for about three-fourths of the population growth. By far, most of the immigrants came from the neighboring Nordic countries, with which Sweden shares a common labor market.

In the 1980s Sweden began to receive an increasing number of asylum seekers from Asian and African countries such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, Eritrea, and Somalia, as well as from Latin American countries that were suffering under repressive governments. Then from 2010 to 2014 the number of people seeking asylum in Sweden expanded dramatically, reaching more than 80,000 in 2014, and that number doubled to more than 160,000 in 2015. Many of these people were fleeing the Syrian Civil War. From the beginning of that conflict, Sweden had granted residency to any Syrian seeking asylum (some 70,000 in total). Thus, by 2016 one in six Swedish residents had been born outside the country, and Sweden, feeling the strain of the mass influx of migrants, enacted new and more stringent immigration restrictions.

Sweden has two minority groups of indigenous inhabitants: the Finnish-speaking people of the northeast along the Finnish border, and the Sami (Lapp) population of about 15,000 scattered throughout the northern Swedish interior. Once a hunting and fishing people, the latter group developed a reindeer-herding system that they still operate. Most of the Sami in Sweden have other occupations as well.

**“In Sweden's Arctic, global warming threatens reindeer herds,” David Keyton, Phys.org, 10 December 2019 [106] <https://phys.org/news/2019-12-sweden-arctic-global-threatens-reindeer.html>**

#### Overview:

Thick reindeer fur boots and a fur hat covering most of his face shielded Niila Inga from minus 20-degree Celsius (minus 4-degree Fahrenheit) winds as he raced his snowmobile up to a mountain top overlooking his reindeer in the Swedish arctic.

His community herds about 8,000 reindeer year-round, moving them between traditional grazing grounds in the high mountains bordering Norway in the summer

and the forests farther east in the winter, just as his forebears in the Sami indigenous community have for generations.

But Inga is troubled: His reindeer are hungry, and he can do little about it. Climate change is altering weather patterns here and affecting the herd's food supply.

"If we don't find better areas for them where they can graze and find food, then the reindeers will starve to death," he said.

Already pressured by the mining and forestry industry, and other development that encroach on grazing land, Sami herding communities fear climate change could mean the end of their traditional lifestyle.

Slipping his hand from a massive reindeer skin mitten, Inga illustrated the problem, plunging his hand into the crusted snow and pulling out a hard piece of ice close to the soil.

Unusually early snowfall in autumn was followed by rain that froze, trapping food under a thick layer of ice. Unable to eat, the hungry animals have scattered from their traditional migration routes in search of new grazing grounds.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the globe. Measurements by the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute show the country has warmed 1.64 degrees Celsius (2.95-degree Fahrenheit) compared with pre-industrial times. In Sweden's alpine region, this increase is even greater, with average winter temperatures between 1991 and 2017 up more than 3 degrees Celsius (5.4-degree Fahrenheit) compared with the 1961-1990 average.

Snowfall is common in these areas, but as temperatures increase, occasional rainfall occurs—and 'rain-on-snow' events are having devastating effects. The food is still there, but the reindeer can't reach it. The animals grow weaker and females sometimes abort their calves while the survivors struggle to make it through the winter.

"We have winter here for eight months a year and when it starts in October with bad grazing conditions it won't get any better," Inga said.

That is devastating to Sami herders, a once-nomadic people scattered across a region that spans the far north of Sweden, Norway, Finland and the northwestern corner of Russia. Until the 1960s, this indigenous minority were discouraged from reindeer herding and their language and culture were suppressed. Today, of the 70,000 Sami, only about 10% herd reindeer, making a limited income from meat, hides and antlers crafted into knife handles.



**“Hunting in the Arctic Circle - The Sami vs the Swedish State,” DW.com, 15 March 2021 [107] <https://www.dw.com/en/hunting-in-the-arctic-circle-the-sami-vs-the-swedish-state/av-56880844>**

Overview:

Who owns the land of the reindeer? The indigenous Sami people? Or all Swedish people? The decision of the country’s top court to award exclusive hunting and fishing rights to Sami in one 19-mile strip of land has prompted an outcry.

Current & Relevant Information:

For the Sami people, the Supreme Court ruling was an historic moment - the culmination of a decade-long legal battle. Yet it is one that has sparked outrage among some non-indigenous hunters and anglers. Sweden’s top judges conferred exclusive fishing and small game hunting rights to the Sami in the village of Girjas Sameby, persuaded by their argument that Sami people had been hunting, fishing and grazing reindeer here since time immemorial until the Swedish state came and took away more and more land.

Some 20,000 to 40,000 Sami people live in Sweden. Almost 5,000 own reindeer, including Ylva Sarri’s family. She hails the judgement, arguing that the Swedish hunters frighten the reindeer with their dogs and hinder the Sami’s work. The indigenous people regularly capture and slaughter the animals to sell their meat and hides. Joachim Almgren is one of Sweden’s 300,000 hunters who fears the ruling will greatly restrict his hunting opportunities. Both hunting and fishing are very popular leisure activities in Sweden. There are fears other Sami communities could follow the example of Girjas Sameby and take their cases to court. The long-simmering conflict now threatens to escalate. What is more important: the wellbeing of the reindeer and the livelihoods of the Sami people, or the Swedish people’s right to hunt?

**“Lapland,” Britannica, 1 December 2017 [108] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lapland>**

Overview:

Lapland, Sami Sápmi, Finnish Lapi or Lappi, Swedish Lappland, region of northern Europe largely within the Arctic Circle, stretching across northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland and into the Kola Peninsula of Russia. It is bounded by the Norwegian Sea on the west, the Barents Sea on the north, and the White Sea on the east. Lapland, the conventional name for the region, is derived from Lapp, the name Scandinavians ascribed to the Sami people, who have sparsely inhabited the region for several thousand years. Today the Sami consider Lapp to be a derogatory term. They call the region Sápmi. Lapland straddles several national borders and does not exist as any unified administrative entity.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Lapland is a region of great topographical variety. To the west it embraces the northern part of the Kolen Mountains, which reach elevations of more than 6,500 feet (2,000 meters). On its Norwegian (western) side this range slopes abruptly and is deeply eroded into fjords and headlands and fractured into archipelagoes. The eastern flank of the range, which is situated in **Swedish Lapland (see [Lapland](#))**, slopes more gradually into a broad piedmont studded with large, fingerlike lakes that feed the rivers flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia. Farther to the east, Finnish Lapland (Lappi) is a relatively low-lying region with many bogs and small lakes.

Norwegian Lapland is largely open and windswept, with timber growth only in sheltered tracts and the more protected interior. Southern and central Lapland occupies the zone of the taiga, or swampy coniferous forest, with its saturated land and many bogs and swamps. Forests of pine and spruce give way to the dwarf birch, heath, and lichens of the tundra farther north and at higher elevations.

Many of the Sami have adopted a sedentary life and intermarried with Scandinavians and Finns. The region is still home to several hundred thousand reindeer, but the traditional reindeer country has been intruded upon by permanent farming, forestry, mining, and hydroelectric and even industrial enterprises. Those who practice reindeer herding have liberty of movement across the open boundaries of Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

### A. Family:

**“In Sweden, Men Can Have It All,”** Katrin Bennhold, [dickkesslerphd.com](http://dickkesslerphd.com), 9 June 2010 [109] <https://dickkesslerphd.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sweden-Family-Leave.pdf>

### Overview:

Mikael Karlsson owns a snowmobile, two hunting dogs and five guns. In his spare time, this soldier-turned-game warden shoots moose and trades potty-training tips with other fathers. Cradling 2-month-old Siri in his arms, he can't imagine not taking baby leave. "Everyone does." From trendy central Stockholm to this village in the rugged forest south of the Arctic Circle, 85 percent of Swedish fathers take parental leave. Those who don't face questions from family, friends and colleagues.

### Current & Relevant Information:

As other countries still tinker with maternity leave and women's rights, Sweden may be a glimpse of the future. In this land of Viking lore, men are at the heart of the gender-equality debate. The ponytailed center-right finance minister calls himself a feminist, ads for cleaning products rarely feature women as homemakers, and preschools vet books for gender stereotypes in animal characters. For nearly four

decades, governments of all political hues have legislated to give women equal rights at work — and men equal rights at home. Swedish mothers still take more time off with children — almost four times as much. And some who thought they wanted their men to help raise baby now find themselves coveting more time at home. But laws reserving at least two months of the generously paid, 13-month parental leave exclusively for fathers — a quota that could well double after the September election — have set off profound social change. Companies have come to expect employees to take leave irrespective of gender, and not to penalize fathers at promotion time. Women’s paychecks are benefiting and the shift in fathers’ roles is perceived as playing a part in lower divorce rates and increasing joint custody of children. In perhaps the most striking example of social engineering, a new definition of masculinity is emerging. “Many men no longer want to be identified just by their jobs,” said Bengt Westerberg, who long opposed quotas but as deputy prime minister phased in a first month of paternity leave in 1995. “Many women now expect their husbands to take at least some time off with the children.” Birgitta Ohlsson, European affairs minister, put it this way: “Machos with dinosaur values don’t make the top-10 lists of attractive men in women’s magazines anymore.” Ms. Ohlsson, who has lobbied European Union governments to pay more attention to fathers, is eight months pregnant, and her husband, a law professor, will take the leave when their child is born. “Now men can have it all — a successful career and being a responsible daddy,” she added. “It’s a new kind of manly. It’s more wholesome.”

**“Chapter 9: Gender Equality and Governance in Arctic Swedish Fisheries and Reindeer Herding,” Maria Udén, Gender, Culture, and Northern Fisheries, 2009**

[110] [https://www.uap.ualberta.ca/book-images/Open%20Access/9781772121780\\_WEB.pdf#page=182](https://www.uap.ualberta.ca/book-images/Open%20Access/9781772121780_WEB.pdf#page=182)

Abstract:

This chapter discusses women’s situation in fisheries and reindeer herding in Arctic Sweden in relation to the governance of these activities. From a gender equality perspective, there are discouraging similarities between these two industries; similarities which distinguish them from the general picture of gender equality in Sweden today. The author’s interest in the subject stems from insights gained in two research projects located in Sweden’s northernmost region, Norrbotten County. The chapter describes local circumstances in some rural communities in an Arctic region, but ultimately addresses challenges at the national level as fisheries, reindeer herding and gender equality are nationally governed.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

This chapter draws together a description of women’s situations in Arctic Swedish fisheries on the one hand, and an account of how gender is regarded in the sector’s

public governance on the other, with corresponding descriptions from another small scale traditionally-based industry in the Swedish Arctic, namely reindeer herding. The incentive for preparing a dual analysis of this kind stems from insights gained in two different research projects; one on women in reindeer herding and another on women in fisheries. The first (2001-2003) was initiated by women reindeer herders in Sirges, a Sámi village in Norrbotten County, Sweden. The project examined social patterns and reviewed the technical modernization of reindeer herding, in order to support an increase of women's representation as reindeer herders. The second was part of an Arctic Council initiative on women in Arctic fisheries (2003-2004), and in this, women's situation in the coastal fisheries of Norrbotten County was portrayed (Udén 2003, 2004). Both of these projects were thus located in the same geographic region and administrative unit of Norrbotten County in Northern Sweden. However, I do not focus on the regional level. Fisheries, reindeer herding and gender equality are all nationally governed in Sweden and the ethos in matters of gender equality and women's rights is coupled to Sweden as a nation. Thus, my discussion ultimately addresses challenges at the national level.

In Sweden, as in most other countries, women's access to political influence, in other words, political power, is generally considered a cornerstone for gender equality. Even if Sweden was not among the very first nations taking the historical step to introduce equal rights to vote for women and men, Sweden is currently recognized as one of the leading nations in terms of gender equality. For instance, the present Parliament of Sweden (Riksdagen) consists of 45% women and the national government is made up of eleven women and nine men (2004). The second cornerstone of the Swedish gender equality policy is the right of women to gainful employment. Swedish economic and labor market policies of the twentieth century have gradually abandoned the male breadwinner model in favor of a dual breadwinner model. The state has thus engaged in advancing women's integration in the labor market through extended welfare rights and services (Mósesdóttir 2001).

At present, the concept of power and influence, together with conditions for gainful employment, continue to be prioritized gender equality issues, as evidenced by the Swedish Government in their gender equality policy for the current electoral period. The government's list of priorities in this area of politics includes some recently added issues such as the sexualization of the public sphere (i.e., the manner in which women's bodies and sexuality are exposed and exploited in mass media, advertising, pornography etc.), but critical issues remain equal access to positions of power and influence and equal pay for equal work and work of equal value (Swedish Government Office 2002:5-6). It is also evident that the concept of gender equality has broadened, for example, it now includes gender representation and balance on the boards of public and private businesses. As the dual breadwinner model has taken precedence in Sweden, a woman is no longer primarily identified according to her marital status as was the case well into the twentieth century. For instance, the income of married couples used to be taxed as one unit in a manner which made

two incomes redundant, but, in 1971, the income tax for married couples became individually determined. The widow's pension, which compensated for a loss of a deceased husband's/breadwinner's support, was formerly included in the Swedish public pension system, but the range of this pension was limited from 1989 onward (Clayhills 1991; Kyle 1987).

## **Conclusion**

According to current Swedish policies, adults are expected to earn their own income and have equal opportunities to participate in political processes. Gendered structures in Arctic fisheries and reindeer herding contradict national gender equality goals of "equal access to positions of power and influence" and "equal pay for equal work and work of equal value." The application (or lack thereof) of these concepts has been examined in relation to the household model. But what does the significance given to the household concept and the gendered organization of labor within the fisheries and reindeer herding households really imply? We see how Sámi women organize to speak about their rights and how male fishers encourage women to enter this profession. Additionally, in comparing the two industries, we must remember that reindeer herding is an exclusive Sámi right in Sweden while fisheries is not distinguished on ethnic grounds. Fisheries and reindeer herding are maintained by two different groups with a different cultural history and they also inhabit varying geographical areas. The results put forth in this chapter shows that official doubts regarding women's abilities are not necessarily shared by the fishers and reindeer herders themselves, and that preconceptions regarding the family economy that is expressed in legislation is often not reflected at the household level.

**"Gender Challenges & Human Capital in the Arctic," Kathleen Lahey, Eva-Maria Svensson, and Åsa Gunnarsson, Arctic Yearbook, 2014 [111]**

[https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2014/Scholarly\\_Papers/9.Lahey.pdf](https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2014/Scholarly_Papers/9.Lahey.pdf)

### Abstract:

This paper brings critical gender perspectives to the interrogation of northern human capital discourses, most of which tend to deploy gender-neutral concepts in analyzing productive capacities to perform labor and produce measurable economic value. From gendered and Indigenous perspectives, this concept of human capital excludes unpaid work relating to social reproduction, human welfare, and subsistence or in-kind production, as well as the value of traditional and indigenous knowledges and processes. In Arctic/northern contexts, burgeoning interest in industrialized resource extraction, transportation, and fisheries affects labor market sectors mainly occupying men, and, not surprisingly, risks intensifying the social, economic, and political marginalization of women and Indigenous peoples.

As members of the TUAQ Arctic Gender Equality Network, the authors approach these issues from governance perspectives, noting that despite state obligations to mainstream gender issues in policy development and to respect Indigenous rights

under domestic and international agreements, women's and indigenous peoples' voices are largely absent from discussions of the economic, environmental, and human development policies that shape human engagement in relation to the north. This paper outlines governance gaps, gender and indigenous women's inequalities, and economic imbalances that flow from this situation. The paper concludes with an analysis of how the costs and losses of the 'paradox of plenty' borne by women, indigenous, and northern communities can be reversed, and calls on multilateral governance bodies to take firm steps to implement these measures.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Gender Equality, Indigenous Peoples, and Circumpolar Governance Issues**

The Arctic has become increasingly important because of the many climate, economic, social, and legal changes affecting the peoples living in this region, and because of the increased focus on the energy, mineral, transportation, environmental, and security implications of circumpolar economic development. While several international organizations have been founded to support research, policy analysis, and development in this region, few gender and indigenous issues have been integrated into consideration of substantive economic, social, governance, or fiscal policies that have been implemented to date.

The marginalization of gender and indigenous issues in (post-)neoliberal policy discourses is accomplished by subsuming gender equality and indigenous rights within the language of economic rationality and ongoing fiscal austerity (Oksala 2013: 37), and by enveloping gender-related claims in economic projects such as social investment in human capital, seemingly universalist concepts that quickly erase the specificities of indigenous and gender identities (Kuokkanen 2012: 226; Jenson 2009: 467). The comparative research carried on by networks based in Tromsø, Norway, Umeå, Sweden, Arkhangelsk, Russia, and Kingston, Canada universities (TUAQ) counters those approaches by identifying barriers to equality faced by women living in Arctic and northern regions, all of which are affected by the lack of domestic and international governance structures capable of addressing issues of sex/gender equality and indigenous rights effectively.

### **Conclusion**

As circumpolar states empower the Arctic Council and other regional governance bodies to take on increased leadership roles, it is urgent that they take three crucial steps toward fulfilling their responsibilities:

- Ensure that membership in such bodies secures equal representation and participation for women and Indigenous peoples, to be chosen via non-governmental civil society organizations;
- Make binding commitments to using governance authority via multilateral treaties to require state members to secure gender and Indigenous women's

equality in all laws, practices, and programs as required by the ICCPR, CEDAW, and other human rights treaties, and implemented consistent with the Beijing Platform for Action; and

- Make binding commitments to using governance authority via multilateral treaties to prioritize environmentally sustainable resource and economic development combined with use of resource revenues to fund investment in durable forms of human development and physical capital.

**“Climate Change and Displacement for Indigenous Communities in Arctic Scandinavia,” Ilan Kelman and Marius Warg Næss, Brookings-LSE: Project on Internal Displacement, 30 January 2013 [112]**

<https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/510a3eee2.pdf>

Summary:

This paper explores anthropogenic climate change influencing displacement/migration for the Saami in Finland, Norway and Sweden near or above the Arctic Circle. Norway plays a large role throughout this discussion because (i) most residents in Arctic Scandinavia live in Norway, (ii) most indigenous peoples in Arctic Scandinavia live in Norway, and (iii) Norway is the only country of the three which has Arctic coastline.

The Saami have inhabited Scandinavia since the first human arrivals in the region as the glaciers retreated from the last ice age. Today, the Saami number approximately 50,000-100,000, although no formal censuses based on ethnicity exist. This means that defining who is Saami for statistical purposes is not always straightforward and often refers to those either speaking or having ancestors who spoke the Saami language.

Approximately 50-60 percent of the Saami live in Norway, 30-40 percent in Sweden, 10 percent in Finland, and under 4 percent in Russia. While the Saami inhabit almost all of Arctic Scandinavia, they are not exclusively an Arctic people, with their ranges extending as far south as approximately 62°N along the Norway-Sweden border. As rough estimates, approximately 900,000 people inhabit Arctic Scandinavia of whom perhaps 50,000-90,000 are Saami.

Saami are frequently associated with reindeer husbandry as a livelihood, but currently only around 10 percent of Saami are currently actively involved in it (Josefsen, 2010). Migration has long been a way of life in Arctic Scandinavia and the Saami reindeer herders have been nomadic or semi-nomadic for centuries. Mobility is central to the nomadic reindeer herding practiced by many Saami, but artificial boundaries such as private property, roads, and railways can inhibit the needs and routes of traditional mobility. It should also be noted that non-Saami migrated into the region over millennia and indigenous and non-indigenous peoples from around the world continue to migrate into the region.

In Norway, national policy (Government of Norway, 2009b) further supports people living throughout the country by providing financial incentives and supporting public services. For example, during the 1970s, most of the reindeer herders had moved into modern houses in central areas in the northernmost county of Finnmark due to official policies. The policy requiring nine years of schooling for children also made it impossible for whole families to live close to their herds year-round (Riseth and Vatn, 2009). Government policies made it possible for reindeer herders to attain a so-called “modern” standard of living in Norway (Nilsen and Mosli, 1994; Riseth and Vatn, 2009) which consequently changed their migratory lifestyle.

As largely rural areas, Arctic Scandinavia in all three countries experiences significant levels of outmigration. In particular young people often leave the region in search of education, larger settlements, or more varied livelihoods. Migration is often initially seen as temporary (for example, for university or independent travel) but may become long-term or permanent.

In fact, migration in Arctic Scandinavia displays all forms found in the mobility literature, including: in-migration, out-migration, and circular migration; and both temporary and permanent migration. Migration within the region also occurs, with people from one Arctic Scandinavian settlement easily moving to another for family or livelihood reasons, irrespective of national boundaries, facilitated by the fact that Scandinavians are permitted to live and work in other Scandinavian countries.

### **Climate Change in Arctic Scandinavia**

The impact of climate change is expected to occur both sooner and more intensely in high latitudes than in other locations (ACIA, 2005; IPCC, 2007; Tebaldi et al., 2006). After surveying the many changes expected in the region, AMAP (2011, pp. 9-12) concludes that “everyone who lives, works or does business in the Arctic will need to adapt to changes in the cryosphere. Adaptation also requires leadership from governments and international bodies, and increased investment in infrastructure... There remains a great deal of uncertainty about how fast the Arctic cryosphere will change in the future and what the ultimate impacts of the changes will be.”

Precipitation rates across Scandinavia, particularly in the form of rain, are expected to increase overall (Engen-Skaugen et al., 2008; Hanssen-Bauer, 2009). That increases the likelihood of floods while decreasing the likelihood of forest fires (Flannigan et al., 1998). Landslides and rockfalls are likely to increase in frequency for the first few decades due to increased ground instability from saturation. Climate change is expected to have particular effects in coastal locations as a result of decreasing sea ice, melting permafrost, and more unpredictability in weather. In addition to sea-level rise, storms will impact Arctic coastal areas. Along Norway’s North Sea coast, climate change is expected to lead to noticeable increases in wind speed, wave height, and storminess.



## **Effects of Climate Change on Migration**

### *Environmental Influences*

During summer, reindeer subsist mostly on herbs and grasses which are found most commonly in mountain areas as are spring and fall pastures (Riseth and Vatn, 2009). With climate change projected to increase precipitation across Arctic Scandinavia, biological productivity might increase in spring, fall, and summer, but that productivity could be tempered by increased ground saturation and higher humidity, suggesting the possibility for more mold, fungus, and invasive species that thrive in a warmer climate.

The most important diet for reindeer during the winter is ground lichens which are commonly found in relatively dry continental areas (Riseth and Vatn, 2009). The rapidly shifting warm and cold periods during the winter resulting from climate change, coupled with a year-round increase in precipitation intensity, is projected to result in increased frequency of wet weather, deep snow, and ice crust formation with negative consequences for reindeer grazing during the winter (e.g., Solberg et al., 2001). The capacity of winter grazing areas tends to determine the maximum possible reindeer herd size which suggests that climate change affecting winter temperatures could be a factor in reducing maximum viable herd numbers. The environmental changes affect reindeer predators too. In Norway, reindeer herders receive compensation for reindeer lost to predators considered to be threatened (Government of Norway, 2001). The impacts of climate change on predators could be multi-faceted.

However, the impact of all of these factors on migration is likely to be limited simply because non-climate factors are much more important in influencing decisions about investments in reindeer herding. Attempting to assess the impact of climate change on this complex relationship between reindeer herding, predators, and predation compensation is difficult. Aside from reindeer herding, environmental changes occurring on the coast will impact Saami livelihoods. Climate change is projected to increase fish stocks in the Barents Sea while changing species composition and likely making more northern waters suitable for fish farming (Stenevik and Sundby, 2007).

### *Social Influences*

Social structures in Arctic Scandinavia will be affected by climate change, consequently impacting migration decisions. Indigenous activities such as farming, fishing, and reindeer herding have a strong basis of traditional knowledge, including environmental variabilities and trends, since seasons and decadal cycles vary immensely in the Arctic. As the Arctic climate shifts into a new regime – a regime which has not been experienced since human habitation – the relevance of traditional knowledge for future operational decision-making is likely to decrease.

Consequently, traditional knowledge becomes less of an anchor for the Saami to their Arctic environments and to their traditional livelihoods.

Social influences inhibit the prospects for reindeer-herding communities to use mobility as a response to environmental change. In all three Scandinavian countries, the trend has been towards privatizing land, putting up fences or other barriers, and redistributing and fragmenting pastures. As a consequence, while environmental variability is predicted to increase with climate change, the herders' ability to respond is reduced.

Mining exploration promoted by the national governments – for minerals such as gold, copper, and diamonds – has long been a source of conflict with Saami interests and has detrimentally impacted mobility as an adaptation strategy by taking away grazing land and interfering in migration routes (Korsmo, 1996). Forestry is another major area of conflict over land use while offshore oil exploration and extraction is a major initiative in Norway.

The final social influence discussed here is the increased infrastructure maintenance expected in Arctic Scandinavia due to climate change. As permafrost melts and the ground experiences less freezing, infrastructure may require retrofitting. With coastal wave energy expected to increase, coastal infrastructure will be subject to a long-term rise in the battering experienced from the sea, leading to damage from the physical force of waves, coastal erosion, and salt (Haugen and Mattson, 2011).

While the indigenous connection to their environment is being undermined by climate change, this will be one factor among many in their migration decisions – and in the migration decisions of others potentially moving to Arctic Scandinavia to pursue livelihoods.

### *Livelihoods Impacts*

Analysis of the environmental and social influences of climate change on Saami migration in Arctic Scandinavia suggests that climate change itself will have limited impact on migration and is not likely to directly cause displacement. Instead, social and governance structures are influencing livelihoods in such a way that adaptation options are becoming more limited.

The main impact of climate change on migration and Saami livelihoods is not so much migration out from the Arctic, i.e., abandoning traditional livelihoods because of climate change, but migration into the Arctic from non-Saami who are seeking to pursue livelihoods in the Arctic. In particular, the increased emphasis on resource extraction will bring major changes to Arctic Scandinavia.

### *Indigenous Communities*

The reactions of Saami to the potential effects of climate change on livelihoods and migration have taken different forms. There has been a perceived need for strong,

almost militant, advocacy because of the history of the three central governments in ignoring indigenous interests, pursuing assimilation programs and forced displacement, and avoiding acknowledgement of indigenous rights. The Saami have sought to work with other indigenous groups on promoting their rights and interests in the context of climate change. Another program, Many Strong Voices (MSV) “brings together the peoples of the Arctic and Small Island Developing States to meet the challenges of climate change.” MSV is based on the premise that climate change challenges fundamental human rights and should be addressed on that basis.

It should be noted that indigenous views are far from homogenous. The Saami have many disagreements within and among groups, especially over managing change. The reindeer herders have been some of the most proactive Saami in terms of developing and implementing climate change adaptation activities.

### *Indigenous Communities and Governments*

The interaction between Saami and governments for reindeer herding is explored through analysis of some of the principle laws and regulations on reindeer husbandry. Even with climate change as a background over the past few decades, reindeer husbandry in Arctic Scandinavia has experienced far greater changes resulting from management decisions, which are not necessarily negative, but which must be acknowledged within the context of migration decisions (Beach, 2000; Berg, 2008; Bergstrøm, 2005; Bjørklund, 1999, 2004; Paine, 1994; Riseth, 2000; Riseth and Vatn, 2009).

The Saami have made it clear they are deeply concerned about the governmental approaches to managing Arctic Scandinavia under climate change. In 2008, the Saami Parliamentary Council’s President stated at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues that “neither our governments nor the industrial interests seeking exploration of the non-renewable resources on our territories have recognized our right to take part in the governing of and the right to share in the economic benefits of industrial recourses found in our territories” (Olli, 2008).

The issue is not just about resource extraction with or without Saami consent, but also the perception of full and fair consultation so that not only is due process followed, but also that Saami accept that due process has been followed. Similarly, perceptions that resource income is being applied for Saami benefit, and that decisions about resource income are being done in a consultative fashion, are part of ensuring that Arctic Scandinavia gains from the resource extraction expected to increase as a result of climate change.

### **Recommendations**

There are a number of areas where future research is needed, including the impact of subsidies and compensation in Norway on livelihoods and migration decisions.

Although much of the discussion here and in the literature focuses on reindeer herding, there are major gaps in understanding the migration-related decisions of non-reindeer herding Saami. Unlike reindeer herders where seasonal migration is a way of life, seasonal migration has not been extensively used by those pursuing other livelihoods. More work is needed to understand their perspectives on mobility – within and outside of the Arctic.

What actions are needed by communities, governments and other bodies?

Fundamentally, displacement due to climate change is not an inevitable outcome for Arctic Scandinavia. Instead, it is feasible to continue living in the Scandinavian Arctic without major problems, as long as the social support structures and governance regimes recognize the challenge of a changing Arctic and the difficulties that the Saami face. Nonetheless, climate change, the social support structures, and the governance regimes will influence people's decisions with respect to mobility and livelihoods, i.e., migration.

As such, the recommendations here are principally about making Arctic living viable in Scandinavia irrespective of climate change, especially for the Saami. The Saami face many threats and challenges to their livelihoods, but not principally from climate change, even though climate change may be an impetus or trigger for migration decisions.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations divided into categories according to the level of governance which would dominate the implementation: mainly (but not exclusively) local, non-local (mainly national), and joint local and non-local:

1. Mainly (not exclusively) local:

- Education in Arctic schools (and elsewhere around Scandinavia) could include more content on indigenous traditions.
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution could be improved, especially in terms of addressing conflicts between traditional and new livelihoods.
- Local mapping of needs and actions for local climate change adaptation could be carried out in a way that includes both indigenous and non-indigenous perspectives.

2. Mainly (not exclusively) non-local, referring mainly to the national level:

- Land use decisions require significant management and consultation processes.
- More comparative analysis is needed to understand how the Saami reindeer herders can best adapt to climate change, especially through comparisons with pastoralists in other parts of the world. Comparative analysis is also needed to look more deeply into similarities and differences among Norway, Sweden, and Finland as well as the situation of the Russian Saami.

- Arctic infrastructure and social mechanisms (e.g., financial incentives) could be further developed according to the needs of the residents (rather than outside interests) to permit living in the Arctic under climate change while pursuing locally-based livelihoods using traditions together with modern social and technological innovations.
- Existing mechanisms could be used more effectively to address indigenous interests, such as the Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the European Union, and Barents Sea networks.

### 3. Joint local and non-local:

- Improved coordination among all reindeer-related authorities and management mechanisms.
- Coordination and linking of observational networks around the Arctic could be improved, especially to make better use of Saami knowledge.
- Cooperation with Russia could be improved, as well as for other Arctic countries in order to strengthen links between the Saami and other indigenous peoples' networks.

## Conclusions

Change is needed in three overarching directions. First, short-term action with long-term perspectives is needed now. Climate change is occurring, and will continue to occur faster in the Arctic than in other regions. Secondly, full and fair participation of Saami in decisions affecting them should be ensured. Third, the changing demographics of Arctic Scandinavia need to be recognized and addressed, especially with regards to temporary migrants.

By supporting change in these three overarching directions, the impact of climate change on indigenous people in Arctic Scandinavia can be lessened and its impact on migration minimized. Climate change is already occurring and is unlikely to be reversed. The Arctic and the peoples living there will need to deal with its effects. That does not mean abandoning their traditions, livelihoods, or homes. Instead, it means working collaboratively to ensure that indigenous interests are respected and that indigenous needs are met without precluding the involvement of others in the Arctic and without being overwhelmed by climate change.

**“Swedes,” Lena Gerholm, Countries and their Cultures [113]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Swedes.html>

#### Overview:

**Identification.** The origin of the name "Swedes" (svenskar) is swaensker, which means "from Svealand."

**Location.** Sweden is located between 55° and 69° N and 24° E. Sweden lies in northwestern Europe in the Scandinavian Peninsula bounded by Norway in the west,

Finland in the northeast, Denmark in the southwest, the Gulf of Bothnia in the east, the Baltic Sea in the southeast, and the North Sea in the southwest. Sweden's main regions are, from the north, the northern mountain and lake region named Norrland; the lowlands of central Sweden known as Svealand; the low Småland highlands and the plains of Skåne, both areas in Götaland. Sweden has a coastline that is sometimes rocky and consists of large archipelagoes, skärgård. About 15 percent of the country lies within the Arctic Circle, and the climatic differences in the country are substantial. Snow is found in the mountainous regions in the north for approximately eight months out of the year, but in the south only about one month. The waters of the west coast are almost always ice-free, but the northern Baltic is usually ice covered from November to May. The growing period is about three months in the north and eight in the south.

**Demography.** In 1990 the Swedish population was about 8,590,630, including a Saami population in Lappland and a Finnish-speaking group, Tornedalians, along the border of Finland, both consisting of approximately 15,000-17,000 persons.

**Linguistic Affiliation.** The Swedish language belongs to the North Germanic (Scandinavian) Subgroup of the Germanic languages. It is related to Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, and Faroese. It has been influenced by German, French, English, and Finnish. The Saami and the Tornedalians understand and speak Swedish, but they form special linguistic groups. Immigration to Sweden after World War II has created many new language groups.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Marriage.** In preindustrial Sweden, marriage was an Economic agreement between two families and not, as today, a private affair. The marriage ritual included exchanges of gifts and economic transactions between the two families. The dowry that the bride should bring into the marriage was carefully stipulated. This dowry, as well as a gift she got from her husband, belonged to her. In cases of childlessness, the dowry went back to the wife's family. Because of economic and Social differences in Sweden, there have been variations in the degree of parental control over marriage partners. Strategic marriages, even sibling exchange, have been much more Common among the wealthy farmers in the south than among the poor forest dwellers in the north. During the last twenty years, cohabitation without marriage (to sambo, sam meaning "Together with" and bo meaning "live") has increased. This form usually precedes a marriage, and it is not unusual to have Children before marrying. In 1988 a law was passed making the partners in sambo relationships almost spouses. The divorce rate has risen during the last two decades: twice as many Marriages end in divorce now as compared to 1960.

**Domestic Unit.** The dominant domestic units in the Peasant society were the small, extended, and nuclear families. Today the most common type is the nuclear family.

**Inheritance.** Until 1845 peasant daughters inherited half as much as their brothers. In 1845 equal rights of inheritance were legally stipulated. In reality, however, there were variations in inheritance practice. Many farmers, for example, on the isle of Gotland, on the plains of Skåne, and in the valley of Mälaren, had male primogeniture. Male ultimogeniture also existed. Other families practiced partible inheritance, for example in Dalecarlia and certain parts of Norrland.

**Socialization.** Characteristically, young children in Swedish peasant society participated in adult tasks. The children learned about working life through observation, imitation, and practice rather than by education. In three-generational domestic units, grandparents played an important role in raising children. In contemporary Swedish families it is common for both parents to work, and all children over 18 months are entitled to a place in a daily-care center up to the age of 6 years. There are also open preschools where preschoolers can meet a few times weekly in the company of a guardian. "Leisure time centers" are available for children ages 7-12 whose parents are working or studying. These centers are open before and after school and during vacations.

**“Love & Marriage: Scandinavian style,” David Bartal, Nordic Reach [114]**  
[https://www.nordicreach.com/its\\_about/lifestyle/135/](https://www.nordicreach.com/its_about/lifestyle/135/)

Overview:

The new myth is that the institution of marriage is disappearing. Researcher Stanley Kurz raised the red flag a couple of years ago, when he claimed in the influential conservative journal *The Weekly Standard* that marriage is slowly dying in Scandinavia. “A majority of children in Sweden and Norway are born out of wedlock. Sixty percent of first-born children have unmarried parents,” Kurz declared. Not only that, but Sweden is singled out as “the world leader in family decline”. *USA Today* echoed these sentiments recently, suggesting that “marriage in parts of Scandinavia is dying.”

These obituaries sound ominous. One assumes that there are tens of thousands of abandoned children wandering the streets of Stockholm and Helsinki, neglected and unloved, while the only people getting married, presumably, are romantically-minded gay couples. Of course, statistics are open to interpretation. My personal reaction to Kurz’ claim—as someone who has lived and worked in Sweden since 1986—was amazement. In the first place, I wondered why the American researcher would be so worried about marital bliss, or the lack thereof, among people living on the roof of Europe.

About half of my Swedish friends with children are not formally married. But these unmarried couples are all in ordinary family relationships, no better or worse than the relationships of couples I know who are married. Unmarried Dad takes turns with Mom in picking Junior up from the day-care center each afternoon. Neither Mom nor Dad wants to go to their kid’s school parent night, but they finally reach a

compromise. Some of these unmarried couples decide eventually to have a wedding, if only as an excuse to have a big party.

Current & Relevant Information:

The man or woman in an unregistered partnership is referred to as one's "sambo" in Sweden or as an "avoliitto" in Finland. These terms do not have derogatory connotations. It is also relevant to remember that domestic life and marriage customs are not set in concrete, but have in fact changed and developed over the centuries. For example, the whole idea of the central importance of love to marriage apparently didn't exist until medieval times. Twelfth century troubadours are given the credit for popularizing the notion of courtly love as we know it today.

One thing that makes marriage special in Scandinavia, compared to North America, is that Scandinavians frequently wait to marry until after they have had one or more children—hence the statistics about children born "out of wedlock." People in the Nordic region regard legal marriage as a serious step, but not more serious than having a loving, long-term relationship, or parenthood.

**"Families and Family Policies in Sweden," Michael B. Wells & Disa Bergnehr, Research Gate, January 2014 [115] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Michael-Wells-11/publication/256304538\\_Families\\_and\\_Family\\_Policies\\_in\\_Sweden/links/00b49539c63129f0aa000000/Families-and-Family-Policies-in-Sweden.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Michael-Wells-11/publication/256304538_Families_and_Family_Policies_in_Sweden/links/00b49539c63129f0aa000000/Families-and-Family-Policies-in-Sweden.pdf?origin=publication_detail)**

Abstract:

Sweden is known as a social welfare state, whereby the people who reside in Sweden are entitled to certain public benefits at little or no cost to the individual. Over the past century, Sweden has reshaped its culture, growing from one of the poorest nations in Europe to a flourishing country that others emulate, especially with respect to their family policies. Sweden has developed several foundational family policies that have helped to encourage equality, while establishing a sense of individuality. Sweden has created similar rights for cohabiters/married couples, as well as for same-sex/opposite-sex couples. Parents receive a generous parental leave package, have flexible employment choices, and a low gender wage gap, while children have high quality childcare, free healthcare, free dental care, and free mental health services, and a substantial child welfare program. Swedish family policies encourage both parents to work and to help each other with household and childcare tasks. Despite the public benefits that Sweden provides for mothers, fathers, and children, there is still a need for further improvements regarding policies on domestic violence, poverty, and child welfare. Assessments of Sweden's family policies are discussed.

Current & Relevant Information:



## Introduction

Sweden, a Northern European country with a population of 9.5 million, is part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, and borders Norway to the west, Finland to the east, and connects to Denmark in the south via the bridge over Öresund. Sweden stretches far north above the Arctic Circle, but the majority of its inhabitants reside in the central and southern parts of the country, within or close to urban areas. Sweden has 1.1 million families with children between 0-17 years old (URL 1) and 18 percent of all children are of foreign origin (URL 2)<sup>1</sup>. People living in Sweden tend to have a long lifespan, with the average life expectancy being 81 years old (URL 3). The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is around \$46,000 USD and Sweden's unemployment rate is around 7 percent (URL 4). Sweden spends 20 percent of its GDP on welfare services that are either free or inexpensive for the individual, thus adding to the individual's disposable income (Statistics Sweden, 2012).<sup>2</sup> Free education, free healthcare, housing allowances, social benefits, parental leave, and support for persons with functional impairments are only a few examples of Sweden's welfare services. During the past decade, families have increased their disposable income, and today, 41 percent of children live in families with high bracket incomes (Barnombudsmannen, 2010). However, monetary equality has changed in Sweden, as there are increasing gaps between different household structures (Fritzell, Gähler, & Nermo, 2007; Rädde Barnen, 2012).

One of the main reasons why more children are growing up in higher income families is for feasibility reasons because most parents in Sweden work and are well established in the labor market prior to having children. In fact, women with permanent employment are 20 percent more likely to become parents compared to those who are either temporarily employed or unemployed, and very few become parents before the age of 20 (Barnombudsmannen, 2010; Statistics Sweden, 2002). The present mean age for first-time mothers is 29 and for fathers is 31 (Barnombudsmannen, 2010), but Sweden enjoys one of the highest fertility rates among industrialized countries, with 1.8 children per woman. With both parents connected to the labor market, most parents go back to work after having children.

The Swedish welfare state is part of what can be called a social-democratic model, which is characterized by having universal benefits and emphasizes equality for all (e.g., gender, economic classes, racial/ethnic groups, and children) (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Estes, 2011). The current welfare system was initiated in the 1930s, but took off after World War II with the Social Democrats leading the government for the past 70 years, where they enlarged the welfare state, while embracing capitalism to stimulate the taxes and revenues needed to fund the welfare programs. Using other countries as models, such as the USA, Sweden adapted new policies and streamlined them to not only be culturally relevant, but also to function more easily. By doing so, people in Sweden prospered, living healthier lives, attending higher quality schools, and increasing their disposable

income due to both genders participating in the paid labor force, with the state providing available high-quality childcare (Sandin, 2012).

This chapter starts with highlighting Sweden's socio-historic, economic, and political contexts. Then we explore family characteristics and family policies under three themes: family policies targeting marriage, the family-work balance, and policies supporting families at risk. The ways in which Swedish family policies are implemented and assessed are embedded within the three policy themes so that a fuller picture emerges on the importance and effect those policies have on those living in Sweden. The chapter ends with a discussion about Sweden's family policies, recommendations for future family policy research, and with a short conclusion.

## Conclusions

Sweden's family policies are a huge undertaking, affecting all aspects of the family's life. Over the past forty years, Sweden has developed and tweaked its family policies to try to make family life more equal, while stressing each person's individual rights. The Swedish model emphasizes the dual-earner, dual-career family; therefore, families with only one salary (or none) and/or with only one career generally struggle compared to those who follow the Swedish model. Some challenges for the Swedish welfare system are to reduce the number of families that experience poverty, to further support families at risk, and to better take into account the views of children. There are also rising educational issues, as more children are failing at school. Despite these short-comings, Sweden has helped lead the world in family policy and is often viewed as a model to emulate.

**“Infant mortality of Sami and settlers in Northern Sweden: the era of colonization 1750–1900,” Peter Sköld, et al., *Global Health Action*, 27 October 2011 [116]  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3402/gha.v4i0.8441>**

### Abstract:

The study deals with infant mortality (IMR) that is one of the most important aspects of indigenous vulnerability.

**Background:** The Sami are one of very few indigenous peoples with an experience of a positive mortality transition.

**Objective:** Using unique mortality data from the period 1750–1900 Sami and the colonizers in northern Sweden are compared in order to reveal an eventual infant mortality transition.

**Findings:** The results show ethnic differences with the Sami having higher IMR, although the differences decrease over time. There were also geographical and cultural differences within the Sami, with significantly lower IMR among the South

Sami. Generally, parity has high explanatory value, where an increased risk is noted for children born as number five or higher among siblings.

**Conclusion:** There is a striking trend of decreasing IMR among the Sami after 1860, which, however, was not the result of professional health care. Other indigenous peoples of the Arctic still have higher mortality rates, and IMR below 100 was achieved only after 1950 in most countries. The decrease in Sami infant mortality was certainly an important factor in their unique health transition, but the most significant change occurred after 1900.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

That the health of indigenous peoples worldwide compares unfavorably with that of their non-indigenous counterparts is well established. Recent studies have found that indigenous peoples suffer higher infant and child mortality, higher maternal morbidity and mortality, heavy infectious disease burdens, and higher levels of suicide. Colonization brings many changes to the area of traditional land use, and the complexity is a challenge to research. The epidemiological transition that took place in the western world with the introduction of modern public health measures was crucial in reducing epidemic diseases and raising life expectancy, but these measures have benefited non-indigenous populations more than indigenous peoples.

The improvement in health and life expectancy among Swedish Sami represents one of the few encouraging examples of a positive indigenous health transition. Even with documented threats such as high suicide rates among young reindeer herders, the Swedish Sami of today experience standards of living, life expectancy, and health equal to those of non-indigenous Swedes. The scenario was different 150 years ago when life expectancy was considerably lower among the Sami as compared to the settler population. However, it is still unclear how the Sami health transition came about.

Systematic longitudinal information about health, morbidity, and mortality among the world's indigenous populations is generally hard to find. Infant mortality rates (IMR) are one of the most used indicators to understand a population's health status, especially if it is possible to examine them over an extended period of time. The contemporary evidence that does exist of indigenous peoples' IMR suggests that poor living conditions and nutrition along with high rates of infectious diseases result in an IMR much higher than among non-indigenous populations.

In an effort to increase our understanding of the demographic transition in northern Sweden, the present study aims to examine the IMR during the period of intensified colonization in a Sami and non-Sami population.

#### **Conclusion**

The Sami in the northern parishes of Jokkmokk and Jukkasjärvi had a high IMR between 1750 and 1900, whereas the southern Sami in Föllinge experienced considerably lower levels. If infant mortality is used as an indicator of a positive shift in the demographic, epidemiologic, and health transitions, it can be concluded that by 1900 these transitions had not begun in the northern parts of the area. The non-Sami in the area show increased IMR over time, and did not follow the decreasing IMR in Sweden from the 1820s. The indigenous people of northern Sweden experienced a delayed process, and at the end of the 19th century, their IMR were still above the national average. On the other hand, the trend shows decreasing IMR, and we know that the gap between the Sami and the rest of Sweden was closed around 1950.

Other indigenous peoples of the Arctic still have much higher mortality rates, and an IMR below 100 was achieved only after 1950 in most countries. Between 1910 and 1939, the native people in Canada had an IMR between 120 and 205. Serning reported remaining ethnic IMR differences in Jukkasjärvi and Jokkmokk for the period 1930–1948, but they were rapidly decreasing. And, from the 1960s, there are no significant mortality differences between Sami and non-Sami in the area. Therefore, the first half of the 20th century is crucial for our understanding of the IMR transition in Sápmi, and hence for our understanding of the Sami demographic, epidemiologic, and health transitions.

Brändström asked if there were reasons to believe that the Sami practiced birth control. Contemporary observers claimed that Sami women gave birth to few children, rarely more than five or six, even if they married at early ages 11. By limiting family size, they may have avoided the increased risk associated with higher order births, and by concentrating births in the seasons with lower risk, they may have improved survival. Cultural responses to infectious diseases and the use of a so-called komse, a small wooden boat box where infants were kept almost constantly for 1 or even 2 years helped in the care of the newborn children.

The traditional nomadic life style is important for our understanding of Sami infant mortality, but there is no reason to believe that hard working conditions caused the Sami women to stop breast-feeding their infants, as was often the case in other contexts. Reindeer herding was an extreme form of living, and the social organization did not offer any assistance. Sami women either rejoined the continuous travel with the reindeer only a couple of days after giving birth or were left alone with the child in a hut. This would certainly have increased the risk of the infants dying.

Until the mid-19th century, the Sami IMR was considerably higher than the non-Sami in the area, even though extensive breast-feeding prevented infectious diseases and nutritional deficiencies. We can note cultural differences within Sápmi, where the South Sami joined the low IMR of the district of Jämtland, whereas the northern parishes remained at higher levels. However, there is no evidence that medical

interventions played any significant role in the reduction in infant mortality. The Sami rarely had any contact with the district physicians, and midwives were not appointed in the northern parishes until the late 19th century.

Demographic changes certainly occurred in Sápmi during the process of colonization. Kertzer and Fricke take a cultural approach to demographic behavior, arguing that from an anthropological perspective, the concept of agency must be given more prominence. They emphasize a cultural sphere that is interwoven with, both shaping and being shaped by, political and economic institutions as well as by kinship and other social organizational structures.

The Sami population has slowly increased since the 18th century and onwards, and the previous general opinion that the Sami were a dying race has been proven to be mistaken. It is the Sami culture, and not the Sami race, that is under threat today. But the path to this point has been long and winding, including great improvements in life expectancy. Infant mortality was a difficult obstacle to overcome, and the final breakthrough did not occur until the 20th century

#### B. Religion:

**“Sweden,” Henrik Enander, Britannica, 15 May 2022 [117]**  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Sweden>

#### Overview:

Sweden, country located on the Scandinavian Peninsula in northern Europe. The name Sweden was derived from the Svear, or Suiones, a people mentioned as early as 98 CE by the Roman author Tacitus. The country’s ancient name was Svithiod. Stockholm has been the permanent capital since 1523.

Sweden occupies the greater part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, which it shares with Norway. The land slopes gently from the high mountains along the Norwegian frontier eastward to the Baltic Sea. Geologically, it is one of the oldest and most stable parts of the Earth’s crust. Its surface formations and soils were altered by the receding glaciers of the Pleistocene Epoch (about 2,600,000 to 11,700 years ago). Lakes dot the fairly flat landscape, and thousands of islands form archipelagoes along more than 1,300 miles (2,100 km) of jagged, rocky coastline. Like all of northwestern Europe, Sweden has a generally favorable climate relative to its northerly latitude owing to moderate southwesterly winds and the warm North Atlantic Current.

The country has a 1,000-year-long continuous history as a sovereign state, but its territorial expanse changed often until 1809. Today it is a constitutional monarchy with a well-established parliamentary democracy that dates from 1917. Swedish society is ethnically and religiously very homogeneous, although recent immigration has created some social diversity. Historically, Sweden rose from backwardness and poverty into a highly developed postindustrial society and advanced welfare state

with a standard of living and life expectancy that rank among the highest in the world.

Sweden long ago disavowed the military aggressiveness that once involved its armies deeply in Europe's centuries of dynastic warfare. It has chosen instead to play a balancing role among the world's conflicting ideological and political systems. It is for this reason that Swedish statesmen have often been sought out to fill major positions in the United Nations. At peace since 1814, Sweden has followed the doctrine, enunciated in every document on foreign policy since World War II, of "nonalignment in peace aiming at neutrality in war."

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Religion of Sweden**

Prehistoric archaeological artifacts and sites—including graves and rock carvings—give an indication of the ancient system of religious beliefs practiced in Sweden during the pre-Christian era. The sun and seasons figured largely, in tandem with fertility rites meant to ensure good harvests. These practices were informed by a highly developed mythic cycle, describing a distinctive cosmology and the deeds of the Old Norse gods, giants, and demons. Important gods included Odin, Thor, Freyr, and Freyja. Great sacrificial rites, thought to have taken place every eight years at Old Uppsala, were described by the author Adam of Bremen in the 11th century.

Sweden adopted Christianity in the 11th century, and for nearly 500 years Roman Catholicism was the preeminent religion. Sweden was the home to St. Bridget, founder of the Brigittine convent at Vadstena. As the first waves of the Protestant Reformation swept Europe in the mid-1500s, Lutheranism took hold in Sweden and remained dominant. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden was the official state church until 2000, and between three-fifths and two-thirds of the population remains members of this church. Since the late 1800s a number of independent churches have emerged; however, their members can also belong to the Church of Sweden. Immigration has brought a steady increase to the membership of the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Islamic religions. Judaism is the country's oldest global non-Christian religion, practiced in Sweden since 1776. After Christianity, Islam is the largest religion in Sweden, with about 100,000 active practitioners at the turn of the 21st century, although the number of Swedes of Muslim heritage was nearly three times that number.

**"Swedes," Lena Gerholm, Countries and their Cultures [118]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Swedes.html>

#### Overview:

**Identification.** The origin of the name "Swedes" (svenskar) is swaensker, which means "from Svealand."

**Location.** Sweden is located between 55° and 69° N and 24° E. Sweden lies in northwestern Europe in the Scandinavian Peninsula bounded by Norway in the west, Finland in the northeast, Denmark in the southwest, the Gulf of Bothnia in the east, the Baltic Sea in the southeast, and the North Sea in the southwest. Sweden's main regions are, from the north, the northern mountain and lake region named Norrland; the lowlands of central Sweden known as Svealand; the low Småland highlands and the plains of Skåne, both areas in Götaland. Sweden has a coastline that is sometimes rocky and consists of large archipelagoes, skärgård. About 15 percent of the country lies within the Arctic Circle, and the climatic differences in the country are substantial. Snow is found in the mountainous regions in the north for approximately eight months out of the year, but in the south only about one month. The waters of the west coast are almost always ice-free, but the northern Baltic is usually ice covered from November to May. The growing period is about three months in the north and eight in the south.

**Demography.** In 1990 the Swedish population was about 8,590,630, including a Saami population in Lappland and a Finnish-speaking group, Tornedalians, along the border of Finland, both consisting of approximately 15,000-17,000 persons.

**Linguistic Affiliation.** The Swedish language belongs to the North Germanic (Scandinavian) Subgroup of the Germanic languages. It is related to Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, and Faroese. It has been influenced by German, French, English, and Finnish. The Saami and the Tornedalians understand and speak Swedish, but they form special linguistic groups. Immigration to Sweden after World War II has created many new language groups.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Religious Beliefs.** At birth all Swedes automatically become members of the Lutheran Protestant State Church, but they have the right to leave the church. Ninety-two percent of the Swedish population belongs to it. The majority of people do not go to church regularly, but most children are baptized and confirmed, and most Swedes are married and buried by the church. During the nineteenth century there were many pietistic movements characterized by a puritan life-style. In the north of Sweden, the Laestadian movement is still vital. Swedish peasant society believed that the landscape was crowded with various supernatural beings.

**Religious Practitioners.** Shamans were part of the Saami religion and are considered prophets of the Laestadian movement. Today the ministers of the Lutheran Protestant State Church are both male and female.

**Ceremonies.** There are not many religious ceremonies in contemporary Sweden. Certainly, some celebrations have a Religious origin—Advent, Lucia, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide—but only a minority of the Swedes think of these celebrations as religious.

**Arts.** Swedish folk art and handicrafts present many Regional variations because of differences in the availability of raw materials. Straw products were usual in Skåne, whereas birch-bark products were common in Norrland. The Saami made, and still make, richly ornamented knives and spoons from reindeer horn. In Dalecarlia human hair was used to produce rings, necklaces, and brooches, which were sold all over Sweden until 1925, when they went out of fashion. The traditional Swedish textiles are wool and flax. A weaving technique used mainly in south and western Sweden is röllakan. Dalecarlia is famous for its wall painting. Blacksmithing is another handicraft with a long tradition. Folk art is noticeable in the modern design of glassware, ceramics, woodwork, textiles, furniture, silver, and stainless steel.

**Medicine.** Traditional folk medicine made use of magical objects as well as locally grown plants. As illness was often attributed to spirit possession, various kinds of healing rituals were also used. These were mainly readings, for example of charms, and various types of curing by local healers' or priests' touch. Medical knowledge was passed from one Generation to the next. During the nineteenth century, several literate healers read official medical books. They picked up fragments of information from these books, which they combined with their traditional knowledge. Sometimes this led to conflicts between local healers and district medical officers and sometimes to a division of labor, with local healers often being respected for their ability to cure allergies and various skin diseases.

**Death and Afterlife.** Beliefs in a life after death certainly influenced the daily life in preindustrial Sweden. Currently, such beliefs are not integrated into everyday life but are privately held. The Tornedalians in the north still practice a Funeral ritual, which in earlier days was common in several areas. Immediately after the death the family, neighbors, and close friends gather around the deceased, in his or her home, and "sing him/her out." Two weeks after this ritual, the Formal funeral takes place in the church.

**“In Search of the Origins of Shamanism, Community Identity and Personal Experiences: Prehistoric Rock Art and the Religion of Northern Peoples,” Liliana Janik, Fennoscandia Archaeologica XXXII, 2015 [119]**

[http://www.sarks.fi/fa/PDF/FA32\\_139.pdf](http://www.sarks.fi/fa/PDF/FA32_139.pdf)

Overview:

While looking at particular interpretations of rock art, I would suggest we need to first acknowledge that rock art was created prior to the historical and ethnographic sources we use to interpret rock art as representing the set of practices and beliefs we know today as shamanism. This means that we need to accept that rock art both influenced and played an active role in the development of shamanism as a historical process, rather than simply being a reflection of shamanism as an unchanging, ahistorical phenomenon.



Further, in order to understand the development of rock art as a creative process of embedding ideas into the rock surfaces, I suggest we need to accept that our interpretations, while being products of the present, are based on the material traces of a past that had its own reality (Janik 2011). The rock art carvings are understood here as representing both 'hard' and soft 'memory' (Janik 2012). Repeated acts of carving the rocks, hard memory, are a part of wider cultural and social acts of the constitution and reconstitution of the lives of the prehistoric communities in question. The acts of the creation of visual narrative alongside storytelling, soft memory, allowed these communities to reinterpret and readjust their ideas and concepts over time, and that is the reason why rock art is not a static and simple reflection of these past societies, because the imagery itself influenced the carvers and the way they expressed themselves.

The paper is divided into general sections. The first part focuses on shamanism and rock art, while the second part explores other interpretive possibilities in understanding prehistoric carvings. The aim of the later section is to contribute to both general and specific understandings of particular sets of carvings simultaneously. For this purpose, similar rock art imagery has been used to illustrate their interpretive potential, an approach which is complementary to trying to understand symbolic and ritual visual narratives related to shamanism.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **SHAMANISM: CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS**

The first historical sources for shamanism date to the 12th century, and the first descriptions of shamanic trances in English appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (DuBois 2009). Shamanism is currently the focus of a very active field of research and is considered by many anthropologists to represent the 'oldest religion'. There are many definitions of the term. It has been recently categorized in archaeological and ethnographic contexts as a 'traditional religion', distinct from a 'world religion' (Hayden 2003) but, as Insoll (2004; 2005) has pointed out, such a categorization is misleading and counterproductive. A recent comprehensive survey of early religion considers that the best definition of a shaman is: 'a social functionary who, with the help of guardian spirits, attains ecstasy in order to create a rapport with the supernatural world on behalf of his group members' (Hultkrantz 1973: 34, quoted in Hayden 2003: 46). Vitebsky adds that:

'The Siberian shaman's soul is said to be able to leave the body and travel to other parts of the cosmos, particularly to an upper world in the sky and the lower world underground. A broader definition than this would include any kind of person who is in control of his or her state of trance, even if this does not involve a soul journey, as in Korea' (Vitebsky 2001: 10).

It is also argued that shamanism is not a technique used only in various religions practiced by peoples of the Arctic and sub-Arctic, Amazonia and Siberia, but it is as

well part of 'other more mainstream or "world religions" in Mongolia, Tibet, Central Asia, Nepal, China, Japan, Korea aboriginal India and Indonesia' (Vitebsky 2000: 56).

Vitebsky argues that shamanism as a religion goes beyond trance as a method of communicating with the other world, and is based on a theology of transcendence and divine presence constant in the world (Vitebsky 2000). In this paper, a narrow geographical area will be considered, namely the area inhabited by the northern peoples, in particular the Sami (Campbell 1989; Vitebsky 2001; Hayden 2003).

Recently, some archaeologists have interpreted cave painting and rock carvings as expressions of shamanism (Lewis-Williams 2004), and many of the elements of what anthropologists and historians recognize as shamanism are thought to have appeared in the Palaeolithic, with the emergence of modern human beings (Mithen 1996; Clottes 2003). The most prominent of this type of study is that by Lewis-Williams and Dowson (1988), who proposed a new interpretation of Palaeolithic cave art on the basis of ethnographical analogies between the creators of the cave art and Kung San communities of Africa and Shoshonean Coso of the California Grand Basin. Subsequently, George Nash, discussing the mobile art of Mesolithic northern Europe, used Lewis-Williams and Dowson's model to argue for the presence of shamanism in northern Europe (Nash 1998). More recently, Lahelma (2005) has proposed an interpretation of Finnish rock art in terms of shamanic trance.

**“Sacred Trees of Norway and Sweden: A Friluftsliv Quest,” Douglas Forell Hulmes, North Troendelag University College, 19 September 2009 [120]**  
<http://norwegianjournaloffriluftsliv.com/doc/192010.pdf>

Abstract:

What began as a curiosity about the traditions and folklore related to trees planted in the center of many farms in Norway, 'Tuntre', and Sweden, 'Vårdträd', led me to a recognition of a tradition that can still be observed in the cultural landscape today. The tradition can be traced as far back as the Viking period, and directly linked to the mythology of the World Tree, Yggdrasil. I have been studying these traditions as they relate to the field of environmental education as an example of mythopoetic stories and folklore that influence moral and ethical regard for nature. Two areas that I feel are relevant to perspectives of 'Friluftsliv' are:

\* How does the mythology and folklore of a culture influence their perception of place?

\* How does ecological knowledge of a landscape compare with 'kjennskap', or what is sacred in a landscape?

Current & Relevant Information:

A special tradition that is shared by many Scandinavians is the planting or the knowing of a special tree in Swedish called a 'Vårdträd', and in Norwegian a 'Tuntre'; a sacred tree planted in the center of the yard on a family farm that reflects an intimacy with place. The caring for the tree demonstrates respect for ancestors' spirits that were/are believed to reside in the tree, and is a moral reminder of caring for the farm or place where one lives. One Norwegian told me that the 'tuntre' provided a direct connection with the nature spirits that lived underground at his farm.

The tradition of sacred trees in Scandinavia goes back to the pre-Christian Viking Age, and likely long before that. Remarkably, it is a tradition that can still be seen as part of the cultural landscape throughout the Scandinavian countries.

**“Religion embedded in the landscape: Sami studies and the recognition of otherness,” Else Johansen Kleppe and Inga-Maria Mulk, bora.uib.no, 2006 [121]**  
<https://bora.uib.no/bora-xmloi/bitstream/handle/1956/11397/kleppe-og-mulk-religion-embedded-in-the-landscape.pdf?sequence=1>

#### Overview:

In archaeological settings Sami cultural features have often been neglected or omitted completely, in comparison with Nordic cultural features. Nordic features on the other hand are seen as the norm and consequently specified whenever they are detected. Changes in attitudes which meant not neglecting the obvious only became more commonly expressed after the publication of the paper *Var de alle nordmenn* (Schanche & Olsen 1983). The formulation of analogies based on Sami ethnography in studies of the past represents a more recent approach. This approach was for a long time almost absent in archaeological research, an exception being the works by scholars like Gutorm Gjessing and in particular his writings from the 1940s.

This paper also includes a discussion of ethical considerations, which are vital in hermeneutic approaches and consequently in the writing of any ethnically-oriented culture history. Schanche and Olsen's paper forced archaeologists to recognize ethnocentrism, but it did not mean that all acted accordingly. Eventually this led to a shift in paradigm, particularly in north Norwegian archaeological research, and studies where ethnicity was explicitly expressed became a general approach (Kleppe 1977; Odner 1983; Olsen 1986; Mulk 1994; Schanche 2000; see also Hansen & Olsen 2004). Odner has pointed out that ethnicity does not explain and embrace all aspects of traditional life, and he suggested that 'great tradition' – a concept that embraces Gjessing's circumpolar tradition – should be reintroduced.

A presentation of the culture history of northern Fennoscandia is included in this paper. This is meant as a pointer towards biases and influences from western archaeological thinking, including the generally accepted outline of culture historical changes in southern Scandinavia. The archaeological record shows cultural continuity throughout prehistory in the northern areas, and cultural meetings are well

documented. From which point in time, it is justifiable to speak about the people in question as Sami is a separate question, but a shared tradition is well documented. There is general agreement that people associated with asbestos pottery (1800 BC to AD 400) and those people using the latest offering sites, are one and the same, and they are the ancestors to the Sami of today.

Any lack of culture historical focus in heritage management is liable to result in the emic dimensions of archaeological evidence being neglected. By 'emic' we mean the insider view. The emic approach seeks to describe another culture (Sami in this case) in terms of the categories, concepts and perceptions of the people being studied. The etic approach, the outsider view that heritage managers all too often adopt, uses only the categories and concepts of modern, western discourse to describe the culture under analysis. We argue that both approaches ought always to be present. We demonstrate this argument through the example of Lapponia, which clearly shows that to understand better what is constructed today as 'heritage' requires that both 'great tradition' and ethnicity be made explicit. Integrated emic/etic insights into Sami world view and ideology in relation to Sami material culture can only be obtained through further research. We need to investigate in more detail meanings in traditional Sami society, in particular their prehistoric religion and ritual practices.

It is clear that Sami religion permeated most of the everyday activities in traditional Sami life, but only recently have archaeologists begun to recognize this, even though this is well established by the research of historians of religion. We think it timely that more explicit and more all-embracing presentations of the traditional Sami animistic religion and their rituals be studied, so that archaeologists can move beyond the use of single ethnographical examples which somehow are regarded as representative for all cases within the etic categories of classical anthropology – for instance the way that the Kung San have been used to represent all so called 'hunter-gatherers' (Lee & DeVore 1968). The traditional life of Sami people was closely linked to their perceptions of time and place and the landscapes in which they lived. Sami ideas about time prior to the introduction of Christianity to the Sami area provide another focus in this paper. Another is the changes that took place due to political and economic interferences from the governments of the respective nations. These are important to bear in mind when interpreting source material of more recent date.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **On Sami religion and ritual life**

Sami religion is classified as a north-Eurasian hunting religion, but it developed its own form during the long period of time when the Sami people lived as hunters, gatherers and fishers. The Sami world-view was communicated through myths, stories, songs, dances, pictures and rituals with or without embedded symbols or

signs. Killing and death meant discontinuity in the social and cosmic ordering, but for the hunters it also meant a precondition for life. Such beliefs explain the present here-and-now and also provide promises about the future.

Rituals are associated with subsistence activities and settlement patterns. The Sami world-view and their concepts of time were conjoined, and they were confirmed in ritual practices. Sacred mountains, water and places associated with the underworld were tightly linked with everyday activities, including people's movements in the landscape. The Sami view on the cosmos was shared with other people in the northern area and was a central feature in the circumpolar great tradition. People were considered to be an integral part of nature, while a common feature was the division of the world into three sections: heaven, earth and underground. The sacred and the profane were closely linked in this world-view, and the three were united through a world-tree or a pillar, the pillar being associated with the northern star.

This religion was animistic, and the natural world and everything within it was considered to be animated. There were important rituals associated with the yearly cycle, carried out both by local groups and by individual members of society. Many rituals were connected to seasonal opportunities for hunting and fishing. The most important seasonal ceremonies were those carried out at the sacrificial sites in connection with the collective reindeer hunting in the autumn (Mulk 2005a, 2005b). Of special importance were rituals connected with bear hunting (Bäckman 1981:45f).

Various ritual acts were closely connected with Sami concepts of time: this includes linear and cyclic as well as mental time. The connection between cyclical time and seasonal subsistence activities may be represented on the Sami drums of the 16th-18th centuries, and some drum motifs may also have served as a star map for astrology when particular constellations came into view in the night sky (Sommarström 1987). Concepts of time were partially documented by some ethnographers, in particular Ernst Manker (e.g., 1950, 1957, 1961). We need to investigate these sources further, to establish the connection between the Sami perception of time and their use of everyday and ritual landscapes. Our comments here should be seen as an initial contribution.

**“Sami People: Religion, Beliefs, and Deities,” Patti Wigington, Learn Religions, 8 February 2020 [122] <https://www.learnreligions.com/sami-people-religion-beliefs-and-deities-4782383>**

#### Overview:

The Sámi people of Norway, Sweden, and Finland have a rich spiritual history that reflects their culture and traditional ways of life. From reindeer herding to animism, the Sámi have found ways to maintain their ancient culture and religious beliefs despite the ever-changing world around them.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

## **Key Takeaways: Sámi People and Religious Beliefs**

The Sámi of Norway, Finland, and Sweden have faced government-sanctioned religious and cultural discrimination.

The Sámi religious structure is a rich system of shamanic beliefs, that is both polytheistic and animistic. Traditional spirituality holds that all things in the natural world—rocks, rivers, trees—have a spirit and a life force.

Among the Sámi's polytheistic religious beliefs, four of the most important beings are the Father, the Mother, the Son, and the Daughter, called Radienacca, Radienacce, Radienkiedde, and Radienneida.

There's been a resurgence of interest in the shamanistic Sámi beliefs, and Disney even consulted with indigenous elders for insight on the film Frozen II.

**“Indigenous Religious Traditions,” Julia Van Raalte, coloradocollege.edu, 5 November 2011 [123] <https://sites.coloradocollege.edu/indigenoustraditions/sacred-lands/the-sami-reindeer-herders-of-sweden/>**

### Overview:

#### **The Sami Reindeer Herders of Sweden**

Although Western culture has lighthearted associations reindeer and the holiday season, these animals have been central to the Sami peoples' livelihood for centuries. The Sami are the indigenous people who first inhabited the area of northern Scandinavia that extends across current day Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Conflict regarding land rights and borders has troubled Sami reindeer herders since the arrival of the current dominant ethnic group from Southern Europe around the 9th century. Colonists continued to push the Sami further north and inland, taking from them their sacred land. Today, while the Sami have been granted some land rights by the government, they still struggle to maintain ownership of their land.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The Sami people have lived moving fluidly through their land in northern Scandinavia since prehistoric times. They were not one people, but groups in a large area who led varying lifestyles. Some developed into permanent settlements based on fishing, while others led more nomadic lifestyles that evolved into reindeer herding. Reindeer herding has existed among the Sami for over 1,000 years. There were some groups that led completely nomadic lives following the reindeer year-round, but present-day herders live a more sedentary life. Today, herders typically move between summer and winter pastures where they have a home. These pastures are organized around villages since they are only allowed to herd the reindeer in designated areas. The Reindeer Husbandry Law of 1971 established this system in order to promote the continuation of reindeer husbandry. The law

designates the lands that the Sami have rights to, as well as provides specific land and water rights. Only those who belong to the government certified villages are allowed to herd, which constitutes about 10% of the total Sami population in Sweden (The Sami People in Sweden). Even though these rights help the Sami in the preservation of their culture, when there is an economic incentive or the option for environmental protection, the Swedish government acts in its own best interest.



There is no one specific area that the Sami deem sacred to their culture. However, reindeer herding is essential to Sami identity, making the land they use for herding critical to the survival of their culture. The Sami practice a type of shamanistic spirituality that is inextricably rooted in nature. Given this close, respectful relationship to nature, they see all of their land as sacred, but mark some specific holy sites (Polidor). Since they cannot designate certain areas as more sacred than others, since all their land used for reindeer herding is sacred, it is difficult to protect all of their land. In the late 18th century, the Scandinavian countries began to

designate their borders and demand the Sami acquire a citizenship to their respective country. The concept of borders and the inability to cross was completely foreign to them and divided their land and people. Early laws required Sami to become citizens, but they were allowed to cross borders freely to continue their traditional practices. Over time there was a general shift in the governments' reclamation of the land from the Sami for state or private ownership and border crossings became stricter. This began a long process of Westernization through limiting their ability to lead a nomadic lifestyle. As the Sami continued to lose their land to the encroaching government and colonists, they tried to hold on to what was essential to their traditional culture and identity. The more land they lost, the more difficult it would be to maintain their way of life.

**“Lands of the Sami,” Amberly Polidor, Sacred Land Film Project, 1 April 2007**

[124] <https://sacredland.org/lands-of-the-sami-finland-norway-russia-sweden/>

#### Overview:

Long before the concept of national borders existed, the Sami people of arctic Europe inhabited the regions now known as Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. They led a nomadic life—hunting, fishing and following the seasonal migration of wild reindeer—and their culture and spirituality developed around their relationship with the land and its resources. The Sami culture survives today, despite centuries of repression from the region's four modern nations. However, an astonishing array of factors, from mining to military installations to tourism development, threaten lands whose ecology and biodiversity have been preserved for millennia under the Sami's care. These lands are some of Europe's last remaining wilderness areas. At the same time, the Sami themselves are seeking to preserve their traditional livelihoods, reassert their culture and claim their right to self-determination. Because of the Sami's relationship with the land, cultural survival and land rights are inextricably tied—and they depend on protecting nature. One Sami man explains, “Nature is the most important thing. Reindeer herders lived here long before anyone else arrived. The Samis did not disturb nature, and we have lived here for thousands of years.”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The Land and Its People**

The Sami are one of Europe's oldest ethnic groups. They have lived in the region most often known as Lapland, today called Sapmi or Samiland, since prehistoric times. Originally fishers and hunters, they began to domesticate wild reindeer many centuries ago, and reindeer herding became the foundation of Sami livelihood. Hunting and fishing also continued as important traditional occupations. The Sami practiced a shamanistic spirituality rooted in a respectful, harmonious relationship with nature. The land itself was sacred, and it was also marked with specific holy sites. Sieidi (stones in natural or human-built formations), álda and sáivu (sacred



hills), springs, caves and other natural formations served as altars where prayers, offerings and sacrifices were made. Through a type of sing-song chant called the joik, Sami conveyed legends and expressed their spirituality. Noiade were individuals who communicated with the spirits and interceded on behalf of the community.

As early as the ninth century, the people who now make up the region's dominant ethnic groups began to move into the Sami homeland from areas to the south, eventually claiming the land and its wealth of resources. From the 17th to 19th centuries, the established governments offered incentives to colonize Sami territory. Much like the plight of native peoples in the Americas during the colonial era, the Sami were pushed off their lands and forced to assimilate into the dominant culture and convert to Christianity. Many believed the Sami were heathens and a backward race and regarded their shamanic practice as devil worship. Sami who attempted to practice their traditional religion were persecuted—some even burned at the stake for “witchcraft”—and holy sites were destroyed. In many cases, they even were forbidden to speak their own language. Throughout the region, laws were created to deny the Sami rights to their land and to the practice of traditional livelihoods.

Despite tremendous oppression, many Sami secretly maintained their language, culture and spiritual beliefs and practice. The past 40 years have seen an era of Sami renewal as these native people have begun to recover from the aggressive assimilation policies of the past centuries. They are reclaiming their language, culture, ancestral belief system, even their name. Today they are formally recognized as “Sami” (also spelled in English as Saami or Sámi)—which means “the people”—rather than “Laplander,” a derogatory term imposed by colonists. They now have their own flag and national anthem, both created in 1986. Although they speak several different dialects and maintain differences in culture and livelihood, they consider themselves one people with a common origin. The Sami are also politically unified and engaged in efforts to strengthen their rights to land, traditional ways of life and self-determination. They are active in international indigenous groups and have status as a registered nongovernmental organization in the United Nations.

The three Scandinavian countries now have laws and programs in place to safeguard and promote Sami language and culture. In 1973 the Finnish government established a Sami Parliament; Norway followed suit in 1987, and Sweden in 1992. The semiautonomous parliaments are elected by and represent the Sami people within each country. They are subordinate to their countries' central governments, but public authorities are obliged to consult the parliaments on matters that might affect Sami land, livelihood and culture. In Russia, where the fall of Communism is still recent history, the Kola Sami do not have their own parliament or the legal protections of their Scandinavian counterparts, but they participate in national and transnational Sami organizations and international indigenous bodies.

In the 1990s, Finland and Norway amended their laws to allow the Sami the right to use their own language when dealing with the government. In Norway and Sweden, reindeer husbandry and related occupations are the exclusive right of the Sami. However, Finnish law does not offer this protection, and most areas that were once Sami territory are now “public land” where all local people are entitled to herd reindeer, hunt and fish. Efforts are under way to amend the law and return some land to the Sami. In 1998 Sweden formally apologized for the wrongs committed against the Sami. Despite significant strides forward in the past decades, these countries have been criticized by the international community, including the United Nations, for failing to respect the rights of the Sami. Only Norway has ratified the International Labor Organization Convention No. 169 on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.

Today somewhere between 70,000 to 100,000 ethnic Sami live in the Scandinavian countries and Russia’s Kola Peninsula. About half are in Norway, some 20,000 are in Sweden, and smaller proportions live in Finland and Russia. It is estimated that as many as 40 percent of Sami make a living based on the traditional and sustainable use of their territory, including reindeer herding, fishing, hunting, small-scale agriculture, and the use of natural products to produce handicrafts. Only about 10 percent still practice reindeer herding as a primary occupation, but that land-based way of life still dominates and guides Sami culture.

## **6. Finland:**

**“Finland,” The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [125] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/finland/>**

### Overview:

The area defined as Northern Finland covers three provinces that together form 44% of Finland: Northern Ostrobothnia (Pohjois-Pohjanmaa), Kainuu, and Lapland (Lappi). When talking about the Finnish Arctic, the area most commonly referred to is Lapland as the Arctic Circle crosses the province at approximately the same latitude as its capital, Rovaniemi. This puts one third of Finland’s territory above the Arctic Circle. The total area of the three provinces of Northern Finland is 160,851 km<sup>2</sup>, of which Lapland covers 98,983 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite being the largest province in terms of territory, Lapland remains sparsely populated with only 180 thousand people. These people are spread across Lapland’s 21 municipalities which, in turn, form six sub-regions. The Sámi Homeland in Lapland is legally defined and includes the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki and the northern part of Sodankylä.

Lapland has a typical subarctic climate with cold, snowy winters and reasonably mild summers. The average temperatures range from -13.5 °C to 14.5 °C whereas during the winter months temperatures can dip below -30 °C. The record low -51.5°C was measured in Kittilä in 1999. Lapland’s nature and scenery are dominated by fells, forests and waterways. There are several fells in Lapland, with the most well-known

being Halti, Saana, and Korvatunturi. About 30% of the land in Lapland is either national parks or other nature conservation areas. Around 90% of the Sámi homeland area is government controlled and 80% falls within nature conservation areas. These areas are important for traditional reindeer husbandry and tourism.

Finnish Lapland has been upheld as an example of how ecosystem services can help prevent ecological problems caused by human action, as well as a way to resolve land-use questions in an economically and environmentally sustainable way. Finland has attempted to position itself as a leader in sustainable development in the Arctic region. Moreover, Finland is often rated among the world's top countries in terms of environmental protection standards. In spite of these impressive achievements, Finland's ecological footprint is still quite high when compared to its Nordic neighbors.

With over 70% of the country covered, Finland is Europe's most forested country. Of these forests, about 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> of it are strictly protected. Finland's forest resources are increasing as the natural growth of forests more than compensates for the amounts of timber logged. Finland's contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions are small in global terms, but very high when measured per capita. Renewable energy sources account for about a quarter of all the energy used in Finland. A large part of this renewable energy is produced from residuals generated in the pulp and paper industry, including bio-sludge and wood chips. Almost half of the wood used in Finland is burnt to produce energy.

The Regional Council of Lapland has developed a climate change strategy for 2030. The strategy lists goals for Lapland in order to better mitigate climate change in the region. Lapland's carbon dioxide emissions in 2009 were about 2.8 million tons, which is more than the Finnish average in proportion to population density. The province of Lapland sees climate change as bringing both economic opportunities for development, but also as a threat to traditional livelihoods.

The Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) is represented in the Arctic Council's Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) studying contaminants in lake sediments and the movements of harmful airborne substances. SYKE also takes part in the Arctic Contaminants Action Plan (ACAP). The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and Environment (ELY Centre) in Lapland also takes part in AMAP and other international environmental management initiatives.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Helsinki, Finland's capital and largest city, has a population of 648,650. The entire Helsinki region counts approximately 1.5 million inhabitants. Most of the largest cities in Finland, including Helsinki, are located in the south. These include Espoo (281,886) and Tampere (234,441). The biggest cities in Northern Finland are Oulu (202,753), Rovaniemi (62,667), Kajaani (37,039), and Tornio (21,912). As of 2014, 181,815 people lived in Lapland.

The majority of Arctic residents in Finland speak Finnish, with 1,560 speaking Sami, 438 speaking Swedish, and 3,467 speaking some other language as their mother tongue. Much of the current population of Finland's Arctic predates the country's modern independence to its time as part of the Swedish Empire (~1249-1809). Many Finns and Swedes moved to Lapland to build villages around isolated dwellings in the wilderness, both claiming land and cultivating parcels. These settlers sought to capitalize on the wilderness and its hunting and agricultural potential. Eventually, new industries like forestry and mining drew southerners to the Arctic for economic gain.

There are approximately 10 thousand Sámi living in Finland. Only about 35 percent live in or near their original Sámi homelands, and those that do live in Lapland compose only 5 percent of the population. This represents a challenge to the Sámi community and culture. Other major challenges facing the Sámi in Finland are maintaining the Sámi language, the limited health and social services available in their remote communities, as well as problems of social exclusion.

The Sámi in Finland are represented by the Sámi Parliament established in 1995 as an independent legal entity subject to public law with its own governing body. There are 21 elected representatives and 4 deputies in the Sámi Parliament who are elected every 4 years. The Sámi Parliament can make initiatives, proposals and statements representing the official view of the Sámi in Finland on issues concerning them in both national and international contexts.

The Finnish Constitution was amended to include stronger rights for the Sámi in 1995. The amendments recognized the status of the Sámi as an Indigenous people and gave the Sámi additional rights to maintain and develop their languages and culture. The new legislation guaranteed that Sámi language and culture in their Homeland would be managed by the Sámi and not the Finnish government. The Finnish authorities thus have to consult with the Sámi Parliament in all matters affecting the status of Sámi as an Indigenous people.

In Finland, the definition of a Sámi is laid down in the Act on the Sámi Parliament and is mainly based on the Sámi language. According to this official definition, a Sámi is a person who considers him- or herself a Sámi, has learnt Sámi as his or her first language, or has at least one parent or grandparent whose first language is Sámi. There have been some issues with the definition lately as the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland still has the right to define the Sámi status. The Sámi Parliament considers this a violation of their rights to define their own identity and community membership. Finland has still not ratified the International Labour Organization's Convention 169—a binding UN document dealing specifically with Indigenous rights.

The Sámi culture has maintained its traditional elements but faces challenges today as people become integrated with global industries, growing tourism, and

technological development. To adapt to the changing economic opportunities of Finland's North while keeping indigenous traditions alive, the two major occupations in the Sámi Homeland are tourism and reindeer husbandry. The Sámi Parliament advocates and works together with the municipalities to revive and maintain the Sámi language and education. All the middle schools and high schools within the Sámi Homelands are legally obligated to offer education also in the Sámi languages; North Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Inari Sámi.

The Sámi of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden are represented in the Arctic Council by the Saami Council, a non-governmental organization founded in 1956. The Saami Council actively deals with policy-related tasks advocating the Saami rights and interests in the four countries as well as to an international audience.

**“Finland,” Arctic Council [126] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/finland/>**

#### Overview:

##### Quick Facts

##### **Arctic Territory**

Northern Ostrobothnia, Kainuu and Lapland

##### **Arctic Population**

180,000 (Lapland), 5,500,000 (Finland)

##### **Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

Saami

#### Finland and the Arctic Region

While Finland's Strategy for the Arctic Region 2013 defines the entire country as Arctic, nearly one-third of the country's land mass lies above the Arctic Circle in the province of Lapland. Despite its vast size, Lapland is sparsely populated with just under 180,000 inhabitants, while Finland's total population exceeds 5,500,000.

Finland has contributed expertise and modern technology to industries such as Arctic construction, Arctic environmental technology and the development of Arctic infrastructure, transportation and navigation in ice-covered waters. It also houses various Arctic research and educational programs and institutions. Several biological research stations are located in Lapland, where Arctic ecology is studied. The Arctic Centre, an institute affiliated to the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, carries out interdisciplinary research on the effects of global changes and on the natural balance of Arctic nature and Arctic societies. The University of Oulu has a research focus on Arctic medical sciences. Arctic-related issues are also included in teaching and research programs of many other higher education institutions in Finland.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

## Indigenous Peoples

The Saami are an Indigenous people who live in Sápmi, an area that stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Saami population is estimated between 50,000 and 80,000, with approximately 10,500 located in Finland. The preservation of the Saami's languages and culture is governed by an autonomous Saami parliament in Inari, Finland.

**“A view from Finland: Security and defense in the Arctic,” Janne Kuusela, DefenseNews, 12 May 2020 [127] <https://www.defensenews.com/smr/frozen-pathways/2020/05/11/a-view-from-finland-security-and-defense-in-the-arctic/>**

### Overview:

Just by looking at the map, it is evident why the Arctic region matters so much to Finland. Although Finland is not a littoral Arctic country, a sizable part of the Finnish territory lies above the Arctic Circle. Finland is located in both the Arctic and the Baltic Sea regions, which are increasingly perceived by defense planners as a single, Northern European operational theater.

The broad geopolitical interest toward the Arctic region is hardly a new phenomenon. Apart from the couple of decades after the Cold War, the military strategic importance of the Arctic has been mainstream during most of the past 80 years. Today, strategic considerations have returned, combined with prospects of increasing navigation and economic activities.

The Arctic is not insulated from broader global security dynamics and challenges, be it great power competition or the impacts of climate change. Russia is a key actor in the Arctic, especially militarily. It controls a significant portion of the Arctic coastal line and has strong economic and security interests in the region. China has declared itself as a “near Arctic state” and included Arctic sea lines in its Polar Silk Road initiative. China has demonstrated its interest, for example, in low-temperature expertise, Arctic infrastructure, digital connectivity and natural resources.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The Finnish government is drafting a new whole-of-society strategy for our Arctic policy, which will lay out the objectives in the long term as well as resources needed to achieve them. Arctic issues also play an important part in Finland's foreign policy and international role. In our view, international affairs in the High North should primarily be the responsibility of the Arctic countries. Finland worked hard to promote cooperation among this group during the recent chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

**“Finland is an active and responsible player in the Arctic region,” Finnish Government, 7 May 2020 [128] <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/-/10616/suomi-on-aktiivinen-ja-vastuullinen-toimija-arktisella-alueella>**

### Overview:

All activities in the Arctic must be based on the carrying capacity of the natural environment, need to protect the climate, sustainable development principles, and respect for the rights of indigenous populations. In line with Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government Program, the Government will prepare a new strategy on Arctic policy, which will set out Finland's long-term goals in the region and address the associated resource needs.

Current & Relevant Information:

Other measures will also be taken to strengthen Arctic cooperation. The aim for Finland is to adopt a key role in strengthening the EU's Arctic policy and in promoting a stronger Arctic Council and the work of the Arctic Economic Council. Finland aims to enhance the stability of the Arctic region and help keep the region free from military tensions.

The main elements of the Finnish Arctic Strategy published in 2013 are still valid. The Government updated the priorities of the strategy in September 2016. The updated strategy further specified Finland's role and the Government objectives in the development of the Arctic region. The strategy was revised from the perspective of the Government Program objectives and key priorities, in line with the priorities established for the updating process. In March 2017, the Government approved the action plan for the update of the strategy that brought the objectives of the strategy closer to practice and established schedules for them.

**“How will Finland’s Arctic Strategy change?” Timo Koivurova, Polar Research & Policy Initiative, 30 March 2021 [129] <https://polarconnection.org/how-will-finlands-arctic-strategy-change/>**

Overview:

The new strategy rightly places the fight against climate change and adaptation to it at the heart of Finland's Arctic Strategy.

Current & Relevant Information:

Finland's first Arctic strategy was adopted in 2010. It focused almost exclusively on external relations, and very soon, it was felt necessary to start the process for drafting a new, comprehensive Arctic strategy adopted in 2013. A brief update to the strategy and its action plan were approved in 2016 and 2017. The new Arctic policy strategy which is now being finalized has been in preparation for a long time. Stakeholder consultations were held in Rovaniemi and Helsinki just before the Covid-19 pandemic hit in early 2020. The Prime Minister's Office sent the draft strategy for consultation at the beginning of February this year, and the deadline for submitting opinions was 12 March.

Hence, the new Arctic strategy is not yet complete, but its content is unlikely to change significantly. It has four priorities: mitigating and adapting to climate change;

residents of the Arctic, the promotion of well-being and the rights of indigenous peoples; know-how, industries, and cutting-edge research, as well as infrastructure and logistics.

What has changed in this new strategy compared to the previous Arctic strategy adopted in 2013? In 2013, relations between the Arctic countries were in a much better shape than they are now. Russia's actions in Ukraine and the ensuing sanctions have changed the way Russia's Arctic neighbors view it. China has also set foot in the Arctic, causing fears and suspicions about the country's motives.

**“Meet the Sámi: Europe’s Arctic Indigenous People,” Alexander+Roberts, 15 April 2019 [130] <https://www.alexanderroberts.com/blogs/blog/april-2019/meet-the-sami-europes-arctic-indigenous-people.aspx>**

#### Overview:

The story of the hardy Sámi — the European Union’s only recognized indigenous people, who inhabit the Arctic regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia’s Kola Peninsula — is one of centuries of triumph over harsh environmental and political conditions.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Roman historian Tacitus called the Sámi, the “Fenni,” from which “Fin” may well have derived, but their existence in the Arctic wilderness of Scandinavia predates Tacitus by many millennia. Unlike their mercantile neighbors in present-day Norway, Sámi were stubbornly self-sufficient, relying on their own environment for subsistence. In addition to fishing and foraging, the Sámi have always relied on reindeer husbandry and herding to provide them with food, clothing, and shelter.

As Christianity became the dominant religion in Scandinavia, the Sámi’s unique shamanistic belief system came under threat. In the Eighteenth Century, Norway, in particular, pursued a consistent policy of taking Sámi children away from their siida or family units and placing them in Christian boarding schools or with missionary families. In the first half of the Twentieth Century, a systematic plan to use the new science of eugenics to wipe out Sami culture saw thousands of Sami women sterilized.

But the Sami proved tenacious, and today their legal rights, unique culture, and way of life are protected under European Union legislation. The Sámi language, which has over 100 words for “snow,” is alive and well and in use amongst Sámi across Sápmi, the northern sector of the Arctic.

**“How is Climate Change Hurting Reindeer Populations in the Arctic?” Doloresz Katanich, euronews, 25 December 2020 [131] <https://www.euronews.com/living/2020/12/25/how-is-climate-change-hurting-reindeer-populations-in-the-arctic>**



### Overview:

It's not just polar bears who are facing challenges because of the climate crisis, reindeer in the Arctic are also under threat.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Higher temperatures cause snow to thaw and freeze again. When the cold returns, thicker layers of ice buildup, which prevent the reindeer from digging down through the snow to access lichen. Lichen is a type of fungus which sustains reindeer throughout the winter months.

Herders in Finland face difficulties, as the country is home to about 200,000 reindeer.

In snow-covered Lapland, 1,500 herders rely on the animals for their livelihood. Reindeer are bred for their meat, milk and fur. However, scientists are concerned that climate change has already had a negative impact on these animals.

**“What the Sami people can teach us about adapting to climate change,” Simon Tisdall, *The Guardian*, 10 March 2010 [132]**

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/mar/10/sami-finland-climate-change>

### Overview:

As global warming and habitat degradation accelerates, people indigenous to the Arctic circle say they have much to teach the world about how to adapt, survive, and thrive.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Utsjoki is a place so obscure that even many Finns have little idea where it is. Utsjoki, or Ochejohka, Uccjuuha, and Uccjokk, depending on which local language you are speaking, is Finland's northern-most municipality. Straddling the border with Norway, it shivers, un-regarded, deep inside the Arctic circle, a few icy miles from the shores of the Arctic Ocean.

Utsjoki, population 1,034, is home to Finland's largest concentration of Sami speakers, the indigenous people once loosely known as Lapps who have eked out an itinerant existence herding reindeer across the frozen wastes of northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and western Russia since the last Ice Age. Nearly 50% of Utsjoki's population are Sami. In Finnish terms, it's the closest this eternal minority has got to being the majority.

As accelerating climate change and other man-made environmental degradations create growing alarm across the planet, the Sami people have much to teach the world about how to adapt, survive, and thrive.

"There is a lot to learn from the Sami, they have the traditional ecological knowledge, they really know about nature," said Helander-Renvall, head of the Arctic Indigenous Peoples Office at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi. "They have the most precise knowledge about the weather conditions, about the plants, the diet, the resources. The Sami people have an ethical relationship with nature; a respect for nature that also has a spiritual side."

The Arctic region is uniquely vulnerable to global warming, but if it is to weather the storm, it would do well to adopt Sami methods of land and resource management, communal co-operation and communication, local knowledge and best practice, she said.

#### A. Family:

**"University studies in the adjacent tab: dimensions of students' agency and everyday life in the rural north of Finland," Maria Peltola and Teemu Suorsa, University of Aberdeen: Education in the North, 2020 [133]**

[https://aura.abdn.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/2164/15672/Peltola\\_etal\\_EITN\\_University\\_Studies\\_In\\_VOR.pdf?sequence=1](https://aura.abdn.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/2164/15672/Peltola_etal_EITN_University_Studies_In_VOR.pdf?sequence=1)

#### Abstract:

This paper focuses on the everyday life and agency of university students. The study aims to deepen the understanding of university students' agency in the age of modern technology, especially in a rural context where studying mostly happens at home. Agency and everyday life are explored from a cultural-historical perspective. Technology and remote teaching have made it possible to study far from universities and to combine work, family and studies. Yet, everyday life and agency processes are complex and multidimensional. The research material consists of written descriptions by 39 university students of their everyday lives when studying at home. The students wrote about their lives as a part of their early childhood education studies. This article focuses on recognizing dimensions of agency in the lives of 17 students studying in northern rural Finland, far from their university. The article presents three ways in which agency is pursued: 1) by articulating participation and engagement, 2) by organizing the conditions and dealing with the possibilities and restrictions, and 3) by mapping meanings, aims and grounds. All three dimensions of agency have specific content relating to life in the rural north.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

In northern rural Finland and the Arctic areas, the nearest university can be several hundred kilometers away. The desire for education or a university degree has long prompted people to move from rural to urban areas. However, gradual changes in education and the advent of accessible technologies have created possibilities for modifying these trajectories and more equal opportunities for learning. In relation to

teacher education, remote learning creates a stronger possibility that rural schools and early childhood education centers will have qualified teachers, further improving the possibility of equal education. Distance learning also meets other needs: lifelong learning solutions make it possible to reconcile work, studies and home life. So far, research has focused on effective learning methods (Sun and Chen, 2016), identifying necessary student qualities, such as self-regulation, self-direction and self-efficacy (Wang, Shannon and Ross, 2013) or recognizing the effect of socially shared processes on motivation and regulation (Järvenoja, Järvelä and Malmberg, 2015). Knowing all this helps educators create fluent learning experiences, and the development of technology makes it possible for students to study regardless of time and place – in their different life situations. Yet, the increase in remote studying challenges the balance between different aspects of life, and the aim of continuous and lifelong learning places increased demands on the individual (Romero, 2011). Teachers have become designers of learning processes and learning environments, but the most important environment, the student's everyday life, remains impossible to control (Kauppi, Muukkonen, Suorsa and Takala, 2020). This calls for a deeper understanding of the student's agency.

### **Aim and research question**

This study introduces an everyday-life perspective on remote university studies and reaches for a better understanding of the student's agency within everyday study-related practices in the rural north. With this study, we highlight the embeddedness and groundedness of students' actions (Højholt and Kousholt, 2019). Exploring everyday life with university students led us to our research question:

What is agency like in the everyday life of students in the rural north?

Our aim is to understand agency not only by asking students about their experiences but also by helping them to study their own lives, actions and grounds within their current circumstances. The university students (N = 39) included in this research studied in the early childhood education teacher program in northern Finland. Half the students lived near the university, and the rest (N = 17) were scattered around northern rural Finland. In this article, we focus on the agency of those 17 students living in northern rural Finland, far from the university. The research material consists of the students' written descriptions of their everyday lives when studying at home.

**“Finland,” Robert Jarvenpa, Countries and their Cultures [134]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Finland.html>

#### Overview:

The terms "Finland" and "Finns" are external obscure derivations from early (first century C.E.) Roman references to people known as Fenni (probably Lapps or Saami) who occupied lands north of the Baltic Sea. In their own language, Finns

generally refer to themselves as Suomalaiset and their land or country as Suomi, which may derive from suo, the Finnish expression for a bog or swamp. Finns constitute the majority of the citizens of the Republic of Finland, which has a Swedish-speaking minority as well as Saami (Lapp) and Rom (Gypsy) minorities. While language was a highly divisive issue as late as the 1920s and 1930s, many Finnish speakers now recognize the value of Swedish for communicating with other Nordic countries. A distinction between urban, industrialized, coastal southwestern Finland and the rural interior northeast is an important historical and regional division in terms of culture and identity. However, socialist versus nonsocialist affiliations are more meaningful at the political level. Despite these distinctions, most citizens strongly believe that they share a common culture and heritage.

Finland is bordered on the east by Russia, on the south by the Gulf of Finland and Estonia, on the west by the Gulf of Bothnia and Sweden, and on the north and northwest by Norway. A quarter of its territory is north of the Arctic Circle. Four physiographic-biotic regions divide the country. An archipelagic belt embraces the southwestern coastal waters and the Åland Islands. A narrow coastal plain of low relief and clay soils, historically the area of densest rural settlement and mixed farming production, extends between the Russian and Swedish borders. A large interior plateau contains dense forests, thousands of lakes and peat bogs, and rocky infertile soils associated with a glacially modified landscape with numerous drumlins and eskers. This district lies north and east of the coastal plain toward the Russian border. Beyond the Arctic Circle, forests give way to barren fells, extensive bogs, rugged mountains, and the large rivers of Lapland. Continental weather systems produce harsh cold winters that last up to seven months in the interior eastern and northern districts, yet long summer days permit farming far to the north. The climate in the south and west is moderated by the waters of the Gulf Stream and north Atlantic drift current.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Gender Roles and Statuses**

**Division of Labor by Gender.** In the rural economy, women are the primary cattle tenders and men are field and forestry workers. Being a good emäntä (female head of a farmstead) involves a balance of cow care, child care, food processing, meal preparation, arduous cleaning in cow shed and house, and ritual displays of hospitality for visiting neighbors, friends, and relatives. An isäntä (male head of a farmstead) is symbolically and practically associated with the outdoor domain of preparing and maintaining pastures and hayfields, cutting wood, coordinating labor with other farms, and operating and maintaining machinery. However, a decline in the availability of work crews of kin and friends and a concomitant increase in mechanization have contributed to convergence in male and female work roles. A complicating factor is that young women have left the countryside in greater

numbers than have men in recent years. Farms have aging personnel and few assisting family members, and some farmers are forced into bachelorhood.

**The Relative Status of Women and Men.** There is a long tradition of sexual equality in the sense that women's participation in political activity and public life has been encouraged. Finland was the first country to provide equal voting rights to women, instituting female suffrage in elections to the national parliament in 1906. Fully 9.5 percent (nineteen of two hundred members) of the parliament of 1907 consisted of women. Female membership in the parliament currently is about 33 percent. Indeed, Finland's current president, Tarja Halonen, is a woman. The traditional role of rural women as resourceful, powerful workers translates well to urban contexts. The model of a man who works to support a wife who remains at home is not widely embraced. There is an old pattern of sending girls for advanced education while keeping boys in farm work after rudimentary schooling. While women work along sidemen in business, forestry, engineering and other fields, women's earnings are only 81 percent of men's, reflecting the greater numbers of women in low-paying service jobs. A lingering area of conservatism and sexual disparity involves men's unchanging attitudes toward their roles and the notion that women, despite their other obligations, are responsible for domestic work and child care.

### **Marriage, Family, and Kinship**

**Marriage.** Endogamous tendencies characterized marriage in rural society, with mates frequently chosen from the same village, parish, or rural commune. This tendency was most pronounced in the eastern districts among large Karelian joint families and those of the same background and status. Night courting and bundling rituals achieved a high degree of elaboration among the youth in the southwest. Originally, bi-local marriages began with engagement and leave-taking (*läksiäiset*) ceremonies at the bride's home and ended with wedding rites (*häät*) at the groom's home. Under church influence, those customs were replaced by uni-local weddings at the bride's home. In recent years, community and regional endogamy have declined. Marriage rates also have declined as cohabitation has become more common in urban areas, yet that pattern preserves some of the aspects of the "trial marriage" of earlier times, when weddings were performed to finalize a marriage after a woman had conceived a child.

**Domestic Unit.** Historically, joint families were common in the eastern Karelian area, where a founding couple, their adult male children, and the male children's wives formed multiple-family farm households that were among the largest (twenty to fifty persons) in Scandinavia. Elsewhere, it has been common for only one child to remain on the parents' farmstead, and smaller "stem" and nuclear families have prevailed. Overall, family size has become smaller under the impact of urbanization, dropping from an average of 3.6 persons in 1950 to 2.7 in 1975. Among families with

children, the number of offspring declined from an average of 2.27 in 1960 to 1.9 in 1997.

**Inheritance.** A common historical pattern was for a son to take over a farm and care for his parents in their old age. However, the custom of patrilineal transmission is changing, perhaps as differential migration to cities alters the sex ratios in rural areas. In many cases, relinquishing coheirs (usually siblings who move away) must be compensated for their shares in a farm by the remaining heir; often this is done with timber income from a farm's forest tracts.

**Kin Groups.** Kinship is basically bilateral, creating overlapping personal kindreds (sukulaiset) derived from the father's and mother's relatives.

**“Ageing villages of northern Finland where ancient way of life is dying out,” Tim Smedley, *The Guardian*, 11 March 2015 [135]**

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/mar/11/ageing-finland-remote-airbnb-education-healthcare>

#### Overview:

In the village of Juujärvi, just inside the Arctic circle, northern Finland, the weather is not usually this forgiving. The day I visit it is a balmy -5, when typically, one can expect -15. A deep crust of snow covers everything for seven months of the year. Cousins Irja and Seppo Juujärvi, who have lived here all their lives, share coffee and blueberry cake with me in a cosy converted cow shed.

“There used to be 200 people living here,” Irja says of her home village, 90km from the nearest town, Rovaniemi. “Now it’s closer to 50.” The average age is 65. Irja and Seppo are 76 and 78.

“Our family has lived here for 400 years, from the 1600s until now,” says Seppo, explaining why they – and many in the region – share their surname with the name of the village. However, they are most likely the last generation to do so. “I have two daughters, one lives in Helsinki and one in Rovaniemi,” says Seppo. “They aren’t interested in living here. They have their own lives.”

Europe is ageing fast, and nowhere more so than rural Scandinavia. While 15.8% of Finns were aged 65 or over in 2002, by 2012 this had risen to 18.8% – one of the fastest rates in Europe. Global questions regarding how society treats its old people, and whether rural communities can be sustained, are an urgent and pressing reality here.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Juujärvi used to have a school, shops and weekly village dances. Now it has none. Seppo insists that “it’s good living here”. He can leave his front door to hunt and return with 400kg of meat from one elk. I meet another resident, Eero Niemi, who does the same aged 89.

But under a hardy surface lies an acceptance that this way of life is disappearing. Their children left to study and didn't return. Employment once provided by fishing and logging has been in steady decline; the local hydroelectric company Kemijoki offered employment booms during construction phases, but now gets by with just 45 staff. Public services are also diminishing. The nearest GP is 45km away; the hospital, 90km.

"If I got sick and needed to see a doctor often, I would have to move," says Niemi, the hunter. "Every year, someone else goes, and the village gets smaller ... because the doctors will not come and see you here. People want to live here as long as possible but at some point, they need to move to the city."

The neighboring village, Autti, has the same problems. Its population is 100, also with an average age of 65; its school has stood closed since the mid-1990s and is now used as a meeting hall. Shelves of children's books remain but there are no children to read them.

**"Living in Lapland FAQ," Lapland Above Ordinary [136] <https://www.lapland.fi/live-work/live/living-lapland-faq/>**

#### Overview:

There are around 180,000 people living in Finnish Lapland, an equal number of reindeer and one Santa Claus. And no, we do not have polar bears. Some brown bears, yes, but they mostly focus on eating berries and avoiding humans, plus they sleep the whole winter.

Lapland is divided to 21 municipalities, varying from Rovaniemi (62,000 people) to Savukoski and Pelkosenniemi (approximately 1,000 inhabitants) spread across large areas.

In total, we have four cities here. Or at least places we call cities in Finnish. Besides Rovaniemi there are Tornio, Kemi and Kemijärvi. Outside those four, Kittilä, Sodankylä and Inari are also quite busy places!

We have huge national parks and wilderness areas, but people are scattered across Lapland. This means civilization stretches from southeast Sea Lapland to all the way north to Utsjoki and Kilpisjärvi. For sure, you can find your cozy and isolated hut, but moving to Lapland does not mean that you have to give up enjoying the benefits of city-life.

The overall population density is 1,98 persons per square kilometer, which is one of the lowest in Europe. Just do not expect to complete wilderness while living in Lapland.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Sámi people and Sápmi?**

Parts of Lapland are the home of Sámi people, the only indigenous people within the European Union, whose land, Sápmi, spreads across Norway, Sweden, Russia and Finland. Since 1996, Sámi have had constitutional self-government in their homeland in spheres of culture and language.

Out of nine living Sámi languages, three are spoken in Finland. We should speak about Sámi cultures in plural. In total, around 10 000 Sámi resides in Finland.

Some of the Sámi people get their livelihood from traditional vocations such as reindeer herding, fishing and handicrafts as others live the normal city lives in Rovaniemi or down south. Don't act surprised when they are not wearing their traditional outfits all the time; nowadays traditional outfits are only worn on special occasions, and even small details in their traditional jackets, Gákti, are meaningful.

**“Sami People,” Britannica, 5 October 2021 [137]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sami>

#### Overview:

Sami, also spelled Saami, or Same, Sami, Sabme, also called Lapp, any member of a people speaking the Sami language and inhabiting Lapland and adjacent areas of northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland, as well as the Kola Peninsula of Russia. The three Sami languages, which are mutually unintelligible, are sometimes considered dialects of one language. They belong to the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic family. Almost all Sami are now bilingual, and many no longer even speak their native language. In the late 20th century, there were from 30,000 to 40,000 Sami in Norway and about 20,000 in Sweden, 6,000 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Sami are the descendants of nomadic peoples who had inhabited northern Scandinavia for thousands of years. When the Finns entered Finland, beginning about AD 100, Sami settlements were probably dispersed over the whole of that country; today they are confined to its northern extremity. In Sweden and Norway they have similarly been pushed north. The origin of the Sami is obscure; some scholars include them among the Paleo-Siberian peoples; others maintain that they were alpine and came from central Europe.

Reindeer herding was the basis of the Sami economy until very recently. Although the Sami hunted reindeer from the earliest times and kept them in small numbers as pack and decoy animals, full-scale nomadism with large herds began only a few centuries ago. The reindeer-herding Sami lived in tents or turf huts and migrated with their herds in units of five or six families, supplementing their diet along the way by hunting and fishing.

Nomadism, however, has virtually disappeared; the remaining herders now accompany their reindeer alone while their families reside in permanent modern



housing. While the reindeer of a unit are herded communally, each animal is individually owned. Many Norwegian Sami are coastal fishermen, and those in other areas depend for their livelihoods on farming, forestry, freshwater fishing, and mining or on government, industrial, and commercial employment in cities and towns. Sami increasingly participate in the Scandinavian professional, cultural, and academic world.

The Skolt Sami of Finland (and perhaps also the Russian Sami) belong to the Russian Orthodox faith; most others are Lutheran. The shaman was important in non-Christian Sami society, and some shamanistic healing rites are still performed. There is, at least in most of the northern Sami communities, a strong evangelical congregationalism (Laestadianism), in which local congregations are virtually autonomous.

The Scandinavian countries periodically tried to assimilate the Sami, and the use of the Sami languages in schools and public life was long forbidden. In the second half of the 20th century, however, attention was drawn to the problems of the Sami minority, which became more assertive in efforts to maintain its traditional society and culture through the use of Sami in schools and the protection of reindeer pastures. In each country there are Sami political and cultural societies, and there are a few Sami newspapers and radio programs.

**“The Sámi in Finland,”** [samediggi.fi](http://samediggi.fi) [138] <https://www.samediggi.fi/sami-info/?lang=en>

#### Overview:

The Sámi are the only indigenous people of the European Union. Peoples in independent countries are regarded as indigenous if they are descended from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and if they identify themselves as indigenous and retain, irrespective of their legal status, some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The status of the Sámi was written into the constitution in 1995. The Sámi have, as an indigenous people, the right to maintain and develop their own language, culture and traditional livelihoods. There is also a law regarding the right to use the Sámi language when dealing with the authorities. Since 1996, the Sámi have had constitutional self-government in the Sámi Homeland in the spheres of language and culture. This self-government is managed by the Sámi Parliament, which is elected by the Sámi. The Skolt Sámi also maintain their tradition of village administration, under the Skolt Act, within the area reserved for the Skolt Sámi in the Sámi Homeland. The Sámi Homeland is legally defined and covers the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki as well as the Lappi reindeer-herding district in the municipality of Sodankylä.

There are about 10,000 Sámi in Finland. More than 60 per cent of them now live outside the Sámi Homeland, which brings new challenges for the provision of education, services and communications in the Sámi language. The total Sámi population is estimated to be over 75,000, with the majority living in Norway.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Livelihoods**

The traditional Sámi livelihoods are fishing, gathering, handicrafts, hunting and reindeer herding and the modern ways of practicing them.

Out of the traditional Sámi livelihoods, reindeer herding still functions as one of the important cornerstones of the Sámi culture by offering both language arena as well as material for, among others, clothing, other Sámi handicrafts and food culture. Ever since the development of reindeer herding, reindeer has been an important form of transportation.

#### **The Sámi Language**

The Sámi languages belong to the indigenous languages of Europe and are most closely related, within the Uralic language family, to the Baltic Finnic languages (such as Finnish and Estonian). Sámi is spoken in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia.

In Finland, there are speakers of three Sámi languages: North Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi. With approximately 20,000 speakers in Finland, Norway and Sweden, North Sámi is the most widely spoken of these languages. In Finland, North Sámi is spoken by approximately 2 000 people.

Inari Sámi is spoken exclusively in Finland. Skolt Sámi is spoken in Finland and in Russia. In Finland, both languages have approximately 300 speakers, most of whom live in Inari.

Under the pressure of the dominant languages, many Sámi have lost their mother tongue. Since the ethnic awakening in the 1960s, a variety of measures have been taken to preserve the Sámi languages and bring them back to life. The Sámi Language Act of 1992, revised in 2004, made Sámi an official language.

**“Lifestyle, Genetics, and Disease in Sami,” Alastair B. Ross, et al., Croatian Medical Journal, August 2006 [139]**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2080452/>

#### Abstract:

#### **Aim**

To present a summary of the lifestyle, genetic origin, diet, and disease in the population of Sami, indigenous people of northern Fennoscandia.

## Method

A survey of the available scientific literature and preliminary results from our own study of the Swedish Sami population.

## Results

The Sami probably have a heterogeneous genetic origin, with a major contribution of continental or Eastern European tribes and a smaller contribution from Asia. The traditional Sami diet, high in animal products, persists in Sami groups still involved with reindeer herding, but others have adopted a diet typical of Western cultures. Early reports indicated a lower prevalence of heart disease and most cancers, except stomach cancer. Recent studies have not found a lower risk of heart disease, but have consistently shown an overall reduced cancer risk. Sami have been reported to share some specific health-related genetic polymorphisms with other European populations, but none that would explain the observed differences in disease risk.

## Conclusion

The genetic structure of the Sami population makes it suitable for studies of the genetic and environmental factors influencing the development of common diseases. The difference in incidence of heart disease between studies may reflect the ongoing transition from a traditional to a more Westernized lifestyle. The ability to compare population segments with different lifestyles, combined with the genetic structure of the population, creates unusual possibilities for studies of the genetic and environmental factors involved in the development of common disease.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Sami are the indigenous people of the northernmost parts of Sweden, Finland, Norway, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. The Sami speak a language belonging to the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family with Finns, Karelians, and Estonians as their closest linguistic neighbors. The Sami languages can be further divided into 10 distinct extant languages. Sami are believed to have been present in the area from soon after glacial ice-sheet retreated. The Sami were initially hunters (mainly of reindeer and moose), but over time they domesticated the reindeer and became reindeer herders. Today, the Sami population is estimated to be less than 100 000 individuals. Some of the Sami are still reindeer herders and maintain a traditional lifestyle linked to the annual migration of the reindeer between summer and winter grazing areas, while the rest have other occupations. The Sami population is not known to have experienced any dramatic population changes and until recent, marriages between Sami and non-Sami families have been infrequent.

**“The Saami people, gender and Christianity,” Claudia Nussbaumer, Stand, 19 October 2018 [140] <https://stand.ie/the-saami-people-gender-and-christianity/>**

## Overview:

Claudia Nussbaumer continues her series, 'Gender roles in indigenous communities,' by looking at Saami gender roles, its change with the arrival of Christianity and the 1970s Saami feminist movement.

## Current & Relevant Information:

The Saami are a Finno-Ugric people inhabiting Sápmi, a large area to the north of modern-day Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Historically, they have been known in English as 'Lapps' or 'Laplanders.' However, these terms can be perceived as derogatory. They have never been a single community in a single region of Lapland. Today's estimated population is between 80,000-100,000.

In traditional Saami culture, women hold a certain amount of prestige due to being the primary caretaker of children. They are responsible for passing culture down through the generations and also ensure the family's survival. Another important aspect is the making of clothes, especially vital for survival in such a harsh climate. These responsibilities and the esteem in which they are held within society indicate a matriarchal element to Saami culture.

However, Saami women themselves have spoken up about the influence Christianity has had on gender roles. Kristi Paltto argues that Christianity has made women subservient as it teaches that women should be men's servants. Saami author, Magga Lukkari partially agrees with this statement. Lukkari claims that while Saami women are in a worse position than before, they are not as oppressed as women in the Western world. She further explains: "The position of a woman has been so important in a society based on an extended family that several generations will pass before Saami women are in the same position as Western women here."

In connection with this is the Saami shamanistic religion, which recognizes a variety of gods. The most important god for women is Mattarahkko, the primeval mother. This god also has three daughters who help women through different stages of their life. The presence of female deities in traditional Saami religion is more evidence for the regard women are held in Saami society.

The Saami feminist movement came into existence for a number of reasons: the effects of modernization; gender disparity within society at large; and specifically, female reindeer herders demanding equal labor rights. Moreover, there was a constructed perception of what it meant to be a Saami woman. Even though it was the image of a strong, decisive mother, it limited and pressured women into a niche gender role.

The Saami feminist movement happened in the late 1960s and early 1970s when women globally began to address stereotypes, economic injustices, and the concept of gender roles. The oppression faced by Saami women is twofold as they

experience oppression based on both gender and ethnicity, inside and outside their communities.

What is important to mention is that feminism didn't reach all Saami women. Many Saami women felt that conversations around gender roles and feminism portrayed them as victims, and so, refrained in engaging in liberation efforts. Furthermore, there was no interaction between mainstream feminist organizations and indigenous groups on the issue- preventing a population-wide uprising from taking root.

Despite this, the 1988 Nordic Council's Women's Conference marked a significant step forward for Saami women. Many Saami decided to band together and form their own women's organization, Sarahkka. This organization focused not only on women's issues but also indigenous problems, such as land and water rights.

## B. Religion:

**“Finland,” Robert Jarvenpa, Countries and their Cultures [141]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Finland.html>

### Overview:

The terms "Finland" and "Finns" are external obscure derivations from early (first century C.E.) Roman references to people known as Fenni (probably Lapps or Saami) who occupied lands north of the Baltic Sea. In their own language, Finns generally refer to themselves as Suomalaiset and their land or country as Suomi, which may derive from suo, the Finnish expression for a bog or swamp. Finns constitute the majority of the citizens of the Republic of Finland, which has a Swedish-speaking minority as well as Saami (Lapp) and Rom (Gypsy) minorities. While language was a highly divisive issue as late as the 1920s and 1930s, many Finnish speakers now recognize the value of Swedish for communicating with other Nordic countries. A distinction between urban, industrialized, coastal southwestern Finland and the rural interior northeast is an important historical and regional division in terms of culture and identity. However, socialist versus nonsocialist affiliations are more meaningful at the political level. Despite these distinctions, most citizens strongly believe that they share a common culture and heritage.

Finland is bordered on the east by Russia, on the south by the Gulf of Finland and Estonia, on the west by the Gulf of Bothnia and Sweden, and on the north and northwest by Norway. A quarter of its territory is north of the Arctic Circle. Four physiographic-biotic regions divide the country. An archipelagic belt embraces the southwestern coastal waters and the Åland Islands. A narrow coastal plain of low relief and clay soils, historically the area of densest rural settlement and mixed farming production, extends between the Russian and Swedish borders. A large interior plateau contains dense forests, thousands of lakes and peat bogs, and rocky infertile soils associated with a glacially modified landscape with numerous drumlins and eskers. This district lies north and east of the coastal plain toward the Russian

border. Beyond the Arctic Circle, forests give way to barren fells, extensive bogs, rugged mountains, and the large rivers of Lapland. Continental weather systems produce harsh cold winters that last up to seven months in the interior eastern and northern districts, yet long summer days permit farming far to the north. The climate in the south and west is moderated by the waters of the Gulf Stream and north Atlantic drift current.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Religious Beliefs.** Traditional conceptions of the supernatural had much in common with those of other Balto-Finnic peoples. The creation of the world was associated with the culture hero Väinämöinen, and the cosmos was divided into an underworld of the dead, a middle world of the living, and a sky-heaven supported by a giant pillar. Supernatural beings or deities included a god of the sky (Ilmarinen); a rain-giving god (Ukko), converted to a supreme or universal god under Christian influence; and other spirits of nature such as Tapio, a forest guardian of game. Many old features of Finnish-Karelian religion were preserved within the Russian Orthodox faith, which currently has about fifty-six thousand members in the venue of the Finnish Orthodox Church. However, Lutheranism, which contributed to an erosion of native religion, includes about 88 percent of the population as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Revivalist movements such as Laestadianism have flourished in the context of the Lutheran Church. The distinction between Lutheran and Orthodox traditions ultimately has its roots in early conflicts between the Swedish kingdom and the semi-independent state of Novgorod. The 1323 Peace of Pahkinasaari established a frontier border through Finnish territory. In the ensuing centuries, Finns to the west of the "Pahkinasaari line" were heavily exposed to Swedish, Scandinavian, and German culture and the Roman Catholic Church (ultimately replaced by Lutheranism), while Finns and Karelians in the Novgorodian realm to the east were influenced by Slavic culture and the Eastern (or Russian) Orthodox Church.

**Religious Practitioners.** Before Christian and medieval Scandinavian influence, religion involved shamanism, with practitioners mediating between the present world and the upper and nether realms of the universe. Traces of this tradition survive in the divinatory practices of the seer, or tietäjä . Evangelical Lutheran clergy, elected by local parish members, are the prominent religious specialists in contemporary society.

**Rituals and Holy Places.** Bear ceremonialism was part of the ancient hunting traditions. Ritual slaying, feasting, and return of the skull and bones of a bear were fundamental to sending the animal's soul back to its original home and thus facilitating its reincarnation. Ceremonies to promote farming and livestock became associated with holidays and the cult of the saints in the Christian calendar. Lutheran life cycle rites involving baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death remain significant for most people.

**Death and the Afterlife.** Living and dead formed a close unity in traditional Finnish and Karelian belief, and death was viewed largely as transfer to a new residence. The complex rituals accompanying death were orchestrated by women, who arranged the wake, washed and shrouded the body, and sometimes sang laments to send the deceased, along with food and implements, to the place of the family ancestors. Memorial feasts were held six weeks and one year after death. Those who passed on to the realm of the dead (Manala or Tuonela) remained a profound moral force among their living descendants. Days set aside for commemorating the dead eventually were adapted to a Christian calendar under Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox influence.

**“Sámi Shamanism Past and Present and the Desecration of the Sacred in Finland,” Francis Joy, ulapland.fi, 2016 [142]**

<https://lauda.ulapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/62704/Joy.Francis.pdf?sequence=2>

Abstract:

The aim of the paper is to outline a number of prospective legal issues in relation to Sámi shamanism and culture within a discussion about Sámi cultural heritage.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to outline a number of prospective legal issues in relation to Sámi shamanism and culture within a discussion about Sámi cultural heritage. In order to facilitate such a task, it is essential to understand the nature of the background issues which contribute to this debate. These are presented to you below.

Since the melting of the ice caps at the end of the last Ice Age across Fennoscandia 10,000 years ago and the formulation and migration of human populations within these vast areas, today in the north, we encounter through the study of prehistory, traces of the legacies they have left behind. The search for human settlement areas across the landscapes has revealed how both groups and individual artists and story-tellers have emerged from what developed into ancient hunting, fishing and trapping civilizations. These persons, one could say on reflection, and who shared a polytheistic worldview of life, which was animated, have been tradition bearers and cultural custodians who have carried the responsibility, customs, and identities of their societies forward into modern times.

For example, throughout the Nordic countries and also the Kola Peninsula in Russia where the indigenous Sámi people live, and who are the descendants of early civilizations. These peoples share a unique feature in the ways their cyclical cosmos and worldview, social life, customs, religious practices and relationship with nature and the animal kingdom has been portrayed through art. Such activities are

predominantly characterized within hunting, trapping, fishing and reindeer herding narratives.

Although we have no evidence of who the actual persons were that created the prehistoric landscape art; namely rock carvings and paintings, the content of their work shows overwhelmingly how they have been ritual specialists and people with extraordinary skills and abilities and who made contact with unseen worlds and the spirits who dwell there.

Today, we find many aspects of such practices which have largely continued until the 17th and 18th centuries portrayed on 71 Sámi shaman drums which were collected by priests and missionary workers whose campaign began sometime during the 13th century in the Nordic countries, to convert the Sámi populations from their pre-Christian religion to Christianity.

The Sámi shaman drum can be described as an oval shaped instrument which was a representation of between 2-5 layers of the cosmos depicting the human, spirit and animal powers that dwelled in the different dimensions within such landscapes. As a magical instrument, the painted drum has also been decorated with solar and lunar symbols as well as spirits representing the different elements within the natural world, thus paying reverence to them and their divine nature. A receptacle as such, could be compared to a sacred vessel into which powerful ancestral spirits and the spirits of nature took up residence and were subsequently called upon by the shaman when he needed assistance in matters pertaining to healing, divination and fortune-telling, for example. In this sense the shaman acted as an intermediary between the people and spirits.

One of the main ways communication was established by the shaman was through sacrificial activities, synchronized rhythmic drumming activities and singing-joiking. Many of these activities were focused upon fertility rituals and seasonal cycles and shifts in relation to hunting and reindeer herding.

Today, the remaining 71 drums can be found in museum collections throughout Europe, the majority (37) being in the archives of the Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, Sweden.

Ever since the campaign through colonialism by the Swedish state, the Sámi shaman drum has been recognized by the Sámi as both as a symbol of resistance but also and more importantly, one of fundamental representations of culture and self-identification of the Sámi as an indigenous people.

Throughout the Nordic countries within the last several decades, in-depth historical research investigating the correlations linking symbols, figures, designs and patterns between prehistoric rock carvings, paintings and Sámi shaman drum motifs has determined how there are remarkable parallels and thereby, links between such documented art forms. As a result, much ambiguity has arisen in relation to the



cultural context and ethnicity of the prehistoric art. It is at this point the focus of this paper turns towards two distinctive features in relation to the practice of Sámi shamanism both past and present with regard to cultural heritage, cultural property and protection.

### **Concluding remarks**

It seems that in both cases regarding the plight of rock paintings in Finland in relation to cultural heritage of the Sámi and the Sámi shaman drums in museums throughout Europe, as cultural property of the Sámi, nothing looks set to change concerning the restoration of knowledge.

It is my opinion that these issues provide much scope for future legal work for scholars both inside and out of Sámi society and thereby, could support further opportunities for cooperation between cultures.

The Sámi shaman and Sámi shamanism play a fundamental role in terms of the preservation of identity and culture across Fennoscandia, and the transmission of traditional ecological knowledge. The shaman's knowledge, wisdom and related spiritual practices and preservations of traditions and intimate relationships with the landscapes seem now at this time more important than ever.

**“Protecting the Cultural Survival of the Sami: Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources and the Role of Free, Prior and Informed Consent in the Protection of the Sami Right to Culture,” Karin Backman, Faculty of Social Sciences, Business and Economics, 2019 [143]**

[https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/169434/backman\\_karin.pdf?sequence=2](https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/169434/backman_karin.pdf?sequence=2)

#### Abstract:

The Sami, as many other indigenous communities, have suffered from oppression and violations of their rights, which have affected their political and cultural institutions negatively. Developmental projects, allowed by state authorities under the premise of state permanent sovereignty over natural resources, are violating the right to culture of the Sami. The Arctic railway, planned in 2017 in Finland and Norway, proves state authorities are disregarding the Sami in their decision-making, indicating flaws in the national legislation and that improvements are needed for states to respect and protect the Sami right to culture.

This thesis thus discusses state permanent sovereignty over natural resources and the possibility to alter the view to one of a cultural right of permanent sovereignty over natural resources. The cultural right to permanent sovereignty is connected to the right to participation in decision-making in the use of natural resources. If discussed from this viewpoint, it enables the Sami to be the right-bearers of such a right and thus protecting their culture and cultural survival. The culture of the Sami is dependent on natural resources and denying the Sami an access to said resources not only affect their traditional modes of subsistence and culture of the group, but the

human dignity of the individual. Securing the Sami, a right to influence the use of natural resources is thus an important step in protecting their human rights. However, even with a cultural perspective on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, the principle is too embedded into the notion of self-determination, thus risking the success of the Sami to acquire the right. Thus, the role of the principle of free, prior and informed consent becomes relevant. Through the implementation of the principle as a meaningful process in national law, the Sami are empowered to control the use of natural resources, thus protecting their cultural survival. Furthermore, if the principle of free, prior and informed consent is implemented as a process of meaningful dialogue, planning and decision-making, where the objective is finding a solution that respect all parties involved, state authorities increase their understanding of Sami culture. This empowers the Sami to protect their cultural survival.

Through discussing the obligations of states in international human rights law, drawing examples from national cases and judgments from international and national courts as well as national and international statements, this thesis examines the role free, prior and informed consent plays in protecting the right to culture and the cultural survival of the Sami. Furthermore, it elaborates how the principle of free, prior and informed consent protects the same interests as the cultural right to permanent sovereignty over natural resources, while simultaneously avoiding the sensitive political topic of Sami self-determination.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

In the past, indigenous peoples have suffered from oppression, which has affected their livelihood as well as their political and cultural institutions. This oppression has led to crippled economic and social conditions, making indigenous peoples the lowest ranking group on the socioeconomic ladder, both in industrial and less-developed countries. Land rights, and the access to natural resources, are connected to the preservation of indigenous people's culture, religion, spirituality and traditional livelihood. Thus, nature has a different significance for indigenous people than for the non-indigenous population of the state. It is a part of their identity. Indigenous people's cultural identity and commitment to its protection is what underlines their struggle to have their land and human rights secured.

The contemporary indigenous movement has increased since early 1970s. The focus of the indigenous movement has been their cultural survival and the protection of access to land and natural resources. Before the 1970s, most states with indigenous populations resisted not only affording indigenous people with land rights, but rights protecting their culture as well. However, even if there has been a steady increase in protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, violations still occur.

Indigenous people still struggle having their land rights secured and having access to natural resources essential for their cultural survival.

The current legal situation of indigenous rights is the result of a past of a lack of rights, and where rights have existed, violations of these rights. The situation has improved; however, economic interests still often violate indigenous intellectual property rights. In order for indigenous people to benefit from greater distributional gains they should, as a community, be able to better control their own development within the state. With a control over their own development and thus an access to land and natural resources, indigenous culture and the survival of their culture is protected.

Protecting indigenous rights has partially been difficult as no definition of indigenesness exists in international law. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has stated that a definition of indigenesness is not necessary, as this might hinder indigenous people's enjoyment of their rights as the worlds indigenous peoples are diverse. The ILO (International Labor Organization) Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (hereafter the ILO Convention No. 169) defines indigenous people as those who are descendant from the populations which have inhabited a country or a geographical region and who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

Furthermore, a working definition has been presented by Special Rapporteur José R. Martínez Cobo. According to this definition, indigenous people are those populations, where a historical continuity reaching to the present can be found. This historical continuity can be based on the occupation of ancestral lands, a common ancestry with the original occupants of the land areas, culture, language, residence or other relevant factors. Furthermore, indigenous people's close relationship to nature and natural resources is a distinctive aspect separating them from non-indigenous people.

The Sami, the only indigenous people in Europe and the oldest ethnic group in the Nordic Countries and probably the oldest people in Europe, have been recognized as indigenous people by Finland and Norway. In Sweden, the Sami received status as a people in 2011. The Sami reside in the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway an area also known as the Sápmi, and on the Russian Kola Peninsula and are numerically a small people. In 2015, it was estimated that the number of Sami residing in Finland was 10,463, in Sweden 15,000-20,000, in Norway 50,000-70,000 and in Russia 2,000. The Sami regard themselves as one people living in four different countries, not as four different people. This notion has been intact since after the Second World War.

The Sami, as many other indigenous communities have struggled to have their rights respected and protected. This is not only an occurrence from the past but is

still evident in the 21st century. State authorities, especially in situations of development and economic growth and well-being, are disregarding Sami rights, hindering the Sami from enjoying their right to culture. The Tana river agreement, a bilateral agreement between Finland and Norway signed in 2016 regulating fishing in the Tana river, has been a hot topic in the last years, as it is hindering the Sami from enjoying their right to culture. In 2017, the Ministry of Transport and Communication in Finland started negotiations with Norwegian state authorities concerning an Arctic railway from Rovaniemi, Finland to Kirkenes, Norway. The railway, which would run straight through Sami homeland, if completed would hinder the ability of the Sami to continue with reindeer herding. To date of writing this thesis there has been no final political decision on governmental level in going through with the project. However, the fact that the railway has been planned even though a project such as it would hinder the Sami from enjoying their cultural rights shows that the Sami are still struggling in having their rights protected.

Developmental projects are often the cause of violations of indigenous rights worldwide. These developmental projects do not only directly endanger the cultural and/or physical survival of indigenous communities, but they often cause significant environmental harm and thus affect indigenous livelihood indirectly. As the Sami, similarly as many other indigenous people, are dependent on an access to natural resources for maintaining their culture, developmental projects, such as the Tana river agreement and the planned Arctic railway, are affecting their cultural rights.

Developmental projects fall under the scope of the state right to use, control and manage natural resources found on the territory, thus falling under the scope of rights of sovereign states. This permanent sovereignty over natural resources is an established principle of international customary law. In other words, according to the traditional view of international law, states enjoy absolute sovereignty over natural resources. States are thus responsible for distributing the gains acquired from these developmental projects. However, indigenous communities have often been left outside the scope of receiving gains from developmental projects. Furthermore, when these developmental projects occur on indigenous ancestral lands, it raises the issue of entitlement and allocation of natural resources between the indigenous community and the state and rest of its nationals.

For indigenous people to better influence their own cultural survival, the topic of permanent sovereignty over natural resources should be regarded as a mechanism to empower indigenous people and allow for access to land and natural resources. As permanent sovereignty over natural resources is linked to the right of self-determination, and indigenous people seek self-determination for the sake of cultural survival and for the protection of their human rights as well as for achieving intercultural justice, permanent sovereignty over natural resources is thus linked to the protection of culture. If discussing the topic of permanent sovereignty over natural resources from a cultural viewpoint, development receives a human rights

approach where culture is grounded in human dignity, allowing for a possibility for indigenous people to protect their culture.

However, even with a human rights approach to permanent sovereignty over natural resources, indigenous people still struggle to have a right to self-determination and, in extension, a permanent sovereignty over natural resources found on their ancestral lands granted to them. This is mostly due to a political unwillingness by states to acknowledge an indigenous right to self-determination, due to a fear of threats to the political integrity of the state. Due to the lack of political willingness to acknowledge indigenous self-determination, other legal provisions must be found to protect indigenous permanent sovereignty over natural resources. The principle of free, prior and informed consent thus becomes relevant.

The premise of indigenous permanent sovereignty over natural resources can be divided into two types: the right to use and enjoy natural resources and the right to give or withhold their consent on developmental projects on their ancestral territories. To give or withhold consent is connected to the principle of free, prior and informed consent, a principle receiving more attention in international human rights law. As developmental projects are affecting the rights of indigenous people, they ought to have a real possibility to influence these projects. Implementing the principle of free, prior and informed consent into national legislation in the overall administrative framework, places an obligation on states to engage in meaningful discussion with indigenous communities, thus allowing for an outcome which respects the interests and rights of both parties. Furthermore, through a meaningful dialogue with indigenous people, state authorities increase their understanding of indigenous culture. Understanding indigenous culture is essential in securing indigenous people a cultural right to permanent sovereignty over natural resources and for respecting their human dignity.

**“Introduction: The Making of Sámi Religion in Contemporary Society,” Trude Fonneland and Tiina Aikas, Religions, 23 October 2020 [144]**

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewiO6IT5hKnwAhVDZM0KHcNVC0AQFjAAegQIAxAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mdpi.com%2F2077-1444%2F11%2F11%2F547%2Fpdf&usq=AOvVaw2FQBStLYrFNFMUBG0IfT5v5>

**Abstract:**

This Special Issue of Religions approaches “Sámi religion” from a long-term perspective seeing both the past religious practices and contemporary religious expressions as aspects of the same phenomena. This does not refer, however, to a focus on continuity or to a static or uniform understanding of Sámi religion. Sámi religion is an ambiguous concept that has to be understood as a pluralistic phenomenon consisting of multiple applications and associations and widely differing interpretations, and that highlights the complexities of processes of religion-

making. In a historical perspective and in many contemporary contexts (such as museum displays, media stories, as well as educational programs) the term Sámi religion is mostly used as a reference to Sámi pre-Christian religious practices, to Laestadianism, a Lutheran revival movement that spread among the Sámi during the 19th Century, and last but not least to shamanism. In this issue, we particularly aim to look into contemporary contexts where Sámi religion is expressed, consumed, and promoted. We ask what role it plays in identity politics and heritagization processes, and how different actors connect with distant local religious pasts—in other words, in which contexts is Sámi religion activated, by whom, and for what?

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Sámi Religion-Making**

What is often termed the Sámi religion or the pre-Christian Sámi religion refers to a set of beliefs and practices performed and communicated by people in an area contemporarily known as Sápmi, and described by missionaries, ethnographers, travelers, and various stakeholders over a long-time span. As Pollan (2005, p. 416) argues, “What today is known as “Sámi religion”, has for the Sámi themselves simply been their way of life”. More than about a Sámi way of life, what scholars, missionaries, travelers, and stakeholders have been writing about is their own view of human history, and at the same time they have taken part in a social, economic, and political oppression. There are in other words no universals of Sámi religion. It is in creative encounters and in a process of translation that Sámi religion emerges as a category. The circulations of religious themes, which are clearly expressed in these processes, bring our attention to the flows of religion and religious change and renewal.

**“The Decline of the Sámi People’s Indigenous Religion,” Alan Holloway, *Sami Culture* [145] <https://www.laits.utexas.edu/sami/diehtu/siida/christian/decline.htm>**

#### Overview:

Sámi indigenous religion, more accurately described as an integral way of life, comprises three intertwining elements: animism, shamanism, and polytheism. Sámi animism is manifested in the Sámi’s belief that all significant natural objects (such as animals, plants, rocks, etc.) possess a soul, and furthermore, are cognizant of their surroundings (according to legend, losing their powers of speech only recently). Seen from a polytheistic perspective, Sámi religion has a multitude of spirits and gods, the most important being the Mother, Father, Son and Daughter (Radenacca, Radienacce, Radienkiedde and Radienneida).

The Son of this pantheon is a creator of the earthly realm, the Daughter a Goddess of spring and fertility. In the earthly or manifested reality, there is also a highly regarded horned god of fertility, fire and thunder, called Horagales, as well

as the Sun goddess Beive and the Moon goddess Manno. The ancient, original Mother and Father of the Sámi, believed by some to be equivalent to Eve and Adam of the Christians, are called Mattarahkka and Maderacce. (Jarving internet resource)

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Sámi indigenous religion was a world-view and also a shamanistic form of worship in which drumming and traditional chanting, yoiking, were of singular importance. The Sámi shaman, called a noaide, was traditionally the healer and protector. More recently, the noaide also assumed the role of the prophesiers of the siida, the basic unit of Sámi society, being composed of typically several families, but the noaide's most vital task was to maintain a link with the world inhabited by departed Sámi. Using a traditional drum, which is the most important symbol and tool of the Sámi shaman, the noaide invoked assistance from benevolent spirits and conducted out-of-body travel via the "free soul" with the help of other siida members. The Sámi distinguish between the "free soul" versus the more mundane "body soul"; the "body soul" is unable to traverse the divide separating the spiritual netherworld from the more mundane, corporeal, real world. As part of the shamanic experience, the noaide and others yoik; yoiking is the Sámi rhythmic chant-song used for a variety of purposes, but in the context of shamanic rituals, serves in part as a trance conjuration tool. In order for the noaide to navigate the spiritual world, they used the drum as a cognitive map of the world inhabited by Sámis in their afterlife; figures drawn on their drums constituted an emblematic representation of their spiritual universe. Yoiking is a manifestation of the Sámi's wish to reify or call someone (or thing) into being—yoiking is an activity that helps to perpetuate a person's memory and acknowledges their existence and importance.

Indigenous Sámi religion has effectively been eradicated. Scandinavian countries differ in the ways in which the Sámis are afforded their respective opportunities to worship (or not). Norway has a curious two-sided attitude towards religion: religious freedom is officially protected, yet there is also a state religion, which confers concrete benefits on its adherents. Only ten percent of the population does not affirm a particular religious denomination. The state religion, Evangelical-Lutheran, claims 86 percent of the population.

The vast majority of Sámi [in Finland] belong to the Lutheran Church, while the Skolt Sámi belong to the Orthodox Church. Within the Sámi region, Lutheran ceremonies and services such as baptisms, weddings and funerals are to be conducted in Sámi whenever wished. In the Sámi region, the church also has a Sámi minister who officiates at services in Sámi. According to the new Ecclesiastical Code, since the beginning of 1994 it has been possible to found a unilingual Sámi or a bilingual Finnish-Sámi parish within the Sámi region. (Virtual Finland internet resource).

Within Finnish borders, the Sámi seemingly have fewer restrictions than they do in the rest of Sápmi.

Sámi society was stable and autonomous for thousands of years. Unfortunately, the ineluctable expansion of the Germanic peoples' territories proved a force against which the Sámi people could not resist. For Sámi indigenous religion, the clash has proved a disaster.

**“Sami Spirituality and the Cult of the Sacred Stones,” Riley Winters, Ancient Origins, 18 May 2018 [146] <https://www.ancient-origins.net/ancient-places-europe/sami-spirituality-and-cult-sacred-stones-0010064>**

#### Overview:

The Cult of the Sacred Stones belong to the Sami people of northern Europe. The Sami (occasionally spelled Saami) live in Lapland, a part of northern Europe near Norway, Sweden and Finland, and adjacent to the Kola Peninsula of Russia. The Sami people once shared in variations of the Norse religion, worshipping gods akin to Odin, Thor, Loki, Freyja, etc. And while the pre-Christian Norse appear to have also valued nature spirits as deities, the Sami were—and are—more attuned to these natural spirits. The Sami traditions of worshipping and presenting offerings to the spirits is continuous, and is best seen within the Cult of the Sacred Stones, or the Cult of the Seida.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Sami Spirituality**

At the core of the Sacred Stones (called seida in the language of the Sami) is a deep-seated belief in spirituality rather than religious figures, or deities. (That is not to say that the Sami do/did not worship figures; merely this means that the religion surrounding the Stones specifically are rooted more in spirituality.) The Sami value particular rocks as possessing the spirits of the natural world; these rocks are considered spiritual for a variety of reasons: in some cases, the rocks are naturally positioned in an intriguing way, or the rocks themselves are "of fancy form", as one source notes. However, there is also a man-made aspect to these Stone formations; the Stones themselves are delineated as sacred and can therefore be configured or reconfigured as necessary or desired by the religious leaders.

##### **Sami and Nature**

To fully understand the value of the Stones in the culture of the Sami, one must first note the value of agriculture and animal husbandry. Herding, hunting and fishing are still highly pertinent aspects of the Sami culture, just as they were early on. From this deep-seated association with the natural world, and because of the constant movement of the Sami across their native lands, the Cult of the Sacred Stones arose.



This importance is difficult to understand, even today, as the Sami keep their spiritual and cultural secrets close to heart, the Sami elders retaining the most comprehensive knowledge of the culture. Perhaps this is why the Cult of the Sacred Stones, and the ancient core of the Sami lifestyle, remains so strongly intact in the present.

**“Religion,” Milwaukee Public Museum [147]**

<https://www.mpm.edu/index.php/research-collections/anthropology/online-collections-research/sami/religion>

Overview:

Like most Arctic and Subarctic culture complexes, Sami spirituality was traditionally natural and shamanic.

Current & Relevant Information:

The forces of nature were the deities and spirits that ruled every important aspect of nature, and of Sami lives. Animals, plants, and even inanimate objects had a soul. Offerings and sacrifices were made at holy natural or human-built sites in the land. Through a type of singsong chant called the joik, Sami conveyed legends and expressed their spirituality (McLeod, 2006).

The drum was a crucial part of Sami shamanism as it facilitated transcendence between the human world and the spirit world. Though every household had a drum, only a few individuals possessed real power. These were called the noiades, or shamans. The drum was used to induce ecstasies, and it was during these trance states that the noiade was able to wander into the spirit world and achieve great things with those sacred animals that served as his assistant spirits (Vorren and Manker 2006: 123). Drums were most commonly used for the purposes of foretelling weather and other conditions for herding travel.

Christianity was introduced to the Sami with the influx of Scandinavians, many of whom believed the Sami were a backward race and regarded their shamanic practice as devil worship. Throughout the region, laws were created to deny the Sami rights to their land and to the practice of traditional livelihoods.

At the end of the 17th century, through royal decree, a church was built especially for the Sami in Varanger, Norway. Sami who then attempted to practice their traditional religion were persecuted--some even burned at the stake for "witchcraft"--and holy sites and drums were destroyed. However, several drums still exist in museums and private households today. Despite initial rebellion against Christianity, in time the Sami became loyal worshippers. In the form of Christianity that most Sami adopted, the feeling of the shamanic ecstasy was echoed in the emotion-charged excitement that could build up during gatherings (Ibid, 130). One man in particular, Lars Levi Laestadius (1800-1861), was instrumental in spreading Lutheranism among the Sami. Being half Sami himself, and with an apparent

penchant for learning languages, Laestadius was eventually able to give sermons in Finnish and Swedish as well as several Sami dialects (Hepokoski 1993).

Because the nomadic lifestyle and the immensity of the Sami landscape prohibited frequent and regular masses, church-going began to occur on annual migrations and at certain special times of year during festivals and markets. It was during these occasions that traditional Sami dress was—and still is—worn as a celebration of Sami culture. Though most fastboende do not wear this tracht dress on a regular basis, some flytte still do.

**“New Users and Changing Traditions—(Re)Defining Sami Offering Sites,” Tiina Aikas and Marte Spangen, *European Journal of Archaeology*, 2015 [148]**  
<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:886171/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

Abstract:

Sami are indigenous people of Northern Fennoscandia. Some Sami offering sites have been used for over a thousand years. During this time, the offering traditions have changed and various people have started using the places based on different motivations. Present day archaeological finds give evidence of both continuing traditions and new meanings attached to these sites, as well as to sites that were probably not originally used for rituals in the Sami ethnic religion. In some cases, the authenticity of the place seems to lie in the stories and current beliefs more than in a historical continuity or any specifically sacred aspects of the topography or nature it is situated in. Today's new users include, for example, local (Sami) people, tourists, and neo-pagans. This paper discusses what informs these users, what identifies certain locations as offering sites, and what current users believe their relationship to these places should be. What roles do scholarly traditions, heritage tourism, and internal culture have in (re)defining Sami offering sites and similarly what roles do 'appropriate' rituals have in ascribing meaning to particular places? How do we mediate wishes for multivocality with our professional opinions when it comes to defining sacredness?

Current & Relevant Information:

**INTRODUCTION**

During the twentieth century, research on Sami offering sites, including any excavations, was, to a large extent, performed by ethnographers (e.g., Manker, 1957; Itkonen, 1962; Vorren, 1985; Vorren & Eriksen, 1993; though see Hallström, 1932; Erä-Esko, 1957). Despite some calls for more archaeological research on such sites (Vorren, 1985: 81; Rydving & Kristoffersen, 1993), only in recent years has there been a renewed interest in fieldwork related to Sami offering sites among archaeologists. Prior to 2006, only four excavations had been carried out on Sami offering sites in Finland. Results from excavations on two sacred islands in 2006 and 2007 led to the launching of the project 'Human-Animal Relations among Finland's

Sami', funded by the Academy of Finland. During this project, excavations were conducted at eight Sami sacred sites in different parts of Finnish Lapland.

Recent archaeological studies in Norway and Sweden have so far mainly been limited to surveys, inventories, and delineations of Sami sacred sites and offering sites for heritage management purposes (Myrvoll, 2008), and to relating known offering sites to other archaeological and topographical features in order to discuss past and present Sami landscape cognition and use (e.g., Hedman, 2003; Sveen, 2003; Fossum, 2006). Apart from this, previously collected material has been used to analyze Sami offering sites (e.g., Mulk, 2005; Salmi et al., in prep.). In 2013, two limited excavations were performed in structures called 'Sami circular offering sites' in northern Norway (Spangen, in prep. a, in prep. b).

The findings from the recent excavations in both Norway and Finland have equally resulted in questions about the age of the offering sites and about what has led to their present definition as such. Studies of the research history in general and concerning some sites in particular have shown that the understanding of certain locations, constructions, or topographical features as being Sami sacred sites may be of quite recent origin, sometimes based on scholarly hypotheses and sometimes outright inventions for touristic purposes, though the interpretations may have some association with older historical accounts or traditions (cf. Äikäs, 2011; Spangen, 2013a). This raises questions of authenticity and definition that are not only relevant when studying Sami offering sites, but that contribute to a wider debate concerning the experience of authenticity and sacredness and some dilemmas of heritage tourism, especially in indigenous cultural contexts. In the following, we will present the new archaeological source material that has recently raised such questions in relation to Sami offering sites, and explore the range of users and historical trajectories that have defined, and still continue to define, sites as sacred in Sami contexts.

## **CONCLUSION**

Sami offering places—or places interpreted as such—demonstrate how site biographies, authenticity, and sacredness can be intertwined in different ways. Their life histories have included changes both in offering practices and in groups of people using them. In meeting such multivocality, the challenge for archaeologists is to identify the discourses involved, and to evaluate if and when these discourses are relevant to include or oppose in the archaeological narrative. Multiple users of these sites and the meanings attached to them can be seen to strengthen their value, but they can also be problematic. Questions of colonial suppression, productization, and even destruction of the sites can be raised as diverse users interact with the sites differently. The marks of modern practices especially can hold different connotations to different people; what is trash to one can be an offering to another.

## **7. Russia:**

**“Russia,” The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 19 June 2020 [149] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/russia/>**

### Overview:

Russia’s Arctic territory stretches along 24,140 kilometers of coastline along the Arctic Ocean and waters above the Arctic Circle from the Barents Sea in the west at the border to Norway to the Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk in the far east. Russia’s coastline accounts for 53 percent of the Arctic Ocean coastline and covers the Barents Sea, Kara Sea, Laptev Sea, and East Siberian Sea. Throughout the country’s Arctic waters a number of archipelagos can be found, most prominently the Novaya Zemlya in the Kara Sea, Severnaya Zemlya in the Laptev Sea, and the New Siberian Islands in the East Siberian Sea. To the north-east of the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, Russia’s Franz Josef Land is located just 950 kilometers from the North Pole. Russia’s closest point to the North Pole is Cape Fligely on Rudolf Island. The Cape is a mere 911 kilometers from the pole.

Russia’s Arctic territory is dominated by three major river systems, the Yenisey River in the west discharges in the Kara Sea, the Lena River empties in the Laptev Sea, and the Kolyma River ends in the East Siberian Sea. While these rivers are frozen for parts of the year, they represent a vital transportation route for parts of the year, aided in part by a specialized fleet of shallow-draft ice breakers to ensure access to communities and cities along these rivers.

Temperatures across Russia’s Arctic and sub-Arctic territory are the coldest recorded outside of Antarctica. The village of Oymyakon in the Yakutsk region regularly sees temperatures below -50°C and recorded a record low -71.2°C in 1924. Daily average low temperatures during winter, while inevitably varying across such large swaths of land, range from -20°C -40°C. During the summer month, average daily high temperatures are between 15-25 °C but can reach as high as 35°C especially in Russia’s sub-Arctic interior regions. In the summer of 2018, the Russian Northern coastal regions also experienced an unprecedented heatwave with temperatures exceeding 30°C.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Russia’s Arctic population counts approximately 2 million people, about half of the people living in the Arctic worldwide. Russia’s largest cities above the Arctic Circle are Murmansk, also the Arctic’s most populous city and historically known as an Arctic hub, with a population of 303,754. Norilsk has 175,365 inhabitants and Vorkuta counts 70,548 people. However, in the recent census of 2017, the Murmansk Oblast population was in clear decline. Since 2010, the population has decreased by nearly 40,000 people over the last 7 years.

Russia accounts for over 100 identified ethnic groups, of which 41 are legally recognized as Indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East. Of the 41 groups, 11 reside around or above the Arctic Circle. Lovozero in Murmansk oblast is considered the Russian “Sami capital,” with 2,800 inhabitants. Russia’s Arctic is home to approximately 67,000 people that are part of indigenous minorities, of which 75 percent live in rural areas. The largest indigenous groups in Russia are the Dolgan, Nganasan, Nenets, Saami, Khanty, Chukchi, Evenk, Even, Enets, Eskimo (or Yupik), and Yukagir.

While traditional livelihood opportunities vary from region to region, the lives of all of Russia’s Arctic people are closely intertwined to the long history of exploitation of resources in Russia’s North, which contains vast quantities of natural resources, including oil and gas, coal, timber, and various minerals. Resource exploration often occurs in proximity to the traditional homelands of indigenous peoples. While the impact of and the adjustment to industrialization varies from region to region, large swaths of land and rivers used for reindeer herding, fishing, and hunting have been lost to or been degraded by industrial development. In the process, traditional knowledge has been lost and century-old patterns of land use have been ignored bringing with it high social cost and the deterioration of traditional culture.

While economic development in the Arctic accounts for a growing share of Russia’s gross national product, it remains difficult for indigenous people to take advantage of higher education opportunities of benefit directly or indirectly from the economic opportunities related to the industrialization of the north. In addition, the melting of the tundra permafrost has caused outbreaks of deadly anthrax and a series of violent explosions in the Russian Arctic. This constitutes a serious danger for both reindeer, ecosystem and Arctic inhabitants. In 2017, a boy died of anthrax in the Yamal Peninsula, while 20 infected people were treated and survived. Temperatures reaching over 30°C in intense heatwaves across Siberia led to the melting of the permafrost.

“The Russian Federation,” Arctic Council [150] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/russian-federation/>

Overview:

## **Quick Facts**

### **Arctic Territory**

Murmansk, Nenets, Yamal-Nenets, Chukotka Autonomous Okrugs and northern municipalities of Arkhangelsk, Komi Republic, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)

### **Arctic Population**

2.5 million

## **Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

40 Indigenous peoples live in Russia. The largest include: Dolgan, Nganasan, Nenets, Saami, Khanty, Chukchi, Evenk, Even, Enets, Eskimo (Yupik) and Yukagir

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Russia and the Arctic Region**

The Russian Arctic is an immense territory that stretches over 24,150 kilometers of coastline and includes:

- The whole of the Murmansk Region and the Nenets, Yamal-Nenets and Chukotka Autonomous Okrugs
- The northern municipalities of the Arkhangelsk Region, the Komi Republic, Krasnoyarsk Territory and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)
- The archipelagoes and islands in the Russian portion of the Arctic Ocean

Russia stretches over 53 percent of the Arctic Ocean coastline. Approximately two and a half million of Russia's inhabitants live in Arctic territory, accounting for nearly half of the population living in the Arctic worldwide. Therefore, efficient and sustainable development of the Arctic is one of the key national priorities of the Russian Federation. Other key national interests in the Arctic include:

- The use of the Arctic region as a strategic resource base of the Russian Federation, providing solutions to the task of socio-economic development of the country
- Preservation of the Arctic as an area of peace and cooperation
- Conservation of the unique ecosystems of the Arctic
- Use of the Northern Sea Route as a national unified transportation line of the Russian Federation in the Arctic

The extraction of natural resources, primarily oil and natural gas, is Russia's primary Arctic industry. The country is the world's third-largest producer of hydrocarbon resources. Another priority area is the socio-economic development of the Arctic region in the Russian Federation, including improvement of quality of life for the Indigenous population and of social conditions for economic activity in the Arctic. Development of science and technology are key focuses, along with the creation of an up-to-date information and telecommunication infrastructure. Environmental safety and international cooperation in the Arctic are other priority areas for the Russian Federation.

#### **Indigenous Peoples**

Russia has 40 legally recognized Indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. Of the 40 Indigenous Peoples, 11 live around or above the Arctic Circle, the largest groups including Dolgan, Nganasan, Nenets, Saami, Khanty, Chukchi, Evenk, Even, Enets, Eskimo (Yupik) and Yukagir. Traditionally, Indigenous peoples relied on reindeer herding, fishing and hunting.

**“Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North,” Arctic Council** [\[151\]](https://arctic-council.org/en/about/permanent-participants/raipon/)  
<https://arctic-council.org/en/about/permanent-participants/raipon/>

Overview:

### **Quick Facts**

#### **Territory**

The Russian Federation

#### **Indigenous Peoples**

40 Indigenous peoples that live in the Russian Federation

#### **Indigenous Population**

250,000

RAIPON's goal is to protect Indigenous peoples' human rights, defend their legal interests, assist in solving environmental, social, economic, cultural and educational issues and to promote their right to self-governance. RAIPON works with the State Duma and the Government of the Russian Federation regarding legislation related to indigenous peoples' issues. In addition to its status as a Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council, RAIPON participates in international structures such as the United Nations Economic and Social Council with a special consultative status and the Governing Council, and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Program as an observer.

Current & Relevant Information:

### **About the Russian Indigenous Peoples Represented in RAIPON**

RAIPON represents 40 Indigenous peoples totaling over 250,000 people. The peoples represented in RAIPON live in 60 percent of the whole Russian Federation territory, including the North, Siberia and the Far East.

RAIPON's Indigenous community includes distinctive cultures with a variety of native languages and varied economic activities that are largely based on natural resources.

**“Who Are the Indigenous Peoples of Russia?” Cultural Survival, 19 February 2014**  
[\[152\]](https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/who-are-indigenous-peoples-russia) <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/who-are-indigenous-peoples-russia>

### Overview:

“We, the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation, believe that the Air, the Land, and Water are blessed; Nature is the source of life, Man is but a drop in the whirlpool of life; The river of time is but a reflection of the past, present, and future and that how our ancestors lived in the past is how we now live and how our offspring will live in the future.”-RAIPON Charter

### Current & Relevant Information:

There are over 100 identified ethnic groups in Russia. Of them, 41 are legally recognized as “Indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East.” These are the only groups that are legally protected as Indigenous peoples; to meet the requirements, a group of peoples must number fewer than 50,000 people, maintain a traditional way of life, inhabit certain remote areas of the country, and identify as a distinct ethnic group. Some groups are disqualified because of their larger populations, such as the Sakha (Yakuts), Buryat, Komi, and Khakas; others are currently striving to get recognition. Additionally, there are 24 larger ethnic groups that are identified as national identities or titular nations. These groups inhabit independent states or autonomous areas in Russia, but do not have specific protections under the law.

The smallest of these Indigenous groups are the Enets (350 people) and the Oroks (450 people), while the largest are the Nenets and Evenkis, which both have nearly 30,000 members. Of the 41 peoples, ten have fewer than 1,000 members and eleven live beyond the Arctic Circle. At least 16 of these peoples have such small populations that they are considered to be endangered; at least eleven have been declared extinct. Though Russia’s Indigenous peoples only make up 0.2% of the total population, or 250,000 people total, they inhabit about 2/3 of Russia’s territory.

The Indigenous peoples of Russia are so varied and diverse that it would be a disservice to try and provide a cultural overview. They do have some characteristics in common: many are nomadic or seminomadic, practice animism, and have lifestyles based on hunting, gathering, fishing, and reindeer herding. In many of these groups, an adherence to traditional lifestyle has become even more important since the collapse of the Soviet economy. The languages of the Indigenous groups of Russia are numerous, but most of them belong to one of three main ethno-linguistic groups: Uralic, Altaic, and Paleo-Siberian.

**“Russia is dominating the Arctic, but it's not looking to fight over it,” Holly Ellyatt, CNBC: World Politics, 27 December 2019 [153]**  
<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/12/27/russias-dominance-in-the-arctic.html>

### Overview:

#### **Key Points**



- Russia has been quietly expanding its political, economic and military influence in the Arctic.
- Russia's coastline accounts for 53% of Arctic Ocean coastline and the country's population in the region totals roughly 2 million people.

Current & Relevant Information:

Russia certainly feels at home with the Arctic, and vice versa; Russia's coastline accounts for 53% of Arctic Ocean coastline and the country's population in the region totals roughly 2 million people — that's around half of the people living in the Arctic worldwide, according to the Arctic Institute, a center for circumpolar security studies.

As such, it's perhaps no surprise that Russia wants to extend its influence in a region that it feels at home in, and one that offers multiple opportunities in a variety of areas ranging from energy and trade, to defense.

"Russia is by virtue of its geography, the largest Arctic country. The fact that there are 2 million people that are Russian living there too means that the Arctic is Russia in many ways," Andreas Østhagen, senior research fellow at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute in Norway, and at the Arctic Institute, told CNBC.

"In Russia too, the Arctic resonates with people and they have so many of their resources in that region; oil and gas, fisheries and minerals."

It is estimated that there could be trillions of dollars' worth (as much as \$35 trillion) of untapped gas and oil reserves, as well as mineral resources, that Russia and its Arctic neighbors are keen to tap.

Østhagen said that Russia can draw on the Arctic for economic purposes and it has for a while been instrumental in investing in grand projects, such as the Yamal LNG project, "one of the largest and most complex LNG (liquefied natural gas) projects in the world," according to Total, which has a 20% stake in the project based in the Yamal Peninsula above the Arctic Circle. Novatek, Russia's second-largest natural gas producer, has a 50% stake in the venture.

In a bid to encourage energy companies to increase exploration and extraction activities in the Arctic, the Kremlin announced in October a trillion-ruble tax cut, or around \$40 billion, to incentivize those activities.

The tax cut reportedly came after domestic and international investors said they would only invest in Vostok Oil, an Arctic oil project led by Russia's largest oil company Rosneft, if the government gave in to demands from Rosneft's chief executive for preferential tax rates. Vostok Oil is expected to produce up to 100 million tons of oil per year, or a fifth of what Russia currently pumps, Reuters noted.

But the Arctic is more significant to Russia for more than resources and it has an important economic, defensive and transport value too. It has symbolic and nationalistic value, Østhagen said.

"The name of the game in the Arctic is presence," he said, noting that the region had value for Russian President Vladimir Putin who has overseen a rise in Russian nationalist sentiment during his two decades in power.

**“Eskimos and Russian Arctic Groups,” Jeffrey Hays, Facts and Details, May 2016**  
[154] [http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9\\_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5](http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5)

Overview:

### **Asiatic Eskimos**

Asiatic Eskimos found in Russia are virtually the same as Eskimos that live in Alaska. They are also very similar to the Inuit in Canada and Greenland. There is an indigenous population of Asiatic Eskimos on the southeastern shore of the Chukchi Peninsula in the Russian Far East. They call themselves the Yupik. Depending on where they are found they are also known as Nevuga Yupiga, Singhinem Yupiga, Sivugam Yupiga.

There are 1,300 Asiatic Eskimos in the Chukotka (Chukchi) region. Their language is called Yupik. In the old days Asiatic Eskimos ranged over a much larger area than they do today: across the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean. In the 1920s, they lived in 13 exclusively Eskimo settlements. Today most of them lived in five settlements along with Chukchis and Russians. Another 1,500 or so Eskimos lived on the St. Lawrence Islands in Alaska.

### **Aleuts**

The Aleuts have traditionally lived in the western tip of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. In the late 18th century and early 19th century when Russians entered their homeland, some of them resettled in the Pribilof Islands and the Commander Islands, which now lie in Russian territory, where they are known as the Komandorskiye islands. The term Aleut is used to describe someone who is descendant of the original inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands. The Aleuts are also known as Unangan.

In the old days the Aleuts engaged in frequent raids. Early Russian explorers described islands that had been depopulated by raids. The Aleuts also battled with the Russians, often with great loss of life. In one incident four Russian trading vessels were destroyed and there were only 12 survivors. The Russians retaliated and later forced the Aleuts to engage in forced labor and fight against other groups. Aleut weapons included animal skin armor, sinew-backed composite bows, war lances and sea darts.

The Aleuts that settled on the Komandorskiye islands did so primarily to earn money from the fur seal trade. They were joined by Kodiak Islanders and Atkans and Attuans, all of these groups converted to Orthodox Christianity and were collectively known as Aleuts. They stayed there after Alaska was sold to the United States. They were employed mostly as sea otter and whale hunters.

### **Yukaghirs**

The Yukagirs are one of the smallest minorities in Russia and the former Soviet Union. There are only around 600 of them. They have traditionally been reindeer herders, fishermen and hunters who lived in the tundra of the Yakutia and Magaden region. They are largely Christianized but in the old days they practiced animism and dismembered deceased family members and kept the body parts as amulets and regarded animals they captured in hunting guests.

There used to be a lot more Yukaghirs. They have a legend that there were once so many Yukaghir bonfires the smoke in the sky darkened the wings of birds flying south, and that the northern lights were nothing but reflections of their campfires. Their population was decimated by disease after the first contact with Cossacks and Russians in 1633.

The Yukagirs have traditionally endured a tough life. They spent the winter in camps living off food they collected in the summer. They hunted when they migrated, often going after deer or elk that they tracked in the snow. In the summer they hunted wild reindeer by driving them into lakes where hunters with spears, waited and stabbed them. They also collected berries, wild mushrooms and the inner bark and juice of red poplars. They used to consume hallucinogenic fly agaric mushrooms. The spring was a tight time for them, after their food supplies ran out. It wasn't uncommon for them to starve to death or freeze to death after their hearth went cold.

The Yukagirs have a pictorial system for writing on birch bark. In the 1980s an effort was made to create an alphabet for their language so they could publish books in their native tongue. Yukaghir author Semen Kurilov one jokingly said he is the only writer in existence who knows all of his readers by sight. Responding to the fact the first printing of one of his Russian books was 100,000 he said, "that means each of my countrymen can have 125 copies!"

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Asiatic Eskimo Life**

The shores of northeastern and southern Chukotka, where Asiatic Eskimos live, features medium-size mountains and lagoon like lakes. The Eskimos and the Chukchi have traditionally made their settlements along small bays with the highest concentrations of animals and biological resources. In the old days they wintered primarily in semi-subterranean nenglus and walrus-skin tipis like those used by the

Chukchis Tipis were also used in the summer. Now they live in modern-style wooden homes with stoves or steam for heat and electric lighting.

Eskimos have traditionally used two kinds of boat: a one-seated, leather-skinned kayak and a large walrus-skin craft with a capacity of four tons. Dog sled were used for transport on land. Eskimos have traditionally been very skilled at making clothes and footwear from animal skins and reindeer hides. Today they wear mostly Western clothes but, in the past, they wore seal skin pants and a sleeveless top made from the intestines of sea mammals. A hunter wearing these garments could survive a fall into the frigid ocean.

### **Aleut Life**

There are about 500 Aleuts on the Komandorskiye islands. They live in sheltered bays near spits that are easy for animal skin boats to land on. Access to freshwater streams, salmon rivers and beaches where driftwood washes ashore and can be collected are also important. Communities traditionally lived in semi-subterranean log houses that could sometimes accommodate around a hundred people.

The Aleuts have traditionally lived off what their sea environment could provide them: seals, walruses sea lions and fish. They caught salmon in rivers and the sea and hunted birds. Clothes were made from sea mammal fur. The only sources of wood were driftwood and trade with other peoples. Today they have been absorbed into the cash economy. Some communities have done well by selling fish.

In the old days sister-exchange marriage, polygamy and polyandry were all practiced. Society was arranged with high nobles, nobles, commoners and slaves (mostly captive of war). Today, marriage customs are in line with those of the Orthodox church, the ranking system has been abandoned and most Aleuts live in nuclear families.

Even Aleuts that lived in the United States are mostly Orthodox Christians. Easter and Christmas are big holidays. During Christmas young men bring stars to the church to be blessed. This is followed by a ritual bath in a stream. St. Peter and Paul Day is celebrated by Aleuts in Alaska who are ancestors of people who were shipped there generations ago from Siberia. Services are conducted in Aleut, Chukchi and Russian.

The Aleut language is relegated mostly to church services. Russian is used at home and in everyday life. Aleut men are known as skilled carvers of ivory and bones. Women create garments from fur and bird skin adorned with gut-on-gut applique and hair embroidery. Interest in these art form has declined.

**“Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Arctic,” V. A. Tishkov, N. I. Novikova, and E. A. Pivneva, Herald of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2015 [155]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/N-Novikova/publication/287224802\\_Indigenous\\_peoples\\_of\\_the\\_Russian\\_Arctic/links/5ea](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/N-Novikova/publication/287224802_Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Russian_Arctic/links/5ea)

Overview:

The historical specifics of indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic are that, as early as several thousand years ago, they assimilated into the unique natural environment of this region and created a kind of an “Arctic civilization” with its characteristic distinctiveness and singularity in the population’s lifestyle and life-support system. On the other hand, the so-called indigenous small nations of the North long ago securely took root in the Russian state and Russian culture. Moreover, the natives of the circumpolar latitudes are a brand characteristic of Russia’s image as a northern country.

Is it necessary to adapt the lifestyle of Arctic inhabitants to that of “mainland” Russia? Or is it a world that should be preserved in its permanent status? Or is there a third option, which we once called culture-oriented modernization? All these questions make one consider what policy we should pursue in the Arctic in the context of sustainable development, environmental safety, and Russia’s national interests as a whole.

Current & Relevant Information:

The history of indigenous peoples of the North covers many millennia; however, when speaking about the history of the Russian state, we should note the periods of certain allied (trade-based) relations between the indigenous population and the authorities of the Russian Empire, its involvement in the Russian tributary system (through paying yasak, i.e., fur tribute) several centuries ago, and full or partial Christianization. We should recall the total and rough Soviet modernization, which included cultural revolution and partial transfer to sedentism, as well as collectivization enforcement and tough social problems of the Soviet era. Overall, the policy relative to the Arctic population was subjected for a long time to utilitarian economic interests, ideological attitudes, and military–strategic considerations. It largely remains the same today, although the new concept of state policy in the Arctic is, so to speak, more sensitive.

In this context, let us consider certain sociocultural realities of the present inhabitants of the Arctic. Academic studies on the history and culture of Arctic peoples have a deep and remarkable background, starting from the first scientific expeditions and descriptions of the peoples living in that region. The Soviet scientific school on studying Arctic peoples is especially meritorious. Studies in this area were dedicated not only to issues of the historical, social, and ethnocultural development of the region’s indigenous peoples but also to the search for ways of their development by preserving traditions and applying state paternalism.

The socioeconomic and political processes that involve these peoples pose new tasks before science. They include determining further perspectives of the development of Arctic communities under the current economic and military–strategic projects. This problem enjoys serious attention throughout the world. The main point to which human society has come is the understanding that it is necessary to reject paternalism with regard to “backward” peoples and to recognize the originality and inherent worth of their cultures.

Studies on the Arctic peoples have become more active of late. Within the basic research program of the RAS Presidium, the project Indigenous Peoples and the Industrial Development of the Arctic: Coping with Risks and Development Strategies has been implemented since 2014. A large number of regional historical–cultural and ethnographical studies are being conducted, and joint international projects have been implemented.

The Arctic zone of our country was determined in 2014 by Decree no. 296 of the Russian president On Land Territories of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation. It includes the territories of eight constituent members of the Russian Federation: (1) Murmansk oblast; (2) seven municipal units of Arkhangel’sk oblast; (3) the Nenets Autonomous District; (4) the urban district Vorkuta of the Komi Republic; (5) the Yamalo–Nenets Autonomous District; (6) the urban district of Noril’sk, the Taimyr Dolgano–Nenets Municipal Region, and the Turukhanskii District of Krasnoyarsk krai; (7) five uluses (districts) of the Sakha (Yakutia) Republic; and (8) the Chukotka Autonomous District. The area of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation is about 9 million square kilometers; its population is more than 2.5 million people, which is less than 2% of Russia’s population and about 40% of the population of the entire Arctic. Out of about 250,000 people of this category of the Russian population, 82,500 representatives of indigenous small nations live in the Russian Arctic. By their ethnic composition, they are Nenets, Chukchi, Khanty, Evens, Evenks, Selkups, Sami, Eskimos, Dolgans, Chuvans, Kets, Nganasans, Yukaghirs, Enets, Mansi, Veps, Koryaks, Itelmens, and Kereks. Some of them are nomads or semi-nomads, which implies traditional types of nature use, such as reindeer husbandry, fishery, seal hunting, hunting, and foraging. The majority are settled residents living in villages and towns. According to our estimates, about 20,000 people in the Arctic, i.e., about one-fourth of its native population, migrate part-time or year-round. Note that about 60% of the country’s nomadic population falls on the Yamalo–Nenets Autonomous District.

**“Arctic Russia,” Amberly Polidor, Sacred Land Film Project, 1 February 2004 [156]**  
<https://sacredland.org/arctic-russia-russia/>

Overview:

Living in the harshest of climates, the indigenous peoples of Russia’s far northern Arctic have survived for thousands of years through knowledge systems and

practices that revere the spirited landscape they inhabit. Their land is full of sacred sites whose preservation has been—and continues to be—essential to their endurance as a culture. Many sites are tied to their traditional livelihoods as reindeer herders, fishers and hunters; others reflect their ancestral relationship to the land through reverence of “grandmother” and “grandfather” spirits; still others represent nature spirits of seas, rivers and mountains, whose veneration may aid in safe travel or successful hunting. Their ability to maintain traditional cultural and sacred belief and practice has not only furthered their own survival but has also protected the biodiversity of their environment. According to Mikhail Todishev, executive director of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Northern Siberia, “Sacred sites teach people rules of behavior, such as how and when to hunt.”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

However, these people, their environment and their sacred sites are no longer remote and untouched. Increasing natural resource exploitation, weak environmental laws, feeble protection of indigenous rights by state and local governments, and growing difficulties in maintaining traditional livelihoods are among the challenges they face. The issue of protecting the sacred sites of indigenous peoples of the Arctic was largely ignored until the late 1990s, when a number of international groups recognized the need for a project to enhance the protection of such sites and began preliminary investigations. In 2000, a coalition of organizations led by the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) initiated a program to document sacred sites in two regions of the Russian Arctic and explore protection measures. RAIPON partnered with Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, which funded the project. In January 2004, CAFF released a 100-page technical report entitled “The Conservation Value of Sacred Sites of Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic: A Case Study in Northern Russia—Report on the State of Sacred Sites and Sanctuaries.” According to the report, “The project was designed to support integrated conservation of Arctic biodiversity and the cultural heritage of northern indigenous peoples, through documenting the biological and cultural significance and status of indigenous peoples’ sacred sites and sanctuaries.”

#### A. Family:

**“Eskimos and Russian Arctic Groups,” Jeffrey Hays, Facts and Details, May 2016**  
**[157]** [http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9\\_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5](http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5)

#### Overview:

##### **Asiatic Eskimos**

Asiatic Eskimos found in Russia are virtually the same as Eskimos that live in Alaska. They are also very similar to the Inuit in Canada and Greenland. There is an indigenous population of Asiatic Eskimos on the southeastern shore of the Chukchi

Peninsula in the Russian Far East. They call themselves the Yupik. Depending on where they are found they are also known as Nevuga Yupiga, Singhinem Yupiga, Sivugam Yupiga.

There are 1,300 Asiatic Eskimos in the Chukotka (Chukchi) region. Their language is called Yupik. In the old days Asiatic Eskimos ranged over a much larger area than they do today: across the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean. In the 1920s, they lived in 13 exclusively Eskimo settlements. Today most of them lived in five settlements along with Chukchis and Russians. Another 1,500 or so Eskimos lived on the St. Lawrence Islands in Alaska.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Asiatic Eskimo Men and Women**

Eskimo men traditionally did the hunting and house building while women did the sewing, food preparation, house work and child rearing. The men often belonged to hunt groups, with each member in charge of a specific task. Marriages were traditionally arranged by parents and took place in stages beginning with an exchange of gifts and bride service by the groom to the bride's family. The groom joined the bride's father's hunt group during the bride service. Sexual relations usually began while the groom lived with the bride's parents. When the couple went to live with the groom's parents the marriage was regarded as validated.

Divorce was easy to obtain. Hunting "brothers" sometimes had sex with each other's wives. If one of them died his wife went to the youngest brother.

In the 1930s, when Eskimos were forced to move into collective communities their traditional marriage patterns were disrupted. By one count three fourths of all children were born out of wedlock to "temporary fathers."

**"Moral values in family relations of youth in Arkhangelsk," Ilya F. Vereschagin and Evgenia A. Sergicheva, Arctic and North, 2016 [158]**

[https://narfu.ru/upload/iblock/cde/01\\_vereschagin\\_sergicheva.pdf](https://narfu.ru/upload/iblock/cde/01_vereschagin_sergicheva.pdf)

#### Abstract:

The article presents the results of a sociological survey conducted in December 2014 — May 2015 in Arkhangelsk. The aim of the study was to make an image of the perfect marriage and analysis of the role of moral values in family-marriage attitudes of contemporary youth in the Arkhangelsk. By using such methods as questionnaire survey, document analysis and expert interviews, data were obtained, largely duplicating the result of the survey conducted by FOM and important in predicting the change of the role of spirituality in family values of youth.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**



Areas of the Arctic zone of Russia at the moment are the most promising in terms of the state. However, their development depends on the activity of socio-demographic behavior of young generations. The image of the "ideal young family" in the minds of both rural and urban residents determines the future of this region. Even in the recent past it was thought that every young person should be prepared and, most importantly, must be willing to become a father or mother. In today's world, we can see ambiguous picture: often frivolous attitude towards sexuality is formed in youth, their attitude toward marriage and children as a barrier to a successful career, which, in turn, is a benchmark of success. Someone may consider such attitude to the future immoral and selfish, but this way of thinking is not associated with the departure of the current youth from standard family values laid down by religion, and rooted in the minds of the older generation, but with the changes in the whole society (globalization, gender equality, economic situation).

If we turn to the modern Russian society, and to the people of the Russian north in particular, it should be noted that young people tend to settle in life: to buy housing, to build a successful career, to ensure their old age. Marriage and children are now treated as "procreation" and "extra material costs." Our research is made on materials of Arkhangelsk, it is extremely important for the forecasting of demographic situation of the Arkhangelsk region and for the analysis of the changing role of moral values in family relations of youth.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of our work was to make the image of the perfect marriage in the minds of the youth of Arkhangelsk. So, perfect marriage is equality; adequate (approximate to the traditional) distribution of responsibilities in the family; the possibility of self-development for both spouses; 2-3 children. This image quite corresponds to the image of the all-Russian poll "Public Opinion" Fund, which means that Arkhangelsk has no significant deviations from the Russian society on the issue as a whole.

The received data allowed to judge about growing role of spirituality and moral values in the youth environment, particularly in the area of family relations. Loyal attitude to patriarchy, the importance of harmony, mutual respect and mutual responsibility in relationships, traditional distribution of family obligations between husband and wife play a special role in making of perfect relationships.

**“Women and the Tundra: Is There a Gender Shift in Yamal?” Elena Liarskaya, Anthropology of East Europe Review, 2010 [159]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elena-Liarskaya/publication/277220754\\_Women\\_and\\_the\\_Tundra\\_Is\\_There\\_a\\_Gender\\_Shift\\_on\\_Yamal/links/5bed32594585150b2bb7a263/Women-and-the-Tundra-Is-There-a-Gender-Shift-on-Yamal.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elena-Liarskaya/publication/277220754_Women_and_the_Tundra_Is_There_a_Gender_Shift_on_Yamal/links/5bed32594585150b2bb7a263/Women-and-the-Tundra-Is-There-a-Gender-Shift-on-Yamal.pdf)

Abstract:

This article questions the notion of gender shift in the Yamal region. It looks at the migration of indigenous women from the tundra/taiga to settlements and towns, as well as at the specific gender division of space that has resulted from this process in the Russian North. The author provides a detailed analysis of quantitative and qualitative sources dealing with these issues in different regions of the Russian North and compares this material with the situation she observed and studied in Yamal in the 2000s. In this way, the author not only shows that Yamal seems to hold a special position in terms of how gender relations are organized today, but she also stresses that although the general picture of the gender shift may look similar, one should pay attention to differences that challenge generalization for the whole of the Russian North.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Among the phenomena that provoked increased interest at the conference “Gender Shift in Northern Communities of Russia” was the migration of indigenous women from the tundra and taiga to settlements and towns, as well as the specific gender division of space that has resulted from this process. I will use “gender shift” to describe the migration of women from the tundra, and issues related to it. This article will focus on the situation in Yamal, which I will compare with other regions of the Russian North.

To understand the situation in Yamal I had to inscribe it into a broader context of the Russian North in general, examining materials related to various territories and peoples from the Kola Peninsula to Chukotka. It turned out that publications on this topic started appearing more than 20 years ago: some of them are directly related to my subject, while others mention it only in passing. To my knowledge, the authors of these studies do not use the term “gender shift,” employing only descriptive names for the phenomenon. These works may be divided into two large groups, “quantitative” and “qualitative.” The former primarily comprises demographic statistics, or else parts or paragraphs of works in demography, ethno-demography, and ethno-sociology, which compile and analyze statistical data. The latter include various anthropological and ethnological works that analyze not so much figures, but situations and contexts. Materials of both types may often be found within the frames of one work.

Since it is impossible, in one short article, to compare the situation in Yamal with every other region of the Russian North, in the first part of this paper I will provide data from several regions, and then discuss these parameters in relation to Yamal.

#### **Conclusion**

Thus, comparing the situation on Yamal with other regions of the Russian Far North analyzed in the first part of this article, we discover that the Yamal case is quite different from all the rest in that production-oriented nomadism did not oust family nomadism, women did not migrate from the tundra, there is no serious asymmetry in

the educational level of men and women, and tundra men do not experience “deficit” of brides. Local inhabitants do not see the tundra as a space where men work, as opposed to the settlement, where everybody lives. Life in the tundra is not considered primitive and uncivilized. “External” vision of the tundra was not internalized. All these factors are so tightly connected with each other that the present-day situation in Yamal, if not studied comparatively, looks very logical and non-contradictory.

Thus, E. Volzhanina writes that the marriage rate is still high in the tundra because for people living here “the union of man and woman is of vital necessity” (Volzhanina 2007b:16). F. Stammler argues that —the tundra version of the Soviet ‘worker-mothers’ *chumrobotnitsa* (tent worker) “fits very well with the pre-existing division of labor in the tundra. The difference is that in the tundra the workplace and mother-place are one and the same. This continuity is responsible for the fact that women in the tundra unlike their post-Soviet counterparts in villages and cities, do not experience an identity crisis because of unemployment” (Stammler 2005:119). Frankly speaking, before I myself looked from the outside at the situation on Yamal, I not only shared both authors’ positions but did not see anything unique about it.

Right now, having compared the situation on Yamal with what is happening in other regions of the Russian North, one has to ask a question: why is the difference so large? I do not have a ready answer for these questions; rather, I can suggest several possibilities to be further explored.

1. The easiest answer would be that due to some combination of circumstances, the impact of the asymmetries described in the first part of this article was milder in Yamal than in other regions.
2. It is possible that migration of women from the tundra is a uniform process developing along successive stages, and what we see on Yamal is just an early stage of it (yet in this case we will still have to answer a question: why the process of migration was so delayed here).
3. Another possible hypothesis is that migration of women from the tundra/taiga may be not a direct consequence of the ideological and economic transformations described above, but a result of some other deeper and covert processes that are taking place in the Russian North. What do I mean by that?

**“Gender Roles of Indigenous Women Reindeer Herders in Transition with Particular Reference to the Arctic Siberian Tundra Areas: Challenges of Social (In)Security,” Elena Bogdanova, et al., University of Lapland, 2021 [160]**  
<https://lauda.ulapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/64610/Juridica%20Lapponica%2048.pdf?sequence=1>

Abstract:

The changing role of women in the traditional Indigenous communities of the Russian Arctic in the 21st century is a rarely studied phenomenon. However, this is an important period of significant strengthening of their civil, political and social rights compared to the 18th to 19th centuries, when gender inequalities and strict subordination of women limited their choices. Now, their voices can be heard: they can participate in political life and lobby for their rights to regional and federal authorities. However, some social insecurities still remain for women reindeer herders.

During the last decade, gender asymmetries concerning lifestyle, educational level and marital behavior have intensified and resulted in increasing emigration of women from the tundra as they have chosen to abandon their traditional lifestyles and move to urban areas. This chapter analyses the changing position of women in traditional reindeer herding societies and whether these transformations have improved women's social security, reduced gender inequality and increased social justice.

To increase the social security of women reindeer herders, the authors recommend encouraging these women to apply for official self-employment (*samozanjatyj*) status (special tax regime with a tax on professional income), supporting cooperative forms of reindeer herding husbandry that employ women reindeer herders, encouraging the semi-nomadic lifestyles of Indigenous women, developing facilities in settlements for processing reindeer herding products that are managed by reindeer herders' families, organizing production cooperatives for reindeer herders to develop facilities for deep processing of reindeer products and increasing the profitability of reindeer herding.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

Sustainable development for the Indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East is one of the priority tasks of the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone in the Russian Federation and Ensuring National Security for the Period Until 2035 (No. 645, 2020). However, 'the maintaining and dissemination of the cultural heritage, the development of traditional culture, the preservation and development of the languages of Indigenous Peoples' (Strategija razvitija [Strategy for the Development], No. 645, 2020) is impossible without the participation of women. They are key persons in maintaining the traditional life support system and national culture. At the same time, the impact of socio-economic and cultural transformations in society in the 20th to early 21st centuries, accompanied by the penetration of both technological innovations and the European value system that is not specific to the traditional culture of the Indigenous peoples of the Russian High North, have contributed to changing these traditional lifestyles. Liarskaia (2010, p. 3) noted a gender shift in Yamal at the beginning of the 21st

century. However, over the past 10 years, the situation in Yamal has changed dramatically. Now, the asymmetries (regarding lifestyle choices, education and marital behavior), which were not so evident before, have intensified and led to an increase in the emigration of women from the tundra as they choose to abandon their traditional lifestyles and move to urban areas.

Analysis of the ethnographic literature on the culture of the Nenets (from the end of the 19th century to the present) shows that gender issues are insufficiently represented. However, prior research can be found on the gender issues of the Indigenous peoples of the Yamal by Russian researchers (e.g., Andronov et al., 2020; Bogdanova et al., 2018, 2019, 2021; Liarskaya, 2010; Nabok & Serpivo, 2017; A. Popova, 2004; Serpivo, 2016). The problem of the influence of inter-ethnic marriages of the Nenets on ethnic and demographic processes has also been presented (e.g., Andronov et al., 2020; Kvashnin, 2002; Kvashnin & Volzhanina, 2003; Volzhanina, 2005, 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2010). Finally, Khariuchi (2001, 2010) discussed the role of Nenets women in science.

Additionally, some fragmented gender analyses of the Indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic have been undertaken by foreign researchers (e.g., Vladimirova, 2018; Vladimirova & Otto Habeck, 2018). However, the language barrier, as well as foreign scientists' difficulties observing ethical guidelines for conducting scientific research in the territory of the Russian Federation (due to the differences in national academic conventions concerning Russia), have complicated the gathering of sufficient field data, thus reducing the quality of these analyses. The value of these works lies in providing an independent, outside perspective regarding the experiences of the Indigenous peoples in the Arctic.

This chapter presents data on how the position of women in traditional reindeer herding societies has changed and whether these transformations have improved women's social security, reduced gender inequality and increased social justice. Therefore, this chapter aims to 1) contribute to gender analysis and reflect on some gender inequalities in the Indigenous reindeer herding communities in the Arctic zone of Western Siberia, 2) give some historical background on the gender inequalities in the 19th century in Yamal to show the transition of women's position in Indigenous society and strengthening of women's rights and 3) present unique data on some of the gaps in Indigenous women's civil and social rights that have encouraged these women to change their lifestyles and migrate from rural to urban areas.

## **Conclusions**

Indigenous women reindeer herders' rights have been significantly strengthened in the 21st century. They can participate in political life and lobby for the rights of Indigenous peoples at the regional and federal levels. Further, the civil rights of Indigenous women reindeer herders are protected by federal and regional laws.

However, there are still some gaps in the social rights of women reindeer herders, specifically challenges regarding their labor rights. Their status as unemployed jeopardizes their social security and does not guarantee a retirement pension in the future. However, there are some solutions that can be enacted through short- and long-term measures. The following are recommended to improve the labor rights of Indigenous women reindeer herders:

- Encourage women to apply for an official self-employed (samozanjatyj) status;
- Support cooperative forms of reindeer herding husbandry (i.e., peasantry farms) and employ women as reindeer herders;
- Encourage a semi-nomadic lifestyle for Indigenous women and create facilities in settlements for processing reindeer herding products that are managed by reindeer herders' families, as this will provide new opportunities for women to be employed through their family business;
- Organize production cooperatives for reindeer herders to develop facilities for deep processing of reindeer products and to increase the profitability of reindeer herding.

**“Cross-Regional Analysis of Population Aging in the Arctic,” Anastasia Emelyanova, University of Oulu, 2015 [161]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anastasia-Emelyanova-2/publication/286175874\\_Cross-regional\\_analysis\\_of\\_population\\_aging\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic/links/5bc477f9a6fdcc2c91fc21c8/Cross-regional-analysis-of-population-aging-in-the-Arctic.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anastasia-Emelyanova-2/publication/286175874_Cross-regional_analysis_of_population_aging_in_the_Arctic/links/5bc477f9a6fdcc2c91fc21c8/Cross-regional-analysis-of-population-aging-in-the-Arctic.pdf)

Abstract:

Despite the greater strategic importance and increasing activities in the Arctic as well as the increased attention paid by national governments, few attempts have been made to understand the on-going demographic changes from a pan-Arctic perspective. In particular, population aging or “silverization” is a demographic megatrend affecting regional societies and the economy which can exert profound social consequences in this most desolate and least populated region in the world. Although there are a few studies investigating aging in the Arctic countries, none have extended their research to the sub-national level. This thesis consists of an analysis of aging and possible rejuvenation trends in 23 Arctic sub-regions, and compares these trends to the national average of their eight respective countries. Two groups of indicators have been used to measure aging; these are based on “chronological” and “prospective” ages, the latter considers changes in life expectancy and improvements in population health.

The study generated a large set of aging data for the period 1980/1990 to 2010 as well as the present day, utilizing the available baseline data. The discussion examined major trends in aging elucidating the interactions of conventional and

prospective indicators, revealed the oldest and youngest territories, linkages between the Arctic and nationwide rates, the fastest and slowest regions that are aging (or in contrast, rejuvenating), sex and ethnic differences, and whether Northern Canada and Alaska, North Atlantic, Arctic Russia and Northern Fennoscandia are converging or diverging in terms of aging development. In addition, the interplay of causes of aging and other demographic conditions of Arctic territories was examined as well as the gaps in knowledge and prospects for future research. The international comparative evidence of the thesis can help the northern communities' policy makers in planning changes that have to be made in order to adjust to an aging transition. It is clear that sustainable population development is the key to a viable Arctic region.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The aging of human populations is a phenomenon which has only appeared in the most recent stage of history. It refers to a demographic process which manifests itself in the growing number of older persons in society, attributable to the concurrent drop in fertility and mortality rates, growing life expectancies, and the generation of baby boomers (born during the post–World War II years) who have reached the top of the age pyramid. The magnitude and pace of aging changes can catch policy-makers by surprise especially in certain parts of the world where the trend may be accentuated.

The Arctic, which covers more than 10% of the planet's total land area but is one of the most desolate and least populated areas in the world, is not exempt from experiencing this aging phenomenon. The population living in the northern parts of countries extending into the Arctic is invariably only a tiny percentage of each country's total population i.e., from 0.1 to 3% (the lowest values refer to Alaska and Siberian Russia) although the land may actually be the lion's part of the country's total land mass. This region has its own drivers of population change, one of which is linked to global population growth. In 2013, there were only four million people living permanently in the area (4 053 055 according to Larsen & Fondahl 2014). This rather modest number will change in the coming decades, in fact, there has been a rather marked population growth occurring since World War II. For instance, in 1945 the population of Alaska was 100 000, and it has grown sevenfold by 2013, in Greenland, the increase has been more than fivefold, and a fourfold increase occurred in Iceland (Larsen & Fondahl 2014).

The growth in the Arctic has been, and will be in the foreseeable future, mostly driven by economical and geopolitical factors, first of all the anticipated climatic changes, economic growth (the wellbeing in Arctic regions largely depends on exploiting resources), exploration of untapped natural resources, opening of new shipping routes with their commercial prospects, and the needs for environmental

protection as well as military factors. As a response to the strategic importance which has emerged since the start of the 21st century, Arctic strategy documents have been recently re-evaluated and published by all Arctic states (GeoPolitics in the High North 2015).

At present, only Alaska, Iceland, and the Canadian Arctic have continued to experience population growth; this is due to not only positive net migration but also to natural population increases (Larsen & Fondahl 2014). During the last ten years, the populations living in the northern parts of Sweden, Finland and Arctic Russia have declined by 5 to 10%. In particular, from the 1990s, the dramatic growth seen in Greenland and the Faroe Islands has reversed to a trend of “thinning out societies” (Aasbrenn 1989). Concerns have been raised about the balance between sexes: due to excessive death rates of Russian men, there has been a predominance of older and lonely women living in the Russian Arctic. In contrast, it is the young women from Greenland who have been most likely to leave (see e.g., Hansen et al. 2012).

An awareness of the age structure of a population contains relatively older or younger people is necessary if one wishes to forecast how the natural increase will occur i.e., will the population grow or decline in the studied areas. In the existing scenarios, the population of the Arctic will grow slowly by only 4% over the next two decades, at the same time when the world’s population is predicted to increase by 29% (Larsen & Fondahl 2014). However, new commercial considerations and related potential influx of migrants can rapidly alter its population growth.

Scientists have echoed the interests often expressed by politicians with respect to the increases in human activity in the region. They have broadly recognized the contrasts between the northern and southern populations of the eight Arctic states that make up the Arctic (Russia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Canada, the United States, Iceland, and Denmark), first of all in grand regional publications (Arctic Human Development Report 2004, Arctic Social Indicators 2010, Megatrends 2011, Young et al. 2012, Hansen et al. 2012, Larsen & Fondahl 2014). The research reports have described a fact not yet clearly stated in governmental strategies: support of a balanced population development is a key element to meeting the stated goals. The reported analyses have taken a long-term perspective on how best to achieve sustainable development of the Arctic, and that this must include the human dimension. There is comparatively little data for these northern and historically small populations, even less is available for these regions at the national level. Fortunately, new statistical sources, such as the ArcticStat and Circumpolar Health Observatory (CircHOB), have started to accumulate data on populations in the Circumpolar Arctic with the goal being to facilitate comparative research on the conditions of the peoples of the Arctic by merging together already existing metadata that are all too frequently in a diffuse form and often hard to find (ArcticStat 2015, CircHOB 2015).



In conjunction with the process of accumulating the data and understanding human development in the Arctic, one question to be answered is whether there is a demographic reason why one should study the Arctic as a region as such. Is the Arctic more than a collection of different places with many common problems, a few of which are demographic? The majority of northern communities have common features in their existence that justify taking a demographic approach to analyze the Arctic as a separate region. Firstly, there are the climatic features, which although not of a direct demographic nature, are very important to understanding human existence in sparsely settled, remote geographical locations with a harsh physical environment, such as the cold weather and long winters, extreme seasonal variations in the amount of light and the close proximity to the wilderness. Most of the northern populations exhibit similar demographic features such as low population densities, with more men than women, higher mobility than in the south of these countries (local young people leave while migrants from abroad arrive e.g., the Polish workforce in Iceland, Asian migrants in Alaska and the Canadian North, etc.), increasing touristic activity, and rapid urbanization and concentration of the populations of nearly all Arctic regions to live in the capitals and regional centers (2.1 Literature on population aging). Infant mortality is comparatively low in the whole Arctic if judged by international standards, in fact some territories enjoy the lowest rates in the world (Larsen & Fondahl 2014: 102). However, if one only examines the national birth rates of the Arctic countries then one will be totally unable to understand of the demographic processes on-going in these northern populations.

As elaborated on the causes of aging (in 4. Discussion and concluding remarks), the rates of all-ages mortality and fertility have been clearly different from the national rates. One explanation is that the Arctic is rich in Indigenous Peoples and the ethnic composition in the North makes a substantial contribution to natural balance, median ages, and other demographic patterns. The North American Arctic (NAA) is home to three major aboriginal groups i.e., Inuit, First Nations or Indians, and Métis in Canada as well as American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States. There are Native Greenlanders or Inuit; the Nordic countries are homes to the Sami people. In Russia, numerically small Native Peoples live in the North, the largest of which are the Yakuts, Komi, and Karelians. The percentage of the total population made up by the Indigenous populations ranges widely, from more than 80% in Greenland and Nunavut, 50% in Northwest Territories (NWT), 20% in Alaska and Yukon, 15% in Arctic Norway and as little as 3-5% in the Russian Arctic (except for 30% in Chukotka). It is important to note that ethnically sub-divided demographic data is scarce and incomplete (more in 2.2.1 Aging data of Arctic populations) which makes it very difficult to restrict the aging analysis to only the minorities living in the North.

If one agrees that it is reasonable to study the Arctic as a single region whose populations face many similar problems, the following research question is whether one should better consider the Arctic as a homogenous or as a heterogeneous

region in terms of population development and, in particular, with respect to population aging? In addition to the above-mentioned similarities of living in the North, the impacts of migration, birth choices, mortality and morbidity rates, gender composition, globalization and environmental shifts display unique characteristics, differing within and among the regions of the Arctic, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous northerners, rural and urban residents, between sexes and also in many other aspects. Thus, it can also prove difficult to make generalizations about Arctic population development. This thesis has developed hypotheses about both the similarities but also the major diversities and large contrasts that characterize population changes and the aging of different populations in various parts of the Arctic.

Societal aging has been recognized as a powerful megatrend in Arctic settlements (see 2.1 Literature on population aging), however, as stated above, previously it has not been possible to answer these questions, since there is a paucity of data on population dynamics at the sub-national level. The process has lacked substance despite its potentially high impact for community wellbeing, since it has the power to transform all tiers of these small communities and profoundly distort the age composition of regional populations. The most recent updated edition of the Arctic Human Development Report has highlighted the need to understand better the social, cultural, economic and political roles that older adults play in regional development, and raises questions about aging-driven complexities. “How will Arctic societies adapt to the aging population, and how can the elderly be better integrated into societal life? What role might elderly citizens make to economic, cultural, and political development? How can increased old-age dependency rates be addressed? What roles can the elderly play in contributing to community cohesion and viability, in connection with Arctic “diasporas” abroad, and how does this differ across Arctic regions and settlement types?” (Larsen & Fondahl 2014: 489).

The extensive scientific, political, and public interest now being focused on the Arctic and its surprisingly sparse database only emphasizes the importance of elucidating the regional demography and the aging of local populations, also as a part of the global aging discourse and policy development.

The focus area of the thesis is on aging in different regions of the Arctic, and the thesis introduces new data that reveal similarities and diversities in aging development for the Arctic, the borders of which are categorized according to the CirCHOB system, located to the north of 60° N. The Arctic can be broadly divided into four regions:

1. The northern Fennoscandia. This includes three Finnish territories (Kainuu, Oulu, and Lapland), three Norwegian counties (Finnmark, Troms, and Nordland), and two of the northernmost areas of Sweden (Vesterbotten and Norrbotten).

2. The Russian Arctic, including various northern republics, oblasts, and autonomous regions: Karelia, Komi, Arkhangelsk, Murmansk in European Russia, as well as the Siberian regions of Sakha (Yakutia), Kamchatka, Magadan, and Chukotka.
3. The North American Arctic, which consists of Alaska of the United States of America (US) and three Canadian territories, the westernmost Yukon, the most populous Northwest Territories, and Nunavut, the largest, least populated, northernmost and newest territory of Canada.
4. The island-states in the North Atlantic region, including Iceland and two Danish self-governing and autonomous territories, the Faroe Islands and Greenland.



Fig. 1. Coverage of the Arctic (Published by permission of Circumpolar Health Observatory).

**“Cultural Resilience of Social-ecological Systems in the Nenets and Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrugs, Russia: A Focus on Reindeer Nomads of the**

**Tundra,” Bruce C. Forbes, *Ecology and Society*, 2013 [162]**  
<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol18/iss4/art36/>

Abstract:

Empirical data on resilience in social-ecological systems (SESs) are reviewed from local and regional scale case studies among full-time nomads in the neighboring Nenets and Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrugs, Russia. The focus is on critical cultural factors contributing to SES resilience. In particular, this work presents an integrated view of people situated in specific tundra landscapes that face significantly different prospects for adaptation depending on existing or planned infrastructure associated with oil and gas development. Factors contributing to general resilience are compared to those that are adapted to certain spatial and temporal contexts. Environmental factors include ample space and an abundance of resources, such as fish and game (e.g., geese), to augment the diet of not only the migratory herders, but also residents from coastal settlements. In contrast to other regions, such as the Nenets Okrug, Yamal Nenets households consist of intact nuclear families with high retention among youth in the nomadic tundra population. Accepting attitudes toward exogenous drivers such as climate change and industrial development appear to play a significant role in how people react to both extreme weather events and piecemeal confiscation or degradation of territory. Consciousness of their role as responsible stewards of the territories they occupy has likely been a factor in maintaining viable wildlife populations over centuries. Institutions administering reindeer herding have remained flexible, especially on Yamal, and so accommodate decision-making that is sensitive to herders' needs and timetables. This affects factors such as herd demography, mobility and energetics. Resilience is further facilitated within the existing governance regimes by herders' own agency, most recently in the post-Soviet shift to smaller, privately managed herds that can better utilize available pastures in a highly dynamic environment experiencing rapid socio-economic, climate and land use change.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Tundra Nenets nomadism is well known within and outside Russia for both the high quality of the intensive or 'close' reindeer herding (sensu Ingold 1980) techniques used and the iconic imagery of a long-distance migratory lifestyle that has all but vanished from most other sectors of the circumpolar Arctic (Stammler 2005a). Nenets reindeer herding within the tundra zone straddles the Polar Ural Mountains, its rangelands encompassing >70% of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO) of the East European Arctic and the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO) of West Siberia (Stammler 2005a, Rees et al. 2008). As neighboring federal districts, they share key common characteristics. These include the presence of large semi-domestic reindeer herds managed by the indigenous Nenets, ongoing large-scale

hydrocarbon development and climate warming in the past few decades (Rees et al. 2008, Forbes et al. 2009). Other indigenous peoples practice reindeer herding on the tundra pastures of these regions, such as Komi-Izhemtsy and Khanty in YNAO and Komi-Izhemtsy in NAO, but the present analysis will be limited to tundra Nenets. Ecological drivers are certainly important, and there is evidence for extensive terrestrial and freshwater degradation across these regions from anthropogenic disturbance. Specifically, there has been a shift from shrub- to graminoid-dominated tundra that is persistent over sizable areas in the vicinity of active and abandoned oil and gas infrastructure (Forbes et al. 2009, Kumpula et al. 2011, 2012). At the same time the availability of fish, a critical source of protein for herders during summer migration, has decreased. This is a result of direct and indirect impacts from road, railway, and bridge construction combined with increasing competition from new workers, who fish in rivers and lakes during their free time (Forbes et al. 2009). Symptoms of warming air temperatures commented on by herders in recent years include earlier break up of rivers and lakes in the spring, later freeze up in autumn, more frequent and intensive rain-on-snow events in winter, and hotter summers with a greater degree of insect harassment (Rees et al. 2008, Forbes and Stammler 2009, Forbes et al. 2009, Bartsch et al. 2010).

Observers have often commented on the apparent flexibility of the Nenets when faced with a wide range of exogenous forces during the Soviet and post-Soviet eras (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999, Stammler 2002, Tuisku 2003, Zenko 2004). The Yamal Nenets social-ecological system (SES), in particular, has stood out as being resilient in the face of extreme shocks and pressures in the past 20-30 years (Forbes et al. 2009) and its tundra nomads are generally considered by other herding cultures within modern Russia to be the 'real' reindeer herders (Stammler 2005a). Within this context, this paper seeks to address a few key questions. Firstly, while Nenets SESs have adapted well to a variety of pressures over the last few decades, can we identify cultural aspects of resilience that have helped them to persist over the decades, and perhaps centuries? If so, are there marked differences in the acknowledged markers of cultural resilience between contemporary Nenets SESs in neighboring federal districts? Finally, to what extent does human agency contribute to resilience and over which temporal and spatial scales?

Crane (2010:2) considers "long-term resilience as a culturally defined experience, exploring the synergies and tensions between resilience as an analytical scientific lens and resilience as a 'normative' cultural process. Note that 'normative' is used to connote socially defined and held values and ideals regarding desirability or propriety of a circumstance or practice, rather than the objective empirical conditions themselves. Collectivity is a key aspect of this use of 'normative' and distinguishes it from 'subjective', which emphasizes individual experience and positionality." Thus, according to Crane (2010), cultural resilience is "the ability to maintain livelihoods that satisfy both material and moral (normative) needs in the face of major stresses and shocks; environmental, political, economic, or otherwise." This definition fits well

for the purposes of the present analysis given the suite of stresses and shocks to be addressed.

This article will address first factors both affecting and contributing to general resilience, then look more closely at cultural components of resilience that fall under the loose rubrics of stewardship (*sensu* Chapin et al. 2010) and worldview (*sensu* McIntosh et al. 2000). In addition, careful attention will be paid to human agency. Davidson (2010:1145) considers human agency as “the most contentious wrinkle in the application of an ecological framework to social systems”. She suggests that, “socio-ecological analyses that ignore agency, however, are woefully insufficient. Agency encompasses both individual-level action, premised on confidence among autonomous and able members of society that change is possible, and collective agency, expressed in the cultural, infrastructural, and communicative resources that enable collective action.” Collective action features prominently in Nenets SESs, as does ‘collectivity’ in the definition of cultural resilience provided by Crane (2010). As such, these will also be discussed in light of the findings and used for framing the conclusions.

## **Conclusion**

This article has reviewed empirical data on resilience in SESs from local and regional scale case studies of tundra nomads in NAO and YNAO. As Crane (2010) asks in relation to her African agropastoralist systems investigated, question remains as to whether or not the Nenets SES described here are rightfully described as resilient. The answer depends on the analytical frame through which a given SES is viewed, which is at least partly a function of the social position of the analyzer (Crane 2010). Davidson (2010:1145) argues that, “resilience itself should be understood as one of three possible responses to disturbance, with the other two being adaptation and transformation, and the researcher should not presume *ipso facto* that resilience is necessarily the preferred response.” Davidson (2010) further contends that adaptation to variability occurs over many generations by experimentation and learning and, as a consequence, may lead to the development of specialized institutions. Such adaptations refer to highly optimized complex systems that are robust within a certain range and type of variability, but may be sensitive to changes in these patterns of variability (Carlson and Doyle 2002). Janssen et al. (2007) hypothesize that many long-term SESs have developed a highly optimized tolerance or HOT reaction to a particular type of variability, but then become vulnerable to regime changes caused by many contemporary social-economical processes. In comparing neighboring Nenets SES subject to quite similar anthropogenic disturbance regimes, environmental change and socio-economics pressures over similar spatial and temporal scales we can draw some conclusions with clear relevance to cultural resilience.

While the structural complexity of both ecological and social systems can be conceived of in similar terms, the feedback processes associated with each are quite

different: Social systems are unique in that the tendencies toward complexity, and the responses of individual organisms to those levels of complexity, are defined not solely by structural variables, but by agency (Davidson 2010). “Agency, in effect, defines an additional conceptual layer not present in ecological systems, and consequently not reflected in ecological theories of resilience. The components of ecosystems cannot consciously act. We are capable of recognizing risks, human-induced or otherwise, to our social systems and/or those things we value before they manifest, and thus we have the potential to take conscious, transformative steps to attenuate them.” (Davidson 2010:1142). Although “many social theorists question whether collective agency is possible at all” (Davidson 2010:1144), the evidence presented here indicates that collective agency is indeed a crucial aspect of tundra Nenets SES sustainability (*sensu* Ostrom 2009). The evidence also points to Nenets culture as a key ingredient of the overall success (*sensu* Stammler 2002) of these SESs. The Yamal Nenets SES, in particular, has fared remarkably well in response to substantial shocks and pressures in recent decades (Forbes et al. 2009). Tundra nomadism in NAO has certainly suffered important setbacks during the late Soviet and post-Soviet eras, yet has still not faced a deep crisis to the extent experienced in many other parts of northern Russia (Krupnik 2000, Tuisku 2001). One of the most significant problems in NAO compared to neighboring Yamal has been the prolonged absence of women and children from nomadism as a legacy of Soviet-era sedentarization. As Tuisku (2001:57) notes, for “the smooth running of tundra reindeer herding” the presence of women on the tundra is simply essential (see also Golovnev and Osherenko 1999), while the future of reindeer herding depends on the relatively consistent recruitment of children (Turi 2002, Ulvevadet and Klovov 2004). The analysis here thus reveals the central role of culture in Nenets SES persistence via the following: (i) an accommodating worldview with respect to environment, industrial development and the future; and (ii) a strong sense of stewardship, which manifests itself through individual as well as collective agency with positive implications for local and regional ecosystem services.

Herders in both NAO and YNAO have serious concerns about the progressive loss of pastures, campsites and sacred sites, poaching of reindeer and other wildlife, and wasteful fishing practices by gas and oil workers (Forbes et al. 2009, Kumpula et al. 2011, 2012). It remains to be seen if there will be conflicts between privately managed and collective herds as territories are increasingly fragmented by infrastructure, rangelands inevitably contract and the competition grows for unlimited access to pastures and the most productive fishing lakes and rivers. These issues are likely to remain to the fore, relative to climate change, for the foreseeable future (Rees et al. 2008, Forbes and Stammler 2009). Although for Nenets significant environmental change from year to year is simply an accepted part of their nomadic existence on the tundra, funding and political institutions appear likely to continue focusing on ‘change’ in its different forms. For example, during 2011–2013 Sweden’s Chairmanship of the Arctic Council has overlapped with the beginning the Arctic Resilience Report (ARR) and the Adaptation Action for a Changing Arctic (AACAA).

ARR and AACA are among the Arctic Council's key successor activities to the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA 2005) and Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA 2011). Given the prevalence of modeling in the analysis of ecological systems, resilience and land change science (Carpenter et al. 2005, Turner et al. 2007), some suggest that cultural values, practices and local knowledge can and should be integrated into systems models, inasmuch as they direct behavior in predictable ways and may be generalized (Crane 2010, Hovelsrud et al. 2011). Such integration is perhaps too much to expect anytime soon. However, explicitly acknowledging the central nature of cultural imperatives and collective agency is clearly an important first step when planning future analyses of long-term resilience in Nenets and similarly persistent SESs.

**“The nuclear family has become a political tug-of-war in Russia and Poland,”**  
**Kjerstin Gjengedal, sciencenorway.no, 2 February 2021 [163]**

<https://sciencenorway.no/domestic-violence-equal-rights-gender-and-society/the-nuclear-family-has-become-a-political-tug-of-war-in-russia-and-poland/1807296>

Overview:

Domestic violence has now become a matter of dispute between liberal and conservative forces, which demonstrates that even authoritarian ruling powers have to take the popular opinion into consideration.

“If there is one lesson we have learned from this complex problem, it must be that the results may be used to put national right-wing populists on the spot,” says Jørn Holm-Hansen.

“It appears that you have a good hand of cards when you address people's everyday problems: Right-wing populists' talk about how protection of victims of domestic violence threatens the harmonious family unit does not resonate with people's everyday experiences.”

Current & Relevant Information:

Both Russia and Poland have been through what may be called an 'illiberal turn' during the past decade, which is particularly characterized by a rejection of so-called Western values. In both countries, an important element within the national conservative narrative has been family rights. As a result, individual rights of women, children and sexual minorities have been challenged. Both countries have recently made changes in their legal system with regards to domestic violence, and this has revived the debate.

**“Russian Culture,” Nina Evason, Cultural Atlas, 2017 [164]**

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/russian-culture/russian-culture-family#russian-culture-family>

Overview:



The Russian Federation is the largest nation in the world, spanning 11 time zones and numerous different geographical environments. The huge country contains an incredible diversity of people, beliefs, values and lifestyles. These distinctions are particularly noticeable between the different regions and ethnicities. Most Russians live in developed and industrialized centers, with an estimated 74% of the population living in urban areas or cities. However, there are also large populations in rural towns and villages across the countryside. Due to the country's massive size and long, complex history, any summary of Russia runs the risk of oversimplifying the culture. While the descriptions that follow are not intended to be indicative of every Russian person, there are common themes and principles that contribute to the values, attitudes, beliefs and norms of the dominant society. Broadly speaking, generosity, resilience and strength tend to be common features of the Russian character across the country.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Family**

One's family holds the highest importance to individuals in Russia. Relatives usually have very close relationships and are interdependent, helping each other in times of need. Extended family members are also very involved with people's lives and the support of the household. If an uncle, aunt or any other relative is in need, it is considered to be the obligation of the immediate family to help. Grandparents play a big part in raising children, and may perhaps even live with the nuclear family. The elderly holds a very respected position in society and generally hold the most authority in the household.

Russia has quite crowded housing conditions comparative to Australia (in square meters per person). Traditionally, three generations lived together in one household. However, in present-day Russia, the nuclear family is becoming more common. Many young couples aspire to move out of their parents' home after marriage. A shortage in housing and difficult economic conditions can make independent living a challenge, which means many grown children have to live with their parents. If an elderly couple lives independently and one of them becomes widowed, they usually move into the household of one of their children to be cared for into their old age.

In the common Russian household dynamic, both parents usually work; it is more commonly the woman's job than the man's job to care for the children and do the housework. However, many modern Russian families have alternative dynamics. For example, parents may be divorced, or work in different cities away from their children. Often, grandparents will help raising children whilst both parents work; they may keep the grandchildren for entire holiday periods to give the parents time for themselves.

Some families of lower-socioeconomic backgrounds may combine their assets in order for all members to have economic security. Typically, if grandparents live with the nuclear family, their pensions contribute to the family budget.

Generally, most Russians adore children and aspire to have their own. It's a primary goal to see one's child be more successful than oneself and so Russians are often deeply proud of their kids. People can be expected to boast of their son or daughter's success. However, there is a growing tendency for people to deliberately choose to stay unmarried and childless in order to focus on their careers. Family sizes may also be limited by economic conditions.

### Gender Roles

Women have equal rights to study and work in Russia. The communist regime sought to empower women and increase gender equality. However, since the collapse of communism, a significant amount of the progress towards gender equality has eroded. In the midst of high unemployment, women were the first to lose their jobs, and a traditionalist view of the division of labor and family life became popular again. Many women saw their participation in the workforce as a "double burden" when coupled with household labor as it continued to be considered the female's duty to complete domestic tasks.

Today, many women work to increase the household income and all generally have the opportunity to pursue higher education. However, they still do not occupy as many leadership positions. Men continue to dominate the public sphere and, since quotas for female representation were discarded, the numbers of women in politics have declined.

Russian culture generally possesses very strong conceptions about femininity and masculinity. Women are expected to be well groomed, reserved and have a feminine look. Meanwhile, though men are also expected to present themselves tidily, it's more acceptable for them to be unshaved, slightly unkempt and out of shape. If a Russian man is too well groomed, it may raise questions about his masculinity.

### Dating and Marriage

Russian dating practices are similar to those in English-speaking Western cultures. However, Russians generally approach dating with the prospect of a long-term relationship in mind. Marriage is the ultimate goal; thus, dates are less casual than what Australians are accustomed to.

Couples generally meet one another through social circles. Dating websites are also gaining popularity. On dates, men are expected to behave like gentlemen while women usually act aloof. It is thought that the man needs to charm and convince the woman into liking him by making romantic gestures, such as buying her flowers, paying for her expenses and buying gifts.

Most Russians marry in their early 20s, commonly in the first years after they have left university. It is often considered somewhat humiliating to be single for a long time; older unmarried women have particularly low social statuses regardless of their wealth or occupation. Some Russians may choose to live together as an unmarried couple for a while, but generally legal marriage is preferred. Divorce is very common in Russia. In 2011, 51% of marriages ended in divorce.

## B. Religion:

**“Indigenous Religious Traditions: Indigenous People of Arctic Russia,” Mitakuye Oyasin, [coloradocollege.edu](http://coloradocollege.edu) [165]**

<https://sites.coloradocollege.edu/indigenoustraditions/sacred-lands/3483-2/>

### Overview:

Although the Indigenous people of Northern Siberia in Russia are a nomadic people, they are very spiritually attached to their surrounding landscape. The four clans of indigenous people living in Northwestern Siberia include the Nenets, the Sel'kup, the Khanty, and the Mansi. These peoples are typically reindeer herders, hunters, and fishers. They practice religious traditions that incorporate the spiritual aspects of the natural and animal worlds. Like other indigenous people, their leaders are spiritual mediators as well, in their case called Shamans. Shamans are spiritual leaders in their tradition and possess sacred powers that other natives do not. The Northern Siberian natives place spiritual importance on their environment through the designation of certain sacred sites that are usually related to the natives' needs for particular resources. The natives' attachment to these sites have conflicted throughout history, first with the nationalistic claim of capital by the Soviets, and later by the nation's endeavors in utilizing the land for natural resources in order to create industry. The natives' spiritual attachment to the land has resulted in many uprisings as well as religious reactions within their communities towards their oppressors. The issues that surround the situation in northern Siberia can be seen throughout many other indigenous communities all over the world, which reveals much about the importance of land within the structure of many religions.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Oppression of Indigenous peoples of Northern Siberia started to reach its first high point in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was during this time that the indigenous leaders began to lose their power and become puppets of the Russian nation. These leaders became intermediaries between the natives and the Russian state. Because attention at this time was moving towards religious affairs within the tribal communities, many of these new intermediary leaders were shamans. By the nineteenth century, a statute was enforced combining local law and Russian civil law into a single system. The Russians were able to enforce this by giving power to, and legitimizing indigenous leaders within the law system of the state. This made it possible for the Russians to monitor and control those leaders' actions, and

therefore manipulate the entire native community into operating under the state law. This time of colonization is characterized by three stages, which Andrei Golovnev and Sergei Kan state in their article Indigenous Leadership in Northwestern Siberia: “(1) the military invasion, (2) the persecution of pre-Christian rituals and shamans and the promotion of secular elders and chiefs, and (3) co-opting of the indigenous leaders”. Some of the most brutal revolts against these regulations by the state were the last ones, which broke out in the 1930s and 40s under the Stalinist regime and were characterized by their intense violence, which included scalping and human sacrifice.

**“Eskimos and Russian Arctic Groups,” Jeffrey Hays, Facts and Details, May 2016**  
[166] [http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9\\_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5](http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9_3f/entry-5130.html#chapter-5)

Overview:

### **ASIATIC ESKIMOS**

Asiatic Eskimos found in Russia are virtually the same as Eskimos that live in Alaska. They are also very similar to the Inuit in Canada and Greenland. There is an indigenous population of Asiatic Eskimos on the southeastern shore of the Chukchi Peninsula in the Russian Far East. They call themselves the Yupik. Depending on where they are found they are also known as Nevuga Yupiga, Singhinem Yupiga, Sivugam Yupiga.

There are 1,300 Asiatic Eskimos in the Chukotka (Chukchi) region. Their language is called Yupik. In the old days Asiatic Eskimos ranged over a much larger area than they do today: across the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean. In the 1920s, they lived in 13 exclusively Eskimo settlements. Today most of them lived in five settlements along with Chukchis and Russians. Another 1,500 or so Eskimos lived on the St. Lawrence Islands in Alaska.

Current & Relevant Information:

### **Asiatic Eskimo Religion**

Asiatic Eskimos believed in a number of benign and evil spirits that inhabited objects in their world. The highest ones were the Masters of the Sky and the Mistress of the Sea. Evil spirits were regarded as the source of disease and misfortune. Amulets were worn to ward them off. They also believed in an Upper World, People's World and Lower World.

Meals started with an offering of a piece of food to the spirits. The food has traditionally been a piece of meat that was thrown into a cooking pot. Now anything from candy to alcoholic beverages can be used. There are prohibitions on killing certain animals such as wolves, ravens and swallows. North Asians traditionally have not killed birds because they were regarded as messengers between heaven

and earth. Some people have “secret” traditional names which they do not to pronounce aloud out of fear of attracting evil spirits.

Traditionally, every village had a shaman, who presided over religious ceremonies, getting rid of evil spirits and was involved in the healing of the sick. Shaman used spell song and held seances and went into trances. . . They became shaman spending a considerable time alone in the tundra or a sacred burial place. After many of them were killed in the 1930s, they performed their activities underground.

Disease was often believed to be the result of a theft of the soul sometime associated with breaking of a taboo. Treatments prescribed by a shaman generally included avoiding certain foods, wearing an amulet or practical treatments such as treating fevers or wounds.

After someone died their body was placed on a raised area of a dwelling. A large feast was organized and the dead was carried to a cemetery and left there. An effort was made to make sure everything done properly so the dead would not return to the world as a spirit and cause trouble. In the old days the dead were placed under piles of stones (digging a grave in areas with permafrost is difficult). Now they have graves in the ground but not deep ones.

**“Russian Culture,” Nina Evason, Cultural Atlas, 2017 [167]**

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/russian-culture/russian-culture-religion#russian-culture-religion>

#### Overview:

The Russian Federation is the largest nation in the world, spanning 11 time zones and numerous different geographical environments. The huge country contains an incredible diversity of people, beliefs, values and lifestyles. These distinctions are particularly noticeable between the different regions and ethnicities. Most Russians live in developed and industrialized centers, with an estimated 74% of the population living in urban areas or cities. However, there are also large populations in rural towns and villages across the countryside. Due to the country’s massive size and long, complex history, any summary of Russia runs the risk of oversimplifying the culture. While the descriptions that follow are not intended to be indicative of every Russian person, there are common themes and principles that contribute to the values, attitudes, beliefs and norms of the dominant society. Broadly speaking, generosity, resilience and strength tend to be common features of the Russian character across the country.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Religion**

The exact statistics for religious affiliations in Russia are difficult to summarize since the official census does not record these numbers. However, estimates taken in

2012 indicate that 41% of Russians identify with the Russian Orthodox Church, 25% consider themselves spiritual but not religious, 13% identify as atheist and 5.5% are undecided about their religious affiliation (Sreda, 2012). A further portion of the population identifies with minority religions: Islam (6.5%), other variations of Christianity including Protestant, Evangelist and other Orthodox sects (7.3%), native Slavic faiths, Paganism and/or Tengrism (1.2%) and Tibetan Buddhism (0.5%).

One's language and ethnicity somewhat correlate with their religious affiliation. For example, most Christians are ethnic Russians (ruskiye) and Slavic speakers; Buddhists are generally Mongolian-speaking people from the central or eastern regions of the country; and most Muslims are from Turkic ethnic groups (e.g., the Tatars) and from the Caucasus region. However, this is not always a clear relationship. For example, while many Turkic speakers are Muslims, several continue to follow shamanistic traditions and some have converted to Christianity. It is perhaps more accurate to say that Russians are likely to follow the religion relevant to their individual ancestral groups' regional or cultural tradition. A general trend has also shown that Russians become more religious as they age.

### The State and Religion

Research confirms that religious affiliations have grown significantly across Russia. This can be explained as a spiritual resurgence and revitalization since the end of communism in Russia. During the Soviet era, belief or membership in a religious organization was considered to be incompatible with loyalty to the Communist Party. Therefore, openly professing one's religious beliefs could hinder people's opportunities and even put them at odds with the state. Many Russians had to renounce their faith or conceal their beliefs during this time. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it became evident that much of the Russian population had continued to follow their faith in private. Furthermore, researchers believe that in the wake of the collapse of communism as a viable belief system, people looked towards religion en masse as an ideological answer. More than 20 years on, religious authority has regained respect and there has been a growing revival of religious traditions from multiple disciplines across the country. The Pew Research Centre's poll results showed that Slavic Russian adults identifying as Orthodox Christians rose from 31% to 72% between 1991 and 2008, whilst the share of the population that did not identify with any religion dropped from 61% to 18%.

### Minority Religions

Although the current government claims to be secular and give all religions equal legal status, this is not the reality. A law drafted in 1997 differentiates the freedom to practice religion based on whether they are 'traditional' or 'non-traditional' faiths to Russia. Christian Russian Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism are recognized as faiths traditional to the native people of Russia and are afforded special privileges. All minority religions that fall outside this group of four must register and

make themselves formally known to the government (including any Christian church that is not Russian Orthodox). This procedure allows state officials to prevent minority groups from renting buildings to be used for the purpose of worship. Furthermore, as part of an anti-terrorist crackdown in 2016, the government has banned proselytizing. This law particularly targets non-Russian Orthodox Christian groups. They cannot share their faith outside of their recognized religious institution's buildings, including online. Generally, a minority faith's freedom to practice, proselytize or build its own institutions depends on its members' relationships with local officials.

### The Russian Orthodox Church

The Russian Orthodox Church has been the dominant religious institution for almost a millennium and continues to be the most popular religion in Russia. The church lost a lot of its property and power during the communist period; however, it has quickly regained esteem and influence. Today, it is commonly thought of as the most trusted institution in society and a reference point of moral guidance for the government. Connection to the church can be cultural to some extent, as a parallel is often drawn between Russian Orthodoxy and Russian nationhood.

Most people who identify with Russian Orthodox Christianity do not practice it formally. However, church attendance is not the most accurate reflection of observance. While only 5.4% of Orthodox Russians claim to attend church services weekly, 27.9% say they pray outside of religious services every day.<sup>3</sup> Other researchers have said this figure is lower. Nevertheless, it is normal to see visible signs of faith in public. People wear crosses around their necks, have religious icons in their houses and ritually perform prayers throughout the day, blessing themselves. Some older Russians (women especially) may say blessings while making the 'sign of the cross' – using their index and middle finger to touch their forehead, followed by their chest, right shoulder and left shoulder.

### Traditional Beliefs

Traditional religions are still followed by many Russians. While they are especially common among rural populations, many urbanized intellectuals and working-class people also continue to hold beliefs centered around spiritual ideas of the forest, house spirits and healing practices. A number of behavioral prohibitions continue to reflect old beliefs. Some include:

- You can prevent bad luck by spitting over your left shoulder three times (similar to the idea of knocking on wood). People may imitate the spitting by just saying "tfu-tfu-tfu".
- Do not sit down at the corner of a square table if you are not married. Doing so will prevent you from getting married for seven years.
- If you forget something and must return to collect it, look in a mirror and smile before leaving again. This prevents bad luck.

- Whistling indoors is thought to summon bad luck and indicate that you will lose all your money soon.
- Lighting a cigarette from a candle brings bad luck.
- Pouring wine backhanded implies you will “pour” away your money.
- Accidentally spilling salt onto the table brings bad luck.
- Complimenting children can cause discomfort as it is thought to potentially summon the evil eye.

Tengrism has also experienced a revival in parts of Central Russia. This is a pagan, animistic and shamanic religion originating from the Turkic and Mongol populations of Central Asia.

**““I Came not to Bring Peace, but a Sword”: The Politics of Religion after Socialism and the Precariousness of Religious Life in the Russian Arctic,”**  
**Tatiana Vagramenko, Theological Reflections, 2018 [168]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tatiana-Vagramenko/publication/324405602\\_I\\_Came\\_not\\_to\\_Bring\\_Peace\\_but\\_a\\_Sword\\_The\\_Politics\\_of\\_Religion\\_after\\_Socialism\\_and\\_the\\_Precariousness\\_of\\_Religious\\_Life\\_in\\_the\\_Russian\\_Arctic/links/5ba9fa8ba6fdccd3cb70d220/I-Came-not-to-Bring-Peace-but-a-Sword-The-Politics-of-Religion-after-Socialism-and-the-Precariousness-of-Religious-Life-in-the-Russian-Arctic.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tatiana-Vagramenko/publication/324405602_I_Came_not_to_Bring_Peace_but_a_Sword_The_Politics_of_Religion_after_Socialism_and_the_Precariousness_of_Religious_Life_in_the_Russian_Arctic/links/5ba9fa8ba6fdccd3cb70d220/I-Came-not-to-Bring-Peace-but-a-Sword-The-Politics-of-Religion-after-Socialism-and-the-Precariousness-of-Religious-Life-in-the-Russian-Arctic.pdf?origin=publication_detail)

Abstract:

In the post-Soviet period, new opportunities have been created for cross-cultural interaction revealing a global religious marketplace. The Russian Arctic seemed to have become an attractive land for international Protestant missionary activities. Since the mid-1990s, scholars began to register the growing influence of evangelical movements among the indigenous population of Siberia and the Far North. Based on a case study of religious communities in the Polar Ural Mountains and the Yamal peninsula, the article addresses the transformation of post-socialist religious landscape into a “battlefield” of different missionary principles and strategies. The picture was also amplified with the persistence of Soviet atheistic discourse on “destructive foreign religious sects” and local authorities’ policy of putting pressure upon and intimidating Protestant religious associations. The endurance of Soviet anti-religious ideology and the issue of “destructive sects” dominated local public discourse and influenced the ways in which the local authorities reacted to recent religious rearrangements. This article explores the background of the emerging diverse and competitive religiosity in the Arctic and across post-Soviet Russia and describes the main tensions that determined religious activity in the Russian Arctic.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**



In the post-Soviet period, new opportunities have been created for cross-cultural interaction revealing a global religious marketplace. The Russian Arctic seemed to have become an attractive land for international Protestant missionary activities. Since the mid-1990s, scholars began to register the growing influence of evangelical movements among the indigenous population of Siberia and the Far North. Here, “at the end of the earth”, there exist people whose “paganism” still lives on in the form of numerous sacred places as well as in everyday life. The global phenomenon of short-term missions reached even the most remote places of Russia, transforming and rearranging the Siberian religious landscapes, making it a “battlefield” of different missionary principles and strategies.

Multiple Evangelical ministries from the former Soviet space, as well as from different foreign countries (Western and Northern Europe, United States, Canada and even from Cameroon, Australia and Korea) have been working in the Polar Urals and the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO), which is the case study of this article. They evangelized, organized conferences, established religious infrastructure, translated and published literature in local languages. As a result of missionary activities, a highly competitive multi-religious landscape has developed here, with diverse religious domains: a number of Protestant movements, the Russian Orthodox Church, Islam, and native religious practices.

The picture was amplified with the persistence of Soviet atheistic discourse on “destructive foreign religious sects” and local authorities’ policy of putting pressure upon and intimidating Protestant religious associations. The endurance of Soviet antireligious ideology and the issue of “destructive sects” dominated local public discourse and influenced the ways in which the local authorities reacted to recent religious rearrangements.

In this article, I explore the background of the emerging diverse and competitive religiosity in the Arctic and across post-Soviet Russia, and describe the main tensions that determined religious activity in the Russian Arctic.

I see the main source for the precariousness of religious life of Arctic Protestant communities in religion-state relations and the state policy based on the “sectarian” discourse and the binary opposition “traditional/non-traditional religions”, within which the Russian Orthodox Church is represented as traditional against the background of nontraditional, hence foreign and alien, Evangelical missionary movements.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, the post-Soviet process of “unmaking and making of relations” implied multidimensional trajectories, and one of them was the thriving of diverse new and old religious movements. The rapid influx of foreign missionaries and evangelicals, and the mushrooming of local religious communities all over the post-Soviet lands, and the flourishing of all sorts of religiosity dramatically changed the religious

landscape and restructured religious life in the post-Soviet space. The construction of shamanic temples, Orthodox churches, Protestant prayer houses, mosques and Buddhist temples in the same environment became a feature characteristic of the highly competitive Siberian religious landscape.

By the late 1990s, the boom of religiosity eventually began to subside throughout the Russian Federation. Previously rapidly growing churches, temples and prayer houses began to experience decline and welcomed a fixed and moderate number of parishioners. The 1997 Federal Law and the following regional laws harshly restricting foreign missionary activity dramatically influenced the development of Evangelical movements in Russia. Some scholars reported significant declines of Evangelical congregations in various regions of Russia in early the 2000s. Although the “crises of faith and power” remarkably influenced the intensity of religious life, in general, however, the religious landscape of post-Soviet Russia remains dynamic, and is characterized by a diversity of movements and forms of religiosity, competitiveness for followers and power between various religious organizations, and is intertwined with local political and cultural movements, having close and complex interrelations with diverse kinds of nationalistic, ethnic and cultural “awakenings”.

**“Internationalisation with the use of Arctic indigeneity: the case of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia,” Emilie Maj, Polar Record, July 2012 [169]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259423026\\_Internationalisation\\_with\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_Arctic\\_indigeneity\\_The\\_case\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Sakha\\_Yakutia\\_Russia](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259423026_Internationalisation_with_the_use_of_Arctic_indigeneity_The_case_of_the_Republic_of_Sakha_Yakutia_Russia)

Abstract:

Over a period of 70 years, the lifestyles and belief systems of indigenous Siberian peoples were transformed by Soviet policy, based on the idea of assimilation and homogenization of the peoples in its territory, in compliance with the idea of a ‘people’s friendship’. The fall of the Soviet Union has given people the opportunity to rebuild their identity, as well as to provide a means of cultural revival for each ethnic community. The case study of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in northern Siberia shows a new relationship, already started during perestroika and developing between the Russian Federation and its peoples. This relationship favors the development of each people’s culture within the broader context of their integration into Russian society. The issue of the instrumentalization of indigenous peoples’ cultural and religious heritage is part of a broader picture of a global affirmation of peoples’ indigeneness. The identification of ethnic Sakha (Yakuts) with other northern peoples is a means of entering the international political arena, pushing far away the geopolitical and cultural boundaries imposed by the Russian Federation and highlighting the idea of a circumpolar civilization.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Under colonialism, indigenous peoples have had to deal with the policies of assimilation and integration within the states in which they found themselves. Today, these peoples inhabit some 70 states and represent 6% of humanity. In response to the loss of cultural identity over the last 40 years these peoples have been 'reviving' old traditions, including religious beliefs, 'subsistence' economic practices, etc., in the hope of finding solutions to the socio-economic, political and psychological problems of their communities (Kasten 2004). Indigenous political and territorial claims, which first found issue in the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in 2007 (United Nations 2007), frighten states that fear constitutional conflicts.

The geographical area in focus is Yakutia, renamed the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in 1992. The region was named in the 17th century by Russians after the largest ethnic group that they met upon arrival, the Yakuts (probably the name that Russian heard from Evenki people) or Sakha, the latter name being their own ethnonym. This republic is located in the north-east of the Russian Federation (RF). This article focuses on the Sakha as providing an example of a dynamic process of identity representation by a marginalized ethnic group within a multi-ethnic state through a fostering of a sense of belonging to a greater society of circumpolar peoples, largely considered indigenous by the international community.

**“The ethnopolitics of Russia in the Arctic zone: integration, regional multiculturalism, and tradition,” Maksim Yu. Zadorin and Oleg V. Minchuk, Arctic and North, 2017 [170] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maksim-Zadorin/publication/322633478\\_The\\_ethnopolitics\\_of\\_Russia\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic\\_zone\\_integration\\_regional\\_multiculturalism\\_and\\_tradition/links/5abe1830a6fdcccda658f254/The-ethnopolitics-of-Russia-in-the-Arctic-zone-integration-regional-multiculturalism-and-tradition.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maksim-Zadorin/publication/322633478_The_ethnopolitics_of_Russia_in_the_Arctic_zone_integration_regional_multiculturalism_and_tradition/links/5abe1830a6fdcccda658f254/The-ethnopolitics-of-Russia-in-the-Arctic-zone-integration-regional-multiculturalism-and-tradition.pdf)**

Abstract:

The article is dedicated to the strategic issues of the ethnic policies' development in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation. Nowadays the academic knowledge of constitutional law and political science doesn't demonstrate clear understanding of the Russian ethnic national policy model in the Arctic, there are no comprehensible definitions and criteria, which could be used to estimate the present and desired model satisfying interests of the state and polytechnic society. It is also important to note that the course of certain ethnic processes in Russia and in the Russian Arctic is determined by the state mechanism. Its main instrument is the regulation of public relations with legal and political methods. In this article, the authors tried to understand the political and legal mechanism of the current Russian ethnic policy model in the Arctic. The practical goal is to develop proposals for improving its main components to form a more advanced policy model. The authors identified ten basic elements of the ethnopolitics of Russia in the Arctic zone, embodied in political and legal institutions (including the author's theoretical ideas about conceptual and

categorical apparatus), and indicated eight practical proposals for improving this model.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

Thus, to summarize, it should be noted that the Arctic ethno-politics of Russia is a system of political and legal measures to strengthen the integration of subjects, the formation of a single regional space by economic and cultural elements, but retaining the regional multi-cultural space and conceptual approval of the revival of traditional social institutions. The main proposals for improving this model are the following:

- to raise the question of support for endangered languages of indigenous small peoples according to the interactive Atlas of UNESCO;
- to do monitoring, accounting and systematization of the customs of indigenous peoples in local governance (by analogy with the pre-revolutionary and early Soviet regulation);
- strengthen the role of the “native councils” under regional public authorities;
- to develop a regulatory definition of the “All-Russian civil nation”;
- not to ignore the support of traditional beliefs of indigenous peoples not mentioned in the federal law “On freedom of conscience”, to improve the “regional branding” projects;
- to start training of specialists in the field of ethnoconflictology with the knowledge of indigenous cultures (incl. etiquette, taboo topics, etc.) and skills for the prevention of ethnic conflicts;
- to make a clear institutional specialization of regional ombudsmen;
- to strengthen the state information policy aimed at supporting “traditional values” (with their subject marking list, accounting the prevailing legal/local/social practice) and tolerance of ethnic communities to each other;
- to carry out a full monitoring of the staffing needs of indigenous peoples and their communities.

**“Traditional Knowledge and Nature Use of Indigenous Peoples of Asian Russia,”  
Laletin Andrey and Bocharnikov Vladimir, Research Gate, 11 September 2015**

[171] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Vladimir-Bocharnikov/publication/283481701\\_Traditional\\_Knowledge\\_and\\_Nature\\_Use\\_of\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_of\\_Asian\\_Russia/links/5639cfba08ae4624b75fbcdb/Traditional-Knowledge-and-Nature-Use-of-Indigenous-Peoples-of-Asian-Russia.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Vladimir-Bocharnikov/publication/283481701_Traditional_Knowledge_and_Nature_Use_of_Indigenous_Peoples_of_Asian_Russia/links/5639cfba08ae4624b75fbcdb/Traditional-Knowledge-and-Nature-Use-of-Indigenous-Peoples-of-Asian-Russia.pdf)

#### Abstract:

This research is mostly based on field materials of the co-authors to highlight main features and characteristics of the traditional use of nature (TUN) of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) of Siberia and Russian Far East. We studied legal, historical,

administrative and socio-demographic specificity of TUN in Russia and identified main features and characteristics of TUN. IPs, as an important part of the northern nature, lived and continued to live at the expense of the careful and prudent use of biological resources. Sacral knowledge of IPs is represented by their cults and rituals. They serve as a basis for ecological knowledge about their territories and for economic activity. Territories of TUN represent natural areas with a high degree of preservation of natural ecosystems, which often include areas of historical and cultural heritage (sacred sites). At the same time, the territories of TUN are the main tools to save a way of life and livelihoods of IPs. In terms of their importance, they are designed to protect native habitat and preserve the traditional way of life of IPs. The results indicate that TUN really expresses the ecological culture of traditional society that is different from the "western" society. It allows building a sustainable development strategy, based on the different cultural context than it does in the "western" ecology.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction, Approach and Materials**

Endless tundra, taiga and forest areas of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East are the birthplaces of indigenous peoples of Russia. They have amassed a wealth of experience over the centuries to survive in extreme climatic conditions of the Arctic, the harsh boreal forests and in vast unproductive but extensive wetlands of great plains of Siberia. But until now the indigenous peoples (IPs) preserve their unity with nature, and such a connection, which is best reflected in the special nature of traditional land and originality manifestations of traditional culture, closely associated with the sacred and traditional aboriginal knowledge (Bocharnikov 2006; Bocharnikov and Laletin 2006).

IPs have a special attachment to their land, wearing a deeply spiritual nature, since they see the land as something fundamental to its survival. This inseparable connection of the spiritual life of indigenous peoples with the Mother Earth, with their lands, is reflected in the concern for the environment, preservation and development of renewable natural resources. So, the traditional knowledge of the IPs indulged in by word of mouth, from generation to generation, and it has survived in the form of legends, traditions and religious rituals performed by them in specially designated sacred sites. The native religious world views of IPs are inextricably linked to traditional forms of farming - in reindeer herding, hunting, plants gathering and fishing. In this regard, it is an integral part of their traditional way of life and economic activities (Freeman 1993; Bocharnikov and Laletin 2010).

However, in recent decades it became clear that the areas of traditional livelihoods of IPs are very rich in natural resources. Intensive development of mineral deposits, carried out in the northern regions of Russia, endangered the traditional way of life of IPs. Under the pretext of the economic feasibility of the industry it substantially

ignored the interests of the indigenous population, violated the requirements of environmental safety. Too little attention is paid to vulnerable northern ecosystems. This article is mostly based on field materials to highlight main features and characteristics of the traditional use of nature (TUN) of indigenous peoples of Russia. It reveals specificity of their sacred knowledge. This article provides examples of the five Russian Regions: Primorsky Krai, the Yamal-Nenets and Koryak Autonomous Okrugs (Counties) based on field research of Bocharnikov V.N. in 1995 -2013 years, and Krasnoyarsk Krai and Irkutsk Oblast based on field work materials of Laletin A.P. in 1992 - 2010 years.

## **Conclusions**

Indigenous peoples, as an important part of the northern nature, lived and continue to live at the expense of the careful and prudent use of biological resources. Traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples about cults and rituals served as a basis for ecological knowledge about their territories and for economic activity.

Territories of traditional use of nature represent natural areas with a high degree of preservation of natural ecosystems, which often include areas of historical and cultural heritage (sacred sites).

At the same time the territories of traditional use of nature in Russia are the main tools to save a way of life and livelihoods of IPs. In terms of their importance, they are designed, first and foremost, to protect native habitat and preserve the traditional way of life of IPs. But also, they can provide successful conservation of natural biological diversity of forest, mountain and arctic ecosystems of the Northern Eurasia.

Traditional use of nature really expresses the ecological culture of traditional society that is different from the "western" society. It allows building a sustainable development strategy, based on different cultural context than it does in the "western" ecology.

**“Transition of the Nenets Traditional Lifestyle in Western Siberia: Transformation of Religious Beliefs,” Andrey A. Lobanov, et al., International Conference on Religion, Culture and Art, 2019 [172]**

<http://clausiuspress.com/conferences/ARTSH/ICRCA%202019/19ICRCA019.pdf>

### Abstract:

Growing globalization processes have significant impact on the assimilation and transformation of lifestyle, and shifts of social roles in the family and religious beliefs in the contemporary Nenets society. Nomadic population still has traditional religious ideas about the world creation, God, struggle between Good and Evil, posthumous fate, sacrifices and rituals. But they are currently transforming under the influence of civil society and European culture patterns. The processes of this transition are passing slower in the Arctic region, especially among nomadic population, still

involved in traditional occupations (reindeer herding, fisheries). But those who moved to the national settlements and got married to non-indigenous person are almost losing these traditional beliefs. These trends are stronger among educated young who are influenced by television culture. Intra-generic and intra-family communication impacts significantly on religious views. The Nenets modern religion has far more monotheistic characteristics than shamanism, and maintains a very strong connection with the reindeer herder's traditional lifestyle. At present, it is still developing, exploring new religious ideas as well as transforming religious practice.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The intensification of globalization processes has a significant impact on the transformation of lifestyle, shifts of social roles in the family and religious beliefs as a part of the “picture of the world” in the traditional indigenous society. The processes of this transition pass slower in the Arctic region, especially among nomadic population still involved in traditional occupations (reindeer herding, fisheries). Nenets are the main reindeer herders in the tundra areas of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Arctic zone of Western Siberia. However, they also inhabit the vast territory stretching along the Arctic Ocean coastline from the Kola Peninsula in the West to the Taimyr Peninsula in the East.

Tundra is still perceived by nomads as a “men’s space”, and a woman is used to be a wife, sister or daughter of a reindeer breeder. The traditional division of gender roles in household and ritual duties in a nomadic family remains invariable. A woman runs a “house”, cooks’ food, looks after children, takes care of fire, cloths etc. A man is a “breadwinner” who herds reindeers, catches fish, hunts and makes a sledge.

Contemporary transformation of the traditional lifestyle had significant impact in modification of Nenets religious beliefs. Old shamanic practices are almost out of use nowadays, and Nenets spiritual vector has changed since pre-literate era. It makes the main task of our study especially interesting: to compare old religious system and modern religious ideas, and evaluate the impact on the social processes in the contemporary Nenets society.

#### **Conclusion**

The analysis of religious motives is very complex and difficult to formalize. The same action may be driven by the motive of preserving the traditions and desire with the help of a magical ritual to control the spirits, or make sense of a truly religious act of turning to God and following his will. However, there is no doubt that the religious beliefs of the Nenets are not ethnographic relic frozen in changeless ritual forms. Our research shows that the understanding of religious ideas changes, a filling of a new meaning of existing symbols is coming.

Perhaps, we are witnessing the transformation of the Nenets traditional religion under the influence of changes in lifestyle, growing population in the Nenets settlements, increasing information flow and contact with monotheistic religions. The modern Nenets religion has a tendency to the loss of traits inherent to shamanism: the disappearance of shamans and shamanic practices, the reduction of the magical ritual role, knowledge of the spirits names and techniques of their management, the almost complete disappearance of references to the evil spirits for the patient's soul redemption. At the same time, religious ideas that are characteristic of monotheism appear: the idea of Num as the God of all people that is radically different from other spirits, active Num's interference into people's affairs and the possibility of personal address to him, the idea of different post-mortem fate depending on deeds or misdeeds in life. There are widespread sacrifices to Num. There are no, or insufficiently manifested characteristic features of Christianity: the idea of repentance before God, salvation, redemption, the history finiteness, theocentric understanding of the struggle between good and evil forces for the human soul, messianism, the ban on sacrifices to the spirits and power, justified religious intolerance to suicide.

Thus, the Nenets modern religion has far more traits of a monotheistic religion than shamanism, maintains a very strong connection with the reindeer herder's traditional lifestyle, and currently continues to develop, exploring new religious ideas as well as transforming religious practice.

## **8. United States (Alaska):**

**“Why Alaska and the Arctic are Critical to the National Security of the United States,” Michael J. Forsyth, *Military Review*, February 2018 [173]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Michael-Forsyth/publication/323456779\\_Why\\_Alaska\\_and\\_the\\_Arctic\\_are\\_Critical\\_to\\_the\\_National\\_Security\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States/links/5a96e4e2aca27214056b2d65/Why-Alaska-and-the-Arctic-are-Critical-to-the-National-Security-of-the-United-States.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Michael-Forsyth/publication/323456779_Why_Alaska_and_the_Arctic_are_Critical_to_the_National_Security_of_the_United_States/links/5a96e4e2aca27214056b2d65/Why-Alaska-and-the-Arctic-are-Critical-to-the-National-Security-of-the-United-States.pdf)

### Overview:

Over the past five years, Russia has moved aggressively to build its Arctic military capabilities, apparently in an effort to secure its claims and interests in the region. Increasingly, human activity is occurring in the Arctic as the sea ice recedes and economic opportunity opens to nations via new shipping lanes. Characteristically, in any geographical area, with the rise in human activity there is also the corresponding possibility that friction will occur as people compete to exploit the natural resources and corresponding economic possibilities. Such friction—and potential conflict—in the Arctic is highly likely at some point unless preparations are made to mitigate it.

Alaska makes the United States an Arctic nation, and its location places the state and country at the center of this fast-evolving region. Thus, Alaska is critical to the national security of the United States; however, we are not, as a nation, keeping



pace with the rapidly changing security situation in the Arctic. Lagging here could also have an enormous impact on our economy. To change this dynamic, there are several things that the U.S. military can do to ensure the future security of the region.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Conclusion**

The U.S. position in the Arctic because of Alaska is of enormous strategic significance. The United States has vital interests in the Arctic region that are unfortunately often overlooked because turbulence in other areas of the world often draw more attention. In time, these interests will come to be seen as both critical and vital to our own long-term economic interests as well as security. Consequently, there is a need to ensure our interests in the Arctic are sufficiently secured to ensure resolutions to territorial and resource claims remain peaceful.

To effect protection of our interests, the United States has to assert leadership using critical elements of national power, including the military. We must rebuild long-ignored Arctic military capabilities to provide a credible deterrent to any nation that may want to expand its territory outside of recognized international norms to exploit the tremendous resources of the Arctic. As human activity continues to increase in the Arctic, it will become more and more important for the United States to demonstrate its strength in the region. Failure to do so could allow the friction of human interaction to grow into needless regional confrontation with global implications. This is preventable with a commitment to leadership and peace in the region that stems from sufficient investment and preparation.

**“The Implications of U.S. Policy Stagnation toward the Arctic Region,” Heather A. Conley and Matthew Melino, Center for Strategic & International Studies, May 2019 [174] [http://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/191009\\_ConleyMelino.pdf](http://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/191009_ConleyMelino.pdf)**

Overview:

The United States’ strategic position near Russia and neighboring Canada allows the U.S. access to the Beaufort Sea, the Chukchi Sea, and the Bering Sea and requires the United States to manage a lengthy maritime border with Russia that extends through the Bering Strait and Chukchi Sea into the Arctic Ocean as far as permitted under international law. The U.S. government has articulated its fundamental interest in the Arctic for more than 40 years in a series of government strategies: beginning with President Nixon’s 1971 National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM-144), to Ronald Reagan’s 1983 National Security Decision Directive (NSDD-90), to President George W. Bush’s National Security Presidential Directive 66 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25, signed in 2009, and the 2016 Report to Congress from the Department of Defense on Strategy to Protect

United States National Security Interests in the Arctic Region. Each document established broad guidelines for U.S. policy in the region that aligned with the geostrategic realities at the time.

Today, there are three major drivers that are shaping the Arctic:

1. Geopolitical drivers of great power competition with the largest Arctic coastal state Russia and a self-proclaimed “near Arctic state,” China;
2. Environmental drivers, which are simultaneously transforming the Arctic maritime and terrestrial space at rates that confound scientists while fueling the development of flexible governance structures; and,
3. Economic drivers that are highly correlated with global commodity prices.

U.S. policy toward the Arctic is driven by these factors as well as Alaska’s important domestic economic role providing vital energy, mineral, and fishery resources. The Alaskan North Slope contains some of the country’s largest oils fields and natural gas fields; the 2016 value of its mineral industry was \$2.83 billion; and fisherman landed \$5.4 billion of fish and shellfish in 2017. Alaska’s economic activity has been subdued for the past several years due to lower global energy prices. The state must respond to increased coastal erosion necessitating village relocation, permafrost thaw, and fresh water scarcity which is dramatically altering traditional livelihoods.

The challenge for an overarching U.S. Arctic policy is that it must address all of these cross-cutting issues simultaneously: protect the homeland, pursue environmental adaptation and resilience, and address global economic and security dynamics while engaging in anticipatory policymaking. U.S. government strategies and documents for the Arctic are largely descriptive in nature, and they have yet to alter resource allocations (with the exception of recent congressional funding for one heavy-icebreaker, which will be predominantly used in Antarctica) or establish new organizational structures that can more efficiently address these cross-cutting issues. They also do not offer a clear set of priorities.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

To date, the United States does not have a meaningful policy response to either Russia’s or China’s increased economic and military ambitions in the region. For now, Washington is acknowledging Russia and China’s growing footprint in the Arctic, but it is allowing both nations to largely shape the region’s future. With the exception of the construction of a polar security cutter, there are no other significant infrastructure initiatives on the horizon. Secretary Pompeo will attend the Arctic Council ministerial in May 2019 in Finland, but the United States may either dilute or delete meaningful mention of climate change from the ministerial’s conclusions. In response to Russian military actions, the U.S. military is placing a greater focus on the region and is increasing its presence in Iceland, Norway, and Alaska. The White House is also examining more closely Chinese presence in the Arctic but again, studying the actions of others is not constructing its own policy.

One hopes that the eventual U.S. policy response to great power competition in the Arctic does not fall into the “too little, too late” category.

**“Arctic 2015 and Beyond: A Strategy for U.S. Leadership in the High North,”**  
**Elizabeth Rosenberg, David Titley and Alexander Wiker, Center for a New**  
**American Security, December 2014 [175] [http://cfcollegefoundation.ca/wp-](http://cfcollegefoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CNAS_ArcticHighNorth_policybrief_RosenbergTitleyWiker.pdf)**  
**[content/uploads/2016/08/CNAS\\_ArcticHighNorth\\_policybrief\\_RosenbergTitleyWiker.pdf](http://cfcollegefoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CNAS_ArcticHighNorth_policybrief_RosenbergTitleyWiker.pdf)**

Overview:

Strong U.S. Arctic policy and leadership are increasingly fundamental to the United States’ strategic and economic interests. Such leadership and focus in this area will be essential to underpinning U.S. initiatives on Arctic matters in multilateral forums, such as the Arctic Council (AC).

If the United States wants to realize broad national interests in this region, particularly in an era of tense relations with Russia (the current pre-eminent power in the High North), it must prioritize greater resource commitments and attention to the region. The United States must accelerate its rate of investment in Arctic infrastructure, operations and legal and regulatory capacities to be able to set the terms for the coming era of expanded Arctic activity. The United States must also implement binding international agreements on such matters as search and rescue, oil spill response and polar shipping codes, among others, to attract opportunity, manage risk and help establish a solid framework for international engagement in this region in the years to come.

Rapid and unprecedented climactic shifts in the Arctic’s environmental, economic, social and geopolitical landscapes are signaling the dawning of a new era of focus on the region. The Arctic is poised to leave its backwater legacy behind and become a prominent player on the world’s stage. Forecasting the exact moment of this transition, as with most predictions about the future, is nearly impossible. However, failure of current policymakers to recognize and anticipate the approaching Arctic epoch will leave the United States playing a game of strategic and economic catch-up or worse, while other nations solidify their own interests and claims in the region.

The AC remains unquestionably the world’s foremost venue for intergovernmental Arctic engagement. One metric of the AC’s importance on the world stage is the doubling in the number of countries applying for observer status, now held by 12 nations. Starting in April 2015, the United States has a rare chance to showcase its international credibility as an Arctic leader. At that time, the United States will assume a two-year chairmanship of the AC, a situation that will not recur until 2031. The United States has but a brief window of opportunity to assume responsibility for shaping international policies to advance U.S. national interests tied to far northern resources and territorial management, and improve the livelihoods of Arctic peoples.

Unfortunately, the U.S. national-level focus on Arctic issues and policy is quite modest, a factor that will undermine and limit U.S. capabilities as leader of the AC. Though this organization is not the only platform to influence Arctic policy and activity, it is an important one deserving of increased U.S. attention. Despite the recent appointment of former U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Robert J. Papp Jr. as special representative for the Arctic and a number of recently released national roadmaps and strategies, the Arctic remains a policy and investment afterthought.

This paper describes the enormous changes taking place in the Arctic and the benefits and opportunities the United States can realize from those changes. It also describes challenges of these changes, including those related to the establishment of a sustained, effective physical presence in the region. After analyzing U.S. policy in light of these opportunities and challenges, the paper provides five recommendations for national Arctic policy and initiatives the United States should champion as chair of the AC. If adopted, these recommendations would advance U.S. interests described in the National Strategy for the Arctic Region and help to ensure an Arctic that is “peaceful, stable, and free of conflict.”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

In 2015, the United States will take its two-year turn as chair of the Arctic Council — an opportunity that will not arise again until 2031. As the Arctic’s environmental, economic, social and geopolitical importance grows exponentially, the need for a strong U.S. national Arctic policy cannot be overstated. This national policy must symbiotically co-exist with a credible Arctic Council action plan. Prompt implementation of the aforementioned recommendations will spur investment and interest in the Arctic, improve U.S. credibility as a global leader in Arctic affairs and inform and shape the nation’s Arctic ethos, policy and investments for decades to come.

**“New Evidence for the Timing of Arctic Small Tool Tradition Coastal Settlement in Northwest Alaska,” Andrew H. Tremayne, *Alaska Journal of Anthropology*, 2015 [176] [https://www.alaskaanthropology.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/AJA\\_131\\_Tremayne.pdf](https://www.alaskaanthropology.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/AJA_131_Tremayne.pdf)**

#### Abstract:

This paper presents the results of a survey of the oldest beach ridges located on Cape Espenberg in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Alaska. The goals were to locate and test Arctic Small Tool tradition (ASTt) sites to develop a coastal settlement chronology and to establish whether marine resources were exploited. At the outset of this project four ASTt sites were known at Cape Espenberg, two with associated radiocarbon dates. Upon completion, ten new ASTt sites with eleven

radiocarbon dates were added to the record. Analysis of the radiocarbon dates indicate ASTt occupations at Cape Espenberg began at least 4,500 years ago and lasted a millennium. Comparisons among ASTt sites throughout Alaska suggest the coast was settled prior to the interior. The site designated KTZ-325 yielded the oldest securely dated evidence for sea mammal use in Northwest Alaska, supporting the hypothesis that ASTt people had a maritime economy in place at the start of their florescence in Alaska and beyond.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

Surveys at Cape Espenberg in 2011 and 2013 discovered ten new coastal ASTt sites. Analysis of the radiocarbon dates suggests that ASTt people settled the unoccupied coastal habitats of Alaska prior to moving inland to exploit terrestrial resources. Their absence in the interior forest habitat suggests competition with other groups but also a preference for an economy that included the harvest of both maritime and terrestrial resources. This adaptation differs markedly from that of the Northern Archaic people who came before and overlapped with ASTt, but is reminiscent of subsistence and land use strategies of ethnohistoric Iñupiat in Northwest Alaska (Burch 2006:31–57). The discovery and analysis of cemented-sand deposits, some of which contained seal bones, associated with the oldest radiocarbon dates at Cape Espenberg confirms that ASTt people were on the coast to hunt maritime prey. It is still unclear how developed their maritime skills were, but they were sufficient to rapidly colonize the coastlines from southern Alaska to Greenland. If ASTt people spread from Siberia to Alaska, as is the most accepted scenario (Raghavan et al. 2014), then it would seem they invented or adopted their maritime adaptations prior to their migration into Alaska and beyond. The fact that there are ASTt dates in a coastal context in western Canada that appear older than those found in Alaska (Savelle and Dyke 2002) would seem to indicate the oldest ASTt sites in Alaska have yet to be discovered. A renewed search for ASTt origins along the Asian side of the Bering and Chukchi coasts is necessary to test these hypotheses.

**“Population, Climate and Electricity Use in the Arctic Integrated Analysis of Alaska Community Data,” Lawrence C. Hamilton, et al., *Population and Environment*, 2012 [177] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lawrence-Hamilton/publication/225725797\\_Population\\_climate\\_and\\_electricity\\_use\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic\\_Integrated\\_analysis\\_of\\_Alaska\\_community\\_data/links/0a85e5369056a4ec15000000/Population-climate-and-electricity-use-in-the-Arctic-Integrated-analysis-of-Alaska-community-data.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lawrence-Hamilton/publication/225725797_Population_climate_and_electricity_use_in_the_Arctic_Integrated_analysis_of_Alaska_community_data/links/0a85e5369056a4ec15000000/Population-climate-and-electricity-use-in-the-Arctic-Integrated-analysis-of-Alaska-community-data.pdf)**

#### Abstract:

Towns and villages of Arctic Alaska experience substantial year-to-year variations in weather, overlaid on longer-term warming trends. Community populations often are

changing as well, affected by highly variable net migration, and birth rates that create pressure for natural increase. In this paper we examine how variations in climate and population affect community use of electricity, which for the most part is generated locally from diesel fuel. We apply mixed-effects modeling to time series of electricity, climate, population and price indicators across 42 Alaska towns and villages over the years 1990–2008. Population dominates annual variations in electricity use, showing both general and community-specific effects. Warmer summers reduce electricity use, as do higher prices. Net of population, climate and price, there has been a general upward trend.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The towns and villages of Arctic Alaska in many ways form a world apart. Most of these small communities, with a hundred to a few thousand people, are unconnected by roads to each other or the rest of Alaska. Long winters as well as long distances, and wide-open Arctic or subarctic landscapes, add to the ways that life is different here. Indigenous Yup'ik or Iñupiat cultures, together with influences from the broader American society and newer, oftentimes transient immigrants, have given rise to communities with complex mixtures of cultural values, subsistence and cash economies, and progressive self-determination alongside deep social problems.

Despite their remoteness, Arctic Alaska communities are inextricably linked to the U.S. and global society. Southern developments such as welfare reform, environmental rulings or the market price of commodities reverberate strongly across Arctic communities. Drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which some Alaskans hope will offset declining Prudhoe Bay production, became an issue in the 2008 presidential campaign. Also in 2008, a worldwide economic crisis and a spike in oil prices led to speculation about new waves of outmigration from the bush — although that has not materialized yet (Hamilton & Mitiguy 2010).

The impacts of global pollution create notable problems in the Arctic (e.g., De Armas & Vanko 2008; Hamilton 2004). Wind and sea circulation bring pollutants into Arctic ecosystems, where they bio magnify up food chains and pose risks to marine mammals and humans at the top of these chains. Greenhouse gas emissions from the south drive climate changes that have been most pronounced in the Arctic (ACIA 2005). Thawing permafrost, reduced or weakened sea ice, shoreline erosion, new storm patterns and the northward expansion of subarctic vegetation, fish and animals are among the environmental changes noticed by Arctic residents (Krupnik & Jolly 2002). They find themselves in a disadvantaged downstream position with respect to global emissions. Due to cold winters and long distances, however, Arctic communities themselves also emit relatively high per-capita levels of greenhouse gases.

Elsewhere, the expected effects of warming climate on energy demand depend on regionally-specific shifts in the need for heating and cooling. In cooler parts of Europe, for example, the net change might be reduced demand due to less need for heating (Mideksa & Kallbekken 2010). The circumstances of Arctic Alaska are different, however, and might present different patterns.

In this paper we examine an integrated dataset containing time series of energy, climate, demographic and economic indicators for 42 selected Alaska communities, over the years 1990–2008. We apply mixed-effects modeling to estimate the effects of year-to-year variations in population, seasonal climate, price and linear trends on community-level electricity consumption, most of which is generated locally by diesel fuel. Although Arctic scientists and stakeholders often mention the desirability of bringing “human dimensions” into natural-science research, efforts towards formal integration are just beginning (Huntington et al. 2007). The modeling approach tested here appears promising for integrated analyses in social/environment research.

**“Food Security in Arctic Alaska: Preliminary Assessment,” Richard A. Caulfield, Ulaval.ca, 2002 [178]**

<https://www.chaireconditionautochtone.fss.ulaval.ca/doc/Publication/Chapitre-4-01.pdf>

#### Abstract:

Alaska's Arctic communities have a dynamic mixed economy that is central to understanding food security and sustainable development. In this economy, cash and country food production are mutually supportive. Country foods are vital to nutritional, economic, and cultural development in Alaska's Aboriginal communities. Research in northern Alaska shows that they are widely obtained, consumed, and shared within families and communities. At the same time, imported foods offer a wide array of nutritional choices. However, they are often expensive, their availability can be uncertain, and their quality can vary greatly. This paper describes Alaska's northernmost regions and discusses this mixed economy as it relates to food security and safety, it highlights five major issues affecting food security in northern Alaska: subsistence conflicts, contaminants in country foods, global climate change, industrial development and habitat degradation, and animal rights activism. It also points to additional research needs important to understanding Alaska's food security in a circumpolar context.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Alaska's Arctic communities have a dynamic mixed economy that is "central to understanding food security and sustainable development (Wolfe et al. 1984, Wolfe & Walker 1987). In this economy, cash and country food production are mutually supportive. Incomes from wage employment and government transfers enable

households to obtain valued country foods like whales, seals, caribou, and fish. Both country foods and imported foodstuffs contribute flexibly toward meeting nutritional, social, economic, and cultural needs. Cash enables household members to purchase boats, outboard motors, rifles, and fishnets. With these, the region's Inupiat people are able to procure and consume large amounts of country foods; far more on average than are residents of urban Alaska. They use a wide array of wild resources, working together flexibly to procure, process, and share country foods. These practices are based on traditional systems of land use and occupancy, and they invoke a complex and dynamic system of indigenous knowledge, beliefs, and values.

In a rapidly changing world, Inupiat people of Arctic Alaska continue to value country foods as central to their culture and identity. In the words of an Inupiat eider from Kotzebue, "The land means everything to us, it brings us food, it provides for our clothing, it provides for our lodging, it brings us water; it means everything to us" (Berger 1985). At the same time, imported foods--ranging from basics like rice, eggs, and sugar to soda pop and candy--offer a wide array of choices in contemporary Inupiat diets. However, imported foods in the region are expensive, their availability is often uncertain, and their quality can vary greatly. While desired for the dietary variety they bring, imported foods can also have detrimental effects on the health of Arctic residents.

This mixed subsistence-cash economy is of central importance to understanding food security and sustainable development in Alaska. In this paper, I offer a preliminary assessment of food security in Alaska's Arctic communities over time, including both formal and non-formal sectors. In doing so, I draw heavily upon my own research, that of the Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and state and federal sources. I also highlight some issues affecting food security in the region, pointing to additional research needs as a contribution to broader comparative study.

The data presented here underscore the fact that the Arctic region's mixed economy is dynamic and subject to rapid change. Our understanding of this economy must be historically and culturally informed. Current transportation and supply "Systems are based on economic assumptions and subsidies that may well change over time. Where one community may have extraordinary access to a particular resource for a time - wage jobs in the oil industry, for example----other nearby communities may have very limited access to this same resource. Moreover, availability of caribou, salmon, or other resources can change dramatically due to ecological or other factors.

Issues of food security in the Arctic must also be placed in a global context (Nuttall 1998). Decisions about food security issues in Alaska--including subsistence rights, oil and gas development, animal rights activism, Arctic pollutants, and responses to global change---are typically made not in Barrow or Kotzebue but in distant centers



like London, New York, and Moscow. While Arctic residents are increasingly successful in securing political self-determination, we know that food security is increasingly affected by a global economy that is itself dynamic and filled with contradictions.

Finally, understanding these local and global dynamics requires documentation of indigenous knowledge about food systems, and how Alaska Native peoples themselves perceive socioeconomic, cultural, and ecological change relating to food security (see, Brooke1993). For Arctic residents, these issues are not merely of academic interest; they are central to their economic and cultural survival.

**“Alaska Nature and Science,” National Park Service, 9 December 2020 [179]**  
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/aknatureandscience/arcticecosystems.htm>

Overview:

The National Park Service manages approximately 18% of the U.S. lands above the Arctic Circle, 20.25 million acres protected in five parks, 17.55 million acres of which are mostly connected. This region is critical breeding ground for many shorebirds, some of which migrate thousands of miles to get here. Caribou herds, also migratory, have calving grounds and wintering grounds in the Arctic tundra. Some species are specific to the Arctic, such as polar bears, muskoxen, Arctic foxes, among others. [The Arctic](#) is a harsh, yet fragile, environment and the people, plants, and wildlife adapt to the conditions to live there.

**“Northwest & Arctic Region,” Alaska Centers, 26 April 2022 [180]**  
<https://www.alaskacenters.gov/destinations/regions/northwest-arctic>

Overview:

Northwest & Arctic Region

The Northwest & Arctic of Alaska is one of Alaska’s most diverse regions ranging from coastal plains to mountain ranges; the land is vast, but the population small at just over 10,000 residents. Much like the varied land, the northern reaches of the state experience some of the largest seasonal changes in sunlight. The northern most city in the United States, Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow), experiences 67 days without the rising sun and temperatures dipping to at least -20°F. The summer months award the residents with 80 days of uninterrupted sunshine heating the air to the high 40’s. Southwest of Barrow and south of the Arctic Circle lies Nome, marking the finish line to the historical Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Nome is in the far north of Alaska, but boasts lows only in the single negative digits in the coldest months with highs stretching for 60°F in the summer. Caribou, muskoxen, and wolverine are among the arctic wildlife more prominent than people in the far north.

## A. Family:

**“Female flight from Alaskan villages leads to social problems,” Doris Friedrich, High North News, 30 May 2017 [181] <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/female-flight-alaskan-villages-leads-social-problems>**

### Overview:

Arctic Alaska’s disproportional outmigration of women can lead to numerous social issues. "However, the birth rate is high enough to outweigh the net effects of migration. As a result, many of these places are still growing, even those most threatened by climate change", Lawrence Hamilton of the University of New Hampshire explains.

"Life in Alaskan cities and associated education and career paths appeal more to women, whereas many men seem to prefer to maintain a traditional subsistence lifestyle. As a result, there is an excess of adult males in smaller towns and villages, in particular among Native populations," Hamilton says.

In Greenland, Iceland, and Norway, the pattern is similar. These are the results from several research projects, whose findings Lawrence Hamilton presented at the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) in April.

Surveys conducted in Alaskan high schools showed that already in school, girls more likely expect to move and live most of their lives away from their home region and outside of rural Alaska. This gender difference is widest among Alaska Native (Inupiat or Yupik) residents. Census data showing the sex-ratio in 43 Arctic Alaska communities confirms the pattern. College aspirations exhibit a similar gender gap: the percentage of girls with college aspirations is higher than that of boys in every ethnic group.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Social problems**

Disproportionate outmigration of women has broad social consequences. Hamilton elaborates: "Men may not find suitable partners in their age class when settling down, resulting in a sort of prolonged adolescence of men. In turn, there might be more pressure on younger women. The cascade of social problems further includes concerns over the loss of cultural values and lifestyle."

#### **Climigration?**

Unexpectedly, Hamilton also found that outmigration in Alaska is not coupled to global economic or climatic changes, such as the oil price increase and global recession of 2008. Even in the communities most threatened by climate change, such as Kivalina and Shishmaref, the rates of migration and population change do not significantly differ from those in communities less at risk. However, this is likely

to change in the future, as environmental threats from thawing permafrost, erosion and flooding become more severe.

### **Demographic trends in Arctic Alaska highly relevant**

Although demographic trends are highly relevant for sustainability issues and community planning, they are not widely taken into account and acknowledged in discussions. The project Sustainable Futures North (SFN) addresses this gap and maintains a demographic database, which tracks changes in 43 Arctic Alaskan towns and villages. Hamilton emphasizes: "Migration levels are key social indicators and important to the future of these communities."

**“Environment and Gender Balance among Alaska Natives: An Historical Perspective,” Lawrence C. Hamilton, Carole L. Seyfrit, and Christina Bellinger, Population and Environment, 1997 [182]**

[https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1160&context=soc\\_facpub](https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1160&context=soc_facpub)

#### Abstract:

Human-environment interactions can affect the gender balance of resource-dependent societies in a variety of ways. Historical and contemporary data on Alaska Native populations illustrate such effects. Some 18th and early 19th century observers noted an excess of females, which they attributed to high mortality among hunters. Population counts in the later 19th century and well into the 20th found instead an excess of men in many communities. Female infanticide was credited as the explanation: since family survival depended upon hunting success, males were more valued. Although infanticide explanations for the excess of males have been widely believed, available demographic data point to something else: higher adult female mortality. Finally, in the postwar years, the importance of mortality differentials seems to have faded — and also changed direction. Female outmigration from villages accounts for much of the gender imbalance among Native populations today. Natural-resource development, particularly North Slope oil, indirectly drives this migration. In Alaska's transcultural communities, the present gender imbalances raise issues of individual and cultural survival.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Linkages are often seen between environment and basic demographic variables — birth rate, death rate, and migration flow. In this article we direct attention to some ways in which environmental variables can also have gender-specific effects on deaths and migration. Such effects alter a society's male-female balance, influencing both the life chances of individuals and the viability of their communities.

Our analysis here concentrates on Alaska, but the patterns we describe appear to be more general. Gender imbalances due to migration or mortality have been

reported in many societies, from Ireland (Messenger, 1969; Scheper-Hughes, 1979) to China (Tuljapurkar, Li & Feldman, 1995). Recent surveys found differences between the migration expectations of young men and women in rural Scotland (Seyfrit & Hamilton, 1992a), Alaska (Hamilton & Seyfrit, 1993a) and Newfoundland (Hamilton & Seyfrit, 1994a). Gender-balance patterns resembling Alaska's appear also in Greenland, both in contemporary population data (Hamilton, Rasmussen, Flanders & Seyfrit, 1996) and in historical reports. Jentoft (1993) describes female outmigration from contemporary Norwegian fishing communities. Informally, we have heard accounts of similar phenomena in other places including Iceland, Siberia and the South Pacific. The details of how gender balance varies with changing environmental and social conditions differ from place to place, however, and deserve individual study.

Alaska's indigenous people are Eskimo, Indian, or Aleut. The term Eskimo is sometimes rejected as pejorative, in the belief that it originates from a proto-Algonquian expression meaning "eaters of raw flesh." Many prefer the self-designation of Inuit ("people") instead. Inuit, however, properly refers to one cultural/linguistic group spanning northern Alaska, the Canadian Arctic and Labrador coasts, and Greenland. Some speakers of Yupik ("real people"), a second major linguistic group found in west and southwest Alaska (with affinities to Siberia), would rather be called Eskimo than Inuit. Furthermore, recent scholarship suggests that the word Eskimo actually has fewer pejorative roots, not in Algonquian but in a Montagnais, expression meaning "snowshoe netter" (Damas, 1984:6). Today the Alaska Federation of Natives, among others, views Eskimo as a neutral term covering both Inuit and Yupik peoples.

Writers in Alaska employ capital-N "Native" as a designation encompassing Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts. This allows use of small-n "native" as a term for anyone born in Alaska. In other U.S. states, the term Native American may be preferred over Indian since the latter arose from Columbus' geographical confusion. In Alaska, however, the term Indian (covering Athabaska, Tlingit, Haida, etc. but not Eskimo or Aleut) remains useful. Native Americans from other states, some of whom move to Alaska, may be identified by Alaska Natives as "outside Indians."

More than two thirds of Alaska's 86,000 Natives presently live in the small and often remote communities of the Alaskan bush. Elements of traditional culture, including language, persist there alongside newer Native institutions and the heavy presence of dominant U.S. culture. As recently as the 1960s, many villagers of northwest Alaska endured bitter Arctic winters in frozen sod huts, much as their ancestors had. Today most dwell in warmer prefabricated houses and schools, although a few still hunt the bowhead whale. Children in some village schools of southwest Alaska begin their schooling speaking Yupik, and switch to English only after third grade. In small villages throughout the state, subsistence hunting and fishing may contribute up to half of the food supply (Jorgensen, 1990).

Despite the appeal of traditional culture, the otherwise limited job, life and recreational choices inspire many young people to leave Native villages. But a large fraction of leavers later return, after finding that city life suits them less well. Native students who drop out from the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, or from Mount Edgecumbe High School (a predominantly Native boarding school in southeast Alaska), often cite homesickness as their reason. Bush villages thus continue to play a central role in the survival of Alaska Native culture, and provide a home for Natives who wish to stay close to their culture — facts recognized by Native and non-Native leaders alike.

Although they help keep traditional culture alive, bush villages are nonetheless experiencing a period of rapid social change. Resource-based industry — forestry, fishing, mining, and especially oil — has been the principal force behind this change, bringing into the bush waves of money, people and infrastructure. With these have come other changes in economy, housing, government, education, transportation and the advent of satellite T.V. Recent books survey the cultural impacts of such change (Chance, 1990; Condon, 1987; Duffy, 1988; Fienup-Riordan, 1990; Jorgensen, 1990; Kizzia, 1991; Oswalt, 1990).

Since 1991 we have been conducting research on how resource development affects adolescents in bush Alaska. Surveys and discussions with high school students soon directed our attention towards migration as a key variable, and in particular, towards the ways in which gender differences in outmigration were changing the demographic profile of bush villages (Seyfrit & Hamilton, 1992b; Hamilton & Seyfrit, 1993a, 1993b, 1994b).

Previous writings present more detailed cross-sectional analysis of the contemporary Alaskan population (Hamilton & Seyfrit, 1993b, 1994b), and also that of Greenland (Hamilton et al., 1996). This article takes an historical view instead, to look at demographic changes over a period during which an essentially Neolithic culture became what Jorgensen (1990) called “oil age Eskimos.” Gender imbalances have been common in Alaska Native villages over the past two centuries. The direction of imbalances has changed, however, in response to changing interactions between society and the physical environment.

**“The Social Determinants of Elevated Rates of Suicide Among Inuit Youth,” Jack Hicks, Indigenous Affairs, April 2007 [183]**

[https://www.iwgia.org/images/publications/IA\\_4\\_07.pdf#page=30](https://www.iwgia.org/images/publications/IA_4_07.pdf#page=30)

#### Overview:

It has not always been the case that the world’s Inuit population has suffered from the tragically high rates of death by suicide that they experience today.

The 150,000 Inuit alive today are an indigenous people inhabiting Greenland, the Arctic regions of Canada, the north and west coasts of Alaska, and the Chukotka

peninsula in the Russian Far East. A maritime people, Inuit traditionally relied on fish, marine mammals and land animals for food, clothing, transport, shelter, warmth, light and tools. Until fairly recent times, there was a remarkable cultural homogeneity across their homelands, but that began to change as the four states in which Inuit now find themselves consolidated their grips over their Arctic regions.

Beginning in the 1950s, governments across the Arctic subjected Inuit to intense disruptions of the lifeways they were accustomed to. The details varied considerably across the region, but the fundamental economic, political and social processes of incorporation and sedentarization were similar. These processes of incorporation and sedentarization also took place at somewhat different times in different parts of the Arctic, and had somewhat divergent outcomes.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The earliest existing data on suicide among Inuit comes from Greenland. Writing in 1935, Dr. Alfred Berthelsen calculated an annual suicide rate of just 3.0 per annum per 100,000 population for the period 1900 to 1930. (By comparison, the most recent suicide rate for Denmark is 13.6 per 100,000, 11.6 for Canada and 11.0 for the USA.) He concluded that the few suicides occurring in Greenland at that time were all the result of serious mental illnesses. As late as 1960 there was still the occasional year when there were no recorded suicides by Greenlanders.

The transition from the “historical pattern of suicide by Inuit” to the “present-day pattern of suicide by Inuit” was first documented in North Alaska by psychiatrist Robert Krauss. In a paper presented at a conference in 1971, he noted:

In the traditional pattern, middle-aged or older men were involved; motivation for suicide involved sickness, old age, or bereavement; the suicide was undertaken after sober reflection and, at times, consultation with family members who might condone or participate in the act; and suicide was positively sanctioned in the culture.

In the emergent pattern, the individuals involved are young; the motivation is obscure and often related to intense and unbearable affective states; the behavior appears in an abrupt, fit-like, unexpected manner without much warning, often in association with alcohol intoxication; and unlike the traditional pattern, the emergent pattern is negatively sanctioned in the culture.

This suicide transition among Inuit was experienced first in North Alaska in the late 1960s, then in Greenland in the 1970s and early 1980s, and then again in Canada’s Eastern Arctic in the late 1980s and through the 1990s. Each time the transition occurred, it resulted in a higher overall rate of death by suicide.

The temporal sequence in which the “regional suicide transitions” occurred is noteworthy, as it mirrors – roughly one generation later – the processes of “active colonialism at the community level”. (We need to differentiate between “active” and

“passive” colonialism as some Inuit populations had been colonized for several generations – but in those cases the colonial powers had not attempted to substantially reorganize Inuit society as they depended on the persistence of the communal mode of production to ensure a supply of marine mammal products, fox pelts, etc.) One of the positive aspects of state intervention in Inuit life was the rapid decline in the incidence of tuberculosis. We can therefore use the decline in tuberculosis incidence as a historical marker of the early years of “active colonialism at the community level”. The historical sequence in which Inuit infectious disease rates fell (as a result of the introduction of Western medicine) was the same order in which Inuit rates of death by suicide later rose across the Arctic.

**“State policy towards indigenous peoples of Alaska: historical review and contemporary issues,” Polina S. Golomidova and Aleksander A. Saburov, Arctic and North, 2016 [184]**

[http://www.arcticandnorth.ru/upload/uf/77f/aan\\_25.pdf#page=55](http://www.arcticandnorth.ru/upload/uf/77f/aan_25.pdf#page=55)

Abstract:

The article analyzes main stages of policy development towards indigenous peoples of Alaska and its influence on aboriginal cultures from the beginning of Russian colonization in the 18th century up to present time. The authors conclude that current policy towards indigenous peoples in Alaska can be generally evaluated as successful and supporting development of traditional cultures. The main achievements of this policy are: high level of self-organization and self-government of Alaska natives, legally secured rights for land and resources, progress in conservation of cultural heritage. However, social and economic challenges faced by indigenous people present a potential threat to the political stability in Alaska.

Current & Relevant Information:

Today it is recognized at the international and national level that sustainable development of the Arctic region is not possible without ensuring social well-being of indigenous peoples of the Arctic and the preservation of their historical and cultural heritage and unique language. This problem is actual for the Russian Federation on the territory of which 40 indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East live as well as the titular peoples of the North: the Komi and the Yakuts. The scientific literature notes the need to ensure sustainable socio-economic and cultural development of the peoples that make up the ethno-cultural space of the Arctic region, as well as more effective migration policy in the northern regions. For the formulation of a coherent policy that meets the interests of the peoples and conducive to sustainable development of the North of the country, it is necessary to study the experience of foreign countries, in particular the United States of America. The US experience is interesting for several reasons. First, the indigenous population of Alaska, as well as the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is different in the ethnic and cultural composition. Secondly, the peoples of northern Alaska and

Russia face similar problems of socio-economic nature and the preservation of cultural and historical heritage. Finally, the unique relationships between indigenous people in Alaska, the state and the authorities of the state, formed for a long period, represent practical and research interest. The purpose of this article is to identify the characteristics of policy on indigenous peoples of Alaska and its impact on aboriginal culture at various stages since the beginning of the Russian presence in the XVIII century until now.

Single issues of history and current condition of the peoples of Alaska are largely studied in the literature. A large number of works have been prepared by Russian researchers on a period of Russian colonization of Alaska and its impact on daily life, beliefs, social structure of indigenous communities. Much attention in the scientific community is paid to the aboriginal self-government, education, racial and ethnic composition. Review articles are published devoted to the current state of indigenous peoples.

The study does not consider separately the peoples living in the Arctic Circle or related to the "Arctic" peoples as per other criteria. This is due to the fact that aboriginal population in Alaska, as a rule, appears as integral subject and object of the policy. Tribes and aboriginal corporations of Alaska are not fundamentally different in their legal status and are treated in most of the scientific literature as a whole. It is also necessary to bear in mind that most part of the US legislation extends on indigenous peoples of Alaska (Aleuts, Eskimos, Indians), as well as on the entire US indigenous population including Indians of the lower 48 states. American Indians and Alaska Natives are the generally accepted names of the indigenous population.

## **Conclusion**

Since the XVIII century it is possible to underline a few stages in the policy of indigenous peoples of Alaska. During the period of the Russian presence from 1740 till 1867 the cultural interaction had the character of acculturation with elements of assimilation. On the one hand, the lower status of indigenous peoples in the structure of colonial society, the destruction of traditional social relations and institutions are obvious. On the other hand, the Russian colonists worked closely with local residents and borrowed a considerable part of the traditional adaptation strategies.

After the sale of Alaska in 1867 the indigenous peoples of Alaska passed a long way from the policy of segregation and assimilation in their relation to the legislative recognition of land rights, self-governance and the preservation of cultural heritage. In many ways, Alaska Natives, thanks to a high level of mobilization, have achieved more rights in comparison with the American Indians of the lower 48 states.

Current policy of the indigenous peoples of Alaska is based on the principles of multiculturalism, recognition and support of the development of traditional cultures.



Among its achievements are the high level of self-organization and self-government of the Indigenous population, legally enforceable right to land and resources, progress in the conservation of cultural heritage. However, the heritage of long policy of assimilation and segregation, supported by the state and society has not been overcome completely. Problems of social and economic nature faced by indigenous people, present a potential threat to the political stability in Alaska. Among them: low level of income of the indigenous population, high mortality, high levels of alcohol consumption, suicide, violence, lower levels of education. A serious challenge is also reducing the number of speakers of the prevailing traditional languages of Alaska.

**“Central Role of Relatedness in Alaska Native Youth Resilience: Preliminary Themes from One Site of the Circumpolar Indigenous Pathways to Adulthood (CIPA) Study,”** Lisa Wexler, et al., *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 2013 [185] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lisa-Wexler/publication/262044969\\_Central\\_Role\\_of\\_Relatedness\\_in\\_Alaska\\_Native\\_Youth\\_Resilience\\_Preliminary\\_Themes\\_from\\_One\\_Site\\_of\\_the\\_Circumpolar\\_Indigenous\\_Pathways\\_to\\_Adulthood\\_CIPA\\_Study/links/54d142430cf28370d0e0630c/Central-Role-of-Relatedness-in-Alaska-Native-Youth-Resilience-Preliminary-Themes-from-One-Site-of-the-Circumpolar-Indigenous-Pathways-to-Adulthood-CIPA-Study.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lisa-Wexler/publication/262044969_Central_Role_of_Relatedness_in_Alaska_Native_Youth_Resilience_Preliminary_Themes_from_One_Site_of_the_Circumpolar_Indigenous_Pathways_to_Adulthood_CIPA_Study/links/54d142430cf28370d0e0630c/Central-Role-of-Relatedness-in-Alaska-Native-Youth-Resilience-Preliminary-Themes-from-One-Site-of-the-Circumpolar-Indigenous-Pathways-to-Adulthood-CIPA-Study.pdf)

Abstract:

This qualitative study of youth resilience takes place in an Alaska Native community, which has undergone rapid, imposed social change over the last three generations. Elders, and successive generations have grown up in strikingly different social, economic and political contexts. Youth narratives of relationships in the context of adolescent growth and development offer insights to better understand culturally-patterned experience, continuity and change. Local youth and adults shaped the design, implementation and analysis phases of this participatory study. Multiple interviews, totaling 20 older (ages 15–18) and younger (11–14) boys and girls provide accounts of everyday lives and life histories. Although losing close relationships was the most common stressor, many of the participants’ resilience strategies centered on their connections to others. Participants cultivated ‘relatedness’, nurturing relationships that took on kinship qualities. Within these relationships, youth participants acted more responsibly and/or developed a sense of competency and self-worth because of others’ reliance on them.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Native Alaskan communities that have undergone social disruptions in recent decades face unique challenges in structuring young people’s transition to adulthood (Chance 1990; Condon 1990, 1995). In our primarily Inupiaq (Alaska Native) study community, typical life styles, economic opportunities even everyday language

changed dramatically over the last three generations (Wexler et al. 2013). A cascade of factors—epidemics, displacement, the establishment of year-round settlements, mandatory mission schooling—has meant that Inupiaq people abruptly went from the primarily nomadic, hunter-gatherer social organization of grandparents to largely sedentary settlements relying on store-bought goods and village services (Burch 1994; Chance 1990; Kruse 1991). Importantly, young people’s learning is now managed extensively by schooling systems that function in ways that are often at odds with the values of many Inupiaq families (Kendal 1989; Chance 1990). The tensions arising when young people are socialized in school to value and prioritize non-Native values, behavioral norms and individualistic orientations (Condon 1988, 1990; Kendal 1989) are often cited by adults and elders as a main contributor to youth problems (Wexler 2006).

As in other Arctic indigenous communities, the experience of growing up Inupiaq has changed significantly over the last three generations in ways that render the current conditions almost unrecognizable from what would have been found in the middle of the last century (Bodenhorn 1988a; Bodfish 1991; Brody 2000; Chance 1990; Condon 1988, 1990). Conventional signposts and benchmarks of maturity are configured differently for young people than they were for their elders. As a result, adults in these communities do not always know how to help younger people navigate the problems they face, particularly in school. They may even find themselves ill-equipped to offer counsel as young folks seek viable means to assume adult responsibilities, often framed as supporting themselves and their families (Brody 2000; Chance 1990; Condon and Stern 1993; Condon 1990). Young Inupiat have had to develop new ways of dealing with everyday problems and significant challenges; they are thrown back on their own devices while trying to suss out and take advantage of opportunities while avoiding hazards that did not exist when their elders were growing up. While this might be true for non- Inupiat to some extent, the dramatic changes in village life, as well as the need for many young people to migrate to regional centers due to economic conditions, present a different set of challenges than would be found in other communities. Perforce, young Inupiat are charting new pathways into adulthood, uniquely defined by their history, environment and culture (Chance 1990; Condon 1990, 1995).

Within this developmental and historically-situated perspective, we focus on Inupiat youth resilience. Although resilience has been studied as a trait and an outcome—better than expected mental health outcome after experiencing hardship or trauma—here we consider resilience as a process (Lee et al. 2012). Specifically, resilience practices refer to the resources and activities drawn upon to manage, overcome and/or effectively handle significant life challenges (Fleming and Ledogar 2008; Ungar 2011; Wexler et al. 2009, 2013). Youth resilience, then, refers to the developmentally specific capacity to navigate acute and on-going difficulties, providing pathways to healthy adulthood. What we can construe as navigating strategies is shaped by political-economic forces, community and culture in which a

young person lives. In this view, resilience is nested within a social ecological model that emphasizes economic and social context in the production of meaning, in turn shaping local resources drawn upon in the developmental trajectories of youth (Allen et al. 2013). In this view, the relationship between meaning and material resources are inseparable, best seen as a recursive process whereby resilience strategies are both constrained and able to change the social environment.

## **Conclusion**

This research illustrates the ways in which Inupiaq youth employ resilience strategies through relatedness. While relatedness relationships can be both burdensome and productive of resilience, we have emphasized the latter. Further we suggest that as part of a culturally embedded maturation process, Inupiaq youth are expected to be able to ‘read’ and inscribe their own mark on the ever-changing social environment. That is, while learning what it is to be Inupiaq, they expand its very meaning into a future of which they are the inheritors, where their resilience and ability to creatively engage with the vicissitudes of life depends irrevocably on rooting themselves in relationships that matter. Resilience, relatedness and the structural dynamics of life trajectories are inscribed within Inupiaq resilience, which itself is situated within a shifting global context. Relatedness continues to be a primary resource by which youth find ballast and maintain positive identities in a world that frequently seems adrift.

**“Ilagiit and Tuqluraqtuq: Inuit understandings of kinship and social relatedness,”  
Christopher G. Trott, Research Gate, 2005 [186]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christopher-Trott/publication/336746731\\_Ilagiit\\_and\\_Tuqluraqtuq\\_Inuit\\_understandings\\_of\\_kinship\\_and\\_social\\_relatedness/links/5db07bb792851c577eb9ef85/Ilagiit-and-Tuqluraqtuq-Inuit-understandings-of-kinship-and-social-relatedness.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christopher-Trott/publication/336746731_Ilagiit_and_Tuqluraqtuq_Inuit_understandings_of_kinship_and_social_relatedness/links/5db07bb792851c577eb9ef85/Ilagiit-and-Tuqluraqtuq-Inuit-understandings-of-kinship-and-social-relatedness.pdf)

### Abstract:

Anthropological understandings of Inuit kinship have focused on the Inuktitut concept of ilagiit, which has generally been understood as equivalent to the English concept of “kindred” (both in extended and more limited forms). This has led researchers to conclude that Inuit kinship pragmatically selects kin out of the range of “kindred” to meet the requirements of flexibility and choice supposedly necessary in a harsh environment. This paper will initially review the use of the term and the conclusions that have appeared in the literature. A critical perspective begins to emerge with the realization that ilagiit is based on the root ila- which simply means “to be with” or “accompany”.

Research conducted in Arctic Bay, Nunavut, revealed that Inuit more often spoke about tuqluraqtuq (the North Baffin form of the word) which can have a range of meanings including “nickname” but more precisely refers to “the term by which one calls another person”. This term does not appear in any of the literature on Inuit

kinship, and yet the use of this term points to the importance of naming, and the naming system for Inuit understandings of their own kinship system. This paper proposes that by shifting the analysis to the range of meanings associated with tuquraqtuq an entirely new understanding of Inuit kinship can be generated, which is more in line with Inuit understandings of themselves. As a result, one develops a critical perspective on existing kinship theories within Western discourse.

Current & Relevant Information:

Interest in the study of Inuit kinship systems has waned in recent years, despite the fact that some remarkable work has begun to break through the older paradigms that were used to characterize Inuit modes of social organization. The problems in Inuit kinship studies have largely derived from the fact that Western models have too quickly regarded Inuit family life as familiar – in the sense that it seems to be recognizable as a form based on interlinking families very much like our own. While there have been some attempts to ask how Inuit themselves may conceive of their own system of kinship, especially through the concept of ilagiit, very little work has broken through the presumed simplicity of Inuit modes of organization to appreciate how relationships may be constructed in Inuit terms. This paper will critically examine the research that focused around the notion of ilagiit, examine the more recent work that suggests other directions in the study of Inuit kinship and finally suggest a new direction that more carefully takes into account the way Inuit themselves might conceive their relationships.

**“Understanding the Role of Grandparents in Indigenous Families: Principles for Engagement,”** Le Anne E. Silvey, Sandra J. Bailey, and James J. Ponzetti, *Family Science Review*, 2019 [187] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Le-Anne-Silvey/publication/336240379\\_Understanding\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_Grandparents\\_in\\_Indigenous\\_Families\\_Principles\\_for\\_Engagement/links/5d961dd1458515c1d391a20c/Understanding-the-Role-of-Grandparents-in-Indigenous-Families-Principles-for-Engagement.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Le-Anne-Silvey/publication/336240379_Understanding_the_Role_of_Grandparents_in_Indigenous_Families_Principles_for_Engagement/links/5d961dd1458515c1d391a20c/Understanding-the-Role-of-Grandparents-in-Indigenous-Families-Principles-for-Engagement.pdf)

Abstract:

Indigenous grandparents have significant roles in the lives of grandchildren. They are integrally engaged with grandchildren because traditional ways value and support their involvement. Despite historical trauma and ongoing marginalization of Indigenous people, the power of their culture and resiliency are strength-based assets. Understanding Indigenous culture and history can help practitioners provide services to these families. This paper reviews unique characteristics of Indigenous grandparenting and makes recommendations for service providers.

Current & Relevant Information:

Indigenous grandparents have historically played and continue to have significant roles in the lives of grandchildren. They are integrally engaged with grandchildren because traditional ways and cultural expectations value and support their

involvement (Thompson, Cameron, & Fuller-Thomson, 2013; Henderson, Dinh, Morgan, & Lewis, 2017). Further, positive external factors, such as employment or educational opportunities that take parents out of the area, and family crises such as death, mental health, incarceration, and substance abuse, impact families such that grandparent involvement is necessary. However, there remains a paucity of research focused on grandparent and grandchild relationships in Indigenous (e.g., American Indian, Alaska Native, and First Nations) communities in the United States and Canada. Grandparents' roles in Indigenous families are reviewed in this paper, and suggestions for service providers to effectively render assistance presented. This paper reviews the unique characteristics of Indigenous grandparenting followed by recommendations for service providers.

Two important points must be recognized from extant literature. First, the tribal diversity precludes any gross generalizations to all groups. For example, some are matriarchal (e.g., Pueblo) whereas others are patriarchal (e.g., Lakota). However, this diversity does not prevent the presence of similarities. Similarities of interdependent extended kinship networks, collective responsibility for family members, and roles and obligations for cultural maintenance are commonplace. Second, most literature on Indigenous grandparents is offered by grandmothers. There is insufficient information to address whether the thoughts and behaviors of grandfathers are different.

**“Domestic function and Inupiaq households,” Amy Craver, *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 2004 [188]**

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.3402/ijch.v63i0.17775>

Abstract:

**Objective.** This paper examines domestic transitions among Inupiaq households, including changes in household composition, household functions, kin networks, and possibly in cultural ideologies such as ethics of cooperation, achievement, and economic attainment.

**Study Design.** STN survey data included extensive information on the characteristics of households. This survey data is combined with STN project data from ethnographic accounts and focus groups; socio-economic trend data; and demographic and epidemiological information about community change to gain a clear picture of Inupiaq family structure.

**Results.** Household data reveal that Inupiaq households living under one roof are rarely an independent entity, either economically or in other ways. Members of one household seldom carry out all the social and economic functions needed to sustain the household. Instead, relatives or friends from two or more households frequently form social networks that support several households.

**Conclusion.** Inupiaq families were found to be opportunistic, flexible, and creative in responding to the challenges of daily life. Domestic functions are divided among a network of kinspeople—people who may live in several separate households and even in separate communities—but who consider themselves related.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

Over the last few decades one of the topics, the arctic science community has focused on is determining how global and regional changes are affecting Alaska's indigenous peoples. Recent studies of the effects of rapid change in arctic societies have demonstrated that arctic residents increasingly combine elements of traditional cultures with the educational and employment opportunities found in rural, hub, and urban communities. Even though such changes have altered domestic life, the traditional social structure of Inupiaq culture has survived fundamentally unchanged. One explanation for the persistence of Inupiaq social structure is that the Inupiat continue to live a subsistence lifestyle and draw upon extended family networks as they harvest, process, and distribute local foods. Another is that the social structure is both flexible and effective enough to continue offering Inupiaq families a strategy for coping with change. Further, Inupiat continue to maintain sharing networks today because year-round employment opportunities are few in most rural Inupiaq communities. Because it is difficult to find full time work in rural Alaska, many Inupiat are forced to leave their communities to seek out employment and most people are only able to work sporadically. Although the basic Inupiaq family structure has changed little over time, there are a number of significant demographic traits associated with contemporary Inupiat households that did not exist historically.

### **Conclusion**

Considering that the Inupiat draw on extended family networks, it is important to account for multi-household networks when analyzing household demographic data. Yet data collection efforts have rarely, if ever, taken this multi-household approach. For example, data-gathering instruments, such as census forms, are designed for the more typical independent, nuclear households of mainstream America. Throughout the nation, census data are collected and analyzed on an individual or household basis. But when Inupiaq households are categorized as if they were conventional American households, the data collected are often inaccurate and incomplete—because this approach does not account for the Inupiat's special understanding of household, family, and domestic function. Since standard surveys fail to account for inter-household relationships, some of the most unique and critical aspects of rural Alaska's domestic economy—the rich and complex economic relationships among cooperating households—are not accounted for and are being ignored. Suggestions for further research would include developing an effective method for identifying and describing multihousehold networks.

## B. Religion:

**“Animals as Agents: Hunting Ritual and Relational Ontologies in Prehistoric Alaska and Chukotka,” Erica Hill, Cambridge Archaeological Journal, 25 March 2011 [189] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Erica-Hill-2/publication/231868813\\_Animals\\_as\\_Agents\\_Hunting\\_Ritual\\_and\\_Relational\\_Ontologies\\_in\\_Prehistoric\\_Alaska\\_and\\_Chukotka/links/578e89ae08ae35e97c3f736c/Animals-as-Agents-Hunting-Ritual-and-Relational-Ontologies-in-Prehistoric-Alaska-and-Chukotka.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Erica-Hill-2/publication/231868813_Animals_as_Agents_Hunting_Ritual_and_Relational_Ontologies_in_Prehistoric_Alaska_and_Chukotka/links/578e89ae08ae35e97c3f736c/Animals-as-Agents-Hunting-Ritual-and-Relational-Ontologies-in-Prehistoric-Alaska-and-Chukotka.pdf)**

### Abstract:

In this article, I discuss the ways in which animals act as ontological subjects — as other than-human persons and as agents in myth and ritual. First, I outline how humans conceive of and behave with animals and their remains in indigenous cosmologies using ethnographic and ethnohistoric examples from the Arctic, Subarctic and Amazonia. I then explore the archaeological evidence for indigenous ontologies along the coasts of Chukotka and Alaska, arguing that prehistoric hunters interacted with animals as agential persons, engaging in social practices intended to facilitate hunting success and avoid offending prey. Two forms of ritual activities are discussed: the use of hunting amulets and the caching of animal bones and antlers. I conclude that focusing on shamanism in the study of hunter-gatherer belief obscures the roles of hunters and their wives. Their thoughts and actions established and maintained relationships with prey animals and may be more productively conceptualized as dynamic social behaviors embedded within the context of daily life than as privileged ritual acts.

### Current & Relevant Information:

In a now-classic essay, Irving Hallowell (1960) described belief in what he called ‘other-than human persons’ among the Subarctic Ojibwa of Canada. He was referring to the personhood of animals, as well as to what many would consider ‘inanimate’ objects. ‘Other-than-human persons’ were considered by the Ojibwa to be capable of acting as agents; that is, they had the ability to think and behave in ways that resembled or mirrored the ways that humans thought and behaved. This sort of ontology, or set of beliefs about the nature of being and existence, privileged certain animals with agency, intentionality and sentience, abilities usually reserved for humans in Western thought. In other words, Ojibwa society, in common with other societies of the Arctic, Subarctic and Amazonia, treated animals as subjects, capable of acting with forethought and of affecting human health and well-being. Such a view of human–animal dynamics transcends the boundaries of the social as generally understood in the West (Hallowell 1958, 64).

In this article, I explore the idea that prehistoric Eskimo inhabitants of the North Pacific coasts of Alaska and Chukotka related to certain prey animals in intersubjective terms. That is, prey animals, especially marine mammals and caribou

or reindeer, were conceived of as agents, as other-than-human persons capable of making decisions about when, where and how they interacted with humans. As with other circumpolar societies both past and present, shamans were critical mediators between humans and animals as other-than-human persons. However, hunters and their wives, acting as individuals and in small groups, were responsible for maintaining good relations with prey animals on a daily basis. Hunters used a variety of practices to communicate with, understand and recognize animals as agents and other-than-human persons in their attempts to demonstrate their respect, hunt successfully and avoid illness. Some of these behaviors appear to have significant time depth along the Bering Sea coast. Below, I use the term 'animal' to refer to those kinds of animals that are perceived of as other-than-human persons. Not all animals were so perceived, and not all individuals within a certain kind of animal group — caribou, for example — are persons. But some of them are.

## **Conclusions**

On the basis of the archaeological data presented above, and in light of the ethnographic data from the Arctic and elsewhere on societies that relate to animals as other-than-human persons, we can draw some tentative inferences about how prehistoric Eskimo of Alaska and Chukotka understood animals. First, prey animals, including bear, walrus and whale, were perceived as agential beings who interacted with humans as persons; they were sentient social equals capable of deciding whether to favor humans by allowing themselves to be taken. Human hunters engaged with prey animals on a regular, perhaps daily, basis. Hunting ritual and observance of taboos were the responsibility of the individual hunter and his family members, whose duty it was to properly approach, take, butcher and dispose of the animal and its remains.

Two forms of material culture are indicative of this Eskimo–animal relationship: hunting amulets and caches of marine mammal and later, reindeer, remains. Amulets, buried with hunters and recovered from funerary contexts at coastal sites in Alaska and Chukotka, materialized the relationship between hunters and the inuit of prey. As personal objects associated with specific individuals, amulets were interred with the deceased, rather than retained by family members after death. Amulets invoked prey animals most frequently through their sculptural representation, usually in ivory. Some evidence also exists for the use of unmodified amulets made of the bones, teeth or soft tissues of animals. A single archaeological example, the loon skull from Ipiutak, may represent the invocation of animal traits, rather than an attempt to lure a specific prey animal to the hunter. Both kinds of amulets, either those representing animals or those meant to invoke animal traits, have been extensively documented in the ethnohistoric literature of the region. Sites yielding amulets — Ipiutak, Ekven and Uelen — date to at least 1500 years ago. Amulet efficacy depended upon the perception of human and animal bodies as fluid, unstable and comprised of both physical and cognitive potentialities.



The second line of evidence — caches or ‘shrines’ of animal remains dated to the fifth through ninth centuries ad and identified on the Seward Peninsula and along the coast of Chukotka — are analogous to the careful deposition of elk (moose) remains by the Eastern Khanty of the Iugan river of western Siberia (Jordan 2003, 100–102, fig. 5.6, 112) or of bear remains by the Koyukon (R.K. Nelson 1983) of interior Alaska. These structured deposits reflect a focus on animal skulls, which were cached and arranged in semisubterranean locations, which may represent centers of communal ritual activity. These deposits were constructed to accord with hunters’ understanding of animals’ preferences regarding the treatment of their remains and are indicative of human efforts to honor and maintain good relations with prey.

I have couched this discussion of amulets and animal bone caches in ontological, rather than religious, terms. The distinction between the two has implications far beyond the Bering Sea region. Whilst the category of ‘religion’ is dependent upon a dichotomy between the known and the unknowable, the natural and the supernatural, the mundane and the numinous, Eskimo understood other-than-human persons as social actors with whom they shared the world. Relations with these persons involved sets of rules and expectations and were predicated upon mutual respect, just as one’s relations with human kin were. Breaches of conduct, misunderstandings and bad manners had negative social implications, just as they did in interactions with one’s affine, cousins or trading partners

Relegating offerings, bone caching and the use of amulets to the category of religious ritual obscures the centrality of such acts to daily life and creates a conceptually distinct set of behaviors that risk fundamentally misrepresenting prehistoric ontologies. In reference to folk ontologies in post-medieval Finland, Herva (2009) had advocated an approach in which archaeologists understand behaviors in terms of perception, rather than belief (see also Herva & Ylimaunu 2009; Herva et al. 2010). In other words, other-than-human persons were directly apprehended — perceived as part of the everyday world. They were not something to be believed in, any more than one ‘believed’ in the existence, sentience and agency of one’s spouse or child. Animal persons and relationships with them were perceived, experienced and occasionally handled improperly or with poor judgment. Making amends and repairing relations with other-than-human persons involved communication, apology and, in extreme situations, requests for shamanic assistance and intervention.

Relations with what have been termed the ‘spirits’ or ‘souls’ of other-than-human persons — what Eskimo understood as *inuut* — constituted no privileged or supernatural class of interactions. Prey animals were members of other-than-human societies that were perceived by hunters and their families in profoundly social terms. Some sorts of material culture — processed animal bones, hunting implements or ‘ritual objects’, for example — should thus be interpreted as social media, rather than as religious paraphernalia. Shamans could play critical roles in

interpreting, mediating and improving relations between human and animal societies. However, hunters who tracked, dispatched and transported prey and women who thought about, processed and shared animals and their remains engaged in daily discourse with other-than human persons and bore primary responsibility for maintaining these relationships. Focus upon shamans, to the exclusion of other members of society, risks underestimating the extent to which non-ritual specialists engaged in 'ritual' activities.

The 'ontological turn' in the discipline promises to further the 'archaeology of hunter-gatherer belief' that Jordan (2008) has advocated. The study of enculturated landscapes, modified natural features and structured deposits represent avenues of research that will expand our understanding of the ways in which foragers experienced, thought about and materialized their worlds. Prey animals were actors in those worlds, influencing foragers' beliefs, perceptions and actions. As this article has demonstrated, untangling economy from social and ritual behaviors is neither necessary nor desirable. Eskimo and other hunters and gatherers (e.g., McNiven 2003; McNiven & Feldman 2003; McNiven 2010; Skelly et al. 2011) treated animals and their remains in highly structured ways that left discernible patterns in the archaeological record. Archaeologists already collect data on animal species, record which skeletal elements are present and calculate relative frequencies of taxa in assemblages. Combined with attention to context, this information can inform our reconstructions of human–animal dynamics in both subsistence and ontological terms.

As highly skilled and perceptive observers, foragers incorporated animal characteristics and behaviors into material culture, myth and social practice. Archaeologists should consider salient characteristics and behaviors of animals in their interpretations. Members of Arctic societies worldwide believe, for example, that bears are 'good to think'. Reasons for this include the strength and power of bears, their ability to stand upright, and their similarity to humans in some anatomical features. These traits may explain, in part, why bears are often considered kin. Following this logic, Sámi bear 'burials' become much more than structured deposits; they may actually represent graves (for examples, see Zachrisson & Iregren 1974; Broadbent 2006; Broadbent & Wennstedt Edvinger 2011). Another example is McNiven's (2010) interpretation of the high frequency of dugong ear bones in Australian bone mounds, which was informed by the perception of local hunters that dugong have excellent hearing — an observation borne out by emerging scientific evidence. He argued that ear bones were selected as amulets in order to manipulate dugong hearing, enabling hunters to approach and take the animals successfully. In both cases, interpretations were informed by knowledge of the prey animal's biology and behavior.

In conclusion, the archaeology of ontology is a challenging field of research that promises to yield new insight into human perceptions of the natural world. Through

material culture, prehistoric Eskimo hunters sought to mediate their relationships with sea mammals, seeking to communicate with, lure, placate and honor prey. They embodied an intersubjective relationship with animals on a daily basis and materialized this relational ontology by wearing amulets, invoking inuat, and constructing caches. Recognizing the ways in which hunters and their families interacted with prey enables archaeologists to construct a more accurate picture of human relationships with the natural world and those other-than-human persons with whom they shared it.

**“Traditional Healing Among Alaska Natives,” Michele Riley Kramer, arctichealth.org, March 2006 [190]**

<https://arctichealth.org/media/pubs/76511/TRADITIONAL%20HEALING%20AMONG%20ALASKA%20NATIVES.PDF>

#### Overview:

The purpose of this essay is to review the written literature on Alaska Native (AN) traditional healing and healers. Alaska (AK) has a rich diversity of native cultures.

Traditional healing is in danger of being lost as elders possessing such knowledge are dying. A great deal of wisdom was already lost from the flu, tuberculosis, and smallpox disease epidemics in the early twentieth century (Fortune, 1992a; Napoleon, 1996). Repression and denigration of healers by missionaries and the white government further added to this loss (Fortune, 1992a). The AN population has begun, in the past three decades, to take back control of their destiny. They are using the bureaucratic system to re-instill their cultural traditions and values, especially with regard to traditional healing practices (Bantz, 1978; Benson, 2003; Book, Dixon, & Kirchner, 1983; Dixon, Myers, Book, & Nice, 1983; "Facts about Indian health services," 1997; Freeman, Morgan, & Farquhar, 2001; Indian Health Service, 2001; Kunitz, 1996; Mills, 2003; Morgan, n.d.; Southcentral Foundation, 2004). This essay will attempt to honor traditional healing and highlight the importance of this work. It is also meant to create another reservoir that preserves healing knowledge.

This essay begins with clarification of terms used in this essay: allopathic medicine vs. traditional healing, traditional healing, and shamans vs. traditional healers. A description and explanation follow of the cultures in Alaska and how they are grouped. An overview of traditional healing among ANs is followed by a discussion of types of healers and traditional healing in the specific cultures. A section discussing present-day traditional healers follows.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

In Alaska, there has been a resurgence and revitalization of traditional ways.... Traditional healing programs in many Alaskan communities have become an

accepted part of regular medical care. Elders are once again teaching the traditional ways to the children in the community. Traditional healers who practiced 'underground' for fear of reprisal from communities and churches now practice in the open and present professional gatherings and conferences. Carried on by the message of the drum and the revival of ceremonies long forgotten, the power of traditional healing in Alaska is growing. (Freeman et al., 2001)

Traditional healing in AK, historically, existed in every culture. Traditional healers (as empirico-rational healers) used their knowledge and skills in surgery, midwifery, plant and animal medicine, and massage to treat their communities. Magico-religious healers (Western term: shamans), when they were used as healers in their cultures, used rituals and ceremonies to travel to spirit realms. In the spirit realms they retrieved souls, battled evil spirits, and received information in order to heal individuals.

The need for traditional healers, always present to some degree, surged in the latter part of the twentieth century when the AN population began to reconnect to their cultural roots. AN people began to seek more people with special gifts of healing rather than allopathic health care providers. In taking control of their destiny through political action and legislation, including the management of their health care, traditional healers were incorporated into the health care organizations that provided health care to the AN population (Bantz, 1978; Dixon et al., 1983; "Facts about Indian health services," 1997; Freeman et al., 2001; Kunitz, 1996; Mills, 2003; Morgan, n.d.; Southcentral Foundation, 2004).

Traditional healers, although acknowledged and protected by their culture and community, must also walk a fine line in their communities. Many AN people are Christian and therefore believe the "magical" types of healing are evil. Traditional healers continue to serve the AN community in greater numbers today. Their work is an important component of the goal to heal the AN nation.

Fortune (1988a; 1992a), Juul (1979), (Kirchner, 1982), and Lucier et al. (1971) provide excellent descriptions of the mechanics of the empirico-rational techniques for traditional healing. The knowledge and skills of 1) massage, manipulation, 2) "poking" or lancing (bloodletting), and 3) herbal and animal remedies were important, contributing to the traditional healers' repertoire. Such skills represent the tangible qualities of traditional healing.

Fortune's empirico-rational healing did not include, at least as reported by Fortune in the literature, the nontangible abilities described by Turner (1989; 1996; 2004), Brew (1992), and Keats (Lucier et al., 1971; Perrigo, 1986). The magico-religious forms of healing included such abilities. Intangible healing abilities of seeing and knowing, along with the assistance of spirits or God, are also included in AN traditional healing. Turner provides the best description and exploration of such nontangible abilities found in AN traditional healers. Freeman et al. (2001), Morgan

(n.d.), and Dolchok (2003) incorporate similar attributes, such as being a conduit of healing energy from a higher source, in their descriptions of traditional healing.

Fortuine's distinction between the healing performed by the magico-religious healers (shamans in Western terminology) and empirico-rational healers (designated as traditional healers in this essay) is probably a Western reductionistic framework and may not reflect true AN traditional healing. In reality, it may be very difficult to distinguish between magico-religious healing and traditional healing among AN culture in present day Alaska.

It is hard to imagine that the magico-religious healer role, so important and respected in most AN groups, no longer exists. Controversy remains as to whether Fortuine's magico-religious type of healers still exist in present-day Alaska, whether they are "underground," or whether they are integrated into the empirico-rational traditional healer role. While the role is thought to have disappeared, some believe they continue to exist. If they exist, they are not publicized or known—Christian religious demonization of these healers would place them at risk. They may have been "absorbed," possibly, into the title of current traditional healers, with their method of healing remaining a secret. It is also possible that magico-religious and empirico-rational healing are more integrated than generally believed in Western culture, defying a reductionistic separation that Fortuine discerned in the past. Both forms of healing were never separate, perhaps, but since non-native Whites authored most written accounts, true traditional healing was never holistically understood.

Turner (1989; 1996; 2004) and Brew (1992) describe current traditional healers who use the abilities of both of Fortuine's magico-religious and empirico-rational classifications. Della Keats (Lucier et al., 1971; Murkowski, 1981; Perrigo, 1986) also described her healing in similar ways. Perhaps, then, traditional healers today have found a way to fuse the very best abilities of their ancestral healing roles. Perhaps there have never been clear-cut distinctions between the two types of healing. Perhaps traditional healing has always contained amorphous boundaries that defy pigeonholing; traditional healing simply maintained its holistic and integrative foundation.

If magico-religious healers exist in AK presently, it is feasible that their healing practices may be integrated into the skills of current traditional healers in AK. Turner (1989; 1996; 2004) provides the most thorough account of the noetic skills of Iñupiat healers—those abilities that defy conventional allopathic logic. Such skills seem to form the bridge between the magico-religious healers of the past and traditional healers of today. These practices include the ability to "see" and "know," with the use of the hands, what is wrong with an individual, the objectification of illness so that it can be literally "blown away" from the individual, and the aid of spirits, either Christian or non-Christian in nature, in the healing process.

What emerges from this essay is the rich diversity of cultures and traditional healing practices in AK and the small amount of written information available on traditional healers and healing. Even less is known, if it exists at all, about how their healing works. When the intangible qualities of traditional healing are viewed within a conceptual framework of the human energy field, it appears that traditional healing and the human energy field are linked; sources point in this direction. Further study regarding this connection potentially opens a new avenue of research.

**“Alaska Native Language, Culture and Identity,” Phyllis Fast, Alaska.edu [191]**  
<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/institutional-effectiveness/departments/books-of-the-year/alaskas-native-peoples/documents/Fast.pdf>

#### Overview:

Alaska Native peoples inherited customs, languages, and intricate ways of knowing the land of their birth. There are many ways to configure the groups of languages and pre-colonial nations depending on your perspective. Most agree that there are 20 indigenous Alaskan languages with many dialects within each language. Likewise, most agree that there are two predominant language families that divide the coastal Inupiat, Yupiit, Unangan and Sugpiat peoples from the Athabaskan, Eyak and Tlingit languages.

Language has a lot to do with culture, but environmental factors are even more influential. Four environmental zones affect Alaskans. These are the Arctic, the Aleutian, the Sitkan and the Interior zones. Tundras along the western and northern coasts identify the Arctic zone while the windy, yet mild Aleutian zone lies along the Alaska Peninsula, western Kodiak, and the Aleutian Islands. The landlocked Interior zone is bound on the north by the Brooks Range and the south and east by the Alaska Range. Finally, northern rainforest characterizes the Sitkan zone of southeast Alaska on the western side of Canada. The nations within each of these zones have met the challenges of their environments in ways that conform both to the land as well as to their value systems. In many cases the value systems are further defined by ancient religious traditions that, despite culturally unique variations on themes of gender and power, have allowed harmonious interaction with nature. Individual pre-colonial cultural members learned to develop their mature identities within this matrix.

Agency, power relations, and cultural factors, such as religious traditions and language contribute to identity. Among pre-colonial Alaska Natives agency and power were intertwined through subsistence: providing food and shelter for the family. Religious traditions controlled when, where, and how one negotiated identity in a dangerous world where one had little control over climate and large predators. In the post-colonial era subsistence activities continue to forge identity, but in a politically charged atmosphere of racism and eroding colonialist power relations. Native children of the 21st century enjoy more choices and empowerment than did earlier generations, but the cost is complex and easily swept away as being little

more than acculturation or assimilation. In this essay I examine the value of pre-colonial religious traditions and language, as well as the post-colonial impact of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 and the ANCSA 1991 Amendments of 1988.

**“The Influence of Christian Missionaries on Alaskan Indigenous Peoples,” Julie Manville and Ross Maller, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, 2009 [192] <https://www.religjournal.com/pdf/ijrr05008.pdf>**

Abstract:

The relationship between Christian missionaries and dominant Western society is a little-explored aspect of the cultural negotiation between Christian missionaries and indigenous communities. The hypothesis underlying this article is that the influence of Christian missionaries on the indigenous peoples of Alaska, as manifested by the maintenance of indigenous languages, for example, should vary according to the level of sectarian tension (using Stark and Bainbridge’s terminology) that exists between the missionaries’ religious denomination and the dominant American society. We postulate that missionaries from low-tension denominations will encourage indigenous communities to resemble American communities, whereas missionaries from denominations with high levels of tension with Western society will have less motivation to press for the assimilation of indigenous peoples into the dominant culture. To test our proposition, we collected data on social and economic indicators such as maintenance of indigenous language, household composition, income, village political structure, and public works for 164 Alaska Native villages. Using historical and anthropological sources, we classified the villages into nine groups representing denominational missionary influence in the villages. We further subclassified these denominational groups into three groups (Church, Catholic, and Sect) that indicate each denomination level of sectarian tension. When all variables were used together, the multivariate technique of correspondence analysis produced an ordination of the villages that correlated well with the sectarian tension classification, and this association was further confirmed by single-variable analysis of variance and log-linear (chi-square) analyses.

Current & Relevant Information:

Summary of Results

Analysis of the data showed the following:

1. Villages in Church areas have the most modern sanitation systems; therefore, we assume that these villages were the most successful in obtaining funding for them. There were no significant differences in the villages assigned to the Sect and Catholic areas in regard to sanitation systems.
2. Fertility rates were almost 50 percent higher for women in the Catholic areas than for women in the Church and Sect areas.

3. Ninety percent of villages in the Catholic areas have an organized borough, compared with 58 percent of villages in the Church areas and 63 percent of villages in the Sect areas.
4. The average number of persons per household was larger for villages in the Sect areas, despite the high fertility rate for Catholics, which implies a higher proportion of extended family households in the Sect areas than in the other areas.
5. Villages in Sect and Catholic areas were more likely than villages in Church areas to maintain indigenous languages. This can be a marker or boundary of cultural identity.
6. Villages in Catholic areas significantly differed from all other villages on two variables: fertility and local government.

**“Chapter 11: Following the Pathways of the Ancestors: Well-Being through Iñupiaq Dance,” Sean Asiqluq Topkok and Carie Green, Research Gate, November 2016 [193] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Sean-Topkok/publication/309764229\\_Following\\_the\\_Pathways\\_of\\_the\\_Ancestors\\_Well-Being\\_through\\_Iñupiaq\\_Dance/links/582221ad08aeebc4f8916202/Following-the-Pathways-of-the-Ancestors-Well-Being-through-Iñupiaq-Dance.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Sean-Topkok/publication/309764229_Following_the_Pathways_of_the_Ancestors_Well-Being_through_Iñupiaq_Dance/links/582221ad08aeebc4f8916202/Following-the-Pathways-of-the-Ancestors-Well-Being-through-Iñupiaq-Dance.pdf?origin=publication_detail)**

Abstract:

In this chapter, we unravel the meaning of well-being through the holistic internalization of Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic (Iñupiaq values), demonstrated and enacted through a healthy and happy state of mind, body, spirit, and the environment. We portray a parallel journey of traditional and contemporary understanding of Indigenous well-being expressed through Iñupiaq Dance by comparing Tuulik’s journey in the unipkaaq(legend) The Eagle Wolf Dance with Asiqluq’s personal journey of well-being in rediscovering his cultural heritage through the formation of the Pavva Iñupiaq Dancers of Fairbanks. We turn inwards and outwards to show how healing begins as an introspective process and moves from the individual, to the family, to the community, and beyond. The drumbeats’ steady rhythm grounds us in the purpose of following the pathway of our ancestors and celebrating and sharing being Iñupiat through cultural dance.

Current & Relevant Information:

This chapter explores mind, body, and spiritual wellness regenerated through Iñupiaq dance. Specifically, we describe how participation in traditional Indigenous dances, stories, and songs can promote health and well-being. The Iñupiat are a western (present day Alaska) branch of the Inuit peoples who inhabit the circumpolar regions across northern Canada, Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut, Nunatukavut, Denmark, and Siberia (Schweitzer, Berman, Barnhardt, & Kaplan, 2008). Like Canadian Indigenous peoples, Alaskan Indigenous peoples continue to experience



negative effects from European and American-European colonization (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Napoleon, 1996; Oquilluk, 1973; Schaeffer & Christensen, 2010). Early Russian fur traders, Christian ministries, and later American gold miners exploited the land and transmitted new illnesses, bringing death and devastation to nearly every Alaska Native community (Napoleon, 1996). Early educational efforts were aimed at making Alaskan Indigenous children “civilized” (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2010). Some teachers perpetrated physical and emotional abuse upon children; other children were orphaned or sent away to boarding schools. These devastating events combined had an intergenerational impact amongst the Iñupiat and other Alaskan Indigenous communities, resulting in a loss of cultural identity and well-being.

## **Conclusion**

It is recognized that deep-rooted cultural knowledge is conveyed through the stories of our ancestors and passed down through the generations (ALKC, 2007; Archibald, 2008; Cram & Phillips, 2012; Garrett, 1999; John, 2009; Northwest Alaska Elders, 1989, 1990, 1992; Reimer, 1999; Topkok, 2010). In this chapter we outlined how traditional stories, including those conveyed through drumming and dance, can provide a meaningful educational approach for transmitting cultural knowledge, wellness, and identity to youth and future generations. We invite others to share in our story and listen to our experience promoting health and well-being of the heart, the mind, the body, and the spirit. In this way, we follow the pathway of our ancestors and live and celebrate our cultural heritages and values, radiating outward to the community and beyond. Our unipkaat (legends) provide the guidance we receive from our ancestors to achieve a state of personal and community well-being.

**“Aleut Mortuary Practices: Re-Interpretation of Established Aleut Burial Customs,” B. Frohlich, D. R. Hunt, and J. Birna, *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 2019 [194] <https://dspace.spbu.ru/bitstream/11701/16342/1/499-524.pdf>**

### Abstract:

The Unangan/Aleut people have lived in the Aleutian Islands for more than 9,000 years. About 250 years ago this unique and successful balance between nature and man was disturbed to such a degree, that the Unangan people almost became extinct. Russian fur hunters and traders (promyshlenniks) killed, annihilated, raped, introduced new diseases (leprosy, smallpox, syphilis and consumption (tuberculosis)), and forcefully displaced Unangan people for the purpose of promoting their fur business. This resulted in major declines in the Unangan population size. It is estimated that an original population of more than 15,000 people in 1741 (time of arrival of Russians in the Aleutian Islands) to less than 2000 in 1800. This drastic reduction in the population size and increasing Russian control did not result in a thoroughly eradication of the Unangans’ culture and spiritual belief.

Also, it is doubtful that the Russian Orthodox Church had much control over the Unangans' spiritual activities, as previously suggested by the church's records. Our research, based on the historical record, archaeological excavations and particularly on the reconstruction of the traditional mortuary practices, strongly support our present hypothesis that the Unangans' devotion to their traditional spirituality was well established and operational at any given time, including: — after the arrival of the promyshlenniks (1741), — after the establishment of the Russian American Company (1799), — after the introduction of the Russian Orthodox Church (ca. 1800), — after the sale of Russian America to the USA in 1867, — and most likely well into the 20th century.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

The Unangan/Aleut people have lived in the Aleutian Islands for more than 9,000 years. About 250 years ago, this unique balance between nature and man was disturbed to such a degree that the Unangan people were almost annihilated. The Russian conquest of the Aleutian Islands and other geographical areas in what we today know as the State of Alaska was powered by relentless greed and demand for fur products. In less than 60 years the uncontrolled activities of promyshlenniks (fur hunters) resulted in an eighty-five percent reduction of the Unangan population. Additionally, the delicate ecological balance between man and his environment was severely disturbed by the excessive overexploitation of marine mammals.

Russian records, including those of Ivan Veniaminov, tend to emphasize the success of Russian political, physical, cultural, social and spiritual power resulting in an almost complete conversion of the Unangan people to Russian traditions. Until recently it has been unclear how effective the Russians and later the Americans were in converting the Unangan people from their traditional way of living and especially in making them abolish their traditional spirituality. Needless to say, that little is found in the ethnographic records, which for the most part derives from Russian hunters, administrators and clergy. Granted, a rich and wonderful amount of information is found in many sources including those of Ivan Veniaminov and George Steller (1793), but all tend to ignore the possibility that the Russians did not have full control over the Unangan people.

The archaeological record is helping us to understand the historical record and the extent to which such records can be trusted. Burial records are especially important. Without burial records we significantly limit our ability to reconstruct historical and pre-historical events.

Our work on burial practices is based on the study of existing records, as well as on modern research on human remains still in our collections (as of 2002).

We use only nondestructive and noninvasive methods. Thus, technologies such as x-ray, photography, and computed tomography (CT) are used to explore and study the remains. If tissue sampling is required and permitted, CT scanning allows directed removal of minute samples for analytical purposes.

Our data, interpretations, and results have been combined with records from archaeological surveys, excavations and the ethnographical record. Not only does combining all available resources allow us to obtain a much better understanding of Unangan burial practices, but it also enables to evaluate the various records in terms of accuracy.

We hypothesize that Unangan traditions and spirituality continued long after the arrival of the Russians in 1741 and the Americans in 1867. Indeed, traditional Unangan burial practices and the practice of Unangan spirituality most likely continued well into the 20th century. It was not significantly replaced by Russian and American traditions and culture until more efficient travel and communication procedures became available with the arrival of fossil fueled ships, radio communication, organized education, and with easier opportunities for the Unangan people to travel and communicate with the “outside world”.

**“Restorative Justice in the Arctic: Indigenous Knowledge for Healing Communities,” Heather Sauyaq Jean Gordon and Ranjan Datta, [ulapland.fi](https://lapland.fi), 2020 [195]**

[https://lapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/64480/Gordon\\_Datta\\_Restorative\\_Justice\\_in\\_the\\_Arctic.pdf?sequence=1](https://lapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/64480/Gordon_Datta_Restorative_Justice_in_the_Arctic.pdf?sequence=1)

Overview:

Indigenous people are overrepresented in the justice systems in both Alaska and Canada, especially when looking at incarceration rates (Alaska Department of Corrections, 2018; Canada Department of Justice Research and Statistics Division, 2019). Mainstream justice systems are focusing on punitive measures that do not reflect Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous approaches to restorative justice and healing (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003). In this short paper, we aim to generate further understanding of how Indigenous knowledge is significant and related to Indigenous restorative justice as a means to consider how we might resolve various forms of disputes, meet the needs of Indigenous peoples and communities, and rethink Alaska and Canada’s justice systems. This paper considers how we might engage in relearning by making more room for the holistic healing found within Indigenous models of restorative justice. We hope our paper provides a general introduction to the importance of Indigenous knowledge for people who work with Indigenous clients in the United States (U.S.) and Canadian Arctic justice systems. Our paper also serves to inform other Indigenous people interested in developing restorative justice practices in their communities of what is being done in some Canadian and U.S. Arctic communities.

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Alaska**

In Alaska, tribes are drawing on their Indigenous Knowledge to heal their people through Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts and Circle Peacemaking. Some tribes have already established self-funded restorative justice practices like the Kenaitze Indian Tribe who operates a Healing to Wellness Court for adults, the Henu Community Wellness Court, and a Peacemaking Circle, the Ts'itq'u Circle (Kenaitze Indian Tribe, 2020a; Kenaitze Indian Tribe, 2020b). Other tribes are applying for funding to start restorative justice practices of their own such as the Outagamie Native Council in Bethel, Alaska through funding from the Alaska Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention which provides funding for juvenile Healing to Wellness Courts through the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (The Resource Basket, 2020). These courts can receive free technical assistance and training through the Tribal Law and Policy Institute or the Rural Community Action Program Alaska Native Youth Training and Technical Assistance Project (Tribal Law and Policy Institute, 2015; The Resource Basket, 2020). The goal of both the Healing to Wellness Courts and Circle Peacemaking programs in Alaska is to utilize culture to heal the offenders and those harmed by restoring relationships, healing the community, and getting people the help they need through substance abuse treatment and counselling instead of incarcerating people.

### **Conclusion**

Indigenous knowledge-based restorative justice programs are not only community-initiated and bear little resemblance to mainstream justice systems, but also provide opportunities on healing individuals and communities– including the underlying harms of ongoing colonization. They could provide an alternative pathway for Indigenous people in the justice system that could lead to healing instead of incarceration and punishment. Indigenous knowledge provides valuable insight into how to better understand and practice restorative justice practices with Indigenous people and the examples we provide from the U.S. and Canadian Arctic demonstrate what communities are doing and what other communities could institute.

**“North Alaskan Eskimos - Religion and Expressive Culture,” Countries and their Cultures [196] <https://www.everyculture.com/North-America/North-Alaskan-Eskimos-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>**

### Overview:

**Religious Beliefs.** The traditional religion was animistic. Everything was believed to be imbued with a spirit. There was, in addition, an array of spirits that were not associated with any specific material form. Some of these spirits looked kindly on humans, but most of them had to be placated in order for human activities to

proceed without difficulty. Harmony with the spirit world was maintained through the wearing of amulets, the observance of a vast number of taboos, and participation in a number of ceremonies relating primarily to the hunt, food, birth, death, the lifecycle, and the seasonal round. In the 1890s a few natives from Southwest Alaska who had been converted by Swedish missionaries began evangelical work in the Kotzebue Sound area. About the same time, Episcopal and Presbyterian missionaries from the continental United States began work in Point Hope and Barrow, followed by members of the California Annual Meeting of Friends in the Kotzebue Sound area. After some difficulties, the Friends were successful in converting a large number of people, and these converts laid the foundation for widespread conversions to Christianity throughout North Alaska. Today, practically every Christian denomination and faith is represented in the region.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Religious Practitioners.** In traditional times, shamans interceded between the human and spirit worlds. They divined the concerns of the spirits and advised their fellow humans of the modes of behavior required to placate them. They also healed the sick, foretold the future results of a particular course of action, made spirit flights to the sun and the moon, and attempted to intercede with the spirits when ordinary means proved ineffective. Around 1900, the shamans were replaced by American missionaries. Most of them, in turn, have been replaced by natives ordained as ministers or priests in the Christian faiths to which they adhere.

**Ceremonies.** The traditional ceremonial cycle consisted of a series of rituals and festivals related primarily to ensuring success in the hunt. Such events were most numerous and most elaborate in the societies in which whaling was of major importance, but they occurred to some degree throughout the region. Intersocietal trading festivals were also important. The traditional cycle has been replaced by the contemporary American sequence of political and Christian holidays.

**Arts.** Traditional arts consisted primarily of the following: (1) making essentially utilitarian objects (such as tools, weapons, and clothes) in a particularly elegant fashion; (2) storytelling; and (3) song and dance. Since the advent of store-bought products and television, all the traditional art forms have declined considerably.

**Medicine.** There were two forms of traditional medicine. One, which involved divination and intercession with the spirits, was conducted by shamans. The second involved the massage and/or manipulation of various body parts, particularly the internal organs. The former has given way to Western clinical medicine. The latter, after several decades of being practiced in secret, has recently experienced a revival.

**Death and Afterlife.** Life and death were believed to be a perpetual cycle through which a given individual passed. When a person died, his or her personal possessions were placed on the grave for use in the afterlife, although it was

understood that, in due course, the soul of everyone who died would be reanimated in the form of a newborn infant. The traditional beliefs about death and the afterworld have been replaced by an array of Christian beliefs. Whereas funerals were not well defined or important rituals in traditional times—the observance of special taboos was much more important—they have in recent decades become elaborate events in which hundreds of people from several villages often participate, particularly when the death of an elder is involved.

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