

Sewing in Arviat: Inuit Women's Work through Stories and Parkas

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In

Cultural Mediations

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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ABSTRACT

Sewing has long been a core part of Inuit women's land-based labour in Arviat, Nunavut. The objects that Inuit women produce by sewing, such as parkas, embody their responses to and perspectives of colonialism and the entrenchment of the capitalist economy in their communities. This dissertation takes an interdisciplinary approach using archival records and photographs, museums objects, interviews with seamstresses and experiential learning. In this project, gendered work is inherently connected to gendered knowledge. The amauti, a women's parka with a pouch to carry small children is useful for understanding both work and knowledge because it is a tool for women's work, while also serving as a conceptual lens through which to discuss Inuit women's knowledge transmission. I use methodologies developed in material culture studies to carefully develop three case studies to trace Inuit women's labour through three sewing mediums.

The first case study uses caribou skin parka designs to examine women's responses to shifting patterns of subsistence and contact with First Nations and Qallunaat. This chapter argues that changes in caribou skin parka designs embody Inuit women's work as they render changes in their designs to respond to changes in their worlds, thereby enabling the continued work of all family members. Ann Meekitjuk Hanson's concept of Inuktization underpins the next two chapters. One examines the use of trade commodity beads, to centre the decisions of Inuit seamstresses as they undertake the physical and intellectual labour that resulted in beadwork that reflects Inuit aesthetics and worldviews. In the final case study, I argue that the shift to fabric parka sewing in the twentieth century demonstrates that sewing remains a significant part of women's work in the mixed economy of Arviat. Inuit women Inuktized fabric into something that suited their needs despite the deprivations caused by colonial policies. The findings of this project foreground Inuit women's work in historical records by centring the sewn objects that women make; they use their knowledge and skills to create a distinctly Inuit modernity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I want to thank all seamstresses who participated in this project. This project would not exist without their generosity in sharing their skills, time and knowledge. In Arviat, I especially want to thank Nuatie Aggark, Joy Suluk, Eric Anoe Jr., Gord Billiard and Shelton Nipisar. I am also grateful for the support of the Arviat Film Society, which provided me with filming equipment and excellent advice.

This project owes its existence to thanks to the support of many individuals and institutions. I want to acknowledge my exceptional thesis committee: Michel Hogue, Ruth Phillips, Carol Payne and Donna Patrick, whose patience, support, critique and careful engagement with the project, its ideas and its words were instrumental to this project. In addition, I received generous financial support from SSHRC through the Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship, which funded the first three years of this project; two years of financial support through the Ontario Government Scholarship; and continued support through Carleton University's generous funding package.

My academic community has extended past my committee. I am incredibly grateful to Frank Tough (University of Alberta) for his mentorship during the last years of writing. His support, both personal and through MAP Lab was central to the success of this project. I also want to thank the editorial team of *Atiqput*, Deborah Kigjugalik Webster, along with Beth (LAC) and Carol (Carleton), for their laughter, inclusion, and wise words. Finally, thank you to Jill Oakes' whose research was foundational for my own and kindly supportive of my project.

They say that PhDs are competitive and cut-throat. Instead, I found remarkable, brilliant women in my cohort: Sheilagh Brassett, Valerie Luchak, Alex Kahsenni:io Nawegahbow and Cecile Wilson. I found this support with Ming Tiampo, Abra Wenzel, Zoe Todd, Shaina Humble, Stennette van de Berg. In addition, I want to acknowledge Dietlind Bork and Tara Joly and our little writing group. I'm so grateful that I have had the chance to heal with you both. Thank you also to Heather Igloliorte, Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, George Wenzel, Gita Laidler Ljubicic, Alexandra Anaviapik, Shelley Elverum and Sean Guistini, John Walsh and David Dean for their advice and correspondence over the years. Last but not least in this group is ICSLAC administrator Dawn Schmidt, who has been there the entire way - thank you for everything.

Many individuals gave their time and knowledge generously in many museums, archives, and universities where I researched. I want to mention Beth Greenhorn (LAC), Ed Atkinson (GNA), Chris Kotecki and Rudy Martinez (HBCA), Joanne Schmidt (Glenbow), Emma Knight (RAM), Krista Ulujuk Zawadski (GNC), Arnie Brownstone (ROM), Cynthia McGowan (British Museum), the staff at the University of Manitoba Archives, the Nunavut Research Institute and the staff and students at Nunavut Sivuniksavut. I especially am grateful to the Manitoba Museum's Curator of Cultural Anthropology, Maureen Matthews and volunteer Tim Worth. Their support of this research and sharing resources was genuinely astounding - they made research at the Manitoba Museum an absolute highlight.

I grew up hearing my family's stories, and these stories are embedded in this text. Thank you to my wonderful family, who has always been there: Cathy, David, Jonathan, Pat, Henry, Andy and Isabel, you no longer need to ask when I'll be finished! Finally, I want to thank my husband, Duncan Scott, who was there every step of the way, this is for you.

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A COMMENT ON PEOPLE, PLACES AND NAMES

The “Caribou Inuit” was a term coined by Knud Rasmussen and Kaj Birket-Smith during the Fifth Thule Expedition in 1922-23. The people of this region in the 1920s described themselves in terms of kinship and place. Unlike all other Inuit groups in the Canadian Arctic, the coast and the marine life harvested there is not the most significant source of materials or food. Instead, the common central animal for their subsistence economy is the caribou, not the seal. Caribou Inuit were recognized as a distinct group by the Inuinnait to the west who called them *Palliq* and the Iglulingmiut to the north, who referred to them as *Agutit*.¹ Within the historic Caribou Inuit group, there are five main historic sub-groups (-miut groups) called: Ahiarmiut, Harvaqtormiut, Hauniqtuormiut, Paallirmiut and Qairnirmiut. -Miut is the suffix used by Inuktitut speakers to describe “people from,” and -miutaq is an “individual from.” For example, if a group of people are from Kivalliq, they are Kivallirmiut, if people are from Arviat, they are Arviaqmiut. I use the -miut names wherever possible, but in some instances, changes in the structures of communities make this more complicated.

Initially, I intended to use the term Kivallirmiut to refer to the Caribou Inuit, however, like any attempt to define groups, I immediately encountered issues with my intention to prioritize the Inuktitut term (Kivallirmiut) over the ethnographic one (Caribou Inuit). Today, Kivalliq is the name that is used by Inuit organizations to describe a modern administrative region in Nunavut, and its geographic boundaries have changed and varied over time. Generally, the area I describe as Kivalliq is Nunavut’s

¹ Eugene Arima, ‘Caribou Eskimos’, in *Arctic*, ed. David Damas, vol. 5, Handbook of North American Indian (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 462; Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo*, Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology 6 (Bureau of American Ethnology, 1889), 42–43.

administrative region of Kivalliq, but it can sometimes also include the northern portion of Manitoba, which was part of what the Hudson's Bay Company called the Keewatin region (Kivalliq is the Inuktitut form of Keewatin).²

The contemporary inhabitants of Kivalliq are diverse and a contemporary reference to Kivallirmiut includes anyone that lives in Kivalliq today: descendants from Baffin Island, the Western Arctic as well as the historic Aivilingmiut Inuit, a group who encountered whalers around Iglulik and moved south with the Scottish and American whalers along the west coast of Hudson Bay in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Aivilingmiut dialect, clothing styles, economy and belief systems were distinct from those of Caribou Inuit, but Aivilingmiut now live in the Kivalliq region with the descendants of Caribou Inuit.³ As such, I use the term Kivallirmiut to discuss the people who settled into the contemporary communities of the Kivalliq but use the specific -miut groups whenever possible. It is only when necessary, I use the anthropological term Caribou Inuit when I am discussing historic Inuit groups as a whole (Ahiarmiut, Harvaqtormiut, Hauniqtuormiut, Paallirmiut and Qairnirmiut) and excluding Aivilingmiut.

The contemporary community was known as Arviat for centuries by the people who sealed and walrused (aiviq is Inuktitut for walrus) in this bay, however, it was temporarily known as Eskimo Point in the twentieth century by Qallunaat (white people).

² A.C. Lawson, 'The Geology of the Lake of the Woods Region, with Special Reference to the Keewatin (Huronian?) Belt of the Archaean Rocks', in *Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada Reports and Maps of Investigations and Surveys*, ed. Alfred R.C. Selwyn, vol. 1 (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1885), 10–15.

³ The descendants of the Aivilingmiut now predominantly live in the northern portion of the Kivalliq region in the communities of Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet), Salliq (Coral Harbour), Igluligaarjuq (Chesterfield Inlet) and Naujaat (Repulse Bay), but they also live in Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut communities like Whale Cove and Arviat.

There has been heated discussion about using the term Eskimo, many Inuit believing it is a derogatory term. Inuit Art Quarterly, for instance now uses E*** to replace the word in their articles. Inuit that I spoke with in Arviat would not use the term Eskimo to refer to themselves but did not see it as especially derogatory (it means eaters of raw meat and Inuit eat and enjoy raw meat – there is no shame in that for many). Arviaqmiut that I spoke to did not feel it necessary to erase the name Eskimo Point from their history either. As such, I use Arviat most of the time, but I keep the name Eskimo Point in quotes and in proper names. I apologize for any pain this causes any reader but felt keeping the name and not altering historical records acceptable when most denizens of Arviat do not have an issue with the name. They prefer Arviat, obviously, but Eskimo Point is part of their history too.

I have also produced a few different maps to assist the reader to locating the places discussed in this thesis. They may be found in Appendix I of the thesis for ease of regular referencing. These maps were produced using equipment from the Métis Archival Project at the University of Alberta, and I am grateful for the generosity of Dr. Frank Tough in permitting me to use the QGIS software at the Lab to generate those maps. I based these maps in a number of sources, but any errors are my own.

Chapter 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

“Cook had baby 1:15 AM,” the Hudson’s Bay Company’s (HBC) trading post journal from Eskimo Point tersely states on 11 February 1938. This entry is the only explicit mention of an Inuit woman in any of the extant post journals from Arviat, an Inuit community on the mainland of southern Nunavut. This quote distills the challenges of researching women when using ‘traditional’ historical sources from the archives. Sources like the HBC journals can detail the minutiae of post life: what chores were performed, who came by for tea, how many foxes were brought in, which Inuit hunters came in to trade. Yet, “Cook,” who presumably worked and lived at the post, is only mentioned in a terse sentence that hints at the writer’s possible disgruntlement at being woken by Cook’s poorly-timed child labour.

This small example suggests how women’s work, particularly Indigenous women’s work is historically undervalued and assumed to be economically irrelevant in historical records. As a result, women’s presence in the archive is often obscured.¹ This study challenges the longstanding disregard of Indigenous women’s labour by scholars and southerners alike and shows that Inuit women, as economically engaged agents, played a significant economic role in their communities and continue to do so. With a focus on sewing as an indispensable form of labour in a land-based mixed economy, I challenge the dominant textual archival record, which has erased the lives, experiences and even the

¹ For instance, Gunlög Fur noted that men writing about Lenape (Delaware) in archival records “were not predisposed to record women’s activities, and had little access to the thoughts and feelings in their hearts. In spite of this, ... women intrude into these sources, and this intrusion ... is a powerful testament to their agency.” Gunlög Maria Fur, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters among the Delaware Indians*, Early American Studies (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 59.

very names of the Inuit women living and working alongside their partners, families and friends.

Feminist historian Carol Williams explains that Indigenous women's labour is primarily absent from history writing "due to the 'place' women were expected to compliantly assume: as passive or unseen, colonized workers."² Minimizing Indigenous women's work in the economic realm diminishes the history of Indigenous women's oppression. Williams suggests that we think of Indigenous women as subjects who "strategically engaged" with the changing economic, cultural and political forces.³ Therefore, Indigenous women used their knowledge, resourcefulness and skills to navigate oppressive colonial structures. While these structures have undermined Inuit women's ability to thrive and live independently of those colonial incursions, the concept of strategic engagement creates spaces to discuss the particular decisions and economic strategies they employed. I argue that although Inuit women did not necessarily have a choice over whether or not they engaged with colonial structures, they could, to some degree, make decisions about how they contended with these incursions into Inuit sovereignty and economic freedom.

More broadly, studying the role of labour, sewing, and Indigenous women's history creates a space for a deeper understanding of the female experience of colonization in the Canadian Arctic and how colonialism was (and is) experienced in material and embodied ways. As Joan Sangster has argued, there is a tendency in much poststructuralist writing

² Carol Williams, "Introduction," in *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism*, ed. Carol Williams (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 21.

³ Williams, "Introduction," 21.

from the 1990s and 2000s to over-emphasize the “causal weight” of discourse and language to the detriment of understanding the material, physical impact of colonialism on women bodies and their work.⁴ Therefore, it is imperative that we look to material production as a way to understand the material history of Inuit women’s labour, especially when archives are silent.

Inuit women’s labour, especially sewing, connects communities materially, economically and culturally across time and colonial disruption. Using the work of Phoebe Nahanni (Dehcho First Nation), I propose that Inuit women’s labour, in the form of sewing, is land-based work that has a valued role in the historical and modern mixed-economic system seen in Arviat.⁵ Women’s work sewing has enabled land-based economic activities such as trapping, hunting, fishing, and berry picking to occur in two ways: first, it provides the clothing necessary to perform these tasks; and, second, it is a way to generate the cash necessary to do these activities, thereby supporting the household unit and disseminating important cultural knowledge.⁶

From a feminist perspective, women’s labour is *always* economically relevant regardless of the economic system. I classify the economic system in Arviat as a mixed economy, which means that it operates using aspects both of a market and a subsistence

⁴ Joan Sangster, “Making a Fur Coat: Women, the Labouring Body, and Working-Class History,” *International Review of Social History* 52, no. 2 (August 2007): 246.

⁵ Phoebe Nahanni, “Dene Women in the Traditional and Modern Northern Economy in Denendeh, Northwest Territories, Canada” (MA Thesis, McGill University, 1992).

⁶ The term seamstress is gendered, but I continue to use it interchangeably with sewers throughout this dissertation because Inuit women use the word to describe themselves. Some Inuit men are certainly capable sewers, but it is women who did and continue to do the vast majority of sewing in communities today. The term sewist is used as gender-neutral term by people involved in “maker culture.” I do not use it for two reasons: first it is a term that I have never heard used by any Inuk who sews, and I do not believe that it is a term that they connect to, as they tend to use seamstress to describe themselves. Secondly, this work is primarily *about* gender. I am talking about women seamstresses: their gender matters deeply in this context.

economy. Moreover, the material culture of items such as parkas embodies the responses and perspectives of Inuit women as they navigated the entrenchment of a capitalist economy. In effect, studying sewing and the concomitant production of garments is a strategy to apprehend Inuit women's navigation and co-creation of modernity situated within the specificities of Inuit society, place and time. This process, which I call Inuktization, is discussed further in Section 1.5.

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

In this thesis, the central question is, *what role has sewing played in the lives of Inuit women in Arviat in the mixed economy?* This question is more specifically a way to understand Inuit women's negotiation of modernity and the capitalist economy in their community. Focusing on sewing is way for me to engage with these broader issues because it is a form of work that has strong evidence of continuity, remains an important part of Inuit women's work and identity today, and its material products are well represented in museum collections and in archival photographs.

First, I provide a history of women's sewing work in the region around Arviat from 1717 to roughly the present. I describe how Inuit women's economic activities operated in the household, community, region, and the international economy. I draw on textual and photographic archival material, museum objects and oral history interviews to discuss how women used their already-established skills as sewers in the developing mixed economy.

Second, I examine how Arviat women have learned and continue to learn to sew by discussing how teaching and learning processes reflect changes in Arviat society and economics. The transmission of knowledge and skills necessary for sewing work is

gendered, and many women continue to share their knowledge and skills with younger generations, though methods have changed over time. Understanding how sewing skills are transmitted, reveals how Inuit Knowledge is maintained throughout the profound changes the community has faced.

Finally, by using three case studies (Chapters 4-6) I illustrate how labour history, in conjunction with material culture studies, can shed new light on the economic experiences of Inuit women. As a methodology, the study of Indigenous women's material production and economic experiences counters the limited nature of archival records. In other words, thinking through sewing and the products made by sewing as both economic and material, I link the currently disconnected literatures around Indigenous labour history and Indigenous material culture studies. Moreover, by using objects that women made themselves, this dissertation subverts the biases of the dominant archival records, which are written mainly by Qallunaat (non-Inuit) colonizers.

1.3. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE FUR TRADE

The historiography of the fur trade economy serves as the earliest and most robust body of literature that seriously considers Indigenous labour, and increasingly, the labour of Indigenous women. The fur trade period in Canada is traditionally understood to have operated from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century and serves as the key period for historians examining Indigenous labour. Fur trade scholars narrate how this commercial enterprise developed extensive transportation networks to move furs, goods and provisions, all of which required a massive labour force, made up by a large number

of Métis and First Nations.⁷ Beginning in the 1970s and into the 1990s, scholars reoriented fur trade scholarship in a way that illustrated how Indigenous peoples understood the economic function of the industry as evidenced by actions such as price-seeking and labour strikes.⁸

Deeply rooted Euro-Western assumptions also explain the lack of research done on women's role in the fur trade and on Indigenous women's work more generally.

Historians Mary Jane Logan McCallum (Munsee Delaware Nation), Carol Williams, Jennifer Blythe and Peggy Martin McGuire argue that the separation of Indigenous women from the economic realm reinforces assumptions that women had no significant or visible (public) economic presence.⁹ Historians including Joy Parr, Joan Sangster and McCallum, all argue that the middle-class assumption that men are the breadwinners is at fault, in part, for the scarcity of research on female Indigenous labour.¹⁰ Following the

⁷ Innis presciently stated in the 1920s that "We have not yet realized that the Indian and his culture were fundamental to the growth of Canadian institutions." Harold Adams Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History*, Reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

⁸ In 1960, E. E. Rich wrote dismissively that "although trading Indians were so long habituated to their business, and so shrewd in their conduct of it, they were not logical in their reactions." Several scholars have demonstrated that Indigenous people's economic behaviours were rational and materially-motivated, and should not be conceived as wholly political or cultural (in the form of gift-giving). Robert Jarvenpa and Hetty Jo Brumbach, "Occupational Status, Ethnicity, and Ecology: Metis Cree Adaptations in a Canadian Trading Frontier," *Human Ecology* 13, no. 3 (September 1985): 309–29; Arthur J. Ray and Donald B. Freeman, *"Give Us Good Measure": An Economic Analysis of Relations Between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company Before 1763* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978); Arthur J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Trappers, Hunters, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Frank J. Tough, "Indian Economic Behaviour, Exchange and Profits in Northern Manitoba during the Decline of Monopoly, 1870-1930," *Journal of Historical Geography* 16, no. 4 (1990): 385–401.

⁹ Jennifer Blythe and Peggy Martin McGuire, "The Changing Employment of Cree Women in Moosonee and Moose Factory," in *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom, and Strength*, ed. Christine Miller and Patricia Marie Chuchryk (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 131–50; Mary Jane McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History, 1940-1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 7; Carol Williams, ed., *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

¹⁰ There are some general Canadian historical examples, in particular Joy Parr's collected essays that include Joan Sangster, Veronica Strong-Boag and Ester Reiter. Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners:*

general burst of interest in the fur trade and Indigenous peoples' role that began in the 1970s, the 1980s brought the work of Sylvia Van Kirk and Jennifer Brown who began the process of inserting women's history to the masculine world of fur trade historiography. Their use of archival documents exposed the active involvement of First Nations, Métis, and women of mixed ancestry in the fur trade and the vital roles they played in the fur trade economy. Both conclude that women held integral socio-economic roles in the fur trade economy vital to the trade.¹¹ As Historian Adele Perry notes, what is especially remarkable about Van Kirk's *Many Tender Ties* (and also of Brown's *Strangers in Blood*) is that the private and public, the formal and informal economies, the domestic and the political are mutually constituted. As Perry acknowledged, this is on one level "unforgivably trite," but that, invoking the adage that the personal is political, we can "leverage new understandings of state and politics" by attending to the "familial, intimate, and gendered character of high politics that form the stuff of conventional politics."¹² The pivotal studies about Indigenous women's role in the fur trade (and the studies that followed in the decades since) provide the crucial foundation for the assertion that the economic and labour history of Inuit women must be understood through a

Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Joan Sangster, "Fifty Years of Labour History: Gendering Labour History Across Borders," *Labour History Review* 75, no. 2 (August 2010): 143–61.

¹¹ Jennifer Brown's thesis and book (1976 and 1980, respectively) took a systematic look at the officer class in the Northwest Company and used kinship as a key organizing principle. Van Kirk, whose book was also published in 1980, studied the formation of the "fur trade society" a concept that attempts to describe the complex social interactions between Indians, Europeans and, later, Métis, as they engaged not only commodity exchange but also in the labour pool of the fur trade. Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Company Men and Native Families: Fur Trade, Social and Domestic Relations in Canada's Old Northwest" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 1976); Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1980), 3–5.

¹² Adele Perry, "Historiography That Breaks Your Heart: Van Kirk and the Writing of Feminist History," in *Finding a Way to the Heart Feminist Writings on Aboriginal and Women's History in Canada*, ed. Robin Brownlie and Valerie J. Korinek (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012), 92.

decolonial or anticolonial lens. These studies point to the profound influence, politically, economically and socially, that Indigenous women have had in the history of their lands.

1.4. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND WAGED WORK

Starting in the 1970s, histories of Indigenous wage labour have challenged the nineteenth and early twentieth-century depictions of Indigenous people as bystanders or victims of the new trade economy, unable to cope with the shift from a subsistence economy to a capitalist one. Historians have disagreed, however, on how to characterize these economic interactions. For instance, Steven High argues that First Nations peoples selectively participated in the wage economy to “strengthen their traditional way of life.”¹³ According to Robin Jarvis Brownlie, this perspective is problematic because it suggests that a limited engagement with the wage-labour market was an intentional choice made by Indigenous peoples. In his work on Anishinaabe and Mohawk in central and southern Ontario, Brownlie found little evidence for believing that cultural preservation was the objective for joining the wage economy, nor did Anishinaabe and Mohawk individuals necessarily see their participation as a “threat to their cultural integrity.”¹⁴ Brownlie notes that High’s culturalist argument over-emphasizes the agency of Indigenous people and therefore risks minimizing the impact of colonialism and racism on Indigenous subjects and thereby inadvertently diminishes the significance of

¹³ Steven High, “Native Wage Labour and Independent Production during the ‘Era of Irrelevance,’” *Labour/Le Travail* 37 (Spring 1996): 244.

¹⁴ Robin Jarvis Brownlie, “‘Living the Same as the White People’: Mohawk and Anishinabe Women’s Labour in Southern Ontario, 1920-1940,” *Labour/Le Travail* 61 (Spring 2008): 43.

Indigenous resistance to colonial structures and institutions by failing to fully account for the colonial intrusions into Indigenous lives.¹⁵

Other scholars have shown how Indigenous labourers did engage with the market economy, despite the peripheralizing effects of colonialism. Studies of wage work and Indigenous labour that focus on British Columbia are particularly prominent: Rolf Knight, James Burrows, Diane Newell and John Lutz have all demonstrated that local Indigenous labour did not become marginal with the end of the fur trade and the establishment of reserves.¹⁶ In other regions, studies demonstrate that Indigenous labourers played a prominent role in many regional economies and sectors.¹⁷ All of these studies highlight the relevance of studying Indigenous labour to understand the economic marginalization and strategies employed by Indigenous workers.¹⁸

¹⁵ For a good discussion of this debate in history, see: Robin Jarvis Brownlie and Mary-ellen Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution, Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?,” *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (1994): 543–56; Douglas Cole, J. R. Miller, and Mary-ellen Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution: Responses and a Reply,” *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (December 1995): 628–40.

¹⁶ James K. Burrows, “‘A Much-Needed Class of Labour’: The Economy and Income of the Interior Southern Plateau Indians, 1897-1910,” *BC Studies*, no. 71 (1986): 27–46; Mica Jorgenson, “‘Into That Country to Work’: Aboriginal Economic Activities during Barkerville’s Gold Rush,” *BC Studies* 185 (Spring 2015): 109–36; Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1848-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1996); John S. Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); Dianne Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada’s Pacific Coasts Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Andrew Parnaby, “‘The Best Men That Ever Worked the Lumber’: Aboriginal Longshoremen on Burrard Inlet, BC, 1863-1939,” *Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (March 2006): 53–78.

¹⁷ For some examples, see: Ron Laliberte, “The ‘Grab-a-Hoe’ Indians: The Canadian State and the Procurement of Aboriginal Labour for the Southern Alberta Sugar Beet Industry,” *Prairie Forum* 31, no. 2 (2006): 205–324; Paige Raibmon, “Picking, Posing, and Performing: Puget Sound Hop Fields and Income for Aboriginal Workers,” in *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounters from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 74–97; Frank J. Tough, *As Their Natural Resources Fail: Native Peoples and the Economic History of Northern Manitoba, 1870-1930* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); David Weitzman, *Skywalkers: Mohawk Ironworkers Build the City* (New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2014).

¹⁸ Lutz argues that tropes around indolence, like the “lazy Indian” are partly to blame for the lack of research on the topic of Indigenous labourers. However I believe that too much focus on the discursive elements can mask the material (economic) impacts of the marginalization of Indigenous labourers. John S. Lutz, “Making the Lazy Indian,” in *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

The marginalization of Indigenous labour in historical scholarship is in part caused by assumptions that Indigenous peoples can only remain authentically Indigenous by resisting modernity and maintaining a pure subsistence economy. Yet, McCallum, for instance asks, “what if we take as a premise that modernity is not something that Indians by nature or by tradition are prohibited from partaking in and indeed creating?”¹⁹

Indigenous wage work should be understood as more complex than merely evidence of rupture and assimilation. Colleen O’Neill makes the important addition that “modernity is a culturally specific, historical construct, yet the concept remains stubbornly reified as some sort of natural historical phenomenon.”²⁰ Both of these scholars highlight that (wage) labour is not anathema to Indigeneity.

1.5. MODERNITY AND INUKTIZATION

The apparent conflict between Indigeneity and modernity is a false dichotomy that can be understood within critiques of anthropology, though the issue is much greater. As anthropologist Johannes Fabian asserts, anthropological studies are often limited in their acknowledgement and engagement with the coequality of people from different cultures.²¹

¹⁹ Mary Jane McCallum, “Labour, Modernity and the Canadian State: A History of Aboriginal Women and Work in the Mid-Twentieth Century” (PhD Diss., Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, 2008), 11.

²⁰ Colleen O’Neill, “Rethinking Modernity and the Discourse of Development in American Indian History, an Introduction,” in *Native Pathways: American Indian Culture and Economic Development in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Brian C. Hosmer and Colleen M. O’Neill (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2004), 12.

²¹ Part of the construction of the Other in anthropology, Fabian argues, is the denial of temporality and time. Embedded within this denial of time, or modernity (in the case of my research), is the subsumed belief in allochronism: that the Other exists on a different point along a linear trajectory of time. A good example of this among Ahiarmiut is a 1959 *LIFE* Magazine article that compares (and arguably conflates) Ahiarmiut with Mesolithic Europeans. Lincoln Barnett, “The Epic of Man: A Mesolithic Age Today: Caribou Eskimos Illustrate Its Culture,” *LIFE Magazine*, February 27, 1956; Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 33–36, 146–52.

Certain kinds of labour (such as fishing, trapping, craft-making) are deemed by colonial society to be acceptable for Indigenous people because they fit an ahistorical vision of a pure, pre-contact past unspoiled by European influences. In contrast, other forms of labour (like hairdressing, nursing, and office-working) are not seen within the dominant, mainstream society, as acceptable because of their engagements with a modern and cash-based economy. While Indigenous peoples are expected to integrate into the market economy, doing so makes them inauthentic and compromises their Indigeneity.²² Indigenous people are trapped in a catch-22 situation.

This project instead strives to centre historicity and temporality as an important part of understanding engagements with modernity. I aim to make it clear that a purely subsistence economy – that is, an economy that is based on procuring necessities of life without the circulation of commodities in a market context – has not operated in Kivalliq since the eighteenth century, and that any assertions to the contrary fail to consider the historical specificities of Kivalliq Inuit. I argue that labour within the fur trade or later cash economy is not a sign of assimilation, loss of Indigeneity (or authenticity) or culture, but rather the reality of Inuit’s entanglements with mercantile and market economies.²³

Rather than locating authenticity in the past, scholars now use the idea of disjunctive, multiple or alternative modernities. Ruth Phillips and Elizabeth Harney challenge the notion that Indigenous artmaking may only be framed in terms of

²² See especially Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounters from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 3.

²³ Andrew Parnaby has noted that this area is understudied, writing that “the significance of wage labour to Aboriginal communities – a phenomenon that suggests change, not continuity; modernity, not custom – has been neglected.” Parnaby, “Aboriginal Longshoremen,” 53.

primitivism in a dialectic opposition to modernist art movements.²⁴ As expressed in modernist art, the lesson is that modernity is co-constructed through encounters and exchanges and, despite its global nature, is expressed in geographically and temporally specific ways.

The situated nature of modernity can be described as cultural translation or Indigenization, as modernity operates within a globalized capitalism.²⁵ Susan Stanford Friedman for instance defines indigenization as “making native or indigenous something from elsewhere.”²⁶ She also reminds us that modernity is historical, not ahistorical, and is spatial as well as temporal in its operations. It is an intensification of intercultural contact, of the new, the juxtaposition of the other and a dialectic of hybridization.²⁷ This does not mean that modernity was a western force that diffused and infused the rest. Rather, modernity is “not one, but many,” there are multiple modernities which “involve global weblike formations, with many multidirectional links, affiliations, and often brutal inequalities of power.”²⁸

²⁴ Elizabeth Harney and Ruth B. Phillips, “Inside Modernity: Indigeneity, Coloniality, Modernisms,” in *Mapping Modernisms: Art, Indigeneity, Colonialism*, ed. Harney, Elizabeth and Ruth B. Phillips (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

²⁵ Sherry Farrell Racette, “My Grandmothers Love to Trade: The Indigenization of European Trade Goods in Historic and Contemporary Canada,” *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no. 20 (March 2008): 69–81; Ruth B. Phillips, “Materiality and Cultural Translation: Indigenous Arts, Colonial Exchange, and Postcolonial Perspectives,” in *Cultural Histories of the Material World*, ed. Peter N. Miller (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 134–43.

²⁶ Susan Stanford Friedman, “Periodizing Modernism: Postcolonial Modernities and the Space/Time Borders of Modernist Studies,” *Modernism/Modernity* 13, no. 3 (2006): 430; Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1988), 22.

²⁷ Friedman, “Periodizing Modernism,” 433.

²⁸ Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, ed., *Alternative Modernities*, A Millennial Quartet Book (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 17; Friedman, “Periodizing Modernism,” 435.

The concept of the co-creation of modernity, with all its disparities of power and temporal and spatial specificities, is at the heart of the concept of Inuktization. This concept, introduced by Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, is shorthand for describing the process of Inuit adapting, integrating and synthesizing new materials into their knowledge and aesthetic systems.²⁹ Inuktization affirms the agency of Inuit rather than implying a blanket domination of westernization, colonialism and market capitalism (and mercantilism). The aim is to explore how Inuit women encountered and co-created their modernity through their labour and the object they produced through sewing. It is my strategy to highlight the historical and geographic specificities of Inuit entanglements with modernity, capitalism and colonialism using one of the products of women's work: parkas.

1.6. WOMEN'S WORK

With the industrialization of Western Europe in the nineteenth century, a division of labour between male paid work outside the home, and female unpaid work in the home became such common practice that it was understood as the natural order rather than part of a particular economic system.³⁰ What women did in the home was constructed as virtuous and morally good, as neoclassical economist Arthur Pigou explained: women's

²⁹ Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, "Conversation with Atsajuk Ituangat (Robert Joseph Flanagan), Jackson Meekitjuk Sagiatuq Hanson, and Robert Donald Malituq Hanson Comeau," in *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*, ed. Carol Payne et al. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2022).

³⁰ Bock argues that nineteenth-century perspectives framed women as closer to nature because of their role gestating a child, whereas men have made more cultural and historical impact as a result of working outside the home (public sphere). This industrialist view neglects earlier economic structures where crofters, farmers, peasants and artisans typically worked near their homes and the family functioned as an economic unit. Gisela Bock, "Challenging Dichotomies: Perspectives on Women's History," in *Writing Women's History: International Perspectives*, ed. Karen Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson, and Jane Rendall (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1991), 2–4.

“home work, to which more people are tied by the *non-economic* compulsion of family cares.”³¹ As historian Nancy Folbre explains, women’s efforts in the home were viewed as an example of “domestic virtue, rather than domestic work.”³² Feminist scholars have challenged the notion that a pure market economic perspective should only consider the waged worker. Feminist economists countered the Economic Man’s *productive* labour concept by deploying the concept of *reproductive* labour.³³ Marxist feminist economists elaborated upon the term reproductive labour in the 1970s, a term initially coined by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in order to achieve “the goal of naming and analyzing the category of work that had previously remained virtually invisible within sociology and economics: women’s unpaid work in the home.”³⁴ Despite being unpaid in the market economy, what women do domestically, constitutes economically-relevant work. The feminist appropriation of Marx’s concept of reproductive labour challenges a central

³¹ Emphasis added. Arthur Cecil Pigou, *The Economics of Welfare*, Third Edition (London: Macmillan and Co., 1932), 553.

³² Folbre explains that domestic virtue meant that socially, women’s domesticity was necessary to “counterbalance the competitive anarchy of the market economy” and create a gentler world at home for men to return to. Nancy Folbre, “The Unproductive Housewife: Her Evolution in Nineteenth-Century Economic Thought,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16, no. 3 (Spring 1991): 466.

³³ *Homo Economicus*, generally translated into “Economic Man” describes a perfectly rational being who acts to maximize their wealth. *Homo Economicus* is always assumed to be male despite being solely *homo* (person) and not *vir* (man). The concept that became the Economic Man was initially developed by John Stuart Mill in 1836 though only labelled as such by critics of Mill: John Kell Ingram and later John Neville Keynes and Arthur Marshall. John Kells Ingram, *A History of Political Economy* (Edinburgh: Black, 1888); John Neville Keynes, *The Scope and Method of Political Economy* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1891); Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, eighth (London: Macmillan and Co., 1920); John Stuart Mill, “Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy: On the Definition of Political Economy,” in *Essays on Economics and Society*, ed. F.E.L. Priestly, vol. V (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 229–340; Joseph Persky, “Retrospectives: The Ethology of Homo Economicus,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 221.

³⁴ Mignon Duffy, “Doing the Dirty Work: Gender, Race, and Reproductive Labor in Historical Perspective,” *Gender & Society* 21, no. 3 (June 2007): 315; Karl Marx, “The Accumulation of Capital: Simple Reproduction,” in *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. Engels, Fredrick, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, Translated from the Third German Edition, vol. II (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Company Limited, 1904); Lise Vogel, *Marxism and the Oppression of Women: Toward a Unitary Theory* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1983).

tenet of labour history as masculine and takes a step towards locating women's work in the market economy.³⁵ It counters the male orientation of the study of labour and work by demonstrating what feminist economists Drucilla Barker and Susan Feiner described as the “material process of production/reproduction” and the cultural processes that have defined how labour divisions are gendered.³⁶

As important as it is to understand that women's unpaid work is work, postcolonial and Indigenous feminist scholars have pointed out that this analysis falls short in non-industrial and non-market economies. Capitalism and the market economy, though hegemonic, do not operate identically everywhere nor is the female experience of work in a non-industrial context universal.³⁷ Indigenous feminist theory radicalizes Indigenous labour history because it centres on female experiences of capitalism, oppression and racialization.³⁸

³⁵ Some key texts of this stance include: Margaret Benston, “The Political Economy of Women's Liberation,” *Monthly Review* 21, no. 4 (1969): 13–27; Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* (Brooklyn: Petroleuse Press, 1971); Silvia Federici, *Wages Against Housework* (Bristol: Falling Wall Press, 1975); Wally Secombe, “The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism,” *New Left Review* I, no. 83 (1974): 3–24.

³⁶ Drucilla K. Barker and Susan Feiner, *Liberating Economics: Feminist Perspectives on Families, Work, and Globalization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 130.

³⁷ For examples of anticolonial feminist critique, which shows the specificities and complexities of women's experiences see: Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” in *Feminism without Borders Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2003), 18–19; Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Press, 1986).

³⁸ Indigenous and anticolonial feminist criticism is future-oriented and centres decolonial visions and potentialities of Indigenous communities and economies that reject oppression and poverty. Indigenous feminists provide essential works that tie the Indigenous female experience to land, water, environment, law, and culture. Joyce Green emphasizes that Indigenous feminism is a conceptual tool that “provides a philosophical and political way of conceptualizing, and of resisting, the oppressions that many Aboriginal people experience.” Kim Anderson, *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood* (Toronto: Women's Press, 2016); Julia V. Emberley, *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women's Writings, Postcolonial Theory, Theory / Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Joyce Green, *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism*, 2007, 23; Leanne Simpson, ed., *Lighting the Eighth Fire: The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishers,

Scholars of twentieth-century Indigenous women's work have focused on how work and training programs were used by the government as a method of assimilating and integrating Indigenous women into the capitalist market economy.³⁹ McCallum's work is significant because it is the first historical monograph on Indigenous women's wage work in Canada. She argues that government policies to train, educate and place these women in particular kinds of jobs were part of the government's broader assimilative and extinguishment policies. However, McCallum mainly focuses on how First Nations and Métis women made impressive efforts to navigate the limited and constantly changing opportunities that were possible and available to them.⁴⁰

1.7. THE MIXED ECONOMY IN INUIT NUNANGAT

As shown in the discussion above, the historiography of the fur trade tends to stop at 1870 (when the HBC transferred Rupertsland to Canada) and shifts to studies on Métis and First Nations and wage labour. The result is a neglect of the twentieth-century fur trade industry which was a significant source of income for Inuit of Inuit Nunangat (the Inuit Homeland) as well as First Nations and Métis in the subarctic.⁴¹ Inuit were the

2008); Cheryl Suzack, Shari M. Huhndorf, and Jeanne Perreault, *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).

³⁹ Similarly, related works note the role of missionaries and government officials in using education and Christianity for similar assimilative purposes. Despite the erasures by colonial officials' vision of Indigeneity, some scholars have considered women's economic contributions as central to family survival through seasonal labour. Myra Rutherdale and Katie Pickles, eds., *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005); Joan Sangster, "Colonialism at Work: Labour Placement Programs for Aboriginal Women in Postwar Canada," in *Aboriginal History: A Reader*, ed. Kristen Burnett and Geoff Read, second (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴⁰ Her argument in some ways echoes the culturalist views of Steven High, noting that these jobs simultaneously meant that, as modern, Indigenous women, they could maintain their cultural responsibilities to their communities and resist state policies. High, "Native Wage Labour and Independent Production during the 'Era of Irrelevance'"; McCallum, *Indigenous Women*.

⁴¹ To be sure, there are a few works that have extended the historical conversation about the fur trade into the Sub-Arctic or the northern parts of the provinces after 1870. There is less work on the Arctic. Jarvenpa and Brumbach, "Occupational Status, Ethnicity, and Ecology"; Arthur J. Ray, *The Canadian Fur*

primary trappers for the booming arctic fox fur trade of the 1920s and the primacy of Inuit trappers in the industry continued until the 1950s.

The term settler colonialism has distinct implications to southerners which can mask the circumstances of colonialism in the Kivalliq region. Because this project takes the premise that Inuit women's labour and economic experiences were (and are) shaped by their specific experiences of colonialism in Canada, those particular experiences risk being erased if these concepts are not carefully applied and defined. The work of Emilie Cameron on colonialism and resource extraction Kugluktuk is particularly relevant in this discussion. Cameron notes that "historical geographies and contemporary articulations of colonization in the North differ in important ways from those in the south."⁴² The Inuit experience of colonialism unfolded differently from the experiences of First Nations and Métis in the south, in part because Qallunaat never settled Inuit Nunangat: Inuit continued to live on the land until the mid-twentieth century at which point they suffered aggressive state interventions through the modernist welfare state.⁴³

Canada is a settler colonial nation, but its relationship to Inuit in Nunavut corresponds with what Jurgen Osterhammel describes as "a relationship of domination" between a colonized Indigenous majority and a settler minority.⁴⁴ In this scenario,

Trade in the Industrial Age (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Tough, *Natural Resources*; Peter J. Usher, "Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories 1870-1970" (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971); Christina Williamson, "The Manitoba Fur Trade and Métis after 1870," in *The Métis in Manitoba: 150 Years of Nation Building, 1870-2020*, ed. Brielle Beaudin-Reimer (Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation, forthcoming); Morris Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914*, The Canadian Centenary Series (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971).

⁴² Emilie Cameron, *Far off Metal River: Inuit Lands, Settler Stories, and the Making of the Contemporary Arctic* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 18.

⁴³ Cameron, *Far off Metal River*, 17–20.

⁴⁴ Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 16–17.

Osterhammel notes, “the fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis.”⁴⁵ Both colonialism and settler colonialism are deeply territorial – land-based – in nature, but Nunavut’s colonial history remained embedded in a mercantile trade economy (turned extractionist economy) long after that mercantile economy had waned in southern Canada.⁴⁶ The Crown’s legal and colonial relationship with Inuit is thus distinct from its relationships with First Nations and Métis.

While historians have generally had little to say about labour and economy in the Arctic, anthropologists have pursued various studies of Inuit labour roles and the adjustments made by Inuit to the major economic shifts of the twentieth century. Anthropologists, particularly those associated with the Canadian Government in the 1960s and 1970s, endorsed the acculturative model, which posited that Inuit were undergoing an inevitable and transformative process that meant the end of the Inuit subsistence economy.⁴⁷ Using this model, outside observers predicted that a dual

⁴⁵ As Lorenzo Veracini explains, colonialism *reinforces* a distinction between a colony and metropole while settler colonialism *erases* it through “the domination of a majority that has become indigenous ([i.e.] settlers are made by conquest and by immigration).” Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 16–17; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010), 5.

⁴⁶ Though there are important distinctions between Patrick Wolfe and Veracini’s definitions for settler colonialism, Wolfe defines settler colonialism as a type of colonialism, while Veracini views them as antithetical modes of domination, although they can operate within the same nation simultaneously. Some of this debate can be seen in the following works: J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, “False Dilemmas and Settler Colonial Studies: Response to Lorenzo Veracini: ‘Is Settler Colonial Studies Even Useful?’,” *Postcolonial Studies* 24, no. 2 (April 3, 2021): 290–96; Veracini, Lorenzo, “Patrick Wolfe’s Dialectics,” *Aboriginal History* 40 (2016): 249–60; Patrick Wolfe, “Recuperating Binarism: A Heretical Introduction,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3–04 (November 2013): 257–79.

⁴⁷ Notably, much of these works were grey literature (that is, bureaucratic reports that are often unpublished) which was commissioned or funded by the Department of Northern Affairs. The following were the most useful for Kivalliq region, there are others. Robert C. Dailey and Lois A. Dailey, “The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet: A Preliminary Report” (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1961); Geert van den Steenhoven, “Report to Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on a Field Research Journey for the Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts

economy of subsistence and market would operate for the early years of Inuit settlement. Thereafter, observers expected that the Inuit subsistence economy would be fully replaced by a market economy. However, although Inuit were predominantly living in settlements by the 1960s, many maintained their subsistence hunting practices, suggesting that Inuit did not adopt the market economy model alone.⁴⁸ Another dynamic was occurring.

Peter Usher explains that the post-settlement economy in Inuit communities developed into a mixed, subsistence-based economy that was neither a dual economy nor a pure market economy.⁴⁹ Leanna Parker adds that the dual economy model “assumes that northern Indigenous communities are divided between individuals who already have a secure position in the modern, wage labour economy and those who continue practicing the traditional economy while waiting for a place in the modern economy.”⁵⁰ It is,

of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955” (Department of Northern Affairs, 1957); James W. VanStone and Wendell Oswald, “The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point” (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1959); Frank G. Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo in the Central Keewatin* (Ottawa: Canadian Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1967).

⁴⁸ In contrast, the cultural ecology perspective (developed by Julian Steward) treats modes of production of society as formed out of, or adapted to, their local environment. For a critical view of cultural ecology in the context of Shoshone, see Ned Blackhawk’s work, where he demonstrates that Steward’s theory implicitly legitimized the impoverishment and dispossession of Shoshone and provided the federal government ammunition for denying treaty rights to Western Shoshone peoples in Nevada. Fikret Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*, 3rd edition (New York: Routledge, 2012), 70; Ned Blackhawk, “Julian Steward and the Politics of Representation: A Critique of Anthropologist Julie Steward’s Ethnographic Portrayals of the American Indians of the Great Basin,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 21, no. 2 (1997): 61–81; June Helm, “The Ecological Approach to Anthropology,” *American Journal of Sociology* 67, no. 6 (May 1962): 630–39; Julian Steward, “The Economic and Social Basis of Primitive Bands,” in *Essay in Honor of A.L. Kroeber* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936), 331–50; George W. Wenzel, “Inuit and Modern Hunter-Gatherer Subsistence,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 37, no. 2 (2013): 186.

⁴⁹ Peter J. Usher, Gérard Duhaime, and Edmund Searles, “The Household as an Economic Unit in Arctic Aboriginal Communities, and Its Measurement by Means of a Comprehensive Survey,” *Social Indicators Research* 61, no. 2 (February 2003): 175–202.

⁵⁰ Leanna Parker, “Re-Conceptualizing the Traditional Economy: Indigenous Peoples’ Participation in the Nineteenth Century Fur Trade in Canada and Whaling Industry in New Zealand” (PhD Diss., University of Alberta, 2011), 4.

however, impossible to separate the subsistence and market aspects of the economy in Arviat and, arguably, most northern communities. Anthropologist Hugh Brody explains the mixed economy in a sub-Arctic context:

Income from guiding illustrates how misleading such a dichotomy can be. In theory, the Indians' earnings can be broken into the equivalent gained domestically (...trapping and hunting, fish, berries), and wages from working for others. In practice, these cannot readily be disentangled. Guides work for others, but in separating them from the traditional sector, cultural and historical associations are lost. It is this dichotomy of traditional and modern that creates this confusion.⁵¹

The mixed economy operates so that wage work, transfer payments (social welfare), and commodity production connect to – and are not separate or distinct from – subsistence activities.⁵² Usher, Gérard Duhaime and Edmund Searles provide a cogent simile for describing the mixed economy in the North: subsistence activities are “like a sponge, absorbing labour when other opportunities decline and releasing it when they arise.”⁵³ A mixed economy does not mean that wage work and subsistence work are distinct, but rather that they comprise an economic structure that allows people working within it to adjust to different situations.

Notably, the foundations of the mixed economy had been developing in the Arviat region over several centuries, as I discuss in detail in Chapter 2 on Inuit women's wage work in the changing economy. What is important to distinguish here is that the post-settlement period eliminated any genuine choice that Inuit might have in their economic system as cash became necessary to perform subsistence activities. As Rauna Kuokkanen

⁵¹ Hugh Brody, “The Indian Economy,” in *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981), 207.

⁵² Rauna Kuokkanen, “Indigenous Economies, Theories of Subsistence, and Women: Exploring the Social Economy Model for Indigenous Governance,” *American Indian Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 221; Usher, Duhaime, and Searles, “The Household as Economic Unit,” 178.

⁵³ Usher, Duhaime, and Searles, “The Household as Economic Unit,” 178.

argues, although the “term ‘subsistence’ carried negative connotations of primitive ways of life ... or rural communities in the developing world, subsistence is both an economic and social system, encompassing various spheres of life that are inseparable from one another.”⁵⁴ I agree with Kuokkanen and others who argue that subsistence is not merely a matter of eking out a living from natural resources, but rather a complex of social, cultural and material obligations, networks and connections.⁵⁵

This mixed economic system is resilient and dynamic: it allows for people living within its context to adjust to various circumstances. It describes how Inuit have adjusted and responded to difficult economic circumstances including the rise and fall of the fox fur industry in the 1920s-50s, the move into settlements, and the crash of seal fur values in the 1970s through to today. Subsistence economic activities have to be understood as a strategy used by Inuit to support themselves in unjust economic conditions. As geographer Frank Tough has argued, Indigenous people are actively involved in both the Canadian and local economies, the colonial economic structures in the North are neither empowering nor beneficial to Indigenous peoples in the globalized economy.⁵⁶

1.8. INUIT WOMEN’S SEWING AND THE LAND-BASED MIXED ECONOMY OF ARVIAT

⁵⁴ Kuokkanen, “Economies, Subsistence and Women,” 218.

⁵⁵ Wenzel and others looked to Marshall Sahlins to understand economics of what Sahlins called “the original affluent society” because these societies could satisfy their needs either by “producing much or desiring little.” He contrasted subsistence economies with market-industrial economies which sustain their economic model by *creating* scarcity to create consumers. Sahlins, and even earlier, Karl Polanyi, argued for a substantivist perspective of economics, one that conceived economic behaviours as embedded in social relationships and provisioning (meeting material needs) rather than in concepts of scarcity and neoclassical economic rationalism. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Second edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 45–58; Marshall David Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (London: Routledge, 2004), 2; Wenzel, “Modern Hunter-Gatherer,” 186.

⁵⁶ Tough, “Indian Economic Behaviour.”

Women's sewing work offers a lens through which to view these broader issues and to demonstrate how women have long done the best they can for their families and their communities. In her research with Dene women in Fort Liard, Phoebe Nahanni argues that these women think of themselves as having three workplaces: bush, household, and job outside the home.⁵⁷ Understanding Inuit women's work spatially, as Nahanni did for Dene women, connects Inuit women's sewing work to larger economic patterns in their communities. In the Arviat context, the three workplaces may be understood as the household, paid workplace, and nuna (land, rather than bush). Sewing is a land-based skill because it supports subsistence activities even in a mixed economy. Anthropologist Barbara Bodenhorn's research among Inupiat offers an interesting example that is highly suggestive for Arviat. She explains that Inupiat classify women's activities such as sewing and butchering as hunting skills.⁵⁸ If this holds in Arviat, as I aim to show, then sewing is a significant facet of women's land-based subsistence activities, as much as hunting and trapping is significant for men.

Subsistence-based work requires cash and that women's wage work helped to support men's hunting activities.⁵⁹ Sewing parkas and other outdoor clothes for use by

⁵⁷ Nahanni, "Traditional and Modern Northern Economy," 84.

⁵⁸ Barbara Bodenhorn, "'I'm Not the Great Hunter, My Wife Is: Inupiat and Anthropological Models of Gender," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 14, no. 1–2 (1990): 55–74.

⁵⁹ In her Ph.D. dissertation, Magalie Quintal-Marineau studied wage-employment for Inuit women in Clyde River and demonstrated that in an ideal situation, wage-work afforded women the ability to support their husband's hunting activities. Still, there are often tensions as women continue to be the primary care-givers, taking on the majority of domestic responsibilities, even as they have paid employment. Quintal-Marineau's work is significant because of its consideration of the close links between women's wage work and the subsistence economy. She argued that in Clyde River, women's wage employment and housework support men's subsistence hunting. However, she overlooked other forms of labour performed by women and in particular sewing as a crucial land-based skill that not only *supports* the economic subsistence activities of hunters, but also is foundational to the economic and social function of their household and community. Usher, Duhaime, and Searles, "The Household as Economic Unit"; Wenzel, "Modern Hunter-Gatherer"; Magalie Quintal-Marineau, "Near the Floe Edge: Inuit Women's Role in the Nunavut Mixed Economy" (PhD Diss., McGill University, 2016), 156–68, 197.

family members is a culturally germane method of reducing any cash outlay that could better support subsistence and provisioning activities for the household unit. Furthermore, the production and sale of parkas are also used to support land-based economic activities. Cash earned from selling parkas may also be used for other purchases, of course, but the mixed economy means that cash earnings are ultimately subsumed into some part of land-based activities.

From a neoclassical economics perspective, Inuit women's work in a camp context is akin to the women's domestic sphere in an urban industrial environment: it is based close to camp and involves childcare, sewing, and managing food. While this perspective posits a clear sexual division of labour, the reality of Inuit women's "household" work is more complex. The Inuit conceptualization of gender roles and labour, particularly in the period before missionization, did not envision women's work in the home as a sign of feminine virtuousness or as part of women's natural tendency towards domesticity and submissiveness. Rather, Inuit gender roles, though clearly distinguished, were, in a camp context, equally significant for the success of the entire camp. Sociologists Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini explain that there was a "sharp delineation between 'men's skills' and 'women's skills,' and that most Inuit elders believe that men and women enjoyed a virtually equal relationship. Reciprocity characterized the division of labour and the exercise of power."⁶⁰ The division of labour, in other words, did not necessarily mean that there was a hierarchy in how that labour was valued. Anthropologist Jean Briggs, speaking of Utkuhikhalingmiut of Tariunnaq (Chantrey Inlet) and Qipisamiut in

⁶⁰ Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini, *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 37.

Qipisa (Cumberland Sound) living in camps in the 1960s, found that “men and women each have their own realm, ... and prestige accrues to excellence in each.”⁶¹ Likewise, anthropologist D. Lee Guemple found that among early twentieth-century Qikirtamiut (Belcher Islanders), marriage for Inuit was a union of complementary skills more than a union of two sexes. Guemple found that Inuit saw gender as secondary to the skills and competencies of each individual.⁶²

Inuit women’s sewing is a valued, gendered skill: it is rooted in a subsistence land-based economy that has become increasingly mixed with a cash economy over time. Bodenhorn makes the important point that for Iñupiat, “there is nothing in this model that assigns a ‘natural’ meaning to the tasks that men and women perform. Men and women are not thought to be somehow congenitally incapable of doing something generally assigned to a member of the opposite sex.”⁶³ While specific tasks are often described as men’s or women’s work, these descriptions are shorthand as there is nothing inherently womanly about sewing or masculine about hunting. Indeed, it behooves any person to be at least somewhat competent at the tasks of the other gender.

Good sewing skills were (and continue to be) highly valued in Inuit communities, and oral histories frequently note the omnipresence and value of sewing in women’s lives. For instance, parents would sew different kinds of amulets on their children’s parkas for reasons of protection, or to promote a desired skill in the child. Manitok Thompson, the great-granddaughter of Nivisanaaq, a famous seamstress of Shugliaq

⁶¹ Jean L. Briggs, “Eskimo Women: Makers of Men,” in *Many Sisters: Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Carolyn J. Mathiassen (New York: Free Press, 1974), 287.

⁶² Despite this complementarity, Guemple asserts that some women were quite capable of hunting seal, small game and trapping. D. Lee Guemple, “Men and Women, Husbands and Wives: The Role of Gender in Traditional Inuit Society,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 10, no. 1/2 (1986): 13.

⁶³ Bodenhorn, “Not the Great Hunter,” 60.

(Southampton Island), told me of a woman who received a lemming foot amulet as a child so her sewing would be small and quick like a lemming. This kind of practice seems to have been present across Inuit Nunangat as Elsie Nilgak from the western Arctic was given a rippled seashell so she would excel at crimping boot soles.⁶⁴

Sewing was a constant presence in camp life. Thompson recalled how she would wake up in the morning and fall asleep at night to her mother, Tweenaq Kanayuk Bruce's sewing. Similarly, artist Pitseolak Ashoona recalled that "In the old days I was never done with the sewing. There were the tents and the kayaks, and there were all the clothes, which were made from the different skins. ... As soon as I was done sewing one thing, I was always sewing another."⁶⁵ As Billson and Mancini write, "The gender calculus was elegantly simple: if the woman lacked skill in making warm clothing, the man would freeze to death on the hunt. If the man did not hunt well, the woman could not make clothing to protect herself and her family."⁶⁶ In short, a man is the hunter his wife makes him.⁶⁷

1.9. SEWING, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT

Sewing is a skill that directly connects Inuit women to their cultural traditions. Rhoda Kaujak Katsak of Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) noted in 1993 just how important it was for her to learn how to sew, "I do it [sew] and I realize that our traditional culture is still very much part of our lives...There are people younger than me who are very confused. They

⁶⁴ Manitok Thompson, interview by Christina Williamson, September 6, 2017; John Bennett and Susan Diana Mary. Rowley, eds., *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 317.

⁶⁵ Bennett and Rowley, *Uqalurait*, 321.

⁶⁶ Mancini Billson and Mancini, *Inuit Women*, 37.

⁶⁷ Bodenhorn, "Not the Great Hunter."

don't know what culture they value most, they are stuck. ... They don't sew traditional clothing. They don't understand the importance."⁶⁸ As Katsak suggested, Inuit women have made clothing for reasons that extend beyond the purpose of survival. Sewing parkas is a way for women to tell their own stories and articulate visions of themselves, their families and communities. The act of stitching clothing is a powerful act of stitching together community and kin. A material culture approach focused on changes in how women designed and sewed parkas thus speaks not only to the labour history of women's work in Arviat but also demonstrates the material and embodied nature of these changes. I will also show in this dissertation how, nearly thirty years after Katsak's comments, Inuit women *do* understand the importance of their inheritance as seamstresses and increasingly want to know the skills of traditional skin processing and sewing.

For this reason, historic parkas are both a link to the past and have the power to enact change because they exemplify, celebrate and mobilize historical skills, designs and patterns. Gabriele Budach, Donna Patrick and Teevi Mackay (Iqalumiut) relate parkas to history and tradition, drawing a close link between material culture and language. The authors think of objects such as parkas as "vehicles in the circulation, redistribution, reification and projection of social meaning, constitutive of discourses, rather than as semiotic resources in their own right and independent from discourse."⁶⁹ The connections that a parka creates transcend time and space and allow Inuit to negotiate knowledge and cultural practices while also negotiating non-Inuit systems of meaning-making and

⁶⁸ Nancy Wachowich et al., "Unikaavut/Our Lives: Stories from the Lives of Three Generations of Iglulik Inuit Women" (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1992), 230.

⁶⁹ Gabriele Budach, Donna Patrick, and Teevi Mackay, "'Talk around Objects': Designing Trajectories of Belonging in an Urban Inuit Community," *Social Semiotics* 25, no. 4 (August 8, 2015): 449.

commodification. While it is essential to understand that parkas are imbued with signification, we cannot remove the object from the labour needed to make them.

As a garment unique to Inuit, the amauti serves as a form of artistic expression and also illustrates how Inuit women work (See Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 for a schema of parka types and their relationships). The amauti is a woman's parka with a large hood designed to carry infants and toddlers. Thinking through the amauti helps us understand Inuit sewing, labour and gender. As will be shown in Chapter 3, the amauti is exceptionally versatile and continues to play a significant a role in childcare practices. As the Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association states, "the amauti reflects the practical and functional adaptations of the Inuit and is intrinsically linked to Inuit culture. That amauti survives today and embodies a link to the past and to the skill sets and role of Inuit women."⁷⁰

Inuit view the transmission of sewing skills as a valued part of both Inuit Knowledge and being an Inuit woman. Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox beautifully depicts the ways that knowledge, place and stories inter-relate in how people come to know. When participating in tanning a moose hide at a Sahtugot'ine (Great Bear Lake Dene) culture camp in the Northwest Territories, Irlbacher-Fox noticed that:

Many of the women who participated in the camp claimed to have no knowledge of moose hide tanning. However, as the tanning progressed, it became clear they had extensive knowledge of tanning hides. The act of hide tanning would trigger memories of grandmothers, mothers, aunts and cousins tanning hides. The stories they would tell held hide tanning knowledge – and also knowledge about relationships, hunting, bush life, animals, rivers, their languages and cultural knowledge and practices. The

⁷⁰ Phillip J Bird and Tracy O'Hearn, eds., *Inuit Women's Traditional Knowledge Workshop on the Amauti and Intellectual Property Rights: Final Report - Rankin Inlet, May 24-27, 2001* (Ottawa: Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2002), 17.

women had embodied knowledge of tanning, the lands and cultures, and knowledge that they did not know they had until revealed by questions, issues and memories drawn from them by the hide tanning activities.⁷¹

The manner in which the sewing and tanning knowledge is expressed, understood, learned, taught, and known, is through doing, being, and storytelling. As this example shows, Indigenous Knowledges (IK) are situated within language, land, culture, ecology and ontology of every Indigenous society.⁷² Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank asserts that IK is “*about* unique entanglements of culture and nature, humans and landscapes, objects and their makers.”⁷³ Similarly, context, or, more specifically, place, is a core aspect of IK; place is how IK is taught, shared, transmitted and known.

I use the term Inuit Knowledge rather than Indigenous Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, or the term Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) in this dissertation. Inuit Knowledge is more specific than the terms Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge; there is, for some, an implied pastness in the latter term as well.⁷⁴ The most controversial aspect of my choice is, however, not to use the term IQ. Often translated as “that which is long known by Inuit,” IQ is a neologism developed by the Government of

⁷¹ I observed and experienced similar situations in Arviat and Ottawa among Inuit women sewing. Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, “Traditional Knowledge, Co-Existence and Co-Resistance,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, no. 3 (2014): 154.

⁷² Erica-Irene Daes, “Preliminary Report of the Special Rapporteur, Mrs. Erica-Irene Daes, Submitted in Conformity with Sub-Commission Resolution 1993/44 and Decision 1994/105 of the Commission on Human Rights,” Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (Geneva: United Nations, July 8, 1994), para. 8.

⁷³ Julie Cruikshank, “Melting Glaciers and Emerging Histories,” in *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters and Social Imagination* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 259.

⁷⁴ The term Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is sometimes conflated with Traditional Knowledge or Indigenous Knowledge. I try to separate these concepts as much as possible for clarity, but it is sometimes not possible when writers use IK or TK interchangeably with TEK. From my perspective, TEK represents only a small portion of Inuit Indigenous Knowledge. Paul Nadasdy and Julie Cruikshank express concern with the impetus among some scientists to treat IK as data points, rather than as distinct systems of knowing. Cruikshank, “Melting Glaciers,” 259; Paul Nadasdy, “The Politics of TEK: Power and the ‘Integration’ of Knowledge,” *Arctic Anthropology* 36, no. 1/2 (1999): 1–2.

Nunavut (GN), and although it is increasingly used interchangeably with Inuit Knowledge, the two concepts should not be conflated (Plate 1.1). The concept of IQ came out of a 1998 Nunavut Sustainable Development Committee meeting to develop a formalized set of principles based on Inuit Knowledge that would guide GN policy and governance in ensuring its operations were culturally relevant.⁷⁵ IQ is a descriptive and structured way of thinking about and describing the ancient knowledge, ontology and epistemology that remains relevant and embedded in Inuit society today, but it is vital that it not be conflated with the knowledge *in and of itself*. A risk with the structuring of IQ principles and maligait (natural laws) by the GN is that it has the potential of ossifying Inuit knowledge and masking the particularities of the localized, community-based knowledge found across Nunavut. For these reasons, I am personally resistant to using the term IQ, with the caveat that IQ has served as an empowering and useful concept for many Inuit and Qallunaat scholars, policymakers, activists and others.⁷⁶

1.10. MATERIAL CULTURE STUDIES AND LABOUR HISTORY

By blending material culture studies and labour history, I seek to correct the previous emphasis on women's material production as exclusively associated with objects of art,

⁷⁵ It is operationalized elsewhere, serving as a key component of Nunavut's educational curriculum, and as guiding principles for the Nunavut Wildlife Act; and for managing Nunavut Parks and Special Places. Nunavut Social Development Council, "Report of the Nunavut Traditional Knowledge Conference" (Igloolik: Nunavut Social Development Council, March 20, 1998), 1; Eleanor Ayr Bonny, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Knowledge Transmission in a Modern Inuit Community" (MA Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2007), 18.

⁷⁶ For some recent examples: Heather Igloliorte, "Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum," *Art Journal* 76, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 100–113; Joe Karetak, Frank J. Tester, and Shirley Tagalik, eds., *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: What Inuit Have Always Known to Be True* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017); Erin Keenan, Lucia M. Fanning, and Chris Milley, "Mobilizing Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Narwhal Management through Community Empowerment: A Case Study in Naujaat, Nunavut," *Arctic* 71, no. 1 (February 26, 2018): 27; Francis Lévesque, "Revisiting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge, Culture, Language, and Values in Nunavut Institutions since 1999," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 38, no. 1–2 (2014): 115.

ethnography, craft or tradition. While no studies have looked at Inuit women's sewing specifically from a labour standpoint, a growing body of literature examines Indigenous women's work and their material production. In this project, I approach studying paid and unpaid labour by examining archival records and oral history and carefully studying the garments that Inuit women sewed. My engagement with material culture – especially parkas – is meant to highlight the potential for fruitful historical scholarship through the use of material culture methodologies.⁷⁷ I also intend to show how an object-focused history can be used to challenge Canadian nationalist and colonizing narratives about Indigenous people.⁷⁸ A focus on objects can decolonize by enabling the revival of styles and techniques: helping individuals remember skills that communities were forced to forget, and challenging written archival records.

Material culture studies offer a way of understanding objects that goes beyond viewing things as passive objects of human action and intention because it centres the object as a legitimate and valuable medium for analysis. The strength of this area of inquiry is apparent in the study of the history of a colonized and marginalized group like Inuit women (whose direct voices are rarely found in the archives), because the objects they made offer access to their perspectives, work and lives. From mercantilism to

⁷⁷ See for example, Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Writing Material Culture History*, *Writing History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015); Karen Harvey, ed., *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009); Peter N. Miller, ed., *Cultural Histories of the Material World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); Christopher Tilley, *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2006).

⁷⁸ See for example, Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden, and Ruth B. Phillips, *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2006); Ira Jacknis, *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881-1981* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002); Laura L. Peers and Alison K. Brown, eds., *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2003); Ruth B. Phillips, *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

classical capitalism to global capitalism, changes in global economies have meant that Inuit have contended with shifting economic and colonial intrusions. These intrusions have changed how women sewed, the materials they used, and their designs. Rather than defining what is ‘authentically’ Inuit, it is more helpful to consider how, for centuries, Inuit women’s sewing creatively ‘Inuktized’ (rendered understandable in an Inuit way) aspects of outside cultures.⁷⁹ Thinking about objects as embedded with a multiplicity of meanings eliminates concerns about what is authentically Inuit. The problem of authenticity, or concerns about traditional versus contemporary, becomes irrelevant through this perspective. Instead, movements, meanings, change, ruptures and continuities become visible in the physical properties of objects.

Whereas most studies of women’s production have primarily focused on the objects women make from an artistic or craft perspective, Kathy M’Closky and Sherry Farrell Racette (Métis Citizen) illustrate how these objects are also physical expressions of women’s labour. In Kathy M’Closky’s study of Navajo weaving and economics, she counters assumptions that women wove in their spare time for “pin money.”⁸⁰ Instead, she demonstrates the significant economic relevance of Navajo women’s weaving for themselves, their communities and the broader market. Similarly, in her work on Métis beadwork and sewers, Racette demonstrates how women’s sewing production was a key form of labour in the nineteenth century. Métis women organized to produce vast

⁷⁹ Hanson, “Conversation.”

⁸⁰ Rather, M’Closky proposes that the blankets and weaving were critical to the Navajo economy largely because it allowed for survival after the reservation system established in 1868 and the cessation of annuity payments in 1878. Kathy M’Closky, *Swept under the Rug: A Hidden History of Navajo Weaving*, 1st ed (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 185, 190.

quantities of quality garments quickly and efficiently.⁸¹ Their sewing integrated the knowledge from both Indigenous and European systems and was a skill valued by all.⁸² The work of M'Closky and Racette thus situate classically “feminine” artistic productions – weaving, sewing and beading – as core economic activities. Although the cultural, temporal and colonial specificities of Arviat differ from those in southern Canada and the United States, Chapter 2 suggests how Inuit women’s role in the fur trade and other later forms of paid and unpaid labour can also be traced through the garments they created.

The way objects circulate and move through systems and between people serves as a particularly powerful mode of analysis in material culture studies. Studying objects biographically centres on understanding objects as entangled with multiple meanings and values. Nicholas Thomas’ work on objects of exchange between Pacific Islanders and Europeans is particularly instructive here because it illuminates how culturally marking objects operates in a historical, colonial context. He proposes that we understand the movement of objects and the colonial interactions between people as one of entanglement.⁸³ Thomas’s theory of objects states that exchange determines the *meaning*

⁸¹ Farrell Racette’s dissertation, especially chapters 7 and 8 offer detailed examples of how women were key actors in clothing traders and other post workers. She found that in 1822 the HBC Northern Department determined that having women provide sewing services would reduce the costs of providing “slops,” a ready-made garment for labourers, as well as their work processing hides and meat. Harvey R. Fleming, ed., *Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert’s Land, 1821-31* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1940), 378; Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing Ourselves Together: Clothing, Decorative Arts and the Expression of Métis and Half Breed Identity” (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 2004), 227–51.

⁸² Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing for a Living: The Commodification of Métis Women’s Artistic Production,” in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada’s Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 23.

⁸³ Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

of things.⁸⁴ Thomas shows how objects that circulate in colonial contexts have multiple meanings and counters the economic perspective that views objects exclusively as commodities for consumption. Instead, in Thomas's model, commodities become meaning-full instead of valuable.⁸⁵

People imbue objects with meanings that are constantly changing. Material culture studies scholars offer methods to approach those changing meanings and assert that objects speak as much as texts do. While historians have conventionally been reticent to use objects in their historical investigations, many advocates argue that objects can complement other sources and lead historians to ask new questions and find new themes in their studies of the past.⁸⁶ As Karen Harvey noted:

objects are not simply cultural receptacles that acquire meanings which can then be unearthed and read by the student or researcher. Through their very materiality – their shape, function, decoration, and so on – they have

⁸⁴ In contrast, according to Foucault, liberal economists believe that “exchange determines the *value* of things.” Michel Foucault, “17 January 1979,” in *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-79*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 17, 47.

⁸⁵ The neo-Marxist approach to objects first proposed by Arjun Appadurai and Igor Kopytoff in the book, *The Social Life of Things* centred on understanding the processes of exchange and commodification of things. Kopytoff proposed using a biographical model to examine the lives of objects. He argued that “the production of commodities is also a cultural and cognitive process. The commoditization of objects tells us how people culturally mark an object at one time or another.” Numerous works have followed up on Kopytoff's biographical approach because it provides a methodology that recognizes mundane things as salient aspects of social and cultural history. Some examples of a biographical approach to objects include: Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63; Igor Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process,” in *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64–94; Ruth B. Phillips, “The Global Travels of a Mi'kmaq Coat: Colonial Legacies, Repatriation, and the New Cosmopolitanism,” in *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 132–54; Laurel Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Knopf, 2001); Christina Williamson, “Objectified: The Story of an Inuinait Parka from the Canadian Museum of Civilization” (MA Research Essay, Ottawa, Carleton University, 2012).

⁸⁶ Gerritsen and Riello, *Writing Material Culture*, 3.

a role to play in creating and shaping experiences, identities and relationships.⁸⁷

Objects challenge historians' notions about the stability of documents as “‘sources’ of information about people in the past.”⁸⁸ Historical parkas housed in museums and shown in archival photographs offer valuable information for thinking about Inuit women's work. These garments embody Inuit women's perspectives as well as their labour, making them an especially valuable source in this study.

1.11. CRITICAL MUSEOLOGY AND DECOLONIZING INUIT PARKAS

Critical museology and postcolonial perspectives centre the museum and the objects they hold as significant sites of decolonization.⁸⁹ Despite being conscripted into colonial projects, objects in museums are reanimated when Indigenous scholars and knowledge holders use them to revive knowledge, ceremonies and skills. For Inuit women, sewing is an exceptionally valued skill and the items that Inuit women sew embody deep cultural values, worldviews, and Inuit women's labour. Object-oriented histories create the space to tell stories about and for colonized communities and people.

⁸⁷ Karen Harvey, “Introduction: Practical Matters,” in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. Karen Harvey (London: Routledge, 2009), 5.

⁸⁸ Harvey, “Introduction: Practical Matters,” 5.

⁸⁹ I use the term object despite growing literature that uses terms such as belongings, beings and grandfathers. The term belongings, the *hənqəmiñm* term, *ʔeləw̄kʷ*, which has proliferated in use in museums eager to ‘decolonize’ comes originally from Musqueam leaders who determined that that word suggests that these items continue to have connections to the community despite being taken from their place. The word had a specific purpose behind it and I am reticent to appropriate this word, with the powerful meanings and purposes behind it. Still, I acknowledge the importance of objects, things, belongings, as items that co-constitute and maintain knowledges, skills and ontologies. The parkas in this study rarely have cosmological or spiritual meaning and using the terms noted above for these more everyday things risks belittling the spiritual significance of the sacred objects housed in museums that were often obtained through questionable means. Reese Muntean et al., “*ʔeləw̄kʷ* – Belongings: Tangible Interactions with Intangible Heritage,” *Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts*, July 1, 2015, 59–69.

Projects in Indigenous material culture studies in North America have predominantly focused on museums and their relationships with Indigenous peoples. Many of the objects studied in this dissertation are housed in museums or known through archival photographs. Though their presence in museums is helpful for researchers like myself and community-researchers, any research with Indigenous objects in museums must acknowledge the context in which objects were collected and deposited in any museum collection and dismantle colonial museological practices.⁹⁰ Many settler-nations use museums to help create a sense of nationhood and identity that does violence to Indigenous sovereignties.⁹¹ Acknowledging how objects arrived in these museums is instructive because it politicizes objects that were treated as objects of scientific data, especially when mounted in didactic displays. Ruth Phillips views museum objects as things invested in complicated meanings and significations rather than scientific

⁹⁰ Some significant examples from a very robust field include: Michael Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995); Edwards, Gosden, and Phillips, *Sensible Objects*; Jacknis, *The Storage Box of Tradition*; Ivan Karp, *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991); Susan M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections: A Cultural Study* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993); Peers and Brown, *Museums and Source Communities*; Phillips, *Museum Pieces*; George W. Stocking, *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

⁹¹ The role of museums as colonial knowledge-makers and national-narrative-builders has mobilized many scholars to examine these institutions. According to Edward Said, museums and proto-museums such as curiosity cabinets, were complicit in legitimizing (in European eyes) knowledge claims about the “Other” by creating images of the Other that made them knowable and, therefore justified the subjugation of people across Empires. Scholars and Indigenous activists have detailed the way that museum collecting and exhibiting perpetuated pseudo-scientific evolutionary perspectives about the eventual disappearance and decline of Indigenous peoples. Some of the literature includes the following: Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); John MacKenzie, *Museums and Empire: Natural History, Human Cultures and Colonial Identities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); H. Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage books, 1993).

certitudes.⁹² Questions of ownership (or stewardship), repatriation, rights to display objects, and rights to tell stories about objects are at issue in today's museums located in what is called Canada.⁹³

Art historian Heather Igloliorte (Nunatsiavummiut) has argued that objects can “help us recover suppressed skills and knowledges.”⁹⁴ She states that it is through art and objects that there is “incontrovertible continuity of Indigenous cultures, and our ability to survive and thrive despite centuries of colonization.”⁹⁵ Both Igloliorte and Gwich'in seamstress Karen Wright-Fraser argue that objects can open up decolonizing ways of thinking about one's history and one's present.⁹⁶ An early example of this approach was the *Threads of the Land* exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (now the Canadian Museum of History) in the 1990s.⁹⁷ This exhibition, as a response to the 1991

⁹² Phillips, *Museum Pieces*.

⁹³ In order to engage with colonial structures as they operate in museum spaces and institutional structures, James Clifford used Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the contact zone. According to Pratt, contact zones are “social spaces where disparate cultures, meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” on the colonial frontier. It certainly was not one for those that live in the Americas. Clifford suggests contemporary museums as a contact zone between Indigenous communities whose objects are stored in museums and the museum staff. James Clifford, “Four Northwest Coast Museums: Travel Reflections,” in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 107–45; James Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones,” in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 207–9; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 7, 8.

⁹⁴ Heather Igloliorte, *Decolonize Me/ Decolonizer-Moi* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 2012), 21.

⁹⁵ Igloliorte, *Decolonize Me/ Decolonizer-Moi*, 21.

⁹⁶ Karen Wright-Fraser had the opportunity to view and re-create a historical Gwich'in tunic stored at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. She described it as an emotional experience as she saw for the first time what her ancestors might have worn: it was part of a history she had never learned. The process of recreating the tunic revealed aspects of how her ancestors interacted with their world and suggests how collected objects can be recontextualized to serve the interests and needs of a community. Karen Wright Fraser, “My People Did This: The Re-Making of a Gwich'in Garment,” in *Fascinating Challenges: Studying Material Culture with Dorothy Burnham*, ed. Dorothy K. Burnham et al., Mercury Series 136 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2001), 99.

⁹⁷ *Sanatujut*, the Inuit clothing portion of this exhibition, has been a major resource for this research project. Judy Hall, Leslie Tepper, and Judy Thompson, *Threads of the Land: Clothing Traditions from Three Indigenous Cultures* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994); Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and

National Task Force of Museums and First Nations, serves as an early example of collaborative research and scholarship with Inuit, Dene and Nlaka'pamux. It focused on clothing traditions as a valuable source of historical, artistic and technical knowledge.⁹⁸ Using such a decolonial approach, the museum can serve as a place for a culturally dispossessed person to recover lost skills and learn about her ancestors' material culture. Regardless of the purposes and goals of a historically colonial institution such as a museum or archive, the historical purposes of colonial documents and objects can be subverted for completely different aims.⁹⁹

For much of the twentieth century, and still today in many institutions, Western collections have typically separated art from artifact. As Michael Ames argues, many

Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994); Judy Hall, Judy Thompson, and Leslie Heyman Tepper, eds., *Fascinating Challenges: Studying Material Culture with Dorothy Burnham* (Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2001); Leslie Heyman Tepper, *Earth Line and Morning Star: Nlaka'Pamux Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1995); Judy Thompson and Canadian Museum of Civilization, *From the Land: Two Hundred Years of Dene Clothing* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994).

⁹⁸ The Task Force was the result of the Lubicon Cree boycott of the Spirit Sings Exhibition which was staged in conjunction with the Calgary Winter Olympics. This was a watershed moment for museums in Canada and their relationships with Indigenous communities. Assembly of First Nations and The Canadian Museums Association, "Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples," *Museum Anthropology* 16, no. 2 (June 1992): 12–20; Julia Harrison, ed., *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988); Ruth B. Phillips, "The Moment of Truth: The Spirit Sings as Critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It," in *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 48–70.

⁹⁹ In other circumstances, the presence of objects in museums can be painful and irreconcilable one. Methodist minister George McDougall took a sacred meteorite, *papâmihâw asiniy* from the Cree in 1866. Sandra Semchuk and Elwood Jimmy (Piyesiw-Awasit/Thunderchild First Nation) describe the pain of seeing *papâmihâw asiniy* in the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM) in Edmonton. This object, at the time of their writing, sat in a diorama of buffalo hunters, a situation that was unacceptable for its sacred status. In 2018, the new location of the RAM opened, and *papâmihâw asiniy* is now accessible for free to anyone that wishes to visit. It rests on the second floor of the museum on earth taken from the location that the meteor originally rested. A circular structure with benches all around curve around the stone and is wallpapered with a night scene of the constellations as seen from the stone's original resting place. All of this was done in consultation with many community members, it is not yet a full repatriation, but the stone is far more accessible than it originally was when Semchuk and Jimmy wrote their work. Sandra Semchuk and Elwood Jimmy, "On Loan': Thoughts on Stolen Strength, Seeds of Lubestrok, Seeds of Truth, Seeds of Reconciliation," in *Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Cultural Diversity*, ed. Ashok Mathur et al. (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2011), 53–68.

Indigenous peoples see objects “as beautiful, practical and spiritual all at the same time, and the academic tendency to focus on only some of these values to the exclusion of others diminishes the original holistic or multiplex meaning.”¹⁰⁰ Tradition and authenticity are concepts that have long been mobilized in colonial contexts to exert control and power over Indigenous peoples. These terms are thus a shorthand for a complex series of historically bounded and evolutionist expectations, values and ideas. Increasingly, museums, artists, scholars and curators, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are developing creative responses that challenge these notions and are creating novel relationships with museum pieces and artistic works.¹⁰¹

1.12. INDIGENOUS ART, INDIGENOUS CRAFT: ISSUES AROUND AUTHENTICITY

The modernist Western art historical canon, according to curator Gerald McMaster (Siksika First Nation), cast non-Western artists into “marginal discursive categories of either “not art,” or grudgingly—or admiringly—deemed them to be makers of “primitive art,” “non-Western art,” “ethnic art,” “tribal art,” or “craft.”¹⁰² Understandings of art and craft are not only racialized but also gendered.¹⁰³ Within the binary of art and craft, craft

¹⁰⁰ Michael Ames, “Cultural Empowerment and Museums: Opening up Anthropology through Collaboration,” in *Objects of Knowledge*, ed. Susan M. Pearce (London: Athlone Press, 1990), 159.

¹⁰¹ There are so many examples, but to name a few focused on Inuit and museums: Ann Fienup-Riordan, *Yup'ik Elders at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin: Fieldwork Turned on Its Head* (Seattle: University of Washington Press in association with Calista Elders Council, Bethel, Alaska, 2005); Heather L. Igloliorte, *SakKijâjuk: Art and Craft from Nunatsiavut* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2017); Zacharias Kunuk and Bernadette Dean, *Inuit Piqutingit (What Belongs to Inuit)*, Digital, Documentary, 2006, <https://perma.cc/ZS7N-NQ3T>; “Qaumajuq,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, 2021, <https://perma.cc/522Z-JDG2>.

¹⁰² Gerald McMaster, “Inuit Modern: An Introduction,” in *Inuit Modern: The Samuel and Esther Sarick Collection*, ed. Dorothy Eber, Ingo Hessel, and Gerald McMaster (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2010), 2.

¹⁰³ While Edward Said speaks specifically of the feminization of the East, this dynamic is also apparent in the Americas, where descriptions of indolence and passivity femininize Indigenous men, in contrast to the hyper-masculine Imperial hero. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage books,

has been treated as less capable of embodying the highest forms of knowledge: (fine) art.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, western understandings of authenticity and tradition necessitate that Indigenous work is understood exclusively within the parameters of craft work.¹⁰⁵

This view also requires that the “non-art” of Indigenous peoples maintain its ‘authenticity’ by showing no signs of western influences. As a gendered feminine skill, sewing is an example of how highly skilled work is devalued by presumptions about the capacities of the producers. Although there are good studies examining Inuit skin sewing, few studies seriously consider fabric and machine-sewn parkas as relevant inheritors of this tradition (see Appendix F). Chapter 4 focuses on the changes and continuities in caribou skin parka designs over several centuries. The aim is to demonstrate that caribou skin parkas, like fabric parkas, reflect economic and social changes in the Arviat region. By taking an approach that carefully examines the changes in construction and design, it becomes clear that traditional skin parka design was as mutable as fabric parkas and reflects the responses by Inuit women and men to economic events such as failed caribou

1978), 206; Elizabeth Vibert, *Traders' Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Columbia Plateau, 1807-1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁴ Nineteenth-century romantic primitivists benefitted by defining Indigenous artists as traditional or unmodern. Economic developers pointed to Indigenous peoples’ modernity as justification to seeking control over Indigenous lands and resources. Ruth Phillips challenges the distinction between art and craft demonstrating how objects made in the Great Lakes region and deemed as lowly “tourist” or “souvenir” actually maintain important cultural and spiritual knowledge and serve as creative resistances to government policies of erasure. Ruth B. Phillips, “Why Not Tourist Art?: Significant Silences in Native American Museum Representations,” in *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Post-Colonial Displacements*, ed. Gyan Prakash (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 100; Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast 1700 - 1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998).

¹⁰⁵ The dichotomy of art and craft has less to do with the object itself and far more with what Fred Myers describes as ‘regimes of value,’ which can alter and shift depending on context and time. Fred R. Myers, ed., *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2001), 53–58.

migrations, new living circumstances and sometimes, it seems, simply their interest in new fashions.

Chapters 5 and 6 in this dissertation take the stance that new materials and mediums do not undermine the supposed ‘authenticity’ of the made object. As Igloliorte notes, “‘authenticity’ is a term that has been dredged up and disputed during each new phase of contemporary Inuit art since 1949.”¹⁰⁶ She notes a cruel irony in all of these discussions:¹⁰⁷

Concurrent with the devastating changes sweeping the Arctic, Inuit contemporary art debuted on the global art scene to critical acclaim, supported by the Canadian public, the modern art market and the government. Somewhat ironically, while Inuit culture was being debased, devalued, exploited and eroded in the North by the dominant colonial presence that sought to wholly assimilate Inuit culture into the mainstream, in the mainstream culture these same Inuit values were being celebrated through the enthusiastic purchase of Inuit art in the national and even international art markets.¹⁰⁸

As Inuit artist July Papatsie explains:

It is vital for the international public to understand that we Inuit artists will overcome the old-fashioned perceptions that writers who have never set foot on the tundra have created. ... Inuit art can and will be made in any medium

¹⁰⁶ Heather Igloliorte, “Nunatsiavummi Sananguagusigisimajangit / Nunatsiavut Art History: Continuity, Resilience, and Transformation in Inuit Art” (PhD Diss., Carleton University, 2013), 17.

¹⁰⁷ For example, James Houston’s early marketing of Inuit souvenir art in the 1950s failed because much of the work appeared to be acculturated and untraditional, and therefore failed to read the market’s desire for ‘authentic’ and traditional-looking products. George Swinton and Edmund Carpenter were the leading, though conflicting, voices for this discussion in the 1970s. Carpenter views modernity as a problem, a monolithic threat to “Inuitness,” and therefore deemed contemporary Inuit artistic production as inauthentic due to its medium (soapstone rather than ivory) and purpose (economic rather than spiritual/personal). By contrast, George Swinton argued that because the new artforms remained expressions of “Inuitness,” that they should be considered authentic. Edmund Carpenter et al., *Eskimo Realities* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 192; Richard C. Crandall, *Inuit Art: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005); Heather Igloliorte, “Influence and Instruction: James Houston, Sunnuyuksuk: Eskimo Handicrafts, and the Formative Years of Contemporary Inuit Art” (MA Thesis, Carleton University, 2006), 18–19; McMaster, “Inuit Modern: An Introduction,” 4; George Swinton, *Sculpture of the Eskimo* (Hong Kong: Swinton, 1987).

¹⁰⁸ Heather Igloliorte, “The Inuit of Our Imagination,” in *Inuit Modern: The Samuel and Esther Sarick Collection*, ed. Dorothy Eber, Ingo Hessel, and Gerald McMaster (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2010), 46.

the artist chooses, and Inuit subject matter can and will reflect and celebrate the Inuit way of life that was and that is yet to come. The art created by the imagination of Inuit artists will continue to use the skills passed down to them from many generations before, and as always will adapt to new ideas, methods and tools.¹⁰⁹

Inuktization, or taking outsider materials and imbuing them with Inuit meanings, is evident in the use of materials such as beads, duffel and other fabrics. This process, of contending and creating their own vision of Inuit modernity, is far more compellingly understood as a sign of cultural resilience and adaptability than of acculturation and loss. Inuit artists, along with First Nations and Métis artists, have asserted that the methods and materials they use do not have a bearing on the value of their artistic productions—we don't, for example, expect totem pole carvers to use only mallets and chisels or non-Indigenous painters to grind and make their pigments by hand in some attempt to reach some purer form of art.

1.13. METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is first and foremost about the stories and experiences of Inuit women from Arviat. I use their sewing stories to think about labour and how sewing has historically played and continues to play a part in the mixed economic system of Arviat. In order to tell these stories, I draw on interviews, archival sources and museum objects in relation to how each of these sources is best suited to evoke stories from a particular era. These bodies of evidence have distinct disciplines and literatures attached to them. I discuss material culture studies and some of the issues surrounding Indigenous-made objects in museums in particular. The following sections consider archival research and interviews in more detail.

¹⁰⁹ Barry Ace and July Papatsie, *Transitions: Contemporary Canadian Indian and Inuit Art* (Ottawa: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1997), 4.

1.13.1. Research in the Archives

Archival research is typically at the core of historical analysis. The archive is traditionally conceived as a repository of knowledge. Yet, as Jacques Derrida explains, the archivist does not merely read and classify a document; the archivist *establishes* the record, and in that act, *institutes* the archive.¹¹⁰ The archivist determines what is worth saving and what is not worth saving and, in so doing, makes claims about their objectivity. From the perspective of anticolonial activism, Cameroonian-South African philosopher Achille Mbembe states that archives are:

traditions in which the knowing subject is enclosed in itself and peeks out at a world of objects and produces supposedly objective knowledge of those objects. The knowing subject is thus able, we are told, to know the world without being part of that world and he or she is by all accounts able to produce knowledge that is supposed to be universal and independent of context.¹¹¹

Archives are hegemonic institutions that establish ways of thinking and modes of thought; they position western knowledge as objective in contradistinction to Indigenous Knowledges are situated as contingent, personal, and as this logic follows, lesser.

That the archive is colonial in its purpose does not mean, however, that archives should be eschewed altogether. Walter Benjamin wrote that it is possible to work by “brushing history against the grain,” historians should look for resistant meanings within archival sources. Archival documents are written with specific goals, perspectives, and reasons, but those purposes do not have to dictate the narratives that may be pulled from the document. Scholars can critically engage with archival materials rather than accept

¹¹⁰ Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, “Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression,” *Diacritics* 25, no. 2 (1995): 38.

¹¹¹ Achille Mbembe, “Decolonizing Knowledge and the Question of the Archive” (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Witwatersrand, 2015).

the perspectives they contain as fact or truth.¹¹² I do not accept archival material as authoritative in and of itself. Instead, I look for resistant meanings within archival sources by recognizing that archival documents are written with specific goals, perspectives, and reasons. There are also, however, powerful interpretive possibilities that arise from reading *with* the grain. Ann Laura Stoler argues that reading with the grain allows for understanding how colonial administrations categorize, enumerate and create order out of the unruly and uncertain.¹¹³ It is critical to understand exactly how policies and decisions were made and the impact of those often banal-seeming bureaucratic choices and their impacts on Inuit lives hundreds of kilometres away.

In particular, I want to note my extensive usage of archival photographs, particularly those by missionary Donald Marsh who photographed Ahiarmiut, Paallirmiut and other Inuit extensively in the 1930s and 1940s. This photograph collection has not been used extensively in academic research until this project, though it is a deeply valuable collection. Like archival documents more generally, the intentions behind the creation of a document are not necessarily the same as my intentions in using the image. Using archival documents alongside museum artifacts and oral histories, I gain access to a multiplicity of perspectives and voices that are in tension with each other. I critically examine these fragments in order to find the “interruptions” in the colonial archives. Foucault wrote that “historical interruptions; what we try to examine is *the incision* that it makes, the irreducible – and very often tiny – emergence.”¹¹⁴ These interruptions create

¹¹² Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, 2019, sec. VII.

¹¹³ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 1.

¹¹⁴ Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 31.

discontinuities in the dominant discourses. Depending on the reading, Inuit women’s presence in the colonial archives can interrupt those dominant discourses – or reinforce them – often in the same document.

While I have worked to obtain names for the many Inuit who appear in these photographs, it is not always possible to do so. The importance of including names in photographs cannot be understated.¹¹⁵ When I was unable to find a name, I intentionally note the absence of the names in the image captions. In this way, I seek to bring to the forefront that the erasure of these names represents a loss of knowledge, of personhood, of history. Nevertheless, these images remain useful: they tell us important things about dress, about communities and material culture. I have therefore opted to use those images rather than not use them at all.

Instead of telling a story that represents Inuit as dehumanized, powerless and oppressed, I have chosen to focus on sewing as a form of resistance, survivance and history.¹¹⁶ While taking care not to erase the colonial realities of Inuit, I represent sewing as a point of pride for many Inuit women and as a valued and cherished skill. As a non-Indigenous researcher, I understand that my work must be reciprocal, accountable and respectful.¹¹⁷ Relationality in research means, as Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree),

¹¹⁵ For discussion on naming, archival imagery and Inuit oral history, see: Carol Payne et al., “Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming, an Introduction,” in *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*, eds. Carol Payne et al (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2022).

¹¹⁶ As Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains, “research is not an innocent or distant academic exercise, but an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions.” She has found that non-Indigenous researchers in the academy have often “wielded [research] as an instrument” to legitimize dehumanizing views of Indigenous people. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Second edition (London: Zed Books, 2012), 5, 12.

¹¹⁷ Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Ruth Nicholls, “Research and Indigenous Participation:

explains: “your methodology has to ask different questions: rather than asking about validity or reliability, you are asking how am I fulfilling my role in this relationship? ... This becomes my methodology, an Indigenous methodology, by looking at relational accountability or being accountable to all my relations.”¹¹⁸

1.13.2. Preparing for Research in Arviat

The central demand of many Indigenous philosophers, leaders and scholars is that the researcher share the research and report back in a way that is useful and understandable to the community. By being actively engaged in the Inuit community in Ottawa, I was able to show my commitment to respectful engagement. Before travelling to Arviat, I would “show face,” as Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes it, by working twice a week as a tutor at Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) (2016-2017), the Ottawa-based college for Inuit students.¹¹⁹ During that same year, I also spent one afternoon a week with a few NS students learning how to sew a fabric parka under the tutelage of Martha Kyak of Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), who taught history at the college and runs the fashion and design business, InukChic.¹²⁰ I attended many of the NS events where I spent time with the students and received many ribbings for being Qallunaat with good cheer. In 2017 and again in 2018, I arranged museum visits with NS students to view parkas in the Canadian Museum of History, where I held a workshop on the basics of material culture

Critical Reflexive Methods,” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12, no. 2 (April 2009): 117–26.

¹¹⁸ Shawn Wilson, “What Is Indigenous Research Methodology?,” *Journal of Native Education* 25, no. 2 (2001): 177.

¹¹⁹ Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 15.

¹²⁰ Martha Kyak, “About,” InukChic, accessed January 4, 2020, <https://perma.cc/E4EK-X5N8>.

research. The aim was to raise the students' awareness of their material cultural heritage in national museums and provoke interest in their history through object-based learning.

Academic activities also helped me show face, such as managing the Lost Stories project in Ottawa, where I worked with two Inuit artists to tell the story of the Southway Inn, where many Inuit stayed over the past sixty years. My role was to establish connections with Innuqatigiit (formerly the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre) and Aatuvvamiut (Ottawa-based) Elders and the Inuit artists to ensure the project was meaningful and relevant to the community.¹²¹ From 2017 to 2021, I worked with Carol Payne, Beth Greenhorn and Deborah Kigjugalik Webster (Qamani'tuamiut), editing *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*.¹²² This project records conversations about Inuit memory and explores the Indigenizing potentialities of recovering the names of people by identifying un-named Inuit in archival images. It has kept me in contact with many Inuit and non-Inuit involved in the book project and has continued to involve me in relevant work with Inuit since moving to Edmonton in 2018.

I attempted to receive as much training in community-based research and ethics as possible. This training included a week-long session with the Scottish Training in Anthropological Research consortium in 2013, an Oral History workshop (two days) in 2015 and a week-long training program offered by the Carleton University Institute on the Ethics of Research with Indigenous Peoples (CUIERIP) in 2017. The training was rigorous and intensive, although the CUIERIP training was most relevant to research in

¹²¹ Lisa Gregoire, "Silver Qamutik Honours Inuit Visitors to Old Ottawa Hotel," *Nunatsiaq News*, September 8, 2017, Digital edition, <https://perma.cc/JWG5-UEJ6>; Ronald Rudin et al., "From the North to Ottawa's Southway Inn," *Lost Stories*, 2018, <https://perma.cc/MQ5R-7Q4U>; Christina Williamson, "The Lost Stories Project," *Above&beyond: Canada's Arctic Journal*, 2017, 33.

¹²² Carol Payne et al., eds., *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2022).

southern Canada since the context of research in a northern community is quite different. The Nunavut Research Institute and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) emphasize that researchers need to be accountable to Nunavummiut (People from Nunavut). Their consultation must be genuine in acknowledging local knowledge, crediting knowledge-keepers, compensating appropriately and listening to and adapting to local community concerns. A week after my return from Arviat, ITK published the *National Inuit Strategy on Research*, a document that outlined many of the issues around northern research for which I had been arguing.¹²³ Although that document was released too late to serve as a guide during my fieldwork, I was able to rely on the principles noted above as outlined in the handbook “Negotiating Research Relationships with Inuit Communities,” as well as some advice from Gita Ljubicic (née Laidler), who co-authored the above handbook, as well as Ryan Shackleton of Know History Inc for introductions.¹²⁴

Before travelling to Arviat, I received ethics clearances from the Carleton University Ethics Review Board and the Nunavut Research Institute (See Appendix H). I spent two months, from 15 January to 15 March 2018, in Arviat. The choice to visit the community in the winter was intentional. Summertime is the regular season for academic field researchers to visit the community, and while this may be a convenient time for people working at a university, it is not necessarily the most convenient time for community members. People are often out of town spending time in their cabins on the land in the summer. In winter, most people tend to stay closer to town. Most importantly,

¹²³ Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, “National Inuit Strategy on Research” (Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, March 22, 2018).

¹²⁴ Scot Nickels, Jamal Shirley, and Gita Laidler, “Negotiating Research Relationships with Inuit Communities” (Iqaluit: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Nunavut Research Institute, 2006), 5.

wintertime is the season that women tend to spend more time sewing. I resided in the Nunavut Research Institute's researcher's bunkhouse for the duration of the trip.

1.13.3. Interviews in Arviat

Oral history is a key way of telling stories from the perspective of the subaltern, the oppressed, and the dispossessed, and it is a logical approach for researching with people belonging to oral cultures.¹²⁵ While early twentieth-century anthropologists and explorers produced ethnographies and carried out interviews for colonial purposes or from the concern that Indigenous cultures would inevitably vanish, Inuit today mobilize oral history for decolonizing purposes.¹²⁶ Theorizing about the power of people to tell their own stories and the importance of oral history as a “history from below” illustrates just how compelling oral history is as a source of history-making for Indigenous peoples. Similarly, Inuit researcher and activist filmmaker Alethea Arnaquq-Baril (Iqalummiut) described filmmaking as a natural extension of traditional Inuit storytelling and ways of knowing.¹²⁷ Filming became a component of my interview process.

It was apparent early in the project that I could not do these interviews alone for several reasons. On the most practical level, many of the women I wanted to interview

¹²⁵ Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader*, second edition (New York: Routledge, 2006).

¹²⁶ The major anthropological works of the early twentieth-century include the members of the Canadian Arctic Expedition and the Fifth Thule Expedition as well as the early works of George Comer and Franz Boas. A small selection of contemporary engagements with Inuit oral history and Inuit writing include: Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, *Tunniit: Retracing the Lines of Inuit Tattoos*, Digital, Documentary (Unikkaat Studios, Inc., 2010); Bennett and Rowley, *Uqalurait*; Keavy. Martin, *Stories in a New Skin: Approaches to Inuit Literature* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012); Saullu Nakasuk et al., *Interviewing Elders: Introduction*, ed. J. G. Oosten and Frédéric Laugrand (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999); Payne et al., *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*; Penny. Petrone, *Northern Voices Inuit Writing in English* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); Nancy Wachowich et al., *Saqiyuq Stories from the Lives of Three Inuit Women* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

¹²⁷ “Alethea Arnaquq-Baril,” Arctic Defenders, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://perma.cc/H352-DCLX>.

are unilingual Inuktitut speakers, and, despite having taken several Inuktitut language courses, my beginner's Inuktitut was insufficient. This situation necessitated someone who could translate my questions during the interviews and translate the transcriptions. Having made some contacts with community members before arrival, I attended the Arviat Film Society (AFS) weekly meetings, where I met Eric Anoe, Jr. (Arviaqmiut), co-founder of AFS with Gord Billard. Speaking to Eric one morning over coffee, I told him about how I was uncertain about approaching women in the community because of my limited Inuktitut skills and limited personal connections in the community. Eric and I agreed that I needed to hire someone from the community to assist me in making contacts, arranging interviews and recording the conversations themselves. He suggested that I speak with Sylvia Nuatie Aggark (Arviaqmiut), a regular member of the AFS meetings. She agreed to work as a community research facilitator. She helped arrange interviews, provided both on-the-spot and transcribed translations, and operated the camera during the interviews. Her support made the interview research possible for this project.

I did a total of ten video-recorded interviews with eleven women in the community over two months in Arviat (see Appendix A, for the list of participants). I did no interviews in the first month, instead choosing to attend community events like hockey tournaments, fundraisers, and a dance to get to know people in the community. I also joined a youth sewing training program and, for the last three weeks of my visit, I attended a sewing group held at the Anglican Parish House each morning, where I made a pair of children's kamiks that were donated to raise money for sewing supplies. I met several seamstresses through these community activities and conducted interviews with

several of them. My approach meant that I could build up contacts and relationships before asking for suggestions about whom to approach for interviews.

Nuatie and I interviewed women in a location of their preference, usually their homes using film equipment provided by the AFS. As I was a visitor to the community, not a guest, the most significant contribution that I could provide to the community during my research was financial, and I compensated interviewees at a rate commensurate with their status as sewing experts. For an hour-long interview, I provided each woman with a thank you card and a \$100 gift card to the Northern Store, one of the two grocery stores in the community. With consultation with the AFS, we determined that the best way to thank the community for their support and participation in the study was to give the raw footage to AFS. For those seamstresses who gave permission, the relevant footage was donated to AFS, although some declined. This footage has the potential to be edited and shown on Channel 5, the local TV channel run and operated by AFS. As a further thank you to AFS for their support and equipment, I donated \$500 to cover some of the TV channel's operating costs. After my return, I was commissioned to write an article on Attatsiaq, a Paallirmiut seamstress whose beadwork pieces are in several museums.¹²⁸ I contacted Joy Suluk, Attatsiaq's granddaughter, and obtained her consent to write the article and arranged for my fee to be donated to the community so that I would not benefit financially from a story that is not my own. The cash was donated to the library as per Joy Suluk's request. On a more personal level, one of the most vivid impacts of this part of my research was made clear when Nuatie mentioned

¹²⁸ Christina Williamson, "Attatsiaq," in *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment*, ed. Sarah Milroy (Toronto: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2021), 71–72.

that she enjoyed working on this project because she loved sewing and had never asked many of these Elders about sewing. My research was a way for her to learn about her community's sewing history and spend time with Elders, something she enjoyed doing but did not always have the opportunity to do.

It is worth noting that I integrate the interviews in a manner similar to how I might integrate a university scholar's information. This was intentional. I wanted to treat these experts as experts and so opted to treat their knowledges with the same approach and respect. My hope is that rather than being too subtle that my approach instead undercuts "othering" that might happen if I approached the seamstresses' knowledge differently from that of other experts.

1.13.4. Reflexivity

Ruth Nicholl's work was instrumental in making legible some of the challenges I faced in this project's field research component. Nicholls recommended employing a strategy of multi-layered reflexivity. By thinking about reflexivity on three levels, the researcher manages various positions and understandings of the project and themselves. It aids in recognizing difference while simultaneously resisting essentialist positions.¹²⁹ Self-reflexivity, inter-personal reflexivity and collective reflexivity are necessary for developing a critical reflexive method in colonial contexts.

The first layer, self-reflexivity, requires the researcher to enunciate her power and privilege in the research process and identify the hidden assumptions that underpin the research.¹³⁰ In this project, my position as a white, middle-class woman from an urban

¹²⁹ Nicholls, "Critical Reflexive Methods," 124.

¹³⁰ Nicholls, "Critical Reflexive Methods," 121–22.

centre in southern Canada meant that I had access to resources not available to others in the community. My privileges included easy access to health care, well-maintained housing and a network of institutional and personal supports during field research.¹³¹ Nicholls's second layer is relational-reflexivity, which requires the researcher to evaluate interpersonal encounters and acknowledge her subjectivity. Meeting Eric Anoe, Jr. shaped the way that the project moved forward. Had he suggested that I interview different people, I would have met different seamstresses and would have had very different stories than those I share here. And, without the support, guidance and knowledge of Nuatie, this project simply would not have been possible. The third layer is collective reflexivity, which requires the researcher to ask how the collaboration shaped the research questions: who participated or did not, and how that participation might impact community participants personally.¹³² Having spent the first month getting acquainted with members of the community, I began to ask people who they viewed as skilled, or well-known seamstresses in their community, regardless of their age or sewing style. Nuatie and I approached women from a cross-section of age, heritage and class. I chose to prioritize having a few careful and respectful interviews over doing many

¹³¹ Other aspects, such being a woman living alone at the NRI's research bunkhouse were not as beneficial. I took precautions as I was able to, such as locking my bedroom door at night and keeping my winter gear in my room in case I had to escape through window at night because of a fire, break-in or issue with another researcher in the bunkhouse. My safety was fortunately never compromised either by transient researchers or people in the community. Personal safety was a hushed conversation I had with colleagues and mentors prior to my time in Arviat, but the issue has since become a topic that is discussed more openly. Sexual and physical assaults on female colleagues of mine have occurred frequently. Some of my colleagues have spoken publicly about the psychological trauma from sexual, emotional and physical assaults they survived during fieldwork, others feel safer sharing this in more private circles. Tara Joly, "The Limits of 'Leaning In': Gendered Dynamics of Ethnographic Fieldwork in a Subarctic Extraction Zone" (Conference, International Arctic Science Committee & International Arctic Social Sciences Association, Akureyi, 2020); Luisa T Schneider, "Sexual Violence during Research: How the Unpredictability of Fieldwork and the Right to Risk Collide with Academic Bureaucracy and Expectations," *Critique of Anthropology* 40, no. 2 (June 2020): 173–93.

¹³² Nicholls, "Critical Reflexive Methods," 123.

interviews quickly. We interviewed women recognized as seamstresses in Arviat to ask them about their experiences learning, teaching, selling and sharing their sewing. Specific names continued to come up from community members, and these names were what composed my early list of interview candidates

1.14. ORGANIZATION OF DISSERTATION

In Chapter 2, I describe the history of Inuit women's paid work in the southern Kivalliq. It begins with initial contact with HBC fur traders and continues to track the historical events and women's role in that history. This chapter re-emphasizes the continuing role of sewing in the mixed economy of Arviat as a land-based form of labour, both as a way of earning cash and clothing family members. It focuses on sewing production, particularly in the fur trade period and early settlement period.

Chapter 3 serves as a counterpoint to Chapter 2 by focusing on the unpaid labour of Inuit women, mainly sewing and childcare, and how women transmit their sewing knowledge. The *amauti*, in particular is framed as a materialization of women's sewing knowledge and as a garment that supports the role of Inuit women's work within the family economy. Like many aspects of Arviaqmiut lives, teaching and learning to sew have changed significantly over the twentieth century, and this chapter traces the continuities and discontinuities of learning to sew. This chapter shows that despite the changes in Inuit society caused by settlement, sewing remains a critical skill for Inuit women, both culturally economically relevant.

The second half of this thesis uses methodologies from material culture studies, history and art history to undertake three close case studies of three distinct types of material used in parka-making. Chapter 4 discusses caribou skin parkas beginning in the

eighteenth century, Chapter 5 analyzes the Inuktization of beadwork, especially in the first half of the twentieth century, and Chapter 6 is an intensive analysis of fabric parkas over the twentieth century. Each of these three mediums grounds discussions of Inuit women's collective responses to material and social change. They each highlight a different theme: the case study of caribou skin parkas focuses on change, the beadwork case study focuses on continuity, and the fabric case study focuses on the rich history of innovative approaches to new fabrics. The chapters work together to show Inuit women's engagement with modernity, that is, how the process of Inuktization is historical and ongoing.

Through a careful analysis of caribou skin parkas, Chapter 4 shows that Inuit from the region around Arviat have long encountered and contended with change. This chapter traces changes in parka designs and connects them to economic changes caused by circumstances like failed caribou herd migrations or the growing presence of the HBC and other fur traders in the region. The chapter contends that the changes in parka designs are material embodiments of Inuit women's practical and aesthetic responses to change.

Having established that caribou parka designs were not quite as stable as they initially appear, Chapter 5 argues that Inuit women Inuktized new materials like glass beads and other kinds of decorative trims into local fashions. I connect pre-beadwork ornamentation and fur-piecing to the forms that beadwork takes on women's tuillis, the regional type of amauti worn by women in Kivalliq. I argue that Inuit women creatively integrated new materials into their knowledge systems as they contended with increasing incursions into Inuit autonomy in the later nineteenth century through to the twentieth century.

Chapter 6 discusses the introduction of new materials and fabrics and how Inuit women have innovated parka designs with these new fabrics. I argue in this chapter that changes in materials do not point to a loss of Inuitness but rather show adaptability and resilience despite colonial interventions. This chapter uses material culture analysis to interpret the transition to fabrics in parka-making, from calicos and duffel to today's technical fabrics. This chapter closes with an analysis of yapas – zippered fabric parkas – and the ways young seamstresses, in particular, are connecting to their heritage using modern designs. Inuit women creatively Inukitized fabric as they navigated this new material, especially in the settlement of Arviat during the post-1950 period. The integration of fabric speaks to how Inuit women responded to and engaged with the fur trade and the settlement mixed economy of their community.

Chapter 7, the conclusion, reviews the findings and arguments of the dissertation and re-asserts that a feminist perspective of women's role in a changing mixed-economy can be understood through sewing by Inuit women in Arviat.

1.15 PLATES

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<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Inuuqatigiitsiarniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ ihumagittiarlugin atlat, inuuqatigiitniit munagittiarluginlu inuit respecting others, relationships and caring for people</p>	1
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Tunnganarniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ, ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ, ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ inutiqittiyuq, tunngahuktittipluni ilaupkaiplunilu fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive</p>	2
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Pijitsirniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ, ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ kivgaqtuiyuq hailihimapkaiyuq ilaminun nunalaaminunlu serving and providing for family and/or community</p>	3
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Aajiiqatigiinni:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ, ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᑦᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ ihumaliurutinik talvuuna, uqaqatinikkun tamarmiiqnikkunlu decision making through discussion and consensus</p>	4
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Pilimmakasarniq/Pijariuqsarniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ, pivallialluqniit ayuirhaqniini ayuirhaqnikkun, ukturnikkun hulinikkunlu development of skills through practice, effort and action</p>	5
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Piliriqatigiinni/lkajuqtigiinni:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ- ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ havakatigiikniq atahiqmun hulyumayayumun working together for a common cause</p>	6
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Qanuqtuurniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ atluurutinikkun ihumatulunilu being innovative and resourceful in seeking solutions</p>	7
<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᑦ: Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq:</p>	<p>ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ, ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ ᐃᓴᓴᓄᓯᓯᓯᑦ, ihumagittiarlugu munagittiarlugulu nuna, hugatjat avatilu respect and care for the land, animals and the environment</p>	8



Plate 1.1 Guiding Principles of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. Department of Culture and Heritage, Government of Nunavut.

Chapter 2 : HISTORY OF INUIT WOMEN’S WORK IN SOUTHERN KIVALLIQ

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter traces the economic history of Inuit women who lived in what is known today as the southern Kivalliq region. The aim of this chapter is threefold. First, the chapter provides the historical context of Inuit in the southern Kivalliq, particularly around the work and economy of Inuit women. Second, the chapter challenges the notion that the so-called Inuit “traditional economy” was a purely subsistence economy until the settlement era of the 1950s. Instead, this chapter demonstrates that Inuit engaged in a mixed economy involving commercial trapping and “waged” work for centuries before settlement. Finally, this chapter places a particular emphasis on the labour of women. As shown in the introduction, women’s labour history is often difficult to discern through archival records. Despite the challenges, it is clear that understanding Inuit women’s work, especially sewing, is necessary to understand how the Inuit family functioned as an economic unit. I argue that Inuit women’s sewing must be recognized as an essential part of the land-based economy of Inuit. Well-made clothing was critical to both subsistence and commercial economic activities and sewing remained a significant component of Inuit women’s economic strategy during the settlement economy of the 1950s and up to today.

I establish that Inuit in the region around Arviat engaged in limited trade with sloops – small ships operated by the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) – beginning in 1718. This trade was intermittent at first but became increasingly regular so that, when the sloops stopped trading along the coast in the 1790s, Inuit began to journey to Fort Churchill, a long, overland trek that had to be made by the whole family. When the men

of a family stayed for the summer to seal or whale for the HBC, the women and children lived and worked at the nearby post where they received provisions.

In the 1800s, some of the Inuit who regularly travelled to Churchill for the summer became intermediaries who would make years-long journeys to trade with Inuit living to the northwest, often with their entire family. Intermediaries were trade specialists, and their wives also became specialized in their roles in this area. These southern Inuit intermediaries operated in this manner until the whalers further north undercut their trade. The late nineteenth-century whaling industry further north in the Kivalliq involved Aivilingmiut (from whom many Arviaqmiut are descended). Whalers, like traders, relied heavily on Indigenous labour for provisioning (hunting), commercial labour (whaling) and outfitting (sewing). The new reliance of whalers on Inuit labour also resulted in an increased demand for Inuit women's sewing labour.

Following the First World War, the global price of Arctic fox increased. Some women trapped and processed the furs at home, while others worked directly for the post as fur processors, housekeepers, and cooks. Inuit women were rarely hired independently of their husbands by the post. More often they worked alongside their husbands, who were the ones hired and paid by the fur trade companies. This pattern continued for Inuit who worked for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Department of the Interior (DI), and other colonial institutions which increasingly controlled Inuit lives. Although not always apparent at first glance, women's work became critical to these institutions. With the coercion of many Inuit into the Arviat settlement, Inuit women continued to use sewing skills to support their families, merging their traditional skills and knowledge to face the difficult circumstances of the settlement's wage and welfare

economy. I trace this history chronologically, starting by establishing the identity of the ancestors of the contemporary Arviat population and the Thule preceded them and other Inuit in the circumpolar north.

2.2. THE HISTORIC BANDS OF THE KIVALLIQ REGION

The people of Arviat are descended from a few different Inuit groups. While ethnologists originally tried to categorize Inuit as different ethnic groups, these assignments were not necessarily the same as those used by Inuit, who instead distinguished themselves according to kinship connections and the region in which they lived, rather than by the discrete cultural groupings developed by ethnologists. Inuit use the suffix -miut, which means “people from” – as a flexible way to designate the communities to which they belong. For example, people from Arviat refer to themselves as Arviaqmiut and those from Ottawa are Aatuvvamiut. An individual would use the suffix -miutaq, meaning “person from.”¹ If someone changed communities, however, they would change their -miut designation. So the assignments originally developed by anthropologists in the 1920s need to be understood as helpful, but not absolute.

I use the –miut names wherever possible, but changes in the structures of communities make this more complicated. For instance, the term Kivallirmiut is a neologism sometimes used to replace the name Caribou Eskimo (or Inuit) coined by Knud Rasmussen during the Fifth Thule Expedition in 1922-23.² Caribou Inuit was used to describe Inuit who spoke a dialect that used ‘h’ rather than ‘s,’ and for whom caribou were central to their subsistence economy. Notably, Kivallirmiut is also used today to

¹ Yvon Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts (1920-50): Dans La Perspective de l’Histoire Des Inuit Caribous” (PhD Diss., University of Laval, 1991), 257.

² Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 263.

refer to the Caribou Inuit, as well as being used to describe *any* person living in the modern Kivalliq administrative region. Qallunaat – that is, non-Inuit, Europeans or Euro-Canadians – were not, furthermore, the only people to distinguish Caribou Inuit from other Inuit: Inuinnait (called Copper Inuit by ethnologists) to the west called them Palliq and the Iglulingmiut to the north, referred to them as Agutit.³ Within the historical ethnographic Caribou Inuit group, there are five historical -miut subgroups called: Ahiarmiut, Harvaqtormiut, Hauniqtuormiut, Paallirmiut and Qairnirmiut, whose general territories are shown in Map 1 and Map 2.⁴ All of this is further complicated by the diverse spellings of all of these names.

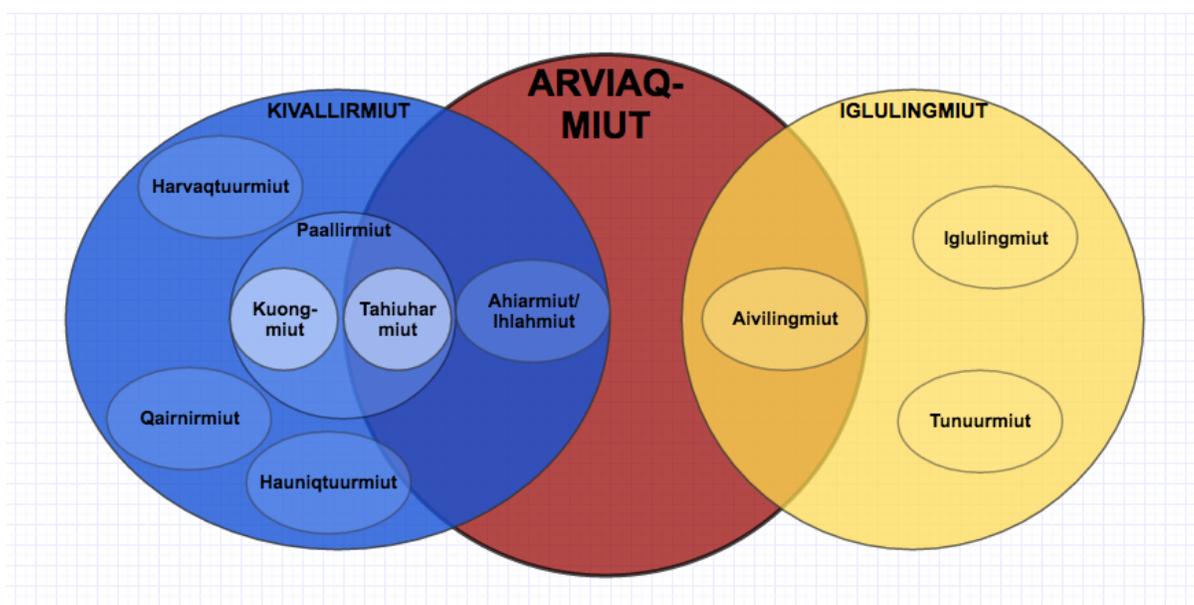


Figure 2.1. A visual representation of the historic Inuit groups and bands whose descendants now reside in Arviat, and their interrelationships

³ Eugene Arima, “Caribou Eskimos,” in *Arctic*, ed. David Damas, vol. 5, Handbook of North American Indian (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 462; Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo*, Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology 6 (Bureau of American Ethnology, 1889), 42–43.

⁴ The naming of people depended on who was doing the naming and is very fluid. For instance, Ahiarmiut literally means “out of the way people” and can refer to anyone who is (relative to themselves) living far inland and away. Concomitantly, inlanders referred to those living on the coast as Tahiuarmiut (or Tariurmiut): people from the sea. Yvon Csonka provides an in depth explanation of who names whom, and how naming conventions were relative. Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 257–86.

Figure 2.1 shows the historical -miut groups whose descendants compose most Inuit living in the modern-day community of Arviat. Most Arviaqmiut are descended from Paallirmiut, whose territory was along the Padlei River; this group was split into two sub-groups, one that lived at the southern outlet of the Hikuliqjuaq (Yathkyed Lake), the Kuungmiut, and a group that lived near Qamaniq (Maguse Lake), the Tahiuarmiut.⁵ The Ahiarmiut (sometimes spelled Ihahlmiut) relied almost exclusively on caribou for the entire year and remained inland, living near Atiqtuniarvit (Ennedai Lake).⁶ The rest of contemporary Arviaqmiut are largely descendants of the Aivilingmiut, the southernmost sub-group of Iglulingmiut who in the late nineteenth century moved farther south to work with American whalers in Hudson Bay.⁷ There are also a small number of Arviaqmiut who come from Baffin Island, or the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, and northern Kivalliq, but the majority are descendants of Paallirmiut, Ahiarmiut and Aivilingmiut.

2.3. THE TUNIT (DORSET) AND THE THULE PEOPLES

The history of human occupation of the Arctic is complicated and some aspects are debated by archaeologists; the broader narrative I offer here is mostly agreed upon, but some finer points are beyond the scope of this introductory chapter.⁸ The earliest people

⁵ Arima, "Caribou Eskimos," 462; Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 136.

⁶ Alan R. Marcus, *Relocating Eden: The Image and Politics of Inuit Exile in the Canadian Arctic* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1995); Frank J. Tester and Peter Keith Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994).

⁷ David Damas, *Arctic*, vol. 5, *Handbook of North American Indian* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 443.

⁸ There was a serious debate in the 1970s and 1980s on the details of Inuit migration and their establishment in the Arctic. A good place to start are the following works, which are ultimately responding to Therkel Mathiassen's original theory. E. S. Burch, "Caribou Eskimo Origins: An Old Problem Reconsidered," *Arctic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (1978): 1–35; Therkel Mathiassen, "The Question of the Origin of Eskimo Culture," *American Anthropologist* 32, no. 4 (December 1930): 591–607; Allen P. McCartney, *Thule Eskimo Culture: An Anthropological Retrospective*, Mercury Series 88 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1979).

to occupy the Arctic territories around the Foxe Basin and Hudson Strait from approximately 500 BCE to 1500 CE, are known to archaeologists as the Dorset. Oral histories of Inuit call the Dorset Tunit.⁹ Modern Inuit are descendants of the Thule people, a group who migrated east from the west coast of Alaska across the Arctic around 1000 CE.¹⁰ The Thule lived alongside the Tunit occasionally living in the same villages and hunting together. According to Inuit oral history, the Tunit were overwhelmed by the Thule's presence and fled east.¹¹ In Kivalliq, the Tunit appear to have ceased to occupy the territory before the Thule migrated southwards. As the Tunit withdrew northwards and away from the region now known as the Kivalliq, Athapaskan-speaking First Nations (ancestors of Dene) followed the caribou migrations as far north as the mouth of the Coppermine River and Aberdeen Lake.¹² The Thule migrated as far south as Churchill between 1200-1300.¹³ The culture and social structures of the Thule altered by the 16th century following the climatic event of the Little Ice Age c. 1400-1600: rather than relying on deep-sea whaling the Thule shifted their harvesting strategy to use smaller, coastal kayaks for sealing.¹⁴ This, among other shifts, resulted in a group of archaeologists defining the Thule as the historic Inuit. Historic Inuit harvesting practices were fully established by the time the Hudson's Bay Company arrived on the shores of the Kivalliq.

⁹ Renée Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550-1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 18.

¹⁰ All dates are Common Era (CE) unless otherwise noted.

¹¹ John Bennett and Susan Diana Mary. Rowley, eds., *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 143–49.

¹² James Vallière Wright, *The Aberdeen Site, Keewatin District, N.W.T.* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972).

¹³ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 72.

¹⁴ Rather than semi-subterranean homes, Inuit used skin tents in the summer and snowhouses in the winter to take advantage of the migratory food resources like caribou, seals and other animals. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 27.

2.4. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SLOOP TRADE, 1717-1790

The HBC presence in the Arctic occurred relatively early in the Company's history.¹⁵

Inuit were generally ambivalent towards trade with the HBC in the early half of the eighteenth century, but specific tools and trade items became desirable as trade became more regular. The place that became Fort Churchill was established on the shores of Hudson Bay (near present-day Churchill, Manitoba) in 1717.¹⁶ Between 1718-1722, the HBC sent sloops north along the west coast of the Hudson Bay to trade with Inuit at their coastal summer camps located at Uqsuriaq (Marble Island), Tikiraqjuaq, Qaglut (Dawson Inlet) and Arviat (called Knapp's Bay by the HBC) until 1790.¹⁷ The Inuit in these camps had minimal interest in trading, in contrast to Inuit elsewhere.¹⁸ These sloop expeditions therefore operated at a loss and thus only sporadically traded until 1760.¹⁹

¹⁵ The Company's 1670 Royal Charter purported to grant it exclusive trading rights to the Hudson Bay Basin, called Rupertsland.

¹⁶ The post was called Fort Prince of Wales in 1717 and later, Churchill Factory. After the French takeover of Fort Churchill and the ensuing English re-takeover of the fort in 1782-3, the HBC abandoned the Fort Prince of Wales citadel and built the Churchill Factory a distance away. To simplify names, I refer to this post/citadel/fort/factory as Fort Churchill or simply Churchill.

¹⁷ Alan Cooke and Clive Holland, *The Exploration of Northern Canada, 500 to 1920: A Chronology* (Toronto: Arctic History Press, 1978), 53–110; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 102–3, 106; J.G.E. Smith and E.S. Burch, "Chipewyan and Inuit in the Central Canadian Subarctic, 1613-1977," *Arctic Anthropology* 16, no. 2 (n.d.): 81.

¹⁸ Unlike in southern Kivalliq, Inuit across the Arctic were typically interested in trading with European explorers and traders. For instance, when Martin Frobisher arrived at South Baffin Island in 1577, he gifted the Inuit there with metal needles and pins which were well-received. Nineteen people boarded Frobisher's ship where they traded seal skin parkas, polar bear pelts and other items for bells, looking-glasses and other smaller items. Trading was typically accompanied with dancing and celebrating. There are several notable exceptions, when kidnappings and attacks by both parties occurred instead. George Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie...* (London: Imprinted by Henry Bynnyman, 1578), 10; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 94.

¹⁹ In 1737, this coastal trade resumed as part of the HBC's renewed interest in finding the Northwest Passage. The company sent a small ship along the coast, trading with people in Tikiraqjuaq. The trading went well, and traders told Inuit that the ship would return the following year. When it returned in 1738, no Inuit were present. The trading continued to be spotty, and the HBC sloops continued to visit intermittently in the following years until 1744. That year was the last sloop trip until 1751. The trips were operated at a loss: the 1744 sloop visited a single tent camp at Arviat traded a single bag of seal oil in exchange for fourteen rings, thirteen knives, four awls, two ice chisels, a scraper and a pound of beads. For a timeline of the sloop expeditions, see Cooke and Holland. Cooke and Holland, *Exploration of Northern Canada*, 53–

In fact, it seems as though Inuit were not regularly camping on the coast when the sloops visited between 1717 and 1759. Their irregular coastal presence suggests that the Inuit did not necessarily need to harvest coastal resources and perhaps only travelled to the coast when the inland resources were lacking. The intermittent contact between Inuit and the HBC aligns with the theory that the economic orientation of Inuit of this region during this period was inland rather than coastal. Inuit continued to prioritize subsistence hunting over trade in the first half of the eighteenth century, so their interactions with HBC traders remained sporadic.²⁰ Inuit might trade if a sloop visited, but they would not make the long journey to Fort Churchill because the time spent on a trade expedition would result in a lost hunting season.²¹

Inuit's wary response to trade was likely partly due to the nature of the brief and inconsistent nature of the sloop trade. Engineer and HBC critic, Joseph Robson blames the HBC for the lack of solid trade relations. He suggested that "for trade, which they [Inuit] are very eager to carry on with our ships, as often as they go by in their passage to the [Hudson] Bay. But our ships give them little encouragement."²² When an annual sloop trade was resurrected in 1760, Inuit's indifferent attitude to trade began to change,

110; K.G. Davies and A.M. Johnson, eds., *Letters from Hudson Bay 1703-40*, 25 (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1965), 253-58; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 94; Matthew D. Walls, "Caribou Inuit Traders of the Kivalliq" (MA Thesis, University of Calgary, 2008), 35.

²⁰ The trade strategy for southern Kivalliq Inuit in the eighteenth century stood in contrast to that of the Chipewyan (ancestors of the Denesuline). Some Denesuline served as year-round provisioners for Fort Churchill. They provided caribou meat, fox and marten pelts and black bear pelts in exchange for powder and shot, cloth, medals and brandy. Inuit's limited contact meant that they prioritized trading for tools and would typically trade seal oil, baleen, caribou skins and occasionally a wolf pelt, for kettles, tin pots, awls and chisels and bayonets. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 108.

²¹ Renée Fossett, "The Keewatin Inuit and Interband Trade and Communications 1717-1900" (MA Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1989), 191-92.

²² Joseph Robson, *An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's-Bay* (London: J. Payne & J. Bouquet et al, 1752), 64.

and as trading relationships solidified, Inuit gained access to guns, tools and beads, which they then traded to Inuit farther north.²³ Though limited to only a small group of Inuit, the eighteenth-century sloop trade suggests that Inuit began to approach trade as a strategy for mitigating difficult hunting years. In years where caribou did not migrate along their usual routes, the sloops offered some security, leading some Inuit to blend subsistence hunting with trade. This blending marked the beginnings of a mixed economy.

2.5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCHILL HOMEGUARD INUIT, 1787-1871
Climatic changes and declining reliability of caribou herds in the 1770s meant that a growing number of Inuit may have begun to approach the HBC as an alternate source of supplies in more difficult times. The 1780s saw the destruction of the Churchill Fort, an epidemic among the Denesuline (called Chipewyan in the historical records), a cooling climate, and poor hunts.²⁴ As a result, the HBC stopped sending sloops in 1790.²⁵ From this time onwards, Inuit had to travel to Churchill if they wished to trade. The difficult decades of the 1780s and 1790s appears to have resulted in a growing number of Inuit participating in seasonal labour at Fort Churchill. At the same time, changes in the

²³ Inuit initially remained ambivalent about trade. In 1753, however, large numbers of Inuit arrived at Arviat, Tikirajuaq, Qaglut and Uqsuriaq. The Inuit were not particularly interested in trading, and attempted to separate the crew several times, some acted aggressively, even attempting to board the sloop. Clearly there was some coordination among the groups, though the reason for this strong shift in response is unknown. The year following, Inuit arrived in smaller numbers and evinced a strong interest in trading once more. In 1755, there was conflict between Inuit and Dene when the sloop ignored the Dene's shoreline volley of gunfire in an attempt to trade. The eighteen Inuit at the Knapp's Bay camp were killed in retaliation. A truce was settled in 1762, and trade continued until 1790. Samuel Hearne suggested the severity of the attack was because of the death of a Denesuline leader attributed to Inuit shamanism.

²⁴ Denesuline is the term used by modern descendants of the people described in historical records in this region as Chipewyan. This is not to be confused with Dene that refers to a larger linguistic group formerly called Athapaskans by anthropologists. Dene (meaning people) includes Denesuline (Chipewyan), Tliche (Dogrib), Deh Ga Got'ine (Slavey), K'asho Got'ine (Hare), T'atsaot'ine (Yellowknives), among other bands.

²⁵ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 110–11; Walls, "Inuit Traders," 41.

economic orientation at Fort Churchill also created a greater demand for Indigenous labour at the post. The HBC began whaling more intensively in the 1770s in an attempt to diversify and commodify animal products beyond fur-bearing animals.²⁶

Whaling and sealing required more labourers than the men who were already engaged at the post, and Inuit from around Arviat and Tikirajuaq (Whale Cove) responded to this new opportunity.²⁷ In 1787, the first recorded Inuit – six men and their wives – came to the Fort to trade, where they worked in the seal fishery at Seal River.²⁸ Four years later, the year after the sloop trade ended, the Fort Churchill post journal notes that three hunters and their families, twenty individuals in all, arrived to trade and seal for the summer.²⁹ Entire Inuit family groups travelled to Fort Churchill and participated in

²⁶ The whaling industry in this part of the Hudson Bay only developed real significance in the 1880s, but small-scale whaling seems to have operated since Fort Churchill opened. According to Samuel Hearne, post servants at Churchill were paid a fee on top of their usual wages to motivate them to whale. Sealing was also a regular activity at the Fort. Samuel Hearne, *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*, ed. Joseph B. Tyrell (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1911), 365; R.R. Reeves and E. Mitchell, "History of Exploitation, Distribution and Stock Identity of White Whales in Western Hudson Bay and Foxe Basin" (Ste. Anne-de-Bellevue: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, 1989), iv–v; D.B. Stewart and W.L. Lockhart, "An Overview of the Hudson Bay Marine Ecosystem," Canadian Technical Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences (Winnipeg: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2005), secs. 14–15.

²⁷ Generally, Inuit avoided whaling because of the poor quality of the whaleboats, unless scarce resources forced their hands. In 1822, nineteen Inuit men arrived at Churchill. They bargained with Chief Factor, Hugh Leslie, to establish the following conditions: they would hunt whales, but stipulated that the HBC would be responsible for hauling the whale from the killing ground to the post. Leslie thought he had managed to convince them to transport the whales by refusing to trade with them until they had killed four whales apiece. Yet, after three days of hunting, the hunters claimed to have used all their harpoon heads and prepared to leave. They only agreed to return to whaling when Leslie agreed to trade their thirty-six white foxes, five blue foxes, ten wolf skins, three wolverine pelts, one muskox robe, 198 caribou skins, eighteen pounds of walrus ivory and one and a half tons of whale blubber. It seems that the women and children were not present at the post during the whaling season. Leslie mentioned that the "whole of the Esquimaux left the House to return to their families." Fossett, *Untroubled*, 121, 155; Hugh Leslie, "Fort Churchill Post Journal 1821-1822," n.d., fol. 28,31-33, B.42/a/147, HBCA.

²⁸ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 111.

²⁹ Note that Fossett and Walls both state that twenty hunters arrived. This is incorrect. The original entry on 9 June states, "Three Esquimaux men and their families (Twenty in [all?]) arrived brought 50 deer skins, 6 Fox skins, and a wolf skin." Over the next month this group brought the blubber of 51 seals and 2 belugas. This concerted trading effort implies some established knowledge of the trading structure as well as the interest of the post in blubber. Inuit did not travel to the post (except boys taken by the sloops over

the seal and whale hunts of May and June, before returning north in August for the caribou migration. Women and children travelled with the hunters as part of a fully functional, self-sustaining economic unit. Wives travelled with their husbands to repair gear and clothing, prepare food, and butcher meat during the long, overland journey to Fort Churchill.

These annual visitors became known at the Post as “Homeguard Esquimaux,” whom I will refer to as Homeguard Inuit.³⁰ Homeguard Inuit maintained their connections to their home territories and kin but their economic practices differed from Inuit who were unaffiliated with Fort Churchill. Homeguard Inuit seem to have approached seal hunting at the mouth of the Churchill River to make ends meet in mediocre years because they could combine subsistence harvesting with short-term labour contracts. The Homeguard Inuit did not come to the post when caribou hunting was excellent or poor. Excellent years meant that they did not need to participate in the Company’s seal hunt because they had enough food and materials from their caribou hunts; during poor years they could not reach the fort because of ill-health resulting from famine or difficult travelling conditions.³¹

2.5.1. Women’s Work at Fur Trade Posts

While the HBC outfitted sealers while they hunted at Seal River on credit, the post provided provisions for the women and children who remained at the post and may have

the winter to serve as linguistic and cultural brokers, who were then returned home) until 1787. William Jefferson, “Churchill Factory Journal 1790-1791” (Hudson Bay Company, n.d.), fols. 16d-19, B.42/a/116, HBCA; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 113; Walls, “Inuit Traders,” 76.

³⁰ Walls, “Inuit Traders,” 56.

³¹ A different group of Inuit men arrived in August or even September came without their families and came only to trade before returning home quickly. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 116-17.

employed the women or purchased the goods they sewed.³² At Fort Churchill, Denesuline, Cree and Métis (called “Half-breeds” at the time) women were also present throughout the year, and those First Nations and Métis women were the primary source of female labour at the post.³³ Female Denesuline Homeguards, along with the Indigenous wives of post employees, would have worked year-round at the post.

It appears, however, that Inuit women likely worked as unwaged labourers who received shelter and board during their brief, seasonal presence at the fort. During much of the nineteenth century, the HBC Tariff Books consistently note “Eskimo Boots” (or kamiks) in their lists of country-made products. Kamiks were valued in inventory at 1 shilling and 6 pence (1/6d) per pair, and after 1863, the boots were valued at 2/6d.³⁴ Kamiks were not an inexpensive item: for example, another country-made product, “tracking shoes” (i.e., moccasins), were valued at only 4d-6d throughout this period.³⁵

Women and children’s status as unwaged labourers was not unique to the Inuit context. While there is little analysis on Inuit women’s work in the early fur trade, scholars such as Brenda Macdougall, Frank Tough and Sherry Farrell Racette have illustrated the vital economic roles played by Métis and First Nations women in the

³² Seal River is roughly 45 km north of Fort Churchill as the bird flies. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 120.

³³ For a good description of the demographics of Churchill in the nineteenth century, see Michael Payne, “Fort Churchill, 1821-1900: An Outpost Community in the Fur Trade,” *Manitoba History* 29 (Autumn 1990), <https://perma.cc/R9DZ-TKDK>.

³⁴ “York Factory Tariff Book, 1824-1832,” 1832, fol. 108,109, B.239/bb/2, HBCA; “York Factory Tariff Book, 1833-1842,” 1842, fol. 109,110d, B.239/bb/3, HBCA; “York Factory Tariff Book, 1843-1852,” 1852, fols. 109–110d, B.239/bb/4, HBCA; “York Factory Tariff Book, 1853-1862,” 1862, fol. 118,120, B.239/bb/5, HBCA; “York Factory Tariff Book, 1863-1872,” 1872, 117,118d, B.239/bb/6, HBCA.

³⁵ The headquarters of the Saskatchewan District was Edmonton, which was an important hub for pemmican production and moccasin-making for the boatmen. Much of this work was done by Métis women. “York Factory Tariff Book,” 1824-1872, B.239/bb/2-6, HBCA.

nineteenth-century fur trade in other locations in the HBC's Northern Department. Their research hints at the possible type of work performed by Inuit women and their children who remained at the post while men sealed. For instance, Tough argues that, in northern Manitoba, Indigenous women played a significant role in the regional economy into the late nineteenth century because "domestic production was essential" to the success of trading posts and fur trade economy more broadly.³⁶ Macdougall explains that throughout the nineteenth century in northern Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba, Métis and First Nations women were involved in tasks ranging from fishing, hauling firewood, gardening, cleaning and interpreting.³⁷ In the southern prairies at Fort Qu'Appelle, Farrell Racette finds that, by the close of the nineteenth century, Indigenous women were routinely contracted for manual labour.³⁸ They shovelled, gardened, fished, swept the yard, cared for sled dogs, sewed tracking shoes and more. Although this work was vital to sustaining trade operations, it was largely unwaged and they were paid in provisions and shelter, not in post credit. Instead, HBC records from the Northern Department Headquarters at York Factory explain that "Indian labour," was to be paid for "at the Establishment and all provisions supplied as rations to those hired for such labor."³⁹

³⁶ Frank J. Tough, *As Their Natural Resources Fail: Native Peoples and the Economic History of Northern Manitoba, 1870-1930* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 19–20.

³⁷ She writes that the "socio-economic activities and ... demands of reciprocal familial commitments" of Métis families in particular connected to the HBC "created a web of interfamily marriages which supported the Company by establishing a chain of connection upon which it could call upon for additional labourers." Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 169.

³⁸ Sherry Farrell Racette, "Nimble Fingers and Strong Backs: First Nations and Métis Women in Fur Trade and Rural Economies," in *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism*, ed. Carol Williams (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 153–54; Isaac Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1913), 213–15.

³⁹ "York Factory Minutes of Council, 1851-1870," n.d., 399, B.239/k/3, HBCA.

2.6. INTER-INUIT TRADE

2.6.1. Churchill Homeguard Intermediaries, 1787-1871

Regardless of the depth of their involvement, Inuit clearly understood the economic system in which the fur trade was operating. Most Inuit involved in the fur trade likely did so in a limited capacity, trading furs only for themselves and possibly on behalf of their family group. Others also included summer sealing or whaling at Fort Churchill as part of their economic strategy. Captain Edward Chappell, who wrote from York Factory in 1814 stated that, “the land to the northward of Churchill Factory in Hudson’s Bay is inhabited by Esquimaux who, contrary to the general customs of this people, employ themselves in hunting [furbearing animals]. They carry their furs annually to Churchill Factory for the purpose of traffic.”⁴⁰ Chappell’s description affirms that the majority of Inuit remained focused on their own subsistence hunting practices rather than operating as trappers for the fur trade.

Certain Homeguard Inuit also operated as intermediaries who made long-distance trading journeys to trade with Inuit living to the north and northwest of Fort Churchill. Master Trader Adam Snodie in 1815 and 1818, described some Inuit who intended to make a several-years-long journey to bring trade goods from Fort Churchill to Inuit groups living as far away as Coronation Gulf and the Melville Peninsula.⁴¹ His tone

⁴⁰ Edward Chappell, *Narrative of a Voyage to Hudson’s Bay in His Majesty’s Ship Rosamund...* (London: Printed for J. Mayman, 1817), 80.

⁴¹ One of the earlier middlemen was a Paallirmiutaq, Ulibbaq, often called William Ullebuk Jr., who was born circa 1830. Ulibbaq worked for the HBC as well as assisted in several expeditions, such as John Rae’s expedition to the Boothia Peninsula in 1852-3. Ullebuk Jr. was paid a £20 salary but earned another £210 from the reward for information on the missing Franklin Expedition. He was also an interpreter and hunter for the HBC between 1855 and 1861. It was after he left the employ of the HBC for the last time in the 1870s that Ullebuk began to make private trade journeys. Matthew Walls cited one journey where Ullebuk left Churchill with a group of Inuit from Marble Island in July 1875. He worked with American whalers for a time before travelling to Igluligarjuuq to trade inland, then journeyed down the Kazan River,

suggests that these kinds of trade expeditions occurred with some regularity.⁴² Those involved in long-distance trade expeditions prove that Inuit understood that strategic engagement with the mercantile fur trade system created opportunities for material gain. These particular Inuit traders were not “trippers,”—that is, traders sent by the Company to trade with distant people—but instead operated independently from the HBC.⁴³ They exchanged trade goods with distant Inuit for their furs, and brought those furs back to Fort Churchill to trade once more. Reports by explorers in the 1820s corroborate Snodie’s description of the inter-Inuit trade. Those reports noted that Iglulingmiut around Naujaat (Repulse Bay) and Iglulik already had trade goods from Fort Churchill, despite never having been there in person.⁴⁴ George Francis Lyon on the Parry Expedition wrote that “our factories in Hudson’s Bay ... have a constant communication with the Noowook people through the intervening tribes,” and the HBC’s “brass kettles, beads and

through Hikolijuaq Lake before returning with a group of Ahiarmiut by qamutik (dog sled) to Churchill in March of 1877. Ullebuk had accrued enough capital that he acquired a schooner in the 1870s, which allowed him to quickly travel along the coast while transporting large quantities of furs and trade goods. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 271; Natasha Lyons et al., “Person, Place, Memory, Thing: How Inuit Elders Are Informing Archaeological Practice in the Canadian North,” *Canadian Journal of Archaeology/Journal Canadien d’Archéologie* 34 (2010): 10; W. Gillies Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos: Hudson Bay 1860-1915* (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1975), 93; Frederick Schwatka, *The Long Arctic Search...*, ed. Edouard A. Stackpole (Mystic, Connecticut: Marine Historical Association, 1965), 26; Walls, “Inuit Traders,” 66.

⁴² See for instance, Adam Snodie, “Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1815-1816,” n.d., fol. 3, B.42/a/142, HBCA; Adam Snodie, “Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1818-1819,” n.d., fol. 2, B.42/a/144, HBCA.

⁴³ The HBC began to employ Inuit trippers around 1910, trippers are Indigenous men specifically outfitted to trade with their own people located most distantly from the posts. In this situation this was around Igluligaarjuk and the Haningayok (Back River). Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 72–75; Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 200.

⁴⁴ Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 139; Fossett, “Interband Trade,” 127–28.

iron...again found a sale amongst the northern tribes.”⁴⁵ These “intervening tribes” included Fort Churchill Homeguard Inuit as well as Denesuline.⁴⁶

The 1850s signalled the beginning of the Homeguard Inuit’s loss of control over the intermediary trade at Fort Churchill. The fur-bearing animals along the Seal River were overexploited and HBC post journals from the period describe the Homeguard’s trade products as pitiful and infrequent, which signals poor caribou hunts as well.⁴⁷ At the same time, whalers had depleted whale stocks in the 1860s around Davis Strait and the northwestern shores of Baffin Island so they shifted their operations to the northwest coast of the Hudson Bay. The growing presence of the whalers around Shugliaq (Southampton Island) and Naujaat undercut the Homeguard’s control over trade goods with Inuit living in northern Kivalliq.⁴⁸ Finally, in 1871, a dysentery outbreak coupled with yet another poor seal hunt meant that thirty Inuit men and an unknown number of women and children who departed from Churchill, died.⁴⁹ All of these factors undermined the Homeguard Inuit’s dominant position as traders in the Churchill hinterland and left an opening for a new group of Inland Inuit to access Fort Churchill’s trade directly.

⁴⁵ George Francis Lyon, *The Private Journal of Captain G.F. Lyon, of H.M.S. Hecla* (London: John Murray, 1824), 175, 346.

⁴⁶ Fossett, “Interband Trade,” 121.

⁴⁷ Walls, “Inuit Traders,” 67.

⁴⁸ The whalers also precipitated a population shift in the region: Netsilingmiut moved east to Naujaat and Ukkusiksalik (Wager Bay) while Aivilingmiut moved southwards to establish themselves in Igluligaarjuk (Chesterfield Inlet) near Qairnirmiut territory. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 176–80.

⁴⁹ About a third of the band survived in a weakened state, ill and with little food. They left Churchill to return home in early August and in December. Postmaster Charles Griffin wrote, “All inland Esquimaux arrived this morning early, no meat, no deer, starving, no ammunition, no nothing These fellows report that our Homeguards are dead but five! Out of 30 odd!” Fossett, *Untroubled*, 180; Charles Griffen, “Fort Churchill Post Journal,” 1871, B.42/a/192, HBCA.

2.6.2 Ahiarmiut Intermediaries, 1858-1925

As the role of the Homeguard Inuit waned around Churchill, a significant shift occurred as a small group of Inland Inuit became trade specialists. In the decades before, the Homeguard Inuit had shored up access to the Churchill trade, and when the Homeguard's hold over the fort weakened, a group of Inuit (probable ancestors of Ahiarmiut) began to travel to Churchill to trade in the winter.⁵⁰ At first, in 1858, the Ahiarmiut Intermediaries acted secretly. They camped behind rocks near the fort, and left quickly: they would trade one day and then leave the following day, as if they were afraid they might be discovered. The stealth strategy of this group suggests that they were attempting to trade directly with the HBC against the desires of another group, most likely the Homeguard Inuit.⁵¹ The Ahiarmiut Inland Homeguards appear to have made long-distance trade journeys to trade with Inuit who did not have access to the burgeoning whaling industry on the coast or to Fort Churchill. Although they traded at Churchill and lived exclusively inland, they traded coastal products such as ivory, sealskin boots and sealskin lines. The trade of coastal products suggests that they were also acting as intermediaries for Inuit who lived along the coast and they were trading those items rather than products that they procured for themselves by hunting.⁵²

⁵⁰ Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 143; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 162.

⁵¹ The implication of this stealth approach is that over the course of fifty years, the Homeguard Inuit had established an exclusive trade with the HBC and were controlling the trade between the HBC and other Inuit. Other observers confirm that Churchill Homeguards did not allow other Inuit direct access to Fort Churchill, instead trade events were held around Hikolijjuak (Yathkyed Lake) and Igluligaarjuk. John Rae, "On the Esquimaux," in *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, vol. IV (London: John Murray, 1865), 139; Fossett, "Interband Trade," 121; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 125; Snodie, "Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1815-1816"; "Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1857-1859," n.d., B.42/a/189a, HBCA; "Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1859-1861," n.d., B.42/a/189b, HBCA; "Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1861-1864," n.d., B.42/a/190, HBCA.

⁵² Walls, "Inuit Traders," 71.

The expanding role of Inuit trade intermediaries meant that Inuit began to have some options outside of the whalers and Fort Churchill starting in the 1880s. Until the Ennedai Lake Post opened in 1906, Inuit could only choose between the trade posts at Churchill and Lac du Brochet. Inuit traders might choose one over the other based on which had the best prices that year, or which products they required. Still, those trips involved travel over great distances, and not all men could leave a camp to trade because some had to stay behind to secure provisions for the camp.⁵³

The relatively well-documented travels of Qiqut, an Ahiarmiut Homeguard trader who regularly traded at Churchill, Lac du Brochet and even Padlei in the early twentieth century, illustrates the well-developed trade networks and routes in the region.⁵⁴ This is further illustrated by Plate 2.1, a map of the inter-Inuit trade networks as determined by Herbert Hall in 1913. The sketch map specifically notes Qiqut's camp location and other trade sites and trails used by Inuit. Qiqut had an enormous, permanent tent located on the east side of Tulemalu Lake on the Harvaqtuuq (Kazan River), where local Ahiarmiut and Denesuline traded during the year.⁵⁵ Qiqut's tent served the same function as an HBC post but allowed Inuit and Denesuline to obtain goods without travelling to Churchill.⁵⁶

⁵³ Oblate missionary Father Gasté, described a meeting between the Inuit and Denesuline who convinced Inuit to trade at Lac du Brochet Post on the shore of Reindeer Lake rather than Churchill. In March 1886, the Post journal in Churchill stated: "Four sleds of Esquimaux came in a few days ago, they brought very good hunts in the way of white foxes, wolves & wolverines, and a few musk ox robes and extra; these Esquimaux were not here last winter, they told me they took their furs to Lac du Brochet last season, they also mentioned that a lot of Churchill Esquimaux were up at that post again this winter with their hunts, they told me that they can get so much for more their furs up there in preference to this post, and if it were not for our large tin kettles, hand dags and carrot tobacco ..." The decision to trade also at Lac du Brochet after 1868 also led to a closer association with Denesuline. Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 213; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 188; "Fort Churchill Post Journal, 1861-1864," fol. 56.

⁵⁴ Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 364; Lyons et al., "Person, Place, Memory, Thing," 15.

⁵⁵ Lyons et al., "Person, Place, Memory, Thing," 15.

⁵⁶ Walls, "Inuit Traders," 72–73.

He would pay others who helped to gather furs in exchange for tobacco and other goods.⁵⁷

The role of Inuit women in relationships with long-distance Ahiarmiut traders is not always discernable, but Qiqut had three wives with clear roles in the camp. Just as Qiqut had specialized in trade, his three wives also had specialist roles in the camp that reflected their status, age and experience. Qiqut's material wealth afforded him the ability to feed and clothe three wives and their children. With his position as a trader, there was more work at camp than there would be for a family that engaged in minimal trapping. The eldest wife was responsible for managing the family camp; her experience and knowledge meant that she was the one to make determinations about meat, skins, procuring fuel, and caring for the dogs. The second wife had children that were old enough to be left at camp while she travelled with Qiqut during his trading trips. She would repair harnesses, untangle dogs, prepare food and repair clothes. Finally, the youngest wife was still essentially "in training;" she was to have children, develop her skills, and learn from the more senior wives.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ According to Revillon Frères employee Thierry Mallet, Qiqut, "relies, of course, on his own hunt, meat and fur, to obtain all the necessities of life. Nevertheless he is a born trader and does not hesitate to journey south to the trees so as to get a small outfit of goods which enables him to collect part of the other Eskimos' white foxes. ... Last summer, for instance, he was the proud possessor of a good-sized wooden trunk, all brass-bound, a phonograph of old vintage but still in good working order, a shotgun, a Mause pistol with two hundred rounds, a new 303 British rifle with a fair amount of ammunition, a fishing net, a secondhand canoe, a few carpenter's tools with nails and screws, a three months' provision of tea and plug tobacco, and last but not least, white men's clothes for summer wear, including a pair of rubber boots." Thierry Mallet, "My Friend Kakoot," in *Glimpses of the Barren Lands* (New York: Revillon Freres, 1930), 85–86.

⁵⁸ According to Thierry Mallet, Qiqut's three wives engaged in a wide range of activities. "His wife number one is about his age [roughly 45] ... she has had several children who are now grown up and have families of their own ... she rules the household with a rod of iron and superintends the storing of the food, the drying of the meat, the tanning of the caribou skins, the manufacturing of garments and boots, and the everlasting search for dry willow twigs for the fire. When the family moves from one place to another she sees that the loads are evenly distributed. Finally, she attends to the dogs. Wife number two is about thirty or thirty-five years of age. Her children still play about the camp, but can look out for themselves. ... her

Qikut's material wealth and trade strategy required more help and support in the camp context, and the three wives, with their distinct roles, show the differentiation of labour needed for this trade context. According to Arviat historian Mark Kalluak, Inuit traders were successful because "they knew exactly what Inuit would want to buy."⁵⁹ Natasha Lyons argues that they "provide ideal examples of IQ [Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit]—they found ways to accommodate and thrive in the new foreign trade economy at the same time as sustaining Inuit family values."⁶⁰

The story of the Ahiarmiut long-distance trader Qaqami, who travelled impressive distances to trade with Inuinnait in the early twentieth century, shows that entire families would often travel together for trade journeys, even if HBC records named only the "camp boss" (lead hunter and trader).⁶¹ For instance, the HBC employed Qaqami to trade with "distant Inuit," mostly Inuinnait and Netsilingmiut of the Arctic Ocean.⁶² We know

sole duty is to accompany Kakoot wherever he goes, either hunting or travelling. Then she tends his camp, repairs his clothes, looks after the dogs, prepares the food, and sets an occasional fox trap. Outside of that, she seems to do nothing but sit on the ground, smoke her own or somebody else's pipe, and spit thoughtfully into the fire. Wife number three is barely twenty. Her sole duty is to bear Kakoot children. ...But she must always look beautiful." Mallet, "My Friend Kakoot," 86–87.

⁵⁹ Mark Kalluak, trans., "What Inuit Can Create from Beads" (Inuit Heritage Trust, 2008), 2, <https://perma.cc/N6XX-CJBR>.

⁶⁰ Lyons et al., "Person, Place, Memory, Thing," 16.

⁶¹ The camp boss appears to be a position that comes out of the early trade and whaling period. This individual was respected by both Inuit and Qallunaat for his political abilities and hunting and trapping abilities. Marc Stevenson explains that he "had to walk a fine line between obligations to his employer and to his ilagitt [kin group]. ...subordinating the interests of either party would have jeopardized his position as he risked losing his followers or his ability to provide for them. As long as the "camp boss" was successful at satisfying the needs and wants of both his kinsmen and the trader, his authority and the camp prospered. While the need to coordinate and organize activities in the whaling industry enhanced the authority and influence of certain individuals, the emergence of the middleman within the context of general trading placed even more control in the hands of prominent Inuit." Marc G. Stevenson, "Traditional Inuit Decision-Making Structures and the Administration of Nunavut," Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Ottawa: Privy Council Office of Canada, 1993), 46.

⁶² The HBC in Churchill provided Qaqami with an advance outfit of \$1475 to trade in 1912, proving that Qaqami was part of an official middleman trade, where Inuit would travel to procure furs to return to the far away post. Diamond Jenness called him Kaksavik and identified him as a "Pallik Eskimo" when they met at Bernard Harbour in December, 1915. Inuinnait also travelled to Ennedai Lake to trade with

that Qaqami travelled with his extended family on his trade excursions because of the tragic starvation of the entire group. In 1925, Qaqami and his band, made up of the extended family, travelled inland to hunt musk-ox to trade. Unfortunately, this group was new to the region and missed the fall caribou migration. They tried to compensate for that loss of a food source through fishing in the winter, but all fifteen starved or froze to death near the Dubawnt Lake.⁶³ Qaqami had traded for many years, and the extreme circumstances of 1925 were not reflective of typical trading years. However, the evidence that Qaqami also travelled with his camp suggests that traders like Qiqut journeyed with their wives; long-distance trading still required both men and women in order to be successful into the early twentieth century.

Traders like Qiqut, Qaqami and other well-known traders (such as Moses and Tattannoeuk) were exceptional individuals.⁶⁴ Most Inuit did not typically mount large-

Ahiarmiut, Yvon Csonka noted that Herbert Hall, during his time in the region wrote of Inuit who “spend nearly the entire winter on the road and I have known of several occasions where they failed to accomplish their journey in one season. The consequence was that the musk ox robes and furs cached under stones for the summer were nearly all destroyed by mice and worms.” Herbert Hall, “Suitable sites for Eskimo trade,” 6 June 1913, HBCA, RG3/20F/1, quoted in Yvon Csonka, “Intermédiaires Au Long Cours: Les Relations Entre Inuit Du Caribou et Inuit Du Cuivre Au Début Du XXe Siècle,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 18, no. 1/2 (1994): 29, 32–34; Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 222; Diamond Jenness, *The Life of the Copper Eskimo*, vol. 12, Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition 1913-1918 (Ottawa: F. A. Ackland, 1922), 49; Knud Rasmussen, *Observations on the Intellectual Culture of the Caribou Eskimos*, vol. 2, 7 (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1930), 7; Walls, “Inuit Traders,” 72. HBCA A.74/77 “District managers’ Annual Reports, Outfit 1914.”

⁶³ Thierry Mallet described the situation: ““Fishing,” was our thought, and at once we knew that our friends were in a bad way. No Eskimo fishes inland through the ice in winter unless he has missed the herd of caribou in the fall and has been unable to stock up with meat and fat until the next spring. “Starving,” was my guide’s cut remark a few minutes later.” D.E. Simons of the Revillon Frères later reported to the Corporal J.J. Molley: “one family in particular, that of native A-A-Ka-Kama [Qaqami]. . . . this man and his family and relatives number 15 all died south of Dubawnt Lake while they were en route in search of Musk-ox, and that he [Simon] passed their igloo and found all inside dead.” Thierry Mallet, “When the Caribou Failed,” in *Glimpses of the Barren Lands* (New York: Revillon Freres, 1930), 127–42; J. J. Molley, “Report on Conditions among Eskimos – Nueltin Lake, Kasba Lake and Ennedai Lake District, N.W.T.,” March 30, 1926, LAC RG85, vol.786 file 5997D, LAC.

⁶⁴ Two other traders or Inuit intermediaries of the nineteenth century were Tattannoeuck and Moses. Susan Rowley, “Tattannoeuck,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto

scale trade expeditions halfway across Inuit Nunangat or operate trading posts from their camps.⁶⁵ However, these biographical glimpses of Inuit traders offer insights into the challenges and possibilities that were available for nineteenth and twentieth century Kivallirmiut. They demonstrate that trade goods were circulating in Inuit Nunangat through Fort Churchill and Lac du Brochet throughout the nineteenth century via Inuit intermediaries whose wives played essential roles in travelling alongside their husbands and managing the camp.

2.7. WHALING IN THE HUDSON BAY

2.7.1. Aivilingmiut and the Whalers

Scottish and American commercial whalers began to spend their winters along the northern coast of Kivalliq near Shugliaq and Naujaat in the 1860s.⁶⁶ Although commercial whaling by Scots and Americans occurred along the coast to the north of Arviat, many descendants of Inuit who were involved in the industry live in Arviat today.⁶⁷ The effects of whaling were far-reaching, making the industry important to

Press, 1987); François Trudel, “Moses: Un Employé Inuit de La Compagnie de La Baie d’Hudson (1822-1853),” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 11, no. 2 (1987): 165–85.

⁶⁵ Csonka argues that only a few Ahiarmiut individuals were heavily involved in the trade, and those individuals held a considerable amount of wealth. Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 363.

⁶⁶ Whalers had virtually exhausted whale stocks in the Davis Strait by the 1830s and therefore sailed deeper into the Hudson Bay to find new stocks. In the 1850s, Scottish whalers began to overwinter in Cumberland Sound. This new whaling strategy, headed by Scottish whalers like William Penny, was only possible because of the provisioning support by Inuit. Following the lead of Scottish whalers, American whalers began to overwinter in the 1860s near Ross Sound between Shugliaq and the west coast of the Hudson Bay. Whalers depleted those waters within a decade, and American ships moved onwards to the Hudson Bay, while the Scottish whalers virtually ceased whaling in the Cumberland Sound in the 1870s. W. Gillies Ross, *Arctic Whalers, Icy Seas: Narratives of the Davis Strait Whale Fishery* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1985); Marc Stevenson, *Inuit, Whalers, and Cultural Persistence: Structure in Cumberland Sound and Central Inuit Social Organization* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), 72–75, 82.

⁶⁷ Whales were an important commodity in the European market. Whale oil was used for lamp-fuel, soap, cosmetics and lubricants. It was also used in the manufacturing of varnish, leather, linoleum and rough cloths such as jute. Baleen, called whalebone at the time, was used for basketry, corset stays, buggy whips, parasol ribs, switches, collar stiffeners and backscratchers.

discuss. Inuit traded with each other across large regions, and so whaling, despite its apparently limited geographical reach, had a broader impact across Kivalliq. Whaling had a significant impact on the seasonal movements of Inuit subsistence economic activities. The arrival of whalers along the Hudson Bay's west coast undercut the position of Inuit intermediaries and altered the nature of men's and women's labour.

Inuit, especially Aivilingmiut, a sub group of coastal Iglulingmiut, whose pre-whaling territory centered around Aivilik and Naujaat, began to establish wintering communities near the Scottish and American ships at Igluligaarjuk (Chesterfield Inlet), Pikiulerk (Depot Island) and Ukkusiksalik Bay (Wager Bay).⁶⁸ These winter villages led to extended interactions between Inuit and whalers as they spent the long winters in close proximity.⁶⁹ Staying on the coast in the fall and winter curtailed access to caribou, but whalers provided a stable food source.⁷⁰ Aivilingmiut saw benefits to working in the whaling industry and, instead of spending the late summer hunting caribou inland, Aivilingmiut went to the coast in August to meet the whalers and stayed with them through the winter.

The impact of that seasonal change was written in the very clothing Aivilingmiut sometimes wore. Qauyaqjuaq (alias Joe Curley, was the son of Nivisanaaq, a prominent seamstress discussed in section 2.7.1) explained:

⁶⁸ Inuit, mostly Aivilingmiut, were later moved or relocated to Shugliaq by whalers after the original Inuit inhabitants, the Sallirmiut, all died from disease brought by whalers a decade earlier. Samuel Robinson, "The Influence of the American Whaling Industry on the Aivilingmiut, 1860-1919" (MA Thesis, McMaster University, 1973); James W. VanStone, "Notes on the Economy and Population Shifts of the Eskimos of Southampton Island" (Northern Research and Coordination Centre, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1960), 2, IV-C-32M, Box 122, Folder 2, Canadian Museum of History Library and Archives.

⁶⁹ This group lived in villages in the early nineteenth century called Akudlik, Aivilik, Igloodik and Nuvuk. Lyon, *Private Journal*, 185, 192, 279, 423.

⁷⁰ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 173.

Sometimes there were starvations, because people couldn't survive if they did not have the caribou clothing that they needed for the winter months. People working for the whalers sometimes had no time to go out and hunt for caribou during the shedding season – the time when you catch the caribou before the coats are too thick. We used to see people walking around in real thick clothing, and it made them quite uncomfortable. Some of them looked very shabby. They used to be short sometimes of warm clothing and also of the caribou hides that used to be needed for mattresses. This happened not really because of the whalers but because the Inuit travelled so much with them. The men did not go out hunting to get the caribou mats and clothing – the mitts and all the garments.⁷¹

Since whaling occupied an increasing amount of the men's time and cut into their own time to hunt, whalers had to provide (limited) provisions to the Inuit families who hunted, whaled or worked on the schooner. By the end of the nineteenth century, whalers would purchase meat to prevent nutritional deficits and skins from the inland Qairnirmiut to provision both themselves and the Aivilingmiut whalers.⁷² The expectation that whalers provision Inuit workers countered the instability of the staple food source (caribou) and perhaps made the starvation periods that Inuit might have otherwise faced less frequent

⁷¹ Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 164–65.

⁷² In the winter of 1903-04, J.D. Moodie, the superintendent of the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP) aboard the *Neptune*, was part of the police force sent to reinforce Canadian sovereignty over the waters of Hudson Bay. In his account, Moodie tried to highlight the inequities put upon Inuit by the whalers and this is certainly an important aspect of the colonial economics of this particular industry. He wrote: "These whalers keep a certain number of men and their families whilst the ship remains up there, merely feeding them, and this consists of one of two ship's biscuits and some weak tea or coffee. Everything killed by these men belongs to the ship, and their meals, with sometimes a few yards of cotton, a pocket knife, some beads or some such trifle is given in exchange. Everything owned by the trader is valued at twenty times the price, and everything owned by the native is cut down in value a hundred fold." Moodie continued by explaining that a rifle worth \$10 in the south, was traded by whalers to Inuit for fifteen musk ox robes, valued at \$50 apiece. A second-hand whaling boat (Peterhead boat) would be sold to an Inuk for seventy-five to one hundred musk ox robes, a value of up to \$500, when the boat itself in its used condition was actually worth \$120 in the south. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 182–83; J.D. Moodie, "Report of Superintendent J.D. Moodie on Service in Hudson Bay, Per SS. Neptune, 1903-04," Canadian Sessional Papers (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1905).

and severe.⁷³ Nutritionally, seal and caribou are vastly superior to the sugar, tea and biscuits the whalers provided.

The whaling economy had mixed consequences for Inuit. The Inuit Churchill Homeguard, whose position was already weak, were undercut by the whalers who provided direct access to trade goods for the Aivilingmiut and Qairnirmiut, who lived in the northern Kivalliq. These Inuit were no longer interested in the trade of expensive, second-hand materials transported from the south by the Churchill Homeguards.⁷⁴ As discussed in the section above, the whalers, disease and poor hunts created the space for the Inland Inuit to take over the role of intermediaries from the Homeguard Inuit.

2.7.2. Women in the Whaling Economy

Aivilingmiut women's economic involvement in the whaling industry both directly and indirectly increased their workload compared to that of their female forebears, though the kinds of work they performed did not differ greatly.⁷⁵ Inuit women's traditional skills were integrated into the industry, especially their sewing skills, which were critical for the success of whalers who spent their winter with their schooners lodged in the sea ice. Men's whaling work included hunting, flensing and processing blubber, and hunting for meat for provisions. An indirect impact of whaling was that men were away from camp for more extended periods, which shifted much of the burden of camp-based work to women, especially childcare.⁷⁶ When Inuit lived in camps, men were active participants

⁷³ Shirley Tagalik, "Whaling Tales," Inuit Contact and Colonization, 2009, <https://perma.cc/2LXZ-QGSS>.

⁷⁴ The distant Inuit Homeguards, such as those living around Tikiraqjuaq, only travelled to Fort Churchill if whalers failed to arrive that season. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 178, 187.

⁷⁵ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 172.

⁷⁶ Fossett, *Untroubled*, 174.

in childrearing, but women were almost exclusively responsible for childcare with the men away for more extended periods.

More directly, the whalers needed warm winter clothing, which they commissioned from Inuit seamstresses. Whalers' sewing commissions significantly increased the quantity of work for women.⁷⁷ The winter of 1903-1904 is useful for discussing the role of women in the whaling industry because of the extensive written and photographic record from two ships: the American whaling schooner *Era* and the Dominion Government Ship *Neptune*.⁷⁸ Clothing the *Era* and *Neptune* crews would have required over three hundred caribou to be caught, skinned, tanned and sewed to outfit the crews.⁷⁹ Plate 2.2 gives a sense of the large-scale work of outfitting the crews, as a woman dries caribou skins with pauktutit (pegs). Plate 2.3 shows the fully outfitted *Era* crew in their parkas, caribou pants and kamiks made by Aivilingmiut women. A description from Charles Francis Hall of interpreter Tookooliktoo in 1864 at Aivilik (one of the Aivilingmiut winter villages) suggests that the processing and sewing of a complete outfit

⁷⁷ Inuit women's sewing skills were critical for clothing the crew over the winter, but their skills were also employed in other ways. A newspaper clipping, for example, depicts Cpt. George Comer sitting with three Inuit women and a man (possibly a whaler from the south), sewing sails. Frederick W. Berchem, *Captain George Comer Aided by Inuit Group, Making Fresh Sails, Hudson Bay, 1919.*, 1919, Ink on paper, 9 x 13 cm, 1919, MP-1984.126.231, McCord Museum, <https://perma.cc/LR7D-LB8K>.

⁷⁸ The DGS *Neptune* was chartered for Canada's first Arctic scientific expedition and the presence of seven North-West Mounted Police signalled this expedition's importance in extending Canadian jurisdiction over the territory. George Comer, *An Arctic Whaling Diary: The Journal of Captain George Comer in Hudson Bay, 1903-1905*, ed. W. Gillies Ross (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984); W. Gillies Ross, "Canadian Sovereignty in the Arctic: The Neptune Expedition of 1903-1904," *Arctic* 29, no. 2 (1976): 87-104.

⁷⁹ The *Era* had a crew of twenty-three men (around 113 caribou would be needed for clothes) and the *Neptune* constituted forty-three more mouths to feed and bodies to clothe (using a further 215 caribou skins). According to Jill Oakes, each caribou skin would take an experienced sewer at least eight hours to prepare, and four or five skins would be necessary for parka, pants, mittens and kamiks. Bennett and Rowley, *Uqahurait*, 322; Jill E. Oakes, "Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production" (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 1988), 160; Ross, "Canadian Sovereignty," 98.

of caribou skin clothes would take an experienced seamstress roughly 65 hours of her time.⁸⁰ Therefore, to outfit both ships would have required the estimated eighteen sewers working roughly 240 hours each to produce the clothing necessary for the crews alone. This does not include the time or labour that was required to clothe their own families.⁸¹ The women were likely paid in trade goods in return for their work, possibly in conjunction with their husbands' work whaling or provision hunting.⁸²

Some of these seamstresses had intimate relationships with whalers demonstrating the prominence of Inuit women in the whaling industry.⁸³ A well-documented example of a long-standing relationship between an Inuk woman and a whaler is that of Nivisanaaq (also known as Shoofly), and George Comer, captain of the *Era*. At this time, Nivisanaaq was married to Comer's friend Tugaak (known as Ben Ell, shown in Plate 2.4).⁸⁴ The

⁸⁰ Interpreter Tookooliktoo, in 1864, spent a month sewing for the Charles Hall Expedition which was sent to find Sir John Franklin in Aivilik. The time spent on extra clothes were described by Hall. Tookooliktoo, "labored for thirty days, fifteen hours out of the twenty-four, during which time, with but little assistances from Ebierbing even in cleaning the skins, she made up, besides bedding, seven complete fur suits..." Charles Francis Hall, *Narrative of the Second Arctic Expedition Made by Charles F. Hall...* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), 100.

⁸¹ Approximately two dozen Aivilingmiut worked for the *Era* while a dozen Qairnirmiut (from the Chesterfield Inlet region) worked for the *Neptune*. Ross, "Canadian Sovereignty," 98.

⁸² While the exact numbers are not available, the *Era* was ready to trade and carried 25 pounds of beads, 731½ yards of calico, 11,000 needles and 74 pairs of scissors. Comer, *Arctic Whaling Diary*, 233–34.

⁸³ There is some debate over the reasons behind the practice of wife sharing. Some argue that it reinforced male friendships and bonds, others point to its ceremonial purposes. Lee Guemple suggested that spouse-exchanges were a method of managing divisions of labour, so for instance, during a trip where a man's wife could not travel with him, another woman might come along instead to sew for him as a short-term "wife." Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, "The Shaman's Share, or Inuit Sexual Communism in the Canadian Central Arctic," trans. Jane Philibert, *Anthropologica* 35, no. 1 (1993): 59–103; D. Lee Guemple, "Men and Women, Husbands and Wives: The Role of Gender in Traditional Inuit Society," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 10, no. 1/2 (1986): 16–21.

⁸⁴ Tugaak and Captain George Comer were, by several accounts, friends, and worked closely together. Comer wrote of Tugaak: "This is the man who pulled me out of the water when I had broken through thin ice and whose timely arrival I owe my life." According to Nivisanaaq's granddaughter, Bernadette Ukpik Patterk recalled, "Ben knew the captain had Nivisnaaq [sic] as a girlfriend, but they were real good friends to each other." Comer, *Arctic Whaling Diary*, 191; Eber, *Whalers*, 115.

arrangement between Tugaak, Nivisanaaq and Comer was not atypical for this period and functioned within the Inuit social structures of spouse exchange.⁸⁵ Nivisanaaq had a great deal of power within her community as well as aboard the *Era*. She controlled the flow of goods in her community and used her knowledge of fabrics to ensure that other Aivilingmiut women received the appropriate goods for their needs.⁸⁶ Nivisanaaq was probably the first Inuk in the area to have owned a sewing machine, and some Inuit knowledge-keepers celebrate Nivisanaaq for her quick adoption of outsider technology.⁸⁷ She used it for sewing trade cloth into skirts which she would trade for beadwork made by other Inuit women.⁸⁸ There are several photographs of one hungauyalik (beaded tuilli) that was made and worn by Nivisanaaq (Plate 2.5 and Plate 2.6). A tuilli is the Kivalliq style of amauti: a parka with a pouch on the back intended to carry a child (see Figure 3.1

⁸⁵ Nivisanaaq's close ties with Comer, which lasted even after Comer ceased whaling in the Arctic, afforded her a position of relative power in her community and on the ship. Fred Calabretta, "At Home with the Inuit: Whaling Captain George Comer's Surprising Life inside the Arctic Circle," *Connecticut Explored* 7, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 28–35.

⁸⁶ Bernadette Dean, the great-great-granddaughter of Nivisanaaq tells a story that helps to understand the position that Nivisanaaq played in her community: "When the ship wintered, Shoofly used to help with the cleaning. At that time, there were bartering services, and Shoofly was in charge - she would organize the trading. There was a young girl - Maani, and she was looking over what Shoofly was handing out - there were materials for dresses and some were very pretty; some were plain but thicker. Maani was given the thick material instead of one of the pretty ones and she didn't like that. She preferred the pretty ones, which were thin. But later she knew that Shoofly had given her the best material - material that would last." Eber, *Whalers*, 118.

⁸⁷ Eber, *Whalers*, 121.

⁸⁸ Eugenie Tautoonie Kablutok, who lived with Nivisanaaq for a short time as a child recalls that Nivisanaaq: "[She] started sewing cloth material for friends and relatives - that's when we started using cloth for clothes. I'm not sure what kind of cloth exactly - I've heard she used to make dresses out of thin cotton. She used to make them on the ship. The captain must have taught her how to make a pattern for dresses, and she started making dresses and skirts. Maybe they had the cloth material on Baffin Island or in the Arctic Quebec region, but people remember that it was Nivisanaaq who started the new clothing up here." It is likely that this beadwork was what ended up on some of the bead-trimmed parkas collected by George Comer for anthropologist Franz Boas. Comer worked with Franz Boas to bring Inuit-made objects of all kinds to the United States, including several hungauyaliks (beaded tuillis). Franz Boas et al., "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the AMNH* 15 (1901): 4–378; Franz Boas et al., "Second Report on the Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *Bulletin of the AMNH* 15 (1907): 371–570; W. Gillies Ross, "George Comer, Franz Boas, and the American Museum of Natural History," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 8, no. 1 (1984): 145–64; Eber, *Whalers*, 121.

and Figure 3.2). In this parka, we see the integration of trade goods through the beadwork, the use of a sewing machine to exchange calico skirts for beaded panels, effectively “crowd-sourcing” the incredibly time-consuming task of beading these amautis, as well as the travels of these Inuit-made works purchased and shipped to the United States and elsewhere. The direct connections between Inuit women, the international whaling economy and their own handiwork, collected for museums and worn by whalers, attests to the global economy in which Inuit women were participating at this time.

By the end of the First World War, whalers had eliminated much of the whale stock in Hudson Bay. The difficulty in finding whales coupled with the precipitous drop in the demand for and price of whale oil due to the broader introduction of electric lighting, meant that whalers withdrew from northern Kivalliq. Their withdrawal had massive implications for the Inuit, who had come to rely on the trade goods, the work and the lifestyle born from this industry. In the twilight of the whaling period, whalers began to focus increasingly on trading goods for furs, walrus ivory and other country products to mitigate poor whaling and low returns.⁸⁹ In stark contrast to the value of whale products, fine fashion fur prices, especially for fox, rose substantially after the First World War. Those high prices spurred the concerted development of fur trade posts in the Kivalliq (and elsewhere in Nunavut) for the first time.

2.8. ARCTIC FOX FUR TRADE AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

⁸⁹ W. Gillies Ross, “Introduction,” in *An Arctic Whaling Diary: The Journal of Captain George Comer in Hudson Bay, 1903-1905*, ed. George Comer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 13.

The increased presence of traders marked the beginning of a century of massive change for Inuit across Inuit Nunangat, particularly concerning sovereignty and control over their affairs.⁹⁰ The interaction between the macroeconomic demand for fox furs after the First World War and the specific circumstances of the Kivallirmiut subsistence economy played a role in the expansion of trading posts into the region. These factors affected the degree to which trading posts were part of most Inuit's economic strategies in the early twentieth century. Prior to the twentieth century, a smaller percentage of Inuit were closely tied to Qallunaat mercantile activities at Fort Churchill or with Scottish and American whalers. More distantly located Inuit were only loosely connected either via Inuit intermediaries or through occasionally trading excursions. In contrast, these twentieth-century changes marked a significant expansion in the scope and scale of Kivallirmiut interactions with the market economy.

The macroeconomic impact on Inuit in the Kivalliq came in the form of the post-war economic boom that led to a sharp increase in the demand for fine furs, especially fox. Higher prices for pelts in the 1920s spurred the HBC and other smaller trading outfits to expand across the Canadian Arctic; Figure 2.2 is a Gantt diagram of the dates during which fur trade posts operated in Kivalliq. The rapid increase in posts that were established in the 1920s is apparent, as is the general instability of the continuity of these posts. The locations of fur trade posts located in Kivalliq and northern Manitoba are shown in Map 3.

⁹⁰ In 1911, the Chesterfield Inlet HBC post was the first post to be established in Kivalliq. For the first ten years of its existence, the post had a minimal impact on Inuit lifeways. Peter J. Usher, "Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories 1870-1970" (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971), 141.

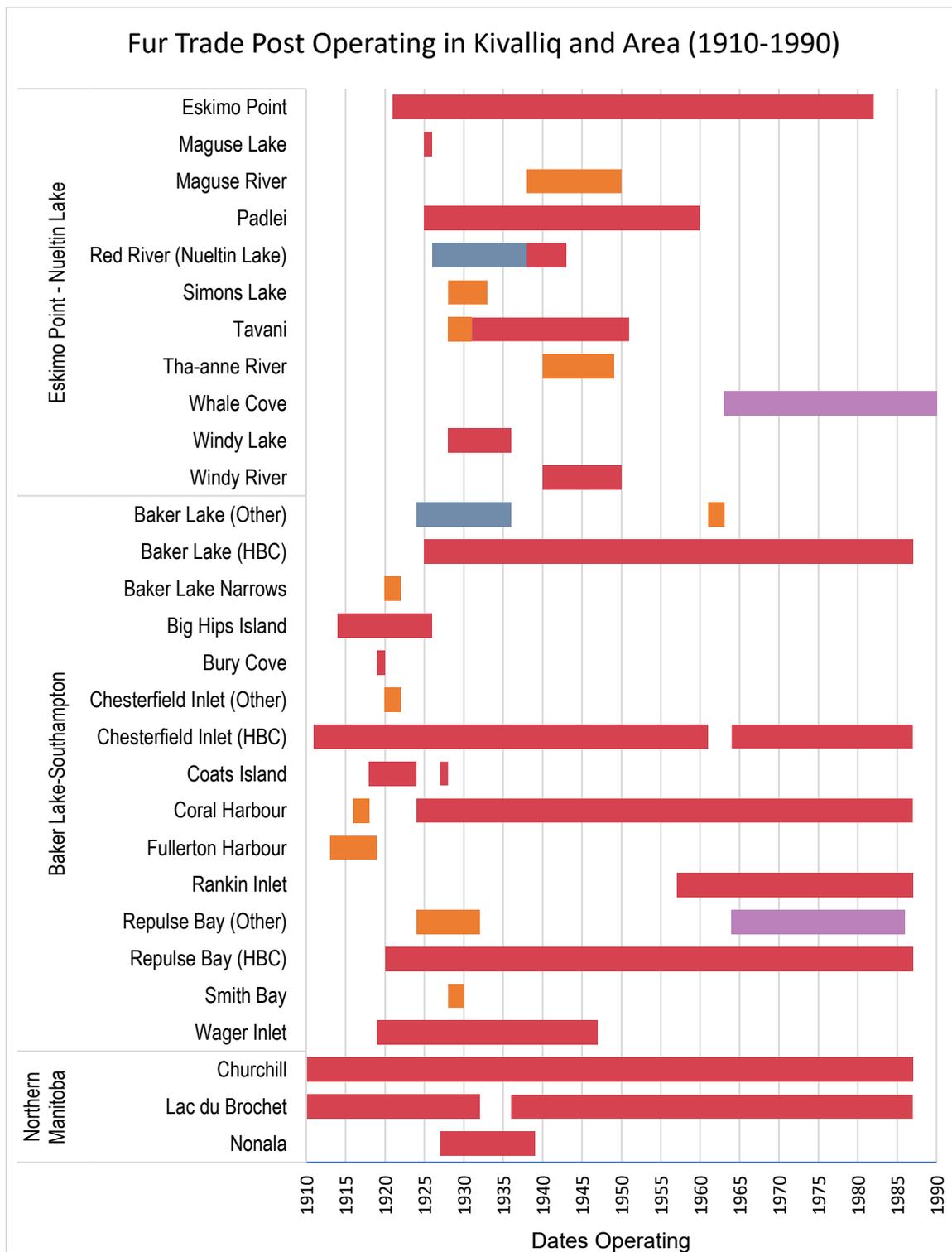


Figure 2.2. Trading Posts Operating around Arviat 1911-1971, based on Peter Usher (1971), Hudson’s Bay Company Archives. Red Bars are posts operated by the HBC, Blue are Revillion Frères, Orange are Independent, and Purple are Co-ops. Note that the names used are the names of the post, not the placename.

The microeconomic impact of the entrenchment of the fur trade industry was at least partly due to the extended famine between 1917-26. During that time, caribou migration paths altered and caused a severe famine and estimates suggest that half of all inland Inuit in the southern Kivalliq died as a result.⁹¹ Trapping was a way to supplement household needs that could not be obtained without the caribou.⁹² Caribou supplied not only meat and fat but also furs for clothes and innumerable other necessities.⁹³ Mary Voisey, daughter of the Padlei post manager Henry Voisey, explained the philosophy that Inuit trappers in the Padlei region (east of Arviat) had towards trapping into the 1950s: “They weren’t like the white people that went out and they wanted so many pelts because, you know, they knew about money. The Inuit didn’t do that. If they needed something, they got two or three pelts and brought them in.”⁹⁴ Even into the 1950s, Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut who lived inland near Padlei were not typically career trappers but instead used trapping to purchase extra goods when desired or needed. Inuit would hunt when the hunting was good, trap when the hunting was bad.

As fox trapping developed in the twentieth century, and fur companies established small trading posts across southern Kivalliq, Inuit patterns of travel changed. The

⁹¹ Csonka calculated that the population of Inuit living exclusively inland expanded demographically and territorially in the nineteenth century and reached its largest numbers at by 1890 at approximately 1375. By 1923, it was about 630. Fossett’s numbers are similar: the pre-famine population she suggests is 1200 people living on the coast south of Igluligarjuuq and inland on the upper Kazan River, to 500 by 1922. Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 178–80; Fossett, *Untroubled*, 192.

⁹² The famine impacted inland Inuit the most intensely because they did not have access to marine resources that coastal Inuit had. Fossett, *Untroubled*, 160, 164, 177, 184, 203.

⁹³ Historically, Inuit would turn to muskox hunting, and as a last resort, fishing, when the caribou failed to migrate along the usual routes. However, in 1917, the Government of Canada banned the hunting of muskox and sale of any by-products of the animal to curb its near-extinction from the area caused by over-hunting due to the high trade value of muskox robes. The overhunting of muskox and the resulting federal ban on hunting the animals had a direct impact on the survival of Inuit during the later famines.

⁹⁴ Mary Voisey, A Narration of Henry Voisey’s Slide Collection of Padlei, Nunavut, interview by Maureen Matthews, transcription, September 27, 2017, Manitoba Museum.

growing number of posts in the region meant that Inuit could travel shorter distances to trade. Men, travelling with a male relative or hunting partner, started to make shorter, more frequent trips to these inland posts in the winter rather than occasional long treks with the entire family to Fort Churchill.⁹⁵ As a result, women may have visited the trade posts less frequently than they had in the nineteenth century, when the choices were restricted to Fort Churchill and Lac du Brochet. The impact of trapping was similar in some ways to the effect of whaling: men were more frequently absent for extended periods. Rather than time spent whaling or hunting for large groups, the men were away from camp to maintain their trap lines or travel to the trading post.

2.8.1. Inuit Women's Work in the Arctic Fox Fur Trade

Feminist historian Joan Sangster explains that historical depictions of women's roles in the fur trade are subsumed by "the reigning anthropological and popular images of patriarchal Inuit culture, with men hunting at the pinnacle of prestige and power."⁹⁶

Despite that mainstream image, Inuit women participated in the fox fur trade as consumers, post servants and even as trappers themselves. Before 1938, fur trade archival records from Arviat contain few details of any kind about Inuit employment at the post.

From the brief mentions of female Inuit post servants that emerge in the records of other

⁹⁵ Some travel accounts from the 1920s note that Ahiarmiut women rarely traveled to posts while groups of two to seven men made brief trips to trade. As might be expected, families from farther afield came less frequently than those whose camps were closer, though those more distant families would most likely come to Arviat once at Christmas and perhaps again in the spring. For a descriptions of trapping and seasonal activities of Inuit in the southern Kivalliq. See Appendix D and see: Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 364; Prentice Gilbert Downes, *Sleeping Island: The Story of One Man's Travels in the Great Barren Lands of the Canadian North* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1943), 212–14; Francis Harper, "Caribou Eskimos of the Upper Kazan River, Keewatin," *Miscellaneous Publications* (Kansas University Museum of Natural History, 1964), 13; Michael Shouldice, "Padlirmiut Ethnoecology," c 1980, 75–77, IV-C-149M, box 382, fol. 2, Canadian Museum of History Library and Archives.

⁹⁶ Joan Sangster, *The Iconic North: Cultural Constructions of Aboriginal Life in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 61.

trading posts in the region (and elsewhere), it is clear that the HBC hired Inuit families to work at the post of Arviat and elsewhere in Kivalliq. If the Inuk male employee was married, his wife likely worked alongside him, although her work was not often mentioned in post records, nor was she directly compensated. These archival fragments, along with oral histories, travel accounts and photographs, provide glimpses of women working in the fur trade in a variety of capacities.

Inuit women and children trapped, though less systematically and intensively than men.⁹⁷ Ahiarmiut Elder, Elizabeth Enowyak, who lived at Atiqtuniarvik (Ennedai Lake) in her youth, remembers that her parents “used to hunt fox and work on the fox skins by drying them up and bringing them over to the trading post” in Padlei.⁹⁸ She recalls trapping some foxes herself, although she preferred to sew rather than trap to support herself and her family after she was relocated to Arviat.⁹⁹ It is not unreasonable to assume that Paallirmiut women took a similar approach to Ahiarmiut women and children and set up and maintained traps outside their camp.

As noted earlier, men would typically make short trips to the trading posts during the year, but Paallirmiut women and families were present for the big trading seasons at Christmas time and in the spring in Arviat. Anglican missionary Donald Marsh described

⁹⁷ Paallirmiut employed two kinds of traplines much like Ahiarmiut. The long trapline-- the *hiniktaniutit*-- would follow eskers and lakeshores for approximately 250 kilometers and men would go to check it with their dogs and their hunting partners. These lines were typically used by men who intensively trapped. The *utirjarniutut* were short traplines of 12-16 km. These would be used at the beginning of the trapping season and could be checked in a day. This information is from Arviaqmiut elders Ututamungnat and Nigjiq quoted in Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts,” 363; Shouldice, “Padlirmiut Ethnoecology,” 75.

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Enowyak, interview by Christina Williamson, video, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 16, 2018.

⁹⁹ Enowyak, interview.

a typical exchange at the Arviat Post in the 1930s, when a hunter came in with his family to make one of the major purchases for the year:

It was the Eskimo father who really did the trading, first for those things that were vitally necessary – tea, cartridges, perhaps a muzzle loader (used as late as the 1930s), some powder and caps for it. Then, having taken care of all the necessities, there would be a certain amount left over to trade, and he might motion to his wife to buy things she wanted. While such things as weapons and tools were essentials and therefore purchased first, the wife's thoughts would run possibly to a vessel for cooking, but most likely to a tartan shawl which perhaps she's been looking at for some time. Sometimes she would pick out all the things she wanted – beads, threads, needles, and the goods that were her heart's desire – only to find that she had spent too much and would have to settle in her mind the things she needed most.¹⁰⁰

Though Marsh, as a missionary, emphasized the role of the patriarch in the family, this quote nonetheless illustrates that women, like men, were consumers. Marsh depicts the wives as if they were frivolous shoppers at Eaton's. Although Marsh implies that purchasing sewing notions and cooking vessels are trifles, the undercurrent of the quote demonstrates that Inuit made consumer choices in partnership with their spouses. As men selected the items they needed for hunting and trapping, women determined the items that they considered essential, such as needles, thread and cooking pots.

2.8.2. Employment of Inuit Women in the Trapping Economy

Women were part of the casual workforce at the trading posts. Scraping and preparing skins was an organized operation that required several women to process pelts for the HBC. While fox and other land-based fur bearers were predominantly collected in the southern Kivalliq, other locations in Nunavut involved women working polar bear skins

¹⁰⁰ Donald B. Marsh, *Echoes from a Frozen Land* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publications, 1987), 103.

and even whale skins on a seasonal basis (Plate 2.7).¹⁰¹ Fur-bearing animals were caught in the winter, when the pelts were thickest and most valuable, and so carcasses were taken from traps frozen solid. Unable to thaw a pelt inside an iglu, Inuit trappers in Kivalliq typically brought entire carcasses or rolled-up raw skins to the HBC posts (see Plate 2.8).¹⁰² The condition of the foxes meant post managers needed to hire Inuit casual labour at certain times of the year to process the skins before they could be shipped south. This work took place at the post where the heat and space needed to do this work were available.¹⁰³ Elder Elizabeth Enowyak recalled that processing of foxes was a particularly unpleasant and noisome and unpleasant task. As she explained: “[when I was] around twenty-five years [old], ... [I had] never worked on fox skins. I don’t like working fox skins. I have never worked on land animals [except] caribou skin.”¹⁰⁴ Donald Marsh explained that foxes “would be thawed by the Eskimo post servant, who would strip off the skins, stretch them on shaped boards, dry the pelts and, at the end of the year, bale

¹⁰¹ A. Dudley “Coplalook” Copland, worked for HBC at Salliq (Coral Harbour) from 1923 to 1939 and described the processing of polar bear pelts by women: “We also had two hundred and twenty-five polar bears to thaw out, clean, stretch and then wash and scrub until all traces of oil and blood had been removed from the hair. This work was supervised by a lively little man named Joannassie. He had an active tongue that never ceased, either praising or castigating the three or four women who worked at cleaning the skins under his direction.” A. Dudley Copland, *Coplalook: Chief Trader, Hudson’s Bay Company, 1923-1939* (Winnipeg: Watson-Dwyer Publicity Ltd., 1985), 45–46.

¹⁰² Mary Voisey, whose parents Henry and Charlotte Voisey managed the post in Padlei in the 1950s explained the state of foxes: “There’s somebody trading a fox ... that’s the way they came in because they didn’t have the facilities in their igloos to skin them and dry them and stuff. They just brought in the carcass.” This method was long-standing, as Bishop Donald Marsh also noted that Inuit brought in whole frozen carcasses to Tavanni, Arviat and Padlei even in the 1930s. Marsh wrote, “When an Eskimo brought in his foxes, the trader would look them over as well as he could, for often they were just frozen carcasses which the Eskimo had found impossible to thaw and were largely just as they had been taken from the fox traps.” Marsh, *Echoes*, 104; Voisey, Slide Collection.

¹⁰³ In contrast to the entire carcasses brought for trade in southern Kivalliq, Inuit of Igluligaarjuk (Chesterfield Inlet) in northern Kivalliq, brought raw rolled-up frozen fox pelts to the post, which meant the furs could not be appraised for quality before being purchased. As Copland explained that: “These fox pelts were usually brought in a rolled-up frozen condition. They had to be purchased at an average price, since we were unable to examine the pelt properly when it was offered for sale.” Copland, *Coplalook*, 22.

¹⁰⁴ Enowyak, interview.

them for shipment outside.”¹⁰⁵ Workers were also hired to unload and transport the annual supplies from ships (for the coastal posts), and later, from the supply plane (Plate 2.9). This intense work of likely a few days, likely involved payment through “gifts” rather than credit at the post.

The employment of Inuit post servants by the HBC was a family affair. A well-documented case occurred northwest of Arviat at the Padlei post in the 1940s and 1950s. The Padlei Post Manager, Henry Voisey employed a family in Padlei to work at “carrying water, cutting firewood, drying fur, and to go to Eskimo Point for mail and supplies if the need arises.”¹⁰⁶ Voisey listed the names and dates of birth of the family members for several years, providing some information about the families who worked at Padlei (Table 2.1) and one of the more regularly hired families (pictured in Plate 2.10). Henry Voisey’s daughter, Mary, recalled the kind of work performed by the post family:

Mary Voisey: Yeah, he’d be out cutting wood, bringing in wood, going down and chopping, you know, a hole in the ice and getting water, drinking water; anything that was needed.

Christina Williamson: What would his wife be doing for the Post, if anything?

Mary Voisey: Oh, they used to scrape. People brought in foxes or whatever, and she used to thaw them out and then she’d skin them, scrape them, dry them.

The tasks performed by the female post servant included scraping pelts, collecting wood, fishing, sewing and hosting visitors on top of her regular tasks caring for her children and housekeeping.¹⁰⁷ The Padlei annual reports do not describe the wages paid to the Inuit

¹⁰⁵ Marsh, *Echoes*, 104; Copland, *Coplalook*, 22.

¹⁰⁶ Henry Voisey, “Central Arctic District Reports for Padley,” June 30, 1953, RG3/75A/2, HBCA.

¹⁰⁷ Voisey, Slide Collection.

families, but they were provided accommodation in the post servant house and were likely compensated through a combination of wages, discounts and rations.

Table 2.1 Families Employed at Padlei Post 1951-1957¹⁰⁸

Year Employed	Names	Date of Birth	Sex
1953	Karyook (Father)	1923	Male
	Kinuk (Mother)	1915	Female
	Kilukiguak (Daughter)	1940	Female
	Keepseeyuk (Son)	1946	Male
1954	Karyook (Father)	1923	Male
	Kinuk (Mother)	1915	Female
	Kilukiguak (Daughter)	1940	Female
	Keepseeyuk (Son)	1946	Male
1955	Harpik (Father)	1929	Male
	Kabloo (Mother)	1933	Female
	Otook (Sister of Harpik)	1939	Female
	Keegoutitook (Daughter)	1952	Female
	Akjaroot (Son)	1954	Male
1957	Karyook (Father)	1923	Male
	Kinuk (Mother)	1915	Female
	Kilukiguak (Daughter)	1940	Female
	Keepseeyuk (Son)	1946	Male
	Igloopalik (Daughter)	1965	Female

The post records from Salliq (Coral Harbour) indicated how Inuit families were paid for their work at the HBC in this period. In the late 1930s, the HBC hired Audlanaaq, one of Nivisanaaq's sons (he is pictured in Plate 2.3, as a boy) in part because of his sway over Aivilingmiut living at Salliq.¹⁰⁹ Audlanaaq was paid \$40.00 a month in

¹⁰⁸ All information for table pulled from Henry Voisey, "Central Arctic District Reports for Padley (1951-1957)," n.d., RG3/75A/2, HBCA.

¹⁰⁹ Post manager Edwards Maurice wrote that Audlanaaq, "is a good and conscientious worker and does as he is told, no use is made of him as an interpreter or in dealings with the natives, it is more satisfactory to deal with all natives personally. The other aspect of his usefulness, that of holding the aivilik natives here has lost much of its importance; deaths and desertions having narrowed the limits of his influence to a bare four families, if he did decide to leave the island and these men went with him it would be a severe blow to the Post." Edward Beauclerk Maurice, "Ungava District Annual Report: Southampton Island (1938-39)," June 27, 1939, 5, RG3/26B/27, HBCA.

wages and received weekly rations (Table 2.2). His total earnings were between \$730 and \$785 a year.¹¹⁰ Additionally, Audlanaaq received a discount on his purchases, paying only a 25% markup on the landed cost of goods - when the standard rate was a 50% markup at the post.¹¹¹ While his wife, Mary, was not described as working for the post, she probably was involved with the post in some capacity.

Table 2.2 John Ell's Weekly Rations, 1939-40¹¹²

Item	Quantity	Price
Flour	20 lbs	1.52
Baking Powder	1 lb	0.21
Biscuits	8 lbs	1.20
Tea	1 lb	0.60
Sugar	4 lbs	0.48
Molasses	1 [tin?]	0.42
Lard	2 lbs	0.48
Rolled Oats	2 lbs	0.20
Butter	1 lb	0.44

Mary Voisey also recalled how hard her mother, Charlotte Voisey, worked as the wife of the post manager. Charlotte was of mixed Nunatsiavummiut and Qallunaat descent, and the Voisey and Ford families of Labrador were brought to Nunavut by the HBC, where they married into Inuit families. Mary recalled how her mother, “actually cut down trees. ... She worked just like a man, and she was only about five foot.”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ This is roughly \$13,500.00 in today's dollars. “Inflation Calculator,” Bank of Canada, n.d., <https://perma.cc/T7C7-B3R2>.

¹¹¹ The 1939-40 annual report explained that the higher ration value for that year was due to the increased cost of the rations rather than an increase in the quantity of rations received. Edward Beauclerk Maurice, “Ungava District Annual Report: Southampton Island (1939-40),” June 12, 1940, 3-4, RG3/26B/27, HBCA.

¹¹² His rations were the annual equivalent of \$249.04 for in 1938-39, \$286.47 in 1939-40 and \$307.35 in 1940-41 Maurice, “Ungava District Annual Report: Southampton Island (1938-39),” 2; Maurice, “Ungava District Annual Report: Southampton Island (1939-40),” 3; P. Dalrymple, “Ungava District Annual Report: Southampton Island, 1940-41,” June 17, 1941, 3, RG3/26B/40, HBCA.

¹¹³ Voisey, Slide Collection.

Preparing the wood that they used to heat their home was a long process. It had to be chopped, cured, then hauled, often with the help of a dog team. Wood was used instead of coal because “it was too expensive to bring in coal and Padlei had the tamarack and the jack pine,” though the forests around Padlei were somewhat depleted by the 1950s.¹¹⁴ Charlotte also grew radishes in a small garden, fished, and was a highly accomplished seamstress and beader. Yet, the HBC did not pay her for this vital work; the HBC viewed her work as the domestic labour of a wife and not an HBC servant, though it is clear from commentators like photographer Richard Harrington that she was critical to the trading post’s success.¹¹⁵

2.9. SELLING COUNTRY PRODUCTS AT THE POST

Indigenous women’s work provisioning and supporting trading posts was widespread and key to the maintenance of the fur trade economy for centuries. In contrast to the elaborate and extensive self-provisioning networks seen in the nineteenth century south of the treeline, twentieth-century arctic fur trade posts did not need the same kind of support system. However, the fur trade still relied on Inuit hunters for dog feed, meat and women’s country products to supplement the food and other provisions transported from the south.¹¹⁶ Women’s sewing, in the form of kamiks and processed skins like caribou,

¹¹⁴ Mary Voisey explained, “In the summer you pile the wood [standing on end in a large pile to cure] and in the winter you come and get it.” Voisey, Slide Collection.

¹¹⁵ Richard Harrington, “Padlei Trip: January - April 1950” (Typed Diary, Toronto, c 1950), MG 31-C5, LAC.

¹¹⁶ In nineteenth-century prairie posts, First Nations and Métis women were involved in commercial pemmican production which was transported to boreal posts. In the parkland and boreal regions, women processed pelts and produced vast numbers of “tracking shoes,” that is the moccasins worn by men in the boat brigades. The HBC’s Minutes of Council regularly requisitioned thousands of pairs of tracking shoes from the Saskatchewan District. Sherry Farrell Racette noted the contradictory nature of women’s role in provisioning at fur trade posts, “wherein women were simultaneously viewed as integral to daily economic life, and as a burden on company provisions, much of which their own labor provided.” See Chapter 1 for more discussion about women in the fur trade, see George Colpitts, *Pemmican Empire: Food, Trade, and*

was purchased at the fur trade post despite not being a major component of fur trade commerce (such as fox and musk-ox).

Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut women produced country products such as seal lines for dog traces, caribou skin clothing, and seal or caribou kamiks. For instance, the 1939 post journal from Eskimo Point notes that on 9 February 1939, “Native Nowya from Tavane came in today DAW bought deerskin couletuk [qullitaaq] from him.”¹¹⁷ Surprisingly, Donald Marsh mentioned that most country products sold to the trading post in the 1930s and 1940s were purchased by other Inuit rather than HBC employees or other visitors:

There were times when the Eskimos had very little food and faced temporary hunger and hardship. There would be certain things in their possession that were of value and could be sold to others who wished to buy them. Sinew, shoes, skins, and various objects made by the Eskimo would be sold in the store, and the trader would allow the owner an amount in trade for the value of the objects. The store, however, never made a profit when these items were sold back to an Eskimo who needed them ... the trader served the community when there was need and helped in situations that could have been quite hard on the Eskimo people.¹¹⁸

As the country products stayed at the post and were consumed either by post employees or traded back to Inuit, the prices were low relative to the values of furs that the HBC transported south.

Despite the evidence of women’s work at these sites, it is often unclear how it was valued. A two-page document from the Nonala (sometimes spelled Nunalla) post, a small trading outpost located halfway between Arviat and Churchill which was frequented by

the Last Bison Hunts in the North American Plains, 1780-1882 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing for a Living: The Commodification of Métis Women’s Artistic Production,” in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada’s Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 151; “York Factory Minutes of Council, 1832-1851,” n.d., fols. 321, 352, 404, 417, 457, B.239/k/2, HBCA.

¹¹⁷ “Eskimo Point Post Journal 1939,” 1939, fol. 51, B408/a/3, HBCA.

¹¹⁸ Marsh, *Echoes*, 107.

Inuit in northern Manitoba, provides useful comparative information. Table 2.3 lists the prices paid in 1929 for country products at Nonala. However, the list alone does not tell the whole story because, at this time, Inuit trappers received credit for trade goods, not cash. For accounting purposes, the HBC used dollar amounts to manage the credit paid to Inuit hunters and trappers. The cashless context renders an accurate comparison of value difficult, but not impossible. It is more useful to compare trade goods with furs rather than cash, though I will include cash values as well.

Table 2.3 Country Produce Tariff, Outfit 260, 1929, by Hugh Conn¹¹⁹

Item		Price
Boots	Sealskin	\$2 ⁰⁰ to \$3 ⁵⁰
Line	Sealskin	40¢ per lb.
Skins	Seal scraped	
“	“ Square Flipper	\$1 ⁰⁰ ea.
“	“ Small	\$3 ⁰⁰ ea.
“	“ Med.	\$4 ⁰⁰ ea.
“	“ Large	\$5 ⁰⁰ ea.
“	Deer Summer	\$3 ⁰⁰ “
“	“ Fall	\$2 ⁵⁰ “
Deer	Meat	\$5 ⁰⁰ per carcass
Dog Feed	Seal	\$2 ⁵⁰ to \$3 ⁰⁰
	White Whale	\$10 ⁰⁰ to \$12 ⁰⁰
Hares		\$1 ⁵⁰
Sinews		25¢ ea.
Deer Skin boots		\$12 ⁰⁰ to \$15 ⁰⁰

To circumvent these challenges, Table 2.4 places the prices that the HBC paid for furs and country produce into a context that allows us to understand those prices comparatively. A pair of sealskin boots, which took days to make, was valued between \$2 – 3, the equivalent in value to three top-quality ermine furs or two boxes of bullets at

¹¹⁹ Hugh Conn, “Nonala Sundry Correspondence,” 1930 1929, H2-133-4-7, HBCA.

Nonala in that year.¹²⁰ This is roughly \$31 – 45 in modern cash, which is enough to buy about one box of similar ammunition today.¹²¹ “Deer skin” boots (caribou kamiks) were valued at the post at \$12 – 15, the same value as a wolverine or a large mink pelt. Those kamiks in today’s currency would be valued at \$185 – 232, but a hand-sewn pair of skin kamiks sells for at least \$800 in 2021.¹²²

Table 2.4 Fox Purchasing Tariff Outfit 260, 1929, by Hugh Conn¹²³

Animal	Detail	Price
Bear	White*	\$25 ⁰⁰
Ermine	Large	1 ⁰⁰
	Medium	75¢
	Small	50¢
Fox	White	35 ⁰⁰ Downwards
	Blue	70 ⁰⁰ [?] do do
Marten	Pale	20 ⁰⁰
	Brown	25 ⁰⁰
	Extra Dark	30 ⁰⁰ Very rare
Mink	Large	15 ⁰⁰
	Med.	10 ⁰⁰
	Small	8 ⁰⁰
Otter	Large	30 ⁰⁰
	Med.	25 ⁰⁰
	Small	20 ⁰⁰
Wolverine		15 ⁰⁰
Fox Red	Best	20 ⁰⁰
Fox Cross	Dark	50 ⁰⁰
	Med and Pale	40 ⁰⁰ Downwards
Above price to be paid for good quality skins only, all others to be graded, and lower prices paid for them according to value		
Wolf		15 ⁰⁰ best pelts only.**

¹²⁰ A circular letter from the HBC also details that .303 Savage Cartridges should be sold at \$1.25 a box, and #6 glover needles should be priced at 11¢ a packet. “HBC Circular Letter: Merchandise Stocks,” August 19, 1929, H2-133-4-7, HB2015/005, HBCA.

¹²¹ .303 Savage cartridges are a connoisseur item worth quite a lot of money today, but from my limited understanding, they are ballistically comparable to .30-30 Winchester bullets, which cost roughly \$28 – 35 for twenty bullets. “Inflation Calculator”; “Ammo Finder,” Online Retailer, Cabela’s, August 18, 2021, <https://perma.cc/3V6E-WEKD>.

¹²² “Inflation Calculator.”

¹²³ Conn, “Nonala Sundry Correspondence.”

Inuit women had no place to sell their work other than at the fur trade post, and this effective monopoly created an imbalance in the power dynamic. It meant that women did not bargain over the price, even when they felt it was too low. Several Arviat Elders with whom I conducted interviews, believed that their sewing products were undervalued when it was sold to the post. Ahiarmiut Elder Elizabeth Enowyak described her disappointment with the sale of her sewing to posts, noting that she was never compensated fairly for the level of work that went into the products that she sold:

Christina Williamson: Did any of the traders ever buy things you made like kamiks, pualuks (mittens)?

Elizabeth Enowyak: They used to buy what they thought was beautiful. Yes, what I sewed was sold.

Christina Williamson: Did you see other women selling their homemade products to the post guys?

Elizabeth Enowyak: Yes, I noticed - white people also went by dog team and pictures/wall hangings, very small kamikpaks [kamik liners, socks].

Christina Williamson: What kind of things would you get in return for a pair of kamiks?

Elizabeth Enowyak: Food, socks.

Christina Williamson: Did you think they were fair trades?

Elizabeth Enowyak: Some sewings were, anyhow, and the carefully done ones were sold or traded. I used to sew little dolls, Adults and children dolls. The ones with a face from an antler or a rock were the expensive ones.

Christina Williamson: Did you think they were fair trades?

Elizabeth Enowyak: When they were sewn carefully or when they were nice. Some sold for \$50, \$100 and \$200

Christina Williamson: How did that make you feel?

Elizabeth Enowyak: I used to think it was too cheap because sewing is a lot of work and tiring, but I didn't say anything that time.¹²⁴

Enowyak did not bargain with the prices offered for her work even when she felt that her work was undervalued at the time.

David Serkoak, an Aharmiutaq who was relocated as a child, explains one possible reason why Inuit were reticent about bargaining over the price of something they made to sell:

I remember when I was in my early teens in Whale Cove that the new craze for carving stone hit most of the men. There was enough soapstone for everybody to practice their new skills. ... Nobody complained about the prices they were receiving, because getting a few extra dollars to buy groceries was the main thing. Most of the families were relying on hand-outs or welfare.¹²⁵

Serkoak suggests that the reticence was mainly about the imbalance of power: a 'beggars cannot be choosers' attitude. In these circumstances, it seems that Inuit felt unable to demand better compensation for their work.

With respect to this issue, an important concept to consider is *ilira*, which is a feeling of being intimidated. Someone who is *ilirnaqtuq* inspires "great fear or awe," according to Inuk politician and activist, Rosemarie Kuptana¹²⁶ Hugh Brody explained that *ilira* might be caused by "ghosts, domineering and unkind fathers, people who are strong, but unreasonable, whites from the south," because all of these entities "make you

¹²⁴ Enowyak, interview.

¹²⁵ Mark Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone: A History of Arts & Crafts Production in Arviat" (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1993), 9.

¹²⁶ Rosemarie Kuptana, "Ilira, or Why It Was Unthinkable for Inuit to Challenge Qallunaat Authority," *Inuit Art Quarterly*, Fall 1993, 7; Mariano Aupilaarjuk et al., *Interviewing Inuit Elders: Perspectives on Traditional Law*, ed. Jarich Oosten, Frédéric Laugrand, and Wim Rasing (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999), 226.

feel vulnerable, and to which you *are* vulnerable.”¹²⁷ Kuptana, Brody and others all maintain that experiencing *ilira* meant that Inuit felt powerless to resist the actions of the Canadian government.¹²⁸ While often framed in terms of psychological or behavioural responses of Inuit to *ilira*, this is also a fundamentally a material question: Qallunaat could restrict Inuit’s access to goods like flour, tea, cloth and kerosene. Enowyak’s feeling of *ilira* had an economic implication, where her feelings of vulnerability constrained her from speaking out against unjust offers for her work. Some cash was better than no cash.

While the stories above suggest that sewing was a method of obtaining income, the power imbalance is even more clearly seen in another example, a situation where Aivilingmiut Elder, Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak (the widow of Special Constable Joe Karetak) was, as a young girl, forced to sell her work when she did not wish to do so. In our interview, Akpaliapik, told this story about a pair of kamiks she sold to an unknown Qallunaaq visitor on at Shugliaq when she was a child:

Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak: When I was twelve, I first sewed kamiks and finished them, and I made them for myself at the age of twelve.

Christina Williamson: Did they turned out well?

¹²⁷ Hugh Brody, paraphrasing Anaviapik of Mittimatalik, explained, “when southerners told Inuit to do things that were against Inuit tradition, or related to the things that Qallunaat wanted from the North, the Inuit felt that they had to say yes. They felt too much *ilira* to say no. There was danger – not of a kind that was easy to describe, but real enough. A possibility of danger. White people had things that Inuit needed: guns, ammunition, tobacco, tea, flour, cloth. They also were quick to lose their tempers, and seemed to have feelings that went out of control for no evident reason. They had power, and there was no equality. These circumstances inspired *ilira*. ... The word *ilira* goes to the heart of colonial relationships, and it helps to explain the many times that Inuit, and so many other peoples, say yes when they want to say no, or say yes and then reveal, later, that they never meant it at all. *Ilira* is a word that speaks to the subtle but pervasive results of inequality.” Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2001), 43.

¹²⁸ Kuptana, “*Ilira*”; Brody, *Other Side of Eden*; Philip Goldring, “Historians and Inuit: Learning from the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2007–2010,” *Canadian Journal of History* 50, no. 3 (December 2015): 512.

Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak: Yes, but they were sold when white people saw me using them, but I do not remember how much it was sold.

Nuatie Aggark (interpreter): Maybe it was \$10, almost.

Christina Williamson: The prices are fair too?

Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak: Everything was cheap, and it was okay back then.¹²⁹

I realised after our interview that reality of this story was quite different when I read a more complete version of the story written for an anthology. The pain of being forced to sell those kamiks, and the sense of powerlessness she experienced as a child is described more explicitly:

In the distance I saw smoke, which meant a ship was coming into the harbour. I ran home with all my might in excitement. I had been told that when a ship arrived in the harbour I would finally be allowed to wear my brand new beautifully embroidered *kamiik*. I sat down to put my beautiful *kamiik* on for the first time, and just as I put them on and while I was still sitting down, ship passengers started arriving. I vaguely recall going outside of our tent and then instantly going back in. I sat down on the ground – as we didn't have beds in those days – just to admire my beautiful *kamiik*. While I was admiring my new *kamiik*, unaware of my surroundings, a Qallunaat woman dressed all in green had come into our tent. She wore a green dress and a green hat.

I noticed the woman staring at my *kamiik* the instant she walked into the tent. My old *kamiik* were still near me. Suddenly, I started hearing voices commanding me to give my *kamiik* away and, in tears, I started removing them. Once I took them off I was forced to give them to that woman in green. In exchange for my beautiful new *kamiik*, she gave me paper and some bead necklaces. Many years later I recognized the green paper as money worth only one dollar. To my utter disappointment, that was what I once received in exchange for my beautifully embroidered white *kamiik*.

I didn't think that what I experienced in losing my *kamiik* would have such a huge impact on my personal life but it did. I often unwillingly remembered losing my *kamiik*, but I had no idea how much this phase in my life would deeply affect me. I have never appreciated what that woman gave me in exchange and I don't remember what happened to those necklaces and how the money was used. When that woman gave me paper in

¹²⁹ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 14, 2018.

exchange for my beautiful *kamiik* I must have felt totally disgraced. I never thought that this incident would have a tremendous impact in my personal life. I had never worn or owned any green-coloured clothing in my life, even though I admired green colours. It was not until I started going through counselling and talking about traumas that I have experienced that I was finally able to wear a shade of green. I realize now that the tiniest unpleasant feeling or incident that has happened in one's life has to be faced and dealt with before you can say you are totally whole again.¹³⁰

Akpaliapik's story of the abuse of power directed at a child in order to procure these kamiks shows the devastating impact of this kind of exchange on a highly respected Elder. It suggests that exchanges that seemed benign for southern purchasers could be the opposite for Inuit, and that the compensation offered could be utterly inappropriate in a place where cash had no value. This situation is a microcosm of the dynamics between Inuit and Qallunaat that is important to keep in mind during the following discussion about welfare, the wage economy and the settlement of Inuit in Arviat.

2.10. KIVALLIQ INUIT AND WORK FOR THE RCMP AND MEDICAL OFFICERS (1930S-50S)

As the fur trade bottomed out, the Company was less able to maintain the credit system, and credit changed into government relief. This instability, coupled with the dramatic post-war inflation of goods available at trading posts, was disastrous. In the 1930s and 1940s, the Department of the Interior (DI), began to provide relief programs for Inuit.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, "Healing Unresolved Issues," in *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, ed. Joe Karetak, Frank J. Tester, and Shirley Tagalik (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017), 182–206.

¹³¹ The federal agency in charge of Inuit affairs changed names frequently, but generally the Minister of the Interior was responsible for the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1936, Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs became separate branches of the Department of Mines and Resources and was also briefly under Citizenship and Immigration before both becoming part of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources in the 1960s. It then became the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) until Prime Minister Justin Trudeau split the department into two variously named departments. Colette E. Derworiz, "Federal Departments of Indigenous and Northern Affairs," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2008, <https://perma.cc/6AZR-THH2>.

The fur trade had established the necessary transportation infrastructure that enabled institutions such as the RCMP and religious groups to access Kivalliq (thus the cynical joke that the HBC actually stands for “Here Before Christ”). The fur trade industry was, therefore, a necessary condition for the intensive presence of the RCMP, along with missionaries and the DI in Inuit Nunangat beginning in the 1930s.¹³²

The expanding presence of these various southern interests provided new work opportunities for Inuit, their labour was consigned to the bottom of the labour hierarchy. For instance, J. Lorne Turner of the Dominion Lands Board explained that “the prevailing rates suggested for Aklavik cover native labour only and should not be confused with white or skilled labour.”¹³³ Some of the work performed by Inuit certainly does not seem as unskilled as government officials seemed to assume. Department of the Interior bureaucrat, O.S. Finnie listed that Inuit employees were “required to act as interpreter, feed and drive dogs, catch fish for dog food, look after fires, cut and haul wood, keep the house clean and generally to perform all such manual labour.”¹³⁴ Although hauling wood and housecleaning could be considered unskilled, fishing, interpreting, driving dogs and guiding are all tasks that require extensive land-based skills or navigational knowledge and understanding of weather conditions. Simply put, Inuit

¹³² For some analyses of the role of the Canadian Government in Inuit Nunangat see: Sarah Bonesteel and Erik Anderson, *Canada’s Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development* (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008); Shelagh Grant, *Sovereignty or Security? Government Policy in the Canadian North, 1936-50* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988); Gordon W. Smith, *A Historical and Legal Study of Sovereignty in the Canadian North: Terrestrial Sovereignty, 1870-1939*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Northern Lights Series, no. 17 (Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2014).

¹³³ J. Lorne Turner to T.N. Irvine, “Letter from J. Lorne Turner, Acting Chairman of Dominion Lands Board to Superintendent T.N. Irvine, ‘G’ Division, RCMP,” April 26, 1934, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 610, file 2725, LAC.

¹³⁴ O.S. Finnie to J.A. Urquhart, “Letter to J.A. Urquhart, Medical Officer Aklavik,” October 24, 1929, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 816, file 6961, LAC.

were skilled workers and they were specifically hired because Qallunaat employees could not perform those tasks.

2.10.1. Sewing for the RCMP

The RCMP (initially called the Northwest Mounted Police NWMP) was the enforcer of Canadian government policies that resulted in forced relocations, dog killings, the administration of the Family Allowance, Residential Schools and the Canadian legal system.¹³⁵ In order to establish sovereignty and enforce law, RCMP “G” Division constables were required to travel extensively throughout the year on patrols.¹³⁶ They required good hunters to hunt for dog feed and to serve as translators and guides on the patrol. The constables also needed clothes that were truly suited for the north rather than the woolen garments issued for officers in the south. The sewing skills of Inuit women were absolutely essential in ensuring the success of the patrols and the safety of all individuals, Qallunaat and Inuit on these journeys.

A few entries in the Eskimo Point post journal hint at the importance of clothing for survival and undertaking these patrols. For example, on 24 January 1938, Constable “W. James left for Padley + Windy Lake at 8 A.M.,” when the temperature was -33°C. Two days later, “W. James returned having found his clothing unsatisfactory.”¹³⁷ James chose to return to the safety of Arviat rather than risk the relatively short sled trip to Padley and

¹³⁵ As explicitly explained by Diabuldo, “the police were the embodiment and custodians of Canadian government policy, however feebly, however muddled, however short-sighted and low key. They were the servants of their political and bureaucratic masters in far-off Ottawa.” Richard Diabuldo, “The Government of Canada and the Inuit: 1900-1967” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1988), 14.

¹³⁶ With the end of the whaling industry, Aivilingmiut continued to work closely with traders and the RCMP as guides or special constables, especially because they knew some English. For instance, in the 1940s, Aivilingmiut Joe Karetak and Jimmy Gibbons served as RCMP Special Constables based in Arviat. “Eskimo Point Post Journal 1939-1940,” n.d., 64, B.408/a/4, HBCA.

¹³⁷ “Eskimo Point Post Journal 1940-1941,” 1941, fol. 32, B.408/a/5, HBCA.

Windy Lake, and these brief entries demonstrate that access to suitable clothing was a life-or-death situation for the RCMP constables posted to Kivalliq.

Some post reports and post journal entries suggest that women were compensated for their work. At Churchill in 1938, Cst. Edward Schofield wrote: “Our deerskin clothes were dried out, and the sewing to be done was given to Mrs. Mary Green, who is a halfbreed Eskimo and very good on deerskin clothing. She was paid by an order on the Hudson’s Bay Co, the amount being Two Dollars.”¹³⁸ Mary Green, or Kasluratsiak (Plate 2.11), was married to a fur trader, and her connections likely meant that she knew to ask for payment.¹³⁹ Her pay, of two dollars, was roughly the value of 35 lbs of flour: about the same as the standard flour rations of a family for three weeks.¹⁴⁰

Inuit women sewed to outfit the men on the annual police patrols by ship, as noted in the section on whalers with the *DGS Neptune*). They also needed Inuit women’s sewing expertise on their overland patrols by dog sled. One early spring patrol near Naujaat from Qatiktalik (Cape Fullerton) to Maluksitaup Tariunga (Lyon Inlet) in March of 1906, a situation involving guides Harry Ford and “Native Tupealock,” and Cst.

¹³⁸ Edward Schofield, “Churchill Mail Patrol – Eskimo Point Detachment,” January 2, 1938, RG 18, vol. 3663, file G-567-31, pt. 1, LAC.

¹³⁹ Mary Kasluratsiak Green born around 1901 (Kasluratsiak may be a misspelling of Kablutsiak. Her mother was Manaletnak and her father is unknown. She was married to an HBC clerk who became an independent fur trapper, William Green and they had two children, Immali Emily Angalik Green (b.1937) and Irene Green (b.1939). Green died in 1943 during the second world war and she had a boy, Mangaliknak with David Lundie in 1942. She married widower Akpa and they had a son, Peter “Coco” Mikeeuneauk in 1947. Kasluratsiak was regularly mentioned in the Eskimo Point Journals in the late 1930s, for receiving destitute rations, probably after her husband left to war. Royal Canadian Mounted Police, “The Following Is a List of the Eskimo Identification Discs as Issued by the Eskimo Point, District E.1 Detachment for the Period Ending June 30th, 1949. This Is a Supplement of the List Issued November 11th., 194?,” 1949, Nuatie Sylvia Aggark Private Collection; “Eskimo Point Post Journal 1939.”

¹⁴⁰ “HBC Company Invoice to Department of Mines and Resources,” February 20, 1941, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 786 file 5997, pt.2, LAC.

Seller's demonstrates just how unacceptable his police-issued clothes were.¹⁴¹ Seller reported that:

The deer skins furnished for us for the trip, with some exceptions, were very poor. They had been made by the natives for trade and just stuck together, besides being made out of inferior skin. The one pair of extra socks and boots issued me lasted one day, and then I had to rely upon my own clothing which was not warm enough for this country. Our sleeping bags were good, but they soon got damp, as we had no sealskin covers. Our 'Korlitangs,' [Qullitaqs] &c., were all one could desire."¹⁴²

The result was that his boots were wet and worn out and the result was it took Ford and Tupealock four days to travel 110 km from for help to save Seller's feet (and life). Once at Lyon Inlet, Seller "purchased two summer deerskins from [Inuit], and had a woman stay with us to make them up into socks &t [sic]. The woman was well known at Fullerton last winter as 'Myria,' and belongs to the Ivilick [Aivilingmiut] tribe."¹⁴³ After Myria made Seller new kamiks, he does not complain again of dangerously wet feet in the report. The patrol's success was based on a reliance on Myria's ability to quickly sew new kamiks and kamikpa as well as the navigational and interpretation abilities of Special Constables Tupealock and Ford. As these accounts show, Inuit women were often

¹⁴¹ Special Constable Henry Thomas Uqallujujuk Ford (not Inuit) saved the life of a NWMP constable a few years later during a boating accident while hunting walrus off the shore of Marble Island. As Corporal R.W. Reeves attested "The moment the walrus struck the boat one of the fore rowlocks came out of the socket, ... the water was rushing in very fast. ... causing it to sink ... by this time I was very numb and helpless through being in the cold water so long and getting into the night air, which was very cold, and my clothing being soaked through would certainly have perished had it not been for Special Constable Ford who took off my wet clothes and gave me his dry ones, wringing as much water out as possible, he put them on himself." Inuit Heritage Centre, Baker Lake Nunavut, "Pork' or 'Pook' Kangirjuaq and Harry Thomas Ford, Special RCMP Constables," Digital Museums Canada Online Exhibition, Tuhaalruuqtut, Ancestral Sounds, c 2005, <https://perma.cc/4UWG-4B4M>; F.W. Reeves, "Corporal F. W. Reeves' Report on the Death by Drowning of Sergeant R.M.I. Donaldson off Marble Island," Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, 1909, Canadian Sessional Papers (Ottawa: Parliament of Canada, 1910); L.E. Seller, "Patrol Report, Constable L.E. Seller, Fullerton to Lyons Inlet," Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, 1906, Canadian Sessional Papers (Ottawa: Parliament of Canada, 1907), 119.

¹⁴² Seller, "Patrol Report," 119, 122.

¹⁴³ Seller, "Patrol Report," 119, 122.

tasked with keeping clothing dry and in good repair both on the land and in the settlement. The photograph in Plate 2.12, which includes some of the men involved in the 1906 patrol, also shows just how many hours of work spent by Inuit seamstresses outfitting all of the men in the caribou parkas, pants and kamiks that they needed for their work.¹⁴⁴

As in the fur trade post, the work of women was usually informally managed while their husbands had more formal employment ties. Arviaqmiutaq Elder Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, the wife of Special Constable Joe Karetak, explained in our interview that she and her husband “were living with the RCMP, and I had to make clothes for them while they lived here for two years. I would have to sew them clothes that were good for those years.”¹⁴⁵ Like other wives of other RCMP special constables, she was not paid for her work, but her labour as a seamstress was assumed to be part of the services that a Special Constable’s wife would provide to the RCMP post.

The practice of women sewing for southerners was widespread, and the routine nature of this work is partly the reason for the rare mentions of their labour in patrol reports of the RCMP. However, there is still the broader tendency to ignore the value of female work and skills, even when they were crucial in ensuring survival. Arviat’s economic system is mixed, and there is a dynamic blend of economic activities in the form of subsistence, wage work, and government supports. Sewing was a key part of women’s strategies to engage with this economy and operated in both subsistence and paid contexts.

¹⁴⁴ David Kattegarsiak, “The Search for Police Descendants,” *Nunavut News*, December 17, 2012, sec. A.

¹⁴⁵ Karetak, interview.

2.10.2. Medical Officers, Women Employees and Moral Panics

The Department of the Interior (DI) managed the Northern Affairs branch, which was responsible for Inuit until 1936, when the branch was moved to the Department of Mines and Resources. The Northern Affairs branch ran the relief programs in the Arctic and also managed the Medical Officers who were based in a few locations in Nunavut. As was the case with the RCMP, Inuit were hired by employees of the DI to work as interpreters, guides, general labourers, and more to perform tasks that ensured their safety, survival and comfort while in Inuit Nunangat. There is strong evidence of Inuit women sewing for southerners for private sewing commissions, but Inuit women were also occasionally independently hired by agents of the DI.

Leslie D. Livingstone, the Medical Officer in Pangnittuq (Pangirtung) and later Igluligaarjuk, described the duties of the Inuit women whom he hired:

I also had an Eskimo woman who made my clothing and for this work she received a weekly ration. In 1928-29 I employed a man continuously and this same woman [mentioned above] did my sewing and also the cleaning of the house. In April I replaced her by a girl whom I paid \$10.00 per month and she was taught to cook and do housekeeping.¹⁴⁶

A female employee's work typically included sewing and housekeeping and sometimes also involved cooking. She would generally be paid less than a full-time male employee partly because her work was part-time and was domestic in nature.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ L.D. Livingstone to O.S. Finnie, "Memorandum," October 16, 1929, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 816, file 6961, LAC.

¹⁴⁷ The lower wages for women is partly explained by the part-time or temporary nature of their work. For instance, one Inuk woman, called Rosie in the archival records was temporarily employed – independently of her husband – in Igluligaarjuk to assist the Medical Officer. Rosie was paid in the form of a pair of sunglasses (50¢), an enamel mug (50¢), and 1.5 lbs of caramel candy (50¢) in June of 1942. Similarly, Therese Tunalik was employed as a "house girl" starting in the fall of 1944 at a wage of \$5.00 a month. The full-time Inuk employees of the Medical Officer, Marc Anowlik was paid \$20 a month in wages as well as rations averaging \$10-15.00 a month. "Miscellaneous Invoices, Department of Interior, 1942-1945," n.d., RG85, vol. 877, file 8920, LAC.

Federal employees in the south discouraged the practice of directly hiring Inuit women, preferring to hire and pay a married man whose wife would presumably work as well. One reason for the lack of formal hired of Inuit women seems to have been out of concerns around sexual propriety. The concerns of Ottawa-based federal employees demonstrate their failure to appreciate the realities of working in northern posts. Livingstone, the outgoing Medical Officer in Igluligaajuk in 1930, arranged to hire an Inuit woman, known only as Mrs. Hayward, as an interpreter and housekeeper for the incoming Medical Officer, Dr. Donald S. Bruce.¹⁴⁸ Livingstone explained that:

It is very essential that whenever possible an interpreter should be employed and as I have used this woman as interpreter at Pangnirtung I know that she is very capable. She is also a good cook and housekeeper and would be quite able to attend to any patien[ts] in the house. I would suggest that Dr. Bruce be notified that she has this appointment at a salary of \$50.00 per month.¹⁴⁹

Department of the Interior Director Oswald Sterling Finnie was horrified to receive news that the new doctor hired a live-in Inuk woman as the housekeeper and interpreter. A series of missives detail Finnie's concerns over the propriety of the arrangement that eventually involved Major Lachlan Burwash and the Catholic Bishop Louis-Eugène-Arsène Turquetil.¹⁵⁰ The situation resulted in the firing of Dr. Bruce ostensibly to reduce costs in favour of Turquetil's recommendation that patients be evacuated by plane or

¹⁴⁸ Livingstone appears to have been respected by Inuit, who did seek his care. He was a highly competent doctor who worked across the Canadian Arctic for decades. As an interesting historical note, Richard Finnie, the son of Oswald Finnie, assisted Dr. Livingstone in a surgery in 1926 in the north. A. Dudley Copland, *Livingston of the Arctic* (Lancaster: Canadian Century Publishers, 1978); Frank J. Tester and Paule McNicoll, "A Voice of Presence: Inuit Contributions toward the Public Provision of Health Care in Canada, 1900–1930," *Social History* 41, no. 82 (2008): 552–55.

¹⁴⁹ Livingstone, L.D. to O.S. Finnie, October 6, 1930, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 816, file 6961, LAC.

¹⁵⁰ See the letters and memoranda between October 1930 through to March 1931 in LAC, RG 85, vol. 816, file 6961 and A. Turquetil to H. E. Human, "Regarding Postponed Appointment of a Doctor at the Hospital of Chesterfield," March 11, 1932, RG 85-c-1-a, vol. 810, file 6815, LAC.

have doctors flown in on an as-needed basis at the Ste. Therese Hospital. This effectively left Igluligaarjuk without a resident physician from 1931-1958.¹⁵¹

The concern around the decorum of single Indigenous women working with non-Indigenous men was not unique to this situation. As Mary Jane McCallum, Paige Raibmon, Joan Sangster and Jane E. Simonsen have shown in Southern Canadian and the American contexts, believed that Indigenous women were incapable of following (middle-class) Christian morality around sexuality and respectability.¹⁵² Domestic labour was means through which Indigenous women (and working-class women, especially unwed mothers and orphans) could potentially become respectable in the eyes of bourgeois society. These scholars have shown that domestic labour was wielded as a tool that served colonial and assimilationist goals. The situation depicted here shows that although domestic work for Indigenous women was generally desirable in a context where a white, middle-class woman was present to train and surveil the Indigenous domestic worker, this approach was not acceptable in the Arctic context where government and church officials did not have control and easy oversight of an Inuk woman living with a single Qallunaaq man.

¹⁵¹ Laura Mitsuyo Ishiguro, "Discourses and Practices of Isolation in the Implementation of Health Care in Ste. Therese's Hospital, Chesterfield Inlet, 1929-1958" (MA Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2008), 80–81.

¹⁵² Mary Jane McCallum, "Labour, Modernity and the Canadian State: A History of Aboriginal Women and Work in the Mid-Twentieth Century" (PhD Diss., Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, 2008); Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounters from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Joan Sangster, "Domesticating Girls: The Sexual Regulation of Aboriginal and Working-Class Girls in Twentieth-Century Canada," in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006); Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860-1919*, Gender and American Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

2.11. ENTRENCHING WELFARE AND THE CASH ECONOMY (1945 TO 1960)

The geopolitics of the Cold War, caribou famines and the declining importance of the arctic fox trade combined with an ideological shift in government policy towards direct intervention in Inuit lives began the process of entrenching wage work and cash into the Inuit economy.¹⁵³ Through some fancy bureaucratic and executive footwork, Inuit were considered Canadian citizens beginning in 1927 and heralded several decades of debates over whether the Indian Act pertained to Inuit or not.¹⁵⁴ Finally, the Department of Resources and Development was vested with authority over Inuit in 1950.¹⁵⁵ Alan Marcus explains that “the government, therefore, placed increasing importance on the status of Inuit living standards and on their occupation of the land.”¹⁵⁶ In the 1950s, government officials such as those of the Eskimo Affairs Committee, emphasized wage work as the policy shifted from trying to keep Inuit on the land to settling Inuit into communities.¹⁵⁷ The presence of Inuit in the north was part of Canada’s sovereignty

¹⁵³ During the Cold War, when American and Canadian military arrived in the north, to construct and operate the Distant Early Warning (DEW) System; a series of northern radar stations established to detect potential Soviet attacks.

¹⁵⁴ For a very clear explanation of all the administrative, executive and legal policy changes in this period, see: Diabuldo, “Canada and the Inuit.”

¹⁵⁵ Diabuldo, “Canada and the Inuit,” 36.

¹⁵⁶ Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 4.

¹⁵⁷ Thought the government wanted wage workers, they presumed that Inuit were not able to manage their own affairs and therefore were not consulted about these policies. It therefore established the Eskimo Affairs Committee (EAC) to oversee Inuit affairs. The paternalism and purpose of the EAC is described vividly in the following draft invitation to the committee (as quoted in Damas): “The basic issue seems to be this, are we to regard the Eskimo as fully privileged economy responsible citizens with the right to spend his income as he pleases, or are we to regard the Eskimo as backward people who need special guidance in the use of their income...I personally feel that if we are realistic we must consider the Eskimo to be in the second category.” The idea that Inuit could not manage themselves translated into why Inuit were excluded from the EAC. J.C. Cunningham, Arctic Director of the Northern Administration and Lands Branch explained the absence of any Inuit on the Committee: “The only reason why Eskimos were not invited to the meeting was, apart from difficulties of transportation and language, that it was felt that few, if any, of them have yet reached the stage where they could take responsible part in such discussion.” “Draft Invitation to Eskimo Affairs Conference” (Northern Affairs Program, February 18, 1952), RG 85-D-1-a, vol. 1069, file 251(1a), LAC; J. Cunningham, “Cunningham to Clyde Kennedy” (Indian Affairs and Northern Development, June 7, 1952), RG 22-A-1-a, vol. 254, File 40-8-1(3), LAC. Both quoted in David

claims, and the logic follows that if Inuit are Canadian citizens, they must receive the same rights as any Canadian: welfare and education.

Since the mercantile economy of the fur trade was cashless well into the twentieth century, the HBC remained the broker for any wages paid to Inuit. Inuit were compensated with accounts managed by the HBC and were required to go to their local post and trade the credit in their account. Using the transportation infrastructure developed by the fur trade, organizations such as the RCMP and the DI began to establish themselves in the 1930s in Nunavut and figured prominently in the Arctic by the 1950s.¹⁵⁸ The HBC sent invoices to Ottawa, where the accounts were reconciled. Inuit wages circulated as numbers on the ledger books of organizations, meaning the HBC had almost total control over Inuit's access to their provisions over the early twentieth

Damas, "Shifting Relations in the Administration of Inuit: The Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Government," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 17, no. 2 (1993): 19–20.

¹⁵⁸ The HBC was informed of an employee's pay and the dollar amount was added to the Inuk's account so they could make purchases at their local post. Finnie wrote: "With reference to the payment of this salary, I understand that the Police Officer in charge at any post where an interpreter is hired, is authorized to pay this salary and remit an account to Head Office for reimbursement. The rations can be secured from the Hudson's Bay Co. at cost landed, plus 25%, and this account should be forwarded, in triplicate, direct to this office for payment." Finnie to Urquhart, "Letter to J.A. Urquhart, Medical Officer Aklavik," October 24, 1929.

century.¹⁵⁹ The result was that the HBC laid the groundwork for the colonial welfare system that led to many tragic consequences across Inuit Nunangat.¹⁶⁰

The credit and debt structure created by the HBC is particularly notorious because it compelled Indigenous trappers into a relationship of dependency on the post.¹⁶¹ The credit system ostensibly managed the price fluctuations: Indigenous trappers would be outfitted on credit and return to the post with their furs. The trapper would pay his bills in a good year or fall into debt in bad years.¹⁶² Fox trapping is an inherently unstable resource on which to base an economy: the price of pelts fluctuated annually from highs of \$35 a pelt in 1945 to \$3.50 in 1950. That was the difference between being able to purchase 400 lbs of flour compared to 30 lbs from the trade of a single fox pelt.¹⁶³ On top of the fluctuations in price, fox populations themselves are unstable, with a multi-year boom-bust cycle, making it impossible to have any consistency from foxes as an income source.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ A Medical Officer for the DI explained the standards in the 1940 for paying Inuit employees in Igluligaarjuk: “it is customary, in cases of permanently employed natives, to take care of all expenses such as food dogs and dog feed, clothes (which I do not do) etc throughout the year.” For instance, Dr. W. McKee, hired Joe Putek, a 29-year-old man with a wife and child. He received \$10.00 per month along with rations in 1939, raising his wages to \$15.00 a month in 1940 and again to \$20.00 per month (plus rations) in February of 1941 so that Putek’s wage was comparable to that of the full-time Inuit employee of the RCMP post. On top of the wage, Putek received rations averaging a value of \$20.00 per month. The rations typically included flour, baking powder, sugar, jam, molasses, tea, biscuits, methyl hydrate alcohol, coal oil, tobacco, matches and cigarette papers. Thomas Melling to R.A. Gibson, “Letter: Reference Employed Native Nuvok,” September 7, 1937, RG 85-C-1-a, vol. 877, file 8920, LAC; “Miscellaneous Invoices, Department of Interior, 1942-1945.”

¹⁶⁰ I am not suggesting that welfare is a bad thing per se, but the way that welfare supports were implemented in the north was exceptionally damaging to Inuit.

¹⁶¹ Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 28.

¹⁶² Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 3–4.

¹⁶³ In contemporary prices, it is the difference between \$535.00 compared to \$40.00. Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 27; “Inflation Calculator.”

¹⁶⁴ Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 28.

The HBC had historically considered trappers to be “assets” worth the expense and investment of supporting them during years with bad fur returns.¹⁶⁵ As Alan Marcus explains: “Relief carried an “efficient trapper [10 pelts a year or more] during the lean years, and in the good years it allowed him to devote less time to hunting out of necessity and more time to his trap lines.”¹⁶⁶ Following the Second World War, the instability of the fox industry coupled with the dramatic post-war inflation of goods available at trading posts was disastrous.¹⁶⁷ Inuit were less able to afford the rising costs of goods and the drop in pelt prices. Even as cash was increasingly part of the Inuit economy in the 1950s, the HBC operated as a bank of sorts. As Peter Kulchyski and Frank Tester explain:

Inuit who needed cash or who had credits with the venerable company had to deal with the manager to get the cash required to place an order with a mail order business in southern Canada. In the 1950s, cash was often sent by Inuit through the mail, accompanying their orders. This situation gave the HBC manager de facto control over the finances of Inuit. It is not hard to understand why the manager would be reluctant to give Inuit cash for the credits they had earned by trading their fox pelts at his store, thus making it possible for them to do business elsewhere.¹⁶⁸

As the fur trade bottomed out, the Company was less able and interested in maintaining the credit system and was increasingly concerned with its effective monopoly as both the purchaser of furs in the region as well as the sole seller of goods. The credit system

¹⁶⁵ As District Manager James Ray explained in 1924 in the Richmond Gulf area: “It is true that the natives are our assets, that we must keep them alive for future profits even though we carry them at a loss till such time shall come.” James Ray, “Fur Trade Annual Reports” (Hudson Bay Company, 1924), DTFR/19, HBCA; Arthur J. Ray, “Periodic Shortages, Native Welfare and the Hudson’s Bay Company, 1670-1930,” in *The Subarctic Fur Trade: Native Social and Economic Adaptations*, ed. Shepard Krech (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984), 16.

¹⁶⁶ Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 29.

¹⁶⁷ Peter Keith Kulchyski and Frank J. Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back): Game Management and Inuit Rights, 1900-70* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 118.

¹⁶⁸ Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut*, 296.

transitioned into relief such as the Family Allowance for Inuit. Though Family Allowance was managed by the DI – later the Department of Mines and Resources (1953-1966) – it was administered in the north by the RCMP or the HBC, effectively keeping the control of goods and money in the hands of the police and the Company.¹⁶⁹

The Family Allowances Act of 1944 was intended to raise the living standard for children across Canada, but ultimately it became a tool of coercion, as it was used to force Inuit into settlements.¹⁷⁰ Initially the Northern Affairs branch (within variously-named departments) and the RCMP feared that the “benefits could impair the industry of the natives and develop a class of people who would spend their time in the vicinity of the trading post waiting for government aid.”¹⁷¹ In an apparent attempt to curtail this, allowances were only provided when food supplies were scarce.¹⁷² Despite administrators’ apparent concern about Inuit reliance on the allowance, they wielded it in such a way that they “threatened [Inuit parents] with the loss of family allowance if they did not send their children to residential school.”¹⁷³

The family allowance system was also tied to the devastating impact of the residential school system. In Arviat, the residential schooling system began in the mid-1950s, when some Catholic students were sent to Igluligaarjuk (1955-1963) and the

¹⁶⁹ Bonesteel and Anderson, *Canada’s Relationship with Inuit*, v, 4; Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut*, 218–20.

¹⁷⁰ Tester provides greater detail on the administrative debates on how they distributed the allowance. See also: David Damas, *Arctic Migrants/Arctic Villagers: The Transformation of Inuit Settlement in the Central Arctic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 107; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 339–42.

¹⁷¹ Quoted in Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 108.

¹⁷² Sherrie Lee Blakney, “Connections to the Land: The Politics of Health and Wellbeing in Arviat Nunavut” (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 2009), 63.

¹⁷³ Heather Igloliorte et al., *We were so Far Away: the Inuit Experience of Residential Schools* (Ottawa: Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2010), 42.

Eskimo Point Federal Day School, which opened in 1958.¹⁷⁴ In order to receive the allowance, and avoid separation from their children (who were legally required to attend school), many parents moved into communities so their children would return home in the evenings, or children stayed at a host's home after school. A smaller group of parents stayed on the land and sent their children to live at the small federal hostel that housed school children in Arviat which operated between 1962-1967.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Residential schools and their impact are now well-known thanks to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Report of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples and the research of many others. The system developed in the north was distinct from that of the South, as day schools and a hostel system were only established in the 1950s. The only formal western schools existing prior to that time were missionary schools managed by Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches. The federal day school system was intended to replace those missionary schools and meant that many children attended school in their own communities. The Catholic Residential school in Igluligaarjuk was established in 1951, the Federal Day schools were established in Arviat (1959), Qamani'tuaq (1957), Kangiqliniq (1957) and Tikiraqjuaq (1961), the Churchill Vocational Centre (1964) was also a place Arviaqmiut commonly attended. Churchill Vocational School is often remembered positively by students but, others, such as Turquetil Hall in Igluligaarjuk, had a long history of sexual abuse and harsh discipline. Twenty-nine Catholic children from Arviat were sent to Turquetil Hall in Igluligaarjuk from 1955-63. The number of Arviaqmiut children sent there is relatively low because the Arviat Federal Day School opened in 1958 in Arviat for Kindergarten to Grade 8. Nineteen of the twenty-nine Arviaqmiut students stayed at Turquetil Hall for one year only. Turquetil Hall is noted as one of the most brutal of the hostels in the Canadian Arctic. There are over 115 allegations of physical abuse and several allegations of sexual assault, though no perpetrators of sexual assault were prosecuted. Students had to travel to Churchill Vocational School or elsewhere if they continued to high school. Lorraine Brandson, "Turquetil Hall: Chesterfield Inlet, N.W.T. Roman Catholic Participation in Education of the Central Arctic Inuit 1955-1960," April 1991, 5, Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre Archives; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 126; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "The Inuit and Northern Experience," The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 3-4; "The History, Part 2 1939-2000," The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 124, 141; Mary Piercey, "Traditional Indigenous Knowledge: An Ethnographic Study of Its Application in the Teaching and Learning of Traditional Inuit Drum Dances in Arviat, Nunavut," in *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*, ed. Carol Beynon and Kari K. Veblen (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 85; James W. VanStone and Wendell Oswalt, "The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point" (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1959), 9.

¹⁷⁵ The small hostels were intended to reduce the cultural disruptions experienced by children at the large hostels, and the government intended the hostels to operate as an intermediary between "the native home and the modern home." Local Inuit rather than Qallunaat supervisors operated them. The hostels lacked bathtubs and showers even in 1965, three years after opening. The failure to maintain safe living conditions for the students is also illustrated by the fact that, between September 1966 and March 1967, thirty-nine percent of the student body was in the Manitoba sanatorium in Clearwater for tuberculosis treatment. A. Schalburg and R. Hanna, "Attached "Memorandum to Mr. R. Hanna: Addendum to Memorandum on Guide to the Operation and Maintenance of Small Hostels in the Eastern Arctic," 1961 1960, RG 85-D-3, vol. 1949, file A-600-1-6-1, Pt. 1, LAC. Quoted in "The History, Part 2," 153-54, 196;

David Damas, James VanStone and Wendell Oswalt argued that Inuit settled in communities like Arviat because they could rely on the missions, police and trading posts to avoid starvation, conditions caused by increasingly erratic caribou migrations.¹⁷⁶ Paallirmiut appear to have stayed closer to the community during bad trapping or caribou years to mitigate the risk of starvation. An RCMP report noted in 1951 that:

The Eskimos have all left their old trapping ground and have moved closer to the settlement of Eskimo Point. They are not trapping as in other years ... [the Inuit] state the following reason. They have no Caribou Caches put up and therefore cannot trap also their dogs have starved and they have no means of travelling.¹⁷⁷

The loss of dogs was devastating for Inuit both from a subsistence hunting and commercial trapping perspective.¹⁷⁸ The lack of food for dogs created a cycle whereby starved dogs made it impossible to travel and, therefore, impossible to hunt.¹⁷⁹ Ahiarmiut,

“Missing Children and Unmarked Burials,” The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 145.

¹⁷⁶ VanStone and Oswalt, “Eskimos of Eskimo Point,” 20–22; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 93.

¹⁷⁷ RCMP, “Conditions of Natives, Eskimo Point,” January 20, 1951, RG 18-F-1, acc. 1985-86/048 GAD, vol. 55, file TA 500-8-1, LAC.

¹⁷⁸ Sled dog killings such as those that occurred in Nunavik and Qikiqtani do not seem to have occurred in Arviat. Few families living inland could feed more than a small number of dogs as they did not have access to the ample marine resources like seals and walrus used by coastal Inuit for dog food. Frank Vallee remarked that older people he spoke to remember only a few families having more than two dogs before the fur trade period. Families in the trapping period typically had three to six dogs. Likewise, Steenhoven noted about five or six grown dogs per family at Ennedai Lake in 1954. Vallee suggested that the increase in the number of dogs among Kivallirmiut had to do with the fox industry requiring trappers to travel long distances which necessitated more dogs. It is notable that it was families living in settlements, who had waged work that had many of the dogs found in the community. Frank G. Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo in the Central Keewatin* (Ottawa: Canadian Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1967), 38–39, 48; Geert van den Steenhoven, “Report to Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on a Field Research Journey for the Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955” (Department of Northern Affairs, 1957), 16; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, “Analysis of the RCMP Sled Dog Report,” Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950–1975 (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media Inc., 2013); Qikiqtani Inuit Association, “Qimmiliriniq: Inuit Sled Dogs in Qikiqtaaluk,” Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950–1975 (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media Inc., 2013), 23–31.

¹⁷⁹ Richard Harrington who witnessed the 1950 famine explained “For the first time, I realize how serious it really is when the caribou do not come. ... Dogs are dying everywhere of starvation. Natives do not shoot their dogs. Remaining dogs look skin and bones, are shivering with cold, are listless. ... Next, it means that since Eskimos must always travel to obtain more food and catch fur, they cannot move around

who lived inland, and did not trade at Arviat and only rarely traded at Padlei, remained inland at their camps. It is this community, battered by a series of extended caribou famines, that experienced multiple relocations in the 1950s.

2.12. RELOCATIONS OF AHIARMIUT

As early as the 1920s, the Canadian government had relocated Inuit within Inuit Nunangat typically because of subsistence needs and often on the recommendation of the HBC to improve their fur returns.¹⁸⁰ The results of these relocations were devastating, and several national apologies by the government have been issued in the last decade.¹⁸¹ The Canadian government employed the relocation of Indigenous people as a strategy of colonization across Canada.¹⁸² Relocating a people is part of the State's exercise of power over territory, as argued in the works of Patrick Wolfe and others.¹⁸³ This often-used

any more [sic]. No caribou means no new warm clothes. ... Death of dogs means no pups can be expected that, is next year too, their travelling will be restricted." Harrington, "Padlei Trip," 22.

¹⁸⁰ Bonesteel and Anderson, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit*, 29.

¹⁸¹ Ahiarmiut relocatees received restitution in January 2019, when a formal apology from the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett and a 5.75 million dollars in compensation was promised. Carolyn Bennett, "Statement of Apology for the Relocation of the Ahiarmiut" (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, January 22, 2019); John Duncan, "Apology for the Inuit High Arctic Relocation" (Official Apology, Inukjuak, Nunavik, August 18, 2010).

¹⁸² The High Arctic Relocations are discussed extensively in relation to Canadian Government Policy and the psychological and emotional impacts in scholarly, governmental and documentary film productions. The literature is quite large, but a few works are: Shelagh Grant, *Errors Exposed: Inuit Relocations to the High Arctic, 1953-1960* (Calgary: Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, 2016); Tina Loo, "'No More Canadians Will Starve!?' Development, Discipline, and Decolonizing the North," in *Moved by the State: Forced Relocation and Making a Good Life in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2019), 28–54; Marcus, *Relocating Eden*; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, ed., *The High Arctic Relocation: A Report on the 1953-55 Relocation* (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1994); Patricia Tassinari, *Broken Promises: The High Arctic Relocations*, 16 mm, Documentary (Nutaq Media Inc., 1995).

¹⁸³ The 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples determined that "relocations must be seen as part of a broader process of dispossession and displacement, a process with lingering effects on the cultural, spiritual, social, economic and political aspects of peoples' lives." While The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), also specifically states that relocations are against the rights of Inuit: "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories." Georges Erasmus and René Dussault, *Looking Forward, Looking Back*, vol. 1 (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), 396; R. Cole Harris, "How Did Colonialism Dispossession? Comments from an Edge of Empire," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94, no. 1 (2004):

colonial method was brutal in its design, dispossessing people from their lands and damaging familial ties to psychologically, economically and culturally break a people.¹⁸⁴

This section focuses on the economic rationale that prompted the government to relocate the Ahlarmiut and the impact of these relocations on the Ahlarmiut survivors.¹⁸⁵ The erratic caribou migrations in the 1940s impacted Ahlarmiut in particular and was the official reason for their relocations the 1950s.¹⁸⁶ Ahlarmiut were relocated without consultation, warning, and without appropriate support, equipment or rations (see

156–82; Nicos Poulantzas, Stuart Hall, and Patrick Camiller, *State, Power, Socialism*, New edition (London: Verso Books, 2000), 100; United Nations General Assembly, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” 2008, para. 10; Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 387–409.

¹⁸⁴ Ahlarmiut were not the only inland Inuit to suffer in this way. My grandfather, Henry Moore, was a witness to a similar situation with the Hanningaruqmiut, inland Inuit who lived near Garry Lake. In 1957-8 when fifty-eight people died. He later told me: “I can still recall the Northern Affairs rep wanting to know [over the radio to the RCMP] if the native’s dogs were still running around. When this was confirmed his response was that if the natives were really starving they would have eaten their dogs... [it] was a real shock when the Air Force brought out the frozen corpses and they were stacked like cordwood at Baker [Lake].” Thirty-one people survived that winter and were relocated to Qamani’tuaq. Henry Moore to Christina Williamson, “Inuit Agree on Compensation for Forced Relocations in the 1950s,” August 30, 2018.

¹⁸⁵ The literature on Ahlarmiut relocations is extensive and rich and is often written about in conjunction with the High Arctic Relocations. A few works include: Grant, *Errors Exposed*; Frédéric Laugrand, Jarich Oosten, and David Serkoak, “‘The Saddest Time of My Life’: Relocating the Ahlarmiut from Ennadai Lake (1950–1958),” *Polar Record* 46, no. 02 (April 2010): 113–35; Marcus, *Relocating Eden*; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*.

¹⁸⁶ Famed Canadian writer Farley Mowat wrote two books on the topic of the Ahlarmiut starvations, which were controversially received, ostensibly because of the factual errors (which Mowat admitted to) but perhaps more significantly, because of his analysis that the trifecta of Church, Police and State were the cause of the demise of Ahlarmiut. However, *People of the Deer* (along with Richard Harrington’s *The Face of the Arctic*, which showed photos of Ahlarmiut starving) were significant in raising the awareness of the Government’s treatment of Inuit in this period. See Alan Rudolph Marcus for a good analysis of the impact and A.E. Porsild for one of the more vehement protestations of Mowat’s work. Photographs of this famine by Harrington are available at Library and Archives Canada, and an extensive search file produced for Mowat by the HBC Archives is also available for researchers. Richard Harrington, *The Face of the Arctic: A Cameraman’s Story in Words and Pictures of Five Journeys into the Far North*, second (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1954); Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 15–20; Farley Mowat, *The Desperate People* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980); Farley Mowat, *People of the Deer* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005); Alf Erling Porsild, “Review of People of the Deer,” *The Beaver*, June 1952.

for a list of relocations).¹⁸⁷ Job Muqyunnik, who survived the relocations as a child, described their traumatic effects:

The government took over the leadership, they took the power. It's like taking the power from the leaders, from our parents. Because we no longer had any power, we just did what ever [sic] the government told us to do. Looking back at the time I became an adult, I started to think about what it was like for my parents and other Ahiarmiut. Once the government started taking control over Ahiarmiut, the hardship seemed to start.¹⁸⁸

In the Arviat area, government relocations of Ahiarmiut in the 1950s altered lives dramatically, undermining their autonomy and resulting in enormous economic (not to mention cultural and psychological) repercussions for the survivors and their descendants.

The second and most well-known relocation in the region occurred in 1954, just after the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) informed the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources that they were uninterested in managing relief provisions any longer for the Ahiarmiut families who frequented the RCAF radio station at Ennedai Lake.¹⁸⁹ The Canadian Army Signal Corps built the station in 1949, and Ahiarmiut helped with its construction. Ahiarmiut visited weekly to receive their Family Allowance rations. Those weekly visits made it difficult for the Ahiarmiut to leave the area.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Ahiarmiut relocation survivor David Serkoak explained: "From what I have gathered from various sources, starvation was approaching us, although some of the people at Ennedai lake [sic] were living quite well. Hard times came once in a while, but nothing very drastic. I don't believe that many people had much advance warning that they would have to move. Some of them found out the same day they were to be moved." Karine Duhamel and Warren Bernauer, "Ahiarmiut Relocations and the Search for Justice: The Life and Work of David Serkoak," *Northern Public Affairs*, July 2018, 13.

¹⁸⁸ Quoted in: Laugrand, Oosten, and Serkoak, "Saddest Time," 131–32.

¹⁸⁹ Laugrand, Oosten, and Serkoak, "Saddest Time," 118.

¹⁹⁰ Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 129; Laugrand, Oosten, and Serkoak, "Saddest Time," 116.

Owlijoot, an Ahiarmiut ihumataq (one-who-thinks, or the one who thinks)¹⁹¹ and camp leader, explained to Geert van Steenhoven, “that he would prefer to live about twenty miles farther east-southeast from the station, where fishing was better also; but the distribution of rations at the radio station was this year arranged in such a way as not to permit the Eskimo to live farther off.”¹⁹² The method of distributing rations presumed Inuit could not manage their rations over an extended period and meant they could not move to other locations that had better hunting or trapping without losing access to their relief rations.

¹⁹¹ This translation, or variations of it are present in the work of Knud Rasmussen, Geert van den Steenhoven as well as other later scholars. Rasmussen, *Caribou Eskimos*, 2:11; Steenhoven, “Legal Concepts,” 31.

¹⁹² Steenhoven, “Legal Concepts,” 19.

Table 2.5 Relocations of Ahiarmiut 1950-1985

Date	From	To	Description
May 1950	Ennedai Lake Radio station	Nueltin Lake (Qikiqtariaktuq)	Nueltin Lake Fish Products, a commercial fishery that needed workers, and various government departments agreed to the relocation of 47 Inuit. Tents were bulldozed, and Ahiarmiut were flown to an island in Qikiqtariaktuq with no supplies. Ahiarmiut were forced to sleep rough, and several Elders died. Ahiarmiut waited until the lake froze and travelled the three-month journey back home, arriving around December.
May 1957	Atiqtuniarvik	Henik Lake	William Kerr stated that he spoke with the camp leaders about the relocation, but no elder recalls such a conversation. Ahiarmiut were forced to abandon their belongings but were provided with some trade goods which were not sufficient to be comfortable at Henik Lake, nor were Ahiarmiut taught how to use things like a Coleman stove. The area lacked caribou, ptarmigan or other hunting resources, nor were there enough fish to feed everyone. Seven people of the fifty-six Ahiarmiut starved.
1957	Atiqtuniarvik	Whale Cove	Some Ahiarmiut relocated to Whale Cove.
1958	Henik Lake	Arviat	Six months after Ahiarmiut were relocated to Henik Lake, southern officials determined that the 'experiment' was a failure and Ahiarmiut were flown to Padlei then onwards to Arviat.
1958	Arviat	Whale Cove & Rankin	With nowhere to house Ahiarmiut, the Ahiarmiut were moved by ship to Whale Cove and then most were moved a few months later to Rankin Inlet
The 1960s	Whale Cove & Kangiqliniq	Whale Cove & Arviat	Most Ahiarmiut returned to Whale Cove and then to Arviat but never lived on the land at Atiqtuniarvik again.
1985	Arviat	Atiqtuniarvik	Thirty-six elders visit their old home at Atiqtuniarvik. For many, it is the first and last time that they see their homeland since their relocation.

The resulting dissolution of camp economics caused by the relocations is apparent in a story about James Kunne, an Ahiarmiutaq who adapted quickly to settlement life because he was young, adaptable, and an excellent hunter with knowledge of a large territory. Kunne adjusted quickly to settlement life. His wife Helen Kunne recalled that:

The men lost their interest to go hunting and took to trying to get caribou meat from friends. The men used to come to get their shares from Kunne's catch whenever he arrived from a hunting trip.¹⁹³

Kunne's caribou caches were raided later that year, which contributed to the family's difficulties. Anthropologist Pamela Stern noted that, following the move to settlements, the formal partnerships and rules for dividing game essentially collapsed, though sharing country food continued through kin networks as "part of a constellation of morally valued behaviours," which are part of a moral economy within the community.¹⁹⁴ Those Ahiarmiut who did not hunt once in settlement believed that country food was shared property.¹⁹⁵ However, Kunne understood his kinship obligations towards individuals who did not hunt to be nullified because they were not contributing to their families' wellbeing.

The relocations and the starvations created upheavals for Ahiarmiut, who suddenly found themselves living on the coast after having survived a decade of repeated inland relocations. The relocation disrupted traditional food sharing laws and traumatized the relocatees who watched family members die of hunger and exposure, and who were inserted into a settlement context that already had an established community of Inuit

¹⁹³ Blakney, "Connections to the Land," 67.

¹⁹⁴ Pamela Stern, "Wage Labor, Housing Policy, and the Nucleation of Inuit Households," *Arctic Anthropology* 42, no. 2 (January 1, 2005): 67.

¹⁹⁵ Blakney, "Connections to the Land," 68.

whom they did not know. By 1959, three groups major groups of Inuit lived in Arviat: Paallirmiut, Ahiarmiut and Aivilingmiut (Figure 2.3).¹⁹⁶

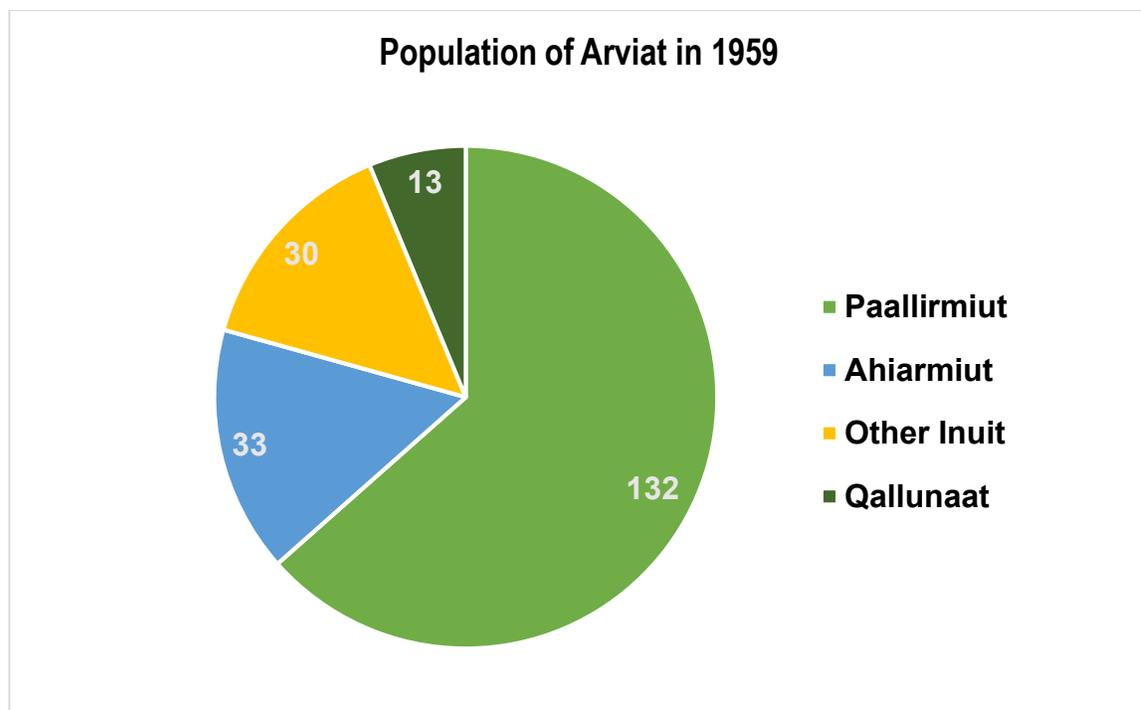


Figure 2.3 Ethnic make-up of Arviat's population in 1959. Based on VanStone (1960).

2.13. SETTLEMENT AND WAGE WORK IN ARVIAT (1950s-1980s)

The foundations for the current cash economy seen in Arviat were laid following the collapse of the commercial fox trade, famines and the resulting welfare policies of the federal government. With settlement came the increased importance of a wage economy in a place where very few quality jobs existed. Piita Taqtu Irniq, a politician and cultural teacher from Naujaat, describes this head-spinning transition as one from “igloo to

¹⁹⁶ VanStone and Oswalt, “Eskimos of Eskimo Point,” 22. Yvon Csonka, “Expansion et Famines Chez Les Inuit Du Caribous: Le Scénario et Ses Interprétations,” *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 16, no. 2 (1992): 17; Frédéric Laugrand, Jarich Oosten, and David Serkoak, “Relocating the Ahiarmiut from Ennadai Lake to Arviat (1950-1958),” in *Orality in the 21st Century: Inuit Discourse and Practice* (Paris: INALCO, 2006), 24.

microwave in less than fifty years.”¹⁹⁷ Wage employment came from only a few sources in the late 1950s, such as the HBC, the school (as hostel parents), the RCMP and a nickel mine in Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet).¹⁹⁸ Class divisions established in this early settlement period continue to reverberate in the community today. Those with jobs with the RCMP, the school or the HBC ‘belonged’ to those organisations. This created a physical separation from others in a manner that did not occur in camps on the land. Those who had steady work tended to live in frame houses like those of southerners, while others lived in shacks made from tarps, cardboard and salvaged wood.¹⁹⁹

A situation developed in the 1960s where those with wage work were the people able to afford to hunt, while those with no work could not. Those hunters who had access to good salaries used their wages to purchase hunting equipment such as guns, ammunition and a skidoo, to travel the necessary distances away from the high concentration of people who lived near Arviat. However, full-time employment left hunters with fewer hours to hunt on the land. This phenomenon was not unique to Arviat.

¹⁹⁷ Piita Taqtu Irniq, “Project Naming: A Dialogue” (Photographs, Generations & Inuit Cultural Memory: Assessing 15 years of Project Naming, Library and Archives of Canada, Ottawa, 2017).

¹⁹⁸ Seventy-nine of the Rankin Inlet Nickel Mine workers came from Arviat. However, most of those jobs were casual and seasonal. Though it operated only briefly from 1957 to 1962, the mine’s closure devastated the local economy in Kangiqliniq and the Inuit who migrated there for work. All Inuit from Arviat lived in one section of the “Eskimo Village” in Kangiqliniq. They lived in tents with a few cooking huts. Other Inuit lived in semi-permanent shacks, cabins, as well as tents in other parts of the Village. No sanitation facilities were available and trash heaps developed beside the residences. The origins of the population living in Rankin Inlet in the summer of 1958 was: Igluligaarjuk and Kangiqliniq: 224; Arviat: 79; Naujaat:19; Qamani’tuaq: 11. Blakney, “Connections to the Land,” 67; Tara Cater and Arn Keeling, “‘That’s Where Our Future Came from’: Mining, Landscape, and Memory in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 37, no. 2 (June 23, 2014): 59–82; Robert C. Dailey and Lois A. Dailey, “The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet: A Preliminary Report” (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1961), 15–20.

¹⁹⁹ The geography of Arviat was also religious. Non-Christian families lived at the end of the community furthest away from the missions and the Roman Catholic and Anglican families clustered near their respective missions. VanStone and Oswalt, “Eskimos of Eskimo Point,” 20–21.

R.G. Vallée noted that Inuit who lived in the settlement of Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake) were materially richer in their modes of transport than those living exclusively on the land. While the latter specifically needed the dogs and equipment to support the family unit on the land, they owned only sixty percent of all the dogs in the region, and only twenty-five percent of the canoes, and inboard and outboard motored boats in the region. The boats, after all, required a significant initial outlay of cash.²⁰⁰ The material inequality of settlement Inuit and land-based Inuit in the early days of settlement continues to have an impact to this day.²⁰¹

Wage employment was not an aspiration of most men in the 1960s, however. Hunting continued to be the marker of being a fully-realized male: ihumataq (one-who-thinks).²⁰² One Arviaqmiut Elder noted that in “the community setting it is often stated by people that others are always making decisions for you. This is culturally foreign. Being independent is part of having the ability to think and reason and be responsible for your own actions.”²⁰³ The ability to hunt for oneself and one’s family was one of the few ways Inuit of the early settlement period could remain in control over their lives. Elders

²⁰⁰ Steenhoven, “Legal Concepts,” 48; Vallee, *Kabloona*, 17, 47–48.

²⁰¹ This division continues to be visible today. Those who can afford to purchase and maintain snowmobiles and ATVs are middle-class Inuit who tend to have steady paid employment, and these individuals can also afford to hunt and feed their family country food. The poorer Inuit cannot afford the equipment or maintain it have less access to country food as a result. Some scholars have connected the socio-economic aspects of the mixed economy to country food sharing, noting that the economic disparities of wage working Inuit who hunt and share country food also creates a political disparity that is reinforced through the social obligations created through sharing. Elspeth Ready and Eleanor A. Power, “Why Wage Earners Hunt: Food Sharing, Social Structure, and Influence in an Arctic Mixed Economy,” *Current Anthropology* 59, no. 1 (February 2018): 20–21.

²⁰² G. W. Nooter, “He-Who-Thinks: Research Problems of a Linguistic Nature,” in *Leadership and Headship: Changing Authority Patterns in an East Greenland Hunting Community* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976); Shouldice, “Padlirmiut Ethnoecology,” 97–98.

²⁰³ Shouldice, “Padlirmiut Ethnoecology,” 99.

interviewed by the Inuit Cultural Institute (ICI) in 1978 explained that they valued hunting and trapping as their core economic base:

Today, many people have become dependent on welfare. While financial relief is good for the old and sick, or for months when the hunt has yielded little food, another alternative should be sought for those ready and willing to work. If the hunting season has been bad or the fox catch poor, the settlement offers few employment opportunities for individuals. It would be ideal if we could live our way (off the land) when it is feasible and be employed otherwise.²⁰⁴

These Elders viewed welfare as disempowering for their community, but also acknowledged that cash also now played an important role in subsistence and commercial hunting and trapping. In the 1980s, long-time Nunavut educator and resident Michael Shouldice found that fur prices influenced hunters. Shouldice found that “when the price paid for furs improves, it is not uncommon for a man to quit working full-time and trap for the season.”²⁰⁵ The price of furs had a direct impact on whether hunters opted for wage work or whether they could earn enough cash through trapping. This demonstrates that hunting and trapping are not exclusively subsistence practices but are also influenced by markets and cash.

Inuit women increasingly postponed marriage beginning in the 1970s and stayed in school longer than boys, with the result that Inuit women began to fill the majority of clerical, educational and retail positions available to Inuit wage workers in their communities.²⁰⁶ Sociologists Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini suggest that girls

²⁰⁴ Shouldice, “Padlirmiut Ethnoecology,” 97.

²⁰⁵ Shouldice, “Padlirmiut Ethnoecology,” 99.

²⁰⁶ The trend of women graduating at higher rates than men continues to be true today in Nunavut as well as across Canada. Ann McElroy, “Canadian Arctic Modernisation and Change in Female Inuit Role Identification,” *American Ethnologist* 2, no. 4 (November 1975): 662–86; Canadian Education Statistics Council, “Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective” (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2017),

are more successful in school partly because of the “early female advantage,” wherein girls across Canada achieve greater success in school at a young age. Mancini Billson and Mancini argue that Inuit girls are less likely to get into trouble in school and respond more positively than boys to the authority of their (often female) teachers.²⁰⁷ Among Inuit, there seem to be still deeper roots than what Mancini Billson and Mancini suggest in their assessment. After all, gendered economic roles impacted attendance at school as early as the 1930s.

Donald Marsh noted that his mission school was dominated by women and children, and men rarely attended because they were seal hunting in the spring and working fishing nets in the summer. Women were more likely to be living near Arviat and were able to attend the evening classes.²⁰⁸ A pattern of school attendance for girls has been established for decades, which creates added expectations for girls that do not exist for young Inuit boys and men. Furthermore, the socialization of Inuit girls to perform household chores on a daily basis as well as behave in certain ways that benefits the household stands in contrast to the less frequent opportunities for performing male-coded chores (i.e. hunting and related tasks).²⁰⁹ Inuit women’s higher educational attainment has

35–36, 43, https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/statcan/81-604-x/81-604-x2017001-eng.pdf.

²⁰⁷ Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini, *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 320.

²⁰⁸ Marsh had to make alterations to his idea of how school looked, as the Paallirmiut’s economic system was seasonal in nature, requiring movements inland and to the coast at different times of the year. Marsh wrote: “The Paallirmiut were, by time-honoured custom, at the coast and at Eskimo Point only for the summer period; the rest of the year they were inland hunting and trapping. For these reasons I decided to hold school in the evenings except for the days when we had service.” Marsh, *Echoes*, 33.

²⁰⁹ Condon and Stern also note that girls were given responsibilities in the household long before a boy is expected to take on their respective responsibilities. Richard G. Condon and Pamela Stern, “Gender-Role Preference, Gender Identity, and Gender Socialization among Contemporary Inuit Youth,” *Ethos* 21, no. 4 (December 1993): 409–12.

meant that they were more likely than men to take on waged jobs, especially the available clerical jobs, in the community.²¹⁰ As discussed in the introductory chapter, women's wage work was (and is) often a method for support for subsistence activities for the household.²¹¹ And, as Usher, Duhaime and Searles explained, the subsistence economy absorbs surplus labour when waged labour opportunities decline, and women's waged labour supports men's ability to provide country food resources.²¹²

2.14. SEWING IN THE SETTLEMENT PERIOD

Inuit women used sewing or other creative productions like printmaking, carving and drawing in the twentieth century to supplement income after the fur trade contracted and Inuit were living in settlements. Arts and Crafts co-operatives were all Qallunaat-initiated, but were managed by Inuit in the community on a day to day level, a quality that scholars and Inuit attribute to playing a significant role in Inuit self-determination.²¹³ Co-operatives dealt with anything from iron ore to fish to handicrafts. Although Arviat did not establish an arts and craft co-op, it had programs run through an Arts and Crafts

²¹⁰ Mancini Billson and Mancini, *Inuit Women*, 320–30.

²¹¹ Condon and Stern, "Gender-Role Preference," 395; Mancini Billson and Mancini, *Inuit Women*, 223; Magalie Quintal-Marineau, "Near the Floe Edge: Inuit Women's Role in the Nunavut Mixed Economy" (PhD Diss., McGill University, 2016).

²¹² Quintal-Marineau, "Floe Edge," 197; Peter J. Usher, Gérard Duhaime, and Edmund Searles, "The Household as an Economic Unit in Arctic Aboriginal Communities, and Its Measurement by Means of a Comprehensive Survey," *Social Indicators Research* 61, no. 2 (February 2003): 178.

²¹³ Helga Goetz, "Inuit Art: A History of Government Involvement," in *In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Native Art*, ed. Canadian Museum of Civilization (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1993), 357–81; Molly McGlennen, "Inuit Agencies: The Legacy of Arctic Art Cooperatives and Indigenous Resistance," in *Visualities 2: More Perspectives on Contemporary American Indian Film and Art*, ed. Denise K. Cummings (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2019), 217–39; Marybelle Myers, "Inuit Arts and Crafts Co-Operatives in the Canadian Arctic," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16, no. 3 (1984): 132–53; Frank G. Vallee, "The Co-Operative Movement in the North," in *Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic*, ed. V. F. Valentine and Frank G. Vallee (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1966), 109–26.

Officer in the 1960s and 1970s.²¹⁴ Arviat carvers and seamstresses developed an aesthetic that is unique to the community despite the lack of a co-op.²¹⁵ Arviat instead relied on a craft shop run by the Department of Economic Development of the Government of the NWT (GNWT) and eventually craft purchases were made through the Northern Co-op Store.²¹⁶ Kiluk Ltd., a craft shop and sewing centre funded by the Nunavut Development Cooperation, opened in 1996 and operates to this day.²¹⁷

Arviaqmiutaq historian Mark Kalluak explains that the arts and crafts industry was federally supported:

The marketing of carvings in Arviat began when Inuit moved off the land to live as a community in the late 50's. Trapping was declining as men could not return to their hunting camps with their families because of their children having to attend school. It was at this period that the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs introduced the idea of carving soapstone, first through an N.S.O (Northern Service Officer). As people attained some knowledge of carving, Arts and Crafts Officers²¹⁸ were then hired to administer the art program. A small house which has once been a low rental unit was used as a crafts shop.²¹⁹

Inuit men and women in Arviat, in association with the Arts and Crafts Officer, worked at carving, sewing and briefly, a tannery.²²⁰ Many carvers and sewers interviewed by

²¹⁴ Arviat seems to have had some connections to the co-op in Qamani'tuaq, but Arviaqmiut were more interested in starting a co-op to deal with sewage and garbage rather than arts and crafts at the time. Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 79–80.

²¹⁵ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, *Eskimo Point Sculpture: The Winnipeg Art Gallery Collection* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1982); Ingo Hessel, "Arviat Stone Sculpture: Born of a Struggle with an Uncompromising Medium," *Inuit Art Quarterly*, Winter 1990.

²¹⁶ Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 22.

²¹⁷ Krista Ulujuk Zawadski, "Where Do We Keep Our Past? Working towards an Indigenous Museum and Preserving Nunavut's Archaeological Heritage" (MA Thesis, University of British Columbia, 2016), keep our past.

²¹⁸ The Arts and Crafts Officers in Arviat were: Dennis Webster (1968-1966), Gabriel Taramanii Gely (1968-1971), David MacArthur (1971-1974), Gina Ausmond, Marlene Nichols, and later Aalu, Jackie Angaksaatsiaq King and David Serkoak served in this role as well. Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone."

²¹⁹ Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 2.

²²⁰ Margaret Uyauperk Aniksak, the grandmother who raised Joy Pameolik Suluk, was involved in a short-lived tannery program, she explained that the tannery, was a project that was moved to Qamani'tuaq,

Mark Kalluak in the early 1990s viewed the program as deeply beneficial to the community. As John Arnalujuak said:

There were all kinds of things going on in one place, tanning leather and skins. It started off to be something really useful, and parka sewing was also in place, adding to a variety of carvers, seamstresses, a tannery, all different ways to make money. Now there is nothing, so I miss all the programs that were in place. ... There is one thing that's been bothering me a lot, lack of good price of fox pelt and other fur bearing animals. Absolutely nothing, no money was put in their place. There is social assistance alright but it's only for food supplement. There is no other money aside from welfare, money that has power to purchase capital equipment such as Ski-doo's and other things. Something must be developed for people like ourselves, Inuit, have an opportunity to make money. ... [arts and crafts] were the only thing that we could turn to at the end of fur trade because people lost interest in it. The craft shop was a real benefit to us at one time, but since it ended we are worse off than ever.²²¹

Arnalujuak understood arts and crafts to be the new fox fur for his community's economy, but spotty support made it difficult for Inuit artists in the 1980s and early 1990s. Nancy Tasseor, a carver, explained in 1991 that "I would be carving a lot more on a regular basis if I knew of a place to take carvings. As it is now, there doesn't seem to be any place at all to take a person's carving. If I were asked to carve though, I'd be more than willing to do it."²²² According to Mark Kalluak:

For people who could not carve there was a lot of interest in marketing sewn items. So on September 1966 Dennis Webster informed the people that "...as soon as the supplies arrive on the boat, I am going to have you all sewing things such as duffel socks, vests, parkas, tapestries and slippers. Also when I have some seal skins tanned you will be able to see [sic] them."

but was a productive opportunity for the community had the will been there to continue it. Uyauperk explained that the tannery "worked out of a small building down by the beach. That was how we began, at first creating only carvings of people moving inland or drum dancing. When it began to progress into other areas [Albert] Nungnilk and I continued to work together. Nungnilk did the sewing while I did the scraping of skins. ...In the tannery we worked mostly on skins, while others were doing carvings. Albert did the sewing and kept records. When I finished with polar bear skins, seal skins, and ordinary [presumably caribou] skins, Albert would sew borders all around the edges. ...When he was done he would sent them out or hang them on the wall as decoration." Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 36-37.

²²¹ Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 23, 43.

²²² Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 96.

A month later a sewing project got underway with Mrs. Pringle in charge. People took their sewings every Friday to an old hostel next to the school now used as a kitchen.²²³

Yet, it was carving, not sewing, that was the major money-earner in Arviat in the 1960s. David Serkoak, who worked at the Arts and Crafts Centre beginning in the 1960s, recalled that in the 1970s, at the height of the carving “craze,” a carver could earn \$200 a week, sometimes more.²²⁴ Joy Hallauk imparted a story of a small stampede into the shop when it first opened as people were desperate to sell their carvings first and Angeline Alikasuak, who was a staff member, recalled that emotions could run very high, some people destroying their work after being asked to file the base to make a carving more stable.²²⁵

The seamstresses I interviewed in Arviat did not mention any specific experiences selling through the GNWT Arts and Crafts Store or at the Northern Co-op Store, though many likely did do so. Most of the women I interviewed recall the important role sewing played in making even a little cash for themselves and their families. Expert sewer and hunter Melanie Tabvahtah of Arviat recalled the hard times she had as a mother in Arviat trying to support her children with limited welfare to provide the cash she needed to live.²²⁶ Tabvahtah sewed tiny kamik earrings from scraps of skins, which helped make

²²³ Kalluak, “Pelts to Stone,” 7.

²²⁴ Kalluak, “Pelts to Stone,” 11.

²²⁵ Alikasuak recalled that some carvers and seamstresses, when told their work was wobbly or not done carefully enough would smash their carvings or throw out their sewing rather than file down the base or re-do the stitches. Kalluak, “Pelts to Stone,” 29, 66.

²²⁶ When I was in Arviat, a knock on the door of the Nunavut Research Institute’s bunkhouse was at least a weekly occurrence. Men would come selling small kamik zipper-pulls, pieces of frozen caribou meat or other handsewn items when the family was short the cash they needed to buy diapers or formula. Likewise, in the hotels at other communities I have spent time in, I would see men and women selling crocheted hats, mittens and other small souvenir items to southerners.

ends meet when she was raising her young children alone (Plate 2.13 shows the tiny paper patterns that Tabvahtah used to make her miniatures kamiks): “I had a hard time many years ago. I got two kids. No money, no job. So, I just do [these miniature kamiks]. ... That was a hard time. ... No money, just selling sewing. Scrap little bit pieces. ... That was ‘73, ‘72. That’s what happened.”²²⁷ Tabvahtah saw her sewing skills as a way to feed her children.

Like Elizabeth Enowyak, years earlier, sewing supplemented welfare and other social supports that were insufficient for her and her children. Tabvahtah’s story is not a singular one, as art historian Ruth Phillips suggests that “abundant anecdotal evidence has been recorded in Native communities to show that women have regularly turned to art commodity production when, for one reason or another, they were left alone to support themselves and their families.”²²⁸ Phillips notes that First Nations women also turned to basket-weaving, quillwork and beadwork to support themselves and their children.²²⁹ Arviat Elder Dorothy Aglukark likewise noted the commercial aspect of her work. While her sewing did not appear to be survival sewing like it was for Tabvahtah, Aglukark sewed for sale when she needed extra income for a particular reason. As she said, she sold her sewing, “When I really need big money. When I’m gonna go south or something [laughs].”²³⁰

²²⁷ Melanie Tabvahtah, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 23, 2018.

²²⁸ Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast 1700 - 1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 254.

²²⁹ Phillips, *Trading Identities*, 254–58, 309.

²³⁰ Dorothy Aglukark, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 25, 2018.

Other sewers would produce sewing to provide important items such as a snowmobile (called a machine in Arviat). For instance, Iqipiriah Eekerkik sewed dolls and wallhangings. According to her granddaughter, Angline Alikasuak with,

the arrival of Arctic Cat snowmobiles which my brother, Leo, wanted very much. I recall grandmother busily sewing a wall hanging and receiving \$600.00 for it. She gave me the money and asked me to go to the co-op with my little brother to buy something. I recall Leo and I heading home on a little machine past the M.O.T. building... the two of us had a lot of fun driving it around. As small as it was we'd let others ride with us. ... Leo won countless friends because of the machine.²³¹

While some women sew for survival, others sew for extra income when they need it. The common thread is that Arviaqmiut women frequently turn to sewing and craft production to obtain that income.

2.15. CONCLUSION

This chapter sought to insert women's economic activities into a general history of Inuit in the southern Kivalliq, especially the area around Arviat. Through this intensive examination of several centuries, I have highlighted the importance of women's work in every period since the first sloops traded with Inuit along the coast in the 1700s. This chapter has demonstrated that the commissioned sewing work of women is part of a long tradition of supplementing and supporting the family economic unit through the production and sale of homemade products. Inuit women sewed throughout the whaling industry, early fur trade and arctic fur trade. Country products such as seal line, sinew, and clothes and kamiks were sold to Qallunaat government agents, traders and visitors well before the relocation of Inuit into communities in Nunavut. By taking a long-term and close-grained approach to the economic history of Inuit women in the southern

²³¹ Kalluak, "Pelts to Stone," 68–69.

Kivalliq, I have shown that Inuit economic strategies have involved trade since 1718 and I have inserted Inuit women's work into this narrative. While I focus primarily on sewing, it should be clear that Inuit women were important partners in the economic and labour history of this region.



Plate 2.2 Two unnamed women peg caribou pelts using pauktutit onto a snow block wall. The bow spirit of the Era is visible, c. 1901. Photograph by George Comer. Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum 1963.1767.34



Plate 2.3 George Comer (Center back row with Audlanaaq (John Ell), son of Nivisanaaq) and crew, Cape Fullerton, Hudson Bay, Canadian Arctic, 1904. Photograph by AP Low. Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum. 1963.1767.242.



Plate 2.4 Malia, John Ell, Ben, Tom Luce and Nivisanaaq. Glass negative by George Comer, 1905. Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.216.



Plate 2.5 “Group of six Ivalik Inuit women and a baby, the woman with the baby in her attigi on her back is Kookooleshook. They are wearing their attigis or beaded parkas, one woman is also wearing her hair in two long decorated braids.” Nivisanaaq is in the front and centre of this photograph, the other women’s names are yet to be confirmed. Photograph by Geraldine Moodie, 1903-04. Photo Courtesy of British Museum Am,A42.22.



Plate 2.6 Nivisanaaq's sungauyaaqtuq. C. 1904. Credit: American Museum of Natural History 60/5758.



Plate 2.7 Unnamed Inuit woman at Pangnirtung, employed by HBC to scrape blubber off skin of white whale. c. 1924. Photograph by Roy Tash. Library and Archives Canada/Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds/a102307. Accession no. 1973-357 NPC, R216 vol. 14996, no. 1924-31.



Plate 2.8 Unnamed Paallirmiutaq hunter with a fox carcass at Padlei Post, c. 1950. Photograph by Henry Voisey. Courtesy of the Henry and Charlotte Voisey collection, Manitoba Museum.



Plate 2.9 “Women [Susie Kaivaluaqjuk] unloading bags of sugar from an Hudson Bay Company barge at Apex, Frobisher Bay, N.W.T., [Iqaluit (formerly Frobisher Bay), Nunavut],” June-September, 1960. Library and Archives Canada/Credit: Rosemary Gilliat Eaton/Rosemary Gilliat Eaton fonds/e010975259. LAC R12438-2465-X-E, vol. 15, no. 41. © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada.



Plate 2.10 Summer picnic around Padlei L-R: Kinaryuak, Mary Voisey (half-hidden by branches and seated behind Kinaryuak), Kinaryuak's daughter Kihiguak in the bluebonnet, and Kinaryuak's son Kipsiyak, one of the men is Karyook, her husband, the other is unknown. The woman in the white shirt and plaid skirt is Charlotte Voisey. Courtesy of the Henry and Charlotte Voisey collection, Manitoba Museum.



Plate 2.11 Mary Kasluratsiak Green and her sons, Probably Mangaliknak (left) and Peter "Coco" Mikeeuneauk (centre), sorting the contents of their tent in Arviat in 1951. Photo By Geert van den Steenhoven, in "Report to Department of northern affairs and national resources on a field research journey for the study of legal concepts among the Eskimos in some parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the summer of 1955."



Plate 2.12 Members of “M” Division R.N.W.M.P. – Royal North West Mounted Police, Fullerton Harbour, 1905, Back: Sgts. Verity, Sellars, Heaps, Sgt. Nicholson, Stothart; Centre (left to right): Sgt. Jarvis, Donaldson, Cst. Russell, McMillan, Alex Moodie; Front (left to right): Interpreter Joe Lane, S/Sgt. Hayne, Supt. Moodie, Insp. Pelletier, Sergeant Major Dee, Interpreter H. Ford; Seated on ground: Sgt. D. MacArthur. Courtesy of the RCMP Historical Collections Unit, Regina, SK.



Plate 2.13 Melanie Tabvahtah’s miniature Kamik pattern in an HBC jewelry box. Photograph by Christina Williamson, 2018.

Chapter 3 THE AMAUTI, LEARNING TO SEW AND WOMEN'S WORK

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The last chapter focused on Inuit working for Qallunaat and the modes of compensation that Inuit women received for using their skill sets in the developing mixed economy from the eighteenth century to the 1970s. This chapter addresses what feminist economists call the unpaid, or reproductive labour, of Inuit women, particularly the work they perform sewing and caring for children. Additionally, I argue that gendered work must be understood as closely tied to gendered knowledge. As a gendered skill in Inuit culture, sewing serves as a lens for thinking about how Inuit transmitted gendered knowledge despite colonial intrusions and disruptions. To do this, I use the amauti to examine the interrelationship of gendered work and knowledge.

This chapter begins by showing how studies about traditional/Indigenous knowledge often fail to acknowledge the gendered nature of that knowledge.¹ Of course, traditions are dynamic and ever-changing, and Indigenous knowledge is more than a static collection of skills and information. I use the term Inuit knowledge in order to reinforce that this is a specific, situated complex of living knowledge and skills (see also the discussion on Inuit knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Chapter 1, section 9).

¹ I use the term Indigenous Knowledge, or Inuit Knowledge, rather than Traditional Knowledge because traditional implies a 'pastness' to the knowledge. I use the term Inuit Knowledge instead of Traditional Knowledge to emphasize that Inuit Knowledge is a living way of knowing. It is best understood as a process of what Bonny describes as, "using, learning, adapting and perpetuating traditional ways of knowing. Eleanor Ayr Bonny, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Knowledge Transmission in a Modern Inuit Community" (MA Thesis, University of Manitoba, 2007), 16. For a more extended conversation on this issue of terminology, see Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, *Finding Dahshaa: Self-Government, Social Suffering and, Aboriginal Policy in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

The amauti, a women's parka with a pouch in the back used for carrying an infant, can be used to analyze Inuit women's sewing work and their associated skills because it is the material expression of both knowledge and work. The amauti is not merely a coat but an entire system that allows women to care for small children while performing other tasks. This complex garment requires highly developed sewing skills and, historically, excellent skin processing skills, for it to support childcare work. It is designed specifically for the kind of work that Inuit women have historically done and Inuit in Arviat continue to wear amautis. These garments are treasured as symbols of Inuit femininity and pride. For the wearer, it also reflects the development of a woman from a young girl to an adult who is inumarriit, that is, someone who is fully formed, fully Inuk.

The next section details how knowledge is transmitted through a discussion of pattern-making techniques and how seamstresses in Arviat transmit those patterns to the next generation. This section establishes that knowledge, history and economics are connected through the tangible – patterns – and the intangible – sewing skills. The sharing, making, and transmitting of patterns reveal moments of rupture in the community and affirm adaptive strategies that maintain the continuity of sewing as an essential cultural and economic practice in the community.

The final section is a study of the presence of isumaqsayuq, Inuit pedagogy, even during the major disruptions in Inuit society caused by settlement. This section tracks how Inuit women learned to sew through camps, mission schools, residential schools and the public school system. This section shows that community-based initiatives intended to preserve Inuit sewing knowledge have a long history in Arviat and demonstrate that Arviaqmiut have consistently valued the skills of Inuit seamstresses in their communities.

3.2. GENDERED KNOWLEDGE, GENDERED WORK

Indigenous women's work has often been interpreted through a bourgeois, Euro-Canadian perspective. This perspective assumes the centrality of male labour (and presumes all systems operate in the Euro-western industrial context), and elides the cultural specificities of gendered divisions of work in non-western contexts. It is worth noting that although I discuss certain kinds of work as gendered, it does not mean that Inuit women never hunt or perform typically male-coded work or vice versa. As many anthropologists and Inuit themselves have noted, nothing prevented Inuit from performing work of the opposite sex when necessary. Inuit historically conceived of gender in flexible terms; names are genderless, children may be raised as the opposite sex to fill a gap in the needs of the family, and Inuit believe that children may change sex as they transition from the womb to being born (*sipiniit*). *Angakkuqs* (shamans) also subverted a binary conception of gender and sex, for instance, by dressing in clothing that had both male and female elements.² All of this is to say that though I use the terms "women's work" and "men's work," they are more closely tied to the type of task rather than the gender of the individual performing the tasks.

The feminist concept of reproductive labour affirms that women's unpaid work in the home (in an industrialized context) is economically relevant.³ The concept of reproductive labour remains useful, despite the rather different economic context that Inuit women have occupied. As we have seen, the Inuit women's world shifted from a

² See the parka of *Qingailisaq*, discussed in Chapter 5, and shown in Plate 5.19. *Saladin d'Anglure* has written extensively on the fluidity of gender in Inuit shamanism. See his first work on the topic here: Bernard *Saladin d'Anglure*, "Foetus Au Chamane: La Construction d'un «troisième Sexe» Inuit," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 10, no. 1–2 (1986): 25–113.

³ *Silvia Federici*, *Wages Against Housework* (Bristol: Falling Wall Press, 1975).

cashless, subsistence economy to a mixed economy during the twentieth century, which involved commercial trapping and wage work. Inuit women continue to undertake the majority of the work in the home. Reproductive labour, as conceived in this dissertation, includes both the work of raising and rearing children, and unpaid work such as sewing, cooking, butchering and managing food, both in a camp and settlement context. Since Inuit women's camp work was focused on cooking, sewing and childcare, non-Inuit made assumptions about the gendered divisions of labour by defining men as sole breadwinners (Man the Hunter), and Inuit women's work as under the dominion of men, like that of a Christian housewife.⁴ This perspective is not reflective of the Inuit economy in which women's work is interdependent with men's work, and constitutes a critical half of an economic unit.

Aluki Rojas and Karla Jessen Williamson have argued that colonial processes have systematically marginalized Indigenous women and, in so doing, obscured the clearly defined but equitable male and female roles among Inuit.⁵ Inuit scholars maintain that Inuit gendered work roles were complementary rather than hierarchical. Aluki Rojas explains:

The relationship and interaction between Inuit women and Inuit men can be symbolized as the wings of a bird. In order for the bird to fly up high both wings must do their part; likewise, in an Inuit society, both women and men

⁴ See for instance, this magazine article that not only frames Inuit as stone-age cave people, but also projects a very particular vision of gender roles (man the hunter, woman the wife) on Ahiarmiut. Lincoln Barnett, "The Epic of Man: A Mesolithic Age Today: Caribou Eskimos Illustrate Its Culture," *LIFE Magazine*, February 27, 1956.

⁵ Aluki Rojas, "Iglumi Isumatait: A Reinterpretation of the Position of Inuit Women" (MA Thesis, Trent University, 2001); Karla Jessen Williamson, *Inherit My Heaven: Kalaallit Gender Relations* (Nuuk: Naalakkarsuisut: Government of Greenland, 2011); Karla Jessen Williamson, "Men's and Women's Spheres among Couples from Maniitsoq (Greenland)," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 30, no. 1 (August 1, 2007): 123–33.

have to carry their own burden in order for the society to function smoothly and in a sense fly high.⁶

While Inuit women and men have historically held defined roles, “they made up a team, complemented each other, and were very much in equal standing,” argued Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley.⁷ Indeed, several Inuit note how men were not the heads of households in the Euro-Canadian sense.⁸ For instance, men decided when to move camp, when and where to hunt, but women managed the camp.⁹ Inuit Educator Beatrice Watts described the role of Inuit women as one centred on family and extended family as a head of household.¹⁰ Valerie Alia found that one Inuk “never referred to the house as my father’s house the house, it was my mother’s domain. So I would have considered my mother as ‘head of the household.’ My grandmother was head of her household; my aunt was head of her household.”¹¹

⁶ Rojas, “Iglumi Isumatait,” 23.

⁷ Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley, *A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit*, second (Long Gove: Waveland Press, 2006), 18.

⁸ The mutual dependence between men and women’s roles was recognized in camp, but many scholars acknowledge that women’s power or authority operated in a more covert fashion than that of men. Women had the ability to decide to divorce, were shamans, and could hunt and trap, but there are many instances where women were still required to subordinate their needs over the needs of their husbands. Some suggest that this be more a situation of individuals’ personalities determine the dynamics in the family rather than socially-prescribed roles of masculine dominance. Barbara Bodenhorn, “‘I’m Not the Great Hunter, My Wife Is:’ Inupiat and Anthropological Models of Gender,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 14, no. 1–2 (1990): 65–66; Jean L. Briggs, “Eskimo Women: Makers of Men,” in *Many Sisters: Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Carolyn J. Mathiasen (New York: Free Press, 1974); Nancy Wachowich, “Pond Inlet Women Speak About Power” (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1994), 25–26, 31, 77–78.

⁹ Inuk advocate and educator Martha Flaherty explains how “women were traditionally responsible for decisions about children, food preparation and the running of the camp.” Martha Flaherty, “Transcript: Ottawa” (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Ottawa, November 2, 1993), <https://perma.cc/8DP3-XLBL>.

¹⁰ *Arnait: The Views of Inuit Women on Contemporary Issues* (Ottawa: Pauktuutit, 1991), 10.

¹¹ Valerie Alia, *Names and Nunavut: Culture and Identity in Arctic Canada* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 57; Valerie Alia, “Inuit Women and the Politics of Naming in Nunavut,” *Canadian Woman Studies* 14, no. 4 (1994): 11.

The complementarity of Inuit men's and women's knowledge is a key feature of gendered labour in Inuit society. Traditional law Keeper and Elder Lucien Ukalianuk of Iglulik explained, "women can do amazing things. So can men. We all do, and we all do [our work] together in order to survive."¹² Reproductive work roles and their skills were important in the camp context. Esliapee Ootoova, an Elder from Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), explains these land-based interactions in terms of love:

A woman has a husband, and whatever her husband catches while he is out on the land [will be taken care of because] the things he catches will be cleaned, the hunter is proud that his clothing will be made. ... He will know that he is well taken care of. And when this happens, he knows that he is loved.¹³

To sew for kin is to show love, or devotion and pride in the same way that hunting for kin shows love and devotion.¹⁴ Women sew skins (which come from the land), and their labour allows their kin to travel and continue to hunt. These are acts that, D. Lee Guemple explains, were done *for* the other sex.¹⁵ The dynamics of camp life that Ootoova describes show how everyone in the camp understood women's sewing work as crucial labour.

The mutual dependence between men's traditional knowledge, skills and work and Inuit women's work, especially sewing, was integral to the economic success of the

¹² Lucien Ukalianuk, quoted in Holly Ann Dobbins, "Nunavut, a Creation Story. The Inuit Movement in Canada's Newest Territory" (PhD Diss., Syracuse University, 2019), 257.

¹³ Elisapee Ootoova, Inuit Qaujimagatiqangit and Knowledge Transmission in a Modern Inuit Community: Perceptions and Experiences of Mittimatalingmiut Women, interview by Eleanor Ayr Bonny, 2006.

¹⁴ Richard G. Condon and Pamela Stern, "Gender-Role Preference, Gender Identity, and Gender Socialization among Contemporary Inuit Youth," *Ethos* 21, no. 4 (December 1993): 391–92; D. Lee Guemple, "Men and Women, Husbands and Wives: The Role of Gender in Traditional Inuit Society," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 10, no. 1/2 (1986): 12–14.

¹⁵ Guemple, "Men and Women," 14.

camp, and her work was land-based like men's work. As Inuk CBC broadcaster Jonah

Kelly explained:

Men and women had traditional roles, but each needed the other. Neither one was better than the other. Women could sew, that was her greatest skill. She can sew something that fits you, is waterproof and lightweight and will keep you dry and warm to minus 70 degrees. She can't do that without materials. ...But when we come home, we bring the meat to the women. Why? Because she knows who needs it most. We are different. We have traditional roles. But we each one [sic] without the other cannot survive. If that is not equality, I don't know what is.¹⁶

Inuit women's roles were just as fundamental to traditional harvesting as were men's roles in a camp context: both sets of skills, knowledge and labour maintained the community.¹⁷ For instance, the Inupiat classify sewing as a hunting skill, as summarized by one of Barbara Bodenhorn's consultants who said, "I'm not the great hunter; my wife is."¹⁸ Sewing makes hunting possible, and hunting makes sewing possible: they are mutually constituted.

Even if a modern seamstress works with fabric rather than skins, the hunter's cash supports the purchase of fabrics that, in turn, provide warm clothing for the hunter to hunt. Inuit advocate and educator Martha Flaherty explained the impact of being competent in one's respective work: "If a woman was a sloppy sewer, her husband might freeze; a man who was a poor hunter would have a hungry family."¹⁹ The knowledge and skills of each therefore ensured the well-being of the whole. Each camp member had a

¹⁶ Jonah Kelley, quoted in: Dobbins, "Creation Story," 257.

¹⁷ Phillip Bird, "Intellectual Property Rights and the Inuit Amauti: A Case Study. Prepared for the World Summing on Sustainable Development" (Ottawa: Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2002), 5–6.

¹⁸ Bodenhorn, "Not the Great Hunter," 64.

¹⁹ Flaherty, "Transcript: Ottawa."

particular role and performed specific tasks and duties based on age, gender and capabilities.²⁰

Inuit women's traditional knowledge and labour are still profoundly linked to the land and environment.²¹ If hunting is a land-based economic activity, and sewing is intrinsically connected to hunting, then sewing itself is a land-based economic activity as well. The connection between gender and land-based skills continues even in the context of the market economy. For instance, Aharmiut Elder Elizabeth Enowyak described selling her sewing, first at trading posts and later to southern museums. Later in life, Enowyak, explained how "one of the museums like in Winnipeg asked me to make amauti out of caribou but I had no caribou skins and my husband passed away so I didn't make one because he used to get me caribou skins."²² Her quote speaks to how gendered work roles are deeply intertwined even today. She could not accept a commission because she was unable to obtain skins to produce the desired caribou skin amauti. While some women in Arviat such as Melanie Tabvahtah, hunt themselves, most share the work of caribou hunting, processing and sewing with their spouse or children. Inuit women have taken up available waged work, which also supports male family members' hunting, or allows women some independence that might not have otherwise been possible.²³

²⁰ Flaherty, "Transcript: Ottawa."

²¹ Anthropologist Béatrice Collignon also notes a distinction between women's and men's spatial knowledge that is born out of how men and women experience and travel differently. Béatrice Collignon and Linna Weber Müller-Wille, *Knowing Places: The Inuinait, Landscapes, and the Environment* (Edmonton: CCI Press, 2006), 31; Ootoova, Knowledge Transmission, 43.

²² Elizabeth Enowyak, interview by Christina Williamson, video, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 16, 2018.

²³ Condon and Stern, "Gender-Role Preference"; Nicole Gombay, "The Politics of Culture: Gender Parity in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 24, no. 1 (2000): 134–35.

Some may challenge the notion that sewing is a land-based skill in a contemporary context, as men can technically purchase clothes from the store to go out hunting, and some do so. During my research visit in Arviat in 2018, most men I watched going out on the land to hunt or trap were wearing homemade fabric parkas, homemade fur mittens, store-bought or homemade windpants and homemade kamiks or store-bought rubber insulated boots. My observations, coupled with my interviews suggest that sewing continues to support subsistence hunting and commercial trapping.

3.3. THE AMAUTI

3.3.1. Parkas: A Primer

Having established the relevance of Inuit women's reproductive labour in the camp and settlement context, it is now possible to consider the amauti, that is a woman's parka, as a garment that facilitates women's work. The amauti reflects Inuit women's experience, work and role within their community. Historically, the style of amauti adult Inuit women wore has been a pullover parka with a large hood and an amaut (pouch) for carrying a child. While both scholars and Inuit organizations have largely considered amautis from a cultural standpoint, the amauti also plays a vital role in women's work and in the family unit's economic wellbeing. This section will discuss the historical and contemporary place that the amauti holds as a tool for childcare and other labour and how it signals a woman's status in her community.

There are many types of amautis, each with its own name. Figure 3.1 schematizes the different women's parkas referred to throughout this dissertation. The style historically worn by Inuit women in Arviat is called a tuilli. Tuillis are a specific type of amauti typical of the Kivalliq region: it has a narrow pouch for the infant set high on the

back, the hood is long and oval, and the hood's opening is a long slit. Tui, the Inuktitut word for shoulder, provides a hint of the most distinctive characteristic of the tuilli amauti: the broad, U-shaped shoulders that resemble epaulettes. These tuis are a feature distinct from amautis made to the north and east of Kivalliq. The kiniq (front apron flap) typically hits around the knee and is U-shaped. Similarly, the akuq (back tail flap) is also broadly U-shaped and hits the wearer at the calf or ankle.

An atigi tuilli (Plate 3.1) has the fur facing inwards against the wearer's skin, while a qullitaq (Plate 3.2) has the fur facing outwards. Atigi tuillis are more like the clothing women would wear day-to-day, while qullitaqs would typically be worn when it was very cold and layer over top of the atigi layer. Beaded tuillis are a sub-category of tuillis and are called hungauyaliks in Arviat (Plate 3.3). Today, Arviaqmiut might wear tuillis made from fabric for special occasions, but wear Qikiqtaaluk-style amautis on a day-to-day basis; Plate 3.4 is an example of an akuliq-style amauti from northern Qikiqtaaluk.

Men's parkas are less complex in their construction than amautis (Figure 3.2). Like with women's parkas, a men's caribou outer parka is generally called a qullitaq; and the term atigi is used to describe a caribou parka with the fur on the inside. Similar to women's beaded tuillis, a men's beaded atigi is also called hungauyalik. In the mid-nineteenth century, a man might have a skin atigi with a fabric hilapaaq (fabric shell or cover) worn to protect the fur atigi. Today, men frequently wear a hilapaaq for indoor occasions such as banquets, political events, lectures and celebrations, in the same way one might wear a suit.

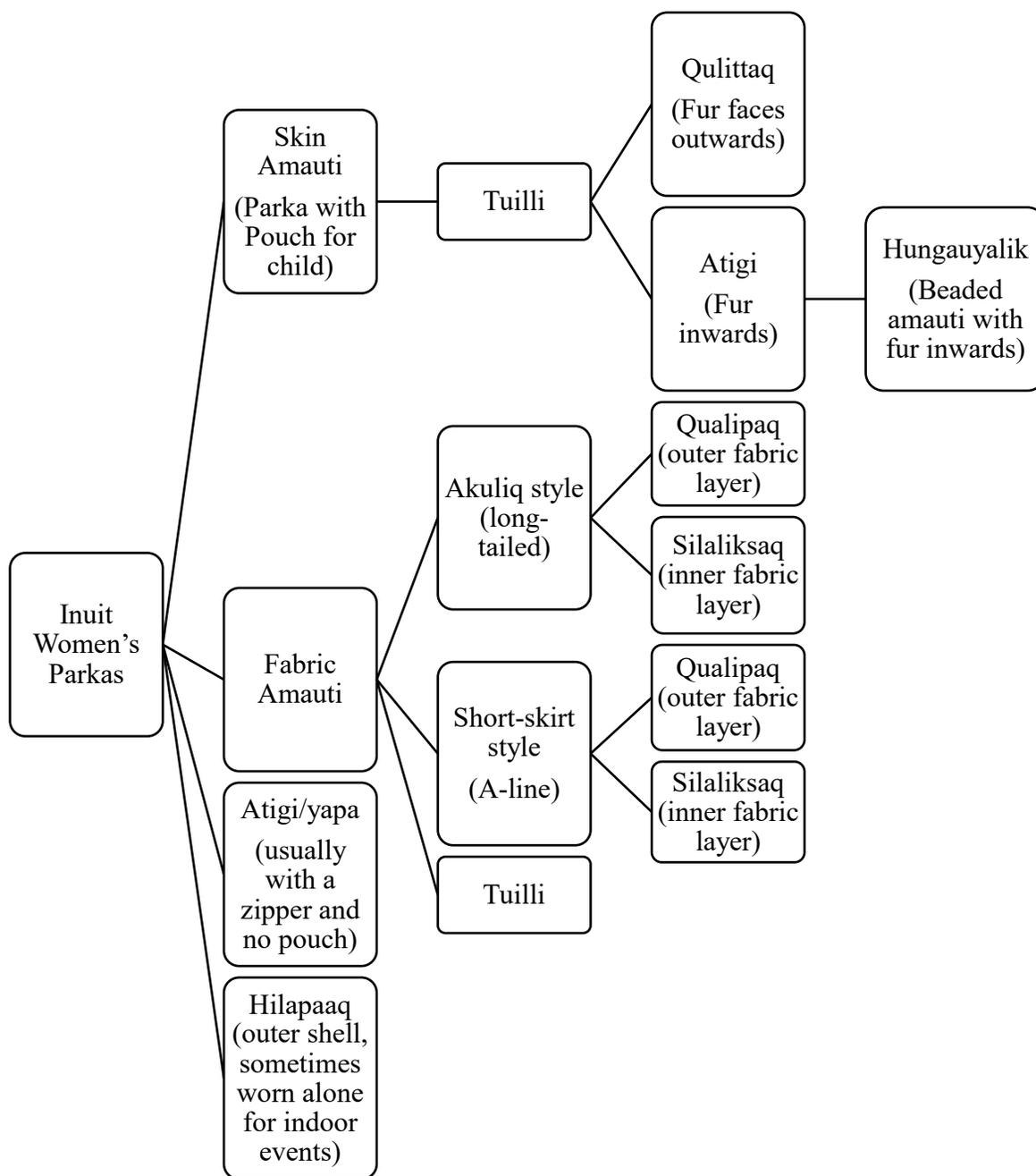


Figure 3.1 Schema of Inuit women's parkas and how they relate to each other.

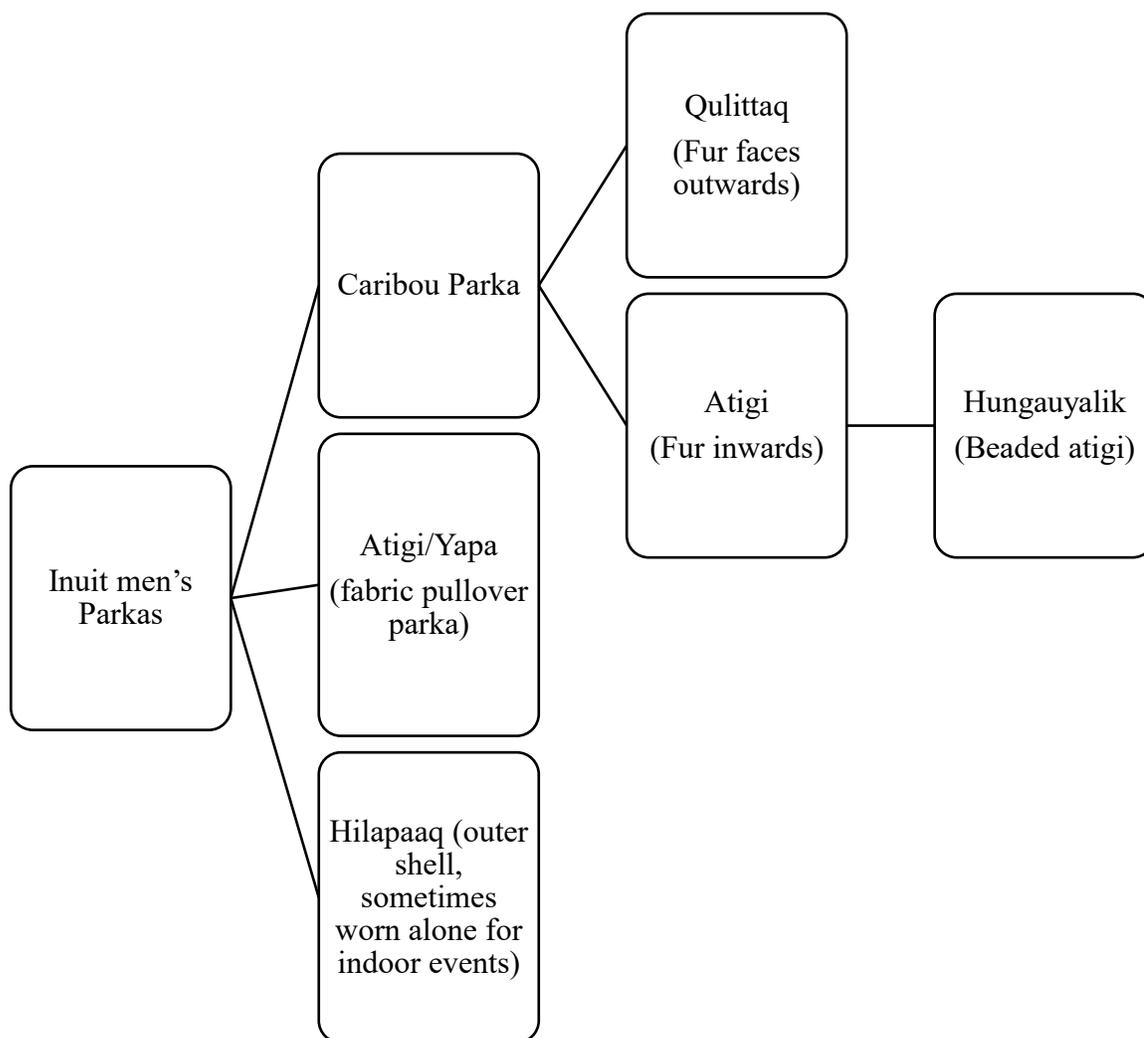


Figure 3.2 Schema of Inuit men's parkas and how they relate to each other.

3.3.2. Growth and Development in the Amauti

Historically, amautis, and the garments worn by girls that before they were old enough to wear an amauti, were material expressions of a female's status in her community; that is, it showed her skills and knowledge as well as her age and place in her family (i.e., mother, grandmother, unwed). It also implied labour roles, as young girls and older women did not typically have a functional amaut. For instance, an infant who lacks ihuma (the ability to think and reason) was naked except for a bonnet. The child later graduated to an akulaaq, a one-piece snowsuit, before wearing a modified version of what adults wear, likely because this teen had no little siblings to help take care of. For very young girls, a tuilli with smaller shoulders, a small kiniq and no amaut was typical, as seen in the photograph of two young girls in Plate 3.5.

As a girl grew up, her amaut, or pouch, would be gradually enlarged, symbolizing her growing position as a woman in her community. There was substantial variation in the shape of the akuq and the kiniq for young girls.²⁴ For instance, a young teenager in Plate 3.6 has no amaut, while the much younger girl in Plate 3.7 is wearing a tuilli that looks very similar to that of an adult's. As girls grew older, hoods became longer and wider, and the shoulders broadened. According to Oakes, "Inuit men say these changes are made to attract the opposite sex's attention."²⁵ A full-fledged tuilli would signal that a girl had reached full maturity, though there is conflicting information about which detail of the garment was most significant in this vestimentary pronouncement. A young woman of

²⁴Jill Oakes noted that "the tail silhouette varied in length and shape. Generally, it is about one handspan long and the same width. It usually tapers from the hemline up to the waistline; some silhouettes are roundish while others have shape corners. Similar back tails were worn by children in Qamani'tuaq." Jill E. Oakes, "Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production" (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 1988), 146.

²⁵Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 149.

marriageable age had a squared-off or folded up akuq. The teenaged girls in Plate 3.5 and Plate 3.6 are wearing garments that show this squared-off akuq. Arviamiut Elder Joy Pameok Suluk explained that in the early twentieth century, the hems of unmarried girls' akuqs were "squared off at the bottom. Unmarried girls had half cut off. With this string, they pulled it up."²⁶ The tuilli of the young woman in Plate 3.6 is a particularly elegant iteration with a slightly curved hem, but the usual band of pukiq (white caribou fur found on its belly) around the bottom is absent, giving it the effect of being squared or cut off. The strings holding up the akuq may have been cut at first menstruation or when a woman was married and had her first child.²⁷ Anthropologist Kaj Birket-Smith, by contrast, stated that it was the full-size hood, worn at first menstruation, that was the sign that a girl had entered womanhood and could marry.²⁸

In Inuit traditional knowledge paradigms, a child is born without the ability to reason (lacks ihuma), and it is through the development of skills, learning lessons and, most importantly, carefully observing and mimicking their elders that a child becomes inumariit.²⁹ Historically, children would develop the skills needed to be a full-fledged,

²⁶ Andrew Graham, an HBC trader from the 1760s, mentioned seeing akuqs tied between the legs. This mention suggests that the practice of tying up an akuq is an old one. It is possible that the tying of the akuq behind rather than between the legs is a newer fashion. It is worth noting that wearing trousers, stockings and tying up the kiniq in this manner would be quite ungainly, especially if the woman was wearing both an inner and outer amauti, which suggests a misinterpretation on Graham's part. If this is a misinterpretation on Graham's part, and the akuq was tied up in the back, it still confirms that the mode of wearing an akuq has a heritage of depicting the stage of life of Inuit women. Andrew Graham, *Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay 1767-91*, ed. Glyndwr Williams (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1969), 215–17; Joy Pameok Suluk, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 6, 2018.

²⁷ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 149.

²⁸ Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, vol. I: Descriptive Part (Copenhagen: Gyldeddalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1929), 223.

²⁹ Inumariit is often used to refer specifically to the generations of Inuit who lived on the land prior to settlement. Inuit who today embody Inuit knowledge, beliefs, values and traditions of inumariit can be called inummarittut: those who behave in the manner of inumariit. The term inumariit is also

capable Inuk, with all Inuit knowledge needed to successfully live on the land by copying parents through play:

The Inuit traditional knowledge associated with *inummarit* is based on a holistic framework of reference holding knowledge on the environment; animals; skills; ways of proper conduct; values; language; ways of conflict resolution; etc. This knowledge is highly valued and serves as a guide for living properly as Inuit ...³⁰

For instance, girls would mimic their mothers, aunties, and grannies and amaq (pack items in their amauts) such as dolls, puppies and their younger siblings (Plate 3.7 and Plate 3.8).³¹ Elder and midwife Saullu Nakasuk of Pangniqtuuq (Pangnirtung) explained that as a child, “I used to play house. I used to carry a puppy in my amauti.”³² Carrying puppies was a form of play and a child’s contribution to their family group as they travelled inland or to the coast, depending on the season. For example, the seasonal travel on foot from Arviat inland for the caribou hunt involved every family member.

Anglican Missionary Winifred Petchey Marsh explained:

Winifred Petchey Marsh: The Eskimos going away in the fall [on foot] and the affluent ones going by whale boat. They would go up the Maguse River. And their poorer relatives, the *Ahiarmiut*, they would walk. It shows you getting ready with the dogs packed up with their dog packs or carrying a tent pole. Even children had to carry puppies. If they were too tiny they would have to carry a puppy in their amaut or a shawl. The picture I did was

used to refer to modern Inuit who strive to live a “true way of life.” See Brody and Mary Elizabeth Piercey-Lewis for discussions about the meaning of this term. Hugh Brody, “Inummarit: The Real Eskimo,” in *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project*, ed. Milton Freeman Research Limited, vol. 2 (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976), 223–26; Mary Elizabeth Piercey-Lewis, “‘Inulariuyunga; Imngirnik Quvigiyaaqtunga!’ - I’m a Real Inuk; I Love to Sing!: Interactions between Music, Inummarit, and Believe in an Inuit Community since Resettlement” (PhD Diss., St. John’s, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2015).

³⁰ A. Nicole Stuckenberger, “Sociality, Temporality and Locality in a Contemporary Inuit Community,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 30, no. 2 (February 7, 2008): 102.

³¹ Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, “Pretending to Be Caribou: The Inuit Parka as an Artistic Tradition,” in *The Spirit Sings*, ed. Julia Harrison (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 186.

³² Quoted in, Saullu Nakasuk et al., *Interviewing Elders: Introduction*, ed. J. G. Oosten and Frédéric Laugrand (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999), 63.

of an old, old lady carrying a tent and everything.³³ All they went with was a tea kettle and some tea and they would hunt on the way. And they would have to work. The teenage girls would chew on seal skin that they got when they were at the coast.

Marsha Twomey: So, they weren't just walking, they were working.

Winifred Petchey Marsh: Working as well; ready to make boots.³⁴

Marsh's recollections highlight the many kinds of work carried out by women of different ages. For younger girls, for example, chewing on skins to soften them as they walked was part of their education in sewing – they learned simpler tasks before moving to more complex aspects of skin sewing work.

3.3.3. Childcare and the Amauti in the Pre-Settlement Period

Amautis were used to carry, nurse and nurture babies and supported other work that women performed. This section breaks down the various functions of each part of the amauti to understand how the entire garment functioned as an object that aids someone in their work and lives.

3.3.3.1. *The Amaut and Hood*

The amauti frequently caught the eyes of explorers and anthropologists who described amautis used by the Inuit women with varying degrees of accuracy. In one of the earliest such descriptions in the Kivalliq regions, HBC Factor Andrew Graham described how women's clothing worked to assist in childcare in the 1760s:

The women's hoods are monstrously large; and are used as a cradle, or receptacle of the children, who toss about in it without any covering. The

³³ See *Starting the Fall Migration*, Winifred Petchey Marsh, *People of the Willow: The Padlimiut Tribe of the Caribou Eskimo* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 28; Maureen Matthews, "Winifred Petchey Marsh," in *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment*, ed. Sarah Milroy (Toronto: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2021), 59–67.

³⁴ Winifred Petchey Marsh, Transcription of Taped Interview with Mrs. Winifred Petchey Marsh, interview by Marsha Twomey, transcription, March 23, 1976, Manitoba Museum.

belt round the mother's waist prevents the child from slipping down to the ground. The boots are so large in the tops, that I have often seen the infant put into them, when the nurse has been wearied or busy; and it has room sufficient to turn itself or play. The garters prevent the child from slipping below the knee.³⁵

Graham's description confirms that large hoods were a key component of amautis in the eighteenth century and that the amaut functioned in the same way as it does today, though he conflates the two.³⁶ Graham also notes that "those women who give suck, have an opening from the neck of the frock a little way down the middle of the bosom, for applying the children to the breast."³⁷ I have not encountered any other mentions of a nursing slit, nor any evidence of this particular attribute in museum amautis, but baby's snowsuit openings with an akulaaq, a small slit in the crotch for young children to urinate

³⁵ Graham, *Observations*, 218.

³⁶ While seemingly improbable, some outsider accounts also include depictions of infants in women's boots. Henry Ellis, for instance, described women of the Hudson Strait's boots, "are commonly stuck out with Sticks of Whalebone, because when they want to lay their Child out of their Arms, they flip it into one of their Boots, till they can take it up again." Most depictions of keeping a child in a boot or stockings are from Inuit of Labrador. For instance, there is the 1773 portrait by Angelica Kauffman, which depicts an infant in the woman's boots. There is also an etching from 1812 of a man and woman from Labrador. The woman is wearing polar bear fur breeches and an infant in her boot. Roger Curtis wrote that "in the boots they occasionally place their children; but the youngest is always carried at the back, in the hood of their jacket." Babies placed in boots were also mentioned in a questionnaire designed by Sir Hugh Palliser in 1765 put to Inuit temporarily camped at Charles Bay, north of Chateau, Labrador. In it, the Moravian missionary Christian Drachard recorded that "when they sit they thrust the child in their boot."

No contemporary oral histories were located that confirmed or denied this practice in Kivalliq, and the practice in Labrador appears to have ceased by the 1850s. The exclusive use of tuktuqtiik (knee-high caribou boots) with qarlik (vertical trousers), or kamiks replacing tuktuqtiik avalluliik, the large stockings hitched at the hips, makes this practice practically impossible. Roger Curtis, "Particulars of the Country of Labradore...," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 64 (February 24, 1774): 383; Henry Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's-Bay by the Dobbs Galley and California* (Dublin: Printed for George and Alexander Ewing, 1749), 64; Garret and Chapman, *Esquimaux Indians of the Coast of Labrador, Communicated by a Moravian Missionary*, 1812, hand-coloured engraving, 24cm x 19.2 cm, 1812, R13133-199-1-E, vol. 12, no. 2837882, LAC; Angelica Kauffmann, *Woman in Eskimo Clothing from Labrador*, c 1768, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 76.5 cm, c 1768, R 10301-0-6-E, vol. 1978-23-1, C-095201, LAC; Sylvie Pharand, *Caribou Skin Clothing of the Igloolik Inuit* (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media, 2012), 82, 86; J. G. Taylor, "Eskimo Answers to an Eighteenth Century Questionnaire," *Ethnohistory* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1972): 135-44.

³⁷ Graham, *Observations*, 219.

and defecate, are well-established. As such, it may have been possible that a slit was present and perhaps hidden behind a beaded panel.

British explorer William Parry described how Iglulingmiut women used their amautis around Winter Island in the 1820s, more than eighty years after Graham made his commentary:

The hood of the jacket, which forms the only covering for their head, is much the largest in that of the women, for the purpose of holding a child. The back of the jacket also bulges out in the middle to give the child a footing, and a strap or girdle below this, and secured round the waist by two large wooden buttons in front, prevents the infant from falling through, when, the hood being in use, it is necessary thus to deposit it. The sleeves of the women's jackets are made more square and loose about the shoulders than those of the men, for the convenience, as we understood, of mere readily repositing a child in the hood ...³⁸

For newborns in Kivalliq, women might also keep their babies in a small pouch, or bunting bag, before carrying them in the amauti. According to James William Tyrell, “new-born infants ... are sometimes kept in a rabbit-skin or bag of feathers for a time before being carried upon the mother's back.”³⁹ However, children are soon transitioned to the amauti and for, “about two years are carried in the hood upon their mother's back. During this time they have no clothing apart from their mother's.”⁴⁰

Infants were naked in the amauti except for a bonnet during the early twentieth century. There were a variety of solutions for dealing with urine and feces, such as using

³⁸ William Edward Parry, *Journal of the Third Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage...* (London: Cassell, 1889), 141.

³⁹ James W. Tyrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada: A Journey of 3,200 Miles by Canoe and Snowshoe through the Hudson Bay Region*, 3rd edition (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1908), 165.

⁴⁰ Tyrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics*, 165.

moss or caribou fur as a diaper.⁴¹ Arviaqmiutuk Elder, Joy Pameok Suluk's father-in-law, Donald Suluk, described the process in more detail:

A piece of caribou skin (from the neck part of the animal) was used as a diaper for the child while being carried in the mother's *amouti* [sic] (women's parka). When the diaper became wet, a caribou shoulderblade bone was used to immediately scrape off the baby's urine before the skin was dried. If it wasn't possible to dry the diaper right away, it was frozen, then beaten to get rid of the urine and dried against the warm part of the mother's clothing.⁴²

Other Inuit groups had different diapering methods, but regardless of the details, carrying babies in the *amauti* meant that mothers were able to manage babies' bodily functions quickly and efficiently.⁴³

South Baffin Elder Uqsuralik Ottokie of Kinngait explained: "We had constant communication and that's why they were toilet trained very quickly. Today they don't learn as fast. In the old days, before they even reached one year of age they knew how to

⁴¹ Raigilie Uyarasok of Iglulik explained that: "I used a diaper cut from the neck section of a bull caribou skin on my eldest daughters. Diapers were reused. I remember using a caribou shoulder blade to scrape the dirty diaper clean. Then we got Pampers." Joly Suluk likewise described using the neck of a caribou because the fur is long and soft, which made it better at absorbing messes. "I'd rather settle for a caribou neck because ... the fur is really long and really soft," she explained. Raigilie Uyarasok, quoted in Jill E. Oakes, *Inuit Annuraangit Our Clothes: A Travelling Exhibition of Inuit Clothing* (Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press, 2005), 14; Suluk, interview; Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 46.

⁴² Donald Suluk, "Inummariit: An Inuit Way of Life," *Inuktitut*, Winter 1987, 35.

⁴³ Inuvialuit in the early twentieth century had a more formal diaper: "Within the snow-hut or tent a baby sprawled stark naked on bedskins, or wore only a caribou-fur diaper, covered at times with a second diaper of either caribou or sealskin that fastened around the waist with a cord." Around 1936, a sealskin baby diaper was found near Point Barrow and is approximately 1200-1000 years of age. The baby pants are quite complex, and according to James A. Ford, "These are for a waist about 64 cm. in circumference and are well made of sealskin, with the fur turned inside. The doubled, triangular portion of the garment which passes between the legs is made of brown sealskin; the leg openings are tastefully edged with light-colored skin strips. A de-haired and bleached sealskin strip sewed around the waist carries a braided sinew drawstring that ties in front." The diapers described here are in the American Museum of Natural History Collection. James A. Ford, "Eskimo Prehistory in the Vicinity of Point Barrow, Alaska" (New York: American Museum of Natural history, 1959), 220; Diamond Jenness, *Material Culture of the Copper Eskimo* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1946), 43; Unknown Inupiaq ancestor, *Seal Skin Baby Pants*, n.d., Sealskin, n.d., 242284, National Museum of Natural History.

go to the toilet. They learned really quickly.”⁴⁴ This quick training was possible because “a tell-tale wiggle or movement would let mom know that it was time, then she could reach back and move the baby from the pouch to the front, allowing the baby to relieve itself onto the ground while still being protected by the front panel of the amauti.”⁴⁵ The amaut meant mother and child were in constant skin-to-skin contact, which meant mothers had a strong sense of the state of their infants and were able to manage their children’s bodily functions with relative ease.

The amauti also supported other forms of labour not directly related to childcare but which frequently occurred while packing a child. Such work included collecting willow for fuel and transporting supplies during the seasonal relocations of camp. Collecting large bundles of willow for firewood was an essential aspect of women’s work in the Arviat region in the early twentieth century, especially for inland Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut, who used willow twigs and caribou fat for fuel. Coastal Inuit, in contrast, had access to seal and whale blubber for their qulliqs (long, shallow lamps that provided heat and light). It took a great deal of effort to collect willow. Kaj Birket-Smith described the method that Paallirmiut women used to carry burdens such as willow twigs and packs when travelling from inland to the coast and back as seasons shifted:

The Caribou Eskimos are excellent walkers who, in summer do not shrink from considerable distances. Thus in August the coast dwellers must travel in over the snow-free country from the sea in order to get to the caribou crossing-places. On these journeys, they carry good-sized burdens. The

⁴⁴ Naqi Ekho and Uqsuralik Ottokie, *Interviewing Inuit Elders: Childrearing Practices*, ed. Jean Briggs (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 2000), 13.

⁴⁵ Kassina Ryder, “Anatomy of an Amauti: An Inuit Tradition Revitalized by Seamstresses and Backed by Scientists,” *Up Here*, April 2017, <https://perma.cc/RB24-8MUY>.

women no less than the men. For this purpose they use trump-lines [burden strap] (na'ḡmautAq), which are laid over both forehead and breast.⁴⁶

Plate 3.9 shows a photograph of a woman laden with a large bundle of willow and her sleeping infant on top. Here, the hood of her amauti is used to cushion the load from the burden strap, or tumpline. The hood was also a good place for storing small items such as mittens that were not in use and other small items.⁴⁷

3.3.3.2. Tui: Shoulders

The unique design of the tuilli, with its enlarged shoulders, allowed women to take their arms out of the sleeves easily to move and reposition children while keeping them ensconced in the warmth of the amauti. The oversized shoulders facilitated nursing. As Driscoll-Engelstad explained:

The large shoulders of the Central Arctic amautik allow the child to be passed over the shoulder from the amaut to the breast for feeding without ever leaving the warmth and protection of the parka. Indeed, the shoulders (tui) of the Copper, Padlimiut, Qaernermiut, Aivilingmiut and Iglulingmiut are accentuated to accommodate this practice.⁴⁸

In particular, the shape of the tuilli, with its epaulette shoulders, allowed for easy nursing without exposing the naked infant. Joy Pameok Suluk explained the manoeuvre: “These have a reason when you’re traveling in a qamutik, in the cold and you want to feed your

⁴⁶ Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, vol. II: Analytical Part (Copenhagen: Gyldeddalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1929), 184.

⁴⁷ Kakpiks are a sewing kit that stowed needles and other sewing equipment such as awls, creasers and thimbles attached to a thong on its end. Paallirmiut and Qaernirmiut women generally kept their sewing kits tied to the thong on their chest, but it is likely that some women stored their kakpiks in their hoods, at least for short periods. Often beautifully made, these kits were proudly displayed and kept within easy reach. Paallirmiut women of the 1920s might have a decorated kakpik of bone or ivory or a sewing kit made of fabric, skin or bird skins or another material. Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929, I: Descriptive Part:248–50; Krista Ulujuk Zawadski, “Lines of Discovery on Inuit Needle Cases, Kakpiit, in Museum Collections,” *Museum Anthropology* 41, no. 1 (March 2018): 61–75.

⁴⁸ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, “The Inuit Parka: A Preliminary Survey” (MA Thesis, Carleton University, 1983), 100.

baby you just take the baby and flip him over his head ... in one of these and you would feed him. And without ever taking the baby out.”⁴⁹

The oversized shoulders allowed for an ease of movement within the garment and meant that it operated a bit like a wearable shelter. While keeping a naked infant warm was necessary, the amauti also allowed mothers to regulate the temperature of infants. Mothers were able to ensure their babies were neither too hot nor too cold and could feel the infant’s body temperature. If a baby was too hot when travelling, she might pull the child out for a few moments to cool down.⁵⁰ Airflow is key to avoiding sweating in caribou skin parkas, and Inuit could allow cold air to enter either from the neck opening or the bottom to regulate body temperature and avoid overheating.

3.3.3.3. *The Kiniq*

Another design feature of the amauti is the kiniq or front apron. There are considerable variations in the size and width of the kiniq among different Inuit groups, but the kiniqs of tuillis are generally long and wide. What effectively served as an apron also had its uses for childcare. Winifred Petchey Marsh explained, “If a mother had finished nursing

⁴⁹ Suluk, interview.

⁵⁰ Vilhjalmur Stefansson has an excellent description of how an Inuinnait mother regulated her child’s temperature while travelling: “When an Eskimo mother travels during winter, she strips her baby naked and carries it at the small of her back, inside her shirt and supported by a belt. Ventilation is up between the mother’s shoulder blades, along the back of her neck, and into her hood, where she can control it. If the child becomes overheated, the traveling party will stop and the mother will spread a skin on the snow, hair side up. Next she loosens her belts, let the baby slide out of the bottom, and places him on his back on the skin. The child wrinkles his face, and you may think he is finding the chill disagreeable, but the mother will deny this, explaining that he is adjusting his eyes to the light. The truth of this is proved a moment later when the baby opens his eyes wider and smiles. Presently, the child manifests discomfort, and the mother lifts him up and slips him once more under her furs. At 20 below, in still air, she will have had the child out from a half to three-quarters of a minute or even longer.” Vilhjalmur Stefansson, “Clothes Make the Eskimo,” *Natural History*, January 1955, 40.

her baby and she didn't want to put it back in her hood she would wrap it around the baby and keep it on her lap. This is what the women told me and I saw them do it."⁵¹

Driscoll-Engelstad argued that "in the ethnographic literature of the Eastern Arctic, [the kiniq's] function is often seen as a windbreaker or convenient appendage upon which to lay an infant when taken from the amaut. Indeed, its appearance in the Eastern Arctic makes such an explanation quite plausible."⁵² Kiniqs in other regions, such as among Inuinnait, are not large enough to be functional, and Driscoll-Engelstad posits that the kiniq's purpose is primarily symbolic rather than functional.⁵³ The symbolic importance of the kiniq is reinforced by midwife Saullu Nakasuk, who explained that "when we were younger, we used to be told that we should wipe our hands often on the front flaps of our *amauti* or parkas, when we were out berry picking unless they were really greasy and dirty. I used to do that and it worked for me. I had a lot of breast milk."⁵⁴ The repetitive motion of rubbing the kiniq, at least in Saullu's camp, connected the kiniq to a woman's ability to produce milk. Saullu's mention of rubbing the kiniq, especially during berry-picking, seems to connect a mother's ability to feed her infant to the land's ability to feed Inuit.

3.3.4. The Amauti Today

Amautis are regularly used in Arviat today and not only by mothers: as in the past, fathers or other caregivers will wear an amauti to transport a small child. It seems

⁵¹ Marsh, Interview.

⁵² Driscoll-Engelstad, "Inuit Parka," 100.

⁵³ Driscoll-Engelstad makes the case that through a linguistic analysis of the root Inuktitut word, kiniq has a solid connection to the urethra. Driscoll-Engelstad, "Inuit Parka," 104.

⁵⁴ Nakasuk et al., *Interviewing Elders: Introduction*, 85.

possible that men and women would swap their garments to suit the tasks that they were undertaking. Mariano Aupilaarjuk of Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet) explained: “We rarely saw men carrying a baby in an *amauti*. Back then, a woman worked in the home and looked after the children while men were out hunting.”⁵⁵ As Aupilaarjuk states, it was rare, but men could wear amautis when needed. During my time in Arviat and other communities, I occasionally saw fathers and uncles carrying children in their sister’s or partner’s amautis at the Northern and Co-op stores. It seems that this will continue to be an increasingly common practice as fathers become more involved in childcare duties.

Arviaqmiut seamstress and Executive Director of the Aqqiumavvik Society, Kukik Baker, described the practicalities of the amauti versus a stroller or baby-carrier in Arviat:

I think they [southern mothers] have very strong arms [laughs], always carrying car seats around. I’m like, “wow that looks like the most uncomfortable thing to be lugging around.” [In an amauti] you can tell everything that the [baby is] doing like you’re not in contact with your baby all you can do is see, and usually, they are covered too, right? So you’ve got to look under their little blanket or covering just to check on them. When they’re on your back, you can just feel them, feel their heartbeat, you can feel their breathing, you can tell how warm they are, you know which way their face is facing, like so you know they are not flat against your back and not having [inaudible] issues.⁵⁶

For Baker, the amauti is eminently practical because it leaves her hands free to perform other tasks, as well as allowing her to connect with her baby in a very tactile way: she can feel if the baby is getting too warm or too cold, if the baby is about to urinate, or if it is fussing, all without having to pull back a blanket to check. Amautis allow women to have their hands free while driving their Honda (a term used for any off-highway vehicle) or machine (term for snowmobile). Obviously, there are no car-seats for children on such

⁵⁵ Mariano Aupilaarjuk et al., *Interviewing Inuit Elders: Perspectives on Traditional Law*, ed. Jarich Oosten, Frédéric Laugrand, and Wim Rasing (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999), 61.

⁵⁶ Kukik Baker, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 21, 2018.

modes of transport. Strollers are also generally impractical in Arviat. The mostly snow-covered, rough gravel roads in the hamlet do not lend themselves to pushing strollers. And, due to shifting permafrost, houses are built on stilt structures, meaning parents would have to carry the stroller up and down the stairs when entering and leaving their homes.

The amaaruti is a modernization of the amauti that allows women to continue to wear their baby comfortably indoors and in warmer climates – a thoughtful modification of the amauti that suits the needs of parents with young children indoors and in urban, southern settings. The garment is essentially a vest with an amaut. It lacks a hood because one is not needed for warmth and may be a pull-over style or zippered. Some women like to add kangaroo pockets to the front. The amaaruti is often made from thin quilted fabric and trimmed with bias tape along the waist and hood. Ujarak Appadoo, originally of Arviat and now living in Montreal, is a particularly notable maker of amaarutis, and her company Amautiga has an extensive presence on Etsy, Facebook and Instagram (Plate 3.10).⁵⁷ Appadoo explains how wearing the amaaruti means her daughter “is accompanying me in the day to day things that I do as an anaana [mother], while in the amaaruti.”⁵⁸ Appadoo’s design is versatile because it can be worn back or front, increasing its usability in various circumstances.

⁵⁷ Ujarak Appadoo, “Profile: Ujarak Appadoo,” *Inuit Art Quarterly*, February 11, 2020, <https://perma.cc/63XV-3HGU>.

⁵⁸ Ujarak Appadoo, “How I Wear My Amaaruti // Amaaq My Panilaaq,” Youtube, October 9, 2020, <https://perma.cc/8BDB-QYNJ>.

3.3.5. “Raised in the Hood”

The rich variations of amautis worn by Inuit in Arviat and elsewhere signals the value that amautis have for Inuit in the modern day. The garment has undergone variations to better suit modern women’s needs while fundamentally maintaining its purpose. Being raised and raising children in an amauti has become a point of pride for contemporary Inuit. An example of this celebration of Inuit motherhood and childcare is an image of a mother with a child in the amauti captioned “Raised in the Hood.”⁵⁹ The “hood,” has a double signification, first referring to the hood (really, the amaut) of an amauti and secondly to the African-American Vernacular English term referring to predominantly Black inner-city neighbourhoods.⁶⁰ The image in Plate 3.11 by Mittimatalik artist Megan Kyak-Monteith playfully embraces hip-hop culture while also honouring and celebrating Inuit child-rearing practices. This particular design makes hip-hop culture’s relevance to Inuit youth explicit; the infant is ‘throwing up’ a hand sign, and the general stance of the figures is ‘tough.’ Hip-hop culture has had a significant impact on Indigenous youth in Canada across North America.⁶¹ In both Black American and global contexts, hip-hop creates a “constructive and contested space for the historically oppressed and

⁵⁹ Pauline Kayak, “Welcome to Kyak Boutique,” 2021, <https://perma.cc/63X7-59HV>; Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership, “Raised in the Hood,” Social Media, Facebook, July 8, 2020, <https://perma.cc/HYU8-K7ZR>.

⁶⁰ “Hood, n.3,” in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, September 2019), <https://perma.cc/VQ7J-QVJ4>.

⁶¹ An example in Arviat is the documentary *Dancing Toward the Light*. Another successful project was a series of hip-hop workshops held in Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Pangnirtung described in Forneris. A more general discussion about Indigenous hip hop as decolonial praxis is considered in Kitra Cahana and Ed Ou, *Dancing Toward the Light*, Digital, Documentary (CBC, 2018), <http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1212072003862/>; Tanya Forneris, “Evaluation of Hip Hop Workshops in Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit in Pangnirtung, Nunavut” (Iqaluit: Prepared for the Government of Nunavut, 2009), <https://perma.cc/ZCZ2-T5A9>; Karyn Recollet, *Dancing “Between the Break Beats,”* ed. Melissa Blanco Borelli, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

marginalized to both resist and challenge social ideologies, practice and structures that have caused and maintained their subordinate position.”⁶² In other words, the embrace of hip hop culture subverts claims made in colonial discourse that Inuit child-rearing practices are inferior to Euro-Canadian ones.

Alexandra Kahsenni:io Nahwegahbow eloquently expressed how outsiders have devalued Anishinaabe child-rearing practices, and her findings pertain to Inuit practices as well: “We were told our parenting was bad and wrong and that message caused an awful lot of damage to families and communities. Indigenous moms are choosing to reclaim those things, knowing we had it right all along – we knew how to parent our children.”⁶³ Amautis and the imagery of “raised in the hood” are decolonizing celebrations of family and love. The embrace of hip hop and traditional child-carrying attests to the continued relevance, presence and value of amautis (and all that connects to amautis) in Arviat and Inuit communities across the Canadian Arctic.

The amauti demonstrates the omnipresence of the garment in historical and contemporary Inuit lives. Every aspect of the amauti served to support the work of women, from the pouch to transport the child handsfree, to the wide shoulders that allow for easy nursing and the kiniq to cover the child when needed. The amauti is a carefully designed garment that supports a women’s childcare work as well as her other work. It

⁶² Roderic R. Land and David O. Stovall, “Hip Hop and Social Justice Education: A Brief Introduction,” *Equity & Excellence in Education* 42, no. 1 (February 25, 2009): 1.

⁶³ Jolene Banning, “Tikinagan Revival: Why Anishinaabe Artists Are Returning to Traditional Handcrafted Wooden Baby Carriers,” *Globe and Mail*, July 5, 2019, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/4NXY-TF3R>; Alexandra Kahsenni:io Nahwegahbow, “Springtime in n’Daki Menan, the Homeland of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai: Babies, Cradleboards and Community Wrapping” (Ottawa, Carleton University, 2013); Alexandra Kahsenni:io Nahwegahbow, “From Great-Grandmothers to Great-Granddaughters: ‘Moving Life’ in Baby Carriers and Birchbark Baskets,” *RACAR: Revue d’art Canadienne* 42, no. 2 (January 25, 2018): 100–107.

embodies centuries of women's knowledge and skills around caring for children and working in the camp, or outside the home.

3.4. PATTERNS AND PATTERN-MAKING

The complexity of the construction of the amauti requires sewing competence and historically, strong abilities in processing skins, all of which requires knowledge that is shared and transmitted. Most women learn to sew amautis and receive their patterns from someone else. Although the transmission of women's knowledge and skills is primarily oral, patterns are a relevant materialization of knowledge transmission – one learns to sew by starting to sew, and patterns, whether on paper or memorized, are a critical part of that learning process. Inuit women share their knowledge and skills by using and exchanging patterns and teaching pattern-making skills, typically from the older generation to the younger. The knowledge needed to make a functional, comfortable amauti is developed through learning to sew simpler items first, and patterns are always a part of that learning process.

I define four methods of pattern development in Arviat: 1) hand measurements 2) string measurements 3) paper patterns 4) taking apart old garments. There are generational differences in who uses these various pattern-making methods. Women who learned to sew before settlement use the first two methods and women who grew up in Arviat tend to use the latter two. At first glance it might seem that paper patterns and tracing old garments would create a more orthodox repetition of pattern cuts than hand and string, but the evidence from my interviews suggests that experienced seamstresses were all capable of visualizing a pattern and adjusting it to fit using any of the pattern

techniques.⁶⁴ The intangible knowledge and heritage of pattern-making is rendered tangible with the use of paper patterns but all of these techniques serve to maintain traditional sewing patterns.

One of the richest areas of scholarship on Inuit sewing is centred around patterns, and I benefitted greatly from the field research carried out in the 1970s and 1980s.⁶⁵ Clothing historian and anthropologist Jill Oakes has written most comprehensively about patterns and patternmaking in Nunavut. *Our Boots* is an in-depth study of footwear patterns while *Copper and Caribou Skin Clothing Production* offers a comparative examination of historical garment designs from Arviat and Whale Cove and several Inuinait communities.⁶⁶ Oakes's work includes detailed drawings of patterns and explains how they are cut out of caribou skins. Similarly, textile historian Dorothy Burnham has drafted historic clothing patterns based on Inuinait and Kivallirmiut parkas from the Canadian Museum of History collection; Judy Hall used these drawings to show the construction techniques of Inuit parkas.⁶⁷ These highly detailed images are critical for understanding how the garments are constructed, especially when an artefact cannot be handled. The careful work of drafting patterns also underpinned the research done by

⁶⁴ Thank you to Ruth Phillips for her prompts to consider this more closely.

⁶⁵ Some earlier studies include: Gudmund Hatt and Kirsten Taylor, "Arctic Skin Clothing in Eurasia and America: An Ethnographic Study," *Arctic Anthropology* 5, no. 2 (1969): 3–132; Jenness, *Material Culture*; Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929.

⁶⁶ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing"; Jill E. Oakes and Rick R. Riewe, *Our Boots: An Inuit Women's Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996); Oakes, *Inuit Annuraangit*.

⁶⁷ Dorothy K. Burnham, "Masters of Design," in *Fascinating Challenges: Studying Material Culture with Dorothy Burnham*, ed. Judy Hall, Judy Thompson, and Leslie Heyman Tepper, Mercury Series 136 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2001), 143–46; Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994).

anthropologists in the Fifth Thule and Canadian Arctic expeditions.⁶⁸ In Arviat, Aivilingmiutaq Elder Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak has also recorded numerous patterns and styles. Her meticulous drawings and explanatory texts in Inuktitut preserve sewing terminology while simultaneously reserving the information for those who are speakers of her Aivilingmiut dialect.⁶⁹ Elsewhere, anthropologist Sylvie Pharand undertook an intensive study of Iglulingmiut caribou skin clothing; her major contribution is her detailed recording of terminology for garments, parts of the caribou and pattern pieces.⁷⁰ Finally, Betty Kobayashi Issenman produced a book *Sinews of Survival* that examines clothing history across the Canadian Arctic.⁷¹ While this encyclopaedic work provides the broadest overview of clothing and its changes across the circumpolar region, the work of Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad offers the most in-depth historical study of Inuit clothing of Inuit Nunangat.⁷² One thing worth noting here is that there is far less information about patterns using sealskin to make kamiks and parkas. This gap is not a significant issue for this project where caribou was almost exclusively the animal used for clothing-making in Arviat, but for communities in Nunatsiavut, Nunavik and Qikiqtaaluk it would be an area that requires more study.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929; Jenness, *Material Culture*.

⁶⁹ Many of Akpaliapik's sketches are available at John Arnalukjuak High School in Arviat and a few examples are in her article in Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, "Amautiit," in *Arctic Clothing of North America: Alaska, Canada, Greenland*, ed. J. C. H King, Birgit Pauksztat, and Robert Storrie, trans. Suzie Muckpah (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

⁷⁰ Sylvie Pharand, "Clothing of the Iglulik Inuit," unpublished manuscript (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, 1975); Pharand, *Caribou Skin Clothing*.

⁷¹ Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*.

⁷² Driscoll-Engelstad, "Inuit Parka"; Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, "Pretending to Be Caribou."

3.4.1. String and Hand Measurements

Though the scholarly literature does not describe the technique in any great detail, Arviat Elder, artist and expert seamstress Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak describes how she and other women would take measurements using a string, “we never really used patterns, we used a little string to measure a body; we tied one end to other to get a measurement. We did that back then. Using a string, we would go from neck to the waist for the front part of measuring a parka.”⁷³ Likewise, my grandmother, Patricia Moore, had a parka made in 1967 in Qamani’tuaq (Baker Lake) using the string technique (Plate 3.12). She remembers a seamstress coming to her home, measuring her with a string, knotting it at various lengths and returning two weeks later with a completed coat.⁷⁴ While Akpaliapik describes using the string to create sized loops, Moore instead notes that the string was knotted at particular points to retain the measurements for the seamstress who could then draft the pattern directly on the material. While the particulars seem to have differed, perhaps by community, family or person, the principle of marking measurements with a string was a method used into the 1960s and 1970s. This was a method used by professional tailors in Europe as well, who used tailor’s tape with a series of coded notches for measuring clients prior to the introduction of the inch measuring tape in the 1820s.⁷⁵

⁷³ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 14, 2018.

⁷⁴ Anne Bissonnette and Christina Williamson, “In Mother’s Hood: Inuit Packing Dolls of Taloyoak,” *Artifacts in the Exhibition* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011), <https://clothingtextiles.ualberta.ca/2018/06/07/virtual-exhibition-catalogue/>.

⁷⁵ Mark Hutter, “Tailors, 1600-1714,” in *Clothing and Fashion: American Fashion from Head to Toe*, ed. José Blanco F. et al. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2016); Patricia Hunt-Hurst, “Apparel Production and Construction, 1820-1859,” in *Clothing and Fashion: American Fashion from Head to Toe*, ed. José Blanco F. et al. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2016).

Hand measurements are a system comprised of different hand positions which help measure a garment. Akpaliapik explained that “making a kamik we had to use hands to measure a foot, using a hand to measure was important.”⁷⁶ Experienced sewers in Arviat in the late 1980s, including Joy Hallauk, used the handspans to measure out patterns (see Plate 3.13). Jill Oakes noted that in the late 1980s few women under the age of thirty knew the hand measurement techniques and relied instead on paper patterns drawn by elders or borrowed and copied from friends.⁷⁷ Hand measurements were typically used to measure footwear, but could also be used for larger garments like parkas, as Betty Kobayashi Issenmen’s description shows:⁷⁸

When in 1978 I asked Napachee, one of the highly skilled seamstresses of the sewing cooperative in Iqaluit, NWT, if I could buy an amauti, she readily assented. She looked me over back and front, measured me across the hips with a hand spread using the span from the tip of her thumb to the tip of her middle finger. A few weeks later my amauti arrived. It fit perfectly.⁷⁹

Hand measurements are indeed rare among younger women in Arviat today, though there is interest in learning the techniques. Arviamut sewer Martha Akatsiak uses a blend of her childhood memories and Jill Oakes’s book *Our Boots* for information to fill in gaps in her knowledge states: “I used to watch Mom too, using her hands as a pattern. Hela [um], once she’s making kamiks, she would use her hands a lot.”⁸⁰ In her interview, she states that proper hand measuring creates a better fit than paper patterns:

⁷⁶ Karetak, interview.

⁷⁷ Oakes, “Inuit Skin Clothing,” 118–21; Oakes and Riewe, *Our Boots*, 53.

⁷⁸ The benefit is that an individual’s hand is sized to measure a perfectly-fitted kamiks for themselves. For excellent visuals and an explanation of hand measuring, see Oakes and Riewe, *Our Boots*, 51–56.

⁷⁹ Betty Kobayashi Issenman, “Tools and Techniques,” in *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), n. 24.

⁸⁰ Martha Akatsiak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 21, 2018.

I just learned this hand pattern in September [2017]. I only know my size by my hands now! [laughs] Like last year, when I get [a] pattern from my cousin Cathy – she [has] got bigger feet than me - when I sewed them, they were too big for me. I tried to make them smaller, like made extra kamiks smaller, but they will not fit right. However, after Kukik [Baker] showed that [*Our Boots*] book [which shows] how to measure our soles for kamiks, that is when I learned. Now they fit!⁸¹

Here, Akatsiak, who developed her sewing skills as an adult, notes the value of *Our Boots* in figuring out how to do handspan measurements. Once she mastered the technique, it enabled her to make properly fitting kamiks. This story suggests that handspan measuring will be a technique that will continue to be used by seamstresses making skin kamiks because it helps a seamstress make a well-fitting pattern.

One of the challenges with both handspan and string measurements is that it can be difficult to translate the spatial knowledge embedded in these techniques to women who are not exposed daily to these skills. For instance, Joy Pameok Suluk, in making her first caribou skin atigi for her husband, Luke Suluk recalls:

My first atigi that I made was supposed to be for Luke, the traditional style with a flap and the fringes ... I took the three skins that I had prepared to my grandmother and asked her if she can help me cut it out. And all she did was use a string, and then she used her hand doing measuring and points with a pencil and not even “this is where the arms goes, this is the hood...” and just – dots [drawn on the skin].

So I did that: I cut it that way, and it started off good. Then I got frustrated... I added a piece so it's like a ... modern parka. I cut off ... the traditional hood, and put that rounded hood and I put fur on it and put cover on it. It looks like a parka and not an atigi!⁸²

Pameok's story shows some of the trials of trying to learn from an Elder for women who were not raised to skin sew. Joy's grandmother, Margaret Uyauperk Aniksak, grew up skin sewing and knew exactly how to cut out a pattern directly onto a skin. It was

⁸¹ Akatsiak, interview.

⁸² Suluk, interview.

difficult to translate that knowledge to Joy, who learned to sew at the federal day school. She used her own skills as a fabric seamstress to fill in the blanks of the small pencil ticks left by her grandmother resulting in a caribou atigi that had a modern fabric hood and more closely resembled a modern fabric hunting parka than a traditional caribou atigi. From the opposing perspective, is Dorothy Aglukark, who explained how cutting out a pattern straight onto a pelt was so deeply engrained in her mind that she could not really express how she does it.

Christina Williamson: In terms of the design of your kamiks, qullitaqs and amautis, where did you get these patterns from?

Dorothy Aglukark: [gestures to her head]

Christina Williamson: Ok, could you tell me a bit more about that? [laughs]

Dorothy Aglukark: I just thought, if you want to have a nice thing, you have to cut it right way. Or if you want the colour, nice colour, choose how, like, I don't know how to explain [inaudible] just have to use a lot of your mind. How are you going to make nice things.

Christina Williamson: So, did your grandmother show you how to place, where to cut skins?

Dorothy Aglukark: Mhm. Like, watching them, wearing them, you just know, you just learn, like in those day, we have to know. Like we have to survive. We have to make, we have to know how to make things, otherwise we don't learn to sew and you froze to death.

Intensive observation, listening and then doing was the method of learning. Aglukark learned to cut patterns directly from skins because that is what she watched her grandmother do. Uyauperk, when showing Joy how to cut out a men's caribou parka, tried to teach her granddaughter in the same way, but Aglukark had observed the process for years as a child, while Joy had not, meaning that she filled in the gaps with her fabric sewing experiences.

3.4.2. Paper Patterns and Using Old Garments

In general, most middle-aged and younger sewers are most comfortable using paper patterns. An advantage of a physical pattern is that they are easily copied and shared. However, these physical patterns are typically made in standard sizes, so they do not necessarily fit as well as a hand-measure and string-measured garment.⁸³ An inexperienced seamstress may not know how to adjust a pattern to fit the intended wearer better, and this restricts the sewer to only making the sizes of her patterns that she possesses. This is particularly true for yapas (zippered fabric parkas) when they are made in standard sizes rather than made to measure but made in standard sizes and then sold. Patterns from paper templates or taken-apart garments can be thought of as materializations of the traditional patterns that were historically visualized and cut based on hand and string measurements. While patterns for smaller items like kamiks and pualuks (mittens) are often made on paper (or, more accurately, cardstock), it is a little more difficult to trace an amauti pattern onto newspaper or cereal boxes. Sometimes kraft paper might be used, as shown in the photograph of Joy Hallauk dating from 1986 (Plate 3.14).

The methods of developing and sharing sewing patterns have changed somewhat over the years. A sewer like Samantha Ikirtaq Kingusiutnak, who uses paper patterns, is so skilled in sewing that she adjusts her patterns by eye, as seamstresses would have done historically. Ikirtaq explained, “when you look at that amauti or parka, it’s easy to sew. I imagine cutting them. How it’s going to turn out, how big it’s going to be – the pouch,

⁸³ Akatsiak, interview.

[and so on].”⁸⁴ Ikirtaq, through years of sewing, demonstrates how skill and experience are the most significant factors in ensuring a good fit, rather than what pattern method is used. She works almost exclusively with a sewing machine and fabric, yet she, like women generations before her, have strong spatial understandings of how to cut the fabric to fit each person.

Another seamstress I learned sewing from in Arviat, Winnie Malla, also demonstrated that she held patterns in her head, even if she was using a paper pattern when teaching beginners to sew. During the “Connecting Youth Through Threads” sewing program I attended, we had the option of making a typical three-piece pualuk (mitten) from sealskin.⁸⁵ Sewing instructor Malla brought in a box of patterns of different sizes and complexities for those that wanted to make pualuks. The patterns were cut from cereal boxes since the cardboard is readily available and sturdier than paper. Prior to attending this session, I had received a pualuk pattern made by a southern teacher who had copied it from another woman in the Thursday-evening Hamlet-run sewing group for adults. I had traced the mitten pattern onto an old newspaper that I had on hand. I soon realized that they were not my size. I showed Malla my newspaper pualuk pattern, and she quickly assessed the problem with the pattern’s fit, cut it down to fit me by eye, and I was then the new owner of a correctly-sized pualuk pattern (Plate 3.15). Malla also taught the youth to develop a simplified kamik paper pattern that would fit them by folding the pattern and forming creases before cutting the pattern out of the paper. Her method dealt

⁸⁴ Samantha Ikirtaq Kigusitnak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 19, 2018.

⁸⁵ The pattern we used is available in Pharand (fig. 50) and Kobayashi Issenman (fig. 2.2). Pharand, *Caribou Skin Clothing*, 153; Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*, 50.

with the issue of sizing because they now had the skills to make a pattern to fit any person they wished, as well as paper patterns sized to their own feet that they could keep, making it faster to start their next pairs.

Alternatively, sewers will take apart an old parka and trace it onto new fabric.⁸⁶

Most of the women that I interviewed in Arviat mentioned that they took apart a garment that they made themselves or received from a female relative in order to make their own tuillis, amautis or yapas (fabric parkas). Arviaqmiutuq seamstress Dorothy Aglukark used an old tuilli that she disassembled in order to make a traditional beaded tuilli for each of her daughters. Aglukark noted that the pattern she used was seven or eight generations old (Plate 3.16).⁸⁷ Joy Pameok Suluk used a similar strategy in order to make a fabric tuilli for her daughter. Joy explained that her grandmother

made a caribou one for me, but the caribou started falling apart, so I cut the beads off and made a material amauti, and I put them [beadwork] on [that one], and I gave the caribou amauti to her namesake. ... I designed [the tuilli for my daughter] from my grandmother's [pattern]. And I have another pattern made by another lady but it's too big. So, I like using my grandmother's pattern.⁸⁸

Martha Akatsiak received an old yapa “from my aunt Sally: she gave me [a] used jacket, she would give me the patterns and she would show me - this is for men, ladies, girls, boys. That's where I got my patterns for jacket and pants.”⁸⁹ Giving an old, no longer used parka to another woman was an efficient way of sharing a pattern.

⁸⁶ When I was tutoring at Nunavut Sivuniksavut in Ottawa, I participated in the parka sewing class, led by Martha Kyak, the NS's history teacher and fashion designer. She handed out several parkas that she had taken apart. We traced the old, disassembled garment onto our fabric and Holo-fil lining and began our sewing projects from there.

⁸⁷ Dorothy Aglukark, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 25, 2018.

⁸⁸ Suluk, interview.

⁸⁹ Akatsiak, interview.

Regardless of the form that the pattern takes, the key is that most women received their patterns from older female relatives and they are also sharing those patterns with the next generation. For example, Lena Napayok received her amauti patterns (not tuilli) from her mother:

My amautik patterns I have I got from my mother. When my girls started sewing, I would, if they asked for it, I would give it to them and then, my mother-in-law made me an amautik too, maybe Coral [Harbour] style. I've never tried that because it looks so hard hela, trying to -- the bias tape, [has] got to be - *hela-qanau* – [um.. what is it?] if you want a good amautik, it's hard for me to sew that bias tape perfectly.⁹⁰

Napayok shared her amauti patterns, received from her mother-in-law, with her daughters, when they were ready for the patterns and asked. Akatsiak also has given her patterns to her daughters, having received them from her cousin:

But with my kamiit, first time I got pattern from my cousin Cathy, my husband's mother, these too mostly. These patterns, I learned from my aunt I just passed them to my panik, daughter. She started sewing when she was thirteen. I taught her to start sewing young. [Which is] not how I did it [learned to sew]. I teach her how to cut the patterns out. She was saying that she can't. But I told her, "no you can." If I can do it you can do it too, it is better to start when you're young. Now she is more expert than me! [laughs]. I was even jealous just this past year, other people were asking her to sew!

Joy also explained that she was sharing her patterns: "I have got lots of patterns that I don't use anymore, so I'm copying them for her [gestures to her granddaughter, Nuatie] and my other two granddaughters. My other granddaughters are good sewers too."⁹¹

All of the women I interviewed named a female family member, most often a mother-figure, who provided them with patterns (or, for the older generation, the pattern-making techniques) necessary for various sewing projects. All of these pattern-making

⁹⁰ Lena Napayok, interview by Christina Williamson, audio and video, February 21, 2018.

⁹¹ Suluk, interview.

techniques, including string, hand, paper, or former garment, are important tools or techniques for sewing garments. Skilled sewers of any generation can adjust patterns to make the small changes in the cuts of the garments that create a well-fitted garment.

3.5. LEARNING TO SEW

3.5.1. Isumaqsayuq: Traditional Teaching Techniques

The ‘traditional’ ways that Inuit learned to sew are similar to those of many First Nations and Métis learners. Learning the skills to be a functional member of society starts at a very young age and continues gradually and often informally until adulthood. J.R. Miller explains that without denying the specificities of individual Indigenous cultures, all groups in Canada “relied on looking and listening to learn.”⁹² As Miller describes them, vocational skills were taught through childhood games as well as the observation and copying of adult behaviours.⁹³

The twin pedagogical notions of *isumaqsayuq* and *ilisayuq*, articulated by Inuit of North Baffin communities, are particularly instructive in discussing how Inuit women learn to sew. Arlene Stairs defines the words:

Isumaqsayuq is the way of passing along knowledge through observation and imitation embedded in daily family and community activities, with integration into the immediate, shared social structure and ecology as the principal goal. The focus is on values developed through the learner’s relationship to other persons and to the environment. ... In contrast, *ilisayuq* is teaching that involves a high level of abstract verbal mediation in a setting removed from daily life, with the skill base for a future specialized occupation as the principal goal.⁹⁴

⁹² J. R. Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 17.

⁹³ Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision*, 37.

⁹⁴ Arlene Stairs, “Self-Image, World-Image: Speculations on Identity from Experiences with Inuit,” *Ethos* 20, no. 1 (March 1992): 122.

Jayko Peterloosie of Mittimatlik explains isumaqsayuq in terms of gender:

Male and female have different tasks and that's probably why they were taught different things, because of certain tasks. They were not necessarily told that it was teaching. The mother makes things and the daughter watches. Only after observing these things, then she starts learning to make things on her own. And the same thing with males too.⁹⁵

Typically, learners expressed a desire to learn these skills before parents began instructing. The training was usually structured by giving the learner a relatively simple project, and parents would then encourage the learner to work through the skill before offering corrections and advancing to more complicated designs and techniques.

A few examples of how women in outpost camps learned to sew are representative of Inuit learning in the Eastern Arctic. Master seamstress Rachel Uyarasuk of Iglulik describes how she learned to sew:

By watching our mothers as they worked, we learned their style of working on skins. As girls we tried by working on clothing for our wooden dolls ... I was about ten or eleven years old when I was able to concentrate on these things... We used the leftovers from the caribou skins our mothers were working with. There would be things like caribou skins and sealskins, which were the main materials we had. Anything that our mothers discarded from their work we would use to cut patterns and to sew.⁹⁶

Uyarasuk recalled the importance of observing her mother before working on small projects, such as dolls around the age of ten, and working on her little sewing projects before making a pair of mittens that an adult could wear. This scaffolded methodology means that sewing mistakes are made on quick, low-stakes projects and allows the learner to develop comfort with her stitches and simple patterns before moving on to more complex items and techniques.

⁹⁵ Bonny, "Knowledge Transmission," 24.

⁹⁶ John Bennett and Susan Diana Mary. Rowley, eds., *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 26.

In contrast to the little projects made from scraps, Mini Aodla Freeman (b. 1936), who grew up on Cape Hope Island in James Bay, learned to sew using larger pieces of fabric because there was more of it to go around in her community. When Freeman was a child, her family worked with whalers which meant that:

There was no shortage of the material, and even little girls like me were given skins already cut out so that we might learn how to make boots. Of course, it had to be little pairs. I decided to make a pair for my brother, but while I was in the process of making them, Grandmother pointed out that I had to give them to my sanariarruk [moral guide].⁹⁷

Like all children, I cried because I wanted my brother to keep what I made. But customs are customs, and when I finished, I had to walk down to my sanariarruk's tent and give him the boots. He hugged me and gave me all the praise that I wished for. It encouraged me, so I went home and asked to make another pair for him. But no, it had to be something else.⁹⁸

These stories from different periods and regions of the Canadian Arctic demonstrate how young girls were trained from a young age to start sewing.⁹⁹ Praise is another facet of the learning process. As Freeman explains, the praise from her sanariarruk “encouraged me.” Learning to sew was part of being a woman in her world. Freeman writes that “it was indeed a joy and a time to learn for our future so that we might take care of our husbands and children.”¹⁰⁰ The importance of sewing for girls in Freeman's community is evident in how she was expected to give her first pair of kamiks or pualuks to her sanariarruk, just as a boy would give his first seal to his sanariarruk.

⁹⁷ A sanariarruk is an individual who is chosen to serve as a moral guide to a child as they grow up. Freeman called this person her sanariarruk (he-form-me-into), and in turn, he or she (in this case, he) called Aodla Analiaq (bringing-you-up-to-be-woman). Mini Aodla Freeman, *Life Among the Qallunaat*, ed. Keavy Martin and Julie Rak (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 71; Milton M. R. Freeman, “Symbolism, Subsistence and Modernity in the Canadian Arctic” (International Symposium Towards an Anthropology of Resources, Tokyo, 2006), 10–11; D. Lee Guemple, “The Eskimo Ritual Sponsor: A Problem of the Fusion of Semantic Domains,” *Ethnology* 8, no. 4 (1969): 470–78.

⁹⁸ Freeman, *Life Among the Qallunaat*, 90.

⁹⁹ Freeman, “Symbolism, Subsistence and Modernity,” 10.

¹⁰⁰ Freeman, *Life Among the Qallunaat*, 91.

The parallels between a boy's first hunt and a girl's first kamiks are formalized in the custom of giving one's "first" to one's sanariarruk.

3.5.2. Traditional Teaching Techniques in Arviat

When speaking with Elders, I quickly learned that their personal stories of learning to sew did not necessarily follow the normative ways of learning discussed above. The experiences of women I interviewed in Arviat demonstrate just how the 'rule' can often be the exception. As a girl, Elizabeth Enowyak did not experience the colonial disruptions to her family life until the 1950s, a bit later than Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak and hunter and seamstress Melanie Tabvahtah. These three women, all born on the land, have slightly different stories of when and how they learned to sew. They remind us that the ideal and reality are not always the same and that seamstresses bring a diversity of experiences and stories and that the continuity of sewers learning to sew despite eras of profound disruption speaks to the strength of sewing as a cultural practice and a historical one.

Enowyak's experiences are closest to the 'ideal.' She learned to sew around ten, starting with small projects such as making little kayaks and kamiks. She learned by observing her mother, her sister, and the wife of the Padlei post fur trader (I believe this was probably Charlotte Voisey). Akpaliapik also began to sew around the age of ten but believed that this was rather late for her to start learning. She said: "when I first started sewing, I was only about ten years old, but when I was younger, my cousins and my brother are only males, I only learned boy stuff when I was younger. I didn't learn how to sew early."¹⁰¹ Akpaliapik's story tells us that it was critical to have a female model

¹⁰¹ Karetak, interview.

behaviour and skills and guide a girl in learning the requisite skills. She completed her first major project at the age of twelve, making a pair of kamiks for herself which were then sold to a southerner without her consent (see Chapter 2).¹⁰²

Melanie Tabvahtah, the youngest of these three women, learned to sew even later than many girls of her generation. As she recalls, she was “maybe sixteen, seventeen. ... because we move[d] here from out in the land. Maybe 1957, moved here, Arviat. ... I would say twelve years old [when I had] TB [tuberculosis for the] first time ...”¹⁰³ She was sent to a sanatorium in the south at twelve years of age. Tabvahtah did not learn to sew when she believed that she should have learned, because she was hospitalized.

These women’s stories suggest that even in the pre-settlement era, the age that a girl learned to sew was often contingent on the situation of her family. While sewing norms and ideals are often described in oral histories, cultural ideals are not always the reality. Regardless of the age these women learned to sew, they all learned by watching their mothers, aunties or grandmothers, then trying to sew themselves. Making mistakes, taking the sewing apart and being coached by their Elders were all salient components of their training.

¹⁰² Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, “Healing Unresolved Issues,” in *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, ed. Joe Karetak, Frank J. Tester, and Shirley Tagalik (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017), 182–206; Karetak, interview.

¹⁰³ Tabvahtah was evacuated for tuberculosis for the first time in 1957. There was a severe outbreak in the spring of 1963 when thirty-three of eighty-four students at the federal day school were at the sanatorium in Clearwater, Manitoba. A second evacuation occurred between September 1966 and March 1967, and twenty-five Arviaqmiut were evacuated for tuberculosis, and another fifty tested positive. Melanie Tabvahtah, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 23, 2018; “The History, Part 2 1939-2000,” *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 159–60; “Report on Situation at Eskimo Point, Settlements and Area – Eskimo Point February 1967–October 1969,” n.d., RG 85-D-3-a, acc. 1985-86/220, vol. 15, file A1000/153, LAC.

3.5.3. Learning to Sew and Mission Schools

Schools run by southerners operated in a limited capacity in the Arviat region beginning in the late 1920s.¹⁰⁴ The educational aims of both Anglican and Catholic missionaries were, of course, centred on conversion, but as James VanStone and Wendall Oswalt wrote, “in all these schools religious activity, education, and subsistence welfare blend into one another.”¹⁰⁵ Marsh described the educational goals of his mission:

The curriculum of a mission school (and there is actually no need to specify it as a “mission” school, because there were simply no other schools) was simple. We didn’t expect or hope to train Eskimo children to speak English; to whom would they speak? The trader? He spoke pidgin Eskimo and always used someone to interpreter for him if he couldn’t manage himself. ... Simple hygiene, how to add, subtract, were the basics given to every child. To read and write in their own language helped them read their Bibles and prayer books as well as to communicate with people far off, and some history and general knowledge of the world gave the children and adults a bit of background of a life apart from their own.¹⁰⁶

The seasonal economy of Paallirmiut determined the times that missionaries could teach.¹⁰⁷ The Marshes were limited to teaching only at certain times of the year and during brief windows in the day. His wife, Winifred Petchey Marsh, explained, “during winter, school was held in our kitchen every day from two till four, followed by music

¹⁰⁴ The Roman Catholic Mission was established in 1926 by Father Ducharme and the Anglican Mission by Donald Marsh in 1928. Cornelius H.W. Remie and Jarich Oosten, “The Birth of a Catholic Inuit Community. The Transition to Christianity in Pelly Bay, Nunavut, 1935-1950,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 26, no. 1 (October 19, 2004): 114; James W. VanStone and Wendell Oswalt, “The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point” (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1959), 2, 8–9.

¹⁰⁵ VanStone and Oswalt, “Eskimos of Eskimo Point,” 8.

¹⁰⁶ Donald B. Marsh, *Echoes from a Frozen Land* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publications, 1987), 31.

¹⁰⁷ Marsh explained that: “The main concentration of teaching took place in late springtime, while on my winter visitations it was more on a family, or one-to-one basis. In the spring as many as 350 people would gather at the settlement of Eskimo Point.” He continues by noting that “the Paallirmiut were, by time-honoured custom, at the coast and at Eskimo Point only for the summer period; the rest of the year they were inland hunting and trapping. For these reasons I decided to hold school in the evenings except for the days we had service.” Marsh, *Echoes*, 33, 35.

and singing lessons. (It was held in the schoolroom in the summer).”¹⁰⁸ Lizzie Iblauk, an administrator at the Arviat elementary school, noted that Petchey Marsh “also taught Inuit women (*arnait*) about household crafts, reading and writing Inuktitut from the bible.”¹⁰⁹

There was no Anglican missionary in the area between 1946-1957, but the Gospel Mission Church was established in 1946 at the mouth of the Maguse River, about twenty kilometres from Arviat. Gleason and Kathryn Ledyard let this Evangelical mission and flew around Kivalliq in their airplane to evangelize.¹¹⁰ Peter Suvaksuiq recalled his time at that school:

I was taught how to speak and write English; they never spoke Inuktitut here at the time. I did not learn any Inuktitut. We did not use the arts and crafts centre; we were here, just in this building at the end here. I lived there, that was the school, but it was different school.¹¹¹

Missionary schooling was piece-meal and involved missionaries taking opportunities where they came. Attendance at mission schools was generally limited, and the impact of these schools on *isumaqsayuq* for sewing (among other skills) appears to be very limited as well. Sewing continued to be taught the traditional way, through observation and trial and error. While specific missionaries, like Winifred Petchey Marsh, may have provided

¹⁰⁸ Marsh, *People of the Willow*, 9.

¹⁰⁹ I cannot verify this information, but many people in Arviat mentioned this detail. Lizzie Iblauk, “Keeping Our Language and Heritage” (MA Major Research Essay, University of Prince Edward Island, 2013), 5.

¹¹⁰ Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten, *Inuit, Oblate Missionaries, and Grey Nuns in the Keewatin, 1865-1965*, 2019, 114.

¹¹¹ Suvaksuiq also said, “Ladies and men were not separated. We all slept in one building but the schools were separated. I remember we were taught Adam and Eve, Noah or the old Testament. We were kids and learning about the old testament, not the new testament ... When I got here in December 1957, I attended school in January, February and March; ... My step-brother brought me back to Arviat and I went to school there... Life at Maguse River was ok because the Ledyards never abused us.” Laugrand and Oosten, *Inuit, Missionaries and Nuns*, 114–15.

some instruction on fabric sewing shirts, trousers, and dresses, Inuit had worked with fabrics for decades at this point and had already developed their techniques for working with duffel and other trade cloth. The priority of missionaries was religious instruction, hygiene and letters.

3.5.4 Federal Day School and the Federal Hostel

The major shift in schooling for Arviaqmiut began in the 1950s with the establishment of the government-run day school and hostel.¹¹² The introduction of the formal schooling system ruptured the way parents taught their children and how children were expected to learn. Children no longer spent their days watching their parents going about their daily tasks and duties. Instead, they learned English and the values, skills, and knowledge embedded in the southern Canadian school curriculum rather than Inuit society.

Manitok Thompson describes the jarring and baffling experience of trying to understand school in Salliq and the shift from isumaqsayuq to ilisayuq:

The whole education system is so foreign today to the education system of what I was experiencing at home. One on one, observing, observing, observing, no questions. You don't dare ask questions. You just observe, observe, observe, and try, and try, take it apart, take it apart, try to go to

¹¹² The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) characterized the experiences of Inuit in Residential School as disorienting and traumatic for children and families in the Eastern Arctic. The TRC Reports that “the introduction of residential schooling was part of a series of dramatic and traumatic changes ... The hostel and school system was imposed on them with no consultation ... [and] few parents had any experience of schools, and the residences were often located thousands of kilometres from their homes... Government planners had expected that families would place their children in the hostels and still spend part of the year on the land themselves. Instead, families settled into communities year-round to be near their children. Other government policies, particularly those related to family allowances, housing, and health care accelerated this process.” The TRC report focuses almost exclusively on schools in the Western Arctic and Yukon, and it does not cover any of the missionary schools in the early twentieth century at all. The one exception is a story about John Ell Oudlanak, the son of Nivisannaq, who requested that his sons be sent south for their schooling. Anglican archdeacon A. L. Flemming arranged for Benjamin Oudlanak and Samuel Pudlutt to attend school in Lakefield, Ontario. The boys returned a year later, having endured influenza, pneumonia, measles and tonsillitis. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, “The Inuit and Northern Experience,” The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 7–57, 73–74.

perfection. When I went to school, when we went to school, [it was a] whole different way of being taught. You're graded. Different way. You get better grades if you ask more questions. You get better grades if you don't ask questions at home. You address ... the teacher by their name. We wouldn't dare address any adults. ... So we were in school, then a teacher starts telling the stories of the three little pigs and the big bad wolf. And you wonder, "Did you make up those animals, like those pigs? Like there [is] such a thing as those things? Where did that come from?" And then she's encouraging you to ask questions. How dare you ask a question to an adult? So, we were all quiet. And our eyes opened to say yes and your nose crinkled to say no. Talking a whole different language. But the teacher's not getting it.¹¹³

Thompson highlights the cultural disjunction between the students and the teacher. The shift from learning on the land while growing up to sitting in a classroom with a teacher speaking a different language and teaching in a different way was shocking for many.

Families were coerced, either directly or indirectly to move into settlements so their children could attend the day school (see Chapter 2). Administrators were concerned that the students were not receiving sufficient exposure to their culture and the economic practices underpinning it. In 1960, M. P. Walsh, the principal of the Arviat school, objected to the government's interest in hiring widows to serve as hostel mothers instead of hiring married couples as hostel parents. Walsh argued that it was necessary to have male (and female) hostel parents to provide country food and expose boys to hunting.¹¹⁴ The lack of a male presence (and provider of country food) seems to have been a genuine

¹¹³ Manitok Thompson, "I'm responsible for that name. If I lose that, I've cut off an Inuit encyclopedia." In Carol Payne et al., eds., "Elder's Speak: Conversation on Photographs by Elders Sally Webster, Manitok Thompson and Piita Irniq," in *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming* (McGill Queens University Press, 2022).

¹¹⁴ Walsh wrote, "we should provide for training of the older boys in the skills of their own culture and should therefore set these hostels up with a 'house father' who can take them hunting, etc. and so provide training for the Eskimo way of life. If it is our intention to try to simulate the natural home environment and to allow these hostels to be operated as Eskimo homes we must face the fact that we plan to have them eat some Eskimo food. This must come from somewhere, and the best way is through the presence of a husband and 'father' in the home." Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Northern Experience," 155.

concern for Walsh as it limited the opportunities for boys to continue to be connected to the male roles in Inuit society. Hiring widows to work as hostel mothers may have been a strategy for the federal government to reduce their welfare payments. Widowed women had the potential to circumvent their community's economic and cultural imperatives by having a small income earned independently of a male partner. However, in the eyes of the school administrator, this was clearly less important than providing children access to the knowledge and skills available from hostel couples.¹¹⁵

The change from isumaqsayuk to ilisayuk learning was disorienting and traumatic for many, but, some Inuit children were still taught sewing at the school in Arviat. While fabric was the dominant material used to learn sewing, children were exposed to skin processing and sewing to a limited degree. The federal day school provided limited Inuit cultural education. Iblauk noted that “there were cultural events during Federal Day School such as sewing techniques, jacket making, knitting, mitt and kamik-making, crocheting, parka making and much more. Many of the attendees of the Federal Day School are excellent at the skills they learned there.” Likewise, Joy Pameok Suluk remembered learning to sew at the school: “We were taught in school Home Ec[onomics] by our teacher when we were going to federal day school, and she was the one that taught us how to sew with material and knitting.”¹¹⁶ Suluk was raised by her grandmother Margaret Uyauperk and was exposed to skin sewing as a child and young woman, but her

¹¹⁵ Robert Williamson noted that remarrying is “a practical necessity. This recognition of necessity is based not only on economic and personal comfort motivations, but on the fact that the normally quite disparate patterns of socialisation for boys and for girls make it virtually impossible for any parent to properly socialise their children of the opposite sex to themselves, and their remarriage is to the advantage of the children.” Robert G. Williamson, *Eskimo Underground: Socio-Cultural Change in the Canadian Central Arctic* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1974), 51–52.

¹¹⁶ Suluk, interview.

training with skin sewing was not as intensive as for women born twenty years earlier: “I make sealskin mitts – leather mitts, but I really never learned to make kamiks. I can make caribou kamiks. But not sealskin, those I never learned. My grandmother sewed more caribou than seal. She made sealskin kamiks, but more caribou.”¹¹⁷ Inuit children were exposed to skin sewing at the Day School to some degree, but most sewers who went through that school became more confident sewing with fabric and today produce a wide range of things from wall hangings, yapas, mittens and more. There was thus some disruption in this decade because children did not spend the entire day watching and helping their parents and relatives with camp work. Children mostly lived in Arviat with family, and between the caribou famines and the heated houses, fabric was more likely to be what was available to learn on for sewing.

3.5.5. Inuit Politics and Pedagogy: Learning to Sew in the 1970s and 1980s

The change from the federal residential school system to the public school system in 1969 represents a watershed moment in the manner that schooling was administered in Arviat and the rest of the NWT.¹¹⁸ Yet, despite efforts that began as early as 1953,

¹¹⁷ Joy Suluk employed those skills quilting and making fabric mitts, headbands, parkas, windpants, dresses for Christmas and wedding dresses. She mostly sews fabric rather than hides, but she learned some skin sewing and tanning from female family members. Suluk, interview.

¹¹⁸ In 1969, the Eskimo Point School established a local education committee and the Qitiqliq Middle School opened in 1973, which served Kindergarten to middle school students. The schools were: Levi Angmak Elementary School (constructed in 1988) and Qitiqliq Middle School served grades 7-12 until John Arnaljuak School was constructed in 2004 for Grades 10-12. Lizzie Iblauk recalled her memories of the Qitiqliq School, whose architecture attempted to foster isumaqsayuq opportunities: “The whole building was a big open space with spiral stairs to the second floor. My earliest time in school as when I was in Grade 2; I had English teacher named Sandy. I did not understand her because I knew no English words.” Aaluk Consulting Inc., “Infrastructure for a Sustainable Arviat,” Consultation Report (Arviat: Hamlet Council of Arviat, March 8, 2011), 54; Frank Darnell and Anton Hoëm, *Taken to Extremes: Education in the Far North* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996), 162–70; Jane Gaskell, “Secondary Schools in Canada: The National Report of the Exemplary Schools Project.” (Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1995), 31, 39–40; Iblauk, “Keeping Our Language and Heritage,” 9.

changes to primary and secondary school curriculums only came to fruition in the 1980s as a result of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada's (now the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, ITK) advocacy for Inuit control over land, economy and education that had begun in 1971. Many of those efforts were based around using culturally-informed pedagogy: Inuktitut language instruction and the involvement of Elders in the school were key principles that Inuit fought to implement in their schools.¹¹⁹ With these changes, there were also some shifts in how Inuit learned sewing.

Despite being schooled at residential schools, Inuit advocates called for the perpetuation of Inuit Knowledge: they saw an intrinsic connection between Inuktitut language learning, Inuit Knowledge and Inuit pedagogy (isumaqsayuq).¹²⁰ In short, the curriculum needed to reflect Inuit lifeways, land skills and Inuktitut and not simply the culture of Southern Canada.¹²¹ An anecdote detailed by anthropologist Hugh Brody

¹¹⁹ Ian Martin, "Aajiqatingiingniq Language of Instruction Research Paper," Report to the Government of Nunavut (Iqaluit: Government of Nunavut, December 2000), 41–50; Ian Martin and Shirley Tagalik, "Aajiqatingiingniq: Lessons Learned from Nunavut's Language Research Project," in *Proceedings 14th Inuit Studies Conference*, ed. Robert O. van Everdingen (Calgary: Arctic Institute of North America, 2004), 167–84.

¹²⁰ A group of Inuit leaders began to form in the 1960s and 70s; they were "educated in the non-Inuit way yet rooted in a strong sense of Inuit identity," and began to agitate for change for Inuit of the future Nunavut. It was only when Inuit politician and political leader Tagak Curley called for a Special Committee on Education, and the ensuing Education Act of 1983 supported the eventual development of Inuit-directed curriculum. By 1995, the language of instruction was Inuktitut in Grades 1-3, both Inuktitut and English in the middle grades and English (except for Inuktitut class) for Grades 10-12. Retention of Inuktitut still was not perfect through this "exit model," and the Government of Nunavut implemented the Qulliq Maintenance Model in 2008. It ensures that some subjects are in English, some are Inuktitut, and others are in both languages. The Qulliq Maintenance Model means that students up to high school have Inuit teachers and exposes students to isumaqsayuq teaching methods and ilisayuq methods. Darnell and Hoëm, *Taken to Extremes*, 167; Jack Hicks and Graham White, "Nunavut: Inuit Self-Determination Through a Land Claim and Public Government?," in *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of Their Lands and Their Lives*, ed. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks, and Peter Jull (Copenhagen: International Work Group of Indigenous Affairs, 2000); Andrew Hodgkins, "Bilingual Education in Nunavut: Trojan Horse or Paper Tiger?," *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education* 3, no. 1 (June 2010): 1; Martin, "Aajiqatingiingniq Language of Instruction Research Paper," 42–50; Martin and Tagalik, "Aajiqatingiingniq," 172, 174–75.

¹²¹ Karla Jessen Williamson, "The Consequence of Schooling: Cultural Discontinuity amongst the Inuit," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 14, no. 2 (1987): 61–62.

explains the significance of knowledge and Inuktitut. In Mittimatalik, Brody asked Anaviapik to teach him Inuktitut. Brody was confused when Anaviapik did not discuss vocabulary, grammar or verb conjugation. Brody “had thought we were talking about words and grammar, about speaking, while [Anaviapik] had supposed we were talking about a way of being. He had embarked upon the task of teaching me how to do and be *Inuk-titut*, “in the manner of an Inuk,” Anaviapik had always known what it would mean to learn his language.”¹²²

While education and curriculum have been somewhat slow to change in the Territory, on a local level Elders were in schools teaching skills like sewing by the late 1970s.¹²³ Their presence, combined with the Home Economics curriculum meant that Arviaqmiut learned both skin and fabric sewing, at least in part, at school. For example, artist and seamstress Martina Anoe taught young Inuit in the 1970s and her daughter, Martha Anoe also taught skin sewing in the 1980s (Plate 3.17).

Arviaqmiutaq seamstress, Lena Napoyak, is the daughter of Elisapee Muckpah, a renowned seamstress whose work is in museums across Canada. Yet, Napoyak learned to sew in home economics class:

I remember going to school. ... maybe Grade 9? ... During the week we go to Home Ec[onomics] all morning, and they would divide the two classes.

¹²² Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2001), 64.

¹²³ Currently, John Arnalukjuak High School in Arviat has Elders that provide traditional skills training to students today, and community involvement in the school is long-standing in Arviat, regardless of official policies. A pilot program called ESTEEM (Empowering Students Through Elders Education and Mentorship) included Elder instruction as well as the Pilimmaksarniq Centre; a drop-in space that students may use certain evenings (and during the day) with teacher support. It provides a place for students who are unable to attend school during the day, lack studying space, or need a safe space to regulate. The room always has healthy snacks and teachers readily available to provide support. AFS would sometimes pick up students in the Centre during its meetings. Sara Frizzell, “Pilot Program at Arviat High School Boosts Student Attendance, Emotional Stability,” *CBC News*, May 2, 2018, Digital edition, <https://perma.cc/8S3L-TMY5>.

First group sewing, [the] other group cooking. So, I used to go to sewing a lot. That's where I learned. I got really into sewing. I remember an elder helping me make those - you know those beaded amautiks? But a miniature one. I don't know how old I was: eleven, twelve, around there. ... It was the elder that taught us, like, there was two elders that used to do some sewing... I remember too, making duffel socks at the school.¹²⁴

Likewise, Martha Akatsiak learned sewing at the school because her mother did not want to teach her:

I remember I started at the school making kamikpa [duffel socks] with my aunt, Martina Anoe. She used to show us how to cut it and stuff like that, where to start. I learned [to make] kamikpa from her. ...No, my mom never taught me how to sew. I would just watch her. She told me a couple of times that sewing is too tough or too tiring for me. They loved me the other way. And they would say that I would get something that is already finished. Like, as if they were going to live forever. I wasn't taught, but I learned at the school too. Sewing programs. ... My mother never told me to do stuff like this and stuff like that. Like, I was the youngest of her children. She would say that she would do sewing for me and have everything ready and stuff like that.¹²⁵

Akatsiak explained that being loved “the other way” was her parents’ way of giving her an easier life than they lived. Her parents did this by keeping her from working – and skin preparation and sewing is hard work. With Akatsiak as the youngest child, her mother found it easier to simply sew things herself rather than spend her limited energy teaching her daughter, Martha to sew.

While both Akatsiak and Napoyak learned the basics of sewing from school, they all specifically mentioned that they primarily learned by watching their relatives sew and prepare skin, suggesting that isumaqsayuq remained an important part of their sewing knowledge base. Napayok explained that while she technically learned to sew in school, she *knew* how to sew because she was always watching her mother, Elisapee Muckpah:

¹²⁴ Napayok, interview.

¹²⁵ Akatsiak, interview.

Lena Napayok: I don't know how old I was. Elevent, twelve, around there. And then I used to watch mom a lot when she was making kamiks. we would sit near her and just watch her sew. ... We did sewing at school, home time, at home we would watch out moms sew. ... when I started, hela, when my daughter was born, I liked to sew stuff for her. So, I would ask mom. She'd give me a pattern to start, or if I-- she was growing and I wanted to make something, she'd give me the material that is ready to soften and cut up. ... I like trying new things too. After my mom passed away, hela, when it was trapping season. I would help. I learned early [how to] clean wolfs, foxes. Mom never let me touch the sealskins.

Christina Williamson: Why was that?

Lena Napayok: I might wreck it. Because she made lots of kamiks. So, once they passed on, my son started catching them and I, we did the cleaning ourselves at home. And, after Mom passed, I finally started skinning seals. Then I knew how to do them. And, I made seal pants, mitts, and sewed parkas, jackets for my children.¹²⁶

The power of *isumaqsayuq* is clear in this situation, Napayok had learned by watching her mother work for years, despite not being specifically instructed. Although she only began to sew and work skins after her mother's passing, she shifted relatively easily in taking over the role of sewing for the family.

Akatsiak also stated that she learned to sew in school in the 1970s, but like Napayok, she already knew how to process hides and sew, even though she had not done it much herself. It was only after her mother passed that she began sewing and tanning in earnest:

But after she passed. When I met my husband. We started going boating or seal hunting by skidoo. And I started thinking how I would do this seal skinning, help him with skinning. Then I would watch his mother. ... That's where I learned—scraping fat from the seal. After a couple of years, it finally clicked, or I started scraping too. Thinking, "I know how to do this, but I just don't know where to start." That's when I started scraping.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Napayok, interview.

¹²⁷ Akatsiak, interview.

Akatsiak's marriage and the resulting relationship she had with her mother-in-law provided the need and opportunity to start sewing and scraping hides herself. Like Napayok, she began by scraping first. She also had support on her own side of the family:

When my dad came to my home while I was scraping, he came, he went out straight. Right away. Next day, he came with a brand new ulu, he told me that I could use this for scraping sealskin, one-sided sharpened ... For sealskin. That's when I had my first ulu from my dad, after seeing me trying to scrape a sealskin. he made me one. ... That would push me further to want to work on sealskin. That's when I started learning how to scrape seal or soften them.¹²⁸

By giving her an ulu, a tool that he made just for her, he was expressing support and subtly obliging her to master the skill of preparing hides. Both Akatsiak and Napayok's stories show that the isumaqsayuq method permeated their lives even when at school. Though they had not performed the tasks much themselves as children and teenagers, they readily picked up the skill when they were mothers because they had observed their mothers so closely throughout their childhoods.

3.5.6 Sewing Workshops and Programs in the 1970s

The nascent Inuit nationalist political movement of the 1970s was echoed in an interest to foster traditional skills such as sewing. Organizations like the Inuit Cultural Institute (ICI) were part of the broader Inuit political movements of the 1970s and 1980s that strove to preserve, record and foster Inuit skills and knowledge. Workshops were offered sporadically in Nunavut in the 1970s as a strategy to train Inuit in land-based skills, especially for those who were generally not receiving exposure and training in their homes. The availability of workshops seems to have varied depending on funding and the

¹²⁸ Akatsiak, interview., interview.

presence of individuals who were willing to organize them.¹²⁹ With its intensive period of skill development, the workshop format broke from the traditional method of learning through long periods of observation followed by attempting the task oneself.

Nonetheless, these workshops still allowed for the transfer of knowledge and following the Inuit Qaujimaqatunqangit principle of pijitsirniq (to serve and provide for family and community).¹³⁰ Workshops can mitigate, at least to some degree, the generational separation caused by ilisayuk southern-style schooling, which removes intergenerational connections and extended time spent together. Workshops place skilled women in a space with other women who could learn using isumsaqsayuk methods.

There were a few notable projects that focused on sewing in Arviat in the 1970s. For example, the ICI sought to preserve and record traditional skin sewing techniques and patterns. In 1976, the ICI established the Inuit Traditions Program and, in 1978, launched their Tent Project. According to Eric Anoe, Sr., the tent project was a reclamation of Inuit traditions and knowledge. The project took months to develop:

Slowly, over the months, with each hunt, skins were gathered and given to three women for preparation and sewing. Uyaupiq, Qupanuaq and Ututamarna worked long and hard in spite of bad weather knowing that, in

¹²⁹ Apphia Agalakti Awa and Leah Idlout d'Argencourt, "Caribou Skin Preparation," *Inuit Today/Inuit Uplumi*, August 1981; Anaauyuk Alookey and Selena Tucktoo, "Natural Dyes from Spence Bay," *Inuit Today/Inuit Uplumi*, August 1975; "Tea & Biscuits," *Inuit Today/Inuit Uplumi*, February 1976, 54.

¹³⁰ Providing for family and community is defined as material items and the intangible knowledge that the next generation must know as well. Holly Ann Dobbins explains: "A hunter does not hunt for him/herself: he or she provides first for family and then for community, moving up the circle of belonging, according to season. A sewer does not just make his/her own clothing, but ensures that the family is well outfitted, the family hunters are protected from the elements, and also that the community as a whole is provided for. Both hunters and sewers also have an obligation to pass down their knowledge and skills to the next generation as well and to continue learning and adapting to new environments and situations themselves." Dobbins, "Creation Story," 172–73.

the past, Inuit persevered under any circumstances. On a special trip to the treeline Job Murjunnig helped collect timber to be used for the tent poles.¹³¹

The project connected women's and men's land skills needed to create the caribou skin tupik (tent) and provided a way to better appreciate life on the land. Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad also attended a skin sewing workshop in Arviat in the 1970s. She recalled that despite months of museum research, it was only when she was:

in conversation with Inuit seamstresses or participating in a workshop preparing caribou furs, or photographing of a young girl “dancing on sealskins” to soften the hides for her grandmother to sew, did I come to appreciate the breadth of community knowledge – and the depth of individual knowledge – invested in Inuit clothing production.¹³²

Inuit in Arviat appreciated how vital sewing skills were to their community and families and made efforts to maintain this knowledge even in the difficult first decades of settlement.

Many of the Arviat projects also involved forging connections between sewers from different communities when possible. In 1975, Arviaqmiutaq Tookashi Akpaleapik travelled to Iglulik and Ikpiarjuk (Arctic Bay) with the financial support of the ICI to meet with seamstresses in that community and study their fur garments.¹³³ The Arviat-

¹³¹ Anoe concluded by saying that “the efforts of these people help us better understand how our ancestors used to work together in the spirit of giving and we would like to thank all those who participated in the project. Erected for the first time in June 1978, the caribou skin tent represents a mutual effort to preserve our traditions. We hope that everyone will share our feelings and goals in this gesture of respect for our ancestors.” Eric Anoe, “Inuit Traditions: Tent Project,” *Inuit Cultural Institute Newsletter*, October 1978.

¹³² Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, “Curators, Collections, and Inuit Communities: Case Studies from the Arctic,” in *Sharing Knowledge & Cultural Heritage: First Nations of the Americas*, ed. Laura N. K. van Broekhoven, Cunera Buijs, and Pieter Hovens (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2010), 39–40.

¹³³ “Among many things that is rapidly disappearing is the traditional Inuit clothing. Inuit Cultural Insitute [sic] is aware of this and has hired an Inuk to do a research on Clothing Project. Tookashi Akapaleapik, Clothing Consultant, attended the I.C.I Board of Directors meeting in June 1975 and presented her proposal. Shortly after, she accompanied Mark Kalluak, Randy Pikiak and Cecile Ayotte for a short visit to Iglulik. She had a chance to talk with some of the ladies there about her project. She also had the chance to look at some of the clothes at the museum. The research began on June 15, 1975 where Tookashi when to Arctic Bay to collect information on preparation on skins, styles, patterns and methods of

hosted Northern Games in 1978 held a traditional clothing fashion show.¹³⁴ These events fostered opportunities for communication and exchange between sewers and skills that might be preserved in different communities. Likewise, tips and tricks (such as using Veet, a hair removal cream for women, to depilate sealskins) were undoubtedly exchanged during these kinds of visits. Efforts like this helped ensure that sewers in the 1970s were knowledgeable about skin sewing and skin garment making.

Likely the largest arts and crafts-orientated event for Inuit women of this period was the Arctic Women's Craft Workshop held in 1975. Eighty-five Inuit women attended the week-long DIAND-funded workshop in Toronto. The focus was on sewing, crafts and marketing but the event also had a political as well as economic significance. As organizer Ruby Angrna'naaq explained, "the purpose was to expose the women to each other, to new ideas and to the South ... Men have had this opportunity for a long time. Now, it's the women's turn. Women should have an idea of what northern men do. It's time the other half knows what's going on."¹³⁵ The definition of Arctic craft was broad, and everything from macramé, sealskin rugs, quilts, batiks, wall hangings and parkas

clothing. She plans to be back here sometime this month before doing further research in other communities." Any more information on this project is unfortunately not covered in the sporadically-published ICI newsletters. "Tradional [Sic] Inuit Clothing," *Inuit Cultural Institute News*, October 1975.

¹³⁴ Alooktook Ipellie wrote: "One night, the community centre was filled with people and beautiful traditional costumes. Here we can see some of the contestants attired in their "Sunday best". Lucy Ittinuar of Rankin Inlet came in first, Helen Kooguk of Eskimo Point, was second and Bessie Wolkie of Tuktoyaktuk was third. As we can see, the judges had a very difficult time who would eventually take the crown. At right, the moment her name was announced, Lucy shows her surprise and excitement at being named the number one designer. Just looking at her amouti [sic] makes one think of the skill and designer's instinct one had to have to create a costume as striking and beautiful as she has made. The colours are predominantly red and white with flower and plant embroidery and beadwork. It is evident how many years of work she has behind her costume designing and the kind of patience that is needed." Alooktook Ipellie, "A Look Back at Northern Games '78, Eskimo Point," *Inuit Today/Inuit Uplumi*, July 1979, 40-41.

¹³⁵ "Arctic Women's Craft Workshop," *Inuit Today/Inuit Uplumi*, August 1974, 63.

were represented at the workshop (Plate 3.18).¹³⁶ This event provided women with an opportunity to exchange ideas, resources and discuss political and social issues impacting their community.

Inuk leader Martha Flaherty, the first president of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, highlighted the connection between sewing, economics and leadership:

The traditional clothing produced by Inuit women is unique in the world. It is a visible statement of the creativity and practicality of Inuit women. ... This is an economic activity which women can undertake from their homes, providing goods for their family or selling the products of their labour for money. We are proud of the skills of Inuit women clothing producers, artists, and craftswomen, and we believe that their work should be included in definitions of community economic development.¹³⁷

Workshops were and are a place for women not only to develop their fabric or traditional skin sewing skills, but also to exchange ideas and to develop key leadership skills. Scholars have also noted that shared crafting spaces were important to the development of Indigenous women's political organizing.¹³⁸ Skilled seamstresses were deeply respected in the trapping period, and they continue to be respected in Arviat and

¹³⁶ Susan Cowan of DIAND's product development branch stated that "those who criticize the Inuit for using new southern techniques and material, are misinformed. ... materials and techniques don't have to be indigenous (belonging naturally to an area.) But what people do with them is a result of their culture." The macramé shown in Plate 3.18 seems to highlight this argument. "Arctic Women's Craft Workshop," 65.

¹³⁷ Flaherty notes that "unfortunately, women's work is often forgotten or discounted in the economic development arena. For example, the Wildlife Hunters Income Support Program negotiated as part of the Nunavut Land Claim provides hunters with money to finance the hunt, but it does not include money for the women who work with the skins." Martha Flaherty, 'Inuit Women: Equality and Leadership,' *Canadian Woman Studies* 14, no. 4 (1994): 6.

¹³⁸ Sarah Nickel, "'Making an Honest Effort': Indian Homemakers' Clubs and Complex Settler Engagements," in *In Good Relation: History, Gender, and Kinship in Indigenous Feminisms*, ed. Amanda Fehr and Sarah Nickel (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2020), 89–113; Lianne C. Leddy, "Mostly Just a Social Gathering: Anishinaabe Kwewag and the Indian Homemakers' Club, 1945-1960," in *Aboriginal History: A Reader*, ed. Kristen Burnett and Geoff Read, second (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Nunavut more broadly today. It is not uncommon for well-known female Inuit leaders (either in politics or the arts) to be highly accomplished sewers.¹³⁹

3.5.7. Learning to Sew Today: at Home

Many women, regardless of age, spoke of learning directly from their mothers or other older female relatives. In my interviews, younger women such as Samantha Ikirtaq Kigusitnak and Kukik Baker did not mention learning to sew skin or fabric in school. They both learned from their mothers. Ikirtaq described how she figured out how to sew herself. Her experiences are reminiscent of how older women also learned to sew:

Maybe when I was around eight, seven years old, I started looking at my mother on the floor, cutting up her materials. I started to thinking that looks so fun and organized all the materials and the patterns. As a girl, yeah. It looks like fun. To puzzle them, all the materials. Then I started to thinking, “I should start doing just like my mother.”

Yeah, without any help. So when I was around ten, eleven, my mother had extra material scraps. I started to look around and start thinking what I would sew. My first sew[ing project] was a parka, a pullover parka. My parents were out, maybe at the community hall, [in the] afternoon. I start to work on my materials and sew it. When I finally finished it. Everything’s not--- Everything was not good. Not puzzled well. So, I called my mother.

“Mom. I’m trying to sew myself a parka. Can you come and help me?”

“No. I’m in the Community Hall right now. I can’t come right now. You can sew and find out yourself because you are doing [it] yourself.”

She told me that. So I hang up the phone [and] went back to my sewing. I started to cry, “I need help!”

So, maybe like half an hour later. I looked back to my material [and] stuff and try to figure [it] out, puzzle it. My parents hadn’t come home yet; I’m trying to keep going. And finally, I made it: a new parka. I was so happy; ever since that day, I started to continue [to sew]. From that small one to

¹³⁹ A list that is by no means exhaustive includes Rhoda Akapaliapik Karetak in Arviat, Apphia Agalakti Awa, and her daughter, Rhoda Innuksuk, Leah Idlout d’Argencourt, Anyook Alookey, Marion Tuu’luq, Jessie Oonark, Manitok Thompson and her sister Cathy Towtongie.

more. They look so beautiful - real nice. I mean, so many times I cried because I really need to learn.¹⁴⁰

Like the women discussed earlier in this chapter, Ikirtaq was exposed to her mother's material sewing from a young age and began to use scraps to piece together a project of her own. For Ikirtaq, piecing the fabric together was like a puzzle that she could figure out with persistence. Her mother guided her by encouraging her to work it out by herself, trusting that Ikirtaq had observed her often enough that she would be able to learn how to make the parka herself. Situations such as Ikirtaq's strongly suggests that isumaqsayuq is still being employed by mothers of younger women today.

Kukik Baker's situation is somewhat different. Her mother, Shirley Tagalik, is a southerner who married James Tagalik of Arviat. Baker notes that she learned sewing and skinning from different family members, but her father played a particularly prominent role in why she began to sew:

When I was in grade six, my Dad asked me if I had in mind what my parka was going to look like that year. And I told him in great detail of my parka design and he sat quietly and listened to [it] all, like, I wanted my last name on the back, I wanted different colours, I wanted my favourite number and lots of detail [laughs]. And then he looks at me and smiles and he kind of said, "well good luck with that!"

And I looked at him and said, "No. Mom's going to sew it!"

And he said, "No, Mom has lots of people to sew for, you're going to start sewing for yourself!" ...

Before then, I always did hand-sewing ... [but] that was the first time I was actually going to sew, like a big project. My mom helped me with the pattern and taught me how to cut out the pattern and how the patterns fit together, and then I started sewing the inside, and my mom would give me pointers on how to make it warmer, and I made my first parka of that year.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Kigusiutnak, interview.

¹⁴¹ Baker, interview.

Baker's experience of learning to sew her first parka is different from that of Ikirtaq because Baker's mother guided her throughout the process, responding to questions, providing the pattern and offering advice for ways to improve the garment. Significantly, like Lena Napayok, it was Kukik's father who gently encouraged her to learn to sew.

Baker learned traditional sewing and skinning techniques, through workshops and her Inuit aunts. Her father taught her how to skin and tan wolves, he would tell Baker that:

Whatever my husband caught, that I should learn how to sew that because we have to: it's not something to waste. So it doesn't matter what my husband catches [I need to be able to skin, tan and sew it].¹⁴²

Baker also notes the value of sewing programs in her own life. When one of her daughters was four or five:

I took that course [on caribou skinning], and I learned. I – like again, I knew the basics from just watching people while I was growing up. ... So adding on to what I already knew and gaining the confidence that you need to do skins.¹⁴³

School days and wage employment had reduced opportunities for children to observe their parents practising essential skills daily. Baker was fortunate because her father and mother placed importance on their children being competent hunters and sewers and empowered her to develop her skills. Today Baker continues to support youth learning with her work at Aqqiumavvik Society.

¹⁴² Baker, interview. Baker has one important caveat: "The only thing I never touched was a muskrat. I was not going to touch that muskrat, I, as soon as I saw the tail, I was like ---no. It sat in my mom's freezer until she threw it out. ... The ugly little tail was all curled up, and I was like, no!"

¹⁴³ Baker, interview.

3.5.8. Learning to Sew Today: Workshops and Drop-ins

Like those in the 1970s, contemporary workshops are an opportunity for women to sew, connect with other women, and develop their skills. Inuit organizations are increasingly providing intensive workshops or evening courses that focus on developing sewing skills and often have an element of healing to them as well. Frequently, participants in these programs point to both the psychological benefits and the economic potential of learning to sew.¹⁴⁴ Dozens of programs related to sewing are available to Inuit today.¹⁴⁵ These programs as well as community sewing centres offer workshops and training across Nunavut, the NWT, Yukon, Alaska and in the south as well.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ For example, in Kangirsuk, Nunavik, an amauti workshop was offered to women in the community. Learning to sew an amauti through a workshop was important to Nancianne Gardiner-Grey, who organized the workshop, “I was having a hard time making an amautik for myself. Of course, I really needed an amautik because I didn’t have a mother or grandmother here to help me, ... I was even having a hard time finding women who knew how to make amautiks. I was asking around, and no one knew.” The fact that a simple amauti can be sewn for under \$100 was a major benefit of being able to sew one oneself, homemade amautis, even second-hand sell for hundreds of dollars. Jane George, “Sharing the Art of the Amautik,” *Nunatsiaq News*, May 12, 2006, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/HD2K-AHPC>.

¹⁴⁵ To list just a few recent programs in Inuit Nunangat: kamiik sewing in Kimmirut and Cambridge Bay; mitten and slipper sewing lessons in Arviat; puhitaqs (sunburst parka hoods) in Cambridge Bay. Likewise, at a beading workshop held in Kuujjuaq’s sewing centre, the beading instructor, Mary Aitchison, spoke of the inter-generational connection that sewing affords. “I see mothers and daughters working together, it’s a wonderful way to build social bonds,” Aitchison noted. Similarly, Rankin Inlet seamstress Miqquusaq Bernadette Dean sees sewing—especially traditional skin sewing and skin preparation—as an important aspect of healing. Somebody’s Daughter, a five-day workshop organized by Dean in 2017, serves as an example of how land camps and sewing workshops can support cultural resiliency and pride.

Jane George, “CamBay Women Learn to Cut, Stitch and Share,” *Nunatsiaq News*, February 19, 2012, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/G7C6-64HR>; Sarah Rogers, “Kuujjuaq Beading Workshop Builds Social Bonds, Creativity,” October 14, 2014, *Nunatsiaq News* edition, <https://perma.cc/3762-5WZP>; Lisa Gregoire, “Months of Hard Work Pay off at Nunavut Kamik-Making Workshop,” *Nunatsiaq News*, May 9, 2016, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/WUU2-7CZ5>; Navalik Tologanak, “Somebody’s Daughter on the Land,” *Nunavut News*, September 11, 2017; “Sewing Sunburst Parka Hoods,” *Nunatsiaq News*, March 9, 2019, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/CMS2-2PEZ>.

¹⁴⁶ The most formal and intensive program is the Nunavut Arctic College The Fur Design one year program that “focuses on traditional Inuit methods and technologies to prepare skins, design, and sew garments, as well as on commercial and contemporary methods for fur design and production.” The optional second year supports students in expanding their skills in sewing, design, and business. Just one example of a sewing centre is the newly established Isaruit Inuit Women’s Sewing Centre in Ottawa has provided drop-in sewing on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. One participant, Grace Salomonie, a young woman from Qikiqtaaluk, explained the impact of the regular space for sewing: “Usually, when I go back home and I study I think about all the things I’ve learned. I’m learning how to bead, I’m learning different

Multiple sewing programs were operating when I was in the community in the winter of 2018. I attended three different sewing programs in addition to meeting with seamstresses individually for interviews. I had already sewn a fabric yapa with students at Nunavut Sivuniksavut in Ottawa and had experience hand-sewing moccasins as well as beading. While not an expert, I did not arrive in Arviat as an absolute beginner sewer. The following section describes my experiences at these programs. I note topics of conversations, the purposes behind each of the programs and who participated in the programs. These were all-female spaces. There was a strong interest in sewing by women and girls of all ages and that opportunities for working with commercially tanned skins or with fabric were readily available in Arviat. Some programs were more structured in their aims at education, while others allowed women to work through a project of their choice and learn from others as they needed. All of them operated by providing little to no “instruction time” and instead focused allowing the learning to work through the project, watching Elders and asking questions when needed. It follows, as closely as possible, to isumaqsayuq conventions.

The first sewing program I attended was called “Connecting Youth Through Threads,” headed by Hilary Irwin, a Government of Nunavut Child and Youth Outreach Worker. The program ran on Tuesday nights from January to March 2018. Its purpose was “to give female youth the skills and confidence to sew for themselves and their

stories, learning different ways of thinking. ... I carry it around with me, and it makes me feel stronger.” Laura Glowacki, “Sewing, Seal Stew and Stories: Inuit Women in Ottawa Gather to Share Traditions,” *CBC News*, March 11, 2020, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/5ZDY-EDWZ>; Christina Williamson, “Field Notes” (Arviat, January 20, 2018); *An On-the-Land Workshop Model for Inuit Women* (Ottawa: Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2011); “Program Report: 700 Fur Production & Design” (Nunavut Arctic College, 2015), 2.

families.”¹⁴⁷ The organizers maintained that the program “brings so much confidence into the young females of our community. They leave the room feeling so much more confident and wanting to continue making different things.”¹⁴⁸ Irwin believed that sewing offered the participants a chance to gain self-confidence by learning a traditional skill and developing closer connections with their Elders. She was also highly conscious that it was a skill that could be monetized and possibly be used by the participants to become more independent and nurture the economic development of young Arviaqmiut women.¹⁴⁹ Irwin knew the economic benefits of being a skilled sewer: she had paid her way through college with her sewing.¹⁵⁰

Two Elders, including Winnie Malla, instructed the teens, while Irwin, a skilled sewer herself, provided support. The experienced sewers taught the students how to scrape commercially tanned sealskin with a dull ulu to stretch it out and cut the pieces out with a ROMI fur knife blade holder.¹⁵¹ We used natural coloured artificial sinew, a waxed polyester thread that is easily split into smaller strands and number six glover needles. There was minimal conversation among the youth participants. I wrote of one evening in my field notes:

It was quiet this evening, the young girls barely even speaking to each other. Only Winnie Malla and Hilary Irwin were really talking - they spoke a little about traditional medicinal practices ...they said that Inuit had a cure for UTIs [Urinary Tract Infections] ... We also talked about menstrual pads

¹⁴⁷ Irwin kindly provided me with a copy of the program’s proposal, from which I cite the program’s goal. Hilary Irwin, “Connecting Youth through Threads: Proposal to the Government of Nunavut, Mental Health Projects,” November 30, 2017, Personal Archive.

¹⁴⁸ Irwin, “Youth through Threads.”

¹⁴⁹ Irwin, “Youth through Threads.”

¹⁵⁰ Christina Williamson, “Field Notes” (Arviat, February 6, 2018).

¹⁵¹ This tool is a thin, brass handle that holds a diagonal razor blade. The knife is extremely sharp. It is used by cutting away from oneself, like how one uses an ulu. These knives were available for sale at Kiluk Inc. and cost about \$50 plus the blades.

which were made from caribou fur (of course). I am not clear how they washed them (or not), but Joy Pameok Suluk said that at least in her group, they made little pampers from the neck of caribou skin and when the babies peed, they freeze the fur, knock off the urine and it'd go right back on - very efficient – freeze-dry cleaning. Hilary Irwin also said that Inuit could only bathe in the summers and not the winter. We all agreed that having running water is a real blessing.¹⁵²

Despite the lack of chatter, the conversations that did occur around women's health and other issues were meaningful. While quiet, the teens were very carefully listening to the conversations between the Elders and Irwin and myself, picking up stories about their ancestors. As we worked on our sewing projects on the floor of the Margaret Uyauperk Visitor's Centre, we could also look at some of the traditional clothing on display.¹⁵³ The space was ideal for surrounding the young seamstresses in both their tangible and intangible heritage.

On Thursday evenings, the Hamlet offered open sewing evenings also at the Margaret Uyauperk Visitor Centre. I only attended once because the sewing evening conflicted with the Arviat Film Society meetings. As the AFS supported me with interview equipment and connected me to community members, I opted to attend those meetings regularly. At the sewing evening I did attend, it was clear that this was oriented less for learning and more to provide a workspace for women who may not have space or quiet to sew at home, especially with overcrowded housing.¹⁵⁴ Sewers needed to bring

¹⁵² Williamson, "Field Notes," February 6, 2018.

¹⁵³ Christina Williamson, "Field Notes" (Arviat, January 30, 2018).

¹⁵⁴ Stephanie Gibbons, who worked at the Hamlet office, introduced me to a few Inuit women at the sewing group. However, I was quickly cornered by a southern teacher, the first of many short-term southerners living in Arviat who were determined to "tell me like it is," which generally resulted in an uncomfortable, misinformed, usually racist discussion about what is wrong with the community and its residents. I elected not to return to this session in part to avoid being associated with that teacher (notwithstanding the convenient Arviat Film Society conflict on the same evening). Christina Williamson, "Field Notes" (Arviat, January 25, 2018).

their own fabric, needles and thread and could share patterns among themselves. There were a few sewing machines scattered on the floor that were available for women to use. Women worked on their projects, drank tea and coffee, and talked among themselves as the local community radio station played in the background for the two hours.

The final sewing program I attended was a drop-in session recommended to me in early February by Shirley Tagalik. The Aqqiumavvik Inuit Wellness Society offered a drop-in sewing space at Inuuhiq (Anglican Church Parish house) managed by Martha Akatsiak. The program also provided the participants with country food such as beluga maktaaq (blubber and skin) or palauga (bannock) and tea. The drop-in style program was slightly different from the others in that participants could bring in their projects and supplies or use the material provided to make items for fundraising. The funds generated from the sale of these items would be used to purchase more materials and support the other programs. Lena Napayok, who had started an earlier version of the program several years earlier, explained the need that she saw for the program. Women wanted to learn how to sew, and kids in the community needed warm clothes. In order to meet those two needs, Napayok noted:

I would announce on the radio that it's open for any ladies or elders that want to come and sew. I'd make a snack: bannock, and there'd be tea and coffee. There's some ladies that started coming [who] didn't know how to sew, or whose mom didn't [sew, or they] weren't taught how to sew. And from that program, like first we'd make mitts for kids, and then our supervisor would bring them to income support and distribute them to children in need of mitts and then we added wind pants because we got donations for wind pants material and they'd sew and - same thing - bring them to income support and distribute it again to people in need and from that ... We've made some to sell and once we got money we bought more material. But that time we used leather and now that program closed for two years or three years, then this one started similar to it. We are making

kamiks, little booties, or with leather bottom, not bearded seal. [Laughs] and they will be distributed to children in need plus mitts.¹⁵⁵

The program's structure makes it reasonably self-sustaining: the Aqqiumavvik Society buys material, and those that use that material donate their products to be either sold to purchase more material or donated to children in need of warm clothes.

At this program, I made blue sealskin kamiks. When I arrived, Kukik Baker and Martha Akatsiak helped me select a pattern from the pre-cut templates made of cereal boxes as well as the leather and seal that I would use to make them (Plate 3.19). Melinda, who took me under her wing and liked to tease me, helped me with my sewing technique. I wrote in my field notes that "Melinda was very kind and helped me with the cutting of the pattern and showed me a different way to hold the needle – [the] Inuit way instead of [the] White Lady way - though ungainly for me at first, it is actually more accurate and provides more control of the stitches."¹⁵⁶ I had been taught hand-sewing by holding the needle between my thumb and index and pushing the needle away from yourself (Plate 3.20). Inuit women hold the needle between their thumb and third finger and push the needle towards themselves with a thimble on the index finger (Plate 3.21). The thumb and middle finger technique provides a great deal more control for sewing with leather, and the instances of stabbing myself with my very sharp glover needle reduced as I adjusted my technique.

The program was designed for women of all skill levels, but many were beginners.

Lena Napoyak explained one woman's learning process at the workshop:

Using mitts as an example, when we first started sewing with ladies in the community, there were some ladies that came who did not know how to

¹⁵⁵ Napayok, interview.

¹⁵⁶ Christina Williamson, "Field Notes" (Arviat, February 15, 2018).

sew. And first, kid's mitts, kid's-sized mitts and then we move to ladies-sized mitts so one of the participants wanted to make sealskin mitts for the first time, while I was sewing she would come, "Lena, like this?" [I said,] "You are going too fast, take it off." So she took it off, try it, hela [um], I showed her steps, she'd go sew, come back, "Lena, like this?" [I replied] "They are too far apart, your stitches are too far apart, take them off- Take the stitches off." She never gave up she kept trying, now she is an expert on sewing mitts. Ii [yes]... and I told her when we sew, we like to show them perfectly because when we are wearing them we want perfect, maybe custom-made mitts.¹⁵⁷

The program created the space for beginner sewers of any age to work through the skills and techniques of sewing (some women also knit and crochet). Through isumaqsayuq, beginner sewers watch, learn, try and try again after receiving feedback from other more experienced sewers. The space makes the learning feel very organic as sewers work at their own pace and ask questions when they want. Napayok and Akatsiak both noted how they too have learned from the program.

Lena Napayok: we started sharing patterns, and there were used to be couple of elders there, but they passed on. And we share. And sometimes we ask the elders...

Martha Akatsiaq: Learn new things.

Lena Napayok: Ii [yes]. Right up to today ... we're still learning, and we share patterns, or if they do not know, they'll come and ask, "What should I do," or, we help each other out; share patterns.¹⁵⁸

This spirit of sharing patterns is important. The women drew on resources such as Jill Oakes' book *Our Boots* and used patterns provided by Elders. Participants were able to draw from a large selection of templates provided by the program, neatly organized in a cardboard box by size.

¹⁵⁷ Napayok, interview.

¹⁵⁸ Napayok, interview; Akatsiak, interview.

Our conversations were more relaxed than those that occurred in the other spaces I sewed in. Likely, the relaxed nature of the conversation had to do with the age of the sewers, whose children were mostly married and grown. I was the youngest. When the women did not want me to know what they were saying, they would switch to Inuktitut and then intermix English when I was to be included:

I was shy at first, but the women were really welcoming - lots of Inuktitut, which meant I only caught bits and pieces – We made bannock and drank tea and laughed. I was teased for the way Qallunaat laugh: “He He He,” apparently. ... I had so much fun. I watched as women helped each other learn to sew, tease each other, chit chat.¹⁵⁹

The conversations shifted from the gentle teasing of the outsider to conversations about different ways of showing love to children. One woman talked about how she

was born here in a summer tent in 1965, and her parents told her not to learn how to sew seal and caribou because it was too hard - she says it was their way of trying to love her - letting her do what she pleased, but [the woman] said she loves her children the other way and disciplines them - she told me a story about how her eldest two boys were starting to smoke and chew snuff, and she gave the consequences, and now the eldest doesn't do either.¹⁶⁰

The conversations were typical of what I encountered in female-only sewing spaces. We shared stories about the kinds of things that matter to most women: their childhoods, their families, love, women's health. Many of them mentioned they enjoyed coming to the sewing group for company, especially now that their children were grown up and out of the house. The program meant they had some company while they sewed. Their projects were often meant for their families.

Arviat is well known for its strong sewing culture. My experiences in 2018 allowed me to appreciate firsthand how that sewing tradition continues. The workshops in Arviat

¹⁵⁹ Williamson, “Field Notes,” February 15, 2018, 15.

¹⁶⁰ Williamson, “Field Notes,” February 15, 2018, 15.

that I attended were informal; learning was done by watching, asking questions and trying it out oneself. These were not *ilisayuq* (abstract, verbally-mediated) methods of learning. With their unstructured time, the workshops allowed each sewer to go at her own pace, ask questions if she needed, or just chat and work through the project herself.

3.6. CONCLUSION

Sewing must be considered as a form of both gendered knowledge and gendered work.

The sewing that women do in Arviat, both historically and today supports the household.

Historically, their sewing would dress their family, create *tupiks* (tents), bedding and innumerable other important items that were necessary for the subsistence economy.

Today, in the wage economy, women's sewing can either be sold for cash, or used in order to more affordably dress their families as well as support subsistence activities.

Regardless, sewing knowledge and work are part of a land-based economic system and are integrally related to hunting and trapping work.

The *amauti* in particular is a useful garment to conceptualize women's work because it is not only sewn, but also supports women's ability to perform their work in myriad ways. Child-rearing and child-care have traditionally been and are central to many Inuit women's work. While unpaid, this labour contributes economically to the family household. Historically, *tuillis* and versions of the garment reflected the stages in a woman's life and her position and role in her community and family. Today, *amautis* remain an important garment for women and men with small children.

Knowing how to sew is also a major part of Inuit women's work historically, and it remains an important and valued skill in Arviat. The *amauti* is the most difficult Inuit garment to sew and its very complexity seems to bring to the fore its prominence as a

garment that represents the value of Inuit women, their knowledge, skills and labour. Sewing and the knowledge wrapped in it continue to be highly valued among the Inuit women I spoke with in Arviat. Learning to sew has changed in Arviat since the late 1950s with the introduction of the federal day school and, later, the community's public school. Yet, the power of isumaqsayuq methods of learning, that is through careful observation and scaffolded tasks, is present even for women who largely learned everything, even sewing, through ilisayuq (lecture) methods at school.

Historically, nearly all Inuit women would have been capable of skin sewing and preparing hides; the proportion of women with those skills today are fewer. Though the need to know how to process skins and sew caribou skin garments lessened with settlement life, women still learned to skin sew from other women in their communities, even if there was some colonially-instilled shame surrounding land-based work. The current sewing resurgence includes skin sewing which many women are re-learning. The role of workshops and other sewing programs in empowering Inuit women both psychologically and economically since the 1970s and currently, demonstrates that there is a long-lasting and continued interest and value in sewing skills across Inuit Nunangat.

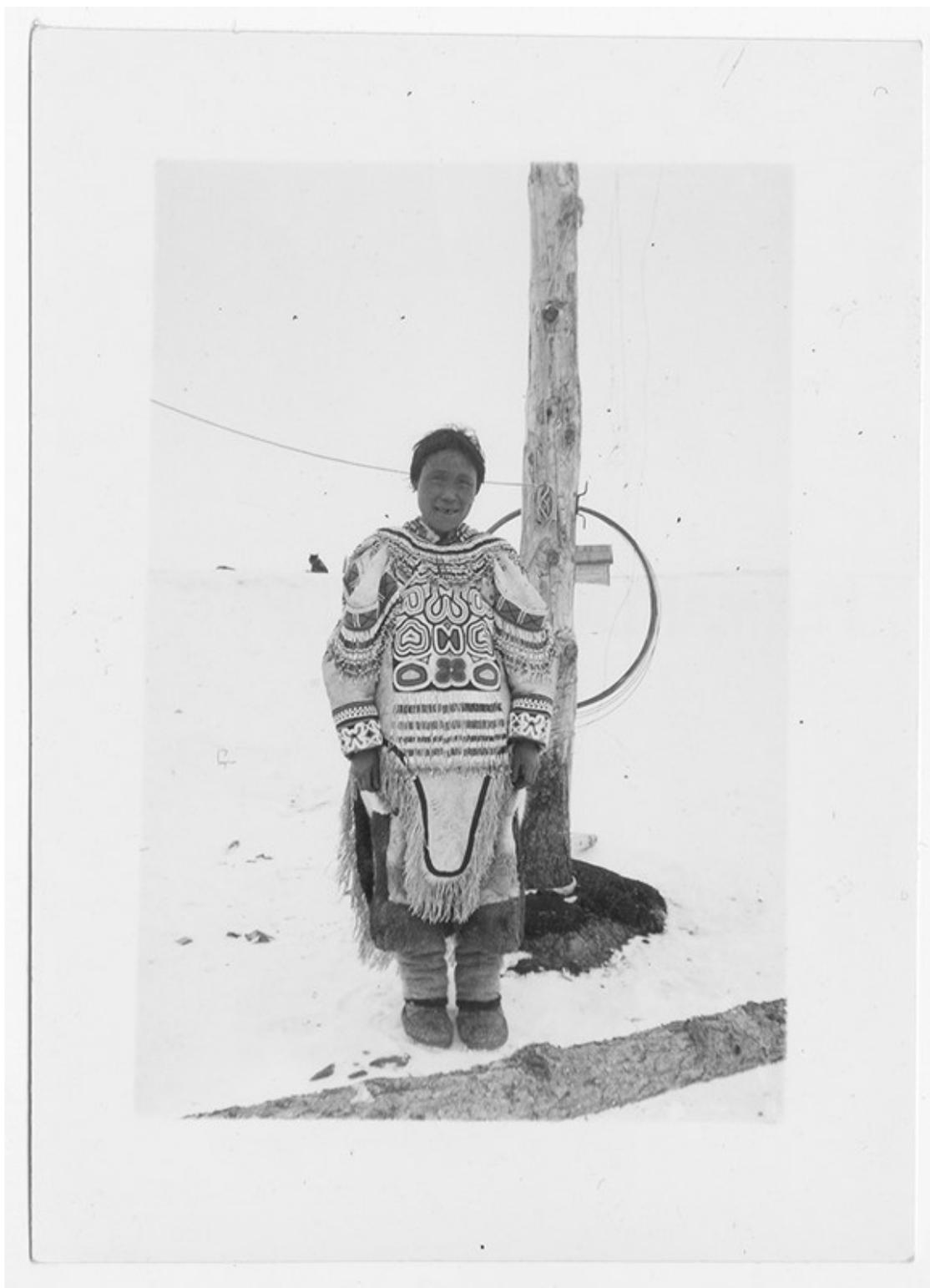
3.7. PLATES



Plate 3.1 Unnamed Inuit woman cooking at outside shelter with children behind her. She is wearing her atigi layer tuilli. The hood opening is trimmed with yellow fabric. Arviat? c. 1937-1946. Library Archives of Canada/ Donald Marsh Fonds/e007914479. Accession no. 1978-039, slide box 4A no. 411.



Plate 3.2 Two unnamed Inuit women sitting on komatik, the one closest to the photographer is packing her child. They are wearing their qullitaq tuillis. Arviat? c. 1937. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e007914477. Accession no. 1978-039 slide box 4A, no. 404.



**Plate 3.3 L. Cobborne?, “Unidentified Inuit woman in beaded dress at Padley,”
Padlei, c.1935. Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, 1987/363-E-240/3.**



Plate 3.4 Three women in their fabric akuliq amautis, the fourth is in a seal akuliq amauti on the shore. Note how the kiniq tapers in behind the thighs and the parka has a broad, peaked hood as well as larger pouches. R.L. Sutton, "Ship Day – Arctic Bay," (Ikpiarjuq, 1939). Hudson Bay Company Archives, 1987/363-E-200/60.



Plate 3.5 “Little children are clothed like this after they grown out of their combination suits.” Arviat? c. 1930. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e010984482. Accession 1981-238, box 3934, number 040.



Plate 3.6 “Getting water. Each morning, the ice that has formed in the hole must be cut away with an ice chisel.” c. 1944. Photograph by Donald B. Marsh Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, 1987/363-E-435:4.



Plate 3.7 Unnamed girl with plastic doll in her amaut, near Arviat, c. 1940s. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e007914524. Accession 1978-039, slide box 10, no. 345.



**Plate 3.8 Unnamed girl amaqing her puppy in her shawl. Library Archives
Canada/Donald Marsh Fonds/Accession no. 1981-238 vol. 3934, no. 33.**



Plate 3.9 Ujaupiq carrying willow bundle and child c.1940s. Photograph by Lionel Ducharme, O.M.I.. Credit: Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay.



Plate 3.10 Still from Ujarak Appadoo's Youtube Film on how to use an amauti or amaaruti. *Amautiga Amaaruti tutorial // Front and Back*, 9 May 2020, <https://youtu.be/17KGGGcLk0Q>.



Plate 3.11 *Raised in the hood* print by Megan Kyak-Monteith, 2015. Photo courtesy of Megan Kyak-Monteith.



Plate 3.12 Patricia Moore and her two daughters, Linda Williamson (née Moore) and Cathy Williamson (née Moore) wearing their parkas and kammiks while in Baker Lake c. 1968. Christina Williamson's private collection.



Plate 3.13 Joy Kiluvigyuak Hallauk showing Jill Oakes hand measuring on a caribou parka. Jill Oakes, NWT Eskimo Point, Hand Measuring Man's Pakra (Rick Riewe's), February 1986. University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, box 10, file 5 slide sheet 7.



Plate 3.14 Joy Kiluvigyuk Hallauk cutting out an Ahlarmiut parka pattern, Jill Oakes, c. 1986. University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, Jill Oakes Fonds, box 10, file 4, slide sheet 7.



Plate 3.15 Hand-sewn seal fur, fox fur, and cow leather mittens from the Arviat youth sewing program. Mittens made by Christina Williamson. Photograph by Cathy Williamson, 2020.



Plate 3.16 Still from Youtube video of Susan Aglukark with the tuilli sewn by her mother, Dorothy. Beadwork was done by Dorothy, Susan and Dorothy's daughter Nanci Tagalik 2018-2019. "Susan Aglukark's Nurses Tribute," 29 April 2021.

<https://youtu.be/6pevmZQ73fg>



Plate 3.17 Jill Oakes, Martha Anoe's sewing class in September 1986, University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, box 10 file 5 slide 7.



Plate 3.18 Macramé of the Calgary Tower, with syllabics along the side and mounted on a caribou antler. Glenbow Museum, AB1603. Photograph by Christina Williamson 2019.

Saved · 8 unopened saves this week
×


Kukik Baker ▸ Arviat Sell / Swap Group
 6 hrs · 
⋮

Kids Kamiks and Mitts and Adult Mitts
\$150
📍 Downtown East

3-5 year old Kamiks - \$150
 1-2 year old Kamiks - \$80
 Adult mitts 3 layer mitts - \$150
 Adult mitts - \$100
 Kids Long mitts - \$60
 Kids Short mitts - \$40

All made by the Ladies Sewing Group. Being sold at fair prices to buy new materials to sew more to donate.

See Martha Akatsiak at the Inuuhiq weekdays from 9-5. Or send her a message.
 Located in Arviat.





Message Seller

Plate 3.19 Facebook Screenshot of kamikpas and mittens for sale from the Aqqiumavvik Society, May 2018. (Post is no longer available).



Plate 3.20 “Qallunaat-style” sewing, where the needle is held between the index and the thumb and pushed away from the sewer. Photograph by Duncan Scott, 2020.



Plate 3.21 Inuit-style sewing, where the needle is held between thumb and middle finger and pushed towards the sewer. The needle is pushed through the skin with the index finger, typically with a thimble on the index. Photograph by Duncan Scott, 2020.

Chapter 4 : CARIBOU SKIN PARKAS: A HISTORY OF CHANGE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The last three chapters strove to establish the presence of Inuit women's economic activities and the important place that sewing held in the changing economy of Arviat. Following the introduction of the research methodology in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 inserted women's labour and wage work into the general history of Arviat and Kivalliq, recasting Inuit women as people who act in economically relevant ways. Chapter 3 established the role of the amauti in Inuit culture as a garment that embodies important elements of Inuit women's knowledge and I framed sewing knowledge as part of gendered Inuit Knowledge. I also discussed the changes in modes of knowledge transmission, particularly during the twentieth century. Together, these chapters demonstrate that Inuit women's sewing is skilled, economic labour and that, as a land-based skill, it has allowed many Inuit to achieve continued cultural and economic relevance within the mixed economy. Each of the following three chapters offers a specific case study of a material aspect of sewing parkas. Each describes a different facet of Inuit women's labour and sewing production.

In this brief chapter, the focus is on the design changes of caribou skin parkas in Kivalliq from the eighteenth century until today. This analysis offers a critical source of understanding of southern Kivalliq Inuit women's collective responses to material (economic) and social change. While I concentrate on the period from the eighteenth century until today in this chapter, I do not mean to imply that these dynamics did not exist beforehand. However, a deeper engagement with archaeological research methods would be required to consider those questions in the period prior to the 1700s. Paallirmiut

and Aharmiut were in contact with non-Inuit starting in the late eighteenth century and fashion changes reflect these connections to other Inuit groups and First Nations, as well as European, Canadian and American incursions into Inuit Nunangat. Overall, there is a long period of continuity in parka design until the nineteenth century. From that time, the increasing number of outsiders who travelled to Inuit Nunangat began to leave their imprint on Inuit fashion. Parkas also reflected major economic realities: parka tails (akuqs) shortened when caribou migratory routes altered and Inuit could not hunt sufficient caribou, for instance. Even the very fact that Inuit in southern Kivalliq used caribou predominantly highlights the deep importance of that animal to Paallirmiut, Aharmiut and Aivilingmiut of this region. All these factors – cultural exchange and the presence, or lack of, caribou – were reflected in the parka designs made by Inuit seamstresses.

Anthropologist Tim Ingold has argued that the process of making must be considered when analysing how materiality conveys meaning.¹ As this chapter will show, Inuit women’s perspectives and responses to social and economic change are embedded in the production and design of caribou skin clothing. Additionally, anthropologists, such as Nicholas Thomas, Arjun Appadurai and Alfred Gell, emphasize that the meanings of objects are produced through social relationships, or through the circulation or commodification of those objects.² I demonstrate not only how the materiality of an

¹ Tim Ingold, “Materials against Materiality,” *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (April 4, 2007); Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller, eds., *Clothing as Material Culture* (New York: Berg, 2005).

² Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Alfred Gell, “Things as Social Agents,” in *Museum Objects*, ed. Sandra H. Dudley (London: Routledge, 2011), 336–62; Igor Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process,” in *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64–94; Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

object is central to its social meaning, but also how, as objects that circulate, as gifts, commodities, objects of exchange and inheritance, parkas are also objects that existed within a particular system of labour and economics.

Despite the limited number of archival sources describing Inuit garments, the available sources still provide strong evidence of the centrality of caribou to the subsistence base of Inuit in the region over the centuries. I also note the evidence for the wearing of caribou rather than sealskin clothing in understanding the economic base of Inuit living in what would become Kivalliq and the continuation of this clothing tradition continued into the nineteenth century. While specific details are limited for the eighteenth century, I bring together the historical evidence to prove the value of women's skilled sewing work, and the use of the amaut (pouch) for carrying infants. The changes in fashion during this century, such as the lowering of the front hem and the shortening of the back hem on men's parkas may reflect new economic circumstances during the nineteenth century as caribou became more scarce. Shifts in the design of women's parkas are more difficult to discern over time, but the distinctive epaulette shoulders on the tuilli is a useful case for tracing influence and interchange between Inuit groups and non-Inuit. This chapter takes a fine-grained approach in tracing design changes in both men and women's garments over two hundred years to establish that the mutability of traditional fashion and designs is longstanding. As Ulrich Lehman argues, "the idea of fashion is an idea of production: the cultural context of making is seen through economic, political and social prisms of making."³ Fashions and cuts of caribou skin clothing are

³ Ulrich Lehmann, *Fashion and Materialism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University press, 2018), 231.

material embodiments of Inuit response to change and how they render that change understandable to themselves.

4.2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF PARKAS

There are no extant Thule or Dorset garments from the Kivalliq region, but a few frozen fragments from the High Arctic, Siberia and Greenland provide clear evidence of the presence of skin garment sewing techniques that are still in use today, such as overcast stitches (the most common, most secure and quickest stitch for sewing), and the waterproof stitch on puckered toe of a shaved sealskin kamik from the Nanoot Site near Kimmirut (Lake Harbour).⁴

Thule figurines are much more likely to be preserved than skin garments and they also offer some hints of parka designs. A Thule wooden figurine from around 1350 CE on Ellesemere Island is especially rare because it also has a small band of polar bear fur around the waist, a style still worn by Inughuit women of northern Kalaallit (Greenland), not far from the Eskimo Byen archaeological site.⁵ Another Thule figurine from much closer to Kivalliq is an ivory figurine dating to 1000-1600 CE that was collected at the Bay of God's Mercy on Shugliaq (Southampton Island).⁶ The figurine is also distinctly female with a clearly marked pelvis, which, coupled with an X across the chest, is

⁴ Moreau S. Maxwell, "Pre-Dorset and Dorset Pre-History of Canada," in *Arctic*, ed. David Damas (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 366; Betty Kobayashi Issenman, "Stitches in Time: Prehistoric Inuit Skin Clothing and Related Tools," in *Braving the Cold*, ed. Cunera Buijs and J. G. Oosten (Leiden: CNWS publications, 1997), 44.

⁵ Karen Margrethe McCullough, *The Ruin Islanders: Thule Culture Pioneers in the Eastern High Arctic* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1989); Thule Culture, *Figurine*, c 1350, wood and bear skin, 9 cm, c 1350, SgFm-4-312, Canadian Museum of History.

⁶ Thule Culture, *Figurine*, c 1300, Ivory, 8.5cm, c 1300, IX-C-2626, Canadian Museum of History.

suggestive of a qakhuvaut, the ties used to hold an infant in place in the amaut.⁷ These Thule figurines, along with the stronger archeological evidence of skin preparation tools, such as needles (not awls), ulus, scrapers and often elaborate and elegant kakpiks (needle cases), establish an ancient history of caribou skin clothing traditions in Inuit Nunangat.⁸

4.3. CARIBOU SKIN PARKAS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Inuit of different -miut groups had distinctive design elements in their garments that distinguished them from other groups, though these differences could be quite subtle to outsiders. The eighteenth century is the earliest period in which we have clear evidence of historical Inuit clothing styles in the Southern Kivalliq, yet I have found no extant examples of early skin clothing from this region. Therefore, this chapter relies heavily on the limited written and archival sources that describe Inuit and the first verifiable accounts of European contact with Inuit on the west coast of Hudson Bay from 1718 onwards.⁹

⁷ Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 13.

⁸ Krista Ulujuk Zawadski, “Lines of Discovery on Inuit Needle Cases, Kakpiit, in Museum Collections,” *Museum Anthropology* 41, no. 1 (March 2018): 61–75; Issenman, “Stitches in Time.”

⁹ It is possible that Inuit lived in the southern Kivalliq region before the 1700s, but there is little archaeological or historical evidence to support this. Most archaeologists believe that this region was occasionally visited by historical Chipewyan and a group of Inuit from the Coronation Gulf (Inuinnait) eventually migrated south-eastwards in the eighteenth-century, and some of that group lived exclusively inland by the 1850s. Explorers like Jens Munk (1619-1620), Luke Foxe (1631), and Henry Kelsey, (1686), did not encounter Inuit at all along the southwest coast of Hudson Bay. The accounts by early observers such as Nicholas Jérémie (c. 1694-1713), the Jesuit Fr. Marest (1694-96), Claude Charles la Potherie (c.1700s), and James Knight (1714-17) contain possible references Inuit living around Hudson Strait, but these references are too vague to be considered reliable. Joseph Robson, who lived at Fort Prince of Wales from 1733-36, mentioned the remains of a camp that by tradition was understood as Inuit, but Burch argues that this camp was more likely intermittently occupied by both Inuit and Chipewyan. Jens Munk and C. C. A. Gosch, *An Account of a Most Dangerous Voyage* (London, 1704); Luke Foxe, *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe of Hull*, ed. Miller Christy (London: Hakluyt Society, 1894); Henry Kelsey, *The Kelsey Papers*, ed. Chester Martin and Arthur G. Doughty (Ottawa: F. A. Ackland, 1929); Jérémie Nicholas, *Twenty Year of York Factory, 1694-1714* (Ottawa: Thorburn, 1926); Father Marest, “Letter from Father Marest,” in *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay*, ed. Joseph B. Tyrell (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1931), 103–42; Claud Charles Le Roy de la Potherie, “Letters of La Potherie,” in *Documents*

We must, furthermore, use these descriptions with some skepticism because many early moments of contact were brief and Qallunaat commentators did not always fully understand how parkas, especially amautis, worked. The predominance of caribou clothing is, however, clear, and demonstrates the singular importance of caribou for people living in this region in contrast to sealskin clothing used on Baffin Island and Nunavik. This signals the inland economic orientation of this period, which may partly explain why sea-faring Europeans did not encounter many Inuit from the west coast of Hudson Bay at all at this time (see Chapter 2).

The first visual depiction of Inuit from the region is an engraving from John Ellis's *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, from 1746-47.¹⁰ Ellis reached Tikirajuaq (Whale Cove), where he encountered the probable ancestors of Qairnirmiut.¹¹ Ellis did not describe the Inuit at Tikirajuaq in any detail pleading, that he "will spare the Reader the Trouble of any Repetitions here," since their clothing was apparently so similar to that of Inuit living

Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay, ed. Joseph B. Tyrell (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1931), 143-370; James Knight, *The Founding of Churchill*, ed. James F. Kenney (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1932); Joseph Robson, *An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's-Bay* (London: J. Payne & J. Bouquet et al, 1752); E. S. Burch, "Caribou Eskimo Origins: An Old Problem Reconsidered," *Arctic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (1978): 11.

¹⁰ The first image from life of Inuit was made around 1567. This image, which is known as the Augsburg engraving, shows an Inuk and her child who were likely kidnapped and brought to Europe. Many images of Inuit from Labrador, Greenland and Baffin Island followed, but the earliest depiction of Kivallirmiut was not made for another 200 years after the Augsburg print. Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, "The Inuit Parka: A Preliminary Survey" (MA Thesis, Carleton University, 1983), 9-44; Wendell Oswald, "The Eskimo People: The Earliest Accounts," *The Beaver*, Autumn 1977, 22; W.C. Sturtvant, Mattheus Francker, and Hans Wolf Glaser, "The First Inuit Depiction by Europeans," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 4, no. 1/2 (1980): 47-49.

¹¹ The engravings in Ellis' book are among the very few depictions of Inuit from the eighteenth century, but must be understood with the caveat that the engravings from this period were done in Europe by artists who had not been present on the voyage, and the ethnological information available in the image must necessarily be taken with some scepticism. Rosalind Pepall, "Images of the Inuit in the Eighteenth Century," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* 5, no. 1 (1980): 5-6,11.

near the Hudson Strait.¹² Fortunately, he published an engraving of these Inuit, shown in Plate 4.1, and described the garments of Inuit women of the Hudson Strait, the probable ancestors of Iglulingmiut shown in Plate 4.2:¹³

The Women have a Train to their Jackets, that reaches down to their Heels. Their Hoods are also larger and wider at the Shoulders, for the sake of carrying their Children in them more conveniently on their Backs.¹⁴

The women's garments he described had all the hallmarks of an amauti: broader shoulders, an akuq (long tail), and an amaut (pouch).¹⁵ The image confirms that the Inuit childrearing practice of packing their children in the amaut was established by this time. We know from Thule figurines that amaqing (packing a child) was practiced long before the 1740s as well.

Some of the key features of contemporary Inuit clothing are mentioned in early travel accounts and engravings and remain in use today. These include the long tail on men's and women's parkas and the primacy of caribou as the fur of choice, even in summer months. The description of John Ellis suggests that sewers made minimal to no use of imported materials such as duffel, stroud or beads at this time. While specific details about men's and women's economic roles and behaviours cannot be determined through analysis of the extant garments of this period, it is reasonable to surmise that women's amautis, and, therefore, women's role as primary caregiver, was well-established in this period.

¹² Henry Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's-Bay by the Dobbs Galley and California* (Dublin: Printed for George and Alexander Ewing, 1749), 107.

¹³ Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, 107.

¹⁴ Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, 64.

¹⁵ Ellis believed babies were carried in the hood of the amauti rather than in the amaut. To this day, this is a common and persistent misunderstanding of the garment. Whether these shoulders were baggy like those seen on contemporary amautis of Baffin Island or had the distinctive Kivalliq epaulettes is not apparent.

The important factor, from an economic perspective, is that the Inuit from Tikirajuaq (Whale Cove) in Plate 4.1, are wearing caribou fur parkas. The clue is the artist's use of tick hatching to indicate caribou fur, which is longer and thicker than sealskin. The contrast can be seen in the engraving in Plate 4.2, where the use of cross-hatching and white space implies sealskin, which is a smoother and more reflective.¹⁶ Many archaeologists maintain that Ahirmiut and the Tahujarmiut (an inland-living subgroup of Paallirmiut) had not fully established their inland economic orientation until the 1850s.¹⁷ Ellis's encounter with Inuit on the coast at Tikirajuaq in the 1740s makes evident that they did not live exclusively inland, yet their caribou garments hint at a stronger inland connection than that of Inuit farther north who used sealskin – a more water-resistant material – in the summer. Similarly, Ellis's comment that “women do not stick out the Sides of their Boots with Whalebone, as the other Eskimaux do,” further confirms that ocean mammals were not a major part of these Inuit's economy.¹⁸ The use

¹⁶ Pepall, “Images of Inuit,” 11; Driscoll-Engelstad, “Inuit Parka,” 23.

¹⁷ William E. Taylor, “An Archaeological Survey between Cape Parry and Cambridge Bay, N.W.T., Canada, in 1963,” *Archeological Survey of Canada Paper* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972), 42; Burch, “Old Problem Reconsidered,” 1–4; Darren Keith, “Caribou, River and Ocean: Harvaqturmiut Landscape Organization and Orientation,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 28, no. 2 (2004): 42.

¹⁸ The man in the engraving shown in Plate 4.1 is wearing an outer parka with a band of white fur along the waist and a white V-shape decoration coming down from the neck. What appears to be wild, unkempt hair, may have actually been, “a Cap made of the Skin of a Buffalo's Tail; which tho' it has a horrid Appearance, yet is it very useful in keeping off the Musketoos, which in this Country are Excessively troublesome.” Ellis was referring to muskox (*Ovibos moschatus*) rather than “buffalo” (*Bison bison*) in his description of the man's head-wear. According to Edward Burch, muskox found inland was a marginal resource for Kivallirmiut prior to the 1820s. Though we cannot determine the historic range of muskox in the eighteenth century, muskoxen in Kivalliq are generally found far inland, a distinction from other regions of Inuit Nunagat where muskoxen are found along the Arctic Ocean coast. Muskox were mostly used for food by Inuit, as the hides are extremely thick and heavy. Starting in the 1820s, Inuit and Chipewyan would trade the hides as robes at Fort Churchill based on the HBC's prompting. E. S. Burch, “Muskox and Man in the Central Canadian Sub-Arctic, 1689-1974,” *Arctic* 30, no. 3 (1977): 143; Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, 107.

of caribou fur and the lack of baleen for the women's trousers suggests that the people of Tikirajuaq were economically oriented towards caribou rather than marine resources.¹⁹

Like explorers in other periods, Ellis and his contemporary, Andrew Graham, noted the finely sewn clothing of the Inuit they encountered. Ellis wrote that

it is not easy to say how dextrously they use Materials, which to us seem so very improper for Purposes to which they employ them. Their Needles are also made of the same Stuff [ivory], notwithstanding which their Cloaths are perfectly well sewed, and are not only strong and close, but very neatly made.²⁰

Graham also specifically mentioned the skillfulness of Inuit sewers:

As this garment is made of several skins, or pieces, the workwomen manifest a judicious fancy, in suiting the colours to each other, so as to appear only one hide; but sometimes the seams are ornamented with a narrow slip, or line, of white or black.²¹

To stitch fur panels together “so as to appear only one hide” requires careful attention to fur length, colour and direction. These descriptions, along with those in other contemporary accounts, note the high quality of Inuit women's sewing. Sewing required not only a technical competence and a specialized knowledge of how to prepare skins that would be supple and strong, but it also a keen understanding of the movements of the body and the high-stress points on a garment caused by such movements. The regular mention of women's sewing skill shows that Inuit and Europeans alike recognized Inuit

¹⁹ Andrew Graham, who travelled along the coast of the Hudson Bay in 1750, 1751 and 1752, also described the clothing worn by Inuit, but relied heavily on what appear to be his notes, which were based on David Crantz's *The History of Greenland*. It is very difficult to distinguish between his paraphrasing of Crantz and his own commentary, so his work will not be discussed here in great detail. David Crantz, *The History of Greenland...*, English edition (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1820); Andrew Graham, *Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay 1767-91*, ed. Glyndwr Williams (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1969), 215.

²⁰ Ellis, *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, 106.

²¹ Graham, *Observations*, 217.

women's notable skills and suggests that those skills were valued as highly as hunting skills were for men.

4.4. CARIBOU SKIN PARKAS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Continuity in design is the salient aspect of this period: nineteenth-century men's and women's parkas strongly resemble those of the centuries before.²² The short kiniq (front apron) and long akuq remained a feature of men's caribou parkas and the amaut was the defining feature of women's garments. While eighteenth-century explorers described the basic silhouette of Inuit garments, it was only in nineteenth-century travel accounts and artworks that details of decorative elements emerge. The earliest image of clothing for Inuit living in the southwestern part of Hudson Bay is an 1832 watercolour painting by John Halkett (Plate 4.3).²³ This image, which is based on a sketch by George Back, is one of the most detailed depictions of southern Kivalliq men's clothing in the nineteenth century. The watercolour shows an Inuk man named Tattannaeuk, known to the explorers and traders as Augustus.²⁴ Tattannaeuk was likely from the area around Tikiraqjuaq and considered the people who summered near Arviat (Knapp's Bay) as his people.²⁵ The painting thus provides some idea of what the (probable) ancestors of

²² Oakes notes that it is not clear when the long-tailed style became popular in this region, but it certainly was present by the 1800s. The presence of the long-tailed style in the eighteenth century among Inuinnait, Inuit of Baffin Island, and Inuit of the north-western shores of the Hudson Bay confirms that the style was wide-spread. Jill E. Oakes, 'Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production' (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 1988), 83.

²³ The John Halkett watercolour is located at the Manitoba Museum and a copy of Halkett's watercolour was made by Jenny Russel Simpson in 1913. I have been unable to locate Back's original sketch. John Halkett was a director of the Hudson's Bay Company (and brother-in-law and ghost writer to Lord Selkirk). John Halkett, *Tattannaeuk*, c.1820s, Watercolour, c.1820s, HBC-38-42-A, Manitoba Museum; Jenny Russell Simpson, *Tattannaeuk, Esquimaux Interpreter - Named, by the English...Augustus*, April 21, 1913, Watercolour, 30.4 x 38.1 cm, April 21, 1913, R13442-3-0-E, vol. 1, C-001048, LAC; W. S. Wallace, "Lord Selkirk's Ghost Writer," *The Beaver*, September 1940.

²⁴ Tattannaeuk worked as an HBC employee and an interpreter and guide off and on from 1812 until his death in 1834. He provided much of the information that the HBC obtained about the Inuit of the region, and he served in both of John Franklin's overland expeditions to the Mackenzie River in the early 1820s. In 1822-23, he worked an interpreter and guide for Reverend John West. Susan Rowley, "Tattannoeuck," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

²⁵ Renée Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550-1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 123.

Paallirmiut wore. Tattannaæuk wears a qullitaq (parka with the fur facing outwards) that is cut high along the front of the waist with a long akuq in the back of the garment, similar in silhouette to the images in Ellis. Horizontal bands of pukiq (white caribou fur) on the arms create visual contrast with the brown caribou fur of Tattannaæuk's qullitaq, a style that probably originated in Qamani'tuaq.²⁶ Rectangular patches of pukiq on the backs of qullitaq remain a common design element on contemporary men's caribou parkas. This image confirms that the horizontal pukiq motif is at least two hundred years old (Plate 4.4). The presence of the style this far south reinforces theories that Inuit in the southern Kivalliq migrated southwards over the course of the eighteenth century.²⁷

The overall design of men's atigis and qullitaqs was strikingly consistent across the nineteenth century and suggests a strong continuity in men's styles. In the 1890s, James William Tyrell visited the southern Kivalliq region and offered the following description of the general design of men's garments:

Commencing at the foundation, it consists of a pair of fur stockings, or duffles, covered by long waterproof moccasins which reach to the knees and are just met by short seal or deerskin trousers. The suit is completed by a jacket or jumper, made of the same material as the trousers, which is pulled on over the head, there being no opening in front to admit of its being put on like a coat. This jacket is provided with a hood, which takes

²⁶ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 106.

²⁷ The banding in the image is likely accurate for the arms, as qullitaqs found in early twentieth-century parkas from the region have a similar decoration. The wide, horizontal bands across the chest of the parka are, however, not found on any of the parkas belonging in museum collections that I have examined. This does not necessarily mean that the depiction is inaccurate because there are no parkas from this region from the 1820s that we can compare this sketch to. It is thus possible that Tattannaæuk's people did have a horizontal banding style on the front of their qullitaq. There is one other image of a qullitaq with horizontal bands in a photograph made in 1884 by Robert Bell, sixty years after Tattannaæuk's likeness was sketched, showing a group of Inuit at Stupart Bay, west of Kangiqsujuaq, Nunavik. One man, third from the left, is seen wearing a qullitaq with horizontal bands, though they are significantly thinner than those on Tattannaæuk's qullitaq. This photograph, combined with the apparently precise depiction of the cut of Tattannaæuk's qullitaq is strong evidence that the horizontal bands on the front chest are an accurate depiction of his parka. Robert Bell, *Inuit at Stupart's Bay*, 1884, photograph, 1884, Robert Bell Fonds, N92-006-001, 1884, Nunavut Archives.

the place of a cap, and may either be worn over the head or pushed back when not required. In the summer season, a single suit of sealskin, made as above, constitutes a man's entire clothing, but in the winter time he wears two such suits, the inner one having the hair on the inside, and the outer one reversed.²⁸

In photographs taken by the Tyrell brothers around Atiqtuniarvik (Ennedai Lake) and Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake) in 1893, the front hem ranges from knee-length to mid-thigh with a fringe that hits around the knee (Plate 4.5). Regardless of the length of the front hem, the akuq was always longer than the front, showing continuity with the styles from seventy years before.²⁹

George Lyon's descriptions of Iglulingmiut women are instructive for getting some sense of southern Kivalliq women's clothing in the 1820s. Though Iglulingmiut lived farther north, there are no eye-witness accounts of southern Kivalliq women's parkas in this period. Since, many explorers noted the strong similarities among fashions of adjacent regions, Lyon's description provides a detailed description of the amauti:

An inner jacket is worn next to the skin, and the fur of the other is outside. The hind flap or tail is of the form before described [a broad skirt, rounded at the lower end, which reaches to within a few inches of the ground], but there is also a small flap in front, extending about half way down the thigh. The coats have each an immense hood, which, as well as covering the head, answers the purpose of a child's cradle for two or three years after the birth of an infant. This is called *āmă-ōō-tă*, and is the same as the amaut of Crantz. In order to keep the burthen [sic] of the child from drawing the dress tight across the throat, a contrivance, in a great measure resembling [sic] the slings of a soldier's knapsack, is affixed to the collar or neck part, when it passes beneath the amaoota, crosses, and being brought under the arms, is secured on each side the breast by a wooden button. The shoulders of the women's coat have a wide bag-like space, for which we were long unable to account; but it was at length ascertained to

²⁸ James W. Tyrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada: A Journey of 3,200 Miles by Canoe and Snowshoe through the Hudson Bay Region*, 3rd edition (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1908), 124.

²⁹ Joseph Burr Tyrell, Eskimos at Head of Baker Lake, 217-221, September 1893, Photographs, Ms. Coll 26, box P144, folder 7, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

be for the purpose of facilitating the removal of the child from the hood round to the breast without taking it out of the jacket.³⁰

This description provides clear evidence of the amaut (in which the child is carried, rather than the hood, as Lyon believed) and also mentions the qakhuvaut, the sash system that supports the weight of the child and prevents the baby from falling out of the amaut. The description also confirms that the long akuq style and large hood were also present in the 1820s in the region.

Seventy years later, J.W. Tyrell described the amautis he saw in 1893-4, which confirms the general construction and shape of the amauti:

The female costume is rather more complex in make-up than the above [men's]. The foot-wear is the same with both sexes, but in place of the trousers worn by the men, the women wear leggings and trunks, and in place of the jacket a peculiarly constructed over-skirt, having a short flap in front and a long train, in shape something like a beaver's tail, just reaching to the ground behind. The back of the over-skirt is made very full, so as to form a sort of bag, in which the mothers carry their children. Like the man's jacket, it is provided with a hood, but of much larger size, so as to provide shelter for both mother and child. The women are very fond of decorating their dresses with beads or other ornaments, and all their garments are made with great neatness.³¹

Photographs taken by the J.W. and J.B. Tyrell of members of Hallo's camp along the Kazan River near what Tyrell called Sandy Hill Lake are probably the first photographs of Ahiarmiut.³² The women's amautis have the U-shaped kiniq and broad, roomy tuis (shoulders), although the latter are not as large as they later became in the twentieth

³⁰ George Francis Lyon, *The Private Journal of Captain G.F. Lyon, of H.M.S. Hecla* (London: John Murray, 1824), 315–16.

³¹ Tyrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics*, 124.

³² Hallo's camp was the located at the opening of the lake immediately to the north of Ipirauhiq (Dimma Lake) and south of Angikuni Lake.

century.³³ The man on the far left of Plate 4.5 is wearing a duffel atigi, which represents some connection to the fur trade via Churchill or Lac du Brochet, Manitoba, or potentially the whalers on the coast.

4.5. MEN'S CARIBOU SKIN PARKAS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Though small changes in the design of parkas occurred in the nineteenth century and before, the parka designs in the twentieth century appear to have changed at a more rapid rate and to a greater degree. Economic changes for Inuit communities came rapidly in the twentieth century and those changes are clearly reflected in garment design. The forced relocations to settlements and altered caribou migrations resulted in Inuit altering design elements to suit the new conditions in their lives, while maintaining those elements in their new forms.

In the early twentieth-century Paallirmiut Inuit men's parkas, both atigit (parka with fur facing inwards) and qullitaq were similar to that worn by Tattannaaeuk, with an akuq (back hem) that hits at the back of the ankle and high hem in the front, much like those of Inuinnait men of the same time period (Plate 4.6).³⁴ The style began to change in the 1920s, when the akuq shortened and the kiniq elongated, similar to the eighteenth century atigis described by Tyrell from farther north (Plate 4.7).³⁵

Driscoll-Engelstad offered a possible explanation for this dramatic change in men's atigis and qullitaqs. She suggests that Inuit wanted to emulate the clothing worn by

³³ Joseph B. Tyrell, "Report on the Doobaunt, Kazan and Ferguson Rivers and the North-West Coast of Hudson Bay: And on Two Overland Routes from Hudson Bay to Lake Winnipeg," *Geological Survey of Canada* (Ottawa: S. E. Dawson, 1897), 20, 126.

³⁴ Ahiarmiut men's parkas differed subtly from those of Paallirmiut: they were slightly longer in the back, had a broader and higher knob on the top of the hood, and less gathering in the side-panels of the hood. Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 93.

³⁵ Tyrell, *Across the Sub-Arctics*, 128.

outsiders such as whalers, traders and explorers.³⁶ As Oakes notes, however, Inuit had sporadically seen Qallunaat since the 1700s, and quite regularly by the 1890s. Why, then, would southern Kivallirmiut men suddenly change their hemlines in the 1920s? I contend that a scarcity of caribou in 1917-1926 led to the shortened akuq on men's parkas, a hypothesis that is further supported by the evidence that women in this region did not do extensive fur-piecing on their amautis in this period, which also required more caribou skins to make.

Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut men in the 1920s and 1930s wore qullitaqs that were generally plain in decoration but had a slightly rounded front hem that was knee-length.³⁷ Some southern qullitaqs south have a "walrus tooth" design (two narrow triangles of pukiq on the chest of the garment) as well as three blocks of pukiq divided by a thin band of darker caribou fur across the back (Plate 4.4).³⁸ The block design on the shoulders originated from Qairnirmiut, Inland Inuit around Qamani'tuaq and held spiritual meaning.³⁹ The back design on men's qullitaqs used a particular kind of dark caribou fur that virtually disappeared once Inuit settled into permanent camps because after moving to the coast they could no longer obtain this special, seasonal fur. Caribou of this colouring were available only during late spring break-up, a very difficult time to travel on the tundra from the community to hunt inland.⁴⁰ The style is by no means forgotten

³⁶ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 84.

³⁷ Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), 38.

³⁸ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 88; Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*, 38.

³⁹ Jean-Paul Michea, "Collection Notes for IV-C-5196" (Gatineau: Canadian Museum of History Collection Services Report, 1955), Private Collection. Quoted in: Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*, 38.

⁴⁰ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 87.

and can often be seen on men's hilapaqs (fabric parkas) which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Arviat Elder, Helen Paungat, had a different explanation for the change in men's parkas. She told a story of the legendary hero, Kiviuq, which explains the fashion change. On one of his journeys

he came across two mountains that were crashing into one another. He knew there was no way around them and that he would have to go in between them. Kivioq grabbed his kayak and ran as fast as he could between the two crashing mountains. He made it in between them although the back of his atigi (*parka*) was caught and torn.⁴¹

Perhaps the men's shortened akuq is to emulate Kiviuq's torn atigi. Kiviuq's story, or unikkaaqtuat (stories from long ago) was also visible in fringes on men's parkas.

Oakes found that there were distinctions among fringes on the hemlines. Coastal Inuit typically did not have a fringe at the bottom of their hems, but only along the split at the hips, "giving the impression that the tail had recently been severed by a supernatural power" (Plate 4.8, see also Plate 5.4).⁴² Inland Inuit, meanwhile had a wide fringe along the hem and splits along the hips. That said, missionary Donald Marsh noted that Ahirmiut removed the front fringes of their parkas upon arriving at the coast to avoid offending Nuliajuk and to prevent poor hunting.⁴³ The removal of the fringe from both the front and back hems of coastal caribou Inuit men's parkas suggests a formalisation of

⁴¹ Helen Paungat, "The Voyage of Kivioq," in *Reflections of Helen Paungat: A Life in the Keewatin / Iqqaumajangit Halan Paungat: Inuusirminik Kivallirmi* (Arviat: Inuit Cultural Institute, 1988), 35.

⁴² Jill E. Oakes, *Inuit Annuraangit Our Clothes: A Travelling Exhibition of Inuit Clothing* (Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press, 2005), 11.

⁴³ Nuliajuk is a key being in Inuit spirituality, and has many names, including Sedna. She is a guardian of sea mammals and punishes those who disrespect them. See Chapter 5 for more details. Donald B. Marsh, *Echoes from a Frozen Land* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publications, 1987), 139.

this custom, or possibly, Oakes suggests that “when tailed parkas became unfashionable amongst the Paallirmiut, the tails were cut off leaving an unfringed edge”.⁴⁴

There were chilly consequences for fringe-free fashion. As Elder Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak explained, the fringe “was to keep warm and make the bottom of the qullitaq heavy and keep it from flying up in a wind.”⁴⁵ Winifred Petchey Marsh recalled that some Qallunaat prospectors learned the hard way about the value of the fringe:

There were three prospectors who went up from Churchill and their garments had been made for them I presume by the *Padlimiut* in-and-around Nonala, that group. They had heavy caribou fringing around their garments. And they didn’t like it; they said they didn’t want all that fancy stuff. And they cut it off and they froze. Because that is a perfect wind break; it is a form of insulation, the air and the warmth.⁴⁶

Winifred Petchey Marsh’s story highlights that fashion and function can be in conflict with each other.

Another feature that is unique to Inuit of the southern Kivalliq is the use of a hip sash, called a *titikhiut* reminiscent of a *ceinture fléchée* (Plate 4.9).⁴⁷ This belt was used for temperature management, but its presence is demonstrable evidence of fur trade connections. The yarn or ready-made sashes could be purchased through fur companies and the belt seems to have been introduced and sold through the fur trade posts also

⁴⁴ Oakes, “Inuit Skin Clothing,” 88.

⁴⁵ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 14, 2018.

⁴⁶ Winifred Petchey Marsh, Transcription of Taped Interview with Mrs. Winifred Petchey Marsh, interview by Marsha Twomey, transcription, March 23, 1976, 24, Manitoba Museum.

⁴⁷ Also known as an Assomption Sash or Métis Sash. This belt was typically finger woven or individuals could purchase these sashes, made in Québec from the Northwest Company and the HBC. It is an iconic part of the clothing of the French Canadian *voyageur* and later, Métis as well. Dorothy K. Burnham, *The Comfortable Arts: Traditional Spinning and Weaving in Canada* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1981); Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing Ourselves Together: Clothing, Decorative Arts and the Expression of Métis and Half Breed Identity” (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 2004), 72–79.

visited by Dene, Cree and Métis.⁴⁸ This style is not seen elsewhere in Nunavut, further reinforcing the likelihood that this is a direct influence of fur trade fashions and connections to First Nations and Métis at Lac du Brochet and Fort Churchill. What distinguishes the Inuit sash from that of the Métis or Assumption sash was how it was worn:

A four strand braided tie is sewn a couple of feet from each end of the belt. The braided ties rather than the sash are tied into a bow. The bow is positioned at the wearer's back, therefore, if the bow loosens, the belt falls off in front of the wearer and is picked up.⁴⁹

These sashes were used from at least the 1920s and continue to be worn on men's traditional parkas today (Plate 4.10 is an example of Aharmiutaq David Serkoak's contemporary interpretation of a qullitaq and sash).⁵⁰

A caribou skin qullitaq remains the gold-standard when going hunting, though they are not as commonly worn as fabric yapas (see Chapter 6). Into the 1960s, Paallirmiut and Aharmiut had designs that were subtly unique to their -miut group, but by the 1980s a single, Arviaqmiut style for men's caribou parkas had emerged.⁵¹ This style was generally like the historical akuq-less style that emerged in the 1920s and early 1930s. The historical garments had long hems and the high slits on the sides and were a logical design when travelling on the land with a qamutik (dog sled). While the hunter ran, the

⁴⁸ York Factory Tariff Books, B.239/bb/1-19, HBCA, cover most of the nineteenth century and show at least half a dozen styles of woolen woven belts were available in the Northern Department.

⁴⁹ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 93.

⁵⁰ Unlike the men's titikhiut, women's qakhuvaut, used on amautis is seen more broadly across Inuit Nunangat and is either finger-woven or worked on a loom. These likely were made of leather thongs before they were made of wool. They are used more broadly because of the universal need to keep the baby in place in the amaut.

⁵¹ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 89.

slits allowed air to flow under the garment to prevent the wearer from sweating, a dangerous thing when travelling in the winter.⁵²

Changes in the mode of transportations are reflected in the caribou skin parkas sewn today for hunters.⁵³ Most contemporary caribou hide parkas made for men are qullitaqs and not atigis, because fabric shirts and sweaters are worn under the qullitaq rather than a caribou atigi. Plate 4.11 is a contemporary caribou qullitaq that Arviaqmiutaq seamstress Dorothy Aglukark made for her husband and exemplifies the contemporary style. The modern style is shorter and accordingly has smaller side slits. Getting on or off a machine is easier when wearing a shorter parka because there are fewer components that can get caught up in the machinery.⁵⁴ Though the old style with the long hems is undeniably warmer, most hunters today have more equipment (extra clothes, fuel and a shelter) when hunting with their machine (snowmobile) and therefore do not need a long-hemmed parka for safety and comfort while running dogs and a qamutik.

⁵² Vilhjalmur Stefansson, "Clothes Make the Eskimo," *Natural History*, January 1955; Jill E. Oakes et al., "Comparison of Traditional and Manufactured Cold Weather Ensembles," *Climate Research* 5 (1995): 83–90; Richard W. Hill et al., "Thermal Imaging and Physiological Analysis of Cold-Climate Caribou-Skin Clothing," *Arctic* 73, no. 1 (March 18, 2020): 40–52.

⁵³ This shorter hem length for men's skin qullitaqs is common across the Canadian Arctic today.

⁵⁴ Compared to women's beaded tuillis, it is unusual for Arviaqmiut men to have an atigi that is beaded today. If he does wear a historic style for use on special occasions, it is more likely to be made from duffel or drill. Typically, men who wear traditional style atigi for special events choose to wear a silapaaq: a fabric style that mirrors a qullitaq. The silapaaqs can be different colours but are typically black (qullitaq) or white/cream (atigi). A notable exception to this statement are the beaded atigis worn by Mark Eetak, the son of Aharmiut John Eetak and Martha Murjurnik Eetak who lived around Kingayualik, near Padlei. Mark Eetak has owned at least two fabric beaded atigis made by his wife, Angie Angmak Eetak. Angie Eetak and Mark Eetak, Dialogue Analysis of Audio between Angie Eetak and her Husband Mark and Maureen Matthews and her Husband Charlie, Regarding Eetak Caribou Stories, interview by Maureen Matthews, transcription, August 15, 2015, Manitoba Museum.

4.6. WOMEN'S CARIBOU SKIN PARKAS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Like men's parkas, women's caribou skin tuillis have changed over time and reflect new social and economic realities. Design changes are especially evident after the relocations of the 1950s. Today, traditional patterns used for caribou skin tuillis are maintained in fabric versions (see Chapter 6).⁵⁵

Three historical patterns were used in the Arviat region prior to settlement. Each was associated with the -miut group of the seamstress, but refinements made by individual seamstresses mean that general rules defining a typical Ahiarmiut, Paallirmiut and Tahiuarmiut styles are merely rules of thumb and not hard and fast standards that distinguish one style from another. The drawing in Plate 4.12 by Jill Oakes provides a visualisation of the broad differences between the Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut tuillis. The Tahiuarmiut styles combine elements of both Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut styles, in keeping with their combined coastal and inland activities.⁵⁶ Women's outer and inner garments were cut virtually identically: the inner tuilli was a little smaller in its dimensions, and was generally fringeless, though sometimes trimmed with beads or bias tape.⁵⁷ Anthropologist Kaj Birket-Smith of the Fifth Thule Expedition (1921-24) found

⁵⁵ Dorothy Aglukark, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 25, 2018; Elizabeth Enowyak, interview by Christina Williamson, video, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 16, 2018.

⁵⁶ Generally speaking, a Paallirmiut tuillit had a shorter akuq and longer kiniq than an Ahiarmiut tuilli. As Birket-Smith explained, the Paallirmiut style was most similar to the more northerly Qairnirmiut and Aivilingmiut styles. However, compared to the Qairnirmiut style, the Paallirmiut akuq was squarer and more generously cut and the kiniq was shorter and broader. The Ahiarmiut tuilli, in contrast, had a shorter kiniq than the Paallirmiut style, yet the akuq was longer and wider than Paallirmiut. Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, vol. I: Descriptive Part (Copenhagen: Gyldeddalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1929), 214.

⁵⁷ The outer tuilli, with fur facing outwards was fringed with two layers of depilated caribou skin, though Birket-Smith also mentioned a garment that used fringed pukiq instead. Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 262; Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, I: Descriptive Part:217.

that Paallirmiut women traveling between snow-houses in the winter often opted for a woolen shawl worn over shoulder on top of their inner tuilli, rather than wearing a qullitaq tuilli.⁵⁸ This observation also confirms that caribou furs were used sparingly in this decade.

A Paallirmiut woman's qullitaq tuilli was typically not decorated with fur-piecing on the chest in contrast to the frequent fur-piecing done by Qairnirmiut women. However, the kiniq and akuq of the outer tuilli might have a band of pukiq along the edge, about ten centimetres wide. This band was sometimes bisected with a thin band of dark brown caribou skin sewn in the centre of the edging and along the lower and upper edges, similar to the bisected pukiq patches on a men's qullitaq. The amaut might also be decorated with a triangular pukiq inset on the amaut (Plate 3.2). Jill Oakes notes that the inner and outer tuilli had the same fur-piecing design, even if the contrasting white and dark fur-piecing were invisible on the atigi tuilli.⁵⁹

This region also had three hood styles. Generally, the Ahiarmiut hood was much narrower than the Paallirmiut cut. Oakes recorded that "seamstresses claim that the Ahiarmiut hood style moves in a swimming motion which is the object of much humour."⁶⁰ The Ahiarmiut style hood was made from two pieces, a left and right piece with a centre seam that ran from the hood opening to the back of the neck. The Paallirmiut style was broader and hung past the shoulders, in part because of its larger centre back piece.⁶¹ A long inset for the Paallirmiut hood can be seen in Plate 4.13, in a

⁵⁸ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, I: Descriptive Part:219.

⁵⁹ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 271–73.

⁶⁰ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 99.

⁶¹ The part of the caribou used to cut the hood also differed, and is discussed in more detail in Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 254–60.

tuilli collected by Birket-Smith. An intermediary style has a small oval piece inserted in the back of the hood and the side-hood pieces was lightly gathered around this insert.

The most distinctive element of the tuilli are the epaulettes, and this component of Inuit women's amautis offers a good way to understand possible Inuit and non-Inuit influences. The prevailing theory is that they were developed to mimic the epaulettes of European naval uniforms, but it is worth considering a possible indigenous origin as well.⁶² Descriptions of women's amautis from earlier centuries describe the shoulders as large and broad, but don't specifically mention epaulettes.⁶³

Two factors suggest that epaulettes were elaborations of an already established Inuit cut of shoulder. First, the dates that Inuit encountered explorers and the dates in which naval uniforms included gold bullion epaulettes do not align. The first representation of beaded epaulettes worn by Inuit women comes from the Polar Expeditions of 1818-1823 captained by William Parry, who wintered near Iglulik (for example, Plate 4.14). At this time, epaulettes were only just beginning to be worn by officers in the British Royal Navy and were almost certainly not worn by the whalers who had entered those waters just a year before.⁶⁴ It is therefore unlikely that Inuit

⁶² Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 262.

⁶³ William Parry shows women in beaded parkas with epaulettes in Iglulik in 1820, the Inuit would have had contact with Scottish whalers for only a few years by this time. Williams Parry, *Journal of a Second Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage...* (London: John Murray, 1824), 402, 419.

⁶⁴ The collection of sketches by George F. Lyon from the Parry Expeditions does not include images of any man wearing epaulettes, and a formal portrait of William Parry from the period shows him without epaulettes. An engraving based on Greenland Inuk John Sackhouse's drawing shows John Ross and William Parry in epaulettes in 1818 at Prince Regent's Bay in Greenland. Another portrait of Parry done by another Inuk also shows the Captain in a double-breasted suit, but no epaulettes. The original image is located at the Scott Polar Library, but I was unable to determine its location, but a copy of that artwork is found in Eber. John Sackhouse and John Murray, *First Communication with Natives of Prince Regents Bay*, February 2, 1819, print, 29.2 x 42.7 cm, February 2, 1819, PAG7970, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; James Thomson, *Sir William Edward Parry*, 1821, stipple engraving, 22.9 x 14.1 cm,

women would have replicated the gold bullion epaulettes of the few high-level men on those expeditions and it seems that they may have already had beaded fringes on their shoulders. Inuit of this region had limited access to beads through Inuit trade networks in the south long before Parry's second expedition (1819-1920) and the ease in which heavily beaded garments were made in Iglulik at this time demonstrates that Inuit beadworkers already had familiarity with beadwork, to have such an advanced beading practice already.⁶⁵ It seems highly improbable that beaded epaulettes rapidly developed based on rare exposures of naval epaulettes when the shoulder design of tuillis was already well-suited for beads and had been accessible to Inuit women for many decades.

The second reason for suggesting that epaulettes were Inuit in origin is based on comparing shapes in women's amauti designs in Kivalliq and in Inuvialuit. Inuinnait women's parkas are typified by their triangularity: the exaggerated shoulders mirror the triangular insets on the chest of their amautis and kiniqs (Plate 4.15).⁶⁶ In contrast, Kivallirmiut and Iglulingmiut women's parkas are cut with curving contours and broad U-shaped kiniqs and akuqs while the shoulders are also U-shaped and made by creating puckers in the shoulder (the shoulder puckers are seen clearly in Plate 16). Both of these shapes were established prior to contact and the silhouettes and repeated shape are evidently key aspects to the regional designs of these amautis.⁶⁷ This comparison of

1821, NPG D38801, National Portrait Gallery; Lyon, *Private Journal*; Dorothy Eber, *Encounters on the Passage: Inuit Meet the Explorers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 18.

⁶⁵ Eber, *Encounters on the Passage*, 24–25.

⁶⁶ B. Driscoll-Engelstad, "Dance of the Loon: Symbolism and Continuity in Copper Inuit Ceremonial Clothing," *Arctic Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 33–46; Diamond Jenness, *Material Culture of the Copper Eskimo* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1946); "Patterns of Change: 150 Years in the Life of the Inuinnait Parka" (Piquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq: Kitikmeot Heritage Society, 2019).

⁶⁷ A well-known watercolour by Edward Adams confirms that triangular shapes were the predominant shape for Inuinnait amautis. This is the earliest representation we have of Inuinnait clothing.

regional amautis gives credence to the idea that the rounded shoulders of the tuilli lend themselves to being beaded, but Inuit women did not change their tuilli pattern in order to have rounded shoulders with beaded fringes to copy naval officers: as that shape was already part of the garment. It also strikes me as odd that women would be copying men's naval epaulettes to put on their own parkas rather than putting beaded fringes on their men's parkas if this was actually an ode to naval fashion. Around Arviat, the broad shoulders became firmly established by the 1940s and the size has become increasingly exaggerated, as shown in Plate 4.17, showing the tuilli Charlotte Voisey beaded in a Paallirmiut style in the 1940s.

4.7. CONCLUSION

Through a study of the fragmentary sources found in travel accounts, photographs, drawings and oral remembrances, this chapter challenges the notion that Inuit of the southern Kivalliq were isolated and unaware of the outside world. By examining the scarce but revealing and important historical resources on Inuit fashions in this region, it demonstrates how fashion serves as a lens for studying historical change and modes of production. Men's and women's garments have undergone notable changes in fashions over the past three hundred years. Men's garments appear to have maintained a silhouette of a short front hem and longer akuq until the early twentieth century, when the front hem became longer and the back hem shorter. This change could simply be due to a change in taste at this time, but a more compelling argument is that it reflects limited access to

Edward Adams, *Esquimaux of Pr[ince] Albert's Land - Winter Dress*, c 1851, c 1851, 83/11/31, Scott Polar Research Institute.

caribou and, later on, changes in men's hunting and the increasing more importance of skidoos as a hunting tool.

Women's fashions have changed as well. Early descriptions of women's amautis do not mention the epaulette shoulders seen in the nineteenth century in the northern part of Kivalliq. However, the puckered shoulder which formed one of the many U-shapes on Kivallirmiut amautis seems to have been similar to the triangular shape seen in Inuinnait amauti design. I argue that Iglulingmiut women, and possibly Inuit women around the Arviat area, integrated beads into the already established shoulder design. This chapter also reveals important continuities: the amaut and the role that the amauti played as a childcare device is mentioned from the earliest descriptions of Inuit women living along the west coast of the Hudson Bay. The amaut serves a critical role in supporting women's work over many centuries.

I have also established that traditional designs have always changed and altered to reflect the Inuit world. I have argued that caribou parka designs responded to and expressed the intellectual, social and material (productive) changes to which Inuit have responded for centuries. They reflect moments of contact with other peoples and hint at the economic focus of Inuit in the Kivalliq over time. Most notably, the prevalence of caribou, rather than seal is a testament to the importance of that animal for Inuit of the region to this day. The ancestors of Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut engaged in trade for centuries and their clothing and material culture reflected those encounters and engagements.

Other fabrics and materials have also been integrated into Inuit aesthetics and design sensibilities. In the next chapter I discuss the introduction of beading and other

decorative elements on caribou and fabric parkas. Beads, in particular, are a useful case study for conceptualizing how Inuit Inukitized trade commodities and adapted outside materials into their material and social world.

4.8. PLATES



Plate 4.1 Kivallirmiut wearing caribou skin parkas. Engraving by J. Mynde, "An Eskimaux on the N.W. Side of Hudsons Bay," detail in Henry Ellis, *A voyage to Hudson's Bay* (Dublin, 1749) p. 232.



Plate 4.2 Inuit from Hudson Strait wearing sealskin parkas. Note the infant in the boot of the woman on the right. Her boots are held up with baleen. Engraving by J. Mynde, "Eskimaux making Fire & Striking Seals," Library and Archives Canada/J. Coles collection/C-100071.



Plate 4.3 Watercolour by John Halkett, *Tattannaæuk* c. 1800. HBC 38-42-A. Image courtesy of Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Plate 4.4 Qullitaq collected around Qamani'tuaq by the Fifth Thule Expedition in 1924. The three patches on the shoulders and the walrus tooth pattern on the chest are important parts of this parka's design. National Museum of Denmark P28.3.



Plate 4.5 Group of Eskimos at Hallo's Camp. Kazan River, 18 August 1894, photograph by J.B. Tyrell no. 944. Photograph courtesy of Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.



Plate 4.6 Beaded atigi, collected in Nueltin Lake (Qikiqtariaktuq) suggesting an Ahirmiut maker, though the style is closer to a Paallirmiut style. Made in 1924 or earlier. Photographs courtesy of Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-2664.



IV-C-5232

IV-C-5232

Plate 4.7 Caribou Inuit atigi, place of origin unknown, c. 1930s. Note that the walrus tooth panels are not made in beads and stroud rather than pieced caribou fur. The akuq is also shortened. Photographs courtesy of Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-5253.



Plate 4.8 Aitjuajuk wearing a beaded atigi. It is now located in the Manitoba Museum. Library and Archives of Canada/Donald Marsh Fonds, Accession no. 1981-238, box 3934, photos 26 and 27.



Plate 4.9 Two men in front of a tree around Churchill, Manitoba. Note the tikihiut (sashes) and the puukammaluks (bandolier bags) worn by these Inuit men around their waists. C. 1930s. Photographer unknown. Credit: Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay.



Plate 4.10 David Serkoak Drumming in a hilapaaq. Photo used with permission from David Serkoak.



Plate 4.11 Hunting parka by Dorothy Aglukark. Photograph by Christina Williamson 2018.

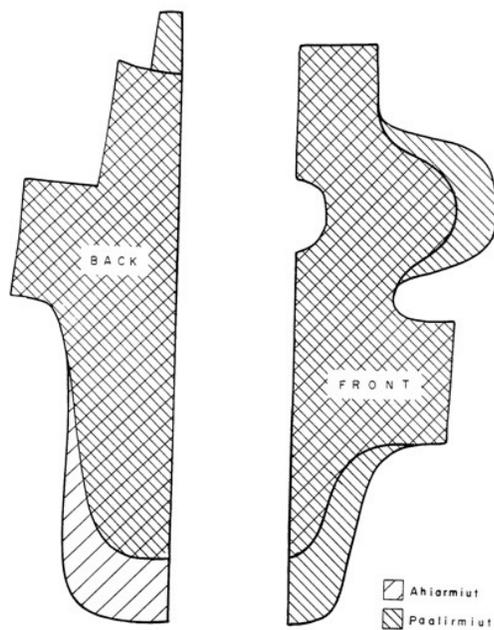


Plate 4.12 Comparison of Ahirmiut and Paallirmiut amauti cuts. By Jill Oakes, “Copper and Caribou Skin clothing production.” 1988. Image used with permission of the author.



Plate 4.13 Front and back view of a Paallirmiut beaded Tuilli from Arviat, collected in 1924 by fifth Thule Expedition. Photograph by Roberto Fortuna. Courtesy of National Museum of Denmark. P28.11



Plate 4.14 Engraving based on drawing by George Lyon, taken from Parry, Williams "Journal of a second voyage for the discovery of a north-west passage from the Atlantic..." (John Murray, London:1824), 402.



Plate 4.15 Two young unnamed Inuit women, 11 July 1916, Bernard Harbour, NWT. Photograph by Rudolph Anderson. Library and Archives Canada/Rudolph Martin Anderson and Mae Bell Allstrand fonds/a165739.



Plate 4.16 Possibly Martha Otunak Oruluk and her son Tassiq, or Koomanaaq, the mother of Arualak. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e007914456. Accession 1978-039 slide box 2A number 374. Note the beadwork on the hood of the child's amauti, including along the hood-opening.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ My identification is different from LAC's was proposed by Michael Ivunirjuk. Christina Williamson, "This Photograph Was Taken Somewhere around Arviat in the Late 1930," Facebook Page, Eskimo Point - Arviat, June 30, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/341884839195538/permalink/3246385772078749/>.



Plate 4.17 Henry, Mary and Charlotte Voisey. Note Mary's highly beaded parka, c. 1950. Courtesy of the Henry and Charlotte Voisey collection, Manitoba Museum.

Chapter 5 : THE INUKTIZATION OF BEADWORK AND TRIM

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter on the history of caribou skin garments traced fashion changes and continuities from the eighteenth century onwards. I made clear the dominance of caribou rather than sealskin garments in the Kivalliq as one example of the centrality of caribou hunting in Kivallirmiut society and its economy. I also demonstrated that change in design and fashion occurred prior to the advent of the fox fur trade in the 1920s to emphasize that the mutability of fashions occurred prior to settlement and the fox fur trade. Most importantly, the preceding chapter established the major elements of Arviat design. In this chapter, I focus on more dramatic changes in the appearance of clothing that have resulted from a process I term Inuktization, a term first used by Inuit Elder Ann Meekitjuk Hanson in her discussion of the Inuit adoption of Christian names.¹ I borrow it here to describe moments where Inuit integrated new material mediums into an already established system of aesthetics and Inuit ontology. In effect, Inuktization is the Indigenization of outside materials into the material culture of Inuit.

The Kivalliq region is famous for clothing richly ornamented with beadwork. Beads are a premiere example of Inuktization, but other hinnikka (decorative trims) such as bias tape, are also examples of this process. As an outstanding example of new decorative approaches that express the economic, political and social world, beadwork will be the main focus of this chapter. Through a fine-grained analysis of changes in clothing styles among interrelated groups in the region, I demonstrate clear connections

¹ Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, “Conversation with Atsajuk Ituangat (Robert Joseph Flanagan), Jackson Meekitjuk Sagiatsuq Hanson, and Robert Donald Malituq Hanson Comeau,” in *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*, ed. Carol Payne et al. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2022).

between beadwork and Inuit cosmology, earlier fur-piecing techniques and beadwork, and the use of amulets and beadwork panels. More broadly, I demonstrate that, beyond the cosmological sphere, changes to the cut and adornment of parkas are material manifestations of Inuit women's socioeconomic responses to the world.

5.2. INUKTIZATION AND BEADWORK

Inuktization—the act of absorbing outside things into the Inuit world—is a useful concept to understand the presence of beadwork in Inuit clothing traditions because it allows for a discussion of Inuit women's negotiations of modernity and capitalism.² This process has been described in different contexts with different terminology. Métis scholar Sherry Farrell Racette, for instance, describes this process in the Métis context as “Indigenization” and art historian Ruth Phillips uses the phrase “cultural translation” in relation to the people of the Great Lakes region.³ All of these terms describe the act of translating outside materials into a form that makes sense to the community.

Understanding the presence of commodities like beads in this way counters the idea that outside materials represent a decline of Inuit material culture and society. Instead, it suggests that Inuit women creatively integrated and synthesized new materials into their knowledge system.

The co-creation of meaning, and of modernity itself (as a geographic and temporally specific state), through the reinvention of commodity goods within Inuit society presents a way to understand Inuit women's strategies for contending with the

² Hanson, “Conversation.”

³ Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast 1700 - 1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 261; Sherry Farrell Racette, “My Grandmothers Love to Trade: The Indigenization of European Trade Goods in Historic and Contemporary Canada,” *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no. 20 (March 2008): 69–81.

entrenchment of mercantile capitalism within their homes. As I demonstrated in Chapters 2 and 3, sewing is a principal activity within the sphere of “women’s work,” and it is therefore logical to understand Inuktization as an Inuit-specific form of Indigenizing aspects of modernity.⁴ This process is a form of women’s labour in and of itself that requires thought, work, time and consideration. Hundreds of Inuit women have collectively established and created clothing designs that Inuktize commodity goods through interactions with each other, whether intensively or casually.

Glass beadwork is a significant artform for many Indigenous communities across Canada, and each group has created a distinctive aesthetic and style. Beads are beautiful, portable, and colourful, and Inuit quickly adopted them into their dress as they became available through their trade interactions with explorers, whalers and traders. Venetian glass beads were integrated into the material culture of Inuit along with other exchangeable commodities like English stroud and Indian calicos. Although some Qallunaat commentators have regarded such adoptions as inauthentic, the use of beads or other outside materials does not represent assimilation into southern Canadian culture any more than consuming tikka masala makes a person more or less British.⁵

Beadwork also became part of Inuit spiritual beliefs and oral history across Inuit Nunangat. Edmund Peck, an Anglican missionary who worked in Baffin Island and in

⁴ A similar argument about the continuities of Inuit beliefs within Christianity is discussed in: Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten, *Inuit Shamanism and Christianity: Transitions and Transformations in the Twentieth Century*, McGill-Queen’s Native and Northern Series 59 (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).

⁵ A good example is the LIFE magazine piece on Ahiarmiut by Fitz Goro and Lincoln Barnett in the early 1950s, which presented Inuit as the last stone-age people on earth and intentionally photograph Aiararmiut without any signs of trade goods like canvas tents, stoves or mugs. Lincoln Barnett, “The Epic of Man: A Mesolithic Age Today: Caribou Eskimos Illustrate Its Culture,” *LIFE Magazine*, February 27, 1956.

Nunavik, recorded a narrative about a spirit-being, or *tuurngaq*, called *Sapangaq*, that lives on the land and resembles a woman. She wears beaded clothing and is a being of light, joy and beauty.⁶ Iglulingmiut Elder Madeline Ivalu once explained that Inuit “always had beads ... I don’t know how they got beads. My mother used to tell us they grow hanging from weeds. They used to swat them with a *qayaq* paddle and catch them in a sealskin laid on the ground. They are found on an island near Iglulik. Probably lots dropped in the water! They grow threaded on the stalks of weeds.”⁷ Beads, were not, and are not viewed as something non-Inuit. Rather, they are part of Inuit histories and are part of Inuit understandings of land and the spiritual world. Ivalu’s story suggests that beads were gifted from the earth itself, after being dropped into the water in the whaling days.

Historical records and oral history consistently note that Inuit valued and admired beads. Arviaqmiut historian Mark Kalluak, for example, describes Paallirmiut women’s response to acquiring beads: “Some ladies used to cry for joy when someone brought them beads. When they saw assorted coloured beads, they became overjoyed.”⁸ To the north, Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet) artist Joan Attuat noted that, during the whaling period, Aivilingmiut “women in those days were not lazy. They really enjoyed making beads; it was their favourite pastime.”⁹ Attuat’s phrasing, “making beads” suggests the act of transforming glass beads into designs and patterns that are much greater than the sum of their parts.

⁶ Frédéric Laugrand, Jarich Oosten, and François Trudel, eds., *Representing Tuurngait*, trans. Alexina Kublu, Memory and History in Nunavut (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 2000), 172.

⁷ Zacharias Kunuk and Bernadette Dean, *Inuit Piqutingit (What Belongs to Inuit)*, Digital, Documentary, 2006, <https://perma.cc/ZS7N-NQ3T>.

⁸ Mark Kalluak, trans., “What Inuit Can Create from Beads” (Inuit Heritage Trust, 2008), <https://perma.cc/N6XX-CJBR>.

⁹ Dorothy Eber, “Eva Talooki: Her Tribute to Seed Beads, Long-Time Jewels of the Arctic,” *Inuit Art Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 13.

5.3. PRE- BEADWORK ORNAMENTATION

Beadwork was adopted into Inuit material culture at different times, but beadwork had strong connections to earlier modes of adornment. For instance, certain breast ornaments appear to have served as amulets, and Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad argues that “seamstresses replaced the traditional amulet decoration of the inner parka” with beads.¹⁰ Some examples of these ornaments include scrimshaw walrus tusk breast ornaments, which were mentioned in the eighteenth century (Plate 5.1). In the 1750s, Churchill HBC factor, Andrew Graham, collected and described a type of breast ornament seen on atigis that may have been a precursor to the beaded chest panels of today. Some women along the south-west coast of Hudson Bay, he wrote, wore “a kind of breast-plate, about eight inches long, and two broad, made of ivory with neat borders, and figures of birds and beasts engraved.” Henry Ellis on his travels to southern Baffin Island, also described a similar “breast ornament made from a Seahorse Tooth” (walrus tusk) with a long narrow shape similar to that described by Graham.¹¹ A twentieth-century breast ornament collected in the 1920s on Shugliaq (Southampton Island) has a totally different design (Plate 5.2). This ornament is a square-shaped piece of hide with overlapping groups of caribou teeth laid in a grid, using the teeth of roughly 40 animals in all. Its design also

¹⁰ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, “Sapangat: Inuit Beadwork in the Canadian Arctic,” *Explore Magazine* 26, no. 2 (January 1984): 43.

¹¹ Graham collected a number of objects including a breast ornament. Graham’s collection was eventually obtained by the National Museum of Scotland (NMS), but the NMS does not have this object in their records. Andrew Graham, *Andrew Graham’s Observations on Hudson’s Bay 1767-91*, ed. Glyndwr Williams (London: Hudson’s Bay Record Society, 1969), 218; Rosalind Pepall, “Images of the Inuit in the Eighteenth Century,” *The Journal of Canadian Art History* 5, no. 1 (1980): 10; C. D. Waterston, “John Walker and the Years of Achievement, 1783-1803,” in *Collections in Context: The Museum of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Inception of a National Museum for Scotland* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 1997), 9–38; Antje Denner to Christina Williamson, “Andrew Graham Collection of Inuit Material Culture 1750s,” March 6, 2019.

suggests that it was worn on the chest, though whether by a man, woman or child is unknown. In any case, the effort to procure the teeth of 40 caribou suggests that this was an object of high-value and importance.¹²

Tattoos are another relevant form of ornamentation for women that have clear connections to beadwork. Tattooing was a common rite of passage for young women across the circumpolar Arctic. Literature on Siberia, Alaska, and Greenland connect tattoos and clothing motifs to beaded joint markings used to mark a new life stage. Tattoos also serve as spiritual and physical protection, and were used for spiritual purposes by angakkuqs. In Inuit Nunangat, tattooing is especially associated with beauty, childbirth and a girl's first menstruation.¹³ Driscoll-Engelstad makes a strong case for how beaded designs follow strict parameters developed centuries before beads entered Inuit material culture. In her formal analysis of Inuit beadwork, Driscoll-Engelstad argued that beads are effectively a translation of tattoo designs onto animal hides worn as garments:

Tattooing marked the joints of the shoulder, elbow and wrist. The joints were marked with a series of simple geometric shapes inscribed within a multi-tiered cluster of horizontal lines. Similarly, in the decoration of the women's outer fur parka the seamstress inserted horizontal bands of contrasting fur into the shoulder and wrist of the parka sleeve as a symbolic

¹² It may have also served spiritual purposes because it would take a significant amount of time to procure the caribou needed to construct such an item. However, more research and recovery of early ornaments is necessary before this assertion may be confirmed.

¹³ In the Canadian Arctic, the connections between tattooing and spirituality are more circumscribed in the literature than elsewhere in the Arctic, especially in comparison to Siberia and Alaska. What I can determine is that tattoos were an important rite of passage and as protection for the woman during childbirth. For some discussion on tattoos, see: Patricia Rieff Anawalt, *Shamanic Regalia in the Far North* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2014), 79,90; Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, "Tunniit: Retracing the Lines of Inuit Tattoos," *Inuktitut*, Winter 2010; Valerie Chaussonnet, "Needles and Animals: Women's Magic," in *Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988), 217–23; Maya Sialuk Jacobsen, "Ancestral Threads," *Canadian Art*, Spring 2019; Angela Hovak Johnston, *Reawakening Our Ancestors' Lines Revitalizing Inuit Traditional Tattooing* (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media, 2018).

reference to the joints. This correspondence between tattooing and parka decoration was made clear in the beaded parkas of the Central Canadian Arctic. ... The placement of beaded panels at the shoulders and wrists, and the simple geometric motifs set between pairs of horizontal lines, recall traditional tattooing styles. As beads became more readily available through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Inuit seamstresses in the Central Canadian Arctic imitated tattooing in devising a style of beadwork decoration that would preserve the symbolic significance of tattooing.¹⁴

The parka, either fur-pieced or beaded, serves as an outer skin of the wearer where the designs mirror the wearer's anatomy. The garment thus maintained the power and symbolism of tattooing even after tattooing was halted by missionaries in the twentieth century.

5.4. EARLY BEADWORK AND ITS ORIGINS

Beadwork was adapted into already-established designs in fur-pieced parkas and became an important mode of expression by the turn of the twentieth century in Kivalliq. Fur-piecing is a method of decorating parkas that uses different colour pieces of hides to create decorative patterns from the contrasting light and dark pelts (for example, see Plate 5.3). As we have seen, pukiq, or white caribou belly-fur, was used to trim cuffs, hems and chest pieces on qullitaqs, the outer parkas for both men and women. Beadwork on atigis, inner parkas, is functionally and formally identical to the pukiq designs seen on qullitaqs. Sallirmiut Elder beader and seamstress Lizzie Ittinuar explained that:

Before we started buying beads, when the Hudson's Bay came with the beads, we used to do the same style with caribou skins. Since we got the beads and the material, we follow the same pattern but it is done in beadwork. Beadwork from Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet or Eskimo Point [Arviat] are all a bit different. We still follow our

¹⁴ Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, "Pretending to Be Caribou: The Inuit Parka as an Artistic Tradition," in *The Spirit Sings*, ed. Julia Harrison (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 198.

grandmothers using the style of the Keewatin. It's the way we pass it on. It's the traditional way of doing it.¹⁵

Ittinuar confirms the idea that beads were incorporated into a pre-existing system of aesthetics and meaning.

Beads were being used to decorate tuillis by the 1820s, if not earlier and was being used in the same way as fur piecing, as seen in an engraving of Iglulingmiut women which is based on a drawing made by George F. Lyon during the Parry expedition of the 1820s. This example suggests how early Inuit Inuktized beadwork to suit already established decorative conventions. In Plate 4.14, the woman on the left of the image has some markings suggesting a design in fur across her chest as well as a design made from pukiq along the akuq (tail), kiniq (apron) and hood of her parka and stockings. The woman second from the right is wearing a beaded tuilli: her epaulettes have a beaded fringe, and it appears that she has two rectangular stroud panels that end in a beaded fringe across her chest.

In contrast to Inuit along the northern portion of the bay, Paallirmiut and possibly Ahiarmiut tended to do less fur-piecing than their northern neighbours, at least in the early twentieth century, when we have clear accounts of the clothing of these -miut groups. Yet, beadwork, particularly that employed by Paallirmiut, still followed the same conventions used by their northern neighbours, the Qairnirmiut and Aivilingmiut and Hauneqtorumiut.¹⁶ There are two possible explanations why southern Kivallirmiut

¹⁵ Lizzie Ittinuar quoted in Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), 82.

¹⁶ Jill E. Oakes, "Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production" (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 1988), 106.

women's beading followed fur-piecing conventions seen further north, even though they did not generally do as much fur-piecing on qullitaqs.

William C. Orchard suggests that Northern Kivallirmiut developed beaded conventions in the 1820s which southern Kivallirmiut then adopted, but this does not explain why southern Kivallirmiut seamstresses imported the beaded atigi style, but did not import the fur-piecing of qullitaq style.¹⁷ Nor does this hypothesis account for the presence of beads from Fort Churchill a century earlier. As explained in Chapter 2, Inuit around Churchill acted as trade intermediaries and imported beads to the northern Kivalliq in the eighteenth century. George Lyon's 1820 account noted that the Inuit they traded with in Naujaat *already* had beads that came from the south.¹⁸ Beads were a highly desirable and *known* trade good for Inuit around Churchill and the southern Kivalliq by the 1720s. Inuk historian Kalluak of Arviat described how beads came to his ancestors:

Beads started being sold when the traders came and built their store. Inuit ladies liked them. Paallirmiut tribes were living around Churchill. It is said that traders in Churchill started selling beads right away, People living around Churchill and Nelson River (Kitigarmiut) discovered the use of beads from the Indians when they saw them wearing beaded garments. Inuit started decorating their garments with beads. Amautit (women's baby pouched garments) started having beads. Even men's' garments started to be beaded. There were different ways of decorating women's' garments and men's' garments.¹⁹

¹⁷ William C. Orchard, *Beads and Beadwork of the American Indians: A Study Based on the Specimens in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation*, second (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation, 1975), 158.

¹⁸ Lyon wrote: "We distributed beads and trinkets to all, but our presents were received with so vacant a stare, that it was plain the donors excited more wonder than their gifts. ... On a jacket being purchased, we found a piece of European worsted lace within it, and soon observed that several men wore a small bracelet of beads, which circumstances excited great interest, as showing that by some means or other, they must have been received from our factories [trading posts]." George Francis Lyon, *The Private Journal of Captain G.F. Lyon, of H.M.S. Hecla* (London: John Murray, 1824), 110.

¹⁹ Kalluak, "What Inuit Can Create from Beads." Kalluak, "What Inuit Can Create from Beads."

Kalluak's assertion that Inuit adopted beads from these Dene or Cree is one of the few accounts that connects beads to trade between Inuit and First Nations, rather than between Inuit and explorers and whalers.²⁰ The flow of trade goods largely moved from south to north until whalers arrived in the northern Kivalliq.²¹ All of this evidence suggests that Orchard's theory that Inuit beadwork was first established north-west of Hudson Bay in the 1860s by whalers and travelled south to Paallirmiut after the whalers began trading with Inuit should be approached with caution. Beads were introduced to the southern Kivalliq before by the HBC at Fort Churchill and contact with Dene or Cree in the eighteenth century. We know that Churchill Homeguard Inuit traded beads and other items with Inuit farther north for at least a century before the whalers arrived.

Early beadwork in the southern Kivalliq occurred as bracelets and ornaments; Andrew Graham's comment that "the hood, or cap, [is] surrounded on the edge with tags or bits of ivory, bone or beads," suggests that by the 1750s small amounts of beads were Inuktized by being placed where pukiq hems and caribou teeth and ivory fringes were used.²² When whalers established themselves in the late-nineteenth century in northern Kivalliq, far more beads entered Inuit communities and the beadwork carried out in these communities became more elaborate. Through trade with whalers, beadwork became

²⁰ Inuit in Labrador had the earliest possible exposure to beads through contact with Basque whalers and fishers. They gained steady access to beads by the eighteenth century. In the Coronation Gulf region, Inuit did not use beads regularly until the 1920s, and with the dramatic change of Inuinnait fashion, beads never made a serious impact on their fashions, especially compared to Central Inuit. Inuit in the Mackenzie Delta and Alaska made beads from bones and wore labrets, and those that encountered George Franklin in 1828 wanted beads; however, they were used more as accessories rather than applied onto garments. John Franklin and John Richardson, *Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea, in the Years 1825, 1826, and 1827* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Carey, 1828).

²¹ Jill E. Oakes, "The History of Beadwork in Eskimo Point, Northwest Territories," *Canadian Home Economics* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 77.

²² Graham, *Observations*, 214–17.

more accessible in the northern part of Hudson Bay and it was only at this point that beads may have been traded among Inuit to the south. As discussed in Chapter 2, it was at this juncture that southern Kivallirmiut's trade with northern Kivallirmiut was undercut by whalers and the loss of trade, coupled with epidemics and caribou famines, meant that Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut were struggling by the twentieth century.

The apparent lack of fur-piecing among Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut in the twentieth century may have had more to do with the period in which explorers and anthropologists (who recorded this kind of information) established contact with Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut. In the early twentieth century, southern Kivallirmiut were struggling with failed caribou migrations and so did not have the resources to design complex fur-piecing work (See Chapter 2).²³ An interview with Winifred Petchey Marsh puts the economic state of northern and southern Kivalliq in sharp relief:

[The Hauneqtormiut were different] in every way ... if you like, in their advancement in their clothing, in their ability of their sewing, their maintenance of their dog teams. They were just super people as compared with the Paalimiut who were so sloppy, and dirty and rough, and hard. ... The difference is so, so amazing because the Hauneqtormiut did the most beautiful sewing and tanned their skins so beautifully. It seemed as if they always had new boots and new clothing; they were so clean. But these people they [Paallirmiut] blew things together. Because as I told you it's that land of feast and famine and if they had the skins the Eskimo woman would just [break in audio]...²⁴

Although Petchey Marsh described these distinctions as personal or moral failings in her comparison of one -miut group with another, what she was actually describing was the relative wealth (in the form of access to caribou and trading posts) of Hauneqtormiut

²³ Yvon Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts (1920-50): Dans La Perspective de l'Histoire Des Inuit Caribous" (PhD Diss., University of Laval, 1991), 178–80; Renée Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550-1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 192.

²⁴ Winifred Petchey Marsh, Transcription of Taped Interview with Mrs. Winifred Petchey Marsh, interview by Marsha Twomey, transcription, March 23, 1976, Manitoba Museum.

compared to Paallirmiut. The watercolour by John Halkett of Inuit guide Tattanaeuk, proves that fur-piecing was in fact done by eighteenth-century women in the southern Kivalliq. However, with a limited supply of caribou, fur piecing became impossible, which created the impression among the newcomers that Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut did not do fur-piecing and lacked the sewing skills for which other Inuit were renowned.

Beadwork traditions in the Arviat area have played a long-standing role in Inuit material culture and aesthetic practices. Additionally, beads were a desirable trade commodity that Inuit eagerly sought. Beads represent a particularly striking example of how ancestors of Arviaqmiut engaged in trade with the HBC, explorers, Dene and each other. Already-established aesthetic conventions in Inuit communities, such as tattoos, fur-piecing and amulets were significant influences in Inuit women's Inuktization of beads.

5.5. FUR-PIECING AND BEADS: FORM AND MEDIUM IN BEADWORK

How did Inuit beadwork panels reflect the conventions of fur-piecing, and the Inuktization of beads by Inuit beaders? The beaded panels follow the lines of the tuilli's cut and accentuate its features. Fur-pieced designs created certain 'blocks' which became the canvas for creative and ornate beadwork. The specific shapes and trims made with pukiq on qullitaqs are faithfully followed in the beaded hungayalik (beaded atigi parkas) of both men and women. In the 1920s and 1930s a fully beaded men's atigi had beaded trim along the waist, sleeves, hem and hood as well as two large oval panels on the chest and a horizontal rectangular or oval-shaped design across the back shoulders (Plate 5.4

and Plate 5.5).²⁵ The qullitaq worn by Mary Nowya shows an example of a fur-pieced garment made and worn around Arviat (Plate 5.3). Like men's beaded parkas, women's tuillis had beaded patches in locations identical to those where pukiq was used (see Plate 5.6). These placements of the beadwork confirm that the *medium* used to follow decorative conventions was less important than the *form* that needed to be followed.

Although women followed the strict conventions of the beaded panels' placement and shape as determined by fur-pieced parkas, they could bead whatever they wished into blank spaces on the chest, back or hood, where pukiq would be located on a qullitaq. Yet, even with that freedom, the artist's choices are strongly shaped by a universe of designs that may be reconfigured but are shaped by the aesthetics and conceptual traditions of that community. These rules are akin to what was described in Ruth Bunzel's seminal work on Pueblo potters found that potters were extremely sensitive to exactly how a vessel should be shaped though they never provided Bunzel with explicit rules about

²⁵ Aitjuajuk, also known as Utuqqayuaq, among other names, was born in 1894 and is shown wearing the atigi. Aijuarjuk lived along the coast and was photographed not only by Donald Marsh (LAC, Donald Marsh Fonds 1981-238, box 3934 photos 26 and 27), but also Geert van den Steenhoven several decades later. The beadwork is located in the same key places: along the hems and openings of the garment as well as two front chest panels and a back panel with three bunches of fringe dangling from below. The hem is only fringed along the slits rather than all the way around the hem. The variation in beadwork suggests the typical manner in which beadwork was done by Paallirmiut women of this period. That is, the beadwork was made over an extended period. The stitches of the garment itself are of high quality: they are extremely fine and precise, whereas the beads on the chest panel and hem are more hastily stitched. The beadwork that trims the hood and sleeves and the sides (above the hip slits) are much more tightly and carefully beaded compared to the chest and hem. There are several possible explanations for this difference. It is possible that different women stitched different panels, that the beader was pressed for time, or that she had increasingly poor eyesight. Aijuarjuk's life as a coastal Inuk is further reinforced by a photograph taken of him by Geert van den Steenhoven in 1955 in Arviat rather than inland. While Steenhoven did not identify him in the photograph, people on the Eskimo Point – Arviat Facebook group quickly identified him as Aijuarjuk. Susan Pameok explained that Aijuarjuk was the father of Andrew Panigoniak and Martha Anarosuk Issumatarjuak and brother of Elizabeth Aulatjut, Aiyarani (Melanie Anowtalik's father) and Ayamiqtuq. Geert van den Steenhoven, "Report to Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on a Field Research Journey for the Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955" (Department of Northern Affairs, 1957); Christina Williamson, "Caption Only Says: 'Character,'" Facebook Page, Eskimo Point - Arviat, June 8, 2018, <https://perma.cc/RXP9-62CU>.

dimensions of the vessels.²⁶ Designs followed clear conventions, reconfigured by the individual potter, but they were always contained within the lexicon of designs from her village.²⁷ Similarly, Bill Holm found that Northwest Coast artwork conventions “gave the artist considerable control over the formlines themselves, but he had always to uphold uppermost the concept that they were, in the end, the positive delineating force of the painting, and that they must also conform to somewhat rigid characteristics.”²⁸ Northwest Coast formline designs, Pueblo pottery and Inuit beadwork all combine strict conventions of form with implicitly designated opportunities for creative expression by the maker.

Though the medium of coloured glass beads was a new addition to Inuit artistic and spiritual expression, forms and designs continued to express the key cultural concepts associated with earlier forms of ornamentation and adornment. Betty Kobayashi Issenman argues that the pukiq chest panels have cosmological significations. She states that “the ventral mane, under which beats the great heart of the caribou, covers the chest of the human hunter or mother... [and is] a symbolic reference to the intimate liaison with the animals.”²⁹ Similarly, Driscoll-Engelstad compellingly argues for the importance of clothing as a reference to the spiritual and physical relationship between Inuit and the animals they hunt.³⁰ For example, beadwork designs down the centre of the hood (above

²⁶ Ruth Leah Bunzel, *The Pueblo Potter; a Study of Creative Imagination in Primitive Art* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 8.

²⁷ Bunzel, *The Pueblo Potter; a Study of Creative Imagination in Primitive Art*, 51–55, 87.

²⁸ Bill Holm, *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form*, Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum 1 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), 35.

²⁹ Betty Kobayashi Issenman, “Inuit Skin Clothing: Construction and Motifs,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 9, no. 2 (1985): 106.

³⁰ Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, “Pretending to Be Caribou,” 172–76; Knud Rasmussen, *The Netsilik Eskimos: Social Life and Spiritual Culture* (AMS Press, 1976), 165–66.

the opening for the face) often have a triangular or diamond-shaped design that, she argued, references vertebrae, such as Heeootooroot's parka in

Plate 5.6.³¹ When the hood is down, the design rests directly over the spine of the wearer, bones and joints being important in the Inuit shamanic belief system.³² The design at the base of the hood also has a large patch that sits over the sacrum when the hood is let down, in a location marked by pukiq on older qullitaq tuillis and also possibly by red strips of fabric. Like the chest panels and shoulder designs on men's beaded atigis, the beaded patch on the hood was a space used for bold figurative designs such as stars, flowers or geometric designs, suggesting its role as an amulet, the modern beadwork of Helen Kunne shows the continued use of the hood patch on the hungayaliks she beaded for her daughters Plate 5.7.

The connection between pukiq and beaded trim is further evidence of the Inuktization process; it is especially clear in the consistent use of porcelain-white beads by Inuit for trims and borders. Pukiq, the white caribou fur that is a key feature of fur-pieced qullitaqs is paralleled by the preferential use of opaque white or porcelain-white beads for edging borders of chest panels and along hems and cuffs. Sportsman, David Hanbury, who visited the region in the late 1890s noted that: "White beads were in

³¹ See also the beadwork on Attatsiaq's parka. Christina Williamson, "Attatsiaq," in *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment*, ed. Sarah Milroy (Toronto: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2021), 71–72.

³² Driscoll-Engelstad, "Sapangat," 44; Blodgett, Jean, *Grasp Tight the Old Ways: Selections from the Klamer Family Collection of Inuit Art* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1983), 52; Emily E. Auger, *The Way of Inuit Art: Aesthetics and History in and beyond the Arctic* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005), 58.

fashion at the time of my visit, but possibly Husky³³ fashions change as ours do.”³⁴

However, the same milk-white beads remained popular in southern Kivalliq thirty years later when anthropologist Kaj Birket-Smith wrote: “The breast and back ornaments [on men’s atigis ...] are not very common, and they will soon become more rare, because the Eskimos can no longer obtain the milk white porcelain beads, and the clear, white glass beads are not in fashion.”³⁵ Another sixty years later, Jill Oakes also noted the importance of porcelain-white beads up to the 1980s: “In the past, milk-white porcelain beads were preferred over clear white glass beads. This remains true today; local suppliers never seem to have enough white beads to satisfy high demand.”³⁶ Thus Hanbury, Steenhoven and Birket-Smith all note the preference for solid-white beads. Milk-white, opaque beads remain present in contemporary beadwork today, further emphasizing their aesthetic role as effectively the same as pukiq trim and providing a good example of Inuktization.³⁷ Traded from outside, beads were transformed into objects that reflect Inuit aesthetics, cultural and spiritual meanings.

³³ The word husky was used in the mid nineteenth century for Inuit, it is a derivation of Ehuskemay or Huskemaw (Eskimo) likely an Innu term. It is also used to replace the eighteenth-century term for Eskimo dog. “Husky,” in *English: Oxford Living Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2019), <https://perma.cc/MZ3P-FMQM>.

³⁴ David T. Hanbury, *Sport and Travel in the Northland of Canada* (London: Edward Arnold, 1904), 66.

³⁵ Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, vol. I: Descriptive Part (Copenhagen: Gyldeddalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1929), 203.

³⁶ Oakes, “Beadwork in Eskimo Point,” 78.

³⁷ Sherry Farrell Racette found that white beads of various types made up a significant proportion of the beads that fur trade companies imported into Rupertsland and the Northwest in the nineteenth century as well, though she notes that the variety of colour increased as the century wore on. Métis, Ojibwe, Iroquois and other Indigenous peoples, make use of white as an important trimming colour – perhaps this is in relation to porcupine quills, dentalium and wampum shells. Contemporary Métis beaders often use opaque white beads for the classic mouse-track motif. Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing Ourselves Together: Clothing, Decorative Arts and the Expression of Métis and Half Breed Identity” (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 2004), 253–56.

The beaded fringes on the hungayalik also followed pre-existing conventions. On qullitaqs, fringes of pukiq and red fabric or yarn were used, and a clear set of rules was established for beaded fringes found on the front of a tuilli. Beads were a precious, but often limited commodity for Inuit women, and, as a result, women often had to make substitutions when they ran out of a particular colour. In this context, the relative lightness or darkness of the beads came to matter more than their specific colours. Angie Eetak in conversation with Maureen Matthews at the Manitoba Museum frequently noted where bead colours were substituted in historical garments, and Eetak seems to have viewed the substitutions as less than ideal, but acceptable considering the circumstances:

Maureen Matthews: This yellow, red, white, blue pattern...

Angie Eetak: Always the same...

Maureen Matthews: Nice.

Angie Eetak: No dark blue or purple. ... It doesn't have the other one, maybe she ran out of colour

Maureen Matthews: But isn't it great. It's just fantastic. And it's symmetrical, you know. She did her best.

Angie Eetak: Maybe she had to think. ...Maybe she was going to fill it all in, maybe she ran out of beads; cause maybe she tried very hard to match everything.

Maureen Matthews: Exactly, yeah. So ,she got that done except for a little bit of red, she ran out of red.

Angie Eetak: And the brown.

Maureen Matthews: So if I hold it like there, that's better. There it's perfect. She was just working on this bit here, and she ran out of green. But, you know she was pretty close, you can sort of see where she was going.

Angie Eetak: But there's none.

Maureen Matthews: But here, here. It's here and here. ...It's pretty perfect.

Angie Eetak: She, maybe she tried her best.³⁸

Oakes also noted that in the 1980s, “when white beads are unavailable, yellow beads are considered an acceptable substitute.”³⁹ Even when the ideal could not be realized, then, a substitute colour was not detrimental to the design as long as it continued to follow the visual rules balancing lightness and darkness.⁴⁰ Akpaliapik explained the rules of the order of bead colour.

Also, following the fringe pattern, there has to be five lines colour white, two lines for red and some can be one line or 3 lines. These are the pattern to follow. The back part is also made from a pattern that has to be followed.⁴¹

Dorothy Aglukark was also explicit about how beads were ordered in a fringe. She said that the fringes “have to be done the right way, you can't just put anything you want to put in. They have to be in the right place: like, blue, white, green, black, white, black, red, white, black, yellow. The colours have to be in the right order.”⁴² The conventions were carefully adhered to, even when obtaining the right colour of beads was a challenge.

5.6. BEADWORK AND AMULETS

The consistency of the placement of the beads among different -miut groups in Kivalliq over such a long time period reinforces the stance that the placement of beadwork on

³⁸ Angie Eetak and Mark Eetak, *Dialogue Analysis of Audio between Angie Eetak and her Husband Mark and Maureen Matthews and her Husband Charlie, Regarding Eetak Caribou Stories*, interview by Maureen Matthews, transcription, August 15, 2015, Manitoba Museum.

³⁹ Oakes, “Beadwork in Eskimo Point,” 78.

⁴⁰ The work of George Hamel on the importance of colours and beads in Iroquois metaphysics offers some insight into the way that certain colours can be analogous for other colours. For instance, sky-blue and white are the same colour because they represent light. George Hamel, “Trading in Metaphors: The Magic of Beads: Another Perspective Upon Indian-European Contact in Northeastern North America,” in *Proceedings of the 1982 Glass Trade Beads Conference* (Rochester: Rochester Museum & Science Center, 1983).

⁴¹ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 14, 2018.

⁴² Dorothy Aglukark, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 25, 2018.

atigis is intentional. The use of amulets on atigis and hungayaliks offers compelling evidence that Inuktized beads served the same purposes and needs that bones, ivory, teeth, pukiq and other adornments had served in earlier years. The beaded panels found on men's atigis are a particularly notable example of this practice. Birket-Smith's description of a beaded Paallirmiut atigi (Plate 5.8) notes the importance of the placement of that panel:

The strangest ornament, however, is on the back where, sewn across the shoulders, is a broad piece of blue cloth edged with rows of beads From both lower corners of this back decoration, and from the middle of its lower edge, hang strings of beads which are intersected by white, red, black and light-blue and, at the bottom, end with the front teeth of caribou. Whereas dress ornamentation is otherwise always to be found at openings in the garment or emphasises its main seams, this back ornament run over the seams regardless of their presences. There can hardly be any doubt that this is a derivation of the amulets which ... are placed just at this spot.⁴³

The beaded panel does not follow the seams or openings of the garment, reinforcing the argument that its role is more than decorative. The placement of beadwork on men's atigis aligned exactly with amulets such as weasel pelts. A man wearing a parka with a weasel amulet was photographed by Donald Marsh around Arviat (Plate 5.9).. The weasel pelts were attached to his atigi to give the hunter strength and cunning.⁴⁴ Amulets such as weasels were worn less frequently by the 1920s and were largely replaced by beads.

The Paallirmiut atigi in Plate 5.8 was collected in 1924, and has beads in place of fringes and amulets: the turquoise beads affixed to the top of the hood replaced the fur tassels of the hood. Likewise, an Ahiarmiut atigi from the same period (Plate 4.6) also

⁴³ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929, I: Descriptive Part:202.

⁴⁴ George Anderson, "Pagan Eskimos," *The Beaver*, June 1943, 39.

has a tassel of beads at the top of the hood and three clusters of beaded fringe affixed to the bottom of the back panel. Arguably, the three sections of beaded fringe reference the three patches of pukiq seen on some men's qullitaqs (see, for instance, Plate 4.4).⁴⁵ The bunches of beaded fringe had a presence in Kivalliq by at least the early nineteenth century. George Lyon described men's beadwork on atigis in the 1820s at Naujaat "though destitute of ornaments of leather, it has frequently little strings of beads hanging to it from the shoulders or small of the back."⁴⁶ According to Birket-Smith, fur tassels on the hood and back panels became unpopular because of ridicule from Qallunaat in the 1920s.⁴⁷ Yet, the style did not disappear, rather Inuit women transformed the pukiq tassels into beaded ornaments affixed to the hood or in clusters of three underneath the horizontal beaded panel on the back of Paallirmiut men's atigis.

5.7. AHIARMIUT BEADWORK

As trading posts were established in the Arviat region in the twentieth century to support the fox fur trade, beads became more steadily available to Inuit than they had been before. Paallirmiut generally had relatively easy access to beads in the first three decades of the twentieth century, because of the posts at both Padlei and Arviat.⁴⁸ The large quantity of beads necessary to fully bead garments (like those that are preserved in museums and documented in photographs) attests to the access that (at least some) Inuit had to beads. By the time Kaj Birket-Smith arrived in the region in 1921-2, beadwork on

⁴⁵ Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 200.

⁴⁶ Lyon, *Private Journal*, 312.

⁴⁷ Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position* (New York: AMS Press, 1976); quoted in Oakes, 'Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production', 88.

⁴⁸ Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*, 82.

Paallirmiut women's amautis was complex and well established. He noted that while Qairnirmiut decorated themselves with fur-piecing, Paallirmiut were notable for their extensive use of beads on their atigis.⁴⁹ In contrast to the well-documented pre-settlement beadwork of Paallirmiut, it has been asserted that Ahiarmiut did not really bead until they were relocated to Arviat and were exposed to Paallirmiut beaders.⁵⁰ As discussed in Chapter 2, Ahiarmiut were actively involved in middleman trading in the nineteenth century; being in control of the bead trade, they undoubtedly had a beading tradition.

In contrast to the heavily beaded garments of Paallirmiut men of the early twentieth century, the atigis of Ahiarmiut men were not often beaded in this period. In the 1920s, Birket-Smith noted that the back and breast ornaments on men's atigi "are to be found almost exclusively among the Pâdlimiut; but owing to their expensiveness they are not very common."⁵¹ It is important to remember that Birket-Smith was travelling to this region during years when caribou migrations were sporadic, and famines were common (see Chapter 2). However, the man's hungayalik in Plate 4.6 is likely Ahiarmiut in origin, since it was collected near Nueltin Lake (Qikiqtariaktuq), suggesting that Ahiarmiut did bead, even if it was not always possible. During the late 1920s and 1930s Ahiarmiut beaded men's atigis reached their zenith, as evidenced by a man, likely Ahiarmiutaq, who was photographed in Brochet, in 1930 in a heavily beaded hungayalik made in the newest, longer atigi style (Plate 5.5).⁵²

⁴⁹ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929, I: Descriptive Part:214.

⁵⁰ Oakes, "Beadwork in Eskimo Point," 77.

⁵¹ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929.

⁵² The hungayalik parka in Plate 5.5 was apparently obtained by Ilia Tolstoy, Leo Tolstoy's grandson, while he was at Lac du Brochet filming caribou herds for the film *The Silent Enemy* (1930), which featured Molly Spotted Elk as the lead. Ilia Tolstoy is shown wearing the parka in several images included in: Graham A. MacDonald, "'When the Caribou Failed': Ilia Tolstoy in the Barren Lands, 1928-

Beads were also worn by some Ahlarmiut women in the 1930s. The wives of Qiqut, the Ahlarmiut middleman discussed in Chapter 2, show how closely connected some Inuit families were with the fur trade economy. Revillon Frères trader, Thierry Mallet, wrote of Qiqut's first wife: "In the summer she discards her native garb of winter hides and wears outwardly at all events, civilized clothes, consisting of a dress and shirt of thick stroud and a shawl round her head. She wears no ornaments and her hair is arranged at the back in a loose knot."⁵³ The eldest wife also showed her status, but by wearing ready-to-wear Qallunaat clothes in the summer, also only obtainable through trade. Qiqut's second wife wore "native clothes all year round, unadorned."⁵⁴ The dress of both of these older women presented an extreme contrast to that of Qiqut's third and youngest wife, who:

Also wears native clothes, caribou fur in the winter, caribou hide in summer. But she must always look beautiful. So she is covered with ornaments of all kinds. For instance, when I saw her a few months ago she was wearing a brand-new two-piece suit of reindeer hide, scraped and tanned until it was nearly white. Her trousers were tucked in high deerskin boots, the laces below the knee being strips of red flannel. The swallowtail of her coat nearly reached the ground, the edges being trimmed with wolverine fur and a row of empty cartridges shells. She wore on her chest, from neck to waist, a wide "stomacher" of multicolored beadwork; in the centre hung a large bright ornament which I recognized as one of my spoon baits, given to Kakoot [Qiqut] the summer before, from which the hook had been neatly filed off. Her head was uncovered, but her hair, parted from back to front, was divided in two braids which, tightly wrapped in beadwork, hung down beside her cheeks like two fat sausages. Her wrists were one mass of copper and bead bracelets, while each finger of her hands sported several broad copper rings, the middle finger of each hand having as many as five. She was smoking a little soapstone pipe. The bowl was dark green in color,

1929," *Manitoba History* 45 (Spring/Summer 2003), <https://perma.cc/6AVN-R3E8>; Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 96–127.

⁵³ Thierry Mallet, "My Friend Kakoot," in *Glimpses of the Barren Lands* (New York: Revillon Freres, 1930), 86.

⁵⁴ Mallet, "My Friend Kakoot," 87.

somewhat like jade, while from the willow stem, two feet long, hung little streamers of beads.

Yes, she looked beautiful, and knew it, too. I had no difficulty having her pose for a few photographs, but each time she insisted on raising both her hands, palms forward, to each side of her face. She did not want her rings to be out of the picture!⁵⁵

The impressive quantity of beads worn by this unnamed third wife highlights her status as one that was to be admired for her youth and beauty. Unlike the first and second wives, she was not responsible for the work at camp or during journeys. The third wife had time to spend beading and Qiqut was happy to provide her with as many beads as she wanted and needed. The implication made by Mallet is that she had the time to ensure that she was beautiful with beadwork.

Between the years 1926-1950, there were six posts established around Qikiqtariaktuq (see Figure 2.2 and Map 3) This trade presence meant that Ahiarmiut did not need travel to Churchill to trade, though depending on the time period, beads were not always plentiful. Ahiarmiutaq Elizabeth Enowyak, grew up around Ennedai Lake and recalled that she learned to bead from her sisters, when her family lived inland:

I was 5 years old [when I learned to bead], my two older sisters taught me; my sisters loved sewing. I was too poor. I used to [take apart beadwork to re-use beads]. I was lazy to do it but I wanted money so I did it, but it's not hard to get them today because we can get them at the store [in town] but I like the smaller ones that are from Winnipeg.⁵⁶

Enowyak explained that she had beads even from a young age, but they were not easy to access as the fur trade post at Padlei was not very close to their camp. With the closure of

⁵⁵ While there is a photograph of the third wife with Qiqut in Mallet's book, I have been unable to locate the original image. I suspect that it is in the Revillon Frères Fonds located at the Glenbow Western Research Centre, however the centre is closed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Mallet, "My Friend Kakoot," 87-88.

⁵⁶ Elizabeth Enowyak, interview by Christina Williamson, video, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 16, 2018.

the other arctic fox posts in the region in the 1950s, the nearest post for Aharmiut was Churchill, which failed to provide beads of an acceptable quality to Aharmiut.⁵⁷ Geert van Steenhoven explained:

Unfortunately for their cultural needs, their supply of beads appeared to be nihil. They should be able to obtain good beads, low grade tobacco or tea does not matter to them, and quantity is much more important. But they want good beads because they have good taste. HBC beads at Churchill are of poor quality: these Eskimos need the strongly coloured and beautiful “Italian seed beads.”⁵⁸

The lack of beads among the Aharmiut was partly due to consumer choice. It was better to have no beads than poor-quality beads, which would have reflected upon them as people with poor taste.

If the availability of beads was limited, the hoods of men’s parkas and the caps of babies were prioritized for decorations. Steenhoven spent the summer of 1955 at an Aharmiut camp and noted that there were few beads in the camp: “only the cloth caps of the small children were beautifully decorated with beads; for the rest I did not notice any beadwork, except on the hoods of the cloth-anoraks of Pongalak and Shikoak.”⁵⁹

Aharmiut women’s tuillis in this camp were therefore unbeaded at this time: good quality beads were in limited supply in the 1950s for Aharmiut.⁶⁰ Plate 5.10 is a photograph taken by Steenhoven of members of the Aharmiut camp, including Shikoak: it shows the cloth and duffel bonnets and atigis worn by Aharmiut children in the camp,

⁵⁷ Arviat and Padlei were still operating, but more difficult for Aharmiut to reach.

⁵⁸ Geert van den Steenhoven, “Attachment II,” in *The Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955* (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs, 1957), 22.

⁵⁹ Steenhoven, “Attachment II,” 22.

⁶⁰ In communities with limited access to quality beads, women might wear a simple bracelet made from a few strands of beads.

but no women have beads on their tuillis. The success of hunters and the safety of young children were paramount to the well-being of the community as a whole. Plate 5.11 shows Shikoak (also called Hickewa) in the centre wearing an atigi with beaded hood under a button-up jacket and puukammaluk (bandolier hunting bag).⁶¹ Much like for the Inuit around Shugliaq Island and Igluligarjuuq described by Lyon and Rae a century earlier, the priority was on the decorated men's parkas and baby bonnets. If beaded ornaments had a role analogous to amulets, beading bonnets and men's atigis was a logical priority to ensure the success of hunters and the wellbeing of children and hunters alike. Beads operated in a complex of symbolic significations for children: this is evident in the bonnets Inuit women made for infants on which the beadwork is consistently done in a circular pattern encircling the child's pate (see Plate 5.12).⁶²

By the 1940s, heavily beaded garments seem to become less common in the Arviat region.⁶³ It is possible that this impression results from the relative lack of interest in Inuit material culture in colonial records in contrast to travelers' accounts, photographs, and museum collections where it is probable that beaded amautis and atigis were over-represented because of their remarkable beauty and complexity. This may falsely inflate our sense of how many people apparently had access to the vast quantity of beads

⁶¹ Steenhoven, "Attachment II," 33.

⁶² Young boys would have a miniature version of a men's atigi by the age of six or seven. They also might also have beaded atigis, such as one boy from Hikoliqjuaq in the early 1920s, had circles of red beaded stroud on the sides of his parka hood, Birket-Smith, who recorded this garment, explained that it represented a ptarmigan and had a spiritual purpose. Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 146; Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929, I: Descriptive Part:194–96.

⁶³ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 77.

necessary to make these garments.⁶⁴ David Hanbury, an English sportsman, provided one of the earliest accounts of Inuit clothing in southern Kivalliq when he travelled through the Kivalliq in the late 1890s. He noted that the love of beads was genderless: “The men are almost as fond of beads as the women, and a long-tailed deerskin coat covered with beads excites admiration and envy.”⁶⁵ Birket-Smith, for instance noted that “the inner frock is sometimes extravagantly trimmed with beads – a frock of this kind is valued at about sixty dollars.”⁶⁶ The purchase price of a hungayalik in the 1920s roughly equivalent to the value of a blue or cross arctic fox, or two white or red foxes – or \$910 in today’s dollars.⁶⁷ Both Qallunaat and Inuit clearly appreciated the artistry and skill underpinning the fine beadwork on hungayaliks, though they used different regimes of value. Still, fully beaded garments were highly prized by Inuit and Qallunaat and were not ordinary, everyday garments for Inuit, even at their zenith.

5.8. ICONOGRAPHY OF BEADS

A close analysis of one motif, or imagery offers some insight into beaded designs and their possible significations. Jill Oakes determined that there are three categories of bead designs: large geometric shapes, small floral designs, and geometric/garment shapes (in essence, designs that border or trim designs). The designs that edged seams on garments, like cuffs, the hems, epaulettes and hood tend to be less figurative and employ repeated

⁶⁴ Ruth Phillips suggests that this, perhaps, skews the appreciation for beadwork towards a Western value for ornamentation that may not fully reflect Inuit regimes of value. Ruth B. Phillips, Personal Communication, December 29, 2020.

⁶⁵ Hanbury, *Sport and Travel*, 66.

⁶⁶ 60 USD in 1929 is worth roughly 900 USD, or 1200 CAD today. Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 1929, I: Descriptive Part:214.

⁶⁷ See Table 4 in Chapter 2 for fur tariffs in 1929. Hugh Conn, “Nonala Sundry Correspondence,” 1930 1929, H2-133-4-7, HBCA; “Inflation Calculator,” Bank of Canada, n.d., <https://perma.cc/T7C7-B3R2>.

geometric motifs in their design. Cuffs often have zigzags, triangles, squares, multiple parallel lines, or another simple, repeated design. When beaded, the hem is always trimmed with a band of several colours, with white dominating. Figurative designs depicting objects such as boats, trees, mittens and high heels also occur, and these design categories may be used in any combination on a single tuilli.

Kaj Birket-Smith photographed a Qairnirmiut woman in a beaded tuilli around Qaman'ituaq in Plate 5.13. The same beaded panels were photographed on a different parka on another woman a decade later near Arviat (Plate 5.14) and demonstrates the reuse of beaded panels and their treatment as heirlooms. The beadwork of this hungayalik is also an excellent example of variations on a single motif. The double-curve motif (Figure 5.1) is a design used by Indigenous women across Canada. A simple double-curve as described by Birket-Smith and Frank Speck is visible along the epaulette design. Along the bottom of the chest panel, it has been split in half to become a lobe, or tongue.⁶⁸ Birket-Smith also noted that Inuit beaders would extend the double-curve motif so that it proliferated into floral patterns, which is visible on the chest panel of this tuilli.⁶⁹ The hemispheres of the chest panel is divided by solid lines creating a vertically flipped mirror-image of a floral double-curve arranged along a central, vertical stem. This design is outlined in light-coloured beads and likely in different colours along the stem. Similar extended double-curves fill the negative space, however the lobes have a

⁶⁸ Frank Speck, "The Double-Curve Motive in Northeastern Algonkian Art," *Anthropological Series* (Ottawa: Department of Mines, 1914), fig. 13; Issenman, "Construction and Motifs," 107.

⁶⁹ The chest panel, shoulders and cuffs were transferred from the original tuilli to a later tuilli of a different design. The second version has the rounded hood associated with Aivilingmiut, whereas the first version has a narrower hood without the band around the through that extends around the perimeter of the hood. The second version's shoulder also appear to be more elongated and exaggerated than in the first version. The chest panel with the extended double-curves is clearly visible in both images.

dynamic quality, where they appear to flow like kelp in water. I would argue that this modified double-curve motif strongly resembles sea kelp, specifically sugar kelp (*Saccharina latissima*) once it has been harvested, or dulse (*Palmaria palmata*) and could represent that food source.



Figure 5.1 Sketch of a double-curve motif at its most fundamental. By Christina Williamson, 2021.

A less dynamic interpretation of the double-curve motif can be seen in other beaded amautis. For instance, a young girl's tuilli at the McCord Museum (Plate 5.15), is reminiscent of the Qairnirmiut tuilli of Plate 5.13 and Plate 5.14. The tuilli chest panel employs the heart-shaped version of the double-curve motif arranged downwards in a vertical line on the chest panels.⁷⁰ The lower horizontal band on the chest panel utilises a zig-zag motif rather than lobes, but lends an effect of water or waves. Paallirmiutaq beader Angie Eetak noted that a green wavy line on the cuffs of her mother-in-law Martha Eetak's tuilli represented water, so this interpretation of this motif is not improbable (Plate 5.16).⁷¹ While there are no colour photographs of the tuilli shown in Plate 5.13 and Plate 5.14, the heart motif on the McCord tuilli is lined in white and the centre of the lobes are beaded in greasy yellow, a colour similar to that of sea kelp and a colour that was very popular in beadwork throughout the fur trade period.

⁷⁰ Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*, 193; Issenman, "Construction and Motifs," 110.

⁷¹ Maureen Matthews, "Martha Eetak," in *The Artist Herself: Self-Portraits by Canadian Historical Women Artists*, ed. Alicia Boutilier and Tobi Bruce (Kingston, Ontario: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2015), 81.

Kelp and seaweed have strong associations with Nuliajuk, a powerful sea spirit. There are many versions of the story, though most have some major aspects in common. Nuliajuk either refused to marry or was forced by her father to marry a dog, and her father, when transporting her by kayak, a storm blew up and to save himself, the father threw his daughter overboard. She clung to the side of the kayak until her father cut off her finger. She sank into the sea along with her severed fingers which became seals and other marine mammals. Because her fingers were severed, Nuliajuk cannot comb her hair when it becomes tangled. Because she is very powerful and has the ability to keep animals away from hunters when angered, angakkuqs (shamans) would dive into the sea to soothe her by untangling or combing her hair—kelp – so that the sea animals would return.⁷² A reference to Nuliajuk, who had a close relationship with seals, walrus and the sea seems particularly apt for coastal Inuit women such as Paallirmiut, Aivilingmiut and Qairnirmiut.

Beadwork represents aspects of Inuit women’s personal lives as well as motifs that are in fashion at a given time. A hungayalik made by Annie Sewoe in the 1980s that has been interpreted by Jill Oakes and George Swinton suggests the deeply personal aspect of beadwork (Plate 5.17 and Plate 5.18). Its front panel displays a green herringbone design down the centre and a mitten on either side. Swinton interpreted the herringbone pattern as “a tree of life,” while Oakes suggested that it referenced the trees Sewoe would have

⁷² Nuliajuk was a spirit-being well-known to coastal Inuit of southern Kivalliq, but was not a significant entity for those who lived exclusively inland, where Hila (Sila) and Pinga were the primary spiritual beings. Knud Rasmussen, *Observations on the Intellectual Culture of the Caribou Eskimos*, vol. 2, 7 (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1930), 48–51; Karen Filbee-Dexter et al., “Arctic Kelp Forests: Diversity, Resilience and Future,” *Global and Planetary Change* 172 (January 2019): 3,6.

seen during her youth living near the treeline.⁷³ Swinton also suggested that the mitten design may symbolize power or to ward off evil, much like the fur-pieced gloved-handprint design seen on the well-known parka made for the famous angakkuq, Qingailisag (Plate 5.19).⁷⁴ Yet, the explanations of beaders do not always confirm such interpretations. Sewoee, for example, explained that she chose the design because, “I like it like that.”⁷⁵ Other seamstresses commonly offer similar comments saying, as Oakes summarised, that they “liked them, it filled the space, or it was [a] design or colour they could do with the available beads.”⁷⁶ When I asked Akpaliak about the meaning behind a particular floral design on a historic parka that I showed her during our interview, she explained that “they don't mean anything, it's just made for a display. It is made from what they like.”⁷⁷ Sewoee's direct response, like that of Akpaliapik, demonstrates that while beaders' choices were typically personal and made without conscious symbolic intention, they involved the configuration and reconfiguration of a certain set of motifs that were established in their communities and referenced collective values and experiences.

⁷³ Oakes, “Beadwork in Eskimo Point,” 78–79.

⁷⁴ The literature discussing Qingailisag's parka, both by Inuit and Qallunaat, is extensive. Some notable discussions are: Franz Boas et al., “Second Report on the Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay,” *Bulletin of the AMNH* 15 (1907): 508–10; Knud Rasmussen, *The Intellectual Culture of the Iglulik Eskimos*, vol. 1, Report of the 5th Thule Expedition 7 (New York: AMS Press, 1929), 205–6; Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, “Tjiqqat: Voyage Au Pays de l'invisible Inuit,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 7, no. 1 (1983): 69–73, 80–2; Kunuk and Dean, *Inuit Piqutingit*; Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, “Restoring an Ancestral Legacy: Museum Collections, Inuit Clothing and Communities,” in *The Hand's Measure: Essays Honouring Leah Aksaajuq Otak's Contribution to Arctic Science*, ed. John MacDonald and Nancy Wachowich (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College Media, 2018), 98–99.

⁷⁵ Oakes, “Beadwork in Eskimo Point,” 79.

⁷⁶ Oakes, “Inuit Skin Clothing,” 114.

⁷⁷ Karetak, interview.

As always, however, there are exceptions. Angie Eetak, in conversation with Maureen Matthews described the meaning behind several designs on her mother-in-law Martha Eetak's work (Plate 5.16):

On her first parka, the two pools of beads on the shoulders are kamik footprints (likely a reference to her husband), the wavy green line around the cuffs is a river, and the dotted line on the hood and over the shoulders is the path of the caribou's annual migration. The cuffs also feature flowers and bugs.⁷⁸

The motif of repeating ovals may be kamik-prints and readable as such for all seamstresses in Arviat or may be a motif that is based in long-standing aesthetic practice which Martha Eetak drew upon to mean kamik-prints, and more privately, her family members. Betty Kobayashi Issenmen noted that a miniature pair of boots could be sewn onto the back of a hunter's parka so that his own kamiks would last during a long journey. It is unclear to which region Issenmen is referring to, but the connection of kamiks to safe, longer journeys seems to be a reasonable one for Inuit across their homeland.⁷⁹ A green zigzag, could be a generic river motif, or it could represent a specific river important to the beader's family and camp life. Oakes also confirms this kind of explanation, writing, "Inuit seamstresses say that the symbols they use do not have a predetermined meaning as is in native Indian groups (for example, heart shaped symbols represent strawberries in Ojibway decoration)."⁸⁰ The 'legibility' of the beadwork appears to be deeply personal even when it employs motifs present across the circumpolar world.

⁷⁸ Matthews, "Martha Eetak," 81.

⁷⁹ Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*, 184.

⁸⁰ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 114.

Beadworking in Arviat continues to follow the rules and parameters set out and maintained by seamstress's foremothers and beadworkers' creations are shaped by the practicalities of working with the beads one has. Engagement with the spatial and aesthetic requirements of a panel also shapes the decisions that a beader makes in her designs. Contemporary beadworkers in Arviat noted that personal fancy and desire were behind their choices for beaded designs. The four beadworkers I interviewed noted that they picked their beaded designs because those designs were the ones that they felt like beading and believed suited their vision and available bead collection. When examining a photograph of some of the beaded amauti she had made for her daughters, Dorothy Aglukark explained: "I just put them [on], what I like."⁸¹

Contemporary beadworkers make designs that are inventive and speak to Inuit aesthetics. The easy transposition of imagery between print, embroidery, and beadwork is apparent in these creative approaches to beaded amautiit. This fluidity between these forms of two-dimensional artwork is a salient feature of Inuit women's artistry. For instance, a recent amauti made by Oloosie Ashevak is based on the work of her mother-in-law, Kenojuak Ashevak, and depicts several of her most famous prints (Plate 5.20). A similarly "art-inspired" beaded tuilli was made by Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake) textile artist Marion Tu'luuq. She designed a stunning tuilli with beadwork showing the kinds of faces for which she is well-known in her appliqued wall-hangings (Plate 5.21). Beadwork, like printmaking, is a medium that expresses the aesthetics of Inuit artists and makers, and both serve as important examples of Inuktizing mediums that carry forward

⁸¹ See Plate 3.16 for some examples of Aglukark's work. Aglukark, interview.

the lexicon of established motifs that already employed in scrimshaw, carving, sewing and other decorative (and spiritual) arts.⁸²

5.9. HINNIKKA

Beads have received the greatest attention as a form of decoration on parkas, but Inuit sewers have also used commercial bias tape, rick-rack and embroidery floss to decorate garments since the early twentieth century. These edgings, like beads, reflect Inuit aesthetic practices and worldviews and are generally used in similar ways to decorative fur-piecing and therefore, serve as examples of Inuktization. Some of the functional and decorative hinnikka (ornamental edging or trimming) that have been used on both caribou and fabric garments in Arviat discussed below are visible on the yapa (fabric parka) shown in Plate 5.22.

The most prominent hinnikka is bias tape. This tape consists of a strip of fabric cut at a 90-degree angle off the warp and weave in the centre (cut on the bias). This gives it an elasticity adapted to edging garments and other fabric projects, especially when they have a curve. Bias tape has the practical function of reinforcing the hems of caribou skin parkas to prevent the seams from ripping. It serves the same function on caribou parka hemlines as did strips of plucked and depilated (shaved) skins.⁸³ Reinforcing the hemline reduced the likelihood of the hem tearing and protected the seams along the sides of the garments. Often a small “x” of overlapping bias tape is added to the side hem of caribou parkas to reinforce the seams, as can be seen on Ootoroot’s atigi Plate 5.23. From the

⁸² Vorano, Norman, *Inuit Prints, Japanese Inspiration: Early Printmaking in the Canadian Arctic* (Gatineau: Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation, 2011); Richard C. Crandall, *Inuit Art: A History* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2005).

⁸³ Oakes, “Inuit Skin Clothing,” 174.

1940s to the 1970s, homemade bias tape was used on both fabric and caribou parkas. Starting in the 1980s, grosgrain ribbon was also used in a similar manner. Grosgrain ribbon is stiff ribbon with a taffeta weave, it has a heavier weft than warp, making a transverse ribbed effect.⁸⁴

Rick-rack, a thin, zig-zag tape, is frequently used to trim and decorate sleeves and the hems of parkas. On caribou-skin beaded parkas, hems, cuffs and hoods, beaded zigzag and triangle motifs were particularly common and the consistency of rick-rack's use in those locations suggests that rick-rack may have been used in place of either or both of those motifs. Delta braid is another decorative trimming most commonly associated with the Western Arctic. Its use originated in the Beaufort Delta among Gwich'in and Inuvialuit. Historically, sewers made a braid used of different coloured or dyed furs painstakingly pieced together to create geometric patterns. A new version of this style of trimming was made from bias tape and seam bindings. Factory-made delta braid is used to decorate contemporary parkas in Arviat, typically in geometric motifs. Embroidered and jacquard ribbon embellished with floral and curvilinear designs, are also called delta braid in this context. Recently, artists like Martha Kyak have designed their own trims for sale, featuring designs of ulus, flowers, tunniit (tattoos), and butterflies (Plate 5.24).

The final decorative trim commonly used in Arviat is embroidery floss. Embroidery floss and yarn are used to decorate duffel garments in particular. Embroidery is most commonly used to finish hems as a blanket, herringbone, feather and cross stitches on hems of duffel socks and yapas, but this more flexible medium means it can also be used

⁸⁴ Oakes, "Inuit Skin Clothing," 201.

for more complex designs. Flowers, butterflies and geometric patterns are similarly applied to decorate and highlight the kamikpas (kamik liners) peeking out of kamiks.

While the various trims are mostly used to reinforce or decoratively highlight hemlines of the garments, embroidery floss is somewhat more flexible in how it can be used. It can decorate the hemlines of garments like duffel socks and yapas, and in the 1970s and 1980s, embroidery floss was also used to create embroidered designs on traditional style tuillis (Plate 5.25). Using embroidery floss and yarn to decorate parkas is less popular today, but more study is necessary to provide a detailed account of the use of these decorative elements. It is likely that embroidery was an economical solution to the difficulty of procuring beads, which were expensive and difficult to obtain in the 1980s.⁸⁵ This connection between embroidery floss and beads further reinforces the thesis that these trimmings function as Inukitized variations on traditional fur piecing. Inuit seamstresses adopted these decorative edgings and followed their own concepts of design.

5.10. CONCLUSION

Women employed beads to express their own perspectives and stories through a process of Inukitization. Beadwork, with its diverse palette of colour and flexibility in design did not erase the personal and cosmological references of other materials, but became a medium through which Inuit aesthetics, historically expressed through tattooing, fur-piecing and other traditional amulet materials, could continue to flourish. The clear constraints on where beadwork was placed on a garment and the motifs employed, further

⁸⁵ Eber, "Eva Talooki," 16.

demonstrate that there were long-standing rules around adornment and design that continue to inform how a sewer might decorate a beaded garment.

5.11. PLATES

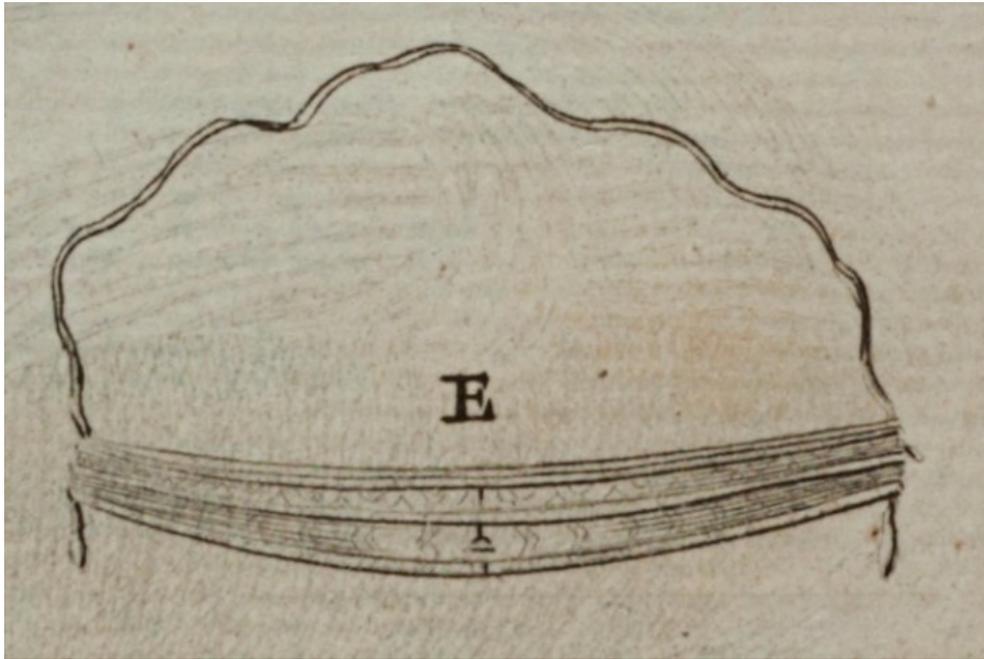


Plate 5.1 Detail of Seahorse tooth breast ornament. From Henry Ellis, *A voyage to Hudson's-Bay by the "Dobbs Galley" and "California" in the years 1746 and 1747.*



Plate 5.2 Inuit Breast Ornament, collected by Sergeant C. Brown, 1923 on Shugliaq. Image © National Museums Scotland, A.1923.438.



Plate 5.3 Gamma Qiliqtii Mary Ford in her qullitaq tuilli. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e007914486, accession no. 1978-039, slide box 5A, no. 107(b).



Plate 5.4 Aitjuajuk's atigi. Photographs by Christina Williamson. See also Plate 4.8.
H5-21-291. Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Plate 5.5 Inuit and traders outside Revillon Frères trading post, Brochet, Manitoba, 1930. Image courtesy of Libraries and Cultural Resources Digital Collections, University of Calgary, CU1129891.



Plate 5.6 Beaded Tuilli belonging to Heeootooroot, c. late 1930s. H5-21-292. Image Courtesy of Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Plate 5.7 Beadwork by Helen Kunne for her daughters. Photograph by Christina Williamson shows a printout shared by Mrs. Kunne during her interview in 2018. Original photographer unknown.



Plate 5.8 Front and back view of a Paallirmiut man's atigi collected in 1924 by the Fifth Thule Expedition. Photograph by Roberto Fortuna and courtesy of National Museum of Denmark, P28.6.



Plate 5.9 Man with weasel skins attached to his atigi, to bestow him with strength and cunning. Photograph by Donald Marsh, in article by George Anderson, "Pagan Eskimos," *The Beaver*, June 1943.



Plate 5.10 Elisapee Nutaraluk with her son Tommy Owlajoot. In the centre is Mary Qahuq Miki with her son David Serkoak on her back and her other son Silas Ilungijajuk in front. On the far right is Mary Anautalik with her son John (not visible) in her amauti. Photograph taken by Geert van den Steenhoven, in “Report to Department of northern affairs and national resources on a field research journey for the study of legal concepts among the Eskimos in some parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the summer of 1955.”



Plate 5.11 From left to right: Angnuokoak (Ungma), Shikoak (Hickewa) and Ootuk. Photograph taken by Geert van den Steenhoven, in “Report to Department of northern affairs and national resources on a field research journey for the study of legal concepts among the Eskimos in some parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the summer of 1955.”



Plate 5.12 Infant's bonnet, Paallirmiut or Ahiarmiut. H5-21-300. Image courtesy of Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Plate 5.13 Unnamed Qairnirmiut woman, photograph by Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimo*.



Plate 5.14 Unnamed woman and child, likely near Arviat, c. 1930s. Library and Archive Canada/Donald Marsh Fonds/e004922730, accession no. 1978-039, box RV4 171, no. 38.



Plate 5.15 Young girl's amauti, ME937.3. Photograph by McCord Museum of Canadian History,



Plate 5.16 Tuilli beaded by Martha Muqyunnik Eetak, c.1918. HBC 16-10. Image Courtesy of Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Plate 5.17 Annie Sewoee in her fabric beaded tuilli. Image courtesy of University of Manitoba Archives, Jillian Oakes Fonds, Box 26, file 12.



Plate 5.18 Annie Sewoee's tuilli. Photograph Courtesy of the Costume Museum of Canada, E.9e980 1980.



Plate 5.19 One of several replicas of Qingailiaq's qullitaq. This one was made by Rachel Uyarashuk around 1988. Photograph by Christina Williamson, British Museum, Am1994,06.24a.



Plate 5.20 Front and back views of Kenojuak Ashevak's daughter-in-law, Oloosie's beaded amauti. It was sold at auction for \$19,000 CAD in 2007. Image Courtesy of Waddington's Auctioneers and Appraisers, Toronto.



Plate 5.21 Marion Tuu'luq in her partly completed beaded tuilli, 1971. The tuilli is housed in the ROM accession 2006.14.1. Photograph courtesy of Jack Butler.



Plate 5.22 Duffel, embroidery and commander yapa made c.1968 in Qamani'tuaq, by unknown seamstress. The hilapaaq is trimmed with white rick-rack and crystal fox fur, the hem of the duffel atigi around the hood is trimmed in red bias tape and the entire inner parka is trimmed in yarn embroidery and a store-bought floral braid. Maker unknown, Christina Williamson's private collection. Photograph by Christina Williamson.



Plate 5.23 Ootooroot drums and dances while the women sing his song.” Photograph by Donald Marsh, c. 1946. Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, 1987/363-E-360/3.

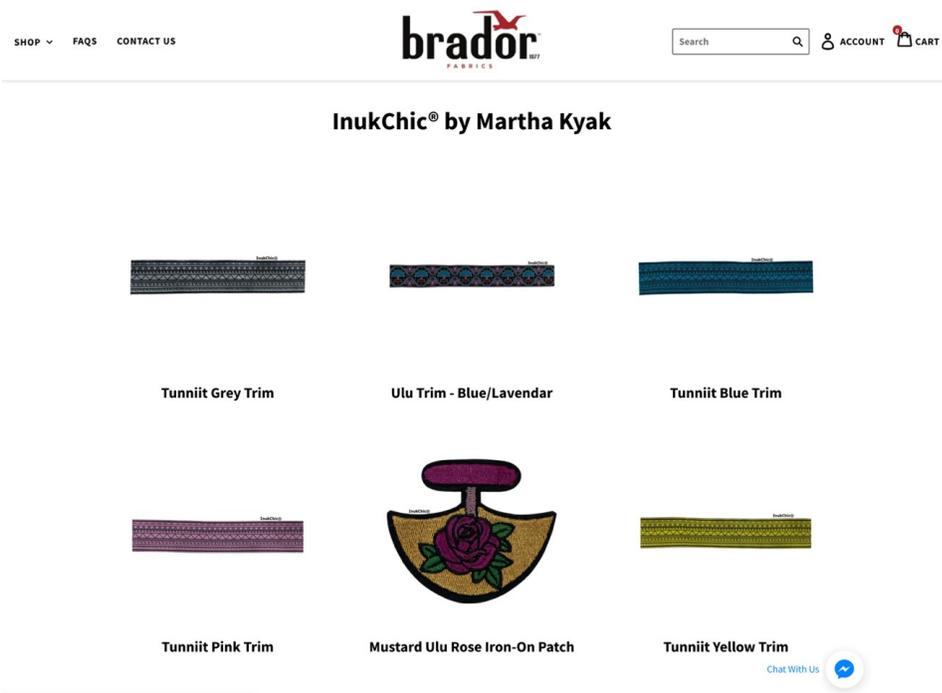


Plate 5.24 Screenshot of Brador Fabric's online shop which sells InukChic's braid.



Plate 5.25 According to Jill Oakes, the chest panels on these amautis are embroidered. The subjects L-R are Elizabeth Nibgoarsi, Elizabeth Quvvaqaat Issakiark, and Lucy Kirkwa probably on Canada Day, c. 1986. University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, Jill Oakes Fond, box 27, file 3.

Chapter 6 : ARVIAQMIUT AND THE INUKTIZATION OF YAPPAKAS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter, I argued that Inuit embraced select trade goods, like glass beads, transformed them into components of clothing that functioned within Inuit aesthetics and spirituality. This process of Inuktization did not stop with beads; manufactured fabrics are likewise embedded within an Inuit worldview as Inuit women navigate and create their modern world. In this chapter, I focus on parkas made with yappakas (fabrics for parkas).¹ Assembling a mixture of parkas and other garments in museums, historical photographs, and interviews with contemporary seamstresses in Arviat, I use material history methods to reveal the broader cultural significance of Inuktization. As we have seen, clothing designs have always reflected Inuit women's adaptability and willingness to try new designs and adornments and Inuit fashions have changed over centuries through contact with other groups, from Dene to whalers. Inuit sewers' adaptability is also visible in how they have approached yappaka and interpreted these imported fabrics through the lens of the furs with which they were familiar.

Sewing remained an important part of women's labour throughout the twentieth century, and the shift to fabric was emblematic of major economic shifts. The production

¹ Yappaka is any material used for making a yapa (japa is also acceptable). According to Piita Irniq, "Jaika(k) is Inukatized from Jacket. Japaksaq, is European duffle material for making a japa/yapa. [...] In most of Kivallirmiut dialects, the terminology for duffle is actually "kamikpaksaq:" "duffle socks" worn inside the kamiik - seal skin boots or store bought rubber boots. When it refers to the kamikpaksaq, it is particularly for European material, the duffle for making japa/yapa. But, Inuit also made kamikpaak (duffle socks) out of the same material. When it is intended for japa/yapa, then it can be japaksaq among Aivilingmiut (Repulse Bay) Inuit." Alexina Kublu further explained to me that "japa + ksaq because of the lack of s and the use of h instead japaksaq which would be japakhaq comes out more like japakkaq in speech and as many people now are omitting the q and use y instead of j the end result seems like the person is saying 'my many parkas' instead." Piita Taqtu Irniq and Alexina Kublu, "Yappaka," December 27, 2021, <https://perma.cc/55Z5-ZZ2U>.

of fabric parkas can be seen as the material expression of Inuit women contending with the massive social and economic changes they experienced in the twentieth century. Fabrics, like beadwork in the preceding chapter, represented a specific material shift specific to Inuit women as the primary sewers in their communities. The Inuktization of fabric functioned in much the same way that it did with beadwork. Inuit women worked to creatively reimagine fabric to suit their communities and artistic sensibilities.

The integration of fabric into Inuit material culture began in earnest in the late nineteenth century and Qallunaat ascribed their own meaning to the increased use of fabrics for parka-making.² They identified changes in material culture, both through the introduction of new fabrics and designs, with the idea of the loss of culture.³ As I will show in this chapter, this destructive narrative of loss is inadvertently perpetuated by contemporary scholars. Their focus on Euro-Canadian conceptualizations of clothing and Inuit-ness has led them to neglect Inuit perspectives on the introduction of fabric into their material culture. One way to centre the perspectives and actions of Inuit sewers as they navigated economic changes is by establishing the histories of how Inuit sewers used fabrics in parka-making. This approach challenges simplistic notions of that focus only on oppression and fail to consider Inuit motivations.

This chapter discusses several fabric types. Among the most significant is duffel, which became inscribed with spiritual and aesthetic meanings once only reserved for caribou. To provide a broader context for the local meanings of duffel in the Arviat

² Other authors have discussed these issues around expectations of Inuit and other Indigenous people, most notably, Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounters from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

³ Christina Williamson, "Objectified: The Story of an Inuinnait Parka from the Canadian Museum of Civilization" (MA Research Essay, Ottawa, Carleton University, 2012).

region, I also discuss calico, a fabric often studied exclusively as a symbol of colonial oppression.⁴ A different narrative of inter-regional trade, beauty and desire emerges when Inuit women's voices and their actions in obtaining calico are more carefully considered. Finally, I discuss the growing prominence of yapas (fabric parkas), contemporary parkas that have historical connections to commercialized Yukon and James Bay parkas that were made in the north and sold in southern Canada. I argue that these yapas, made from yappaka (fabric), retain a strong connection to historical caribou-skin parka designs and have become symbols of pride and Inuit creativity.

6.2. CAUSES FOR THE GENERAL TRANSITION FROM CARIBOU TO FABRIC

The shift from skins to cloth seems to have occurred more out of necessity than preference for fabric over fur. In the southern Kivalliq there seems to be three reasons, all of which are economic in their cause: first, more intensive fur trapping left less time for the subsistence hunting needed for procuring caribou for meat and furs. Secondly, the change in caribou migratory patterns had massive ramifications for Inuit access to caribou skins; and, closely related, was the forced relocations of Inuit into settlements in the 1950s. All of these factors worked together to make fabric the dominant material for parka-making in the hamlet of Arviat.

The intensification of commercial fur trapping in the early twentieth century meant that it was often necessary for Inuit involved in the fur trade to use fabric because, as trappers, they had less time to hunt caribou for subsistence purposes. Their time was

⁴ A few scholars have implicitly or explicitly made this assertion when discussing calico. A detailed discussion is available in sections 6.5 and 6.6 of this chapter. See: Cyd Martin, "Satin Dresses and Caribou Kamiks: Negotiation of Tradition in Northern Alaskan Inupiaq Weddings," in *Wedding Dress across Cultures*, ed. Helen Bradley Foster, Donald Clay Johnson, and Joanne B. Eicher (Berg Publishers, 2003); Heather Davis-Fisch, "Girls in 'White' Dresses, Pretend Fathers: Interracial Sexuality and Intercultural Community in the Canadian Arctic," *Theatre Research in Canada* 32, no. 1 (2011).

spent trapping commercial furs. The specific dynamics of the trapping and its relationship to subsistence hunting is detailed in Appendix D. Paallirmiut were able to incorporate trapping into their traditional subsistence cycle because they lived inland during the winter, where fur-bearing animals also lived. Ahiarmiut also trapped, but their exclusively inland economic orientation meant that relying on caribou hunting and supplementing with fishing when absolutely necessary, offered a more certain economic base than the distant trading posts.⁵

Shifts in caribou migratory movements also played a significant role in the presence of fabric in parka-making for Arviaqmiut. By 1959, anthropologists James VanStone and Wendell Oswalt found that “winter clothing is made ideally from caribou skins and is of aboriginal cut, but the scarcity of skins makes this impossible.”⁶ The scarcity of the furs was the result of unreliable caribou migrations in the 1950s. Duffel filled an important gap for Inuit parka-making and was a necessary replacement for the loss of reliable access to caribou for Inuit families now living in settlements. But the fabric was used in camps as well. Anthropologist Susan Briggs, during her time with Netsilingmiut farther north on the mainland of Nunavut, explained that duffel “does not compare with caribou as a protection against the wind and therefore does not encourage prolonged outdoor activity.”⁷ As a result, women and children no longer accompanied the

⁵ Yvon Csonka, “Les Ahiarmiuts (1920-50): Dans La Perspective de l’Histoire Des Inuit Caribous” (PhD Diss., University of Laval, 1991), 369–70; A.H. Lawrie, “Barren Ground Caribou Survey” (Ottawa: Department of Resources and Development, Wildlife Division, 1950), 1.

⁶ James W. VanStone and Wendell Oswalt, “The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point” (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1959), 12.

⁷ Jean L. Briggs, *Never in Anger: Portrait of an Eskimo Family* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 165.

men to Gjoa Haven because any of the limited caribou furs available had to be reserved for the hunters of the camp.

Finally, the forced relocations of Inuit to Arviat also meant that many families' access to caribou skins became severely curtailed because they were not able to travel to follow caribou, forcing them to wear duffel garments. For example, when Arviat seamstress Melanie Tabvahtah's family was relocated into the community in the late 1950s, Tabvahtah recalls that there "weren't any more ... [caribou] for wintertime. I understand now."⁸ She remembers her strong reaction to duffel as a young girl when she first tried on the fabric:

That's it, after that [the relocation], no iglu. Different. No heat. No insulation, no lights. Nothing. ... [The] first time [I] tried wearing [duffel clothes, I said,] "icky!"⁹

In Tabvahtah's case, this change was clearly not one of preference or desire, but directly related to economic and geographic circumstances forced onto her family. The altered caribou migrations and her family's relocation into Arviat meant there simply was no way to obtain caribou.

Heated houses in the settlement, furthermore, are too warm and dry for processing caribou. As Tabvatah explains: "For iglu, [tanning caribou] it's good work. [Working in an iglu] makes ... for [a softer] skin. Not hard."¹⁰ Tabvatah explained that it is nearly impossible to process caribou skins in a heated house because the temperature makes the

⁸ Note that this interview was done in English, per Ms. Tabvahtah's request. This is why the interview text is heavily edited compared to some of the other interviews. Melanie Tabvahtah, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 23, 2018.

⁹ This is my transcription of the interview. Keavy Martin, has since, rightfully, I believe pointed out that Melanie was likely saying "ikkii!," Cold! Tabvahtah, interview.

¹⁰ Tabvahtah, interview.

skin dry too quickly, becoming brown, brittle and unpliable. Akpaliapik agreed, voicing a similar sentiment:

People don't dry much caribou skin today. People just leave skin or don't work on the skins that are so nice. ... [It is] hard to work on the caribou skin when it is in the warm place; we live in that warm place today.¹¹

Because housing realities make it difficult for women to process caribou skins today, skins can go to waste. Some women, especially those with stable access to housing, are able to construct sheds which provide better conditions for skin processing and storage. For instance, Dorothy Aglukark typically works in her shed or outside rather than inside her house. The permanence of her housing situation makes it worthwhile to construct and maintain a shed for storing all kinds of items, but especially skins (Plate 6.1).

6.3. INUIT PERSPECTIVES ON CARIBOU AND FABRIC

Today, yappaka is generally used by Inuit seamstresses in Arviat instead of caribou skins.

For some Inuit, the adoption of fabric was a matter of ease and convenience. Inuk politician and sewer Manitoq Thompson believed that it was no surprise that her whaling ancestors, Aivilingmiut women from Salliq (Coral Harbour), were delighted by the fabrics that whalers imported to the region at the close of the nineteenth century.

Thompson explained that fabric was less labour-intensive, which is a significant benefit over skins.¹² There is no arduous, messy and time-consuming tanning or skinning required for fabric; it lies flat easily, comes in many colours, and is easier to sew.¹³

Aivilingmiut Elder, Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak explained that working caribou is time-

¹¹ Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, trans. Nuatie Sylvia Aggark, February 14, 2018.

¹² Manitoq Thompson, interview by Christina Williamson, September 6, 2017.

¹³ Thompson, interview.

sensitive because “people have to work on caribou skin right away when it’s caught to make clothing.”¹⁴ Arviat Elder and seamstress Dorothy Aglukark explained how unpleasant she thought preparing caribou skins was as a child:

I remember [when] we lived on the land we [would] have to make - they had to make clothings for the winter. We used to put ... caribou skin between our blanket and touching our skin ... We were keeping it warm ... maybe two nights, I don’t know. I don’t really remember, but all I know is when I complained, “I don’t want this touching me, this skin,” very stiff skin and smelly... not too smelly but fresh smell.... But that’s how we used to do it. They used to do it [to] make a good, really good atigi, or parka out of it, or pants, or, kamiks. I complained [because the raw pelt was clammy], but my grandmother wouldn’t let me, “don’t complain,” and I knew she was teaching me.

Most seamstresses that I interviewed in Arviat who had worked with skins noted the hard work that was required to prepare the skins before even beginning to sew, but stated it was worth the effort to have caribou skin hunting clothes.

Despite the dominance of fabric-use in parka making today, Arviaqmiut continue to regard caribou as the best material for making parkas. This is especially true for Elders who grew up mainly wearing fur parkas. Elders value caribou skin for its warmth, softness and cultural significance and all sewers that I interviewed in Arviat viewed caribou as the gold standard for hunting garments.¹⁵ Arviat Elder Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak explained in an interview:

Caribou is really good for clothing ... We even use caribou legs to make mittens, and they turn out so nice and warm. ... I would love people to have warm clothing out of caribou. I would appreciate it if people making

¹⁴ Karetak, interview.

¹⁵ In winter, caribou fur is exceedingly warm for its weight. Jill E. Oakes et al., “Comparison of Traditional and Manufactured Cold Weather Ensembles,” *Climate Research* 5 (1995): 83–90; Richard W. Hill et al., “Thermal Imaging and Physiological Analysis of Cold-Climate Caribou-Skin Clothing,” *Arctic* 73, no. 1 (March 18, 2020): 40–52.

qullitaqs would teach younger seamstresses because winters are long and cold. It will always be winter again.¹⁶

Likewise, Arviat Elder Dorothy Aglukark, an experienced seamstress who prepares caribou skins, notes the superiority of caribou above all things for warmth:

Like in the wintertime, men never stop going out [on] dog-team those days, or skidoos. We, as the elders, know that caribou skin is the best. Warm. Everybody should have it, and everybody – people – women should learn to make them because they are the only real, warm clothing you can have in the wintertime. Sealskins are ok. Some people live in [them] when there's no caribou they use the sealskin for clothing, like winter clothing. Winter clothing: I mostly use maybe from November to May, something like that.¹⁷

Both Aglukark and Akpaliapik recognize the superiority of caribou for warmth and the importance of maintaining skin processing skills among Inuit. Akpaliapik is concerned that women will no longer know how to use traditional materials like caribou. She explained in her interview:

It has changed a lot; it is good to sew with materials like Commander and Holofil because there are many different colours. I'm happy with using new materials, and people are getting very good with it, but qullitaqs and caribou clothing aren't made very often anymore, and sadly, people don't make much caribou clothing today. I would be happy if people sewed caribou clothing.¹⁸

Elders acknowledge that caribou skin processing is messy and hard work, but they maintain that these skills are important for younger women to learn and maintain. Making parkas and other garments from fabric is undeniably less labour-intensive than working with skins, but caribou skin clothing is superior in terms of warmth and practicality, particularly for hunting

¹⁶ See chapter 3 for discussion of different parka types. Karetak, interview.

¹⁷ Dorothy Aglukark, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 25, 2018.

¹⁸ Karetak, interview.

6.4. THE INUKTIZATION OF DUFFEL

Having established that the use of fabrics in Arviat is the result of social, economic and environmental changes in Arviat, we turn to duffel, a particularly noteworthy type of yappaka for Inuit sewing history because of its ubiquity in Arviat and Inuit Nunangat more broadly. I assert that Inuit sewers Inuktized duffel: they integrated duffel into their material culture to fulfill the aesthetic and spiritual functions previously only associated with caribou skins. The connection between caribou and duffel is evident in producing duffel parkas following the same pattern used for caribou skin parkas. The specific treatment of different-coloured duffel fabrics and the transference of sewing taboos further reinforce this vital connection.

Yappakas were used by Inuit in Kivalliq by the 1900s, but the most prominent fabric, duffel, was widely used in the 1930s to 1970s. Duffel is a thick, woollen cloth with a dense knap that originated in the eponymous Belgian town.¹⁹ The earliest depiction of duffel in a garment worn by an Ahiarmiutaq is a photograph taken around the Kazan River at Hallo's camp in 1894 (Plate 4.5).²⁰ By the 1930s (and likely earlier), Paallirmiut and Aivilingmiut living around Arviat were making two-layered parkas with a wool duffel inner and a hard-wearing water-resistant outer fabric like Grenfell or

¹⁹ "Duffel" was the term used by the seamstresses that I spoke with to describe any thick felted fabric like stroud, Melton or duffel. The early twentieth century Arctic posts' trade cloth was not Belgian-made, and there are no studies at the present that examine the history of this cloth in twentieth-century Arctic Canada. Anthropologist Cory Willmott notes in her discussion of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century woollen trade textiles that there is no authoritative typology of fur trade textiles. For the sake of ease, I use the term duffel to describe any heavy felted woollen fabric that was typically used by Inuit for inner parkas. Cory Willmott, "From Stroud to Strouds: The Hidden History of a British Fur Trade Textile," *Textile History* 36, no. 2 (November 2005): 196.

²⁰ Frank J. Tester and Peter Keith Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), 206; Joseph B. Tyrell, "Report on the Doobaunt, Kazan and Ferguson Rivers and the North-West Coast of Hudson Bay: And on Two Overland Routes from Hudson Bay to Lake Winnipeg," Geological Survey of Canada (Ottawa: S. E. Dawson, 1897), 20, 126.

canvas, called a hilapaaq.²¹ But the broad presence of duffel garments is most clearly evidenced by Donald Marsh's photographs beginning in the 1930s. The two-layer fabric parka design follows directly from the traditional two-layer hide parka consisting of an atigi inner parka (with fur facing inwards) and the outer qullitaaq (with fur facing outwards).

The preferred colour used by seamstresses for inner parkas was white duffel (more accurately, cream or off-white), and it remains the most popular colour for traditional style tuillis made today.²² I posit that this colour is omnipresent for fabric inner parkas because it replicates the colour of caribou skin atigis (inner parkas), which have fur against the body and the creamy white skin showing outward. In the 1940s and 1950s, Dorothy Aglukark recalled that white duffel "used to be the only lining we had in those days – early days – white, white, white."²³ Though Aglukark's quote suggests that white duffel was often the only cloth available, photographic evidence from the 1940s shows a range of different colours of woollen cloth, which suggests that the white was, at least in

²¹ Grenfell cloth is a tightly woven cotton gabardine and was one of the earliest technical fabrics used for outer garments. It was used in Inuit Nunangat by the 1930s and is most strongly associated with Nunatsiavut, where Wilfred Grenfell was a missionary and the inspiration for the development of this early technical cloth. Grenfell cloth is still woven in England and is now used predominantly for designer sportswear but has a long history of use in clothing by adventurers. This cloth is still used for parkas today, Grenfell Handicrafts Ltd. in Newfoundland, and retails "Grenfell Parkas" for roughly \$300. Some accounts also refer to the use of canvas as an outer fabric in the 1930s, and Sheri McBride mentions the use of canvas in the late 1980s, though precisely what kind of canvas this was is unclear from the available records. Without doing a careful textile analysis of yapas in museum collections, examining HBC shipment records, and interviewing seamstresses about their textile use, it is impossible to establish precisely which fabrics were used. R. H. Cockburn, "Prentice G. Downe's Eastern Arctic Journal, 1936," *Arctic* 36, no. 3 (September 1983): 232–50; Sheri McBride, "Factors Influencing Current Fabric Hood Production in Eskimo Point, Northwest Territories" (MSc Thesis, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, 1988), 74, 89, 96; Rafico Ruiz, "Grenfell Cloth," in *New Materials: Towards a History of Consistency*, ed. Amy E. Slaton (Amherst: Lever Press, 2020); "Grenfell Handicrafts," 2019, <https://perma.cc/6FYL-XV4Z>.

²² Tuillis, as discussed in previous chapters, are the amautis (packing parka for women) historically used in Kivalliq. The parka has exaggerated shoulders (tui in Inuktitut), and a long, narrow hood.

²³ Aglukark, interview.

part, a consumer choice that the fur traders catered to rather than one that Inuit were forced to accept.

Issenmen suggests that Nunatsiavummiut (Northern Labrador) hunters wore white to camouflage themselves in the snow and ice when hunting seals on sea ice.²⁴ This explanation, however, while logical in Nunatsiavut, does not account for why Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut would *also* choose to wear white duffel atigis where the major hunt for caribou was on the snowless tundra in the early fall. The use of white duffel in this region seems to have less to do with camouflage and more with maintaining an aesthetic connection to tanned caribou.

A description by legal anthropologist Geert van den Steenhoven when visiting Ahiarmiut of Ennedai Lake in 1955 supports my assertion that Inuit treated duffel like caribou skins. Taboos around sewing caribou were transferred to duffel:

There was a taboo that forbade Inuit from working with late summer skins (when they are prime for clothing) until winter (igloos) had arrived. To observe such a taboo among coast Eskimos is not uncommon, since these groups make a clear distinction between seasons of land and of saltwater hunting. Interestingly, the taboo had been extended [among Ahiarmiut] to the working of large pieces of imported textiles: for when Mr. McCue of Life Magazine wanted a parka to be made from a piece of duffel in his possession, it could not be done for this reason.²⁵

²⁴ Buijs notes that white, especially on anoraks, is a generally masculine colour in Greenland traditional dress. He also notes that polar bear parkas and pants served as important camouflage for hunters on sea ice. There seems to be a link in the association between masculinity, hunting and the colour white in this context as well. Cunera Buijs, *Furs and Fabrics: Transformations, Clothing, and Identity in East Greenland* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2004), 55, 91, 208; Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 166.

²⁵ Geert van den Steenhoven, "Report to Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on a Field Research Journey for the Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955" (Department of Northern Affairs, 1957), 23.

The transference of a caribou sewing taboo onto duffel fabric strongly suggests the Inuktization of duffel whereby Ahiarmiut integrated duffel into their aesthetic and spiritual world.

The Inuktization of duffel rendered it sensible not only within the Ahiarmiut worldview but also for Paallirmiut and modern-day Arviaqmiut. The use of light-coloured fabrics for inner parkas persisted into the late 1980s when Sheri McBride noted that inner layers of duffel amautis were all light in colour were exclusively cream-coloured, though those made with a piled fabric were evenly split into white and light pink.²⁶ Inuit today largely uphold this practice of selecting light-coloured fabrics for inner parkas, and cream continues to be the most common base for contemporary atigi-type tuillis.²⁷ I have never seen a dark-coloured fabric tuilli that was beaded: qullitaqs, too, are also unbeaded.

My hypothesis that duffel has been integrated into Inuit material culture in a manner that maintains a strong connection to caribou also holds with outer garments. The Inuktization of duffel is visible in both the design of the fabric versions of tuillis and the colour selection. Cream or light colours are selected for inner tuillis, and darker colours, such as black, navy and even red, have been used from the 1930s onwards. As with beadwork, the lightness or darkness of the duffel is more important than the specific colour itself.

Like qullitaqs made of caribou, historical outer duffel tuillis were unbeaded but were decorated in designs using the same fur-piecing technique used for caribou fur. In

²⁶ McBride, "Fabric Hood Production," 73.

²⁷ First Nations around Great Lakes in the eighteenth century also prioritized the importance of lightness over darkness of a shade over the hue or colour. George Hamell, "Trading in Metaphors: The Magic of Beads: Another Perspective Upon Indian-European Contact in Northeastern North America," in *Proceedings of the 1982 Glass Trade Beads Conference* (Rochester: Rochester Museum & Science Center, 1983).

Plate 6.2, Mary Nowya and Ooyopik are wearing their caribou qullitaq tuillis, which serve as a good example of the kind of fur-piecing done on Paallirmiut caribou outer tuillis. The two women in Plate 6.3 are all wearing duffel outer tuillis, and the patterns of the duffel pieces are virtually identical to Mary Nowya's caribou parka. As Winifred Petchey Marsh noted, duffel "coats are panelled identically as fur counterparts."²⁸ These parkas show just how closely seamstresses followed the caribou fur patterns when working with duffel and are therefore treating this fabric like they treated caribou furs in their sewing designs.

The darker outer shells worn by the women in Plate 6.3 recall the darker fur of a caribou-skin qullitaq. The most common colour for duffel outer parkas in the 1930s and 40s appears to have been a deep blue colour, though this is difficult to discern because so many of the photographs are black and white. Helpfully, Petchey Marsh noted on the back of the photograph of a particularly remarkable duffel qullitaq-style tuilli that "this coat is made of pure wool fabric. Many white and red stroud."²⁹ The choice of red is noteworthy. Like the navy blue outer tuillis, the red colour is a deep hue and thus replicates the dark fur of a qullitaq. Red is also a spiritually powerful colour across Inuit Nunangat.³⁰ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad argued that in the 1920s large quantities of red stroud on particular caribou Inuit parkas might denote a garment for an angakkuq (shaman) (Plate 4.6 is an example).³¹ Among non-angakkuqs, fringes of red stroud and

²⁸ Winifred Petchey Marsh, Photograph Caption (c 1981), Accession 1981-238, Box 3934, e010984470, LAC.

²⁹ Petchey Marsh, Photograph Caption.

³⁰ Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*, 188.

³¹ Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), 78.

pukiq along the shoulders, hood, and hem of the kiniq were frequently used as decorative (and likely protective) elements in the Eastern Arctic.³²

Two clues suggest that this woman was not an angakkuq, though the red undoubtedly had spiritually powerful connotations. First, she does not wear an angakkuq's belt, which would symbolize her spiritual position. Second, the white panels of this tuilli are much larger and more exaggerated than the blue duffel tuillis and caribou qullitaqs (see Plate 6.2, Plate 6.3 and Plate 6.5). Her extensive use of white duffel may suggest an intention to mitigate some of the implications of shamanism associated with red.

Though the continuity of design between caribou and duffel outer tuillis is notable, I am not suggesting that no innovations or alterations occurred in the decorative elements of either caribou or duffel outer tuillis. Returning to Plate 6.2, Winifred Petchey Marsh noted on the back of this photograph that Ooyopik's caribou amauti demonstrates a 'modified version,' because it had no fur-piecing on the chest and it had vertical fur panels on the sleeves rather than the more typical Paallirmiut design of horizontal white panels seen on Mary Nowya's. The duffel tuilli in Plate 6.5 has a vertical sleeve design similar to Ooyopik's tuilli, which confirms that vertical sleeves were unusual but not

³² The spiritual importance of red is circumpolar. Farther west, the primary decorative element for Inuinnait before the 1920s, was thin strips of light, dark and stained red caribou skin on dancing bonnets, parkas, trousers and kamiks. In Alaska, Yup'ik Elder Rita Pitka Blumenstein described the meaning of red as representing blood and suffering. To the east of Inuit Nunangat, Sami (Finland) and Sápmi (Norway) shamans painted their drums with red dye from the sacred alder tree. B. Driscoll-Engelstad, "Dance of the Loon: Symbolism and Continuity in Copper Inuit Ceremonial Clothing," *Arctic Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 37–38; Diamond Jenness, *Material Culture of the Copper Eskimo* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1946), 26; Issenman, *Sinews of Survival*, 188; Francis Joy, "Noaidi Drums from Sápmi, Rock Paintings in Finland and Sámi Cultural Heritage – an Investigation," *Polar Record* 53, no. 2 (March 2017): 200–219.

entirely novel. The unnamed woman in Plate 6.5 went a step further and added a zig-zag rick-rack trim in contrasting colours along the sleeves.

This decorative element hints at how designs changed over time in Arviat: a woman attempts an experimental design element but follows other rules and conventions. Sometimes the design becomes part of the design tradition, while at other times, it makes a relatively short-lived fashion statement, as in the case of rick-rack on a vertical sleeve design. Innovations in design occurred, but changes in fabric tuillis are related to the design shifts seen in caribou versions.

To summarize, Inuit replicated conventions of caribou skin garments when using duffel, suggesting a process of Inuktization. Supporting this assertion is the consistency with which duffel inner tuillis used light colours, while deeper colours were selected for outer tuillis. Sewing taboos and the designs of tuillis and men's atigis and qullitaqs were also carried over. Inuit women, who were the primary pelt-processors and sewers in a community, also maintained the important design elements of parkas when working with duffel. This Inuktization of duffel demonstrates that Inuit sewers integrated the material into their material culture and sustained meanings and values with those garments. The result is suggestive of how Inuit women responded to economic changes by creating familiar clothing with a novel fabric.

6.5. CALICO SKIRTS

While duffel was a standard fabric for parkas, cotton calicos also had a place in Kivallirmiut women's wardrobes in the form of skirts. Existing scholarly analyses tend to frame calico skirts and garments as an example of colonial oppression and the impact of missionaries and Christianity in particular. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence that

these skirts held a very different meaning for Inuit women which deserves some investigation. Skirts and dresses made from trade cloths like calico were present in Arviat by the 1920s (Plate 6.6) and prevalent by the 1930s (see Plate 6.3, Plate 6.4 and Plate 6.5). They continue to be worn by older women today, particularly when wearing their tuillis for special events.³³ However, information about calicos are richer in the northern region of Kivalliq. I discuss the connection between calico and whalers in that region because of many of the children and grandchildren of those Inuit whaling families settled in the southern Kivalliq.

As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, Inuit women worked in the whaling industry, often as seamstresses. They wore skirts and dresses of calico for the dances and celebrations held on whaling ships during the long winters when the boats were trapped in the sea ice (Plate 6.7). Heather Davis-Fisch suggests that women would wear western-style clothing for social events onboard to:

facilitate intercultural sociability and, specifically, interracial sexual relationships. By providing clothing that made Inuit women appear more “white” and teaching them square dances, whalers could ostensibly contain the threat posed by “going native” through miscegenation; however, the clothing also highlighted the women’s racial alterity and may have fetishized the women for the *Qallunaat* men.³⁴

This “white clothing” reading centres the perspective of whalers and their sexual desires and seems to assume that whalers were exclusively white men (Black men also worked on these ships, see Plate 2.3). It also de-emphasizes the motivations of Inuit women who liked these skirts and made them themselves. Inuit perspectives on these clothes show

³³ Generally speaking, the term calico refers to any plain-woven cotton textile that often has a small, colourful, repeated pattern. In this dissertation, calico is used more broadly to refer to all cotton trade cloths, which better reflects the term’s usage in Inuit Nunangat.

³⁴ Davis-Fisch, “Girls in ‘White’ Dresses,” 88.

that calico skirts held vastly different meanings for them than they did for white whalers.

Eugenie Tautoonie Kablutok of Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet) described her Elder's approach to fabric:

[Nivisanaaq] started sewing cloth material for friends and relatives - that's when we started using cloth for clothes. I'm not sure what kind of cloth exactly – I've heard she used to make dresses out of thin cotton. She used to make them on the ship. The captain [George Comer] must have taught her how to make a pattern for dresses, and she started making dresses and skirts. Maybe they had cloth on Baffin Island or in the Arctic Quebec region, but people remember that it was Nivisanaaq who started the new clothing up here.³⁵

These calico skirts were prized possessions of Inuit women, representing the height of fashion in the region at the time. As Tautoonie explained:

The new clothing became really useful. People would keep the same dress from cotton material for about two summers, sometimes more, washing it carefully and making sure there were no tears and trying to keep it as pretty as possible. Then once winter came we'd store them away where nobody would touch them. Only in the summer would we wear cotton skirts again.³⁶

Inuit women valued calico clothes, much as they prized beads. These garments may have been a way to make Inuit women's Indigeneity more acceptable to whalers, but what is more significant is that calico was also considered beautiful, colourful and treasured by women who obtained the fabric through their work as seamstresses and butchers for the whalers.

Though calico skirts were signs of the fashion sensibilities of the early 1900s, the meaning of the garment shifted, at least in some parts of Inuit Nunangat.³⁷ In Inukjuak,

³⁵ Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 121.

³⁶ Eber, *Whalers*, 122.

³⁷ Skirts in Nunavut do not have the same controversy seen in formal or ceremonial settings of First Nations Communities in Canada. Jill Alaers, "Two-Spirited People and Social Work Practice: Exploring the History of Aboriginal Gender and Sexual Diversity," *Critical Social Work* 11, no. 1 (2010); Drew

Nunavik, for example, calico skirts, seem by the mid-twentieth century, to be strongly connected to missionaries and modesty. In the 1950s, for instance, Johnny Inukpuk of Inukjuak explained the reason for wearing skirts in his community:

Our women used to dress something like that, ... only their clothes were made of caribou skin. There were lots more caribou here then than there are now. But, after the missionaries came, they taught our women to cover up their trousers with skirts. Then, after a time, they didn't wear trousers anymore, only bloomers they buy at the store.³⁸

Although for Inukpuk calicos were tied to missionaries and Christianity in Nunavik, Inuit women wore skirts well before missionaries arrived in Hudson Bay, suggesting that skirts were not originally or exclusively tied to Christian custom.

This fabric's meaning has changed drastically over the decades and demonstrates that the Inuktization of fabrics can operate in different ways depending on the context. It serves as an important reminder that a story of fabric and colonialism in one place is not always true for another place. If calico skirts, at least initially, did not have a connection to missionaries and modesty, this association may have developed in the 1940s or later in Arviat. It was not, however, the reason these skirts were first worn in Kivalliq.

6.6. MOTHER HUBBARD PARKAS

Calico fabric is very common in the Western Arctic, particularly for a parka called the Mother Hubbard. Its use is a good case study for understanding how Inuktization has occurred in communities other than Arviat and the Kivalliq. Mother Hubbards are women's parkas made with a sunburst ruff and a ruffled hem (Plate 6.8). The inner parka might be fur or, as is more often the case today, a synthetic insulating layer, and the outer

Hayden Taylor, "The Shame of Skirt Shaming," *Windspeaker Publication*, 2016, <https://perma.cc/S5JJ-YFEE>.

³⁸ Margery Hinds, *School-House in the Arctic* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1958), 146.

parkas are often made from brightly patterned calico fabric. Iñupiaq refer to the outer fabric part of a Mother Hubbard as an atikluk; Yup'ik refer to the same item as a qaspeq. Its history is multi-faceted and has involved Inuit innovation and design. In the Western Arctic, the association between Mother Hubbard parkas and calico is so strong that these parkas are sometimes called kalikus.

Like calico skirts, Mother Hubbards have historical connections to Christianity and bear the name of a modesty garment. They were originally based on a loose-fitting nineteenth-century dress worn in Europe (scandalously) without a corset. However, by the late nineteenth century the Mother Hubbard had become a modest garment that missionaries encouraged women to wear in Hawai'i and elsewhere in the South Pacific. It spread to Alaska with missionaries and was adapted into a parka or parka cover by Iñupiaq, Yup'ik and, in the 1920s, the Inuinait in Inuvialuit.³⁹

Cyd Martin describes how Iñupiaq were under pressure from missionaries to mask the “savage” appearance of fur parkas by wearing the qaspeq:

Women wore them [qaspeqs] indoors without the fur parka underneath. The calico covers gave the appearance of dresses without making Iñupiaq women sacrifice the practicality of the loose fit and shorter length that allowed them to perform their domestic responsibilities. ... The *atikluks* (covers) solved the clothing dilemma from both western and Iñupiaq perspectives.”⁴⁰

Notably, despite the missionary pressures, Yup'ik and Iñupiaq found that the qasepeq functioned in a workable manner for their needs as well. While their research on contemporary Iñupiaq communities and dress is valuable, both Cyd Martin and Janne

³⁹ Sally Helvenston Gray, “Searching for Mother Hubbard: Function and Fashion in Nineteenth-Century Dress,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 48, no. 1 (2014): 59–66; Jill E. Oakes, *Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production*, Mercury Series Paper 118 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991), 24.

⁴⁰ Martin, “Satin Dresses.”

Beate Reitan's works lack geographical and temporal specificity when discussing historical Iñupiaq dress.⁴¹ They argue that missionaries forced Iñupiaq to wear kuspuks. The use of fabric apparently implies that it is exclusively part of a missionary's "civilizing" mission. However, these women were already sewing garments with flour sacks obtained from whalers well before the missionaries arrived, which, I believe suggests that the use of fabrics is more complicated than it seems at first glance.

Certain design aspects of Yup'ik and Iñupiaq fancy parkas (Plate 6.9) appear to have influenced details on the Mother Hubbard parkas made by Inuit women, but the Inuktization of Mother Hubbards is particularly apparent when comparing the curved pockets of the Mother Hubbard to the bands of trimming found on the chest of a fancy parka. The Mother Hubbard's ruffled hemline visually functions in a manner similar to the fur trim at the hem of the fancy parka. Taken together with the other details including the parkas' length, there is evidence that a formal connection exists between fancy parkas and calico Mother Hubbards.⁴²

While visiting Padlei, a fur trade post near Arviat, in 1950, photographer Richard Harrington wrote an entry in his diary that indicates Mother Hubbards had made their

⁴¹ Martin, "Satin Dresses"; Janne Beate Reitan, "Contemporary Vernacular Inuit Clothing as Sustainable Fashion," in *Design for a Sustainable Culture: Perspectives, Practices and Education*, ed. Astrid Skjerven and Janne Beate Reitan, 2017.

⁴² The contemporary kuspuk is an indoor garment, a modified shell of a Mother Hubbard, and functions similarly to a hilapaaq (silapaaq in other Inuktitut dialects), an outer fabric shell worn indoors without its liner. Janne Beate Reitan describes the contemporary use of flour bags and even sofa fabrics to make the outer shell while keeping the inner fur parka protected. Women's kuspuks closely resemble a Mother Hubbard as they often have a similar ruffled hem on the skirt but they are typically shorter in length than a Mother Hubbard Parka. Women's kuspuks are nearly always sewn in boldly patterned fabrics, maintaining their connection to the Mother Hubbards of decades earlier. They may also have a kangaroo pocket trimmed with bias tape or delta braid. The hem on women's kuspuks tends to hit a mid-thigh but may be longer or shorter. Men's kuspuks are straight hem that hits the waist. They are hooded with a kangaroo pocket and may be in a solid fabric or patterned, but overall are more subdued than women's kuspuks. Martin, "Satin Dresses"; Reitan, "Vernacular Inuit Clothing."

way to Arviat by that time.⁴³ Harrington described the dress of his host Padluk, the wife of Pipkaknak and mother of Arviat seamstress and Elder Helen Kunne (Plate 6.10):

Padluk is the only woman I have seen here who wears a voluminous Mother Hubbard missionary-inspired garment over her fur pants. It usually gets very grimy and can stand up by itself. But it must mean some prestige.⁴⁴

His comment shows that Padluk prized the garment enough to keep it despite its apparent heavy use and also that this style was known to Inuit that were supposedly among the most isolated people in the world. He unfortunately opted not to photograph Padluk in her Mother Hubbard, so his passing reference is the only evidence of that particular parka.⁴⁵

There are two possible explanations arise for how Padluk obtained her Mother Hubbard. The wearing of Mother Hubbards might have been encouraged by the northern Canadian Evangelical missionaries Gleason and Katherine Ledyard, who were operating a small school and mission in the area at this time.⁴⁶ However, there is no evidence that the Ledyards had any particular interest in importing the Mother Hubbard parka to Inuit in the Southern Kivalliq.⁴⁷ Additionally, Harrington wrote that Pipkaknak was “a Pagan,” which would suggest that Padluk and her family were not closely associated with any of

⁴³ Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu’naaq Webster, “‘The Local Style Was Too Cold.’ A Fashion Revolution in Copper Inuit Clothing,” in *Sanatujut* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), 97–104.

⁴⁴ Richard Harrington, “Padlei Trip: January - April 1950” (Typed Diary, Toronto, c 1950), 39, MG 31-C5, LAC.

⁴⁵ Martha Langford also mentions Harrington’s choice not to photograph Padluk in her Mother Hubbard. Martha Langford, “Migrant Mothers: Richard Harrington’s Indigenous ‘Madonnas,’” *History of Photography* 40, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 28–48.

⁴⁶ Harrington, “Padlei Trip,” 12.

⁴⁷ Gleason H. Ledyard, *And to the Eskimos* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958).

the Christian missions; Evangelical, Catholic, or Anglican.⁴⁸ It seems most likely that Padluk's Mother Hubbard was either gifted, copied, or traded for, thanks to the trade networks between Inuit of the southern Kivalliq and Inuinait (who had adopted Mother Hubbards by the 1920s).⁴⁹ Driscoll-Engelstad explains that,

Incorporating design features in one's parka from a neighbouring, or better still, far distant community, was a sign of prestige and an indication that one was well-travelled.⁵⁰

The high regard that Padluk had for the garment suggests that it was something special and represented her status as a woman with worldly connections. Plate 6.11 provides photographic evidence that in the southern Kivalliq, Mother Hubbards such as Padluk's, may have been acquired through ancient trade networks with Inuinait of what is today called the Kitikmeot region. This image of a family working a catch of fish was apparently taken in Arviat in 1930. Their garments are distinctly western and suggest that Inuinait travelled hundreds of kilometres southeast to the region around Arviat on occasion even into the first half of the twentieth century.

The existence of these kinds of inter-regional connections reinforces the theory that Padluk's Mother Hubbard emerged out of the patterns of exchange and sharing by seamstresses across the Arctic.⁵¹ The mention of Padluk's parka adds complexity to how

⁴⁸ Harrington, "Padlei Trip," 39.

⁴⁹ Hall, Oakes, and Webster, "Too Cold."

⁵⁰ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, *The Inuit Amautik: I like My Hood to Be Full* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1980), 65.

⁵¹ Archival images from Arviat in the 1970s and 1980s suggest that, although the Mother Hubbard was made and worn, it remained relatively uncommon in Arviat. When worn, it was usually by young girls and infants. Nonetheless, as illustrated above, the garments were made and worn by Arviat residents. Similarly, Dorothy Aglukark sought out a western arctic pattern and sewed a Mother Hubbard parka for her daughter and a western-style parka for her son-in-law for their wedding because her "daughter married a west[erner]." Aglukark, interview.

we can understand the use of fabric parkas in Arviat, where styles from places as distant as Alaska can make their way to Hudson Bay and be integrated into local fashions.

6.7. ZIPPER AND PULLOVER PARKAS 1950S-1990S

6.7.1. Fabric Yapas and Hilapaaqs

Parkas that combined new fabrics were not only found among tuillis and amautis but in men's parkas as well. A photograph taken by filmmaker Douglas Wilkinson during his time in Arviat in the late 1940s shows the use of colourful material for the hilapaaq (outer shells) on men's and children's clothing (Plate 6.12). In this period, the atigi (inner parka) could be caribou fur or duffel, while the hilapaaq was made from a densely woven textile (see Appendix E for a list of fabrics used by Arviaqmiut) and is thus similar to contemporary parkas with a thick inner layer and a thin, water-resistant shell.⁵² The men's fabric yapas (parkas) in this photograph are shorter than the traditional hunting qullitaqs and atigis and do not have splits on the side hems, but they are otherwise very similar to caribou parkas.

The pullover style of men's parka is and was standard across the Canadian Arctic, though small details marked regional differences, especially in the hood design. The hood of the men's fabric parka was typically peaked, a style introduced in Arviat around the 1900s and associated with a hunter's role.⁵³ This peaked hood is visible on several men in Plate 6.12.⁵⁴ Sheri McBride notes that, during her research in Arviat the late 1980s, there was no consensus in Arviat about where this particular hood design originated. The other

⁵² I use the term outer-shell to avoid making any diagnostic claims about the fabric.

⁵³ McBride, "Fabric Hood Production," 68.

⁵⁴ McBride, "Fabric Hood Production," 68.

typical hood design for men's parkas had a small gathering, making a knobbed peak. It was generally reserved for skin parkas and was a design affiliated with Paallirmiut men.

Zippered parkas had developed by the 1940s, but because the zippers allow more cold air to escape and metal zippers freeze to bare skin, they were unsuitable for extended periods out on the land. They are, therefore, more common on women's yapas than on men's, even today. Zippered yapas, for both men and women in the 1960s, followed the by-now standard men's pullover yapa pattern, with the addition of a zipper down the front. These yapas preserve the ever-important two-parka system, with the atigi (insulating layer) covered by the hilapaaq (protective, weather-resistant outer layer). The atigi was frequently decorated with embroidery floss or applique designs. The hilapaaq tended to be comparatively plain, with some decorative tape trimming the waist and sleeves. These yapas were always trimmed with fur around the hood and sometimes around the wrists and hem. Inuit made yapas of this style in communities across the Kivalliq. Later in the mid-twentieth century, the heavier cotton fabrics used for the hilapaaq, such as Grenfell and canvas, were replaced by nylon or cotton-nylon fabrics that are lighter in weight and more waterproof and breathable. By the 1970s, Inuit seamstresses used various proprietary technical fabrics such as *Canadian Mist* (Plate 6.13), *Arctica*, and *Arctic Armour* (See Appendix E).⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Generic polyester-cotton poplin and other blends were all used, and many continue to be available today. McBride notes that cotton drill was by far the most popular fabric during her fieldwork in the 1980s. Forty-nine of the sixty garments she surveyed were drill, followed by canvas (six garments), Polyester-cotton blends (three garments), and Arctic Armour (two garments) McBride, "Fabric Hood Production," 72.

6.7.2. Selling Fabric Parkas

Inuit seamstresses have for centuries made parkas for Qallunaat, beginning with whalers, explorers, missionaries and government agents. The establishment of several co-operatives during the 1960s and 1970s, meant that handmade, machine-sewn parkas were a potential cash source for Inuit women living in communities with few jobs available to them. It is at this time that parkas were for the first time explicitly sewn with the intention of being sold to Qallunaat living in the south.⁵⁶ Making yapas for sale in a commercial context developed alongside the infrastructure of co-operatives and other arts and crafts made for sale to southerners. The history of these parkas deserves a more focused study especially because commercial parkas are increasingly viewed by the general public as items that should be in museum collections.⁵⁷ My preliminary research suggests that these commercial parkas, along with other sewing productions such as wall-hangings, packing dolls, and other cold-weather items like mittens and hats, are not as insignificant as they may seem relative to the high value of carvings, prints, and drawings.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ For an analysis of both the beneficial and detrimental effects of the Co-operative system, see: Lon David Duncombe, "Co-Operatives and Cultural Change in the Canadian Arctic: A Case Study" (MA Thesis, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, 1978); Marybelle Myers, "Inuit Arts and Crafts Co-Operatives in the Canadian Arctic," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16, no. 3 (1984): 132–53.

⁵⁷ A good example is a situation where a commercial, handmade sealskin parka was donated to Goodwill in Edmonton, Alberta. Staff spent at least a year trying to find a museum that would be interested in receiving the parka as a museum donation with little success. I was brought into the conversation by the Edmonton Heritage Council, where I served as a director, after a year of searching. I suggested a few locations, but underscored what curatorial assistant at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Ryan Silke had explained: that the parka, while well-made with some value, but is not a rare object: indeed many museums have fairly large collection of commercial yapas made in the 1950s onwards. That parka was made with the intention to sell. Kate Kyle, "Here's the Backstory on This Inuvialuit Parka Left at an Edmonton Thrift Shop," *CBC News*, January 10, 2020, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/B47U-LLEF>; Travis McEwan, "Goodwill Plans to Preserve Sealskin Coat Donated to Edmonton Thrift Store," *CBC News*, January 7, 2020, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/KZ77-P623>; Jasmine Robinson to Edmonton Heritage Council, "Inuvialuit Parka - Goodwill Industries of Alberta," January 11, 2021.

⁵⁸ There are no scholarly publications on the history and development of these popular parkas, which should be addressed. However, the history of co-operatives and the commercialization of Inuit crafts is beyond this dissertation's scope, which focuses more closely on parka-making for family and the

By the 1970s, the hemlines of women's urban yapas of duffel and a hilapaaq had lengthened. I have been unable to determine with any certainty whether this change came about internally or if it was influenced by parkas often called Yukon Parkas or James Bay Parkas in southern Canada. A preliminary examination of archival material suggests that the coats were first designed for commercial production in Yukon Territory.⁵⁹ These fabric parkas, originally made by co-operatives in several Arctic communities, are designed for both men and women.⁶⁰ They are generally zippered A-line coats, knee-length or longer, trimmed with fur and ornamented with embroidery floss and appliquéd cloth cut-outs of northern animals and scenes. They were sold in the south by companies such as James Bay Parkas, Yukon Indian Arts and Crafts Co-operative Ltd., and the Inuvik Parka Enterprise. Alongside this production, Inuit women made similar parkas for the Hudson's Bay Company and Eaton's.⁶¹ Although these parkas never became an income-generator to the same degree that carvings and prints were, they were trendy in the south among Qallunaat and worn by Inuit in the north as well.⁶²

"cottage industry" developing in recent years. However, there is a very rich literature on the commercial production of carvings, prints and drawings. See, for just a few examples: Christopher Paci, "Commercialization of Inuit Art: 1954-1964," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 20, no. 1 (1996): 45-62; Vorano, Norman, *Inuit Prints, Japanese Inspiration: Early Printmaking in the Canadian Arctic* (Gatineau: Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation, 2011); Anne Bissonnette and Christina Williamson, "In Mother's Hood: Inuit Packing Dolls of Taloyoak," *Artifacts in the Exhibition* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011), <https://clothingtextiles.ualberta.ca/2018/06/07/virtual-exhibition-catalogue/>.

⁵⁹ A careful examination of the Yukon Indian Arts and Crafts Co-operative Ltd. fonds located at the Yukon Archives and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism fonds at the NWT archives would be necessary to develop a more complete history of these parkas. However, a first glance through the finding aids shows that this style of commercially-made parkas originated in Yukon. The article by Jessica Davey-Qantick also confirms this. Jessica Davey-Qantick, "The Art and Science of Staying Warm," *Up Here*, December 2019, <https://perma.cc/C3XY-J66H>.

⁶⁰ Nathalie Atkinson, "Parka Life," *The Globe and Mail*, February 14, 2017, <https://perma.cc/4QPH-GZUL>.

⁶¹ Davey-Qantick, "Staying Warm."

⁶² Atkinson, "Parka Life"; Davey-Qantick, "Staying Warm"; John C. Williams Consultants Ltd., "A Business and Marketing Study and Plan for Inuit and Dene Arts and Crafts," 1985, 66-68; Lutra Associates, "N.W.T. Arts and Crafts Survey- Summary Report" (Arts and Crafts Division, Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Government of the N.W.T, 1990), 7.

A 1985 catalogue from the Churchill-based Arctic Trading Company provides some sense of the commercial parka's cost, fabric, and style (Plate 6.13). The inner parka was made from wool duffel and lined with silk. The outer shell was made of *Canadian Mist* and retailed for around \$450 (equivalent to about \$965 today). A "designer parka" by Veronica Manalik of Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet) was also offered for sale at nearly double the cost: \$890 (\$1,910 in today's terms). While made of similar materials, it was a one-of-a-kind garment depicting walruses wearing amautis and atigis. These parkas come in and out of fashion in the south and are now often resold in vintage shops, or through online retailers such as eBay and Etsy at anywhere from \$150 to \$900, depending on the condition, fur trim and design. While most sewers were not able to make a full-time income sewing these parkas, their sewing skills were still evidently in some demand and seamstresses could sell their work to companies that sold them through catalogues.

Homemade versions of these commercial parkas were made and worn in Arviat in the 1970s and 80s, and their fabric and construction seem to be clearly connected to earlier yapas made in the 1960s and before. These parkas were made at home to be worn by family members, saving money when compared to store-bought parkas. In Plate 6.14, Arviat Elder Melanie Tabvahtah is pictured wearing such a parka in 1979, fully trimmed in white arctic fox fur with an arctic hare appliqué design on the chest. Similarly, Plate 6.15 shows a group of young Arviaqmiut from the early 1970s, including Elder and seamstress Rhoda Akpaliapik Karetak's daughter, Nancy Lindell-Karetak (the young girl on the left). Karetak's daughter is seen wearing red trousers, rubber boots and a navy-

blue parka that resembles the commercial parkas sold in the south.⁶³ The characteristic pockets are outlined with delta trim starting at the bust or shoulders and sweeping to the hips, as seen in the top left image in Plate 6.13, and may be an interpretation of Iñupiaq and Yup'ik design.⁶⁴ The girl with her hood up wears a cobalt-blue parka with a slight A-line silhouette, pointed hood, and white fox trim that is typical of Arviat and Salliq in the 1960s and into the 1970s.⁶⁵

6.8. CONTEMPORARY TUILLIS AND BAFFIN-STYLE AMAUTIS

Parka designs have altered to match the needs of Inuit living in a settlement, and this shift is especially true in the case of the tuilli. The concept of what a “traditional” garment might look like has shifted over the years in response to economic and social changes. The most important constant is the exchange of ideas and designs that are a treasured part of sewing’s living tradition. Inuit women’s perspectives on the changes of the early twentieth century are not well recorded, but their approach to material and economic change is stitched into the fabrics they Inukitized. The most dramatic change in Arviat’s history of parka design is in the traditional tuilli, which altered from a caribou atigi and qullitaq to a beaded caribou one. Further changes resulted in the adoption of a duffel atigi and ultimately to a fabric hilapaaq. Plate 6.16 shows several examples of contemporary tuillis intended for use during indoor special events, such as these students from Nunavut

⁶³ Rubber boots and kamikpa (duffel socks, or boot liners) are classic spring weather footwear and the subject of many jokes despite their practicality in spring time.

⁶⁴ Master seamstress Marie Meade provides an in-depth examination of the variety of significant parkas made by Yup'ik seamstresses. Marie Meade, “Sewing to Maintain the Past, Present and Future,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 14, no. 1–2 (1990): 229–39.

⁶⁵ When looking at the old photographs on a Facebook page, contemporary seamstresses on Facebook took inspiration from the latter parka in particular, imagining a version they could make for young girls in their families today. Gene Chovin, “Private Correspondence,” November 20, 2020; Gene Chovin, Facebook, January 5, 2013, <https://perma.cc/RE9A-AMFZ>.

Sivuniksavut.⁶⁶ Inuit sewers create designs that speak to their contemporary world and experiences living in Arviat.

Arviaqmiut still make the traditional designs, but tuillis are only worn in the community today for special occasions. Arviat seamstress Joy Suluk said that “there are some [people] that has them and they wear them to carry their babies. Not, not very many. [But] I know they ... have them.”⁶⁷ My research coordinator, and Suluk’s granddaughter, Nuatie Aggark wryly noted to me that tuillis are worn “for the tourists.”⁶⁸ Women also explained that they no longer carry their children in tuillis because that the tuilli style could be uncomfortable or even painful when packing a child.⁶⁹ Napayok noted that the tuilli could be uncomfortable compared to the amautis her mother knew from Mittimatalik: “I know her pattern doesn’t hurt when packing a child. But other ones, it hurts...”⁷⁰ Joy Suluk also mentioned this problem, adding that it can be challenging to cut and sew the tuilli in a way that does not choke the wearer:

Our style is what we call tuilli. With flaps in the front and the back with fringes and big shoulders and long hood. That’s the style that we wore – what my grandparents wore, and I wore once with one of my kids, but – they pull. If they’re made improperly, they choke you. They have a certain style – like a certain way that you can make it [so] that it doesn’t do that and [I] never got the hang of it. Sorry!⁷¹

The margin for error in cutting the tuilli is minimal, especially compared to the Baffin-styles. Related to this issue of comfort is the practicality of the size of the amaut (pouch)

⁶⁶ The result of this conference, is, in part this edited collection: Carol Payne et al., eds., *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2022).

⁶⁷ Joy Pameok Suluk, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 6, 2018.

⁶⁸ Christina Williamson, “Field Notes” (Arviat, February 16, 2018).

⁶⁹ Lena Napayok, interview by Christina Williamson, audio and video, February 21, 2018.

⁷⁰ Napayok, interview.

⁷¹ Suluk, interview.

of a tuilli. Seamstress Martha Akatsiak mentioned that “maybe the carrying pack was too small, yeah I think so.”⁷² Arviat seamstress Kukik Baker also noted the limitations of the amaut in the tuilli. She told me: “the pouch is much smaller and higher up on your back.”⁷³ The smaller amaut means that children can only be carried in the amauti until they are a year or so old. Plate 6.17 shows how a contemporary caribou tuilli (by Elizabeth Enowyak) made in the historic Paallirmiut style sits higher on the back compared to the large, low Baffin-style pouches (Plate 6.18 and Plate 6.19).

For the practical purpose of packing of a child, Arviaqmiut prefer styles of amauti-- now a generic term for any parka with a pouch for packing a child-- that originate from Qikiqtani (Baffin Island), rather than the local tuilli amauti. In Arviat in 2018, when I was undertaking my interviews with seamstresses, there were two amauti styles most prevalently used by Arviaqmiut: the akuliq style and the short-skirt style. The akuliq refers to the akuq, the back tail of the parka, which has a long, rounded back hem, seen in Plate 6.20, and is similar to the fur and duffel styles seen in Baffin Island communities such as Kinngait (Plate 6.18). The short-skirt amauti is based on the angijurtaujaq, shown in Plate 6.21, was first made in the late nineteenth-century in whaling centres around Ikpiarjuk (Arctic Bay) and Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet).⁷⁴ This version of the Baffin-style amauti has an A-line hem that extends to the knee (Plate 6.19).

⁷² Martha Akatsiak, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 21, 2018.

⁷³ Kukik Baker, interview by Christina Williamson, video and audio, February 21, 2018.

⁷⁴ Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, “The Inuit Parka: A Preliminary Survey” (MA Thesis, Carleton University, 1983), 148; Therkel Mathiassen, *Material Culture of the Iglulik Eskimo*, vol. 6, Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24 (Copenhagen: Gyldendalsky Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1928), 183.

Seamstresses provided several reasons why they prefer Baffin-style amautis for daily use. Some women I interviewed noted that the designs are graceful: Arviat sewers Joy Suluk and Kukik Baker both noted that they found the akuq style to be especially beautiful thanks to the curved sleeves and elegant, scalloped designs on the akuq and kiniq.⁷⁵ The Baffin-style hoods are broad and, to use Manitok Thompson's words, they have a "happy point," meaning the hood point is perky, slightly hooked, and stands up on its own.⁷⁶ In contrast to Baffin-style hoods, tuilli hoods are rounded with a small face opening and no peak (tuilli hoods are clearly in Plate 6.4 and Plate 6.17). Other seamstresses mentioned that modern transportation has made shorter, lighter styles more practical. For example, the fringes of the tuilli can get in the way when travelling on skidoos, ATVs and trucks.⁷⁷ Napoyak noted that "there's trucks now, so they are making thinner amautis now, and shorter ones."⁷⁸ Historically, when travelling by sled or working at camp, the long skirt of a tuilli was useful to block wind, protect an infant, use as an apron, and add an extra layer of insulation when seated. Today, those needs are not as great, and the change to using Baffin-style amautis reflects these new circumstances. As a result, tuillis are used for daily childcare by few, if any, Inuit in Arviat. Instead, contemporary tuillis are reserved for special occasions and are more often made of cloth or duffel than caribou skin. The tuilli is by no means a forgotten style, and people proudly offer their contemporary perspectives on this garment.

⁷⁵ Suluk, interview; Baker, interview.

⁷⁶ Thompson, interview.

⁷⁷ Suluk, interview.

⁷⁸ Napayok, interview.

Increasing possibilities for travel between distant communities by air may have also influenced parka fashions. As for Padluk, the Padlei matriarch who owned a Mother Hubbard parka, wearing a garment with different regional styles represents worldliness for other Inuit as well.⁷⁹ During the 1970s, air travel allowed Inuit to traverse the great distances between communities and to travel to or settle in different communities. Influential individuals from other regions, such as Elizabeth Muckpah and her husband Rev. James (Jimmy) Muckpah, settled in Arviat. The family moved to Arviat from Mittimatalik in the 1970s, and Muckpah's daughter, Lena Napayok, explained in an understated way that "maybe the Baffin-styles started with my mom. I know Mom sewed -hela- [um] she used to make amautis too. Maybe that style started from there."⁸⁰ Muckpah was recognized in the community as an excellent seamstress, and the wife of an Inuk Reverend would have had an elevated social position.

The shift from using tuillis either in caribou or fabric to using fabric amautis that are either in the akuliq-style or short-style shows that Inuit women's tastes and requirements have changed and the result was a general adoption of Qikiqtani-style amautis over tuillis for day to day use. Tuillis are not forgotten, but are generally used in different contexts and typically not for packing children. The major point is that a garment designed specifically for childcare continues to be a prominent parka type in Arviat and other communities in Nunavut, demonstrating that it remains a deeply valued and valuable garment for caregivers of young children.

6.9. RESURGENCE AND YAPAS

⁷⁹ Driscoll-Engelstad, *I like My Hood to Be Full*, 48.

⁸⁰ Napayok, interview.

Although it seemed that homemade parkas were made less frequently in the 1990s than in decades prior; seamstresses never stopped making yapas for themselves and their families. During that decade, store-bought coats were most prevalent among teens. Judy Hall and Jill Oakes found that “young people prefer short-waisted, mass-produced jackets.”⁸¹ These bomber jackets are a style that continues to be popular with young men today. There was some concern that homemade yapas would be usurped completely by store-bought jackets. Yet even store-bought jackets were always modified, with “wolf, fox tails, and a few commercial furs” to trim the hoods.⁸² This modification suggests that even Inuit disinclined towards sewing need to ensure that store-bought jackets were properly trimmed with fur. In the twenty first century, Arviat men and women’s yapas look quite different from the duffel-lined parkas from previous decades, but home-sewing never stopped in communities.

In the past ten years, there has been an increased interest in sewing and design, and there is a renaissance in homemade parkas. This yapa resurgence is connected to a larger movement across Canada through which Indigenous people are expressing pride in their heritage and culture through the revitalization of traditional skills and practices.⁸³ In Arviat, this is reflected in Inuit women’s interest in learning to sew fabric yapas and to process and sew hides. Young women in Kivalliq are among the many Inuit women

⁸¹ Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*, 110.

⁸² Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*, 110.

⁸³ Jeff Cornassel and Cheryl Bryce, “Practicing Sustainable Self-Determination: Indigenous Approaches to Cultural Restoration and Revitalization,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 18, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2012): 151–62.

leading the way in Inuit cultural resurgence that takes the form of creative and historically informed parkas.

Young Inuit designers are making a living by creating yapas to sell to both fellow Inuit and southern buyers. The most nationally famous and popular designer/seamstress is Victoria Kakuktinniq, owner of Iqaluit-based Victoria's Arctic Fashions (VAF).⁸⁴ Originally from Kangiqliniq, Kakuktinniq began to sell her parkas over Facebook in 2013. Kakuktinniq's popular designs blend the contemporary and the traditional. Her signature parka silhouette is fitted and form-flattering and was initially designed with an asymmetrical zipper, a popular style on coats in the early 2010s (Plate 6.22). Instead of a straight hemline around the waist, seen in duffel yapas, the hemline drops down in the front and back and curves up at the waist with a band of contrasting fabric or sealskin, much like a modified amauti. The hemline makes an apparent reference to the akuq and kiniq designs of amautis and tuillis. As with any other yapa, Kakuktinniq adds bias tape trim on the sleeves and waistline and trims the hood with arctic fox, maintaining the yapa's connection to more traditional designs, she began experimenting with a more exaggerated akuq style and uploaded the first photograph of that style on her Facebook Page in April of 2016 (Plate 6.23): this early version became the "Qablu" ("eyebrow") design in her 2018/2019 collection.

Since then, Kakuktinniq has expanded her yapa designs and some designs have an even more apparent reference to amautis. Kakuktinniq's fabric parkas retailed for \$620 and had an akuq hemline that falls just above the knees. Her Aagjuk parka (retailing for

⁸⁴ Beth Brown, "This Iqaluit-Based Designer Can Hand-Make a Luxe Parka in 2.5 Hours," Magazine, *Flare* (blog), February 28, 2018, <https://perma.cc/74VM-UERN>.

\$3400) is made from harp seal and even more explicitly references the amauti. Instead of the three-piece hood, this hood has the classic peak seen on historical and contemporary Baffin-style amautis. Two black sealskin bands match the qakhuvaut (finger woven amauti tie) that go diagonally across the chest and under the arms. Through their explicit references to amautis, all these designs play strongly into a vision of Inuit femininity that appeals to women without children or whose children have grown.

The use of sealskin on fabric yapas is an important feature of Kakuktinniq's designs. Its inclusion is a significant political act and one example of the younger generation's response to the historical issue around the impact of anti-commercial seal hunt activism. Kakuktinniq says: "I'm not hesitant to use [animal skins] at all. It's part of who I am. Especially the sealskin."⁸⁵ As is carefully explored in Althea Arnaquq-Baril's documentary *Angry Inuk*, the commercial seal hunt protests have significant financial benefits for certain environmentalist non-profit organizations who promote the false idea that seals are an endangered animal, to the detriment of Inuit commercial sealing. These protests also pave the way for extractive industries in these communities by endangering wildlife and thus eliminating work for Inuit commercial hunters. Kakuktinniq's commercial use of the sealskin is a provocation to environmentalist groups who intentionally undermine the commercial viability of seal hunting for Inuit.⁸⁶ In this context Kakuktinniq's work is a project of reclamation and pride in Inuit history, aesthetics and sewing heritage.

⁸⁵ Brown, "Luxe Parka."

⁸⁶ Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, *Angry Inuk*, Digital, Documentary (National Film Board of Canada, 2016), https://www.nfb.ca/film/angry_inuk/; George Wenzel, "The Harp-Seal Controversy and the Inuit Economy," *Arctic* 31, no. 1 (January 1, 1978).

Other seamstresses have also embraced the curved hemline rather than the straight hemline used since the 1960s on women's zippered yapas. In Arviat, several women have also designed their versions of yapas that reference women's amautis. Chelsey St. John, the owner of Sophia's Outerwear in Arviat, released her new akuq design in March 2018, describing it as a Baffin-style akuliq amauti style without the amaut (Plate 6.24).⁸⁷ The front of the yapa has a design in bias tape that matches the decoration of the kiniq and akuq, adding further amauti reference. St. John includes a small drawstring that sits below the bust, similar to the qakhuvaut used to hold up an infant in an amaut. The hood is peaked like the amauti hood but smaller because it lacks an actual amaut. The shoulders are narrow and have straight sleeves appropriate for a yapa that is not meant to amaq (pack) a child. Likewise, Kayleigh's Fashion (KF), formerly operated by Kristy King and Chantel Kablutsiak, developed a yapa around the same time that Kakuktinniq posted about her first akuq yapa in 2016 (Plate 6.25).⁸⁸ In contrast to St. John's akuliq style, KF opted to reference the traditional tuillis of Kivalliq. The parka has a curved hem and a cord at the shoulders that ties around the mid-back, referencing the qakhuvaut of a functional amauti. Using bias tape, King and Kablutsiak outline the curved epaulette-like shoulders of the tuilli. The hood has a pleated hood pattern, one of the two popular designs for Baffin-style amautis in Arviat, and not the hood style of a traditional tuilli. The hood is also substantially smaller on the tuilli-style yapa because there is no packed child. Instead, the designers added vertical designs with fabric or bias tape along the

Chelsey St. John, "Akuk Jacket. ☐ for the Women Who Don't Have Small Children to Amaq, Akulik Style Jacket!," Facebook Page, *Sophia's Outerwear by Chelsey St. John* (blog), March 6, 2018, <https://perma.cc/EWM2-YJFA>.

⁸⁸ Kristy King and Chantel Kablutsiak, "New to Our Page?," Facebook Page, Kayleigh's Fashion, December 6, 2018, <https://perma.cc/5TQS-PUUK>.

upper back, and a single pleat in the middle of the back serves as a reference to the pouch. In 2019, these fabric parkas were selling for around \$650; leather versions of these yapas were more expensive.

KF's designs embrace the surging interest in selling parkas to Inuit women who want a garment that is contemporary in its feel while also referencing traditional parkas of their communities. These new amauti-inspired garments are part of the tradition of adjusting a woman's parka to reflect her stage in life. As shown in Chapter 3, women's and girls' tuillis were modified by changing the size of the amaut, the length of the akuq and the breadth of the shoulders to reflect a woman's age. The contemporary fabric yapas reference the amauti without including the amaut, suiting women who may not have small children or who work outside the home.

Compared to women's parkas, contemporary men's yapas tend to be of two types and differ from historical designs in less dramatic ways than women's parkas. The more traditional men's yapa is a pullover style, which is generally best suited to hunting. It might have a large front pocket with a top flap that can keep items like binoculars and sunglasses at hand while travelling by snowmobile (Plate 6.26).⁸⁹ Unlike women's yapas, men's parkas are rarely, if ever, trimmed with arctic fox: instead, racoon, wolverine and wolf are the preferred trims because these furs shed frost better than fox, an essential factor when spending extended time outdoors. The more urban version of the style yapa is a bomber-style that reaches the hips, often with elastic storm cuffs around the hips and wrists. This design is shorter than the yapas worn in the 1940s and 1950s in Arviat. If

⁸⁹ Some examples of modern hunting parkas can be seen in this article. Jim Bell, "Ottawa Spends \$1.23 Million on Arviat's Young Hunters Program," *Nunatsiaq News*, February 2020, Online edition, <https://perma.cc/2CCG-Y5LB>.

zippered, men's yapas typically have pockets on the side for hands. Arviat seamstresses often design yapas for boys to look like hockey jerseys or signal the wearers' interests (Plate 6.27). These flourishes include camouflage fabric for the aspiring hunters, homemade appliques of superheroes for little boys, as well as TV characters and name brands such as Nike, Tonka and John Deere.⁹⁰

6.10. TENSIONS BETWEEN BRANDS AND TRADITIONS

Inuit Creative Productions is a popular Facebook group created by Susie Napayok (Lena Napayok's sister-in-law) that showcases Inuit sewing. One of this group's central rules is that the works shown cannot have any logos or advertisements. Susie Napayok states why she views these as intrusions into her culture (Plate 6.28):

A friendly reminder that I won't post anything to do with hockey teams, Marvel comic book heros [sic] or anything that represents the Qalunaaq western world logos or advertisements. Please remember that because although I don't like to do it, I do remove pix depicting the merchandise or the commercializations [sic] of items that don't relate to the Inuit arts and crafts. I do see a lot of hockey logoed parkas and as much as I love them, I won't post them so please remember this site tries to represent our cultures and our past, our current and the trending styles we are making! Qujannamiik with my apologies!⁹¹

Napayok articulates a tension that many makers have expressed between traditional craft and southern culture. She understands Inuit craft and art production to be incompatible with commercial imagery such as team logos and fashion brands. While she believes in maintaining traditional skills and styles, she also affirms that the works posted on the Facebook group represent current trends and fashions in the Canadian Arctic. Notably, Napayok and many others draw a firm line between authentic and traditional.

⁹⁰ Little girls might have ulu designs, Disney princesses (characters from *Frozen*, Anna and Elsa are especially popular, for obvious reasons), and the garments are often pink, purple or light blue.

⁹¹ Napayok, Suzie, Facebook Group, Inuit Creative Productions, January 11, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Inuitwomen/permalink/605372206261060/>.

The distinction between western intrusions and authentic Inuit craft seems to have more to do with how recent the influence is. After all, fabric and beads are now considered components of Inuit traditional art and craft but were novel in their time. The discomfort with changing fashions is not new. Jill Oakes wrote in the late 1980s that:

Experienced seamstresses are the educators, they also are generally very traditional and conservative compared to the younger women. Elders ensure that the information they pass on accurately depicts the way their elders taught them. It is the “right way” to measure, cut and sew.⁹²

In contrast,

Young seamstresses readily adopt new fashions from other communities, and a few actually mix features from several groups. These new fashions are made from fabric rather than skins and are held in high esteem by the younger population.⁹³

This generational tension between sewing and designing parkas the “right” way has probably been present in the community for a long time. We can infer from archival photographs that in earlier times, Elders may have been perturbed by the introduction of calico and duffel, although younger women adopted these fabrics and took up elaborate beadwork. Similarly, in much more recent times, photographs showing new fashions in fabrics, adornments and designs show these fashions worn by younger men and women almost exclusively, rather than by Elders. Arguably, the integration of logos reflects the particular interests and cultural realities of Inuit today, just as beaded ships, stars, ships, and high heels had been beadwork subjects 130 years before.⁹⁴

⁹² Jill E. Oakes, “Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production” (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 1988), 286.

⁹³ Oakes, “Inuit Skin Clothing,” 286.

⁹⁴ Hockey, in particular, is important to many young Inuit. Jordin Tootoo, the first Inuit NHL player, is a hero to many Inuit youth, and hockey serves as a healthy, positive way of engaging with the community. Hockey tournaments allow youth to travel to different communities and meet others. Many people attend the tournaments throughout the year, whether their child or friend is playing or not.

6.11. CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown the connections between fabric parkas and the fur garments discussed in Chapter 4. It demonstrated a tradition of Inuktization by tracing the history of fabrics used during the past century and highlighted Inuit women's material responses to economic change in their communities. I take a material culture approach to analyze the clothing they produced, especially parkas, as evidence of Inuit women's perspectives and their responses to colonialism in their communities that are not been recorded in official archives.

More than any other fabric in Arviat, duffel represents a direct analogue to animal skins in Inuit clothing construction. Several seamstresses confirmed this, including Elizabeth Enowyak, Joy Suluk and Manitok Thompson. Inuit women designed duffel tuillis in a manner identical to their caribou skin tuilli, both in terms of how they observed taboos associated with caribou and used duffel in the same way they used light and dark caribou fur.

Other non-duffel yappakas were first integrated into Inuit material culture in tuillis and men's atigis. The changing use of yappaka reflects the social and economic changes that Arviaqmiut experienced. Fabric was both more convenient and comfortable in heated houses, but its adoption also reflected the restricted access to caribou. Calico skirts had a long-standing history in the Kivalliq region. Calicos used for Mother Hubbards are the traditional parkas in Western Arctic and Alaska, and there is evidence that they were known in Arviat by the 1950s, suggesting historical trade connections between the Kivalliq and Inuvialuit still existed despite settlement and colonial policies. The western influence is also seen in James Bay or Yukon Parkas, which were also worn and made in Arviat. Though the production of these parkas in co-operatives was primarily intended

for southern buyers, Inuit in Arviat also purchased or made similar ones at home. This was the first time that Inuit-made parkas for Qallunaat were sent south, rather than made for visiting Qallunaat.

Finally, Inuit sewers use technical fabrics in their yapa design for their lightweight and warm qualities. These fabrics attest (as did duffel and calico in earlier decades) to a long-standing Inuit tradition of adaptability. Historical parka designs such as tuillis and men's hunting atigis continue to influence design in yapas, while several innovative designers are inventing new designs inspired by those earlier garments in Arviat and the Kivalliq region. Seamstresses have embraced new fabric technologies, Inuktizing those fabrics while maintaining essential connections to their heritage.

6.12. PLATES



Plate 6.1 Dorothy Aglukark showing caribou leg skin in her shed. The mound behind her was mostly caribou skins she had tanned herself. Photograph by Christina Williamson, 26 February 2018.



Plate 6.2 Mary Nowya and Ooyopik with her child. According to the note on the back of the photograph from Winifred Petchey Marsh: “Eskimo girl Mary Nowya in finery of beautifully panelled Koolitak + white fur ‘streamers’ the other, “Ooyopik’ in a more modified version.” Near Arviat, c. 1930s. Photograph by Donald Marsh. Library Archives of Canada/Donald Marsh Fonds/e010984429, accession no. 1981-238, box 3934, no. 107.



**Plate 6.3 Three women and three children standing near a building, Arviat.
Photograph by Donald Marsh, Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin
Marsh fonds/a204714, accession 1978-039, nitrate 19, PA-204714.**

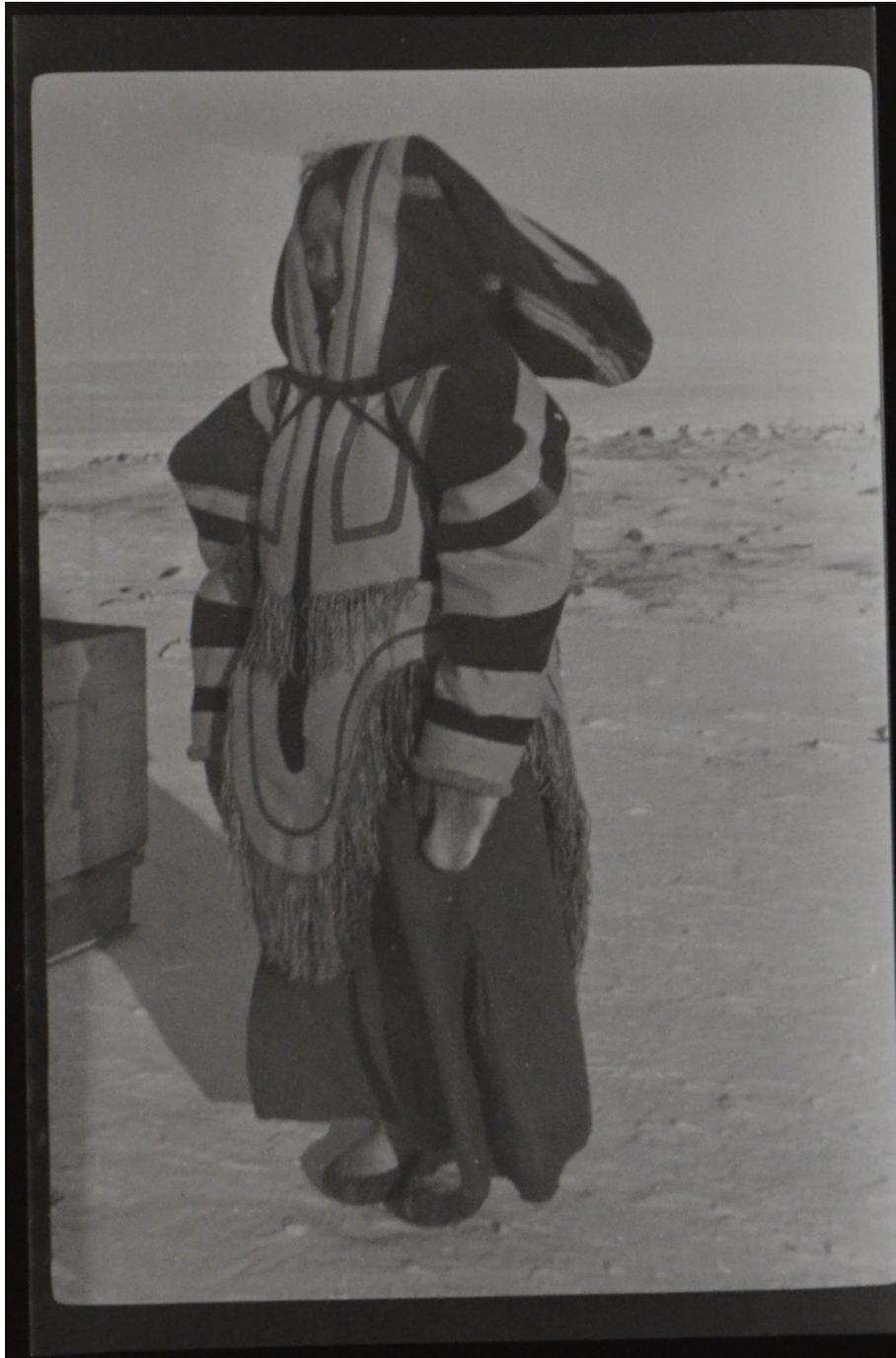


Plate 6.4 According to Winifred Petchey Marsh: “This coat is made of pure wool fabric. Many white and red stroud. Coats are panelled identically as fur counterparts.” Photograph by Donald Marsh, Library Archives of Canada/Donald Marsh Fonds/e010984470, accession no. 1981-238, box 3934, b. 25.



Plate 6.5 Unnamed woman probably packing the Marsh's daughter. Photograph by Donald Marsh. Library and Archives Canada/Donald Benjamin Marsh fonds/e004922735, accession no. 1978-039, no. 59.



Plate 6.6 Inuit connected to Padley Post from the 1920s, note the presence of sunglasses, calico skirts and blankets. Hudson's Bay Company Archives, 1987/363-E-220/2.



Plate 6.7 Inuit and Crew on board the Neptune at Cape Fullerton. Photograph by J.D. Moodie, 15 December 1903. Library and Archives Canada/George M. Dawson fonds/c001817.



Plate 6.8 Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wasley, July 18 1971. Courtesy of the University of Alaska Anchorage, Archives and Special Collections Consortium Library, Ruth A.M. Schmidt papers, UAA-HMC-0792.



Plate 6.9 Unnamed woman in her Fancy Parka, July 4th, 1962 Photograph by Steve McCutcheon. Courtesy of the Anchorage Museum, McCutcheon Collection, B1990.14.5.AkNative.15.6.



Plate 6.10 Pipkanak's family: L-R Pukiluk and Kinaalik. Front Row: Pipkknak, Helen Kunne, Nanak and Padluk. Library and Archives Canada/Credit: Richard Harrington/Richard Harrington fonds/a147241 © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada.

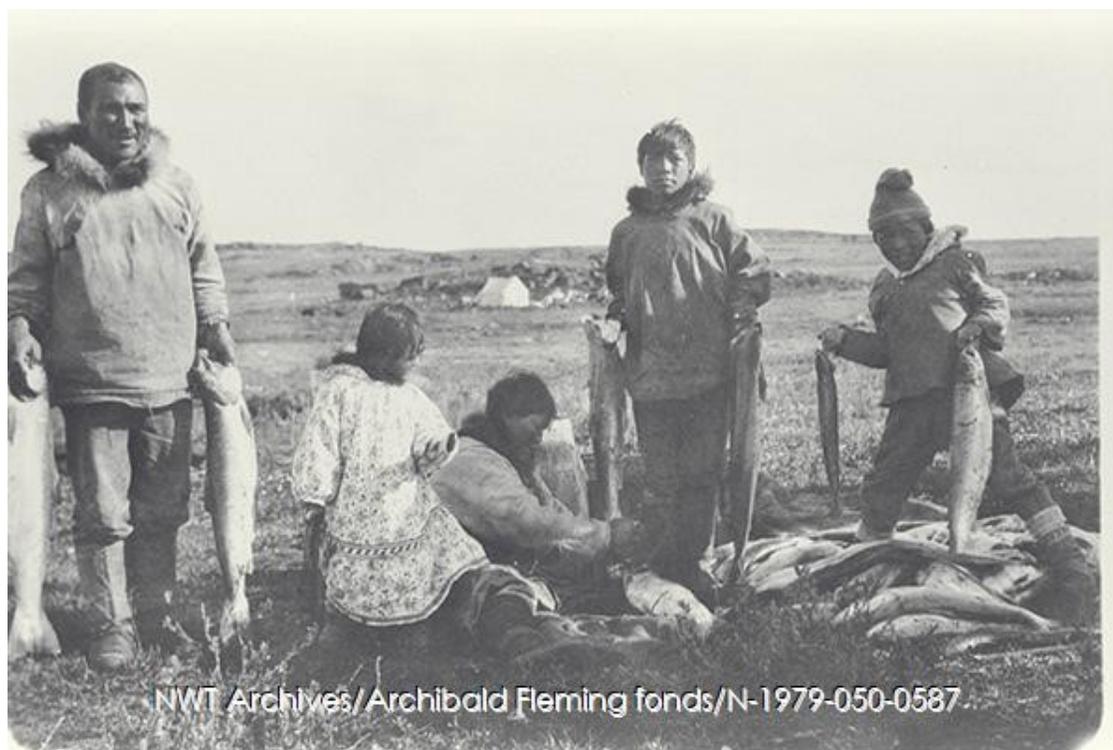


Plate 6.11 NWT Inuit from Arviat skinning fish, c. 1930, GNWT Archives, Archibald Fleming fonds, N-1979-050: 0587.



**Plate 6.12 Christmas time in Arviat c. 1948. Photograph by Douglas Wilkinson.
GNWT Archives, N-1979-051: 17965.**

INUIT ARCTIC PARKAS



The Yukon Ladies' Parka. New, fitted, extra long, stylish and warm. Consists of two layers, each attractively finished. Inner layer is 100% wool duffel with satin lining. Features hand embroidery, pockets. Wolf trim on bottom and on hood, fur pompoms at the ends of the hood laces. Outer shell is windproof and waterproof Canadian Mist Nylon embroidered with white leather Arctic figures and animals. Also with co-ordinated two-way zipper. sizes 6-20.



Rankin Inlet Designer Parka. This original parka was designed and hand decorated by the famous Inuit artist Veronica Manalik. Intricately detailed with scenes of Inuit legends using fine yarns and wools. Limited production. Comes with matching Canadian Mist shell. Hand made in Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.
5 RAN 52 \$ 890.00

outer shell/inner coat
Burgundy/Burgundy
Rose/Rose
French Blue/Royal Blue
Red/Red
5 YUK 18

Teal/Turquoise
Wedgewood Blue/Light Blue
Navy Blue/White
Black/Black

\$ 460.00



Ladies' Inuvik Parka With the special Delta braid trim. This parka is specially designed to give room to move. It is not as fitted as our Yukon parka and more forgiving to our extra bumps and bulges. Extra long, stylish, and warm. Two coats in one. Inner coat is 100% 32 oz. wool duffel with satin lining. Blue Fox trim on hood and bottom, embroidered pockets and bottom. Outer shell is co-ordinated Canadian Mist windproof and waterproof, decorated with Inuvik's special Delta braid. Both inner and outer coat come with special 2-way zippers and deep pockets. A beautiful parka, hand made by Canada's Inuit. Available in 8 co-ordinated colours.

5 INU 97 \$ 450.00

Men's Inuvik Parka. Same description as above Inuvik Parka. Men's parka is shorter in length.

5 INU 99 \$ 450.00

Choose from 8 colour co-ordinated combinations for both Inuvik parkas.

outer shell/inner coat
1. Camel/Chocolate Brown
2. Burgundy/Burgundy
3. Navy Blue/White
4. Red/Red
5. Navy/French Navy
6. Dark Brown/Tumbleweed
7. Light Blue/Blue Bell
8. Royal Blue/French Navy

Plate 6.13 The Arctic Trading Company catalogue 1985.



Plate 6.14 Melanie Tabvetah on her three-wheeler, 1979. Photograph by Ken Bell, LAC R5529-66-5-F vol. 220, number 61, e010948577. © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada.



Plate 6.15 Photograph of school children in Arviat early 1970s. L-R Nancy Lindell Karetak in navy blue on the far left, Louisa Issumatarjuak Pingushat in the centre with the cream coat, Paul Akaralak Aliktiluk in the blue parka with shearling trip and Paul Issakiark in the red coat at the front right of the frame. Courtesy of Gene Chovin.



Plate 6.16 Manitok Thompson, in her contemporary Aivilingmiut tuilli is speaking to an audience at the Library and Archives Canada for the Conference, *Healing Journey, Project Naming at 15*. Thompson is talking about the design details on Nunavut Sivuniksavut student, Brendan Mannik's hilapaaq (Qamani'tuaq). Jillian Kaviok (Arviat), Cathy Pikuyaq (Sanirajak) and Candace Barnabas (Ikpiarjuk)

look on. Photograph by Tom Thompson, March 2017. © Library and Archives Canada.



Plate 6.17 Elizabeth Enowyak's caribou skin tuilli. Arviat. Photograph taken by Christina Williamson, 2018.



Plate 6.18 Mary Ashoona with her son, Pootoogoo Toonoo in Kinngait, 1960. Photograph by Rosemary Gilliat Eaton. Library and Archives Canada/Credit: Rosemary Gilliat Eaton/Rosemary Gilliat Eaton fonds/e010975359 © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada.



Plate 6.19 Linda Akat in Arviat 1979, with unidentified child. This is the A-line style of short skirt amauti. Library and Archives Canada/Credit: Ken Bell/Ken Bell fonds/e010948616. © Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada.



**Plate 6.20 Akuliq amauti made by Samantha Ikirtaq Kigusiutnak in Arviat, 2018.
Note the curved sleeves and pleats on the amauti. Facebook, 2020
<https://perma.cc/A8TM-E4JS>**



**Plate 6.21 Two unnamed women in angijurtaujaqs. Mittimatalik c. 1922-24.
Photograph by L.T. Burwash. Library and Archives Canada/Department of Indian
Affairs and Northern Development Fonds/e002414763.**



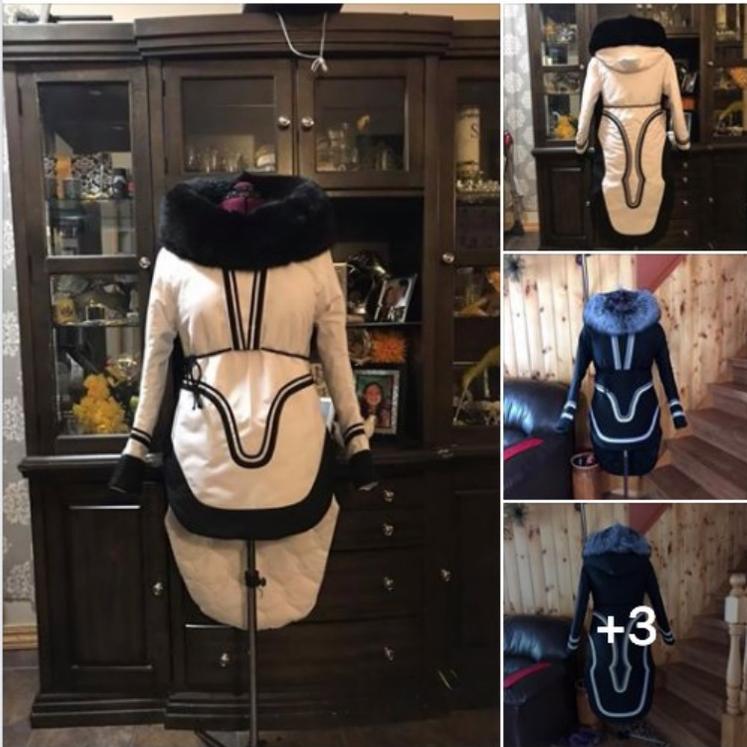
Plate 6.22 VAF Signature parka with sealskin trim and off-side zipper. The off-set zipper has been replaced with a center zipper and no longer has the rose-embroidery that was typical of her early designs. Image taken from <https://web.archive.org/web/20171126061546/http://vafashion.ca/pages/women>.



Plate 6.23 Screenshot of Kakuktinniq's first publically shown akuq-style parka, precursor to the 2018 Qablu and Aagjuk styles. Facebook, <https://perma.cc/KE2J-J7QH>.

Sophia's Outerwear by Chelsey St. John 6 March 2018 · 🌐

Akuk jacket. 🥰 for the women who don't have small children to amaq, akulik style jacket!



👍🥰❤️ Kaviok Jillian, Lalainia Suluk and 305 others 29 Comments 90 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

All comments ▾

Write a comment... 😊 🗨️

Tagalik Eccles I love love love mine! 🥰 👍 2
Like · Reply · 1y

Louisa Grey-Eetook How much and what sizes
Like · Reply · 1y

Sophia's Outerwear by Chelsey St. John Hi, sorry these were all sold 😊 they sell for \$625 👍 2
Like · Reply · 1y

➔ View more replies

Plate 6.24 Screenshot of Chelsey St. John's Announcement of her Akuk design, 6 March 2018 on Facebook, <https://perma.cc/EWM2-YJFA>.

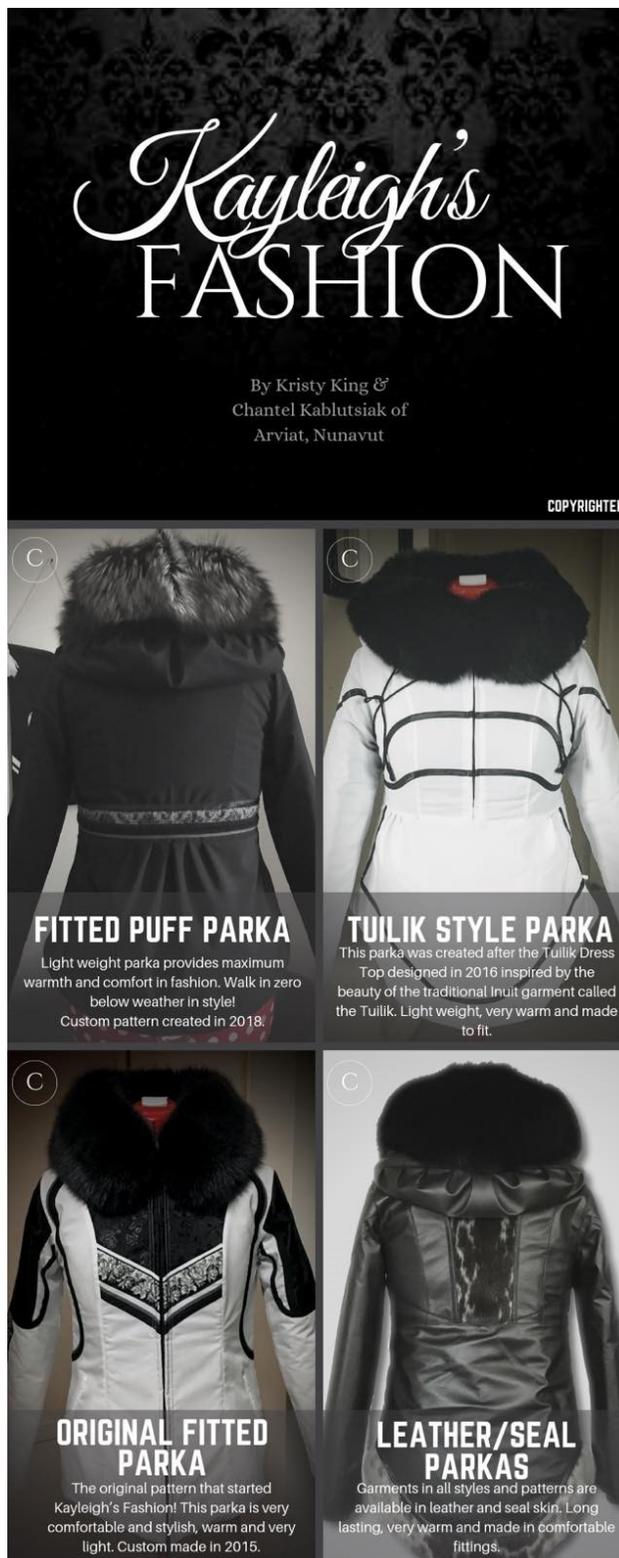


Plate 6.25 Kayleigh's Fashion and the four designs Kristy King and Chantel Kablutsiak offered in 2018, <https://perma.cc/5TQS-PUUK>.



Plate 6.26 Jimmy Muckpah Napayok with two young hunters in Arviat. Still taken from *Boys of Nunavut* documentary by Andrew Maguire, 2018.

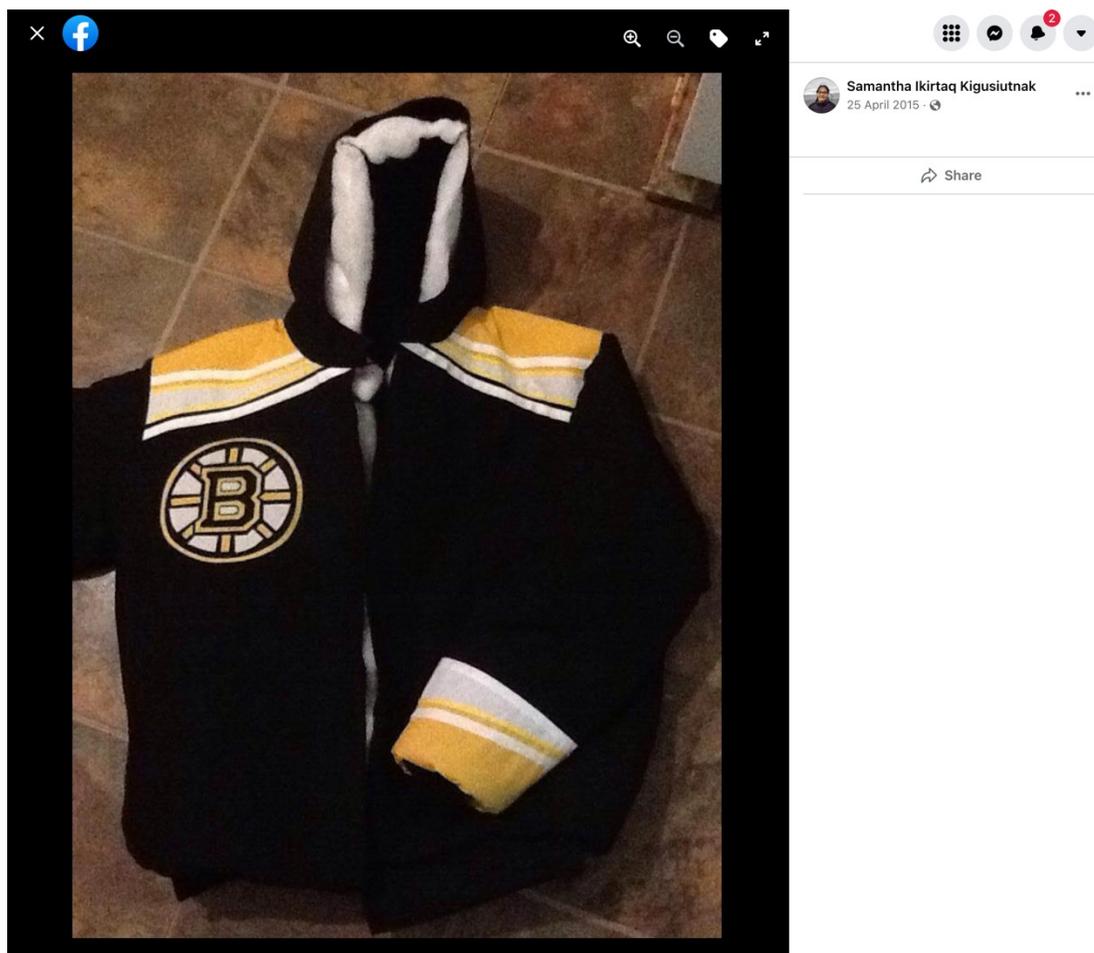


Plate 6.27 Hockey Team jersey parka for young boy, 2015. By Samantha Ikirtaq Kingusiutnak. Facebook, 2015, <https://perma.cc/3F35-P9AB>.

 **Suzie Napayok**
11 January 2015

A friendly reminder that I won't post anything to do with hockey teams, Marvel comic book heroes or anything that represents the Qalunaat western world logos or advertisements. Please remember that because although I don't like to do it, I do remove pix depicting the merchandise or the commercializations of items that don't relate to the Inuit arts and crafts. I do see a lot of hockey logoed parkas and as much as I love them, I won't post them so please remember this site tries to represent our cultures and our past, our current and the trending styles we are making! Qujannamiik with my apologies!

 30  8 comments

 Like  Comment

 **Ronald H Brower** No need for appologies here! you have served us all well stick to the intent...Love the site! Love Inuit products!
Like · Reply · 3y  1

 **Aatii Evaloakjuk** well said,,so proud of you to make this page.. aakuluk
Like · Reply · 3y  1

 **Joan Blacquier** love your site thanks for approving my request
Like · Reply · 3y  1

 **Suzie Napayok** You're welcome Joan.
Like · Reply · 3y

 **Suzie Napayok** li, Aatii. 😊  1
Like · Reply · See translation · 3y

 **Christina Gravel** That is why your group is so unique and authentic its due to you for being selective and true to the Inuit craft , well done Napayok-Short 💜
Like · Reply · 3y  2

 **Suzie Napayok** Unfortunately I had to remove someone's mitts with the Hab's logo on it.
Like · Reply · 3y · Edited

 **Suzie Napayok** .
Like · Reply · 3y

Plate 6.28 Suzie Napayok, who formerly ran the Facebook page, Inuit Creative Productions expressing her view of authenticity and commercialization. Facebook, 2015, <https://perma.cc/CC7S-EUAN>.

Chapter 7 : CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation answers the question, *what role has sewing played in the lives of Inuit women in Arviat in the mixed economy?* The relationship between the sewing economy and women's work is closely intertwined in Arviat. This interdisciplinary project embraces methodologies adapted from the fields of history, anthropology and art history. I use a range of sources, including museum artifacts, archival photographs and records, interviews with seamstresses, and experiential learning. I challenge the dominant textual archival records that fail to acknowledge the presence of Inuit women and their highly skilled labour, and argue their work played an essential role in maintaining the family economic unit in subsistence, mixed and cash economy contexts. I demonstrate that sewing is a core part of Inuit women's work and that it serves as a suitable lens to reconstruct a history of Inuit women's labour as land-based work valued in Arviat's historical and modern mixed-economic system. This project takes the feminist stance that women's labour is economically relevant, regardless of the economic system. I show the importance of the amauti as a materialization of women's sewing knowledge and as a garment that supports the role of Inuit women's work within the family economy. Finally, by taking a case study approach to three different aspects of the material culture of Inuit parkas and sewing, I show that we can counter the absence of Inuit women's presence in historical research through three in-depth case studies of material production. I argue that caribou skin and fabric parkas, along with decorative elements such as

beadwork are all modes for understanding Inuit women's entanglements with capitalism and colonialism as they worked to co-create modernity in a process of Inuktization.¹

7.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In Chapter 1, I discuss the methodology and theoretical underpinnings of the project. I explain how most research on Indigenous labour in what is now known as Canada focused on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fur trade in Canada's boreal and prairie regions. There has been increased interest in Indigenous women's work, but historians have not yet extended their focus into Inuit Nunangat. To establish the presence and role of women's sewing in Arviat, I frame the economic system in Nunavut during the twentieth century as a mixed economy. I define this economy as a dynamic system that allowed Inuit to emphasize different aspects as necessary: waged work, welfare supports, and subsistence activities. This strategy enabled Inuit to manage difficult economic circumstances brought on by mercantile colonial interests which resulted in coerced and forced relocations into settlements. This descriptor acknowledges that it is impossible to separate subsistence economic activities from market ones in Arviat. A robust body of anthropological research has shown that hunting and trapping are land-based economic practices, but Inuit women's sewing work has yet to be explicitly treated in scholarly literature as a land-based practice. I show that sewing operates within a mixed economy as a form of labour on the land, even when it is performed in the household and when its products are potentially sold for cash. The work of Phoebe Nahanni is especially instructive here because, in her research with Sahtugo'tine Dene women, she found that

¹ Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, "Conversation with Atsajuk Ituangat (Robert Joseph Flanagan), Jackson Meekitjuk Sagiatuq Hanson, and Robert Donald Malituq Hanson Comeau," in *Atiqput: Inuit Oral History and Project Naming*, ed. Carol Payne et al. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2022).

women think of their work as operating within three spatially distinct but interconnected spaces: the workplace, the household, and the bush. Inuit women, like Dene women, work in these three distinct spaces.² In fact, a mixed economy involves women's work in all three of these spheres. The interconnection of these places of work and their relation to the economy is indicative of larger processes at work and this is why sewing deserves such an intensive analysis. Though certain elements have changed since the 1700s, sewing has played a culturally relevant role in supporting land-based activities such as commercial trapping and subsistence hunting and it continues to operate in the cash economy of modern-day Arviat. As an Inūpiat hunter (quoted by Leona Okakok) put it: "I'm not the great hunter, my wife is."³

Having established the feminist approach that I take to history, art history and material culture studies, I shift to a history of women's work in southern Kivalliq in Chapter 2. I describe how Inuit men and women were involved in the mixed economy involving commercial trapping, whaling and "waged" work for centuries before settlement. In particular, women played an under-acknowledged economic role in the mercantile economy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I argue that at least some Inuit in southern Kivalliq were engaged in occasional trade with the HBC and provided a source of seasonal labour during the summer months. While women are mentioned indirectly as part of families in the fur trade journals, Inuit women produced country-made goods, especially kamiks, while men were whaling and sealing for the Hudson's

² Phoebe Nahanni, "Dene Women in the Traditional and Modern Northern Economy in Denendeh, Northwest Territories, Canada" (MA Thesis, McGill University, 1992).

³ Barbara Bodenhorn, "'I'm Not the Great Hunter, My Wife Is:' Inupiat and Anthropological Models of Gender," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 14, no. 1–2 (1990): 55–74; Nahanni, "Traditional and Modern Northern Economy."

Bay Company. Some women in southern Kivalliq played key roles in supporting extended family camps that were part of middlemen traders' success, while farther north, other women worked sewing warm parkas for whalers.

In the early twentieth century, Inuit women were involved in processing furs at trading posts and worked as cooks, housekeepers, interpreters and seamstresses for traders, police and medical officers. I also argue in Chapter 2 that women's sewing continues to be a source of cash production used for sustaining households in the mixed economy. Women sold country products and their sewing work to trading posts and Qallunaat, though often for less than they believed it was worth. This situation points to the profound power imbalances of Inuit and Qallunaat, which I frame as *ilira*: Elders like Elizabeth Enowyak and Rhoda Akapaliapik Karetak speak of the painful impact of Qallunaat impositions into their own lives through discussions of their sewing.

Chapter 3 shifts focus to the knowledge and skills that underlie their labour. In this chapter, the *amauti* is used as a lens for understanding the interrelationship of gendered work and knowledge as it is shared across generations and over time. The *amauti* is conceptually valuable in two ways: it is a garment that supports women in performing their work, and, as a difficult garment to construct, it exemplifies women's sewing skill and knowledge. This chapter demonstrates the gendered nature of Inuit knowledge by analyzing how sewing skills and patterns are transmitted and shared. I argue that sewing should be understood as a way of stitching together community and kin, and that these skills continue to sustain Inuit economic, social and cultural practices. Here, various pattern-making techniques help to illustrate modes of knowledge transmission, and the ways that Inuit seamstresses shared their skills, patterns and stories over generations.

Many middle-aged women I interviewed noted how they started sewing later in life but found they already knew how to sew because of the ways they had observed their mothers and aunts during childhood. I argue that this kind of learning, *isumaqsayuq*, is therefore being maintained even when *ilisayuq* methods of learning are present (through school). I also detail how Inuit have used learning opportunities like workshops, in-school classes and self-teaching to mitigate the impact of federal day schools that reduced the time that children spent watching parents work. These strategies follow *isumaqsayuq* pedagogy.

The first half of the thesis (Chapters 1 to 3) provides the foundations for understanding that sewing continues to be a valued and valuable skill of Arviaqmiut women and their ancestors. The second half of the dissertation (Chapters 4 to 6) takes a case study approach. Each chapter focuses on a different material used by women in Arviat. My material culture approach answers how Inuit women responded to economic changes through their sewing, even when written records neglect to mention women's presence and labour. Each case study uses photographic, museological, archival and oral sources to track changes to garments. Since written records of Inuit women's perspective over this period are limited, the things that women made are a powerful way of centring their voice, as clothing contains not only women's work but also their experiences and perspectives.⁴ I use a term coined by Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, *Inuktization*, to explain how Inuit women worked to create a distinctive modernity by absorbing outside materials

⁴ Maureen Matthews, "Martha Eetak," in *The Artist Herself: Self-Portraits by Canadian Historical Women Artists*, ed. Alicia Boutilier and Tobi Bruce (Kingston, Ontario: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 2015), 80–81.

and making things that are comprehensible and relevant within Inuit worldviews.⁵ Each of the subsequent chapters show material expressions of Inuktization and conceive of parkas as objects of economic value, both to support land-based activities and in terms of finances.

Chapter 4 uses a chronological approach to examine the changes in design in both men's and women's caribou skin parkas. By taking the approach that the materiality and process of making constitute the meaning of parkas, I demonstrate that design changes in parkas are an integral part of Inuit women's sewing history. The impetus for change may be contact with other Inuit and Inuit groups, or environmental and social circumstances that shape the availability of materials needed to make clothing. Inuit women were therefore constantly working to create garments that fulfilled the needs of their families while also innovating and altering designs to respond to seasonal, annual and personal change.

In Chapter 5, I turn to a detailed study of beadwork, again understood through the concept of Inuktization. I trace the genealogy of amulets and fur-piecing and argue that beadwork is an inheritor of these traditions. I show that beadwork designs are often positioned where amulets would have been sewn, suggesting a robust aesthetic and ontological persistence in the beadwork. For example, I make the case that milk-white beads are significant in Inuit beadwork designs because they play the role of pukiq, the white fur of caribou used as trim on qullitaqs. These examples provide strong evidence that Inuit women took on the physical and intellectual effort to Inuktize these materials. It

⁵ Hanson, "Conversation."

also challenges narratives of passivity as it clearly shows that Inuit women were materially and intellectually engaged in creating their modern world.

In Chapter 6, I continue the discussion of Inuktization by turning to fabrics, or textiles used by Inuit for parka-making. I demonstrate the continuity of sewing into the twentieth century and how Inuit women Inuktized imported trade fabrics such as duffel, calico and other fabrics by creatively transforming them into clothing that suited their needs, aesthetics and world. In this chapter, I also explain that caribou fur remains the premier material for parka making. There are many reasons for the surge in the use of fabric in the post-1950 community of Arviat, from relocations, schooling and irregular caribou migrations. I also show the increasing role of sewing in the market economy, noting the development of yapas. Compared to buying winter clothes at the store, making fabric yapas at home saved women cash which could be used for other things such as gas for a skidoo or food for the household. Selling parkas was also a means of making money, either by selling within the community or to southerners (a long-standing tradition). Sewing fabric parkas remains a way that women make cash contributions to their households. While some women choose to sell their sewing work only when they need a bit of extra cash, other women have transformed their sewing skills into jobs as entrepreneurs and fashion designers. Their designs now grace catwalks across North America and Europe.

7.3. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD

I have taken the stance that sewing is an essential component of women's knowledge. Though men may sew, and many do, most Inuit agree that sewing is the purview of women and women's work. While I acknowledge that sewing, beading and parkas,

especially amautis, are artistic productions, I have tried to conceptualize these skills and objects as economic strategies. Feminist scholars have shown that women's work is often neglected because it is frequently cashless and seen as uneconomic.⁶ With the limitations of archival records, using objects women made themselves emphasizes women's perspectives, experiences, and economic strategies and artistic perspectives.

Understanding sewing as part of the land-based economy further underscores women's crucial role within their families and communities.⁷

There are growing bodies of literature on women's work and Indigenous women's artistic production; however, this dissertation is the first to consider Inuit women's place within a changing economic system from the perspective of sewing and material culture. Important and thorough research done by Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, Jill Oakes, Betty Issenman, Judy Hall and Sylvie Pharand provide foundational studies into traditional Inuit fur clothing culture.⁸ Their work touches on aspects of change in Inuit communities, but none focused in detail on new trade materials (other than beads) in their research.

⁶ Sherry Farrell Racette, "Sewing for a Living: The Commodification of Métis Women's Artistic Production," in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Carol Williams, ed., *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012); Mary Jane McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History, 1940-1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014).

⁷ Peter J. Usher, Gérard Duhaime, and Edmund Searles, "The Household as an Economic Unit in Arctic Aboriginal Communities, and Its Measurement by Means of a Comprehensive Survey," *Social Indicators Research* 61, no. 2 (February 2003): 175–202; Sherry Farrell Racette, "My Grandmothers Love to Trade: The Indigenization of European Trade Goods in Historic and Contemporary Canada," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no. 20 (March 2008): 69–81; George W. Wenzel, "Inuit and Modern Hunter-Gatherer Subsistence," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 37, no. 2 (2013): 181; Magalie Quintal-Marineau, "Near the Floe Edge: Inuit Women's Role in the Nunavut Mixed Economy" (PhD Diss., McGill University, 2016).

⁸ Bernadette Driscoll, "At the Winnipeg Art Gallery: The Inuit Amautik: 'I Like My Hood to Be Full,'" *Museum International* 33, no. 1 (April 24, 2009): 30–34; Jill E. Oakes, *Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production*, Mercury Series Paper 118 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991); Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994); Sylvie Pharand, *Caribou Skin Clothing of the Igloodik Inuit* (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media, 2012).

Moreover, studies of Indigenous women's work have mainly examined their role in the fur trade up to 1870 or women's wage work in the post-war period. My thesis is the only study I am aware of that intensively details women's work in the Arctic fox fur trade and early casual work in the pre-settlement period. This study, therefore, merges feminist economic ways of thinking with material culture studies to deepen and enhance the limited historical record of women's lives in southern Kivalliq. My interviews with women of all ages in Arviat were critical in understanding how Arviaqmiut women think of their history, their sewing work today and their role within their families and communities.

7.4 CONDUCTING RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study is centred on the stories of women in a small region of Nunavut, with occasional forays into other regions of Inuit Nunangat, when evidence for the region around Arviat was limited. This project does not attempt to make claims about the historical circumstances of Inuit anywhere else in Inuit Nunangat. Studies of other communities in Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, and Inuvialuit would enrich this topic because of the distinct historical experiences in those regions.

After I completed my research at the University of Manitoba Archives, the archives acquired the fonds of Gabriel Gély, an eyewitness to the relocations of the Ahiarmiut. He was an artist and avid photographer and lived in Arviat and many other communities around Nunavut for nearly four decades and remembered fondly in the communities in which he lived. His fonds would have been exceptionally helpful for enriching my study of parkas in the post-settlement period. Unfortunately, the news of this fonds' availability came during the COVID-19 pandemic, and travel was therefore impossible. Nevertheless,

Gély's fonds should be investigated in the future for more imagery of everyday life in Arviat and other communities.

I was also unable to return to Arviat to conduct more interviews and follow up with the women I interviewed in my first visit. I funded my trip to Arviat through short-term research contracts and personal savings. I have kept in touch with several people in the community through email and Facebook, but most of the older individuals I met do not use the Internet (as might be expected) and some do not have phones, preferring short-wave radios. I note this to highlight the difficulties of doing humanities research in Nunavut, which receive very little financial support from key organizations like Polar Knowledge, and the Northern Scientific Training Program. The lack of financial support for graduate humanities research makes it challenging to conduct respectful, ethical research. Discussions on this topic are increasing as I complete my Ph.D. studies, and I can genuinely say that I did my best to do my research in a good way.⁹

7.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The central findings of my research show that sewing is an integral part of a land-based mixed economy, just as it was a part of the land-based subsistence economy of Paallirmiut, Ahiarmiut and Aivilingmiut before settlement. With the lack of textual evidence that historians would usually rely on, histories of women, especially Indigenous women, benefit significantly from using methodologies rooted in both oral history and material culture sources. Through the changes in garment designs, materials, and the stories seamstresses shared with me, a picture of women's responses to the social and

⁹ Doing things in a "good way" is often the phrase used by First Nations advocates, elders and thinkers. It means doing research that is inclusive, respectful, relevant, ethical and beneficial. Another call is to do *research with us, not about us*.

economic changes in their camps, families, and communities over the centuries comes to light in a manner that foregrounds their choices and engagements. This project offers a rich collection of images, recollections, stories, and museum objects that detail the importance of Inuit women in Arviat and that of their ancestors. My goal has been to outline the massive changes and traumatic alterations to a way of life, to write a history that acknowledges the colonial violence of the region, and celebrate Arviat women's resilience, inventiveness and creative capacity using their sewing skills and knowledge in order to keep their families and themselves safe and warm.

Appendix A : LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Last name	Inuktitut Name	First name	Birth year	Interview date	Interview location	Language of Interview
Aglukark		Dorothy	1945	25 Feb 2018	Her home in Arviat	Eng
Akatsiak		Martha	c. 1960s	21 Feb 2018	Anglican Parish House	Eng
Baker		Kukik Melissa	c. 1982	21 Feb 2018	Office of Aqqiumavvik Society	Eng
Enowyak	Satuq	Elizabeth/ Illisapi	1939	16 Feb 2018	Her home in Arviat	Inuk
Karetak	Akpalipik	Rhoda	1933	14 Feb 2018	Arviat Elder's Residence	Inuk
Kigusiutnak	Ikirtaq	Samantha	c. 1980	19 Feb 2018	Her home in Arviat	Eng
Kunne	Agaaqtuq	Helen	1931	12 Feb 2018	Arviat Elder's Residence	Inuk
Napayok		Lena	c. 1960s	21 Feb 2018	Anglican Parish House	Eng
Suluk	Pameolik	Joy	c. 1950	6 Feb 2018	Her home in Arviat	Eng
Tabvahtah	Tabvahtak	Melanie	1946	23 Feb 2018	Her home in Arviat	Eng
Thompson		Manitok	1955	6 Sept 2017	Inuit Broadcast Company Headquarters, Ottawa	Eng
Voisey		Mary	c. 1945	27 Sept 2017	Her home in Sandy Hook	Eng

Appendix B : GLOSSARY OF PLACENAMES

A

Akulliqpaaq qamaniq	Aberdeen Lake
Aglirnaqtuq	Tha-anne and Thelwiza Rivers
Appaturjuaq	Coats Island
Apuqtinirjuait	Maguse River
Aqiggiq Qamania	Kasba Lake
Arviat	“bowhead whale,” formerly Eskimo Point, community named for the old name of Sentry Island, Arviarjuaq. See also: Itsaliurvik and Tikiraarjulaaq.
Arviliqjuaq	“place with lots of bowhead whales,” officially known as Kugaaruk “little stream,” formerly Pelly Bay
Atiqtuniarvit	Nueltin Lake
H	
Haarvaqtuuq	Kazan River
Hanningajuq	Garry Lake
Hanningajurjuaq Kangilliq	North Henik Lake
Hanningajurjuaq ki'jiq	South Henik Lake
Hikuliqjuaq	Yathkyed Lake
I	
Igluligaarjuk	Chesterfield Inlet “place with a few houses”
Iglulik	Igloodik, “place of houses”
Ikahuak	Sachs Harbour, “where you go across to”
Ikpiarjuk	Arctic Bay, “the pocket”
Inuit Nunangat	a term to describe the Inuit homeland in Canada that comprises the land, water and ice of this region which includes Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut.
Inukjuak	translates to “the giant,” but the name is a misnomer of Inurjuak, meaning “many people,” formerly Port Harrison
Inuvialuit	refers to either the people of the Inuvialuit Settlement region, or it may be a shortened form of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region

	located in the Northwest Territory and Yukon.
Inuvik	headquarters of the Inuvik region
Itasliurbik	
Iqaluit	“place of many fish,” formerly Frobisher Bay
Iqaluktuuttiaq	Cambridge Bay, “a good place with lots of fish”
K	
Kangiqsualujuaq	“the very large bay,” formerly known as George River or Fort George
Kangiq&ugaapik/Kangiqtiniq	Rankin Inlet “deep bay/inlet”
Kangiqtugaapik	Clyde River “nice little inlet”
Kimmirut	“looks like a heel,” formerly Lake Harbour
Kinngait	Cape Dorset “high mountain”
Kingyualik	Padlei
Kinngarjualik	Padlei River
Kitikmeot	north
Kivalliq	southern mainland administrative region of Nunavut
Kopanuak	Sandy Hill Lake
Kugluktuq	see Qurluqtuq
Kuujuuaq	a mispronunciation of Saimuq “let’s shake hands,” formerly Fort Chimo
N	
Nanisivik	“place where people find things,” company town for a lead
Nattiit Kunngat	Seal River
Naujaat	“nesting place for seagulls,” formerly Repulse Bay
Niuningajjuaq	Winter Island
Nunalla	Sometimes spelled Nonala, Egg River
Nunatsiavut	“Our Beautiful Land” in Inuktitut
Nunavik	“Great Land” in Inuktitut, this is the homeland of Inuit in Quebec and encompasses the northern third of Quebec.
Nunavut	“Our Land” in Inuktitut, Nunavut is a territory of Canada
Nutarauit	Tulemalu Lake
M	
Maluksitaup Tariunga	Lyon Inlet

Mittimatalik	Pond Inlet, “place where Mittiima is buried”
P	
Padlei	Padlei Post on Padlei Lake (it is said to mean willow)
Pangniqtuuq	Pangnirtung, “place of the bull caribou”
Paulatuk	“place of coal,” Paulatuqq (alternative spelling)
Pikiulerk	Depot Island
Q	
Qaglut	Dawson Inlet
Qamani’tuaq	Baker Lake, “big lake joined by a river on both ends,”
Qamaniq	Maguse Lake
Qamanirjuaq	Qamanirjuaq Lake
Qatiktalik	Cape Fullerton
Qikiqtariaktuq	Nueltin Lake
Qausuittuq	“place with no dawn,” Resolute Bay
Qikiqtani	see Qikiqtaaluk
Qikiqtarjuaq	“big island,” formerly Broughton Island
Qikiqtaaluk	easternmost administrative region of Nunavut, it includes Baffin Island, Melville Peninsula and most of the Arctic Archipelago
Qingaut	Bathurst Inlet, “the nose”
Qipuqqaq	Postville
Qurluqtuq	“place of moving water,” formerly Coppermine
S	
Salliq	Coral Harbour “a large, flat island in front of the mainland,” also used to refer to Southampton Island more generally.
Sanirajak	Hall Beach, “one that is along the coast”
Shugliaq	Southampton Island, the island may also be called Salliq
T	
Tavanni	sometimes spelled Tavane or Tavani
Tikiraqjuaq	Whale Cove, “long point,”
Taloyoak	see Talurjuaq

Talurjuaq	“large stone caribou blind,” formerly Spence Bay
Tasiujaq	“which resembles a lake”
Tikiraarjulaaq	another old name for the peninsula where Arviat is located
Tuktoyaktuk	“it looks like a caribou,” (Tuktuyaaqtuuq, alternative spelling) formerly called Port Brabant
U	
Ujariglu	Churchill
Ukkusiksalik	“where material for pots or qulliq is found” also called Wager Bay, an area occupied by Inuit from the 11th century until settlement.
Ulukhaktoq	“the place where ulu parts are found,” (Ulukhaqtuuq, alternative spelling), formerly Holman Island
Umingmaktoq	see Umingmakttuq
Umingmakttuq	“s/he caught a caribou,” formerly Bay Chimo
Uqsuriaq	Marble Island
Uqsuqtuuq	Gjoa Haven, “place of plenty of fat”
Uqsuriaq	Marble Island

Appendix C : GLOSSARY AND NOTES ON SPELLING AND GRAMMAR

Inuktitut is a language with many dialects and two spelling systems: syllabics and roman orthography. The syllabics system was not standardized until the 1970s and this process continues. The spellings that I use are not the only way to spell many of the words that I use in this dissertation, however, I have used the spellings given to me by Sylvia Nuatie Aggark and others from the community of Arviat. Even within the community there are several dialects distinguished by historic –miut groups that were relocated to the community.

Ahiarmiut and Paallirmiut both use an “h” in place of an “s.” The “h” is more characteristic of western Inuktitut dialects, while the “s” is present in most of the Eastern Arctic. I have chosen to use the “h” spellings when it is an Inuktitut word that is used specifically in Arviat. For instance, the word “Sila” (very loosely translates to all the things above the earth, such as weather) is pronounced and spelled “Hila” by most Arviaqmiut. However, when I have not encountered a word in its “h” form (for instance because the person I interviewed speak Aivilingmiutut), I use the “s” form. There may also be occasions where I use a more archaic spelling or an unstandard version of a word because this was how it was written by the original writer in a quote.

The second note I wish to make is that I do not use Inuktitut plurals, rather I pluralized the singular Inuktitut work using English plurals (I add an “s”). It is not uncommon for Inuit to say “kamiks” to refer to a pair of kamiik in English. I include here a highly simplified explanation of plurals in Inuktitut:

Inuktitut has two plural forms: one for two of something, and one for more than two of something. The dual plural ends a word with a double vowel and a K. A woman's knife, ulu (singular) becomes uluuk (double). Tent, or Tupiq (singular) becomes tupiik (double).

The more-than-two plural always ends in a T. When the word ends with a vowel, the "-it" suffix is added: ulu (singular) becomes uluit (3+). When the word ends with any consonant (except for "t"), the last consonant is removed and -it is added: Tupiq becomes Tupit (3+).

Some of the common words in this dissertation include:

Singular	Double	Three or more	English
Amauti	Amautiik	Amautiit	Packing Parka
Atigi	Atigiik	Atigiit	Fur facing inwards parka
Kamik	Kamiik	Kamit (Kamiit is commonly used)	Boots
Hungaujat	Hungaujaak	Hungaujait	Beads
Tuilli	Tuilliik	Tuilliit	Packing parka with enlarged shoulders from the Kivalliq

GLOSSARY

A

<i>Ahialmiuyak</i>	Paallirmiutut to describe staying inland for the summer, to do as the Ahialmiut do
<i>Airut</i> □□□□	Decoration around the sleeves
<i>Akuq</i>	Curved back hem of a parka, amauti's "tail"
<i>Akuliq</i>	Parka with a longer, curved hem
<i>Aggaak</i>	A pair of gloves
<i>Amaq</i>	To pack a child in an amaut
<i>Amaut</i>	pouch in a woman's amauti used to carry an infant or small child
<i>Amauti</i>	a woman's parka with that has an amaut/pouch to carry an infant or small child
<i>Amauti akuq</i>	An amauti with a long curved 'tail' hem
<i>Amauti atajuqtaq</i>	Amauti with a short, straight hem that typically hits the wearer mid-thigh
<i>Angijuaqtaq</i>	skirt
<i>Annuraaq (sing.)</i>	Garment. Annuraat (pl)
<i>Arnautit</i>	Women's parka without the amauti
<i>Arnaq (sing)</i>	Woman, Arnait (pl)
<i>Ataaqtuq</i>	the Paallirmiut word for the journey to move to the coast in the spring and summer
<i>Atajuq</i>	Dress
<i>Attataak</i>	Pants
<i>Atigi</i>	Inner shirt/parka made with the hair turned towards the body
<i>Atigi aingittuq</i>	T-shirt
<i>Atigi nuviqhaaq</i>	Shirt
C	
<i>couletak</i>	Archaic anglicization of qullitaq.
H	
<i>Hakut</i>	A dull-bladed scraper
<i>Harutit</i>	Front beaded decorations on an atigi
<i>Hela</i>	An interjection used when trying to think of a word. Like "um."
<i>Hilapaaq/ Silapaaq</i>	outershell of a fabric parka (silapaaq n. Baffin for windpants, n. Baffin for outershell) see also Qalipaaq.

<i>Hiliq</i>	When a skin is dried and ready to be wetted and scraped
<i>Hiniktaniutit</i>	longer traplines following eskers and lake shores (hinigniq - root= to sleep)
<i>Hiniq</i>	Decoration for the hem
<i>Hinnikka</i>	trims for decorating a parka
<i>Hirliriyaut</i>	A dull-bladed skin stretching tool
<i>Hiiqliq</i>	Cracked. Describes the state of a skin that is tanned
<i>Honda</i>	Any All-terrain vehicle, typically a quad
<i>Hungaujaq</i>	beads in Paallirmiut dialect, more often seen as Sungaujaq or Sungaujat elsewhere
<i>Hungauyalik</i>	Beaded atigi, either male or female
<i>I</i>	
<i>Iglu</i>	Snowhouse
<i>Ihiriut</i>	Button
<i>Ihuma</i>	To think
<i>Ihumataq/ Isumataq</i>	One who thinks, wise one – typically the male head of an extended family
<i>Ii</i>	
<i>Iiira</i>	Feeling of fear or powerlessness
<i>Iirnaqtuq</i>	Someone or something that inspires fear or awe in others
<i>Iisayuq</i>	Formal abstracted pedagogy
<i>Inuk (sing) Inuit (pl)</i>	literally means “people” but typically used to refer to people formerly known as Eskimos.
<i>Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit/ Inuit Qaujimajaqtuqangit/ Inuit Qaujimanituqangit</i>	Various spellings are used. I use the first, which is the one used by the Government of Nunavut
<i>Inumarriit</i>	Someone who is fully Inuk, fully human, competent and skilled.
<i>isumaqsayuq</i>	Traditional learning techniques based on careful observation
<i>Iqtuqsit</i>	Tool to scrape, dry-flesh and stretch a skin
<i>Ivalu</i>	Sinew used for thread
<i>Ivalukka</i>	Cotton thread
<i>J</i>	
<i>Japa/Yapa</i>	Fabric parka, often zippered. Can be spelled with a j or y, pronounced with a “y” sound

K	
<i>Kabloona</i>	Archaic form. See Qallunaat
<i>Kamik (sing.)</i>	Boots made of skins.
<i>Kammiit (pl.)</i>	
<i>Kamikpa(k)</i>	Inner socks for kamiit. (called aliqsik elsewhere)
<i>Kiluk</i>	Seam joining clothing, tents or fabric
<i>Kiniq</i>	Front apron of an amauti
<i>Kivalliq</i>	Southern mainland administrative region of Nunavut, part of region historically called Keewatin
M	
<i>Machine</i>	Skidoo
<i>Maligait</i>	Natural Laws
<i>Maktaa</i>	Whale fat and skin – a delicacy
<i>Mikilirarut</i>	Ring
<i>Miqqut</i>	Sewing needle
<i>Miquq</i>	To sew
<i>Mirhuut</i>	Sewing machine
<i>-miut /</i>	People from/
<i>Miutaq</i>	Person from
N	
<i>Nahaq</i>	Hat
<i>Nahaujaqmiutaq</i>	Decoration on the back of a hood
<i>Nanuraq</i>	Polar bear skin
<i>Natchiaq</i>	Seal (spelled nattiq or natsiq elsewhere)
<i>Natchiaq qihiq</i>	Sealskin (with fur on)
<i>Nipku/Mipku</i>	Dried meat
<i>Nuijaqattaq</i>	Sweater
<i>Nuila</i>	Decoration around the hood
P	
<i>Palauga</i>	Bannock
<i>Piphi</i>	Dried fish (spelled pipsi, pitsi elsewhere, among other variations)
<i>Pualuk</i>	Mitten
<i>Pukiq</i>	The white belly fur of a caribou, often used as decorative trim, can also refer to a caribou that is albino or the Peary caribou species

Q	
<i>Qajjuk</i>	Women's stockings with closed side pouches that were used to store items like sewing or diaper material
<i>Qakhuvaut</i>	Tie for amauti (qaksungaut elsewhere)
<i>Qalipaaq</i>	Outer shell of a parka (alternatively Qalikpaaq)
<i>Qallunaat</i>	White person, historically spelled Kabloona by southern writers
<i>Qamutik</i>	Dog sled
<i>Qarlik</i>	Women's trousers with dark and light caribou skin stipes that are vertical, fur side out, that hit the tops of tuktuqtiik
<i>Qaliruak</i>	Wind-pants
<i>Qanuq</i>	"How?"
<i>Qaurumiutak</i> □□□□□□	Beads on a head band
<i>Qaurut</i>	Headband
<i>Qavvirajak</i>	Wolverine fur
<i>Qihiik kammiit</i>	Pair of sealskin boots
<i>Qulirraujaq</i>	Parka made
<i>Qullitaq /</i>	Heavy winter parka with fur facing outwards
<i>Qungahiruq</i>	Scarf
S	
<i>Sanariarruk</i>	Moral guide chosen at birth for a child
<i>Sapangaq</i>	Beads. Can also refer to a tuurngait that wears clothing of beads and gives joy to those that encounter her.
<i>Siiliqsiiniq</i>	To crack the skin in order to soften it
<i>Siiliqsimangngittut</i>	A frozen, stiff skin awaiting scraping and softening
<i>Sungayalik</i>	Beaded tuilli, in northern Kivallirmiutut
T	
<i>Tajat</i>	Wristwatch/bracelet. Taliaq in other dialects
<i>Taqjaqtuq</i>	Paaliirmiutut word for the journey of moving inland for the winter
<i>Tasuuktiruti</i>	Device for stretching animal skins, Kamaksauti an alternative word for one specifically made for stretching kamiit
<i>Tayikit</i>	Sharp-bladed scraper

<i>Titikhiut</i>	Belt
<i>Titiganiarajak</i>	Fox pelt
<i>Tuirutit tuijirutii</i>	Shoulder decorations/epaulettes
<i>Tuklirutit</i>	Hair sticks
<i>Tuktu</i>	Caribou
<i>Tuktu amiq</i>	Caribou skin
<i>tuktuqutiik</i>	Knee-high boots made of caribou worn in the winter, fur side in
<i>tuktuqtiik avalluliik</i>	Winter boots-leggins combination with a curve from the hip to above the knee. Worn by women with children
<i>Tunurutit</i>	Beaded decoration on the back of an atigi
<i>Tui</i>	Shoulder
<i>Tuilli</i>	Amauti worn in Kivalliq region
<i>Tupik (sing.)</i>	Caribou-skin tent, roughly conical in shape
<i>Tuurngaq (Sing.)</i>	Spirit
<i>Tuurngait (Pl.)</i>	
<i>U</i>	
<i>Ulu (sing)</i>	A knife shaped in a half-circle used by women
<i>Uluit (pl)</i>	
<i>Ujamik (sing)</i>	Necklace. Also used to refer to Eskimo identification Discs
<i>Ujamiit (pl)</i>	
<i>Umingmarajak</i>	Muskox fur
<i>Unaliq</i>	Cree person
<i>Unikaat</i>	Stories from recent events (oral histories)
<i>Unikkaaqtuat</i>	Stories about things that happened long ago
<i>Utirjarniutut</i>	Short trapline checked during daylight hours in Paallirmiutut (Utirniq – Root= to return)
<i>Y</i>	
<i>Yappaka/Jappaka</i>	Fabrics used for parkas

Appendix D : TRADITIONAL TRAPPING IN THE ARVIAT

REGION

June Helm and David Damas argues that the establishment of trading posts signalled the beginnings of what they describe as the contact-traditional period in the north.¹ They define the contact-traditional as the period sustained with technological changes (such as more readily available guns with ammunition) affected subsistence activities and patterns of settlement.² Trade goods impacted the subsistence economy, and as a result, social band units and hunting groups shifted to trading communities with hunting-trapping base camps. Despite these changes, Damas and Helm conclude that these changes were largely superficial and did not disrupt Inuit lifeways and autonomy nearly as severely as centralization through forced settlement did.

The Paallirmiut, Ahiarmiut and Aivilingmiut who lived near or at Arviat had different harvesting practices and therefore seasonal movements. Those movements altered in different ways for each of these groups with the increasing ubiquity of trapping as a component of Kivallirmiut economic practices.³ According to Geertz van den

¹ June Helm and David Damas, “The Contact-Traditional All-Native Community of the Canadian North: The Upper Mackenzie ‘Bush’ Athapaskans and the Iglulingmiut,” *Anthropologica* 5, no. 1 (1963): 9–21, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25604554>; David Damas, “The Contact-Traditional Horizon of the Central Arctic: Reassessment of a Concept and Reexamination of an Era,” *Arctic* 25, no. 2 (1988): 101–38.

² Damas, “Contact-Traditional Horizon: Reassessment,” 130.

³ Milton Freeman’s *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project* remains the most thorough investigation of land-use in different regions across the Canadian Arctic. In the following section, I will summarise the differences and nuances of different Inuit group’s use of land and subsistence economic practices, but far more information is available in Freeman’s three-volume report. Milton Freeman Research Limited, ed., *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project: A Report: Land Use and Occupancy*, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976); Milton Freeman Research Limited, ed., *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project: A Report: Supporting Studies*, vol. 2, 3 vols. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976); Milton Freeman Research Limited, ed., *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project: A Report: Land Use Atlas*, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976).

Steenhoven, VanStone and Oswald, two subsistence systems existed in settlement that Paallirmiut had been using since the 1940s.⁴ The first system was mobile. Families took credit for provisions from the HBC and hunted caribou inland in August or hunted seals on the coast for dogfood and had dispersed fishing camps in the summer. They then moved inland for the winter, where they would set up fishing nets or jig for fish as well as hunt and trap ptarmigan and foxes.⁵ The second system was more localized; Inuit remained in settlement all year but would hunt, fish and trap closer to town.⁶ Of the Inuit connected to Arviat in 1959, twenty-one percent stayed in Arviat for a portion of the year. Thirty-six percent lived in Arviat all year and 43 percent lived on the land all year (Figure 7.1).⁷

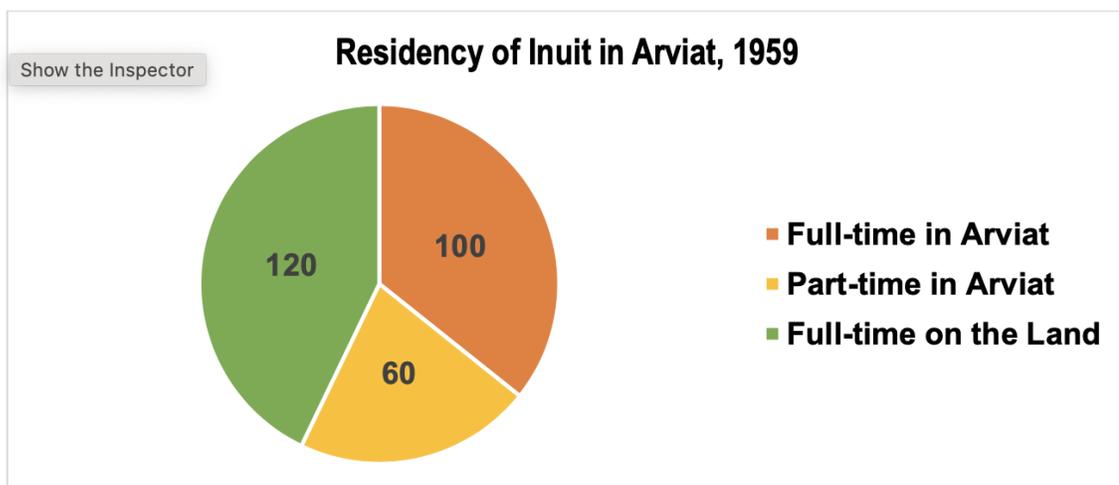


Figure 7.1 Seasonal Movements of Inuit in Arviat, 1959. Based on VanStone (1960).

⁴ Geert van den Steenhoven, "Report to Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources on a Field Research Journey for the Study of Legal Concepts among the Eskimos in Some Parts of the Keewatin District, NWT in the Summer of 1955" (Department of Northern Affairs, 1957), 16; James W. VanStone and Wendell Oswald, "The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point" (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1959), 3–5.

⁵ Steenhoven, "Legal Concepts," 16.

⁶ Paallirmiut, as fox trappers, took advantage of the abundance of foxes along the coast near Arviat. VanStone and Oswald, "Eskimos of Eskimo Point," 4–6.

⁷ VanStone and Oswald, "Eskimos of Eskimo Point," 1, 3–5.

Paallirmiut Trapping Economy

Before the introduction of the trapping economy, Paallirmiut generally had a dual economy based on land animals in the fall and winter and marine resources in the spring and the summer.⁸ Michael Shouldice explains that:

Each season implied transitions in the natural environment and are related to the resource base and human activity such as camp style and movement. The terms of camps and the duration of camps belong within the season and are part of a macro-structure of movement between the coast and the inland areas.⁹

Caribou were hunted by kayak at water crossings in the fall during migrations and in the winter. Areas with thick lake ice near productive fishing sites and near caches of caribou meat were ideal winter campsites. Summer camps were smaller than winter camps, and people dispersed into smaller family units to hunt marine mammals such as seal and walrus and to fish.¹⁰

The HBC opened a post near today's Arviat in 1921, and an outpost called Padlei opened in 1925. Padlei facilitated trade with Paallirmiut at Hikuliqjuaq and some Ahiarmiut on the lower Kazan River system. Tavane and Nonala served Paallirmiut located around the Tha-Anne River Delta.¹¹ Trapping was incorporated into Paallirmiut annual activity in the winter months because hunters could check their traplines while

⁸ Michael Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," c 1980, 31, IV-C-149M, box 382, fol. 2, Canadian Museum of History Library and Archives.

⁹ Shouldice also describes some of the Paallirmiut terms for the seasonal movements of Paallirmiut. The move inland for winter is *taqjaqtuq*, and the move towards the coast for spring and summer is *attaqtuq*. Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 55.

¹⁰ Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 31.

¹¹ Peter J. Usher, "Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories 1870-1970" (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971), 141; Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 32.

caribou hunting and retrieving cached meat.¹² Paallirmiut quickly incorporated trapping into their seasonal movements: for many other Inuit groups inland fox trapping was not conducive to their winter coastal blow-hole and floe-edge sealing activities.¹³

Winter camps continued to be established near lakes with thinner ice to facilitate fishing and men would visit their traplines from November to April, often with their hunting partner. Families would often travel to posts for Christmas festivities and religious services and exchange news with people from other camps.¹⁴ Men in smaller groups might travel to the post a few times over the winter with pelts for trade. Paallirmiut would then travel as families to the trading posts for a few weeks in the spring before moving to their spring and summer camps. Since resources were more scarce in the summer, the larger winter camping groups would break up into smaller family groups. In August families would trade once more before heading back inland for the caribou migration and prepare for winter again. Paallirmiut families might travel hundreds of miles inland to get to their winter camp, and some travelled by canoe with an outboard motor, and others traveled on foot.¹⁵ Some Paallirmiut stayed inland the entire year something they called *ahialmiuyak*; based on the Inuktitut word *ahiak* meaning "out of the way." The word means to mimic Ahiarmiut. Paallirmiut generally disliked living inland during the summer because of the insects and poor resource base but would stay inland if a family could not travel or they felt that the trapping season was going to be particularly productive that fall and early winter.¹⁶

¹² Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 33.

¹³ Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 33.

¹⁴ Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 37.

¹⁵ Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 36.

¹⁶ Shouldice, "Paallirmiut Ethnoecology," 60.

Ahiarmiut Trapping Economy

Ahiarmiut, like Paallirmiut, relied heavily on caribou as the staple resource, hunting them by caribou-skin kayak at river crossings. However, they stayed inland for the entirety of the year. Ahiarmiut travelled within their territory, taking advantage of resources in different regions and different seasons. However, unlike Paallirmiut who did use marine resources for human and dog consumption, if necessary, Ahiarmiut did not access those alternative resources. Instead, musk-ox and fish supplemented any shortfall of caribou meat.¹⁷

Ahiarmiut subsistence practice necessarily changed in the post-1920 period with the famine years of 1915-25. Musk-ox were rare and illegal to hunt. Fish could replace some of the food resources, but trapping was necessary to supplement certain material necessities. Ahiarmiut cultural and spiritual practices limited the importance of fish as a staple food source. Fishing nets were introduced in the 1930s by Aivilingmiut hired to instruct Kivallirmiut on how to use gill nets.¹⁸ This government project was not particularly successful, as there were strong taboos against eating fish pulled dead from the water. Moreover, Ahiarmiut considered dried fish (*piphi*) to be a food of coastal Inuit, which limited options for preserving fish to freezing them in the winter.¹⁹ As a result,

¹⁷ Christian Leden, *Across the Keewatin Icefields: Three Years among the Canadian Eskimos; 1913 - 1916* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1990), 266; Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, vol. II: Analytical Part (Copenhagen: Gyldeddalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1929), 96.

¹⁸ Frank G. Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo in the Central Keewatin* (Ottawa: Canadian Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1967), 42.

¹⁹ Yvon Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts (1920-50): Dans La Perspective de l'Histoire Des Inuit Caribous" (PhD Diss., University of Laval, 1991), 340.

fishing remained a secondary food for Ahiarmiut until the 1950s when Ahiarmiut adopted fishing nets.²⁰

Most Ahiarmiut traded at the Red River trading post, located on the Manitoba side of Nueltin Lake (Qikiqtariaktuq) but in 1941, the HBC shut the outpost down, assuming Ahiarmiut would travel to Padlei for goods instead.²¹ The reality was that they rarely made the trip to Padlei, possibly for two reasons. First, travel would have been difficult after the devastation of the famines which killed more hunting-aged men than any other age and gender group in the community, and the trek to Padlei from Ahiarmiut territory was difficult.²² Secondly, Ahiarmiut seemed to have been uncomfortable with establishing themselves near the Inuit of Padlei, who were essentially strangers.²³ A rare few Ahiarmiut individuals travelled to Arviat, Nonala and even west to Slave and Athabasca Lakes.²⁴

The most desired commodity for Ahiarmiut was tea. In 1948, A.H. Lawrie described the trade goods among Ahiarmiut:

Not only are they too poor and too far from the posts to regularly supplement their diet but there is no doubt that, with the exception of tea, they regard white man's foods as luxuries in the category of cake and meat is their basic and most relished food [...] white man's tools, gun and trap,

²⁰ According to Burch: "Birket-Smith provided an answer, which has three parts. First, they had a powerful taboo against eating fish taken dead from the water – and fish often drown in gill nets unless removed very quickly. Such prompt removal is very difficult in the winter. Second, it is just about impossible to dry and mend nets in a snow house where the temperature is below or near freezing most of the time. Finally, nets are heavy, bulky items to carry around, and Caribou Inuit moved quite often. For all of these reasons, but particularly the first, nets were simply out of the question." Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 339; Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, II: Analytical Part: 118; E. S. Burch, "The Caribou Inuit," in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, ed. Bruce Morrison and C.R. Wilson (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986), 122.

²¹ Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 365; Usher, "Fur Trade Posts," 143.

²² Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 303–5, 382.

²³ Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 382.

²⁴ Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 365.

needle and file, harness and rope, axe and tea pail are eagerly sought after but still subordinate to the caribou derived, homemade articles.²⁵

Lawrie blamed Ahiarmiut's poverty on being shiftless and indolent.²⁶ This racist conclusion fails to account for the decimation of the Ahiarmiut population the decade prior and the resulting small number of men of hunting age in the group. Lawrie based his conclusions on his expectation that Ahiarmiut should be trapping when subsistence hunting was a greater certainty economic base than the distant, expensive trading posts.

Csonka concludes that:

Il est possible que la population Ahiarmiut ait été composée d'individus à la mentalité plus conservatrice ou moins réceptive à de nouvelles possibilités économiques que leurs voisins, [...] Malgré tout, il paraît que l'inaccessibilité relative de leur région explique mieux le fait qu'ils aient été moins sollicités par les marchands de fourrure, en dehors de brèves périodes pendant lesquelles la valeur des renards battait des records, que leur éventuel désintérêt pour la traite. [...] Mes données de terrain sont claires: tous les Inuit Caribous qui pouvaient compter sur un approvisionnement régulier en munitions, et en farine lors des hivers de disette, ont abandonné la chasse en kayak et se sont lancés dans le piégeage intensifs; seul les Ahiarmiut ont continué à chasser en kayak jusqu'à leur déportation en 1957, forcés selon leur propre témoignage par le manqué de munition et de nourriture importée.²⁷

Csonka argues that Ahiarmiut were not involved in the trade because the traders never came to their territory in a concerted way.

²⁵ A.H. Lawrie, "Barren Ground Caribou Survey" (Ottawa: Department of Resources and Development, Wildlife Division, 1950), 1. Quoted in: Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 366.

²⁶ Lawrie, "Caribou Survey."

²⁷ My translation: "It is possible that the population of Ahiarmiut was comprised of people with conservative mentalities or were less receptive to new economic possibilities than their neighbours. [...] Nevertheless, it appears that the relative inaccessibility of their region is a better explanation for the fact that they encountered less solicitation by fur traders – other than for brief periods of record-breaking fur prices – than a lack of interest of their part. [...] My fieldwork results are clear: all Caribou Inuit who could count on regular outfitting in munitions and flour for difficult winters, abandoned hunting caribou by kayak and spear; only Ahiarmiut continued to hunt by spear and kayak until their deportation in 1957, forced, according to their own accounts, by the lack of ammunition and imported food." Csonka, "Les Ahiarmiuts," 369–70.

Aivilingmiut trapping economy

Aivilingmiut whaling economy has already been discussed in detail above, but those that moved to Arviat migrated south at the close of the whaling economy. Aivilingmiut adjusted to the trapping economy quickly, and many families moved or were relocated by the HBC to Shugliaq, others remain around Naujaat. By the 1950s, the trapping economy on Southampton involved spring sealing, collecting eggs and spearing char through ice holes in inland lakes, in the summer, Aivilingmiut hunted walrus, seals and belugas from canoes and Peterhead boats. Dogs and people alike consumed dried beluga, seal and fish caught in the summer. In the fall, walrusing became the focus, and finally, winter was the season of fox trapping. However, Aivilingmiut would seal on the ice if dog food was short. Hunters would visit their traplines for a week or two before returning to the villages on the island to dry the skin and trade before heading out to the traplines once more.²⁸

Robert Williamson notes that to be genuinely successful at trapping, Inuit had to travel beyond their traditional coastal hunting grounds to travel inland where coastal Inuit generally did not live and hunt. This required a substantial store of dog-feed which could only be accrued using Peterhead boats for walrus meat, the ideal dog-feed. Those that were the best in this context were, "seen as leading people, "camp-bosses", or "progressive natives", and favoured by the whites."²⁹ Aivilingmiut were likely to have

²⁸ James W. VanStone, "Notes on the Economy and Population Shifts of the Eskimos of Southampton Island" (Northern Research and Coordination Centre, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1960), 6, IV-C-32M, Box 122, Folder 2, Canadian Museum of History Library and Archives.

²⁹ Robert G. Williamson, "Significant Aspects of Acculturation History in the Canadian Arctic: Analysis of the Forces of Inuit and Southern White Interaction until Mid-Century" (Ottawa: Privy Council Office of Canada, 1996), 27, <http://publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.830019&sl=0>.

these boats, obtained through their connection with whalers and later trading posts in

Naujaat and Shugliaq. Williamson also notes that:

Mainly the descendants of old established whaler-serving families tended to hang on as trader-servants, R.C.M.P. Special Constables and, occasionally, Anglican catechists, passing on the jobs and perquisites along kinship lines, between themselves, and seeing themselves as superior (a Europeanised reflection of their employers' attitudes).³⁰

In Arviat, many Aivilingmiut spoke enough English that the RCMP frequently hired them as special constables and guides and the HBC hired them as post servants. As a result of these positions, Aivilingmiut families tended to live near the settlements or posts year-round to do their work. Aivilingmiut were a small group in Arviat: in 1955 only five Aivilingmiut tents existed in the community.³¹ The hierarchy of political and economic power established by colonial agents in the 1940s reverberates to this day, as noted by many researchers and Inuit in this community.³²

³⁰ Williamson, "Aspects of Acculturation," 32.

³¹ Steenhoven, "Legal Concepts," 17.

³² Sherrie Lee Blakney, "Connections to the Land: The Politics of Health and Wellbeing in Arviat Nunavut" (PhD Diss., University of Manitoba, 2009), 41; Renée Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550-1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 218–19.

Appendix E : FABRICS USED IN ARVIAT

Today, most women in Arviat use a proprietary 75% polyester and 25% cotton blend poplin fabric called *Commander* as an outer shell because it is wind and water-resistant and extremely tough, while also being easy to sew. *Commander* retailed in 2019 at around \$15.00 to \$17.00 for a metre of fabric on mail-order websites.³³ Rather than the expensive and heavy duffel of the past, the liner of contemporary parkas tends to be made with *Holofil*, a quilted batting comprised of hollow polyester fibres. This material is inexpensive (around \$15.00/m, depending on the weight) and relatively warm. The polyester batting is quilted between thin layers of ripstop nylon to keep the batting in place. It is perfectly adequate for yapas worn in communities. Yapas meant for longer trips on the land are made with thicker, premium versions of *Holofil* combined with *Radiantex*, a piece of thin fabric with a shiny mylar side that keeps out moisture and keeps radiant heat in. *PrimaLoft* and *Thinsulate* are other more expensive technical liners that some women sew with, but the vast majority of garments that I saw Inuit wear in Arviat used *Holofil*. The image below is a photograph of the Northern Store's fabric section in Arviat and shows the long row of bolts of *Commander* fabric. Large bolts of various types of *Holofil* and other parka liners fill the lower shelves. One or two bolts of duffel were also available. Eskimo Point Lumber also had an extensive selection of sewing notions, beads and sewing machines, while the Co-op, the smallest of the three general stores in the community, mostly restricted itself to notions.

³³ 'Commander', Fabric Vendor, Peak Fabrics, n.d., <http://www.peakfabrics.com/fabric/promo/commander/>; Linda McPhee, 'Poly Cotton All Weather Poplin', Fabric Vendor, McPhee Workshop, accessed 25 February 2019, <https://www.macpheeworkshop.com/collections/commander>.



**The sewing section at Northern Store in Arviat. Christina Williamson, Arviat,
March 2018**

Fabric name	Usage	Composition	Qualities & Treatments	Period used	Manufacturer/ Patent proprietor	Price historic	Price per metre
Arctic Armour	Shell	Nylon	Ripstop nylon with a silvery inner coating that is wind and waterproof	at least the late 1980s, probably until the 1990s.	Obtained by women in Arviat from Mitchell's Fabric in Winnipeg and Edmonton	n/a	n/a
Arctic Tech	Shell	85% polyester/15% cotton blend	Water and wind resistant with a DWR finish	Developed by Canada Goose and excess fabrics are donated to Inuit communities to use for their own sewing	Canada Goose	n/a	n/a
Arctica	Shell	25% Cotton/ 75% Polyester medium weight plain weave	n/a	Developed alongside an unnamed outerwear company to produce this fabric in 2010	SilTex (Winnipeg) exclusive manufacturer	n/a	\$15.00

Broadcloth	Shell/ liner	Historically made from wool, but often made with cotton or a poly-cotton blend today. Woolen Broadcloth was also called stroud or trade cloth.	Plain-woven cloth, synonymous with poplin by the 1920s	Developed in 1400s, but commonplace in Canada by the 17th century. See also Melton/Trade Cloth/Stroud as these fabrics are often conflated.	various	n/a	\$5.00
Canadian Mist	Shell	45% Cotton/ 55% Polyester Twill with a Durable Water Repellent (DWR) treatment	Tight weave and Durable Water Repellent (DWR) treatment makes this waterproof	n/a	SilTex (Winnipeg) exclusive manufacturer	n/a	\$8.00
Canvas	Shell	Plain woven cloth made from cotton, linen, and historically, hemp	Sometimes waxed, or treated to make it more waterproof	1880s to 1980s (onwards?)	Various	n/a	\$10-20.00
Commander	Shell	25% cotton/ 75% Polyester medium weight poplin	Tight weave makes it water	n/a	Brador Hiver (Montreal) exclusively	n/a	\$15-20.00

			resistant and wind and down-poof		produces the fabric in Canada		
Cotton Drill	Shell	Heavy or medium-weight cotton with a twill (diagonal) weave. May be poly-cotton today	Tight weave makes it breathable while wind and water resistant	Invented in the mid 1800s, probably commonplace in Arctic Canada by the 1920s or 30s	Various	n/a	~\$10.00
Duffel	Liner	Wool	Thick, tightly woven woollen cloth with a thick nap	Common in Arviat by the 1940s	Originated in Duffel, Belgium, and was popular in Europe by the 1850s	\$4.00 c. 1970	\$40-60.00
Gore-Tex	Shell	Polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon) membrane with an outer layer of nylon or polyester	Waterproof, breathable fabric, sometimes treated with a DWR finish	Invented in the 1969, was proprietary until 1990. Few people use this fabric in Arviat, but may have become available in the 2010s	W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc. held the patent until 1990	n/a	\$25.00

Grenfell	Shell	cotton with a 600 thread-per-inch Gabardine weave	Tight weave makes it breathable while wind and water resistant	Invented in 1923	Invented by miller Walter Haythornthwaite and Wilfred Grenfell, a British medical missionary who worked in Newfoundland	n/a	n/a
Holofil/Hollofil	Liner	Polyester fibres (Olefin), sometimes will have built-in wind proofing with ripstop nylon or RadianTex	Made in many weights for different needs, from 6oz to 12oz	Commonplace in the 2000s	Produced in the 1970s by Dupont, called Dacron Hollofil, though most northerners spell it Holofill	n/a	\$15-30.00 depending on thickness and lining
Melton/ Trade Cloth/Stroud	Liner	Wool (or cotton-blend) woven in a twill or satin weave with a raised nap. Often blended with nylon today	May be in many weights, but the felted-like texture make it wind and weather resistant and it does not fray	First mentioned in 1823, this cloth was first milled in Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire. Used as the based for beadwork by Inuit as early as the 1820s.	n/a	n/a	\$15-55.00 depending on quality, typically about \$25.00

Pile	Liner	various	Pile is the description of a weave similar to that of terry cloth	Commonplace in the 1980s, other periods, unknown	n/a	n/a	n/a
PrimaLoft	Liner	Polyester fibres	Stays warm even when wet	Used in Arviat by the 2010s	Originally developed for the US Army, in the late 1980s. Currently owned by PrimaLoft Inc.	n/a	\$15-20.00
Quilt/Blanket	Liner	Various	Old blankets and quilts would be cut-up and re-used for parkas	Used whenever necessary	n/a	n/a	n/a
Radian-tex/Insul-Bright	Interlining	99% polyester/1% polyethylene	Mylar-coated polyfiber with a reflective side to radiate heat back	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$11.00
Satin	Interlining	various	various	Common in the 1970s	Various	n/a	\$3-15.00

				Sometimes used on duffel to make it softer on the skin.			
Thinsulate	Interlining	A variety of polyester-synthetic fibers, primarily polyethylene terephthalate and sometimes polypropylene	Low-bulk batting with fibres of a variety of sizes that trap heat, but allow moisture to escape	First sold in 1979 and became popular in outerwear in the mid 1980s. Information as to when this became commonly used in Arviat is unknown	3M owns Thinsulate trademark	n/a	\$12-14.00

Appendix F : MAJOR STUDIES AND MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS OF INUIT SEWING

Though there are some earlier examples, it was in the 1980s that publications which examined Inuit clothing and sewing began to proliferate.¹ Many of those books were written for museum exhibitions and their parka collections.² The focus was mostly on historic clothing collected by early twentieth-century ethnologists and focused on the formal and functional aspects of the clothing. Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad's 1980 exhibition *I Like My Hood to be Full* at the Winnipeg Art Gallery signalled the start of a contemporary interest in Inuit clothing, especially historic parka designs and patterns.³ In her catalogue, Driscoll-Engelstad argued that parkas are an art-form rather than a craft. She was and continues to be, particularly interested in the symbolism and cosmology expressed in Inuit parka design and decoration.⁴ Sylvie Pharand's field work was done in

¹ A few earlier works that take special consideration of Inuit clothing design include: Gudmund Hatt and Kirsten Taylor, "Arctic Skin Clothing in Eurasia and America: An Ethnographic Study," *Arctic Anthropology* 5, no. 2 (1969): 3–132; Diamond Jenness, *Material Culture of the Copper Eskimo* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1946).

² Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad, *The Inuit Amautik: I like My Hood to Be Full* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1980); Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, "Pretending to Be Caribou: The Inuit Parka as an Artistic Tradition," in *The Spirit Sings*, ed. Julia Harrison (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987); Betty Kobayashi Issenman and Catherine Rankin, eds., *Ivalu: Traditions Du Vêtement Inuit / Traditions of Inuit Clothing* (Montréal: Musée McCord d'Histoire Canadienne, 1988); Judy Hall, Jill E. Oakes, and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster, *Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994); Jill E. Oakes and Rick R. Riewe, *Our Boots: An Inuit Women's Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996); J. C. H King, "Annuraaq - Arctic Clothing from Igloodik" (Exhibition, British Museum, London, 2001); J. C. H King, Birgit Pauksztat, and Robert Storrie, *Arctic Clothing of North America: Alaska, Canada, Greenland* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005); Judy Thompson, *Women's Work, Women's Art: Nineteenth-Century Northern Athapaskan Clothing*, McGill-Queen's Native and Northern Series 70 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013).

³ Driscoll-Engelstad, *I like My Hood to Be Full*.

⁴ Driscoll-Engelstad, Bernadette, "Pretending to Be Caribou"; B. Driscoll-Engelstad, "Dance of the Loon: Symbolism and Continuity in Copper Inuit Ceremonial Clothing," *Arctic Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 33–46.

the early 1970s, but only published in English in 2012. Her work on caribou skin clothing among Iglulingmiut paid particular attention to sewing-related words as well as patterns.⁵

Around the same period, anthropologist Jill Oakes spent extensive time working with Paallirmiut and Ahiarmiut in Arviat and Inuinnait from Kugluktuk, Bathurst Inlet and Cambridge Bay. She studied changing designs, skin preparation and sewing techniques in these communities.⁶ Her detailed work in the late 1980s catalogued skin parka and kamik patterns, design, materials, preparation. Betty Issenman's comprehensive book outlined the history of Inuit clothing from across the Canadian and Alaskan Arctic.⁷ An exhibition catalogue, *Ivalu* further discussed the significance of sewing in Inuit culture in 1988.⁸ The extensive archival and artifact research by the abovementioned authors created a rich catalogue of historic and contemporary Inuit garments that have been critical for the foundational research done in this project.

Since the 1980s, a number of projects have extended this research on Inuit clothing. In *Sanatujut* Judy Hall, in partnership with Jill Oakes and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster (Qamani'tuamiut), presented the Inuit component of the larger 1995 exhibition *Threads*

⁵ Sylvie Pharand, "Clothing of the Iglulik Inuit," unpublished manuscript (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, 1975); Sylvie Pharand, *Caribou Skin Clothing of the Igloodik Inuit* (Iqaluit: Inhabit Media, 2012).

⁶ Jill E. Oakes, *Copper and Caribou Inuit Skin Clothing Production*, Mercury Series Paper 118 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991).

⁷ Betty Kobayashi Issenman, "Inuit Skin Clothing: Construction and Motifs," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 9, no. 2 (1985): 101–19; Betty Kobayashi Issenman, *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); Betty Kobayashi Issenman, "Stitches in Time: Prehistoric Inuit Skin Clothing and Related Tools," in *Braving the Cold*, ed. Cunera Buijs and J. G. Oosten (Leiden: CNWS publications, 1997); Betty Kobayashi Issenman, "The Art and Technique of Inuit Clothing," McCord Museum, 2007, http://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/viewobject.php?section=false&Lang=1&tourID=CW_InuitClothing_EN&seqNumber=0&carrousel=true.

⁸ Issenman and Rankin, *Ivalu*.

of the Land.⁹ The museum exhibition on northern Indigenous clothing resulted from the first major in-depth consideration of Caribou Inuit and Inuinnait clothing in a museum context. Textile expert Dorothy Burnham used her drafting skills to recreate clothing patterns of Inuit, Innu and other peoples.¹⁰ Her methodology of drafting the patterns of historical garments to understand their construction influenced the work of many of these scholars, as did the knowledge shared by Inuit experts who assisted in this exhibition.

In Europe, Ann Fienup-Riordan organised a trip to the Ethnologische Museum Berlin with Yup'ik elders to examine a collection made by Johan Arian Jacobsen in the 1880s. The book resulting from this project discussed the possibilities of visual repatriation and the power of “reverse fieldwork” in museum research.¹¹ The National Museum of Denmark with the Greenland National Museum and Archives initiated the SkinBase database and the website Skin Clothing Online.¹² The website presents 2,170 pieces of circumpolar clothing. A smaller sample of these objects, largely Greenlandic, were 3D scanned to measure the garments and created patterns from the garments. This project, though cutting-edge in its technology, does not seem to have strong connections to any source communities, and the National Museum of Denmark acknowledge that some Inuit, including the Inuit women's organisation Pauktuutit, have had concerns about Inuit intellectual property being stolen for commercial purposes, but seem confident that

⁹ Hall, Oakes, and Webster, *Sanatujut*.

¹⁰ Dorothy K. Burnham, “Masters of Design,” in *Fascinating Challenges: Studying Material Culture with Dorothy Burnham*, ed. Judy Hall, Judy Thompson, and Leslie Heyman Tepper, Mercury Series 136 (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2001), 143–46.

¹¹ Ann Fienup-Riordan, *Yup'ik Elders at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin: Fieldwork Turned on Its Head* (Seattle: University of Washington Press in association with Calista Elders Council, Bethel, Alaska, 2005).

¹² Nationalmuseet, “Skin Clothing Online,” accessed February 9, 2020, <http://skinddragter.natmus.dk/>.

they have addressed this problem through a copyright licence, which ostensibly forbids using the patterns for commercial purposes and requires the project be attributed.¹³ While this project has many positive qualities, its determination to make all this information, down to sizing, available online seems to place Inuit cultural heritage at risk of being exploited. Another more recent project is the Mittimatalik Arnait Miqsutuit Collections (MAMC) which filmed a series of master classes which show viewers how to process skins and sew, guided by master seamstresses.¹⁴

¹³ The Creative Commons license is CC BY-NC-SA 2.5 DK which requires that any information, images and material be attributed, but it is unclear in the licence, the article or the website exactly *who* the attribution should name. Is it the participating museum? the maker? the project? Anne Lisbeth Schmidt, "The SkinBase Project: Providing 3D Virtual Access to Indigenous Skin Clothing Collections from the Circumpolar Area," *Études Inuit Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 15, 2019): 199–200, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1055438ar>.

¹⁴ "Mittimatalik Arnait Miqsutuit," Vimeo, n.d., <https://vimeo.com/mamc>.

Appendix G : MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

During the research phase of the project, I visited the following archives:

Scott Polar Library and Archives

Research over the week at the Scott Polar Library and Archives in 2015 was preliminary for the project. Documents examined at this archive were focused mainly on records made by early explorers such as letters, diaries and logbooks belonging to John Rae, John Ross, Charles Hall, John Franklin, George Beck and William and Margaret Penny. The watercolours done by John Ross (1829-33) and sketches by Edward Adams (1848-50) were also studied.

Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Library

While not technically an archive, the library at the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs has an extensive collection of grey literature that until recently was not accessible online. The documents consulted at this library in 2017 were mostly reports written by researchers for the Department in the 1950s and 60s. The most relevant reports were by Geertz van Steenhoven, B.M. Brack and D. McIntosh and Frank Vallee.

Hudson's Bay Company Archives

I spent a month researching documents at the HBC Archives in 2018. The HBC Post Journals, annual reports and district reports, as well as photographs taken for *The Beaver* and servant records, were all examined. These documents were beneficial for understanding the fur trade system in the 20th century Eastern Arctic. The quality of information pulled from the post journals varied considerably based on who was writing

the journals. Some post managers did not provide much information while others would include valuable information such as the names of the people who traded.

Library and Archives of Canada

I consulted documents at the LAC throughout my time living in Ottawa as well as during subsequent visits back to Ottawa. Documents consulted at LAC varied from government records to private fonds. The Central Registry documents from Northern Affairs (RG85) provided some information on “Eskimo Relief” and the growing welfare system in the region. Explorer’s personnel files, newspaper clippings and rates of pay for employees also provided some comparative information. Documents from Northwest Mounted Police (RG15) such as patrol reports were also examined to see how the RCMP officers related to the Paallirmiut (now Arviaqmiut) for food and clothing will help to reveal one of the shifts in the family economics of the people of this region.

I focused on photographs held in the LAC’s collection, especially those photographs by Bishop Donald Marsh and Richard Harrington. Richard Harrington, a freelance photographer, also visited the region in the 1950s and took many photographs of the people from the area (Figure 5). These photographs can help identify designs and material changes as well as work conditions for sewers, while his diaries are helpful in finding the names or determining the context of the photos (from his perspective). Bishop Marsh photographed for personal reasons as well as missionary ones. His wife, Winifred Petchey Marsh noted that Marsh’s photography was also a way to cover expenses in their

early days in Arviat and Marsh sold his photographs to National Geographic and The Beaver magazine.¹

University of Alberta Archives, Circumpolar Library & Strynadka/Brady Reading Room

The Circumpolar Library and the University of Alberta contains an impressive collection of published and grey literature relating to the Canadian Arctic. I consulted this library throughout my research. Grey literature and reports, and northern periodicals such as *Inuit Uplumi/Inuit Today*, *Inuktitut Magazine* and the *Inuit Cultural Institute Newsletter* served as relevant sources of Inuit perspectives on a variety of topics, especially about the days before settlement. The University of Alberta Archives houses the papers of Mel Hurtig, who published Donald Marsh's *Echoes from a Frozen Land*. The fond includes his correspondence with Winifred Petchey Marsh during the publication process. The Strynadka/Brady Reading Room, located in the Native Studies Department of the University of Alberta consists of the published materials written or collected by Peter Usher, whose work on labour and economy in the Arctic have been particularly influential.

University of Winnipeg Archives (2018)

This archive houses the Nelson Graburn and Jillian Oakes Fonds. Graburn's fonds included an extensive collection of articles, slides and other material related to Inuit art and the Jillian Oakes Fonds and the Jillian Oakes and Rick Riewe Fonds contained

¹ Donald Marsh, 'Canada's Caribou Eskimos', *National Geographic*, January 1947. Marsh also had at least ten articles or photo-articles published in *The Beaver* from 1940-1955.

photographs by Oakes in the 1980s in Arviat as well as Oakes' collection of literature, and her writing related to Inuit clothing and material culture.

Canadian Museum of History (2012-2016)

I consulted both the collections and the archives at the CMH. I studied a range of parkas and other garments and those that were not possible to see in person were studied online using the CMH's online object database. The archives' collection includes documents written by Michael Shouldice and James VanStone, who both produced unpublished research reports about Inuit in the region. The library collection was also consulted, notably the Mercury Series and art auction catalogues.

The British Museum (2016)

Early on in the project, I visited the British Museum to see their collection of parkas. Most of the parkas were from Iglulik and commissioned for the significant 2001 exhibition, *Annuraaq – Arctic Clothing from Igloolik*. I spent a week carefully studying the cuts and designs of the garments. This trip was valuable for learning more about parkas in different regions and developing my ability to recognize regional variations in style.

The Manitoba Museum (2018)

The Manitoba Museum's collection of Inuit parkas includes parkas collected by the Marshes as well as the Hudson's Bay Company. This collection is the most extensive collection of Inuit parkas from Arviat and the pieces from this museum are discussed extensively in this dissertation. Marsh photographed many of the pieces he later donated to the museum, or very similar ones are found in photographs in the LAC collection. The

curator, Maureen Matthews also generously provided extensive background and research material related to these collections and objects.

Other Museum Collections

Museums and archives whose relevant objects were viewed during public visits, online and over email with the curators include: the McCord Museum (Montreal), the Bata Shoe Museum (Toronto), the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto), the Winnipeg Art Gallery (Winnipeg), the University of Alberta Clothing and Textiles Collection (Edmonton), the Museum of Anthropology (Vancouver) the National Museum of the American Indian (Washington, D.C.), the National Museum of Natural History (New York), the Mystic Seaport Museum (Mystic, Connecticut), the Fenimore Art Museum (Cooperstown), the University of Aberdeen Museum (Aberdeen), the McManus Art Gallery and Museum (Dundee), the National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh), the Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford), and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Cambridge).

Appendix H : RESEARCH LICENSES

I applied for ethics review under the Carleton University Ethics Review Board A and received approval effective 3 February 2017 (Certificate 106313, Appendix Z) The Government of Nunavut also requires that researchers secure permission to conduct research from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI). I received the NRI's research clearance on 15 January 2018, with license # 0100118-N-M. I also contacted the Arviat Hamlet Office and met with staff members upon my arrival to the community.”

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute

Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone: (867) 979-7275 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail:
mosha.care@arcticcollege.ca

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENSE

LICENSE #: 03 001 18N-M

ISSUED TO: Christina Lynn Williamson
 Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture
 Carleton University
 201 St. Patrick's Building, 1125 Colonel By Drive
 Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5R6 Canada

TEAM MEMBERS: R. Phillips, M. Hogue

AFFILIATION: Carleton University

TITLE: Women, Labour and the Inuit Parka: A History of Sewing in the Canadian North

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:

This project traces the production of parkas as a key aspect of Inuit women's labour in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut in the Canadian Arctic from the 1900s to today. By surveying the sewing work of parkas, this project emphasizes the contemporary importance and value of women's work in the Arctic by examining historic parkas. Using parkas as the central focus of the project connects women's labour to the historical colonial economies of whaling, the fur trade, the settlement period and also to Inuit-First Nations interactions as well. This project focuses on Inuit women from the region of Kivalliq because the people of this region have interacted with non-Inuit – both First Nations and Qallunaat (non-Indigenous) – for centuries. Kivallirmiut have dealt with Qallunaat explorers, whalers, government officials and military from the south and, because Kivallirmiut live just north of the treeline, were also in frequent contact with Sayisi Dene First Nations people, who would visit the same trading posts and hunt in the same areas as Kivallirmiut.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:**DATA COLLECTION IN NU:**

DATES: January 15, 2018-December 31, 2018

LOCATION: Arctic

Scientific Research License 03 001 18N-M expires on December 31, 2018

Issued at Iqaluit, NU on October 06, 2017


 Wally Lush, Thomas
 Science Advisor



PROJECT SUMMARY

Women, Labour and the Inuit Parka: A History of Sewing in the Canadian Arctic

Project Location: Arviat, Nunavut

Time Frame: January 15 – March 15 2018

This project traces the production of parkas as a key aspect of Inuit women's labour in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut in the Canadian Arctic from the 1900s to today. By surveying the sewing work of parkas, this project emphasizes the contemporary importance and value of women's work in the Arctic by examining historic parkas. Using parkas as the central focus of the project connects women's labour to the historical colonial economies of whaling, the fur trade, the settlement period and also to Inuit-First Nations interactions as well. This project focuses on Inuit women from the region of Kivalliq because the people of this region have interacted with non-Inuit – both First Nations and Qallunaat (non-Indigenous) – for centuries. Kivallirmiut have dealt with Qallunaat explorers, whalers, government officials and military from the south and, because Kivallirmiut live just north of the treeline, were also in frequent contact with Sayisi Dene First Nations people, who would visit the same trading posts and hunt in the same areas as Kivallirmiut.

The research design includes a total of 10-15 oral history interviews with Arviaqmiut women, each of which will focus on participants' personal experiences of learning and/or teaching sewing. Questions about family sewing history, participants' sewing practices and their views on sewing as a cultural tradition (See attached list of interview questions). Participants will receive a gift card commensurate with their participation and Arviat Hamlet recommendations. All research data, including audio-recordings, photographs, and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes and USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet at Carleton University. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisors. Once the project is completed, all research data will be kept for five years and potentially used for other research projects on this same topic. All normal attempts will be made to notify participants should their interview be used for another project. At the end of five years, all research data will be securely destroyed. Electronic data will be erased and hard copies will be shredded.

Results of the research will be communicated in several ways: first in the form of a PhD Dissertation. Up to 5 peer-reviewed academic articles will also be published. Most relevant for Nunavummiut is a community "town hall" event held in March 2017 to show some preliminary results. When the analysis of the project is complete, another trip to Arviat and Iqaluit will be made to share the results. This project also involves the researcher producing a product for the community such as a small book on the history of parkas in the community (translated into Inuktitut) or an online database. The format of this project will be determined based on consultation with participants and other stakeholders.

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ethics@carleton.ca

CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS CLEARANCE

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A (CUREB-A) has granted ethics clearance for the research project described below and research may now proceed.

CUREB-A is constituted and operates in compliance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2).

Ethics Protocol Clearance ID: Project # 106313

Project Team Members: Ms. Christina Williamson (Primary Investigator)

Dr. Michel Hogue (Research Supervisor)

Ruth Phillips (Research Supervisor)

Project Title: Women, Labour and the Inuit Parka: A History of Sewing in the Canadian North

Funding Source (If applicable):

Effective: **February 03, 2017**

Expires: **February 28, 2018.**

Restrictions:

This certification is subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Clearance is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
- 2 Any modification to the approved research must be submitted to CUREB-A via a Change to Protocol Form. All changes must be cleared prior to the continuance of the research.
- 3 An Annual Status Report for the renewal of ethics clearance must be submitted and cleared by the renewal date listed above. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the closure of the file. If funding is associated, funds will be frozen.
- 4 A closure request must be sent to CUREB-A when the research is complete or terminated.
- 5 Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to CUREB-A.

Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2nd edition* and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research* may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.

Please contact the Research Compliance Coordinators, at ethics@carleton.ca, if you have any questions or require a clearance certificate with a signature.



Consent Form

Women, Labour and the Inuit Parka: A History of Sewing in the Canadian Arctic

Date of ethics clearance: 03/02/2017

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: 01/05/2018

I _____, choose to participate in a study on the history of women's sewing in the North. This study aims to collect memories and personal experiences that surround sewing – particularly the sewing of clothes – in the Arctic and link this history to the broader history of colonization in the Canadian Arctic. **The researcher for this study is Christina Williamson in the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture (ICSLAC), at Carleton University in Ottawa.** She is working under the supervision of Ruth Phillips in the ICSLAC and Michel Hogue in the Department of History.

This study involves one 60-minute interview. With your consent, interviews will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio-recording will be destroyed. You will also be asked to be photographed or to share photographs relevant to the researcher's project.

This project will ask you about your experiences as a seamstress and about family members who sew. While the risk is expected to be minimal, there is a risk that speaking about the past may bring up difficult memories and feelings. You may refuse to answer any question that you wish. Should you experience any distress during the interview, you will be provided with contact information for counseling services available nearby.

You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until *December 31, 2018*. You may withdraw by contacting the researcher or research supervisor via phone, email or letter. If you withdraw from the study, all information you have provided will be immediately destroyed.

As a token of appreciation, you will receive a gift card. This is yours to keep, even if you withdraw from the study.

The project aims to credit all knowledge generously shared by participants, however you may choose to participate and remain anonymous. If you do not want to be identified by name, we will assign you a pseudonym and you will not be asked specific questions that may identify you. You may also request to be anonymized at any time after the interview until *December 31*,

2018.

All research data, including audio-recordings, photographs, and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes and USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet at Carleton University in Ottawa. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisor.

Once the project is completed, all research data will be kept for five years and potentially used for other research projects on this same topic. You will be notified if the information is used for another project. At the end of five years, all research data will be securely destroyed. Electronic data will be erased and hard copies will be shredded.

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic or hard copy sent to you.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. If you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact Dr. Andy Adler, Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A by phone at 613-520-2600 ext. 2517 or via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

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Do you agree to be identified by name?..... Yes No

Do you agree to be audio-recorded?..... Yes No

Do you agree to be photographed?..... Yes No

Do you wish to edit the transcript prior to its use?..... Yes No

I have been fully informed of the objectives of the project being conducted. I understand these objectives and consent to being interviewed for the project. I understand that steps will be undertaken to ensure that this interview will remain confidential unless I consent to being identified. I also understand that, if I wish to withdraw from the study, I may do so without any repercussions.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date

Appendix I : MAPS



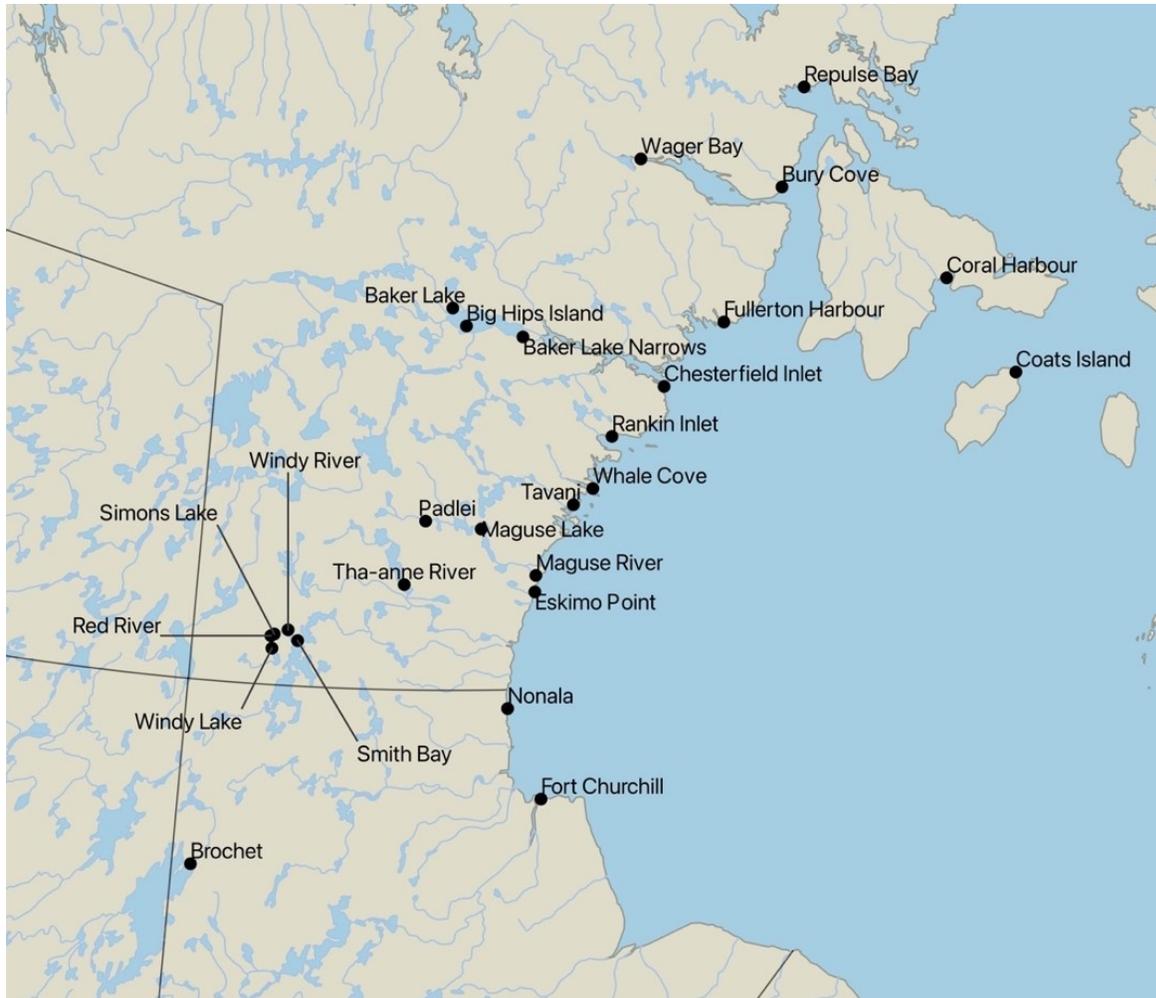
Sources: Inuit Heritage Trust, Arctic IQ, J.B. Tyrell, "Map of Doobaunt and Kazan River," Herbert Hall "A rough map of the country," HBCA RG3/2011/1, Eugene Arima, "Caribou Eskimos," p. 448.

Map 1 Places mentioned in this dissertation (Inuktitut whenever possible). Map by Christina Williamson, 2021.



Sources: Inuit Heritage Trust, Arctic IQ, J.B. Tyrell, "Map of Doobaunt and Kazan River," Herbert Hall "A rough map of the country," HBCA RG3/20f1/1, Eugene Arima, "Caribou Eskimos," p. 448.

**Map 2 Places mentioned in this dissertation (English or archaic/disused names).
Map by Christina Williamson, 2021.**



Map 3 Map of Fur Trade Posts in the Kivalliq and area in the twentieth century, partially based on Usher (1971). Map designed and developed by Sandy Hoye and Christina Williamson (Métis Archival Project).

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- E.91/96 (former code), Transcription of Interview with Alfred Copland
- E.203 (former code), Alfred Dudley Copland fonds
- E.368/1 Nonala Post Journal
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Search file – Barrens

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