

Development of the Institutional Structure of the Economy of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, Canada:
Inuit Strategic Participation in Commercial Opportunities

By

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to provide insight into **the development of the institutional structure of the economy of Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region, Nunavut, Canada from its inception (1953-1957) to the period following the creation of the Territory of Nunavut in 1999**. Its analysis is informed by the ideas of Karl Polanyi, who argues in *The Great Transformation* that Britain's commercial economy rests upon an institutional structure erected by the state largely during the 19th Century and not, as Adam Smith famously suggested, on innate human tendencies. State interventions expanding the scope of commercial activity often undermined the viability of existing forms of non-commercial economic activity as well as the institutions upon which they were based. The British public, however, suffering from these developments successfully pressed for legislation to reduce the scope of commercial activity in their lives, in a process Polanyi refers to as the "countermovement."

Prior to the entry of Europeans to the Kivalliq Region, Inuit economic activity was non-commercial. Based on harvesting resources from the land and sea, it was governed by and played a role in regenerating societal institutions, principally the extended family. As Europeans and non-indigenous North Americans entered the region in the early 1700s in order to obtain and sell its resources on external markets, opportunities arose for Inuit to participate in commercial activity. Inuit adjusted their participation in these fluctuating commercial opportunities for the next 200 years, in a way that tended to maintain the primacy of existing non-commercial productive capacities and institutions.

The community at Rankin Inlet was founded in 1953 when several Inuit families settled to participate in wage employment at a nickel mine. Since the mine's closing in 1962, Rankin Inlet's Inuit residents have participated in a combination of traditional harvesting, cash-based (often commercial) and other informal economic activities, a dynamic referred to as a "mixed economy" which exists in most Nunavut communities. Cash-based economic activities in Rankin Inlet have occurred largely under the auspices of new, externally grounded institutions. During the period the nickel mine was in operation, (1953-1962) the company which operated the mine – itself supported financially and in policy by the Canadian state – yielded significant power in influencing Inuit economic choices. Following its closure, much of the power in shaping cash-based economic activities shifted to state organs, whose presence and expenditures have grown in Rankin Inlet since 1962.

Rankin Inlet's post-1962 "mixed economy" flows from Inuit adaptation to life in an urban environment and represents the latest phase of a centuries-long process of considered involvement in changing economic opportunities¹. In contrast to earlier eras, in which the extended family was dominant, it is an economy founded on (at least) two major, co-existing institutions: family structures and the state.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, the nascent, relatively stable economic dynamic - found in Rankin Inlet and communities across the Eastern Arctic - was exposed to potentially disruptive external forces, in particular private sector interests aiming to extract the Arctic's non-renewable

¹ Renée Fossett in *In Order to Live Untroubled*, (University of Manitoba Press, 2001), provides a comprehensive overview of Inuit survival strategies in the context of changing economic and environmental circumstances.

resources with the legal and regulatory support of the Canadian state. As opportunities for self-representation at the federal level grew over the during the same period, Inuit across the Eastern Arctic sought institutions with political and sovereign powers similar to those of Canada's provinces as well as special rights for Inuit including the ability to set the terms by which large-scale resource development projects could proceed (if at all). Inuit efforts in this regard led to tangible results, including, importantly, the signing of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) in 1993 and (as per the NLCA) the creation of the Territory of Nunavut in 1999.

Through the various provisions of NLCA (including the creation of Nunavut) Inuit have obtained a measure of sovereign control over how commercial, state, and traditional economic activity occurs its territory, including the power to shape and/or reject projects which could affect this balance.

Inuit strategic participation in available commercial opportunities over the centuries, as well as more recent efforts leading to the signing of the NLCA and the creation of Nunavut, bear important similarities to British society's 19th Century countermovement described by Polanyi. Both groups (Inuit and British society) used available means to limit the power of commercial forces in their lives. Whereas the efforts of British society aimed to reduce the scope of existing commercial forces, those of Inuit in Nunavut focused on restraining and shaping the scope commercial forces moving forward.

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List of Acronyms

AEM – Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.
BNA Act – British North America Act
DEW – Distant Early Warning
DIAND – Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
DIO – Designated Inuit Organization
DNANR - Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources
EAC – Eskimo Affairs Committee
COPE – Committee for Original Peoples’ Entitlement
FPIC – Free, Prior and Informed Consent
DIO – Designated Inuit Organization
GN – Government of Nunavut
GNWT – Government of the Northwest Territories
HBC – Hudson’s Bay Company
HTO – Hunters and Trappers Organizations
IBA – Impact Benefit Agreement
IIBA – Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement
IQ – Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit
ITC – Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
ITK – Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
KAF – Kivalliq Arctic Foods
KRP – Keewatin Rehabilitation Project
NHSP – Nunavut Harvester Support Program
NIC - Nunavut Implementation Commission
NIRB – Nunavut Impact Review Board
NLCA – Nunavut Land Claims Agreement
NPA - Nunavut Political Accord
NRNM – North Rankin Nickel Mines
NSO – Northern Service Officer
NTI – Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
NWT – Northwest Territories
NWMB – Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
NWMP – North West Mounted Police
NTYB – Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources
RWB – Regional Wildlife Boards
SLiCA – Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic
SPR – Social Protection Response
TFN – Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut
UK – United Kingdom

US – United States
USD – United States Dollar
WWI – World War One
WWII – World War Two

Introduction

Rankin Inlet Context

The Hamlet² of Rankin Inlet (Kangiqliniq³) is a community of roughly 2,600⁴ in the Territory of Nunavut, Canada, on the west coast of Hudson Bay (62.8097° N, 92.0994° W). It is the second largest community in Nunavut by population, following the territorial capital Iqaluit. Approximately 1,800 of its residents are Inuit.⁵ As Figure 1 shows, Rankin Inlet is one of twenty-five communities in Nunavut.



Figure 1 - Map of Nunavut
("Nunavut Legal Services Study," Department of Justice, accessed Nov. 1, 2016, http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/aj-ja/rr03_la14-rr03_aj14/p2.html.)

² A Hamlet is a form of municipal incorporation as defined by Nunavut's *Hamlets Act* (1988).

³ Kangiqliniq is Rankin Inlet's Inuktitut name. Inuktitut is the first language of many Inuit of Canada's Eastern Arctic.

⁴ The first publication of the 2011 Census reported that Rankin Inlet's population was 2,266. This figure was revised to 2,577 in March 2014 by Statistics Canada.

⁵ Statistics Canada. "Corrections and updates: Population and dwelling count amendments, 2011 Census." Accessed October 9, 2016. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/news-nouvelles/corr/cgen004-eng.cfm>

Settled in 1953 by Inuit largely from the present-day Kivalliq⁶ Region of Nunavut (as well as non-Inuit from the south⁷) Rankin Inlet, like all communities in Nunavut, is young. Prior to the twentieth century, the population of the Eastern Arctic⁸ was comprised almost entirely of Inuit whose life was semi-nomadic.⁹ The pre-settlement Inuit economy was mainly based on harvesting resources from the land and sea; Inuit would travel long distances in accordance with the changing seasons and the availability of game. Inuit are descendants of the whale-hunting Thule people, who migrated to Nunavut from present-day Alaska roughly between 1000CE and 1300CE.¹⁰

Definition of Key Terms, Research Question, Dissertation Main Argument and Dissertation Methodology

Explanation of Key Terms

The terms “state” and “institution” are central to the dissertation’s analysis and are used throughout. This section briefly describes what these terms mean in the present context.

⁶ The present-day Territory of Nunavut contains into three large administrative regions: Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and, Qikiqtaaluk. The Kivalliq Region, in which Rankin Inlet is located, is in the middle of Nunavut, to the west of Hudson Bay (extending as far South as Nunavut’s border with Manitoba, as far west, roughly, as Nunavut’s border with the Northwest. The borders of the Kivalliq region are very close to that of its administrative predecessor (prior to the creation of Nunavut in 1999) the Keewatin Region.

⁷ The term “south” in this dissertation refers primarily to part of Canada not in the Yukon, Northwest Territories or Nunavut, where most of the Canadian population live.

⁸ The term Eastern Arctic as used in this dissertation describes, roughly, the area comprised by the Territory of Nunavut. It is home to a majority Inuit population.

⁹ Traditional Inuit patterns of movement and migration is described in Chapter Two.

¹⁰ Renée Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550 to 1940* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 2001), 3; The Thule (and their Inuit antecedents) migrated as far east as Greenland and as far south as Labrador, Canada.

The term “state” – as it is used herein - has three notable features. First, it meets the definition put forward by Max Weber in “Politics as a Vocation,” as a “human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory.”¹¹ Second, a core function of the state is the facilitation of commercial activity principally through the enforcement of private property rights. Referencing the work of Ellen Meiksins Wood and others, this function is explored in more detail in Chapter One. Third, as Karl Polanyi’s work suggests, the state can (and often does) employ its power to expand commercial activity to geographical and social spheres where it did not previously exist.

As Streeck and Thelen note in, “Introduction: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies,” the term institution has been widely defined.¹² For the most part, the use of the term herein aligns with the definition provided by the abovementioned authors that institutions are,

building-blocks of social order: they represent socially sanctioned... collectively enforced expectations with respect to the behaviour of specific categories of actors or to the performance of certain activities. Typically they involve *mutually related rights and obligations* for actors, distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate, ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’ actions and thereby organizing behavior into predictable and reliable patterns.¹³

¹¹ Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” accessed October 16, 2016, <http://anthropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Weber-Politics-as-a-Vocation.pdf>.

¹² Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen, “Introduction: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies,” in *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, ed. Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 9.

¹³ *Ibid*; (italics are Streeck and Thelen’s).

Examples of institutions used in this dissertation include: the state, the Inuit extended family, the market, schools, and private businesses. Importantly (and in alignment with Streeck and Thelen's above definition), each of these social entities sets boundaries on acceptable forms of human behaviour within its scope and each contains at least some type of enforcement mechanism.

Research Question

The dissertation's main research question is:

How has the institutional structure of the economy of Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region, Nunavut, Canada evolved from Rankin Inlet's inception (1953-1957) to the period following the creation of the Territory of Nunavut in 1999?

Polanyi's writings, which emphasize the importance institutional configurations in influencing the range of forms of economic activity that occur in a given context, offer insight as to why pursuing this question is worthwhile. In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi describes the process by which a series of state-led institutional adjustments over several centuries caused commercial activity – characterized in part by the drive to maximize personal wealth, irrespective of social considerations – to become a dominant form of economic activity in 19th Century Britain. By couching the emergence of Britain's commercial economy as the result of the deployment of state power, Polanyi contests the argument put forward (perhaps most famously) by Adam Smith that Britain's commercial economy emerged organically from innate

human tendencies to maximize individual wealth.¹⁴ On the contrary, prior to this state-led process, commercial activity played only a minor role in British economic life. To the extent that commercial activity did occur, it was severely restricted by laws and other mechanisms in order to protect the population from its harmful effects.¹⁵ As the British population began to suffer from the ascendancy of commercial activity, it successfully exploited legislative opportunities to limit the reach of commercial activity in their lives in a process Polanyi calls the “countermovement.”¹⁶

To support his contention that commercial economies are the products of time and space-specific institutions rather than innate human drives, Polanyi describes how the economy of an indigenous society in the Trobriand Islands functions with little individual concern for wealth accumulation (a key characteristic of commercial activity). The community’s economic needs are met because individuals, responding to the incentives of the prevailing (non-state) institutional structure, aim to increase their social status within the society through hard work and giving generously. Polanyi describes economies such as those of the Trobriand Islanders - in which the performance of economic activity is intimately linked with the development and maintenance of social concerns – as being “submerged” in social institutions.¹⁷

¹⁴ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Beacon Press, 2001 (1944)), 146.

¹⁵ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 65.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

The economy of Inuit of the Kivalliq region,¹⁸ who represented a large portion of Rankin Inlet's first inhabitants, was "submerged" or "embedded"¹⁹ (in Polanyi's sense) in Inuit social structures, principally the extended family,²⁰ prior their first sustained interaction with Europeans in the early 18th Century. As encouraged by Inuit social structures, economic activity was deeply connected with the maintenance of interpersonal bonds. Concern for maximizing personal wealth was largely absent. Beginning with the construction of Fort Prince of Wales by British traders in 1719 in present-day Churchill, Manitoba, however, succeeding generations of Inuit of the Kivalliq region encountered (and participated in) various waves of commercial activity brought by non-indigenous Europeans (and North Americans) aiming to convert the region's resources into private wealth. These waves of commercial activity can be category four into distinct eras (approximate dates): 1. The "Fort Prince of Wales Era," 1719-1860; 2. The "Whaling Era," 1860-1915; 3. The "Fur Trade Era," 1915-1953; and, 4. The "Mining Era," 1953-1962.

¹⁸ "Inuit of the Kivalliq Region" refers to Inuit populations who historically lived in the present day Kivalliq Region of Nunavut since the 1700s. Many Inuit of the Kivalliq Region would also fall under the term "Caribou Inuit" (formerly called Caribou Eskimo) used by Kaj Birket-Smith (1929) to denote Inuit groups in the Kivalliq Region who relied heavily (compared to other, sea-oriented, Inuit groups) on inland animals (principally Caribou) for subsistence. The "Caribou Inuit" are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

¹⁹ Polanyi appears to use the word "submerged" and "embedded" synonymously; Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 60.

²⁰ R.G. Williamson, *Eskimo Underground* (Uppsala, 1974), 42-43; Ernest Burch Jr. "The Caribou Inuit," in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, edited by Bruce Morrison and Roderick G. Wilson (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 125; Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo* (University of Nebraska Press, 1964 (1888)), 170; Eugene Arima, "Caribou Eskimo," in *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 5, Arctic*, edited by David Damas (Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 455.

Rankin Inlet was chosen as a “case-study” because it is the only community in Nunavut founded due to industrial development (a nickel mine in 1953). The dissertation aims to provide insight regarding the responses of people and changes in key institutions resulting from encounters with new commercial forces.

Although, as mentioned above, states can play a crucial role in facilitating commercial activity the Canadian state (itself created in 1867) was largely absent from Canada’s Eastern Arctic prior to World War Two (WWII). The near absence of state organs in the first three eras of commercial activity limited the power of non-indigenous commercial actors in their dealings with Inuit. In part due to this lack of state power, prior to 1953 participation in commercial activity by Inuit of the Kivalliq region largely remained a secondary pursuit, with traditional productive activities (occurring within the context of the extended family and related social structures) playing the largest role in survival. In other words, Inuit economic activity remained embedded in traditional social structures. Other factors contributing to continuity in traditional productive activities and social structures prior to the founding of Rankin Inlet include: the fact that Inuit had uninterrupted access to resources of the land/sea²¹; and, the lack of physical and material power of the commercial actors themselves relative to the Inuit population.

In the post-WWII era, the state presence in Canada’s North, including the Eastern Arctic, increased markedly. Related in part to this development, Inuit began to abandon their semi-

²¹ This assertion borrows from Marx’s analysis in *Capital* that the earliest wealth accumulation involved, “nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production.” (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, (1887) 1957), 738.

nomadic lives to live in settlements, with rudimentary commercial economies and a growing range of government services. The settlement at Rankin Inlet was unique because many of its first Inuit residents (who migrated from the Kivalliq region and elsewhere in the Eastern Arctic and Northern Quebec) moved there in order to receive wages from working at a nascent nickel mine.²²

For many Inuit of the Kivalliq region, living in Rankin Inlet during brief the “Mining Period,” (1953-1962) economic life for the first time became influenced by two major institutions (as opposed to one): 1. The extended family (which carried on); and 2. The mining company, North Rankin Nickel Mines (NRNM), which fueled a cash economy mainly by paying wages to employees. This new dual-institutional economic structure meant that the extended family’s role in influencing Inuit economic behaviour diminished compared to the three previous Eras (as well as pre-contact times). Many Inuk²³ individuals participated in full-time wage-labour, on a schedule and performing tasks mainly of their employer’s choosing. Wages from the mine (with which goods and services were purchased) played a central part in the material security of many of Rankin Inlet’s inhabitants. Rather than completely displace traditional economic activities, however, involvement in wage activity often supported participation in them. Inuit used wages to purchase materials such as tools, equipment, and fuel to harvest the resources of the land. Inuit social structures continued to influence economic decision-making

²² Nunavut’s other settlements tended to grow around a fur-trading post, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachment, or missionary presence.

²³ Inuk is the singular of Inuit (plural).

and activities during this period as well. This system – characterized by the interdependency of cash and traditional activities – is often referred to as the “mixed economy.”²⁴

Due mainly to the exhaustion of accessible ore²⁵, the nickel mine closed in 1962. The traditional component of Rankin Inlet’s economy continued following this consequential event (as did the role the extended family in influencing economic decisions and behaviour), along with the economy’s cash-based component. The federal government, however, replaced NRNM as the chief institution supporting the cash economy, through the provision of wage employment, transfers (e.g., pensions) and other expenditures. Federal government expenditures to Eastern Arctic and northern²⁶ communities grew significantly during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Over the same period, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), whose areas of responsibility began to approximate those of a Canadian province, increasingly administered this spending. To the degree that the GNWT had authority over the expenditure of funds within Rankin Inlet (and larger the Eastern Arctic) in areas falling its jurisdiction, it co-existed with the

²⁴ The mixed economy’s functioning and resiliency in northern indigenous communities has been documented by several scholars. For example: Shauna BurnSilver et al, “Are Mixed Economies Persistent or Transitional? Evidence Using Social Networks from Arctic Alaska,” *American Anthropologist* 000, no. 0 (2016), 1-9, accessed Dec. 20, 2016, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/aman.12447/pdf>; Robert J. Wolf and Robert J. Walker, “Subsistence Economies in Alaska: Productivity, Geography, and Developmental Impacts,” *Arctic Anthropology* 24, no. 2 (1987), 56-81; Gérard Duhaime and Édouard Roberson, “Monetary Poverty in Inuit Nunangut,” *Arctic* 68, no. 2 (June 2015), 223-232; Birgel Popper, “Interdependency of Subsistence and Market Economies in the Arctic,” in *The Economy of the North*, ed. Solveig Glomsrød and Iulie Aslaksen (Oslo: Statistics Norway, 2006) 65-80, accessed Dec. 20, 2016, http://www.ssb.no/a/english/publikasjoner/pdf/sa84_en/kap5.pdf; Peter Usher, Gérard Duhaime, and Edmund Searles, “The Household as an Economic in Arctic Communities, and its Measurement by Means of a Comprehensive Survey,” *Social Indicators Research* 61 (2003), 175-203.

²⁵ Which could be mined an acceptable cost to the mine operator.

²⁶ The terms “northern” and “north” refer in this dissertation roughly to the which encompasses the territory of the present-day Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

federal government as a main institution supporting Rankin Inlet's cash economy.²⁷ Rankin Inlet benefitted in particular from cash expenditures due to its role as a GNWT administrative centre beginning in the 1970s (resulting in new public service jobs and related investment for the community).²⁸

Over the same roughly 20 to 30-year period, Eastern Arctic settlements became increasingly exposed to the possibility that disruptive, major non-renewable resource developments could proceed in the region with state support. Partly in response to this concern, in the 1970s Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Region²⁹ created the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) to represent their interests in discussions with the federal government.³⁰ A chief aim of the ITC was to enter into a treaty with the Crown³¹ to achieve the broad goal of Inuit self-determination. ITC negotiators specifically sought new political institutions with sovereign powers similar to those of Canada's provinces as well as special rights for Inuit including the ability to set the conditions upon which industrial developments could take place.

Following nearly two decades of negotiations, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) was signed in 1993 between the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN)³² and the Crown, which provided for the creation of the majority-Inuit Territory of Nunavut and the

²⁷ Although most cash spent by the GNWT was transferred to it from the federal government (i.e., the GNWT had very little "own source" revenue).

²⁸ Government of the Northwest Territories, "Government in Transition: Annual Report of the Government of the Northwest Territories" (Yellowknife: 1975), 25

²⁹ The boundaries of the initial Nunavut Settlement Region are close, but not identical to, those of Nunavut.

³⁰ Similar organizations were founded during this period by other northern Canadian indigenous groups.

³¹ Which in practice would be administered by the federal government.

³² The TFN was formed in 1982 to represent Inuit in land claims negotiations with the Crown. It succeeded the Inuit Tapirisat (created in 1976) in this role.

implementation of as well as special social, cultural, and environmental rights for Inuit beneficiaries to be implemented by the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI, TFN's successor organization). According to the NLCA, Nunavut would have a public territorial government with legislative powers similar to those in Canada's ten provinces. Through the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB), a sub-institution of the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI, TFN's successor organization) local populations are now able to set conditions upon which proposed major developments may take place (and deny projects altogether if such conditions are not met).

As in the preceding roughly 35-year period, Rankin Inlet's post-1999 economy has continued to align with the "mixed-economy" model, containing significant and intersecting traditional and cash based components. In terms of the economy's institutional composition, the extended family institution continues to exert important influence over economic activities, while the Government of Nunavut (GN) through various expenditures and employment plays a central role. Private sector (largely small) businesses, whose presence has significantly grown over the past 40 years (largely as a "spin off" from government transfers) continues to play an important role in Rankin Inlet's cash-based economy as does economic activity associated with land-claims organizations (e.g., Kivalliq Inuit Association) with local offices.

In addition to the "mixed economy" model, Rankin Inlet's post-1999 economy bears important characteristics of three other models in academic literature on economies of indigenous people. The first model describes the (worldwide) Arctic economy as resting on "three pillars": 1. The non-renewable natural resource sector; 2. The public sector; and, 3. The

traditional sector.³³ While the public and traditional sectors have remained important elements of Rankin Inlet's economy since the close of the nickel mine in 1962, the non-renewable resource sector has played a small role. The importance of the non-renewable resource sector has increased dramatically in recent years, however, due to significant development work on the nearby Meliadine gold mine project (discussed in further detail in Chapter Five). If the Meliadine project enters production in 2019 as planned, (which seems likely as the project has received approval by NIRB) it will have a profound effect on the community's economy for its projected nine-year lifespan.³⁴ The second, "indigenous hybrid economy" model, was developed to describe the economy of indigenous people in rural Australia. According to this model, economic activity occurs across three sectors: 1. the customary (i.e., traditional) sector; 2. the market sector; and, 3. the state sector.³⁵ Like the mixed-economy model, the "indigenous hybrid economy" model emphasizes the linkages and inter-supportability of the three sectors.³⁶

The "northern social economy" is the third model. It focuses economic activity that "lies outside the direct ambit of government programs and large businesses," including family

³³ Andrey N. Petrov, "Exploring the Arctic's 'other economies': knowledge, creativity and the new frontier," *The Polar Journal* 6, no. 1 (2016), 51.

³⁴ Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd., "Meliadine," accessed March 27, 2017, <https://www.agnicoeagle.com/English/operations-and-development-projects/development-projects/meliadine/default.aspx>; Julie Laroche et al, "Updated Technical Report on the Meliadine Gold Project, Nunavut, Canada," accessed March 27, 2017, https://s21.q4cdn.com/374334112/files/doc_downloads/operations/meliadine/Feb-11-2015-Meliadine-Technical-Report.pdf.

³⁵ J.C. Altman, "Sustainable development options on Aboriginal land: The hybrid economy in the twenty-first century," *Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research*, Discussion Paper No. 226, accessed Dec. 27, 2016, https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/40104/2/2001_DP226.pdf.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

activities, but also, “small business, not-for-profits, co-operatives... traditional or non-commodified production, and volunteer support to others.”³⁷ While this dissertation emphasizes the historical and current role of family, government, land claims organizations, and the private-sector in Rankin Inlet’s economy, it acknowledges the existence of economic activity in the community which lies outside the auspices of these institutions. In fact, as a large wage-centre which has experienced significant in-migration from across Nunavut and Canada’s south since the 1950s, the importance of Rankin Inlet’s “social economy” may be larger than in most (smaller) Nunavut settlements.

Dissertation Main Argument

The main argument advanced herein is that the institutional configuration of Rankin Inlet’s post-1999 economy is partly the outcome of historical strategic Inuit actions aimed at preserving Inuit well-being in the context of uncertainty associated with encroaching economic and political forces. These efforts occurred on two separate levels: 1. At the individual, family, and community level, Inuit carefully regulated the extent to which they engaged economically with new commercial actors (e.g., the whaler, fur trader, or mine manager) and/or continued to participate in traditional economic (or other) pursuits; and, 2. At the territorial and federal political level, Inuit political actors successfully attained for the Inuit of Nunavut various institutional mechanisms and resources which permit Inuit to control the type and extent of economic activities that occur within Nunavut, including, if necessary, the ability to resist

³⁷ Frances Abele, “The State and the Northern Social Economy: Research Prospects,” *The Northern Review* 30 (Spring 2009), 38.

unwelcome encroaching forces. These efforts bear important similarities to British society's 19th Century countermovement described by Polanyi. Both groups (Inuit and British society) used available means to limit the power of commercial forces in their lives. As an important aside, while Polanyi writes about both European (capitalist and pre-capitalist) and non-European indigenous societies, this dissertation references primarily his analysis with respect to Europe.

Discussion of Methodology

The dissertation's methodology pursues the following approach. First, in Chapter One, it attempts to clarify some of the key terms and concepts (in addition to "state" and institution" described earlier) which together inform the analytical lens through which the research question is examined. This discussion aims to explain the difference between commercial and non-commercial economy activity, show the role of institutions facilitating certain types of economic activities (and limiting and/or prohibiting other types), and explain why an excess of commercial activity in people's lives can generate resistance. It then discusses the ideological basis upon which various British colonial actors founded the Canadian state in 1867, and describes its function in early Canadian economic development. As stated, in the post WWII-period, the state became an important institution affecting the lives and economies of all Inuit. Understanding these factors associated with the creation of the Canadian state, helps to explain why it took the actions it did (and the potential effects of these actions) during this time.

Chapter Two attempts to develop a "baseline" model of the institutional structure of the pre-contact economy of Inuit of the Kivalliq region, against which to compare subsequent

institutional changes. The Chapter relies largely on anthropological sources, which in addition to recorded Inuit oral histories, are the most comprehensive source of information about pre-contact Inuit institutions. There are inherent limitations in using anthropological sources for this task. First, the anthropological studies stem from in the early-mid 1900s, at which time most Inuit of the Kivalliq region had already been in some contact with non-indigenous people. The institutions of Inuit of the Kivalliq region, therefore, would have likely already slightly changed (and cannot represent a pure pre-contact baseline). Second, for several reasons (e.g., language barrier) anthropologists would have been limited in their ability to understand how the society of Inuit of the Kivalliq region actually functioned. Further, their observations would have been coloured by their own biases and beliefs (as are those of all researchers). Third, the researchers observed only samples of Inuit of the Kivalliq region. There was variation in the institutional arrangements and functioning of Inuit groups across the region that anthropologists did not witness. Therefore, some of their generalizations about Inuit society may be incorrect. To mitigate these weaknesses, the dissertation attempts to triangulate anthropologists' work with recorded Inuit oral sources where possible. In order to mitigate the second and third weaknesses, the dissertation endeavours to avoid uncritically repeating the anthropologists' interpretations of their observations, and instead attempts to use primarily their descriptions of what they witnessed.

Chapter Two also discusses Inuit participation (an endogenous force) in each ensuing period of commercial activity in the Kivalliq Region (an exogenous force) in order to assess the ongoing and/or changing role of traditional institutions in the Inuit economy during each period

and/or to what degree economic activity occurred outside of traditional Inuit institutions. The chapter describes the type of commercial activity occurring in each period using secondary sources, which themselves are based in part on the journals of non-indigenous actors and to a lesser extent Inuit oral history. The dissertation interprets Inuit responses to these waves of commercial activity using the same sources (which describe Inuit/non-indigenous economic and social interaction).

Chapter Three describes the changing policy orientation of the Canadian state towards the Eastern Arctic and its people to 1953 (roughly the first work began on the time in Rankin Inlet). This discussion aims to show the type and quantity of power employed by the state over this period (as well as its reasons for exerting power) which influenced Inuit economic decisions. State actions during this time both facilitated and established boundaries within which future (i.e., post 1953) state and Inuit actions could occur. This discussion similarly relies mainly on secondary sources – based partly on government documents – and original government documents themselves.

Chapter Four describes how North Rankin Nickel Mines (NRNM) played a central role in the economic decision-making and activities of many Rankin Inlet Inuit residents during its period of operation (1953-62). It assesses the benefits and costs that miners may have faced by working at the mine, and provides an interpretation of how miners may have tackled decisions regarding whether to respond to requests/demands of NRNM management and/or those of the extended family. It also describes the role played by other institutions and actors (such as the state and the mine's financial backers) which contributed to the mine's opening. This Chapter

relies largely on the observations and analysis of Robert Williamson, who lived and worked in Rankin Inlet (as a federal bureaucrat) for a period while the mine was open. Williamson, now deceased, went on to become a Professor at the University of Saskatchewan and saved many documents (from both the government and the mining company) from his time in Rankin Inlet in a collection at the University of Saskatchewan Library. The author reviewed these documents, some of which the Chapter references. The Chapter cites materials by other researchers in Canada's Arctic and Rankin Inlet during this period, as well as government documents, mining journals, and recorded Inuit oral histories.

Lastly, Chapter Five describes important elements of the institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy from the closure of the nickel mine 1962 to the post-1999 period. As in the preceding chapter, it interprets how the prevailing institutional structure during this period may have affected Inuit economic decision making. It describes key national-level political and economic developments over the same time-frame which led to the signing of the NLCA and the creation of Nunavut, and provides an interpretation of the meaning of these developments using the main theoretical sources referenced in Chapter Two. This discussion cites a combination of government documents, consultant reports, anthropological studies, other secondary sources as well as interviews with Rankin Inlet residents (conducted by the author mainly in 2012).

As referenced above, the author interviewed twenty-one Inuit and non-Inuit residents of Rankin Inlet in November-December 2012, during which time he resided in the community. The key goal of performing the interviews was to understand the intersecting roles of the private sector, state (including Nunavut Land Claims Agreement institutions) and traditional

activities/institutions in Rankin Inlet's past and current economy. Interviews were conducted with "Key Informants" who had unique and wide-ranging knowledge in one of more of the abovementioned areas. Interviewees included: two past mayors, and one current mayor, community elders, Government of Nunavut (GN) officials, a representative from the Hunter and Trapper's Organization, and representatives of the business community. The author found interviewees through online research (e.g., government online directories), as well as, in large part, the recommendations of community members familiar with the settlement's diverse sources of knowledge. In this sense, many key informants were found via the "snowball sampling" approach. Interviews - which lasted approximately 30 minutes - were semi-structured, in that the author would begin with specific questions based on his best guess of the interviewee's area of knowledge but would allow the interviewee to take the conversation to areas in which the interviewee her/himself deemed important. The author took notes during all interviews.

Examples of topics discussed with interviewees in each category were:

- **Private sector:** key lines of business, number of employees, challenges of doing business in the Rankin Inlet and Nunavut, trends in economic activity in Rankin Inlet, exports to outside of Rankin Inlet and outside of the Arctic.
- **State/Inuit organizations:** role of economic development agencies in supporting local businesses, role of government in providing income (e.g., social assistance) and services to residents, role of government in supporting and regulating local harvesting, intersection of the traditional and commercial economic sectors, future economic development plans.

- **Traditional Activity:** Prevalence of hunting in Rankin Inlet; main species hunted; prevalence of the sale of harvested resources; community access to country food; social and spiritual importance of harvesting; youth participation and interest in traditional activities; potential impact of the upcoming Meliadine gold mine project on the ability of residents to participate in traditional activities.

Interview results are primarily referenced in Chapter Five of this dissertation which focuses on changes in Rankin Inlet's economy in recent years. The Chapter cites interview results in instances where (in the author's view) they provide insight into the institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy that is not available online or in easily accessible public documents. The author also compared interview results with all other sources of information reviewed in the research process in order to avoid including statements in the dissertation which seem unlikely to be true.

While the researcher was present in Rankin Inlet during November-December 2012, he attempted to unobtrusively increase his knowledge of the community in various ways. These included: regularly walking throughout the community, attending local events, shopping/eating at local businesses, boarding with a local family, immersing himself in Inuktitut when possible, and eating country food. In December 2016, the author returned to Rankin Inlet to present his preliminary findings to the Rankin Inlet municipal council and thank the community for its hospitality and participation in his research. He was also able to reconnect with many of the interviewees and friends he had made during his 2012 stay.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the key theoretical concepts that form the basis of this dissertation's research method and analysis. Using Marshall Sahlins's "continuum of reciprocity" in *Stone Age Economics* (1972), the Chapter begins by showing how people in stateless indigenous societies – including that of pre-contact Inuit in Nunavut – performed economic activity both to improve their material security as well as enhance social connections. The performance of economic activity, therefore, tended to support social harmony and preserve peace.

Commercial activity, conversely, is undertaken primarily for material reasons (i.e., increasing one's own wealth), with little or no value placed on enhancing the social ties of those involved. Commercial activity is normally facilitated in the modern context by the state, which guarantees, through the threat and use of force, each person's physical security (and near absolute) right to own property. In a commercial exchange³⁸ one transactor may exercise a great amount of domination and control over another, depending of the relative wealth of each transactor and the importance of the thing being exchanged for the survival of at least one of the transactors. Such a relation of domination often exists between employee and employer. As Meiksins Wood shows in, "The Separation of the Economic and the Political in Capitalism,"

³⁸ A central element of commercial activity is commercial exchange. Commercial activity also includes (for the purposes of this dissertation) tangential activities (e.g, the labour of the commercial actors) that facilitate the act of commercial exchange.

(1981) those without access to productive resources must rent themselves – often at very unattractive terms – to those who do own productive assets in order to survive. By participating in wage labour, the wage labourer often increases the material wealth of the owner of productive resources (while just keeping herself alive) thus reinforcing the relationship of domination.

In *The Great Transformation*, Karl Polanyi provides an account of the national-level process of political and institutional change by which commercial activity attained an unprecedented role in the 19th Century British economy, a state of affairs Polanyi refers to as “market society.”³⁹ Lacking alternate means of subsistence, and having been deprived of alternative mechanisms and social structures to support their material well-being, vast numbers of humans were forced to sell their labour on the market⁴⁰ in order to survive. This situation caused such general misery that British society “took measures to protect itself”⁴¹ from market dependence, by enacting of several pieces of legislation aimed at removing the individual’s immediate dependence on the market for survival, a process he calls the “countermovement.”⁴² Polanyi’s analysis is useful in the context of this dissertation because his work suggests that those whose lives become dominated by commercial forces may engage in resistance.⁴³ As discussed in the Introduction, how the Inuit of the Kivalliq region and (subsequently) Rankin Inlet responded to such commercial forces in different historical and institutional contexts, has played a key role in the institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s post 1999- economy.

³⁹ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 60.

⁴⁰ The dissertation assumes that by markets, Polanyi was referring to loci of commercial activity. locus

⁴¹ Ibid., 3.

⁴² Ibid., 147.

⁴³ Streeck and Thelen, “Introduction,” 4.

Having put forward a theory (primarily Meiksins Wood's) regarding the state's role in facilitating commercial activity, as well as possible reactions of groups impacted by encroaching commercial forces, the Chapter ends with a discussion on the ideological origins of the Canadian state and its unique economic functions. Based on a belief by those at its reins that state power should be used to create returns for capital, following its inception the Canadian state pursued a "National Policy" based on westward agricultural expansion and settlement, and the implementation of a protective tariff. For the first several decades of the Canadian state's existence, Canada's North was considered too remote to offer opportunities for profitable commercial activity. As such, the Canadian state was – as compared to Canada's West – largely absent from Canada's North until World War Two (WWII). As Chapter Three discusses, the absence of the state in Kivalliq region until the mid-20th Century meant that the Inuit of the region had one less source of power to contend with when regulating their involvement with various commercial actors from the early 18th Century to the mid-20th Century.

Sahlins's Continuum of Reciprocity

Using Marshall Sahlins's discussion of reciprocity in *Stone Age Economics* as a reference point, the dissertation aims to show that the economic activity of pre-contact Inuit was not commercial in character. According to Sahlins, exchanges of material things occur on continuum, which ranges from those in which social connection is the chief concern of participants (and material concerns are absent) to those in which individual desire for material

gain is paramount.⁴⁴ Sahlins identifies three particular forms of exchange on the continuum - Generalized reciprocity, Balanced reciprocity, and Negative reciprocity – distinguished by on the importance placed by transactors in each form of exchange on social considerations.

At one end of the continuum, “Generalized reciprocity... describes transactions which are “putatively altruistic.”⁴⁵ Sahlins includes under this category actions such as “‘sharing,’ ‘free gift,’ ‘help,’ and ‘generosity’.” For exchanges falling under this category, “[t]he material side of the transaction is repressed by the social.”⁴⁶ Anticipation of material return for giving may exist, “[b]ut the counter is not stimulated by time, quantity or quality: the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite.”⁴⁷ When acts of reciprocity do occur, they tend to occur at times of a particular need for the first giver, or when the initial receiver is able to reciprocate. Often, where generalized reciprocity occurs, a stronger party may act as primarily “giver” to a weaker party over time.⁴⁸

In exchanges Sahlins considers as “Balanced reciprocity... the reciprocation is the customary equivalent of the thing received and is without delay.”⁴⁹ Sahlins includes in this category some forms of “gift-exchange”, “trade” and the involvement of “primitive money.”⁵⁰ Concern for balance in the “economic” value of things exchanged takes an elevated position (compared to forms of Generalized reciprocity), with “the material side of the transaction...

⁴⁴ Ibid., 193-196.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 193.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 194.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 195.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

[being] at least as critical as the social.”⁵¹ Thus, he notes, a good measure of whether an exchange relationship is General or Balanced, is its ability to permit sustained “flows”⁵² of goods from one transactor to another with the latter incapable of doing so.⁵³

Finally, he classifies as Negative reciprocity those forms exchange in which the participants “attempt to get something for nothing.”⁵⁴ Sahlins includes under this form of exchange, “‘haggling’ or ‘barter’... ‘theft’ and other varieties of seizure.”⁵⁵ Negative Reciprocity is, at once, the most “economic” and the least “social” form of exchange with actors engaging in a transaction with decidedly “opposed interests.”⁵⁶ Each participant wishes to maximize his net economic gain, not to enhance an interpersonal connection.⁵⁷

According to Sahlins, peace in stateless societies⁵⁸ is maintained in part by exchange tending towards the Generalized end of the spectrum. To support this point, Sahlins references anthropologist, Marcel Mauss who (himself in agreement with Hobbes) believes that all societies have an inherent tendency to devolve into war. Whereas Hobbes argued, classically, that an all-powerful state was required for societies to transcend the state of war, Mauss believed human economic activity itself, specifically the giving of gifts, fulfills this role in indigenous societies.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Sahlins uses the word “primitive” instead of “stateless.”

Through continuous acts of gift giving, Mauss believed, individuals surrender part of themselves to others, thereby reducing the need for war.⁵⁹ As Sahlins puts it,

[i]f friends make gifts, gifts make friends... A great proportion of primitive exchange underwrites or initiates social relations... Thus do primitive peoples transcend the Hobbesian chaos. For the condition of primitive society is the absence of a public and sovereign power: persons and (especially) groups confront each other not merely as distinct interests but with the possible inclination and certain right to physically prosecute these interests. Force is decentralized... the social compact has yet to be drawn, the state nonexistent. So peacemaking is not a sporadic intersocietal event, it is a continuous process going on within society itself.⁶⁰

Before describing commercial exchange in more detail, the Chapter will briefly discuss Sahlins's understanding of how kinship and reciprocity relate to one another. As would be expected, Sahlins asserts that as kinship ties increase, exchanges tend toward Generalized reciprocity. Conversely, as kinship factors decline (as lineage between people or groups becomes more distant) exchange may assume a more Negative character.⁶¹ Residential structure and physical distance may overlap with kinship factors in a given stateless society to influence the form(s) of reciprocity which occur:

[T]he tribal plan can be viewed as a series of more and more inclusive kinship-residential sectors, and reciprocity seen then to vary in character by sectoral position... The close kinsmen who render assistance are particularly near kinsmen in a spatial sense: it is in regard to people of the household, the camp, hamlet, or village that compassion is required, inasmuch as interaction is intense and peaceable

⁵⁹ Ibid., 171.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 186-187.

⁶¹ Ibid., 191, 196.

sociability essential. But the quality of mercy is strained in peripheral sectors, strained by kinship distance, so is less likely of fellow tribesmen of another village than among covillagers.... Reciprocity accordingly inclines toward balance and chicane in proportion to sectoral distance... In brief, a general model of the play of reciprocity may be developed by superimposing the society's sectoral plan upon the reciprocity continuum.⁶²

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between kinship / "residential sector" and form of reciprocity described above.

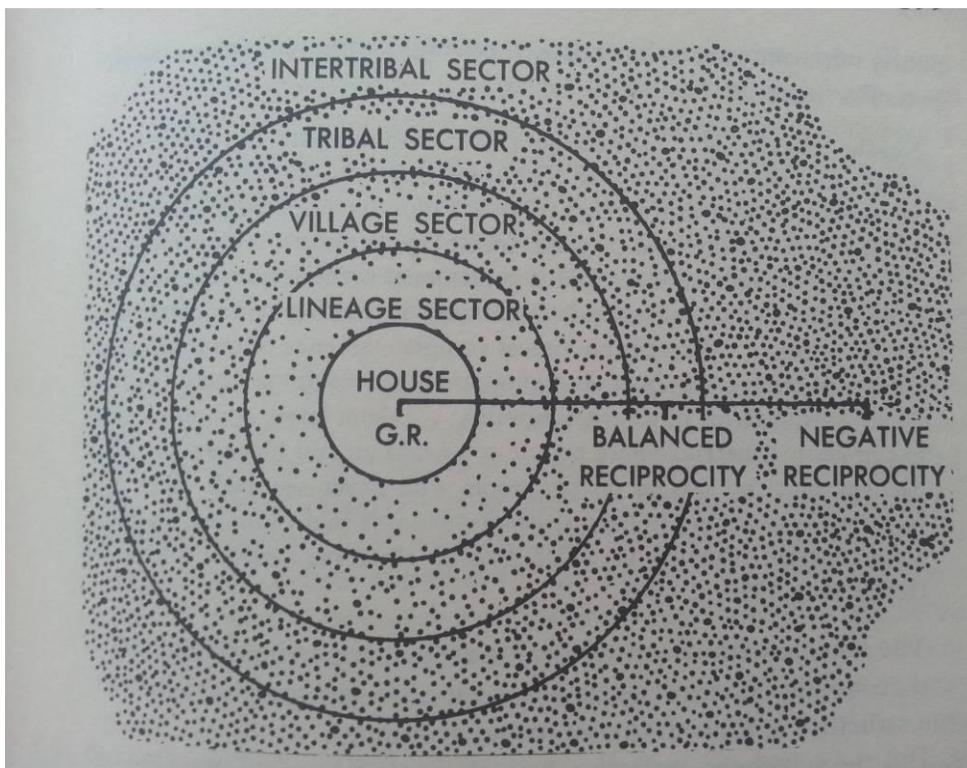


Figure 2 - Sahlins's Framework of "Reciprocity and Kinship Residential Sectors"⁶³

⁶² Ibid., 198.

⁶³ Ibid., 99.

Commercial Exchange as Negative Reciprocity

A useful starting point for describing commercial exchange is that it generally lies on the “Negative reciprocity” end of Sahlins’s continuum. In a commercial transaction, the relative values of the things exchanged is a supreme consideration; each transactor aims to maximize her net economic gain from the transaction (i.e., get as much as possible and give as little as possible). The importance placed on engendering social relationships by the transactors, through the exchange, is negligent or non-existent.⁶⁴

Commercial exchange,⁶⁵ according to C. A. Gregory in *Gifts and Commodities* (himself referencing an insight from Marx) tends to occur between “transactors (who) are in a state of *reciprocal independence*, ie. ... transactors (who) are strangers, aliens.”⁶⁶ Similarly, the things exchanged are totally separate or alien from the transactors themselves. This stands in direct contrast to gift exchange in which one symbolically gives up an “inalienable” piece of one’s self.⁶⁷

The Role of the State in Commercial Exchange

The state, as discussed below, typically plays a fundamental role in facilitating commercial exchange. Specifically, through the enforcement of property rights and contractual commitments and the protection of personal security, the state permits individuals to hold and exchange wealth without fear that one’s person will be attacked or possessions stolen. In this

⁶⁴ C. A. Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities* (London: Academic Press Inc. 1982), 19.

⁶⁵ Gregory uses the term “commodity economy” (1982, 43).

⁶⁶ Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities*, 42.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

way, the state frees individuals from the types of social considerations that influence economic decisions in many stateless indigenous societies.

Although each transactor voluntarily enters into a given commercial transaction in order to maximize her material interest, depending (as mentioned) on a number of factors, including the relative wealth of each transactor as well as the importance for survival of the things being exchanged, in reality commercial transactions be can loci of domination and exploitation. As Meiksins Wood points out, this is evident in the wage labour process, wherein those without wealth (and who are unable to independently secure a material subsistence), although not directly coerced, provide their labour in exchange for wages merely to survive.⁶⁸ As a condition of paying wages, the owner of the productive resources appropriates a portion of what the labourer produces (equal to difference between the value of what she produces and what she is paid in wages).⁶⁹

Karl Polanyi and Human Responses to Commercial Forces

In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi provides an account of how the scenario discussed above (in which humans – deprived of alternative means of survival – are compelled to rent their labour in order to survive) became a common state of affairs in 19th Century Britain. For Polanyi, it represented the culmination of a sustained effort by the state to abolish existing non-commercial forms of economic activity – as well as the institutions which supported them – in

⁶⁸ Meiksins Wood, “The Separation of the economic,” 80.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

order to create a “market society”⁷⁰ whereby virtually everything is available for commercial exchange. This situation was so harmful to human life, he argues, society resisted through legislative acts meant to reduce human dependence on the market.

A useful starting point for exploring relevant aspects of Polanyi’s thought is his views on economic activity in stateless societies. In alignment with Sahlins, he maintains that in a stateless social context, the prime motivation behind an individual’s economic behaviour is not the augmentation of his material wealth, but to increase his prestige.⁷¹ In Polanyi’s words, “man’s economy, as a rule is submerged (embedded) in his social relationships. He does not act so as to safeguard his individual interest in the possession of material goods; he acts so as to safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets.”⁷² In non-state societies, a “premium” is placed on gift giving and ostensibly selfless behavior of the type which would fall on the “generalized reciprocity” pole of Sahlins’ continuum.⁷³ Polanyi argues that this dynamic which rewards selfless behavior, is ultimately beneficial for the society as a whole, because it “keeps all its members from starving unless it [the community] is itself borne down by catastrophe, in which case interests are again threatened collectively, not individually.”⁷⁴

Even the economies of “non-primitive” societies with states and/or state-like institutions and markets have, according to Polanyi, historically been “embedded” in institutions aimed at preserving social and material stability. The first markets in human history were formed around

⁷⁰ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 32.

⁷¹ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 48.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 48.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

“long-distance trade, a result of the geographical location of goods, and the ‘division of labor’ given by location.”⁷⁵ This contention is consistent with Sahlins’s view that the propensity to Negative reciprocity increases in proportion to geographic and kin distance among transactors. When long distance commerce began in Britain, economic activity and the exchange of goods at the local level remained non-commercial, in accordance with feudal structures. Eventually, “local” markets did materialize, a development whose origins, according to Polanyi coincided with urban living, however, they were “surrounded by a number of safeguards designed to protect the prevailing economic organization of society from interference on the part of market practices. The peace of the market was secured at the price of rituals and ceremonies which restricted its scope while ensuring its ability function within... narrow limits.”⁷⁶ These “safeguards” ensured that rural areas of Britain remained non-commercial, and that “long-distance” trade and “local markets” remained separated spheres of economic activity.⁷⁷

The scope of the market within Britain⁷⁸ expanded in the 1600s, however, as the state⁷⁹ began to remove existing institutional mechanisms which had constrained its reach. An important example of state action in this regard was the removal of locally instituted barriers to trade which protected merchants engaging in local commerce (i.e., at the town level) from cheap

⁷⁵ Ibid., 61.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 65.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Polanyi’s main focus is on the historical development of markets in Britain. However, similar trends were occurring, he notes, in other parts of Western Europe (2001, 66).

⁷⁹The state was itself during this period growing in terms of power and size and was acting in accordance with mercantilist logic which called for, “the marshalling of the resources of the whole national territory to the purposes of power in foreign affairs” (Polanyi 2001, 9).

imports.⁸⁰ The market's scope reached a high point in 1834, at which time the Speenhamland Law was repealed, which, since 1795, had provided peasants with an "allowance" guaranteeing them, "the right to live."⁸¹ As a consequence, vast amounts of the British population had no choice but to work for wages to survive, creating, for the first time, a national pool of readily accessible labour. At that point, according to Polanyi, markets in Britain had - instead of being an appendage of society as had been the norm throughout history - themselves "subordinated [society] to meet... [their] requirements."⁸² Put differently, those without wealth - deprived of an alternative source of subsistence - had no choice but rent their labour, and thereby serve the economic interests of those with wealth, in order to stay alive.

This new state of affairs, in which state-erected markets had supplanted previous mechanisms for organizing human social and economic matters (which he labels "market society") was, in Polanyi's view, artificial, harmful and unsustainable.⁸³ Market society's artificiality lay in the fact that, "land, labour and money" were treated as "commodities" although they "empirically" were not.⁸⁴ Defining commodities as, "objects produced for sale on the market" Polanyi argues that labour could not be considered as such, noting that it, "is only another name for a human activity which goes with life itself, which in its turn is not produced

⁸⁰ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 68-69.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 74.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 75.

for sale but entirely different reasons.”⁸⁵ Land, he states, is “only another name for nature” and money is “merely a token of purchasing power,” neither of which are “produced at all.”⁸⁶

The harm and unsustainability of market society are intimately connected. Describing, in particular, how the commoditization of labour hurts individuals, he writes that,

‘labor’ power cannot be shoved about, used indiscriminately or even let unused, without also affecting the human individual who happens to be the bearer of this peculiar commodity. In disposing of a man’s labor power the system, would, incidentally dispose of the physical, psychological, and moral entity “man” attached. Robbed of the protective covering of cultural institutions, human beings would perish from the effects of social exposure; they would die as the victims of acute social dislocation through vice, perversion, crime and starvation.⁸⁷

Such a market society was, however, ultimately unsustainable because those subjected to it actively resisted their wholesale commoditization in order to avoid and/or mitigate these outcomes. In a process refers to as the “countermovement,” 19th Century British society “took measures to protect itself” largely through the enactment of “protective legislation” which was designed to reduce human dependence on the market for survival.⁸⁸ This legislation which covered areas such as, “public health, factory conditions, social insurance... and so on” was spontaneous, in that it emerged as a response to societal suffering, and not due to a deep-seated ideology, or an “anti-liberal conspiracy.”⁸⁹ In this respect, the origins of the spontaneous

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 76.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 3; Polanyi identifies other several causes of liberal market unsustainability; Similar acts of resistance to the emergence to market society occurred elsewhere in Europe (2001, 154).

⁸⁹ Ibid., 153.

countermovement were radically different from the creation of a “market society” which was “planned” and implemented by the state.⁹⁰

Using Polanyi’s conceptual framework as an analytical resource, this dissertation takes the view that pre-contact “economy” of Inuit of the Kivalliq region was embedded in society with the extended family as the principal societal institution (social structure) governing social and economic affairs. Unlike in a “market society,” there was no inherent major tension between each Inuk’s economic activity and individual and group wellness. Evidence to support this assumption is provided in the following chapter (Chapter Two). Polanyi’s analysis also suggests that, depending on its intensity and form, the imposition of commercial activity on Inuit of the Kivalliq region – which occurred in various forms and phases over 200 years – could have had harmful effects, and likely elicited responses from those affected aimed at limiting any harm. Examining and understanding these responses is a central goal of this dissertation.

The use of Polanyi’s concepts to explain and/or interpret the impact of commercial forces on stateless Inuit society could be criticized on the grounds that Polanyi’s analytical focus dealt primarily with a different historical context (i.e. pre- to post Industrial Revolution Britain and Europe). In particular, the use of the concept of “countermovement” could be criticized given that, according to Polanyi, in Britain and Europe it was manifested largely through the passage of social protection-oriented legislation, an avenue of action not available to Inuit of the Kivalliq region throughout large parts of their history of interacting with commercial forces.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 146-147.

Three points are offered in response. First, although it is true that the countermovement described in *The Great Transformation* - which occurred in Britain and across Europe in the 19th century - often took the form of socially oriented legislation, Polanyi emphasizes its spontaneous nature.⁹¹ It is therefore plausible that a countermovement could take a different *form* in a different historical, and societal/institutional context (e.g. Canada's Waster Arctic in the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries). Second, as Chapter Five discusses, Inuit from the Kivalliq Region and across Nunavut did call for – and were successful in having implemented – legislation to insulate themselves from commercial incursions when opportunities to do so arose in the second half of the 20th Century.

Third, Polanyi himself discusses the negative impact of commercial forces on indigenous societies in his 1944 essay “Class Interest and Social Change.” In this work he argues that the imposition of large scale commercial activity on an indigenous society is akin to social upheaval. He writes,

[t]he catastrophe of the native community is a direct result of the rapid and violent disruption of the basic institutions of the victim (whether force is used in the process or not does not seem altogether relevant). These institutions are disrupted by the very fact that a market economy is foisted upon an entirely differently organized community; labour and land are made into commodities, which, again, is only a short formula for the liquidation of every and any cultural institution in an organic society.⁹²

⁹¹ Ibid., 147.

⁹² Karl Polanyi, “Class Interest and Social Change,” in *Primitive, Archaic, and Modern Economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi*, ed. George Dalton (New York: Anchor Books, 1968), 49.

Polanyi does not offer a precise definition of the term “cultural institution,” however he is likely referring to social structures such as the extended family (and accompanying customs, traditions, and behaviours) which support the economy and life of indigenous societies. He writes that the only way to defend indigenous societies from the destructive commercial intrusion is to restore these cultural institutions and isolate them from market forces. He thus calls for an indigenous quasi-counter-movement, writing that, “[c]ultural degradation can be stopped only by social measures, incommensurable with economic standards of life, such as the restoration of tribal land tenure or the isolation of the community from the influence of capitalistic markets.”⁹³

Ideological Basis and Function of the Early Canadian State

A contributing factor, according to Polanyi, as to why “market society” was imposed on 19th Britain, is that state began to serve the unique material interests of the “middle class” which was expanding in Britain for technological and other reasons.⁹⁴ In the Canadian context, the very creation of the Canadian state⁹⁵ in 1867, as well as its early economic policies (collectively referred to as the “National Policy”) can similarly be understood the use of state power to support specific class interests. Frances Abele argues as much in, “Canadian Contradictions: Forty Years of Northern Political Development,” writing that the idea of the Canadian state came from a “fractious colonial elite who conceived... [it] as a solution to various problems of markets and capitalization created by American protectionism and expansionism and the waning of

⁹³ Polanyi, “Class Interest and Social Change,” 56.

⁹⁴ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 82, 105.

⁹⁵ Referred to hereafter as Canada.

commercial privileges granted to British colonies.”⁹⁶ Understanding why the Canadian state (henceforth referred to as Canada) was created, as well as its economic policies, provides insight as to why it largely ignored the Eastern Arctic and its inhabitants until approximately WWII.

In the years preceding Canada’s creation, the Province of Canada’s⁹⁷ political system was unstable (governments frequently changed), its economic future uncertain (access to key U.S. markets was tenuous), and it feared the possibility of armed conflict with the U.S.⁹⁸ Key Province of Canada actors considered the expansion of the its “political and economic boundaries” to include the Maritime Colonies (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island), which would reinforce trade flows along an east-west axis, as a solution to these challenges.⁹⁹ Following several rounds of negotiations by colonial representatives, the state which was created in 1867¹⁰⁰ was a federation with legislative power divided between the newly created provinces and federal government. Some Province of Canada negotiators, such as Canada’s first Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, had advocated the creation of a near unitary state,¹⁰¹ in part to avoid the internal conflict experienced by the U.S. during its Civil War. His

⁹⁶ Frances Abele, “Canadian Contradictions: Forty Years of Northern Political Development,” *Arctic* 40, no. 4 (1987): 311.

⁹⁷ The Province of Canada was a pre-Confederation British colony comprising territory including in the present-day provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

⁹⁸ Robert Dawson, *The Government of Canada* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1957 (1947)), 24-26; The Province of Canada was a settler colony in British North America which was divided into the provinces Ontario and Quebec (of the Canadian state) in 1867.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁰⁰ Canada was created the by granting of Royal assent to the British North America (BNA) Act (an act of the British Parliament).

¹⁰¹ Chester Martin, *Foundations of Canadian Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955), 319; Dawson, *The Government of Canada*, 27, 44.

preference however, did not prevail and provinces retained significant legislative power in areas such as education, hospitals, and the administration of justice.¹⁰²

The conviction held by Macdonald and others that a strong state could facilitate economic expansion and development was grounded in Toryism, a then influential socio-economic ideology. Whitaker writes that Toryism represents a localized adaptation of Burkeanism, (a conservative philosophy enunciated by Irish/English politician and writer Edmund Burke) a set of ideas which supported the continuance of hierarchical and hereditary institutions (e.g., the monarchy) as well as “market liberalism.”¹⁰³ In the British North American context, the “Tory mind” held that the state should play a strong role in the maintenance of class divisions and the promotion of “national economic development.”¹⁰⁴ According to Whitaker, such a belief can be traced to Loyalist settlers – who migrated north from the U.S. during periods revolutionary activity – as well as early “colonial administrators [who] came to Canada to Canada armed with a mission to build a conservative, un-American, and undemocratic society in the northern half of the continent.”¹⁰⁵ Although Whitaker notes that certain interests opposed Toryist logic during the pre-Confederation period - notably

¹⁰² Dawson, *The Government of Canada*, 98; See BNA Act 1867, section 91 for a complete list of provincial legislative powers.

¹⁰³ Reg Whitaker, “Images of the State in Canada,” in *The Canadian state: political economy and political power*, ed. Leo Panitch (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 36.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

“independent family farmers” in Upper Canada – Toryism was, for the most part, a belief grounded in the pre-Confederation anglo-settler population at large.¹⁰⁶

Toryism helped to legitimize the control of the state by a wealth owning class.¹⁰⁷ In the period leading up to Confederation, the same actors often led both state institutions and powerful commercial organizations. Hence, according to Whitaker, it is difficult during this period to speak of distinct “public” and “private” regions of activity.¹⁰⁸ The passage below from Whitaker summarizes how the Tory state served narrow class interests,

The state offered an instrumentality for facilitating capital accumulation in private hands, and for carrying out the construction of a vitally necessary infrastructure; for providing the Hobbesian coercive framework of public order and enforcement of contract within which capitalist development could alone flourish; and, finally, for communicating the symbols of imperial legitimacy which reinforced the legitimacy of unlimited appropriation in a small number of private hands. The basic engine of development in Canada was to be private enterprise, but it was to be *private enterprise at public expense*. That is the unique feature of our [Canadian] tradition.¹⁰⁹

Post Confederation National Policy

Post-Confederation, Canada pursued a suite of economic development policies grounded in the Toryist ideology known collectively as the “National Policy.” According to Eden and Molot, the National Policy¹¹⁰ had three foundational elements: the implementation of a

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 37,39.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹¹⁰ Eden and Molot label what this dissertation refers to the “National Policy” as the “First National Policy,” or a period of “defensive expansionism” (1993, 233).

protectionist tariff; the promotion of immigration and settlement in the West; and the building of an east-west railway.¹¹¹ This group of policies meant that,

like other industrializing countries in the late 1800s, Canada pursued a policy of import substitution industrialization. The intent was to generate east-west trade, exchanging central manufactured goods for western staples. The tariff was also expected to generate government revenues to finance the building of the cross country railroad which would carry immigrants to the western frontier.¹¹²

Put differently, the National Policy, which Fowke argues, “ [a]fter 1867... became the leading, if not the sole, objective of the national [federal] government...”¹¹³ served to create new (western) markets for the central Canadian manufacturers, protect these markets from U.S. competition, and allow central Canada to obtain products from the west.

Eden and Molot write that the foundations for the National Policy were laid prior to Confederation, notably the pre-Confederation proposal for a “transcontinental railway.”¹¹⁴ According to Fowke, the first proposal to implement a national protectionist tariff, however, was made by John A. Macdonald in 1878 during his tenure as Leader of the Opposition. It was implemented after his election to office in 1879 and was continued by the successive Liberal government despite their previous opposition to it.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Lorrain Eden and Maureen A. Molot, "Canada's National Policies: Reflections on 125 Years" in *Canadian Public Policy* 19, no. 3 (1993), 233.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 235.

¹¹³ V.C Fowke, "The National Policy-Old and New," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 18, no. 3 (August, 1952), 276.

¹¹⁴ Eden and Molot, "Canada's National Policies," 235.

¹¹⁵ Fowke, "The National Policy," 272.

Treaties with Local Indigenous Groups as a Tool for Westward Economic Expansion

Westward immigration significantly increased in the early 20th Century. Fowke notes that between 1900 and 1931, the territory to the west of Ontario, (what would become known as Canada's Prairie Provinces) experienced "fivefold" population growth, to 2.3 million (compared to a doubling of the entire population of Canada). As implied, many of these settlers were farmers, with "the area of farms increas[ing] sevenfold... from 1901 to 1931... with 60 million acres of improved land."¹¹⁶

Indigenous peoples, however, were already living on much of this land. According to existing law (specifically the Royal Proclamation of 1763) any territory which had not been "ceded to or purchased by" the Crown was "reserved" for indigenous populations, whose right to it could be ceded only through a negotiated settlement with the Crown.¹¹⁷ Therefore, notes Dickason, in the post-Confederation period, the Government set about to negotiate and sign treaties with local indigenous groups in Canada's west in order to "open(ing) up Indian lands for settlement and development."¹¹⁸ The impetus for the negotiation of each post-Confederation treaty (often referred to as the Numbered Treaties) arose as the land it enveloped became valuable from the federal government's perspective and clashes with its indigenous inhabitants became a possibility.¹¹⁹ Thus, between 1871 and 1899 eight treaties were signed (officially by

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹¹⁷ "Royal Proclamation of 1763: Relationships, Rights and Treaties – Poster," Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, accessed October 20, 2016, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1379594359150/1379594420080>.

¹¹⁸ Olive Patricia Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1994 (1992)), 275; Abele "Canadian Contradictions," 311.

¹¹⁹ Dickason, *Canada's First Nations*, 275.

the Crown) with local indigenous populations, covering most of the territory of the current Prairie Provinces and Alberta as well as a small part of central/southern (present-day) Northwest Territories.¹²⁰

The terms of the treaties varied, but in general, they involved a cash payment to each local indigenous group, guarantees of access to small areas of land, and the provision of schools in exchange for the extinguishment of title. Treaty 3 included the additional guarantee of agricultural, hunting and fishing supplies, while Treaty 6 contained the “provision to maintain a medicine chest,” to support the health and welfare of the signatory indigenous population.¹²¹ Dickason attributes the increasingly favorable terms for indigenous signatories in part to an improved understanding of how government officials approached negotiations.¹²²

Emergence of Canada’s “North” as Conceptually Separate from the “West”

To understand how the North (including the Inuit-inhabited Eastern Arctic) fit into in the its westward-expansionist economic program, it is useful to briefly discuss the process by which Canada (which in 1867 covered a territory from the Atlantic Ocean to roughly the Great Lakes region) acquired its vast western and northern territories.

The regions now regarded as the “West” and “North” of Canada, became part of the country in two phases: first through the transfer of Rupert’s Land and the North-Western

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 274.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 279, 282.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 280.

Territory in 1870,¹²³ and, second through the transfer of the Crown's remaining Arctic assets (the Arctic Archipelago) in 1880. Foreign powers did not contest the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada, however, issues pertaining to sovereignty over the Arctic Archipelago were eventually raised eventually by states, a matter which is discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.¹²⁴

Large parts of these territories – understood collectively in the post-Confederation period as the “Northwest” - were consecutively portioned off into Canadian provinces after 1870, beginning with British Columbia (B.C.) on Canada's west coast in 1871, followed by Alberta and Saskatchewan to B.C.'s west in 1905. The boundaries of the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba (itself established in 1870) were extended northward in 1912, such that the remaining “Northwest Territories” (including Nunavut) outside of provincial jurisdiction were almost entirely North of the 60th parallel. The Yukon Territory, which covers the region directly east of Alaska and north of British Columbia, was created in 1898.¹²⁵

According to Zaslow, Canada's West and North did not become distinct cognitive concepts until the completion of the east-west transcontinental railroad along a “southern route”

¹²³ Prior to their transfer, Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory were controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company (through a Charter given to it by the British Crown).

¹²⁴ Gordon W. Smith, *Territorial Sovereignty in the Canadian North: A Historical Outline of the Problem* (Northern Co-ordination and Research Centre, Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, 1963), 2.

¹²⁵ Morris Zaslow, *The Northwest Territories 1905-1980* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 1984), 3; “ARCHIVED - Canadian Confederation,” Library and Archives Canada, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-3070-e.html>

in 1883. Prior to this, economic development along the western frontier was considered (roughly) “Northwestern.”¹²⁶ The choice of the southern railroad, notes Zaslow,

...diverted the course of settlement, investment, and attention away from the northward facing settlements of the Saskatchewan valley... Canadians’ attention became focussed now on the empty farmlands and ranchlands of the south that drew their settlers from eastern Canada, the US, and Europe, and looked Eastward rather than northward. *The “Northwest” for practical purposes, became replaced by the “West,”* and for twenty years Canada’s primary developmental task became to populate the southern agriculture prairies, establish its institutions there, and integrate its economy and society into those of Canada as a whole. *Until that task was well on the way to completion, the North would have to mark time.*¹²⁷ (italics added)

Put another way, following Confederation, the remaining British Northern American territory (from the Pacific Coast, to Ontario’s border, and northward) was viewed as a single entity, open to be developed for the benefit of Central Canada and (to a lesser extent) the East. Following the southern construction of the railroad however, Canada’s cognitive frame changed, with the North and West representing distinct separate regions. Government officials considered the West as integral to national economic development, whereas the North was not.

In *Political Economy of the North* (1968), K.J. Rea explains why prior to WWII Canada’s North had been considered largely economically unviable by the federal government. He writes that, “the territories comprising the North, “were ‘remnants’ in every sense of the word. They

¹²⁶ Morris Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North: 1870-1914* (Toronto/Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971), 28-29.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

were lands of patently inferior quality from the standpoint of economic potentiality. While Canadians had no intention... of discarding them or letting some other country use them, they were set aside, presumably in the hope that they would be useful in the future if not the present".¹²⁸ There were brief periods between Confederation and WWII, in which southerners hoped that the North – largely to the west of present-day Nunavut - could be developed to the economic benefit of the rest of the country, including discovery of oil at Fort Norman in present day Northwest Territories.¹²⁹ However, none were believed to be sufficiently promising that the Government considered making any taking a leading role “promot[ing]” or “accelerat[ing]” Northern development through large scale investments as it did in the West, for instance through the construction of the railroad.¹³⁰

In part due to the North’s perceived lack of economic importance, its indigenous inhabitants – particularly the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic – were largely overlooked by the federal government until the post-WWII period (with important exceptions, discussed in Chapter Three). The minimal interaction between Inuit and the federal government prior to WWII, contrasts with the experience of the indigenous people of Canada’s west, whose very existence was a policy problem to be resolved by state officials soon after Confederation. As discussed in Chapter Three the federal government’s minimal presence in the Eastern Arctic to the post-WWII period

¹²⁸ K.J. Rea, *The Political Economy of the Canadian North: An Interpretation of the Course of Development in the Northern Territories of Canada to the Early 1960s* (University of Toronto Press, 1968), 56.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

was likely an important factor in Inuit being able exercising control over their interaction with commercial actors who did arrive.

Conclusion

This Chapter began by presenting some of the important assumptions and ideas that underlie the dissertation's analysis, beginning with Sahlins's continuum of exchange which shows how economic exchange ranges from that in which social considerations are paramount and economic ones non-existent (i.e., Generalized Reciprocity) to the complete reverse (i.e., Negative Reciprocity). A society's institutional configuration influences the prevalence of the various forms of economic exchange (and supporting economic activities more broadly) along Sahlins's spectrum which occur. In the case of stateless societies, such as the pre-contact Inuit of Canada, the chief societal institutions tended to promote economic activity towards the generalized end of Sahlins's spectrum. Commercial activity, conversely, which Inuit of the Kivalliq region began to encounter in the 18th Century, falls on the negative end, and is often facilitated by a state that ensures the personal security and wealth of autonomous actors. While commercial transactions are voluntary, they are often based on relations of exploitation and domination, depending on the relative wealth of transactors and the importance of the things exchanged.¹³¹

Polanyi suggests that a society encountering forces aiming to expand the scope of commercial activity therein – a process that may undermine existing social structures and

¹³¹ Voluntary in the sense that no one is directly coerced by another human.

productive activities that promote community well-being – may engage in acts of resistance. The following Chapters assess the destructive potential of the commercial forces which Inuit of the Kivalliq region encountered between 18th and 20th Centuries and examines their responses to these forces.

Finally, this Chapter described aspects of the ideological basis and economic function early Canadian state. At its inception, the Canadian state was an instrument for creating new commercial opportunities. As represented by the post-Confederation National Policy, the key tenets of its early program for economic development were protectionist tariffs and westward expansion (involving the building of an east-west railroad to facilitate the movement of goods and people, encouraging white settlement, and settling disputes over land ownership with local indigenous groups through the signing of treaties). Due in part to the construction of the railroad along a “southern route,” Canada’s North, and the Arctic in particular, fell outside of economic development strategy. As discussed in the following chapter, the limited state presence in Canada’s Arctic (both pre- and post-confederation) would significantly affect the range responses available to Inuit of the Kivalliq region as non-indigenous commercial actors arrived in their region.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the social and geographic origins of the Inuit of the Kivalliq region, and describes key elements of the institutional the context in which pre-contact economic activity occurred. As mentioned in the Introduction, the pre-contact economic activity of Inuit of the Kivalliq region was, to use Polanyi's term, "embedded" in society. It was non-commercial and largely conducted in accordance with rules and norms associated with its main pre-contact societal institution - the extended family. Next, the Chapter discusses Inuit responses to the waves of commercial activity that entered the region between approximately 1720 and the early 1950s (not including the beginning of work on the nickel mine in Rankin Inlet in 1953, which is discussed in Chapter Four). The chapter categories these waves of commercial activity into three different eras: 1. The "Fort Prince of Wales Era," 1719-1860; 2. The "Whaling Era," 1860-1915; and, 3. The "Fur Trade Era," 1915-1953.

At least some Inuit of the Kivalliq region participated in commercial activity in each of the three "eras." They probably did so in order to attain material benefits from said participation and because, for the most part, it did not excessively interfere with their ability to perform traditional economic pursuits (e.g., subsistence hunting) nor does not appear to have threatened the extended family as the pre-eminent institution governing Inuit economic behaviour. Inuit participation in commercial activity was a secondary pursuit, with the bulk of economic activity remaining embedded in Inuit social structures.

There are several possible reasons why Inuit participation in commercial activity did not displace traditional socio-economic pursuits or undermine existing social structures, including:

1. Relatively few commercial actors entered the region; the commercial activity which occurred was often on small scale and episodic and was, itself, not sufficient to ensure the survival of a family;
2. The very limited (sometimes non-existent) presence of state officials to protect property and persons, meant that non-Inuit commercial actors could not maintain a purely commercial disposition in their interaction with Inuit. In the whaling era in particular, because the non-Inuit commercial actors benefitted from Inuit knowledge and skills for their own survival, the economic activity that occurred between Inuit and non-Inuit had an important social dimension, and therefore was closer to the middle of Sahlins's spectrum of exchange (i.e., Balanced reciprocity).
3. Neither commercial nor state actors had an incentive to (and thus did not attempt to) deny Inuit the ability to secure a living from the vast land and sea;
4. Inuit participation in commercial activity (e.g., fur trapping) could often be conducted at the same time as non-commercial activity (e.g., subsistence hunting).

Inuit Thule Ancestry

Canada's Inuit population are likely descendants of the Thule people who began an eastward migration across the Canadian Arctic from Alaska around 900 CE, largely in response

to environmental changes.¹³² Between roughly 900 and 1200CE, the northern hemisphere experienced a period of climatic change called the “Neo-Atlantic” in which air temperatures rose significantly. In Scandinavia, notes Fossett, this warming led to increased agriculture yields, providing the population with the economic security to expand and colonize surrounding territory including Iceland.¹³³ In the far northwest of North America, the diminution of sea ice altered sea mammals’ migration patterns. Baleen whales, in particular, began to remain in Arctic waters year round, (they had previously migrated to the Pacific Ocean in winter) first in the Bering Sea and then gradually Eastward. Increased opportunities for open sea whaling across the Arctic benefitted the whale-hunting Thule people who “followed their prey eastward across the arctic, perfecting their whaling technology and adapting to local conditions as they went.”¹³⁴

The same climatic changes seem to have harmed the Dorset people who had been living in the (present-day) Canadian Eastern Arctic for centuries and whose subsistence was based on the harvesting of a range of animals, varying by season. For the Dorset, winter seal hunting became more difficult due to reduced sea ice, while caribou hunting became increasingly challenging as migration patterns changed.¹³⁵ Thus, Fossett writes, “For people [i.e., the Dorset] already hard-pressed by environmental and ecological changes, the appearance of Thule immigrants was a catastrophe.”¹³⁶ Although it is unclear precisely what happened to the Dorset

¹³² Robert McGhee, “Thule Prehistory of Canada” in *Handbook of North American Indians Vol. 5*, ed. William C. Sturtevant (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 370; Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled*, 3.

¹³³ Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled*, 15.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

people – whether they were exterminated or incorporated into Thule society (or some combination) - archeological evidence suggests that (with some potential small scale exceptions), by 1300 Dorset culture had largely vanished. Inuit oral traditions suggest that both violent and amiable encounters had taken place between the two peoples.¹³⁷

The concept of the “Inuit” as a people separate from their pre-historic Thule ancestors is associated with the development of new forms of social organization and patterns of subsistence attributable to a further evolving climate and adjustment to local environments. About three to four hundred years after the initial eastward migration (around 1200 - 1300CE) Thule groups were living across Canada’s Arctic, reaching as far East as Greenland.¹³⁸ It was around this time that Thule/Inuit culture began showing regional distinctions, “probably resulting from regional isolation and the development of local types of economic adaptation.”¹³⁹ Adjustment to local environments continued such that,

[b]y the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Thule people had become the Historic Inuit. Centuries of adaptation to local conditions had resulted in groups of people who were so socially and culturally different from their biological ancestors and, in varying degrees, from each other. Because whale were less abundant, and available only in some seasons, Thule people... made major changes in their subsistence economies... They created new techniques and equipment appropriate to fishing and terrestrial hunting in the new lands.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ McGhee, “Thule Prehistory of Canada,” 373.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 27.

The next section of this chapter discusses the socio-economic organization of the “Caribou Inuit” (so named by anthropologists) who by the 19th Century inhabited large parts of the Kivalliq Region.¹⁴¹ Inuit descendants of this group formed a significant proportion of the first inhabitants of Rankin Inlet.

Historic Origins of the Caribou Inuit

Franz Boas published the first anthropological discussion of Caribou Inuit in 1888.¹⁴² Kaj Birket-Smith and Knud Rasmussen provided extensive descriptions of Caribou Inuit society emanating from their experiences in the Central Arctic as part of the 1922 Fifth Thule Expedition. Members of the expedition coined the term “Caribou Eskimo” (referred to hence forth as Caribou Inuit) to describe the Inuit who lived to the West of Hudson Bay (Kivalliq Region), presumably because of the importance they placed on Caribou for subsistence (relative to other Inuit groups whose subsistence centred more on marine life).¹⁴³

Debate lingers regarding the exact time in which Caribou Inuit Thule ancestors migrated to the Kivalliq Region (as well the precise route they followed).¹⁴⁴ By 1719, however, according to Burch (himself referencing records of “Hudson’s Bay Company traders” in the region) the

¹⁴¹ Ernest J. Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, eds. Bruce Morrison and Roderick Wilson (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 124.

¹⁴² Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1888).

¹⁴³ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 115; Eugene Arima, “Caribou and Iglulik Inuit Kayaks,” *Arctic* 47, no.2 (June 1984): 193.

¹⁴⁴ Ernest S. Burch, “Caribou Eskimo Origins: An Old Problem Reconsidered,” *Arctic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (1978): 1-35.

Caribou Inuit “Founder Society” (of approximately 250-450 people) was “firmly ensconced in the central portion of the west of Hudson Bay.”¹⁴⁵

The “Founder Society” largely remained near the coast until the 1820s, by which time it began to disaggregate, with some people spending the entire winter inland near Baker Lake and others staying along the coast near present-day Arviat.¹⁴⁶ Groups continued to move across the region such that, “by the 1890s the [Caribou] Inuit had expanded over practically all of the tundra portion of southern Keewatin [Kivalliq] and they were encroaching into the northern transitional forest zone.”¹⁴⁷ Burch considers the post-1890 “Caribou Inuit region” as the 300,000 square kilometer area to the West of Hudson Bay “between approximately 60° and 65° N” (see Figure 3).¹⁴⁸

Over the course of this territorial expansion, the original Founder Society separated into five distinct “societies” (total population in 1890, est. 1,375): the Qaernermiut, the Huneqtormiut, the Harvaqtormiut, the Padlimiut, and the Ahiarmiut.¹⁴⁹ In addition to inhabiting a specific geographical are of the Kivalliq region, each “society” was comprised of a “discrete network of families [which were] connected to one another by marriage, descent and partnership

¹⁴⁵ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 119.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁴⁷ James G.E. Smith and Ernest S. Burch Jr., “Chipewyan and Inuit in the Central Canadian Subarctic, 1613-1977,” *Arctic Anthropology* 15, no.2 (1979), 85.

¹⁴⁸ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 117; Eugene Y. Arima, “Caribou Eskimo” in *Handbook of North American Indians Vol. 5*, ed. William C. Sturtevant (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 447,

¹⁴⁹ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 124.

ties.”¹⁵⁰ Table 1, below, from Burch shows the estimated size of each group as of 1890 and its estimated date of “establishment”.

*Table 1 – Estimated Population of Caribou Inuit Societies in 1890*¹⁵¹

Inuit Group Name	Year Established	Estimated Population
Padlimiut	by 1825	450
Qaernermiut	by 1825	200
Ahiarmiut	by 1858	350
Huneqtormiut	by 1871	175
Harvaqtormiut	by 1890	200

The map below (also from Burch, 1986) shows the approximate geographical area inhabited by each of the five societies in 1890.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 127; The table is modified slightly to ensuring consistent spelling of Inuit Group names. Also, the columns from Burch’s Table titled, “H.B. Co Name” and “General Location” are omitted.

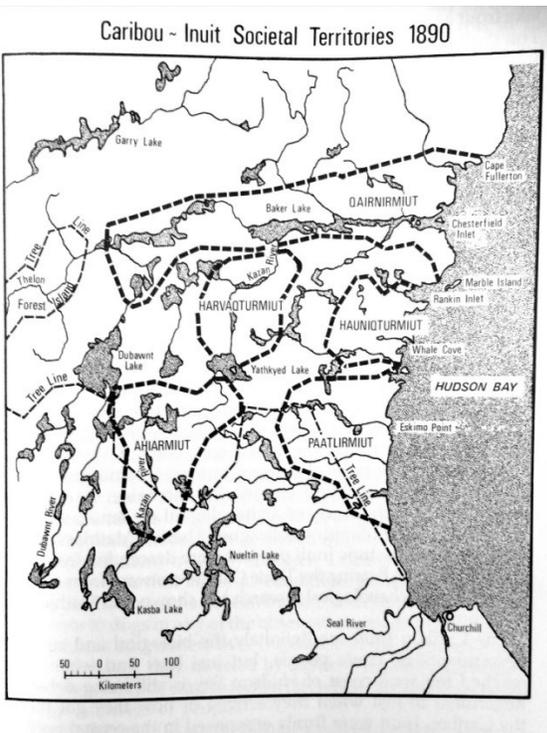


Figure 3 - Territory Inhabited by the Five Caribou Inuit Societies in 1890¹⁵²

Kivalliq Region Geography

The geography of the Kivalliq Region consists of “an undulating plain of generally low relief that rises gradually from the shallow waters of Hudson Bay toward the west and south, where it reaches a maximum elevation of 500 meters above sea level.”¹⁵³ There are numerous of bodies of water, remnants from the glacial period including, “countless rivers, lakes, streams, and

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 118.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

ponds” abundant with a several fish species.¹⁵⁴ The region’s climate – with little precipitation, extremely cold winters, and severe, persistent winds - severely limits vegetation growth, with most plants below one meter in height. Animal life consists of caribou, musk-oxen, “[a]rctic fox, wolverines, wolves, polar bears and several varieties of birds...”¹⁵⁵ Sea mammals, notably seal, populate the “central and northern sections” of the coast, which is frozen for much year.¹⁵⁶

Caribou Inuit Material Subsistence

Of the various resources of the land and sea used by the Caribou Inuit for survival, Birket-Smith considered the caribou as the most important: it was “the pivot around which [Caribou Inuit] life turn[ed].”¹⁵⁷ Besides being an important source of food, Caribou by-products provided Caribou Inuit with, “clothing, foot gear, tents, boat covers, sleeping bags, mattresses... tools, weapons and utensils...”¹⁵⁸ Caribou are a migratory animal whose population fluctuates from “extreme abundance to virtual extinction.”¹⁵⁹ Survival required organizing life around where caribou was present. Caribou tended to be more plentiful on the tundra during spring and summer (where they gave birth) and reverted to the forest in winter. Caribou hunting was pursued intensely in autumn, with the goal of storing as much meat as possible to last through the winter months. In the off-season, Caribou were hunted only sporadically while other animals

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 118.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos: Material and Social Life and their Cultural Position* (Copenhagen: New York: A.M.S., 1929), 9.

¹⁵⁸ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 129.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

(e.g., fish and musk ox) were harvested when possible to fill the gap.¹⁶⁰ As mentioned, the Caribou Inuit's relatively small reliance on sea mammals – notably seal – for survival distinguished them from other Inuit societies.¹⁶¹ Caribou Inuit groups which travelled to the coast in the summer months likely did hunt sea, but in Birket-Smith's view, they did not value seal as highly as Caribou, with “sea mammal meat... as a rule used as dog feed...” when Caribou supplies were sufficient.¹⁶² For the Ahiarmiut and Harvaqtormiut who remained inland all year, sea mammal hunting was likely minimal. Seal was likely more important for the 18th Century Caribou Inuit “Founder Society” - who remained near the coast year round – than for many of their 19th Century descendants.

The Institutional Foundation of Caribou Inuit Society

The extended family was the most important pre-contact Caribou Inuit institution for social and economic organization.¹⁶³ It represented, as Streeck and Thelen define institution, “the building block(s) of social order” around which according to Burch “[a]lmost all functions required to sustain life were performed... from the moment a person was born until the time one died.”¹⁶⁴ Betrothal played an important role in keeping as many members a society as possible

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 129-130.

¹⁶¹ David Damas, “The Eskimo,” in *Science, History and Hudson Bay, Vol. 1*, ed. C.S. Beals (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968), 145.

¹⁶² Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 137.

¹⁶³ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 42-43; Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 125; Boas, *The Central Eskimo*, 170; Arima, “Caribou Eskimo,” 455.

¹⁶⁴ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 127; Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen, “Introduction,” in *Beyond Continuity: Explorations in the Dynamics of Advanced Political Economies*, ed. Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 9.

connected by blood. Burch thus remarks that, “[i]f Caribou Inuit ideology was carried to its logical conclusion, all the members of an entire society would live together in one place, intermarrying, having children and generally operating as one huge family.”¹⁶⁵

Caribou Inuit social organization, however, was not based on kin ties alone. Damas notes, for instance, that “extra-kinship” associations also played an important role Caribou Inuit society such as, “partnerships... through spouse exchange, dancing and naming.”¹⁶⁶ “An additional layer of complexity to this issue is added by Lee Guemple in, “The Institutional Flexibility of Inuit Social Life,” who writes that the Inuit concept of kin was actually quite porous and elastic, and “formulated... in such a way that...[it] could be extended to almost everyone.”¹⁶⁷ This openness to establishing kin-like bonds with non-blood relatives allowed Inuit to establish close relationships with those nearby which facilitated economic cooperation in the interest of all.¹⁶⁸

Although Birket-Smith acknowledges the role of kin ties for social order, he implies that individuals’ sense of obligation towards the “community,” which he describes as, “an inherent conglomerate of families or households, voluntarily connected by a number of generally recognized laws...” was more important.¹⁶⁹ His emphasis on voluntary association may have stemmed from his under-appreciation for the kin ties between individual families in living in

¹⁶⁵ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 129.

¹⁶⁶ Damas, “The Eskimo,” 147.

¹⁶⁷ Lee Guemple, “The institutional flexibility of Inuit social life,” in *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project: A Report*, ed. M. Freeman (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Ottawa, 1971), 183.

¹⁶⁸ Guemple, “The institutional flexibility of Inuit social life,” 183.

¹⁶⁹ He writes in *The Eskimos* that “among the Eskimos, blood relatives feel themselves attached in friendship in mutual helpfulness” (1959,142); Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 260.

close proximity and his belief that marriage in Caribou Inuit society was largely based on individual free choice. He notes (at total odds with Birch) for instance, a “pronounced poverty of obligations [among Caribou Inuit] to marry between certain persons.”¹⁷⁰

Caribou Inuit Social and Economic Organization

The basic residential structure of pre-contact Caribou Inuit society was the “group,” comprised of approximately “10 to 25” people with an upper range of around 50.¹⁷¹ The composition of any single group was fluid. It was normal for people to leave one group and join a new one, a process facilitated in part through the maintenance of kin ties across a region. Each group was normally composed of multiple “households” containing the members of an immediate family - usually including a husband, wife, their children, as well as some grandparents or other relations - living in one or two dwellings. As mentioned, Inuit group composition was often “strongly influenced by kinship...” with groups themselves often being composed solely of relatives.¹⁷²

Hunting was an essential part of Caribou Inuit economic, social, and spiritual life. It was performed both by individuals alone (often employing a bow and arrow) and by many people working together.¹⁷³ One commonly practiced cooperative hunting method involved scaring caribou towards a location in which they would have limited mobility (e.g., a body of water)

¹⁷⁰ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 293.

¹⁷¹ Arima, “Caribou Eskimo,” 454.

¹⁷² Arima, “Caribou Eskimo,” 454; Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 127.

¹⁷³ Birket-Smith, “The Caribou Eskimos,” 107; 110-111.

such that they could be killed.¹⁷⁴ Fishing was also very important for Caribou Inuit subsistence. It was performed using a wide variety of tools and skills and was probably undertaken by single individuals and people working together cooperatively.¹⁷⁵ Birds and other smaller game were also hunted, although to a lesser extent.¹⁷⁶ By the time Birket-Smith observed the Caribou Inuit in 1921-24, trapping various animals (primarily the arctic fox) in order to exchange their skins at a trading post was also an important part of the Caribou Inuit economy. Inuit participation in trapping is discussed further in the Chapter.

Precisely how the spoils of a successful hunt were allocated to group members was governed by a series of informal rules, which likely varied from group to group, and were influenced by several factors including group size, as well as the abundance and type of resource being allocated. According to Birket-Smith, however, two guiding principles vis-à-vis the distribution of food were widely adhered to: 1. No one in a group should ever go hungry, provided sufficient resources were available¹⁷⁷ and, 2. “all hunting spoils are, to a certain extent common property...” meaning that “[d]uring a famine all right of possession to food is abandoned.”¹⁷⁸ Researcher Steenhoven quotes Inuit informants Akpa and Pameok from his 1955-1957 field research in the Kivalliq region, whose statements affirm these principles. Akpa (in relation to the first principle) is quoted as saying, “If some one (from outside) asks for food,

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 110-111.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 117-118.

¹⁷⁶ Arima, “Caribou Eskimo,” 449.

¹⁷⁷ Birket-Smith, *The Eskimos* (Butler and Tanner Ltd., 1959 (1936)), 145; quote refers to all Inuit, not just Caribou Inuit.

¹⁷⁸ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 263;

this can never be refused, not even to a total stranger or to a lazy man.”¹⁷⁹ Pameok (in relation to the second principle) is quoted as saying: “In time of starvation, the food is shared in common.”¹⁸⁰

Within a nuclear family (i.e., household) distribution of food likely took the form of “Generalized reciprocity.” Birket-Smith remarks that that among the Caribou Inuit, “the family and not the individual, is the smallest unit.”¹⁸¹ Therefore, although an animal killed by a particular hunter “belonged” to him, it would have been shared within that hunter’s immediate family as a matter of course. Steenhoven provides a vivid description of how intra-household sharing occurred, based on his own observation: “[t]he returning hunter hands the spoil to his wife... who brings it... inside the tent or snow house... (then) the distribution will be administered – even if the same unit is inhabited by several families - as if it were one family by the ‘senior’ woman.”¹⁸²

The precise patterns of intra-group sharing among Caribou Inuit do not appear to have been documented in as much detail as those of other Inuit societies. To gain a sense of how intra-group sharing may have occurred among pre-contact Caribou Inuit, it is useful to refer to Damas’s 1972 piece, “Central Eskimo Systems of Food Sharing,” which discusses historical sharing practices among the nearby Copper, Netsilik, and Iglulik Inuit. One such practice, the

¹⁷⁹ Geert Van Den Steenhoven, *Leadership and Law Among the Eskimos of the Keewatin District Northwest Territories* (Excelsior, 1962), 38.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 98.

¹⁸² Van Den Steenhoven, *Leadership and Law*, 27. The division of labour between men and women is discussed further in this chapter.

piqatigiit, practiced by the Copper and Netsilik Inuit¹⁸³ was a formal “system of sharing partners or associates,” whereby a hunter would distribute portions of a successful hunt among the members of this partnership.¹⁸⁴ The *piqatigiit*, notes Damas, aligns with Sahlins’ conception of “balanced reciprocity” with reciprocal material returns of similar value expected by the giver.¹⁸⁵ The *payuktuq* (elements of which existed in all three societies) on the other hand, was a more “voluntary” form of sharing which, “involved sending portions of seals not distributed according to the *piqatigiit system* to the houses of the villagers not included in the successful hunter’s network of partners.”¹⁸⁶ The *payuktuq* can be considered as tending towards the “Generalized reciprocity” end of Sahlins’ continuum with the giver expecting no material return.¹⁸⁷ As such, in Copper Inuit society, notes Damas, the *payuktuq* was crucial for the survival of “[o]ld people who could not hunt or who had no productive adult offspring...”¹⁸⁸

Damas notes that notions of kinship influenced these sharing patterns to varying degrees among the three societies. In instances when kinship was not a key determinant in sharing practices, other factors were at play including (among the Copper Inuit, for instance), “local considerations and voluntarism.”¹⁸⁹ Damas makes the point that – among the Copper Eskimo - the prominence of *payuktuq* (voluntary) intra-group sharing decreased in time when food was in

¹⁸³ The *piqatigiit* was referred to as the *niqaiturvigiiit* by the Netsilik Inuit.

¹⁸⁴ Damas, “Central Eskimo Systems of Food Sharing,” 223.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 225.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 230; All italics in the above discussion are Damas’s.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

abundance and increased in times of scarcity.¹⁹⁰ In sum, Damas writes that the combination of sharing patterns within a group served to “insure survival when a minimal amount of food was available... and worked toward evening highly unequal possession of food in better times.”¹⁹¹

Given the fact that a large portion of the proceeds from an individual’s economic activity in Caribou Inuit society was allocated to others - through intra-household and intra-group sharing - the question arises of what impelled individual economic activity in the first place. An examination of Birket-Smith’s characterization of Caribou Inuit justice is a useful starting point for developing a hypothesis.

According to Birket-Smith each person in Caribou Inuit society had an obligation to contribute to community well-being. Able-bodied men were required to hunt and share the spoils while women were expected to perform an array of essential tasks. A key mechanism for ensuring that essential productive and distributive activities were performed, was the fear – within each person - of being castigated or ostracized by her fellow group members for failing to contribute. He notes, for instance, that “if someone – for any given reason - refused to share the spoils of a hunt, he would make himself so impossible in the narrow circle of his kinsmen that he would soon abandon his unsociable behaviour.”¹⁹² Similarly, if a man refused to “provide” for his immediate family, his wife could choose to find a new husband or live with relatives.¹⁹³ It is unclear precisely how often, and to what degree, individual deviancy from these expected norms

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 236.

¹⁹² Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 97, 258, 261.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 261.

took place, but Birket-Smith implies that they were rare, given the agonizing nature of group reprimand.

Accordingly, Birket-Smith (writing of all Inuit) seems impressed by the degree to which Inuit society existed in a relative state of equilibrium – that is to say that the desires and actions of an individual rarely if ever threatened group cohesion. He notes that, “[i]f finally we look at the Eskimo society as a whole, we cannot but be struck by its primitive stamp... Here is no social tension to threaten its destruction, no cleavage between the individual and the whole, no cry for justice against a privileged brutality.”¹⁹⁴ This observation aligns with Mauss’s view that economic activity in stateless societies promotes harmonious and peaceful interactions among their members. With respect to the Caribou Inuit, Birket-Smith attributes the balance between group and individual to the absence of institutionalized positions of great power or authority (such as “chiefs” or “nobility”), as well as the inability for any person to accumulate significant wealth.¹⁹⁵ He ascribes the lack of individual wealth Inuit accumulation to nomadism which, he posits “does not encourage the accumulation of much of the sort of property which moths and rust can destroy.”¹⁹⁶ While this may have been one contributing factor, it is also possible that Caribou Inuit social structures would not have permitted significant individual accumulation of wealth to occur. Before discussing eventual Caribou Inuit interaction with commercial activity, the following paragraphs discuss three other important features of the Caribou Inuit society.

¹⁹⁴ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 152.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 259.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

First, as previously mentioned, is the importance of economic activity performed by women. Economic responsibilities in Caribou Inuit society were often divided according to sex. Birket-Smith notes that women were exclusively responsible for cooking, “tending fire and lamp” and sewing, and sharing with men responsibility for setting up shelter, fishing, hunting, collecting, flensing/flaying, and skin preparing.¹⁹⁷ Boas provides an approximately similar division of labour, noting “[t]he woman has to do the household work, the sewing, and the cooking. She must look after the lamps, make and mend the tent and boat covers, prepare the skins, and bring up young dogs. It falls to her share to make the inner outfit of the hut, to smooth the platforms, line the snow house, &c.”¹⁹⁸ Boas makes the additional point that when rowboats were used (a device likely introduced to Inuit by whalers) women were responsible for rowing and men steered.¹⁹⁹ Women also played a prominent role in raising children.

Second, is the existence of positions of authority within each group. According to Birket-Smith the only recognized group authority figure was the senior male figure called the “ihumataq.”²⁰⁰ While Burch and Birket-Smith agree on the existence of the ihumataq, they disagree over his power over other group members. Birket-Smith notes that although “[h]is advice is often taken... he has no legal authority at all and cannot be called a chief in the ordinary sense.”²⁰¹ Burch on the other hand, argues that the ihumataq held a strong position

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 110-111, 139, 257-258.

¹⁹⁸ Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo*, 172; Boas’s observations may not refer specifically to Caribou Inuit society.

¹⁹⁹ Franz Boas, *The Central Eskimo*, 172.

²⁰⁰ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 259. Damas writes that the position of ihumataq also existed among the Netsilik Inuit (1972, 233).

²⁰¹ Birket-Smith, *The Caribou Eskimos*, 259.

within the group, writing that he was a “chief” who, “would have more wives, more living children, better clothing and generally more and better of everything than anyone else in the group.”²⁰² As well, he tended to be a “physically powerful individual” who could attempt to assert his power by “brute force.” The ability of families to leave a group and join a new one, Burch notes, may limited his propensity to do so.²⁰³ In general, Burch portrays Caribou Inuit society as more hierarchical than Birket-Smith, with seniority (age) and sex (male over female) as determining factors.²⁰⁴

Fort Prince of Wales Era (1717-1860): First Inuit Involvement in Commercial Activity

The first involvement by Inuit of the Kivalliq region in economic activity of a commercial character²⁰⁵ likely resulted from the establishment of the Fort Prince of Wales trading post by the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) near present-day Churchill, Manitoba in 1717. Trading of goods between Inuit and non-indigenous people (including possibly the exchange of humans) may have occurred during two sea voyages (in 1718 and 1719) along the southwest coast of Hudson Bay, which originated from the trading post.²⁰⁶ Burch highlights the historical significance of these early economic interactions, writing that they “initiated the long period of contact between the Eskimos of the area and Hudson’s Bay company personnel that

²⁰² Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 128.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Excluding long-distance trade with other Inuit or First Nations populations; Henceforth the dissertation will use the term Inuit of the Kivalliq region instead of Caribou Inuit.

²⁰⁶ Brenda L. Clark, “The Development of Caribou Eskimo Culture” (Originally M.A. Thesis, Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1977), 14; Ernest J. Burch, “Caribou Eskimo Origins: An Old Problem Reconsidered,” *Arctic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (1978), 11.

has continued, with few exceptions right up to the present.”²⁰⁷ Additional HBC voyages Northward (in which contact with Inuit was made) occurred in 1720, 1721, and 1722, during the last of which HBC personnel tried unsuccessfully to persuade Inuit to migrate southward to Churchill to engage in trade. Such voyages ceased until 1737, after which an additional six trading voyages occurred between then and 1744.²⁰⁸

Fossett remarks that the HBC/Inuit trading which occurred up to the 1750s appears to have been relatively unimportant for Inuit survival. They were observed by traders during that period to be living “in the same summer villages during the same weeks as they had in 1718.”²⁰⁹ As well, the items traded in the early 1750s – including “whale oil, blubber, baleen, the occasional narwhal or walrus tusk and once in a while wolf, wolverine or marten pelt” for “bayonets, hatchets, scissors, ice chisels, knives awls, and needles” – had not varied since 1719.²¹⁰ She notes that the Inuit appeared to place little cultural significance on the act of trade. It occurred without accompanying festivals or social events as “a business to be carried out quickly, followed by immediate return to other occupations.”²¹¹

Trade with ships emanating from Churchill continued to the 1790s, at which time the HBC decided to cease commissioning voyages, due to a lack of profitability.²¹² Within a year, however, Inuit parties began making long voyages over land to Fort Prince of Wales to engage in

²⁰⁷ Burch, “Caribou Eskimo Origins,” 11.

²⁰⁸ Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled*, 94.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*, 112.

trade, trips which also provided opportunities for performing subsistence hunting. In 1791 approximately twenty Inuit families travelled to Churchill to trade deer, fox, and wolf skins. They stayed in the region for five weeks, during which time they hunted seal and whale whose products they traded as well.²¹³ Similar trips were undertaken by some Inuit in the years 1795-1798.²¹⁴

Between 1803 and 1820, groups (usually of small size) travelled to Churchill usually to trade furs as well as hunt sea mammals on the coast.²¹⁵ The trips continued into the 1820s, over which period with the range of items traded evolved. By this time, Fossett notes, Inuit wished to trade for guns above all else, with “luxury purchases of shirts, jackets, decorative gartering and tin tobacco boxes” being requested as well.²¹⁶ In return, Inuit were now offering more “terrestrial products” or arrived at the post without any goods for trade, but then hunted near the Churchill coast long enough to trade seal products.²¹⁷

The increasing propensity of Inuit to trade land-based products likely stemmed from the fact that (as previously mentioned) the Caribou Inuit “Founder Society” had begun to disaggregate, with some descendants spending larger portions of time inland, away from the coast. The inland migration of some Inuit of the Kivalliq Region can be explained by various factors including: a declining population of the neighboring Chipewyan indigenous people (in

²¹³ Burch characterizes the Inuit’s relationship with the HBC during this time slightly differently than Fossett, writing that the Inuit were “hired” by the HBC to hunt seals and whale (1986, 121-122).

²¹⁴ Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled*, 116-117.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 122-123.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 122.

part due to disease); the adoption of snowhouse technology from neighboring Inuit tribes (which in winter were both warm and permitted mobility, as opposed to stone houses which were stationary and tents which were not warm); possible population increases; and, declining caribou populations near the shore.²¹⁸

Fossett stresses that the period discussed above (roughly 1790-1830) was difficult for many Inuit of the Kivalliq region due in part to erratic caribou populations and climactic fluctuations.²¹⁹ The trips to Churchill for trading represented one element of a “strategy” for ensuring economic well-being, which included, “dispersion, long-distance harvesting, expansion of territory, relocation, intensification of labour, and a switch to new food resources.”²²⁰

The Whaling Era (1860-1915): Intensified and Sustained Inuit Interaction with Non-Indigenous Commercial Actors in the Kivalliq Region

Beginning around 1860, American and European whalers began whaling activities in Hudson Bay, marking the beginning of a new era of commercial opportunities for some Inuit of the Kivalliq region, which lasted until 1913.²²¹ The first decade of whaling in the Hudson Bay region, 1860-1870, saw the most activity with 59 voyages, 57 of which were American and two British. U.S. voyages declined in each subsequent decade until the industry totally “collapsed”

²¹⁸ Burch, “The Caribou Inuit,” 122-123.

²¹⁹ Fossett, *In Order to Live Untroubled*, 163.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 154; Fossett refers to “dispersion, long-distance harvesting, expansion of territory...” etc. as strategies (154). However this dissertation considers them as elements of a survival strategy.

²²¹ W. Gillies Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos: Hudson Bay 1860-1915* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), 37.

in 1913.²²² Following an unsteady trajectory over the same period, British voyages peaked in the decade 1900-1910, and also ceased in the following decade. Whaling activity had occurred in the nearby Davis Strait and east of Baffin Island since the 1720s, first by Dutch vessels, and then a British fleet towards end of the 1700s.²²³

The beginning of commercial whaling in the Hudson Bay region coincided with the advent of “modern whaling” which, according to Toennessen and Johnson, was characterized by improved harvesting techniques facilitated by technological developments.²²⁴ Despite these advancements, the whaling industry itself in 1860 was on its last legs. Around the same time, the value of whale oil, which was used for “lubrication and lighting, and in the tanning and textile industries, as well as for linoleum and paint,” began a steady decline due in part to the emergence of substitute products.²²⁵ The collapse of this market, as will be discussed, was an important factor in the end of the “whaling era” in Hudson Bay in 1915.

The first whaling voyage into Hudson Bay occurred, according to Ross, when the captain of a U.S. vessel sought to verify accounts of healthy whale populations near Whale Point just north of the Caribou Inuit territory.²²⁶ The voyage was highly profitable for the vessel, and as such, “encouraged other ships to visit the Hudson Bay (regions?) and (as such) between 1860

²²² Ibid., 37; Shelagh Grant, *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America* (Douglas & McIntyre, 2010), 212.

²²³ Daniel Francis, *Arctic Chase: A History of Whaling in Canada's North* (Breakwater Books Ltd., 1984), 3-4.

²²⁴ J.N. Toennessen and Arne Odd Johnsen, *The History of Modern Whaling*, (Berkeley University of California, 1982), 3, 6.

²²⁵ Ibid., 10.

²²⁶ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 37.

and 1870 fifty-nine whalers sailed... the vicinity of Roes Welcome Sound.”²²⁷ Although much of this activity took place north of Caribou Inuit territory – a significant amount occurred therein, as far south as Marble Island off the coast of Rankin Inlet.

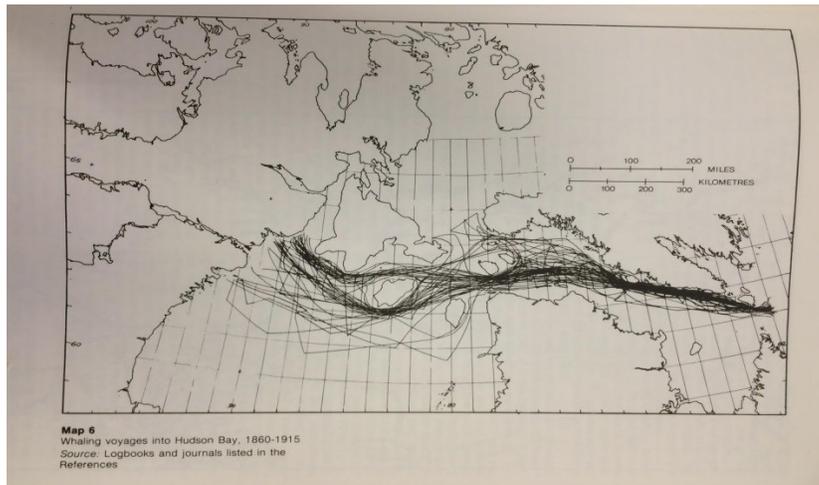


Figure 4 – Trajectory of Whaling voyages to Hudson Bay, 1860-1915²²⁸

The social and economic interaction between Inuit of the Kivalliq region and whalers during the whaling era (1860 and 1915) was more frequent and intense than Inuit interaction with HBC officials during the Fort Prince of Wales Era.²²⁹ One cause of this close and sustained interaction, was the fact that whalers often “wintered” (i.e., lived in the region for the entire winter) on the west coast of Hudson Bay, which permitted “an unusually intense and sustained contact... between whalemens and Eskimos.”²³⁰ Marble Island was used more than any

²²⁷ Francis, *Arctic Chase*, 50.

²²⁸ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 41.

²²⁹ Some interaction with officials at Fort Prince of Wales likely continued during the Whaling Era by some southern Inuit of the Kivalliq Region.

²³⁰ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 47 in Marybelle Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite* (McGill-Queen's University Press), 64.

another location for “wintering” by the whalers, especially between 1860 and 1887.²³¹ Not all Inuit of the Kivalliq region, however, interacted directly with the whalers. The principal Inuit society to develop economic and social relationships with them were the Qaernermiut and to a lesser extent the Padlimiut. Nearby non- Caribou Inuit – notably the Aivilingmiut to the North of Chesterfield Inlet - interacted strongly with whalers as well.²³²

Ross assigns the economic activity which occurred between Inuit and whalers on a regular basis to three categories: “subsistence trade;” “commercial trade;” and, “employment.”²³³

The Subsistence Trade

The subsistence trade, which occurred since the beginning of the Whaling Era, refers to Inuit-whaler trade in which whalers obtained the necessities for survival during their long stays in the Hudson Bay region. Whalers considered the obtainment of fresh food, particularly meat, from Inuit to be “almost essential to successful wintering” in part to prevent the incidence of diseases such as scurvy.²³⁴ In return, Inuit would receive preserved food from the whalers which assisted them in times when game was not plentiful.²³⁵ The subsistence trade, according to Ross, occurred “mainly during the winter. Eskimo visitors would arrive sometime after their autumn caribou hunt... Meat was never refused... and some vessels received substantial quantities.”²³⁶

²³¹ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 47.

²³² *Ibid.*, 60-71.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 65, 66, 79, 81.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 64

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

To the extent that the subsistence trade involved social considerations (and therefore approximated “Balanced reciprocity”) it cannot be considered commercial activity.

The Commercial Trade

Whereas the subsistence trade existed from virtually the beginning of Inuit-whaler contact, the “commercial trade” – in which whalers obtained goods from Inuit (largely arctic fox furs) to sell on markets upon completion of each voyage – began a few years later in 1866. The HBC had decided to send a sloop to Marble Island (from Fort Prince of Wales) to trade with the Inuit residents, in response to perceived challenges to its regional monopoly in the fur trade posed by the recently arrived whaling ships. Interestingly, Ross suggests that the HBC’s fears were unfounded and that probably only a subsistence trade had been operating to that point, noting that the whalers’ chief commercial interest in the region was whale products.²³⁷ In any case, during the 1866 voyage to Marble Island, HBC officials traded with Inuit for “skins of 313 foxes, 23 musk-oxen, 19 wolves, 7 hares, 47 caribous, 4 seals and one swan, as well as ivory, meat and blubber.”²³⁸ Aware of the newfound commercial activity, the captain of a nearby American ship also decided to test the profitability of fur trade, thus establishing “a bitter rivalry... between the two ships.”²³⁹ As Ross points out, the “ironic” outcome of the HBC voyage is that rather than preserve its monopoly trade with Inuit, it likely “opened the eyes of the

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

whaling captains to the possibilities of a commercial trade on the whaling grounds.”²⁴⁰ Thus began an era of commercial trade of furs/skins between Inuit and whalers that lasted until the final whaling voyage in 1913.²⁴¹

The Inuit-whaler “commercial trade” increased in economic importance for the whalers towards the end of the 19th century, particularly as whale stocks began to diminish.²⁴² To encourage Inuit participation in the trade, whalers began offering more a diverse offering of goods. Indeed, creating “the desire for variety of manufactured goods” among Inuit had been one of the initial tactics used by the HBC to get the commercial trade off the ground in 1866.²⁴³ According to Ross, a vessel in 1880 is recorded as bringing “necklaces, beads, footballs, goggles and tin pails” on board for trade (as well as firearms) and one in 1883 brought “lead, tobacco, sail cloth and a whaleboat.”²⁴⁴ By the 1900s, other factors were contributing to the increased importance of the commercial trade for whalers including greater competition among whaling vessels and enhanced Crown regulation of whaling.²⁴⁵ Thus, as Eber writes, by this time the whalers could be properly described as “hunter-traders” who were “after furs as much as oil or

²⁴⁰ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 67.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 69, 74.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 66.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 73; Crown regulation of whaling activities is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

baleen.”²⁴⁶ To maximize trade volumes, ships would hire Inuit to take their goods for trade with inland Inuit groups, as far west as Baker Lake²⁴⁷

In 1911, with the stationing of a permanent HBC trading post in Chesterfield Inlet, a brief period began in which these (whaler) “hunter-traders” faced competition for trade with Inuit from an established fur trade post. According to Ross, “[t]his incident was a brief interlude in the transition from whaling-controlled trade to the commercial system of the trading posts, from transactions carried out from wintering vessels to those effected at a permanent station.”²⁴⁸

Employment of Inuit by Whalers

A third form of Whaler-Inuit economic activity occurred in the context of an employee-employer relationship. Ross notes that “[a]lmost all the whalers entering the Hudson Bay employed some Eskimos.”²⁴⁹ From 1860-1880 the bulk of this employment occurred in winter, during which time whalers inhabited the region for long periods. Ross divides the Inuit who visited the “wintered” sloops into three groups (based on the whalers’ descriptions) according to their level of socio-economic integration with whalers. The least integrated group, “outside natives,” were rarely “employed” by the whalers in the conventional sense. They would normally visit the whalers, conduct limited amounts of trade, before returning “to their areas of

²⁴⁶ Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers were up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 70.

²⁴⁷ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 73.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

residence, often far from the winter harbours.”²⁵⁰ The next group, “squatter natives,” spent significantly greater amounts of time near the vessels during winter and conducted significant trade “or part time-labour.”²⁵¹ The most integrated group, “ships’ natives,” engaged in activity with whalers that most closely resembled what now would be described as full-time employment. Ross provides an overview of this type of work:

“Ships’ natives” were hired with their families to perform certain tasks during the winter. The men were expected to keep the ships supplied with fresh meat, provide dog teams for general transportation around the harbour, and act as guides and drivers when mates or masters made excursions inland. The women were usually employed in making and repairing footwear and fur clothing for the crews. In return for their services, ship’s natives received one or two meals a day on board ship, obtained rudimentary health and welfare benefits, and were supplied with firearms and ammunition for hunting. Aside from the security inherent in this relationship, they often received substantial material rewards at the end of their service, occasionally even whaleboats.²⁵²

As early as 1880 Inuit were hired in summer to assist with (or perform themselves) the whale hunt itself. This practice probably increased beginning in the 20th century. As the stock of whales declined, whalers needed more eyes on the water, a task accomplished by increasing the number of the smaller whaleboats, which were often operated by Inuit.²⁵³

Inuit-Whaler Social Interaction

As the description of the “ships’ natives” implies, for some Inuit, the level of contact with whalers was intimate and nearly constant. Unsurprisingly, this contact led to sexual, social and

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 78.

other forms of intermingling deserving of a brief discussion here. Sexual contact, notes Ross, did occur, but was often limited by “the severity of the climate and the lack of privacy” as well as “restrictions” imposed by captains on such activities.²⁵⁴ Two immediate results of whaler-Inuit sex, were the spread of sexually transmitted infections and the birth “mixed blood” children.²⁵⁵ Non-sexual interpersonal bonds also developed between Inuit and whalers. An oral informant in Eber’s book – who recounts how whalers and Inuit often shared food. She also says that, “[t]he Inuit and the white people used to have a lot of fun, and the relationships in those days were very close. They would go around together in good friendship.”²⁵⁶ Alcohol was sometimes consumed in the course of Inuit-whaler interaction, as both Ross and Eber note, to a moderate degree.²⁵⁷ Disease, such as tuberculosis, may have been transmitted to Inuit from whalers to Inuit in the Hudson Bay region, although probably to a lesser extent than in the Western Arctic, a fact Keenleyside attributes to an overall smaller presence of whalers.²⁵⁸

Inuit Responses to Commercial Activity During the Whaling Era

As discussed in the Chapter One, Polanyi suggests that populations may resist encroaching commercial forces which threaten the functioning of existing non-commercial institutions and productive activities which support community well-being. When interpreting

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 119.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 120-121.

²⁵⁶ Eber, *When the Whalers were up North*, 98; The informant, Leah Arnaujaq, is from Repulse Bay, slightly to the North of Caribou Inuit territory.

²⁵⁷ Eber, *When the Whalers were up North*, 164; Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 123

²⁵⁸ Arne Keenleyside, “Euro-American Whaling in the Canadian Arctic: Its Effects on Eskimo Health,” *Anthropology* 27, no.1 (1990), 14.

how Inuit responded to new forms of commercial activity during the Whaling Era, it is useful to first assess how (if at all) said commercial activity presented a threat. The following attempt to show that Inuit/whaler commercial activity did not pose an immediate threat to the functioning of the extended family or their ability to perform subsistence harvesting because whalers had no incentive – nor the power - to impose changes to Inuit life. Two possible reasons for this assertion are provided below.

First, whalers depended on Inuit skills, knowledge, and generosity in order to survive.²⁵⁹ Lacking access to resources (e.g., food and supplies from the outside world) for long periods of time and absent any state presence to enforce property rights (guaranteeing the personal security of the non-Inuit whaler-traders) they had a direct interest in developing and maintaining social relationships with Inuit. Had they engaged in unwelcome behaviour or displayed a hostile attitude, Inuit could have simply refused to interact with them, which would potentially endanger their lives. It is therefore reasonable to suspect that much of the whaler-Inuit “commercial trade” (in addition to the subsistence trading) would have at times tended towards the middle of Sahlins’s continuum of reciprocity (i.e., Balanced reciprocity). Ross notes, for instance, that befriending, engaging in reciprocity, and “playing host” to Inuit were elements of a survival strategy pursued by whalers.²⁶⁰ The harmonious foundation of Inuit-whaler relations is confirmed by an Inuk informant in Eber’s book, saying “[i]n the whaling days the qallunaat [white people] just hopped on the sled without paying for the trip or the hunter asking for

²⁵⁹ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos* 64.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 64-56.

anything. The qallunaat used to get a ride, and eat, and the Inuit never thought about pay. They were living in harmony together. The qallunaat lived just like the Inuit, and they used to help each other out.”²⁶¹

Second, the whalers had little incentive to impose changes on Inuit life because their prospects for commercial success (i.e., their ability to obtain goods to sell for profit) depended on Inuit skills and knowledge. Ross notes that Inuit “were employed as skilled hunters rather than economic serfs.”²⁶² Indeed, Inuit sometimes displaced some trader-whalers in the direct whale hunting tasks, who were themselves “relegated to inferior tasks.”²⁶³

Finally, even if whalers had wished to change some aspect of Inuit life by force, being outnumbered by Inuit, and without state functionaries to impose violence on their behalf, they lacked the means to safely do so.

The above paragraphs show that a key factor in the creation of the 19th Century British working class – a major institution (the state) with the intent and ability to remove from peasants existing there means of production and therefore survival - was not present during the whaling period. For the most part, therefore, Inuit appear to have voluntarily interacted with whalers (economically and socially) because doing so did not bring about unmanageable risks.

²⁶¹ Eber, *When the Whalers were up North*, 165.

²⁶² Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 85.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 88.

Impacts on Inuit Life from Interaction with Whalers

Despite the above assertion that Inuit productive capacities and institutions remained largely unaltered during the whaling period, there were important impacts in Inuit life related to the acquisition of new subsistence technology, mainly guns. One impact of the introduction of the gun²⁶⁴ was that it strengthened economic ties with the whalers. Ross notes that, “[t]he acquisition of guns by Eskimos... immediately committed an Eskimo to repeated trade contacts in the future in order to secure the powder, flints or caps, and bullet.”²⁶⁵ Another possible impact was the individualization of the hunting process (particularly for caribou) which prior to its introduction, was often a group undertaking. Ross describes the associated improvement in hunting abilities during the whaling era as a “revolution” for Inuit noting that, “[i]ndividual hunting was vastly improved... (and the) cooperation of several hunters for caribou drives became less necessary and small travelling groups had greater opportunity to secure solitary caribou during inland trips.”²⁶⁶ The individualization of the hunting process may have altered patterns of intra-group sharing/distribution of food. As well, with more time spent using rifles, it is possible that hunting skills using traditional methods diminished.

The introduction of the gun could have possibly affected the dynamics of authority/power within a particular Inuit group. Great hunters were often revered and respected in Caribou Inuit society. Therefore, the ability of an Inuk to obtain a firearm – regardless of his traditional

²⁶⁴ Some Caribou Inuit had acquired guns through trade at Fort Price of Wales, although their prevalence appears to have been much smaller than during the Whaling Era.

²⁶⁵ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 97.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 102.

hunting ability – may have improved his social standing, to the detriment of those without one. However, such power imbalances would have probably diminished by 1900, by which time, Ross notes (at least among the Qaernermiut) likely all hunters owned a gun.²⁶⁷

The introduction of the whaleboat may have also affected Inuit societal dynamics. Whaleboats were approximately thirty by six feet in length and were often obtained by “employee” Inuit as “wages in kind.”²⁶⁸ Like the firearm, the whaleboat made hunting (of sea mammals, and particularly whales) much more effective than with previous technology (including the kayak). As well, whaler-Inuit economic relationships were strengthened among those Inuit who owned whaleboats as, “it was likely that the [Inuit] recipient [of the whaleboat] would once again offer his services in order to collect further [in-kind] wages.”²⁶⁹ In contrast to firearms (used by individuals), however, teams of men and women operated whaleboats. Whaleboats, thus (in combination with other newly introduced tools) had the opposite effect of the rifle. They rendered the hunting of sea mammals - which had often been an individual pursuit - into a more “a cooperative, cross-family enterprise, involving several men...”²⁷⁰ Similarly, just as the firearm had facilitated the migration of certain Inuit groups of the Kivalliq Region inland, the whaleboat (with room for many people and supplies) had, in summer, permitted greater coastal “mobility” which facilitated hunting in different areas.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

The whaleboat may have altered intra-group authority in at least two related ways. The first, according to Ross relates to the fact that the operation of whaleboat itself, although cooperative, required new forms of “organization and leadership.”²⁷² It is possible that those exercising leadership in the context of a whaleboat also began to do so (for the first time) in other areas of Inuit socio-economic interaction. The second, relates to the ownership of the whaleboat. Those Inuit who owned a whaleboat enjoyed a form of preferred status among the whalers, which increased the likelihood (relative to their peers) of receiving future employment by the whalers (who would not have to front the capital costs of hiring them).²⁷³ The ability for some Inuit to have greater access to material resources than others may have in some cases altered intra-group dynamics.

Such “preferred” status was also conferred upon those appointed by the whalers’ appointment as “head natives.”²⁷⁴ These persons performed a variety of specialized tasks for the whalers including “assum[ing] the role of between captains and the rank and file of native labour... The captains relied on these individuals to recruit other Eskimos.”²⁷⁵ They also operated essentially as “labour bosses” to other Inuit in the whalers’ employ, as sort of mid-level managers. “Head natives” were chosen based on hunting skills, degree of “influence” within Inuit society, demonstrated leadership abilities, and comprehension of English. They were often

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 80

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

provided their own whaleboat or firearms, which tended to “reinforce” their dominant status.²⁷⁶

An Inuit informant in Eber’s book, describes her father who seemingly performed the duties of such an individual. She states, “My father had his own whaleboat, which he’d been given [by the whalers] with all the equipment inside so he could catch whales for them. He would also be giving out orders to the Inuit helping the whalers and also to his own men.”²⁷⁷

The introduction of diverse quantities of Western goods – particularly food – to Inuit society during the whaling period likely modified Inuit preferences in way that affected social and economic functioning. In particular, a growing desire to receive non-traditional goods (compared to traditional ones) may have lessened the value placed on traditional subsistence activities versus work performed with or for the whalers (trapping, hunting for whales).²⁷⁸

Despite these changes in Inuit life, commercial activity during the whaling era (as argued above) does not appear to fundamentally altered Inuit way of life – specifically their capacity to survive through traditional economic activities supported by the extended family as the principal societal institution. An interesting standard used by Mitchell²⁷⁹ to assess the degree of Inuit societal change during the whaling era, is whether, when the era was finished, “a return to previous practices was possible.”²⁸⁰ She speculates that “undoubtedly... [such a return] was [possible] although there would have been considerable hardship in achieving it.”²⁸¹ The main

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Eber, *When the Whalers were up North*, 110.

²⁷⁸ Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs*, 77.

²⁷⁹ Mitchell examines Inuit whaling activity in the entire Arctic.

²⁸⁰ Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs*, 77.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

“hardship,” she hypothesizes, would have stemmed from the loss of access to Western goods for which Inuit had developed an appetite.²⁸² Francis in *Arctic Chase*²⁸³ similarly believes that Inuit could have survived at the end of the whaling era without further Western intervention, writing,

The whalers in Canada’s Arctic provoked many changes in Inuit culture, but they by no means destroyed it. The northern people remained hunters and fishermen, taking their living from the land and if the whaling men had disappeared from the arctic coasts without a trace then the Inuit people no doubt would have resumed their traditional way of life.²⁸⁴

Inuit were not forced to “return to previous practices” at the end of the whaling era, because the Arctic fur trade commenced at virtually the same time the whaling era ended (with some overlap), thus providing new avenues to acquire non-traditional goods. However, as Ross notes, many Inuit largely did return “back-to-the land,” with the termination of the whaling era, as population centralization near whaling ships ended (to be discussed) and as Inuit continued with subsistence activities while increasing participation in the growing fur trade.²⁸⁵

The Fur Trade Era (1911-1953): A New Relationship with Commercial Actors

The HBC erected the region’s first fur trade post in Chesterfield Inlet (in 1911) slightly before last whaling crew departed the Hudson Bay region in 1916.²⁸⁶ The post’s opening marks what this dissertation refers to as “Fur Trade Era,” which lasted until establishment of the

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Francis examines Inuit whaling activity in the entire Arctic.

²⁸⁴ Francis, *Arctic Chase*, 105.

²⁸⁵ Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 137.

²⁸⁶ Peter J. Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories, 1870-1970* (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1974), 141; Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 74.

settlement at Rankin Inlet in 1953 (although fur trapping activities did not cease).²⁸⁷ As shown in Figure 5, developed using data provided by Usher, between 1911 and 1950, 19 fur trading posts operated in and near the Keewatin region, with 10 in operation simultaneously in 1927. As indicated, the bulk of these posts were owned by the HBC, while others (until 1930) belonged to smaller firms.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ Although 1953 demarcates the end of the “Fur Trade Era,” trapping fur trading as an economic activity did not completely end.

²⁸⁸ Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories*, 142-145.

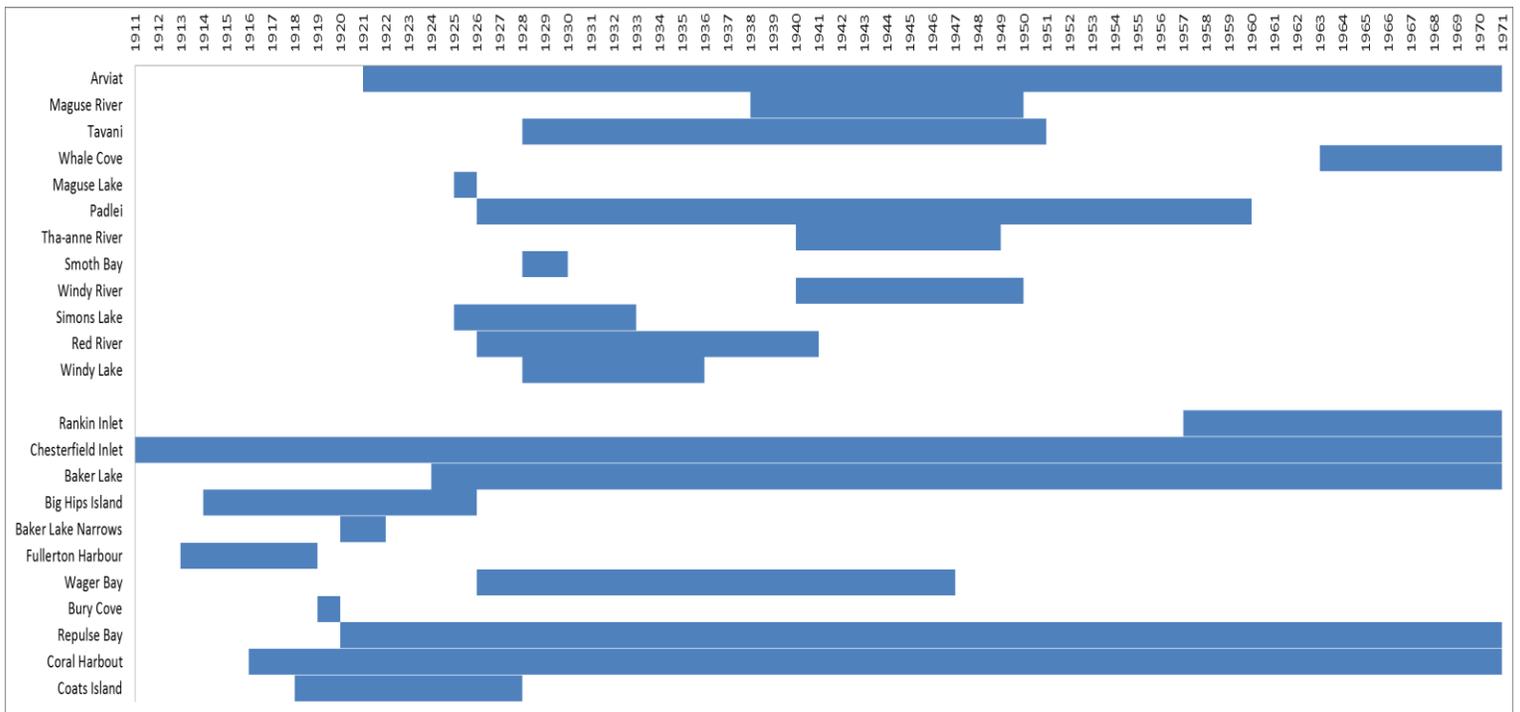


Figure 5 - Fur Trade Posts operating in and near the Kivalliq Region, 1911-1971²⁸⁹

In contrast to the whaling era, which (in terms of Caribou Inuit participation) primarily involved the Qaernermiut living along the Coast between Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet (other groups were involved indirectly) each of the Caribou Inuit “societies” participated in the fur trade. In “Inuit Land Use in Keewatin District and Southampton Island,” Tony Welland demonstrates that in nearly all areas of the Kivalliq Region, trapping became a major economic activity for Inuit in the winter months. In what he describes as “Southwest Keewatin” he writes that “as in other parts of Keewatin... one of the people’s major winter occupations was fox

²⁸⁹ *ibid.*, 141.

trapping.”²⁹⁰ For the “South Keewatin Coast,” he writes that “[t]hroughout the winter, trapping was the primary occupation although caribou, wolves and wolverines were hunted if seen near the trap line.”²⁹¹ Along the Northeast Keewatin Coast where the Qaernermiut lived (as well as the Aivilingmiut) trapping was an important activity during winter months, but seems to have been accompanied by relatively greater amounts of subsistence hunting. In the Chesterfield Inlet area – which contained Qaernermiut, Aivilingmiut as well as recently emigrated Netsilingmiut - trapping is described by Welland as, “a major activity” in winter.²⁹² Finally, in the Northwest Keewatin District, “[t]rapping was a major winter activity” however it commenced, “only after enough (Caribou) meat had been secured to last the winter...”²⁹³ Indeed, as will be discussed in further detail, subsistence hunting remained important to all Inuit in the region during the fur trade period, particularly outside of winter.

As in the preceding Fort Prince of Wales and Whaling Eras, Inuit of the Kivalliq region appear to have largely participated in the trapping and trading furs of their own volition. For the most part, trapping supported material well-being and did not directly threaten their ability to participate in traditional subsistence activities (e.g., hunting) which could sometimes be performed simultaneously.²⁹⁴ Graburn notes that the long-term credit system in which traders advanced goods to Inuit for which they would then “work off” through the provision of fox furs,

²⁹⁰ Tony Welland. “Inuit Land Use in Keewatin District and Southampton Island,” in *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project, Vol. 1*, ed. Milton Freeman (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1976), 84.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 92.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4; The term trapping, here, is inclusive of trapping and related activities (e.g., trading furs at a post).

meshed well with Inuit conceptions of “delayed reciprocity.” Men, in particular, were proud to receive large credit balances as it reflected the traders’ confidence in their abilities “as hunters and trappers.”²⁹⁵

Although a much greater proportion of Inuit of the Kivalliq region (virtually all groups) participated in trapping than had interacted economically with whalers during the whaling era, in many cases actual contact with fur traders was less frequent, and involved fewer individuals. The contact was less frequent because (particularly early on in the era) as Damas notes, with the exception of “a family or two whose breadwinners were employed by the trading posts,” most families lived “in... outlying regions” away from the posts themselves.²⁹⁶ This stands in contrast to the large groups of families who had often lived among whalers, particularly in winter. Thus, notes Graburn, Inuit normally visited the post “to trade (only) when they had ample... skins.”²⁹⁷ One strategy employed by Inuit to maximize efficiency in time spend between trapping and hunting was, according to Welland, to “set traps along the route” to the post.²⁹⁸

Contact with traders often involved only one or a small number of male representatives of a particular Inuit group. Graburn illustrates how a standard Inuit visit to a trading post would unfold:

An Eskimo entered the store, put his bundle of furs on the floor and looked around the wall and stocked shelves. The Company trader took the furs, valued

²⁹⁵ Nelson Graburn, “Traditional Economic Institutions and the Acculturation of Canadian Eskimos” in *Studies in Economic Anthropology*, ed. G. Dalton (Washington: American Anthropological Association, 1971), 112.

²⁹⁶ David Damas, “The Contact-Traditional Horizon of the Central Arctic: Reassessment of a Concept and Reexamination of an Era,” *Anthropology* 25, no. 2 (1988), 114.

²⁹⁷ Graburn, ““Traditional Economic Institutions,” 107.

²⁹⁸ Welland, “Inuit Land Use,” 84.

them and pushed across and then pushed across the counter toward the Eskimo a number of differently sized tokens... which represented the value of the furs. The Eskimo then pointed out the things he wanted or put them on the counter. The trader gradually took back the equivalent counters (tokens?) until there were none left.²⁹⁹

Inuit obtained items to provide both for their immediate security and well-being (e.g., food and clothing) and well as those enabled them to harvest from the land (tools, firearms and ammunition). As has been noted, by this time (and as would progress through the fur trade period) many Inuit had also developed a taste for “white man’s” goods which could be obtained at the post, including “tailor made clothes and photography equipment.”³⁰⁰

Like the whaler who preceded him, the fur trader had an interest in preserving some level of traditional Inuit subsistence skills. The quote from Damas’ below, argues that traders’ believed that Inuit economic output was maximized (in terms of furs traded) by allocating an optimal amount of time/effort between trapping and traditional subsistence activities.

...[C]onversations with traders and reference to Hudson’s Bay Company journals indicated that efforts were directed toward influencing the (Inuit) entire economic orientation.... From these sources it is possible to abstract what the traders considered to be an ideal pattern of Eskimo economic effort, including subsistence activities. The traders felt strongly that during the off-season for fox furs, from about April to early or mid-November, the Inuit should invest their time in intensive hunting in order to stockpile foods. In this way more time during the trapping season could be devoted to the pursuit of arctic fox. Ammunition, rifles and nets were often issues on credit to achieve that end.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ Graburn, “Traditional Economic Institutions,” 112.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Damas, “The Contact-Traditional Horizon of the Central Arctic,” 107.

A similar excerpt from a speech given to Inuit by the Governor of the HBC in 1934, supports the thesis that fur traders essentially wanted Inuit off-season subsistence hunting to support winter trapping:

Here God has given you plenty of fish and seals so that you should not only catch sufficient for your present needs, but lay in stocks for the long cold winter moons when food is scarce, and in between times when it is not necessary for you to hunt for food. I would ask you to be more diligent in trapping so that with that foxes you catch you will be able to buy better guns, seal nets, and hunting equipment so as to make it easier for you to obtain a supply of food. The more fur you catch the more seals you obtain, the more of the white man's goods we will bring into the country for your use.³⁰²

Unlike the whalers, fur traders generally did not rely on Inuit for survival. This material independence likely afforded them the ability to be stingier in trading activity with Inuit than the whalers could have been.³⁰³

Possible Changes to Inuit Life during the Fur Trade Era

An assessment of how, as well as the degree to which, participation in the fur trade impacted Inuit life is challenging. Disagreement exists among writers vis-à-vis: the type of change that occurred, the extent of change, and whether this change was positive or negative. As well, by this time, state officials and missionaries were settling in the region, which makes isolating the precise cause of any change difficult. The proceeding paragraphs attempt to sift through some common perspectives on this issue.

³⁰² Richard Finnie, *Canada Moves North* (The MacMillan Company, 1942), 33.

³⁰³ R.W. Dunning in, "Ethnic Relations and the Marginal Man in Canada," (1959) notes examples of what he considers unfriendly – if not unethical – behaviour of fur traders towards Inuit clients.

Various authors have asserted that the fur trade fostered a decline in traditional Inuit subsistence skills - caused both by an increased prevalence of Western hunting technology (specifically the rifle) and by less time actually spent performing subsistence hunting activities. The declining ability of Inuit to independently secure the essentials of life from the land increased their reliance on goods obtained from trading. Welland espouses this perspective, writing of the Fur Trade Era that, “[w]hereas they [Inuit] had once hunted with bows and arrows and spears for a living, they now began to depend on rifles and on supplies obtained by trading furs.”³⁰⁴

Adding to this point, Jenness hypothesizes that the loss of traditional skills and reliance on goods from the trading post was a source of distress. He writes,

With the introduction of rifles they had forgotten the art... of driving whole herds of caribou into snares or ambushes, or into lakes and rivers where the hunters could pursue the swimming animals in their kayaks and slaughter them with lances... The inherited lore of centuries was fading, and the younger generation of natives neither valued the knowledge and skills of their forefathers nor cherished any desire to cling to the ancient ways... What was past was past and could never return... Trapping had become a vital necessity to their generation... So from November until March most Eskimos... renounced the comfort and support of their relatives and friends and the amenities of village life, and spent their days in the solitude and isolation of their individuals trapping cabins and tents.³⁰⁵

Brody similarly notes that the increased effort spent trapping “sometimes left the Eskimos hungry and it created a need for new equipment with which to trap... the hunters-become trappers

³⁰⁴ Welland, “Inuit Land Use in Keewatin District and Southampton Island,” 1.

³⁰⁵ Diamond Jenness. *Eskimo Administration: II*. (Canada: Arctic Institute of North America, 1964), 25. Jenness to be referring to all Inuit in Canada (not just those of the Kivalliq Region).

traded skins for food and new equipment, and thereby their dependence upon trading posts rapidly became acute.”³⁰⁶

Renowned Canadian author Farley Mowat, who had spent time living among Inuit in the Kivalliq region, argued that the introduction of firearms led to overhunting (both for subsistence and in order to bait traps). This severely reduced caribou populations resulting in an increased reliance on the fur trade:

The slaughter of the caribou became a bloodletting on an unprecedented scale... Starvations became an annual occurrence in the Ihalmiut [a Caribou Inuit society] camps. Only a few of the best and most determined hunters now dared depend upon the deer. For the rest, their dependence on the fox and on the food the fox could buy became greater with each year that passed.³⁰⁷

As a consequence of a decreased ability to survive through traditional pursuits, when the price of fur collapsed during the Great Depression, many Inuit did not have a reliable source of food, and died.

Then in 1932, the value of white fox pelts... suddenly and catastrophically collapsed... By 1940 when the last official trader, an outpost manager for the Hudson’s Bay Company withdrew from the land, there were 138 Ihalmiut left... In effect, therefore the Ihalmiut were almost totally abandoned and they could neither return to the old ways nor find a sufficient source of sustenance in the new ways that the white had taught them.³⁰⁸

In, “The Contact-Traditional Horizon of the Central Arctic: Reassessment of a Concept and Reexamination of an Era” Damas suggests that - for several reasons - the Inuit of the

³⁰⁶ Hugh Brody, *The People's Land: Eskimos and Whites in the Eastern Arctic* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1975), 21-22. Brody appears to be referring to all Inuit in Canada (not just those of the Kivalliq Region).

³⁰⁷ Farley Mowat, *The Desperate People* (Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Ltd., 1959), 26.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

Kivalliq region did not suffer an extraordinary level of hardship during the fur trade era. First, despite traders' efforts to "reorient" Inuit economic life to focus more greatly on trapping, subsistence hunting actually remained the most important economic activity. According to Damas' this fact is reflected in "journals and from conversations with traders (which reveal) that ... (they) were seldom satisfied with Inuit trapping efforts and in many cases they were thoroughly dissatisfied."³⁰⁹ Inuit often ignored trappers pleas that they move to areas where it was believed the trapping was better. Instead, camp site location was based foremost on where subsistence activities were most likely to be fruitful.³¹⁰

Second, he contends that major Inuit economic decisions resided "at either the nuclear or extended family level, depending on the region."³¹¹ Furthermore, notes Damas, within Inuit families, traditional leadership roles persisted.³¹² From Damas' perspective, therefore the Inuit economy, despite its interaction with commercial actors, remained principally oriented to traditional pursuits and embedded within traditional social structures.

Third, Damas argues, in many cases Inuit benefitted materially from improved subsistence capabilities enabled by the presence of western technologies. As evidence, Damas cites the enlargement of Inuit "dog inventories" during the fur-trade era, including potentially, among the Inuit of the Kivalliq region.³¹³ Inuit dog teams required great amounts of nutrition for survival. Noting the "absence of dog food" among the items available to Inuit at the fur trade

³⁰⁹ Damas, "The Contact-Traditional Horizon of the Central Arctic," 108.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 118.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 108.

posts, Damas infers that increases in Inuit dog population could only have been sustained by “an expanded subsistence economy” made possible by increased levels of western technology.³¹⁴ In addition to representing enhanced Inuit subsistence capability, larger dog populations would themselves have improved Inuit migration capabilities and over large distances thus improving both subsistence hunting as well as trapping capabilities.³¹⁵

One of Damas’ most provocative points (following from his larger argument that Inuit material well-being likely improved during the fur trade era) is that “deaths from starvation... declined during the Central Arctic contact-traditional era.”³¹⁶ This assertion contradicts Farley Mowat’s well-known view that certain Caribou Inuit groups suffered a tragic and painful decline in the same period.

Conclusion

The aim of the preceding discussion was to, first, show that pre-contact economic activity of the (pre-contact) Inuit of the Kivalliq region was principally governed by, or, to use Polanyi’s term, “embedded” in existing social structures. In this context, economic activity tended to reinforce existing social relationships in part through acts of Generalized and Balanced reciprocity.

Between the early 18th to- mid 20th Centuries, non-indigenous actors entered the Kivalliq region to engage in commercial activity. Some Inuit of the Kivalliq region participated in

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 108-110.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 110.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

commercial activity with non-indigenous migrants in each era (1. Fort Prince of Wales; 2. Whaling; 3, Fur Trade) in order to benefit from opportunities for improved material well-being and security. Participation in commercial activity during the Fort Prince of Wales and Whaling Eras does not appear to have undermined existing social structures, nor their ability to perform traditional subsistence activities although important changes in Inuit life occurred. Debate exists among authors regarding whether or not Inuit participation in the fur trade undermined traditional modes of subsistence (either through the loss of traditional hunting skills or the reduction in the caribou population – both attributed to the introduction and widespread use of firearms). The extended family, however, appears to have remained the principal institution governing the economic life of Inuit of the Kivalliq region during this period.

Fossett's characterization of Inuit trade at Fort Prince of Wales as one element of a multifaceted survival strategy, appears to apply broadly to Inuit participation in commercial activity in the Kivalliq region during all three eras. Inuit engaged in few (if any) explicit acts of resistance to the actors bringing commercial activity to the region, likely because the viability of Inuit traditional economic pursuits – and the social structures and relationships which supported those pursuits - were not gravely threatened. Instead, individual and group decisions to participate or not (and to what extent) in commercial activity were likely made on an ongoing basis; and would have been weighed against the pros and cons of participating in subsistence harvesting.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction

This Chapter provides an overview of shifts in the federal government's³¹⁷ policies towards the Eastern Arctic and its Inuit population between Confederation and the 1950s, the period in which Inuit began to settle at Rankin Inlet. It discusses the interests of state and commercial actors entering the Eastern Arctic during this period, whose actions would: affect Inuit decisions regarding where to live and how to allocate time among various forms of economic activities; and, greatly impact the development of the future institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy.

As mentioned in the Introduction, following Confederation, the Arctic³¹⁸ held little apparent economic value from the federal government's perspective. As such, the Government largely ignored the region and its inhabitants until the early 20th Century when, facing potential challenges to its claims to sovereignty over the region, it took modest steps³¹⁹ to show the world it was Canadian territory. As the first half of the 20th century progressed, the establishment of Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) posts through the Arctic became an oft-used tool by the state to assert Canadian sovereignty. The proliferation of these posts led Government officials to take increased notice of the Inuit population and an official state orientation was developed towards them. As is further discussed, key tenets of this initial orientation, which

³¹⁷ The Canadian federal government is henceforth referred to as the "Government."

³¹⁸ This Chapter often uses the term "Arctic" rather than "Eastern Arctic," because the Government's geostrategic concerns during the period discussed encompassed Canada's entire extreme North, including areas (e.g., the present day Inuvialuit Settlement Region) outside of Nunavut.

³¹⁹ Notably the commissioning of ships to voyage to the Arctic.

largely remained in place until the post WWII-period, included: 1. Enforce the rule of law; and, 2. “Keep the native native,”³²⁰ that is avoid taking action which (it was believed) could undermine Inuit ability to survive by hunting and trapping. During the early to mid- 20th Century, the Government also provided “relief” (emergency assistance) to Inuit³²¹ on an ad-hoc basis, and performed other modest interventions discusses briefly in this chapter.

In the post-WWII period, however, this roughly 75-year period of relative indifference to the Arctic and its people ended. Due to the Arctic’s newfound geostrategic significance (in particular the fear that the Soviet Union could attack North America by way of the polar region) as well as the rapid expansion of the welfare state in Canada, the region and its Inuit inhabitants were subject to greater state attention and intervention. Notably during this time, the Government began to greatly expand its delivery of social services to Inuit, a policy which according to Damas, “though not overtly expressed...[was] best actualized under conditions of concentrated settlement.”³²² The policy “keep the native native” was gradually abandoned as Inuit migrated³²³ towards population clusters (settlements), and the Government began to consider and promote new forms of non-traditional (i.e., non-hunting and trapping) economic activities for Inuit, including participation in wage-labour. The employment of Inuit at the nickel mine in Rankin Inlet Nickel Mine (the first large-scale development project in Canada’s Arctic),

³²⁰ Richard Diubaldo, “The Government of Canada and the Inuit, 1900-1967” (Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1985), 72.

³²¹ Relief was also provided by officials of trading posts (e.g., HBC).

³²² Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 131.

³²³ Migration to settlements sometimes occurred, as will be discussed, with Government inducements.

as the next Chapter discusses, was considered by Government officials as a promising experiment in this regard.

Government of Canada Interest in the Arctic: Sovereignty

Unlike the Government's immediate post-confederation interventions in Canada's west, which were elements of a program of national economic development, its first serious interventions in the Arctic were driven primarily by the desire to secure assert

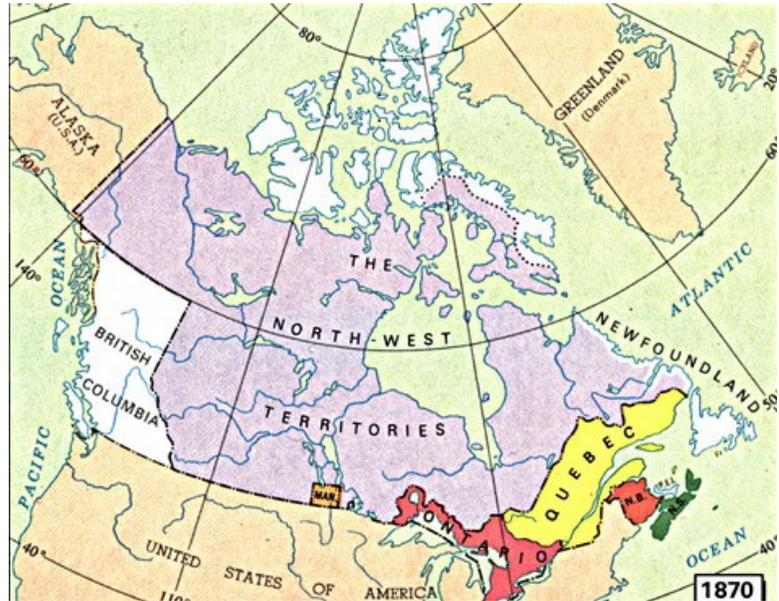


Figure 6 - The "Northwest Territories" in 1870

territorial sovereignty. Indeed, staking Canada's sovereign claims to the Arctic remained an important rationale for involvement in the region until the 1930s. Understanding how and why this process unfolded is useful, as it would shape the eventual trajectory of state action in the Arctic.

(Library and Archives Canada, "Archived – Canadian Confederation," accessed May 13, 2017, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-3070-e.html>.)

As stated in Chapter One, the territory comprising Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory were transferred to Canada from Britain in 1870.³²⁴ J.L. Granatstein in, "A Fit of Absence of Mind: Canada's National Interest in the North," holds that Britain's original claims to these lands (and waters) and areas North was, "based on a series of explorations taken by British seamen and explorers over a period of some 400 years – Frobisher, Hudson, Franklin, and the others who sought the Northwest Passage in vain..."³²⁵ British claims to the remaining Arctic territories,³²⁶ however, "were uncertain," and were transferred to Canada in 1880 based on the belief that Canada would be less likely (than Britain) to face a challenge their over sovereignty from the U.S.³²⁷ The Government did not accept the remaining territory enthusiastically, with then Prime Minister Macdonald tepidly arguing in favour of its acquisition on the grounds that, "[t]he [new] territory would cost nothing to administer until such a time as Canada was ready to settle and exploit it."³²⁸

Shelagh Grant in *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America* asserts that before 1900, the Government took no direct action aimed at asserting sovereignty over the Arctic, save for the commission of an expedition by sea 1897.³²⁹ In 1903, motivated by

³²⁴ Figure 6 shows the extent of the territory, "Rupert's Land and the North West Territory," collectively named the "Northwest Territories". As the map shows the "Northwest Territories" did not include various Northern Arctic Islands (the Arctic Archipelago) until 1880.

³²⁵ J.L. Granatstein, "A Fit of Absence of Mind: Canada's National Interest in the North to 1968" in *The Arctic in Question*, ed. E. J. Dosman (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), 14.

³²⁶ The Arctic islands which are normally referred to as the Arctic Archipelago.

³²⁷ Granatstein, "A Fit of Absence of Mind," 14.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

³²⁹ Shelagh Grant, *Polar Imperative: A History of Arctic Sovereignty in North America* (Douglas & McIntyre, 2010), 176).

concerns about possible U.S. claims to the Arctic, the first North West Mounted Police (NWMP) establishes its first northern posts at the Mackenzie River, and at Fullerton Harbour.³³⁰ The Government chartered a vessel the same year to bring supplies to the Fullerton post as well as “monitor the whaling activities along the Baffin coast.”³³¹ The NWMP had existed in the Yukon for some time – where a significant population American miners had lived³³² - and were considered to have successfully upheld Canadian claims to sovereignty over that territory.³³³ In addition to just being present in the North, newly dispatched NWMP detachments were to perform “a variety of administrative tasks such as postal service, issuing of licensing and collecting customs duties... [all of] which provided evidence of ‘effective occupation’”³³⁴

The Government remained concerned about asserting Canada’s sovereignty in the Arctic in the following years. Between 1906 and 1911, it commissioned a state-owned vessel to perform three Arctic voyages with the assertion of sovereignty as a principal goal.³³⁵ Although the ship’s captain was cautioned to avoid actions that could cause a diplomatic incident, his responsibilities included taking “possession of lands, by ‘raising the flag’ and leaving a written

³³⁰ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 201.

³³¹ Shelagh Grant. *Arctic Justice: On Trial For Murder, Pond Inlet, 1923* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 26.

³³² American miners had migrated to the Yukon as early in 1873 in search of gold. By 1898, around the peak of the gold Rush, 30,000 (largely Americans) were present in and around to Dawson City, Yukon. According to Coates, from the perspective of the Government, which had been wary of unregulated American activity in the North for some time, “Canadian control of the far Northwest seemed under attack...” Kenneth Coates, *Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories*, (James Lorimer and Company, 1985), 68,78,79.

³³³ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 201.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 204

proclamation in stone cairns... [and] perform[ing] a variety of administrative functions such as issuing... new licences and collecting customs duties from foreign whalers.”³³⁶

Arctic matters were receiving greater Government attention by the end of World War One (WWI), in part because recently developed technologies made north-south travel more feasible.³³⁷ In addition, Denmark was planning expeditions in Canada’s Arctic which alarmed Government officials, as neither Denmark nor the US accepted Canada’s title to “unexplored” territory at that time. To address these concerns, the Government established an advisory board in the Department of the Interior. Grant writes that, “[t]he committee feared that [previous] British discovery claims were insufficient to maintain title to portions of the uninhabited Arctic Islands... where... [US and Danish explorers] were reported to have made a number of recent discoveries.”³³⁸ To counter these challenges, the board recommended continuing with the construction of police detachments and Arctic voyages, enforcing wildlife laws, as well as relocating Inuit to the extreme North.³³⁹

Indeed, the number of Arctic police posts increased during the mid-1920s. The population of non-governmental, non-indigenous persons, such as fur traders and missionaries was also increasing during this time, and the police were involved in monitoring them. In this respect, although sovereignty may not have been the Government’s sole motivation in expanding its Arctic police presence, by the period leading up to the Great Depression, “the region was

³³⁶ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 207.

³³⁷ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 217.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 220.

slowly acquiring permanent settlements, with sufficient patrols and administrative actions performed by the police to ensure that Canadian sovereignty was well protected by clear evidence of effective occupation.”³⁴⁰ Other pre-Depression Government initiatives aimed at sovereignty assertion included: a 1925 “amendment to the Northwest Territories Act” obliging non-Canadians to obtain certification before performing scientific activities in the North; and, the 1926 establishment of, “the Arctic Islands Game Preserve.”³⁴¹

The Government reduced expenditures on its Arctic presence during the Great Depression of the 1930s, in part due to deteriorating public finances, but as well because “[b]y 1931 Canada’s [previously tenuous] title over the Arctic Archipelago appeared secure...”³⁴² In 1933, it eliminated an RCMP post on Devon Island which was replaced the following year by a “colonization scheme,”³⁴³ consisting of a HBC trading post and several Inuit whom the Government relocated from the other Arctic locations.³⁴⁴ The project, which last only two years due to in part to a lack of game, represented the first attempt to use Inuit life as a tool for sovereignty assertion.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁰ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 227.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 235-236.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 244.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 244; David Damas, *Arctic Migrants / Arctic Villagers: The Transformation of Inuit Settlement in the Central Arctic*, (McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 2002), 33, 34; The Inuit residents were subsequently transported to Admiralty Inlet (Damas 2001, 34).

³⁴⁵ Grant, *Polar Imperative*, 244; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 33, 34.

Government of Canada Policy Toward Inuit

Largely through the establishment of police posts, the Government became increasingly aware of the Eastern Arctic's resident Inuit people in the early 20th century. According to Richard Diubaldo in, "The Government of Canada and the Inuit: 1900-1967" the Government's first official policy towards Canada's Inuit was through the NWMP's "selective applications of the sovereign rule of law," beginning in 1903.³⁴⁶ NWMP officers considered that the application of the "King's Law" to the Inuit (and in turn "civilizing" them) as one aspect of their larger mission to assert Canada's sovereignty over the territory.³⁴⁷ The provision of "baby bounties" to Inuit mothers by the police (viewed as a mechanism of preventing infanticide) and the prosecution of two Inuit for the alleged murder of two priests are early examples of police action in this regard.³⁴⁸ In the case of the Inuit tried for (and subsequently convicted of) murder, the words of the prosecutor characterize the belief that Inuit culture must be changed to come into compliance with Canadian law:

These remote savages, really cannibals, the Eskimo of the Arctic regions have got to be taught to recognize the authority of the British Crown... that they must regulate their lives and dealings with their fellow men... according to the outstanding principles of law, which is part of the law of civilization... The code of the savage, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life must be replaced among them by the code of civilization.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ Richard Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit: 1900-1967*, (Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1985), 14.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17-20.

³⁴⁹ R. G. Moyles, *British Law and Arctic Men: The Celebrated 1917 Murder Trials of Sinnisiak and Uluksuk, First Inuit Tried Under White Man's Law* (Western Producer Prairie Books, 1979), 29, in Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 20-22.

Grant illustrates how the law was, in fact, applied haphazardly in relation to the abovementioned case. She notes that it took over two years for the suspects to be located by the police, after which time one of them (who was tried alone) was found not-guilty (for the murder of one of the priests) because the jury likely believed, “he had feared for his life... and had acted in accordance with Inuit custom.”³⁵⁰ At a second trial, during which both men appeared (simultaneously) before the court for the murder of the other priest, a guilty verdict was reached. Initially sentenced to death, their punishment was reduced to life in prison, “because they had no prior knowledge of the white man’s laws.”³⁵¹

The Inuit essentially remained “wards of the police” until the conclusion of the WWI following which Inuit began to receive “a closer look” from the state.³⁵² Confusion reigned in Ottawa, however, regarding the departmental jurisdiction under which Inuit affairs belonged, particularly in such areas as health, welfare, and education. For a period between 1924 and 1927, a revision of the Indian Act put the Inuit under the responsibility of the “Indian department.”³⁵³ Then, an Order-in-Council passed in 1927 placed them under the control of the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.³⁵⁴ In 1939, the Supreme Court of Canada settled the

³⁵⁰ Shelagh Grant, *Arctic Justice*, 40-41.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 29.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 30-33.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

matter once and for all, ruling that “the Inuit were Indians” despite the fact that they had never entered into a formal treaty with the Crown.³⁵⁵

Perhaps due in part to the abovementioned legal ambiguity, issues of Inuit well-being went largely unaddressed by the Government between 1918 and 1939. As Diubaldo writes, “Concern for the welfare of the Inuit was always present but never paramount. Priority was given... to the wider aspects of sovereignty and the application of the king’s law.”³⁵⁶ Writing in 1942, Richard Finnie underscores the low priority placed by the Government on addressing Northern “natives”³⁵⁷ welfare, and highlights the role of religious institutions in providing assistance and education. He writes that “the general welfare and training of the natives are left in the hands of the Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries, whose schools and hospitals are subsidized. No serious attempt is being made by the Northwest Territories Administration to study the problems of the Indians and Eskimos.”³⁵⁸

One element of state intervention in the Arctic – related to the rule of law and the assertion of sovereignty - which affected Inuit life prior to WWII, was the regulation of wildlife (including the fur trade). Two recent books, *Kiumajut (Taking Back)* by Kulchyski and Tester (2007) and *Hunters at the Margin* by Sandlos (2007) show that the motivation of Government actors in these matters was complex. Before discussing the authors’ perspectives, it is useful to

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 48; Sarah Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development* (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008) accessed February 20, 2016, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/inuit-book_1100100016901_eng.pdf, vi.

³⁵⁶ Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 53.

³⁵⁷ Finnie was referring to Inuit as well as other indigenous groups in Canada’s North.

³⁵⁸ Finnie, *Canada Moves North*, 74.

briefly examine some of the main Government wildlife regulation initiatives during this period. Because many of the initiatives applied to the “Northwest Territories” as a whole (which by the interwar period included both the “Arctic,” inhabited by Inuit and the Mackenzie Valley to the west, inhabited by First Nations) parts of this discussion encompass Canada’s larger territorial North.

According to Sandlos, 1894 marked the Government’s first action intended to “protect Northern wildlife” through the implementation “of a ban on all wood bison and muskox hunting by non-Native hunters...”³⁵⁹ In 1917, the Government then passed the Northwest Game Act which set the first “seasonal restrictions” on the hunting of various game (including caribou and commonly hunted birds) by Inuit and Indian hunters.³⁶⁰ The law, however, did allow for hunting out of season in cases of extreme need.³⁶¹ It also required anyone other than indigenous residents of the NWT to obtain a license in order to participate in the fur trade.³⁶² The Northwest Game Act was strengthened by a 1926 Order-in Council creating the Arctic Islands Game

³⁵⁹ John Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margin: Native People and Wildlife Conservation in the Northwest Territories* (UBC Press, 2011) 17.

³⁶⁰ Peter Keith Kulchyski and Frank J. Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back): Game Management and Inuit Rights, 1900-70*, (UBC Press, 2007), 32.

³⁶¹ David Damas, “Shifting relations in the administration of Inuit: The Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Government,” *Etudes/Inuit/Studies* 17, no. 2 (1993), 11.

³⁶² Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories*, 17; indigenous persons defined as Dene, Inuit, and “half-breed” (Usher 1971, 17).

Preserve that permitted only indigenous people to hunt and trap in the region³⁶³ and which required all new trading posts in the NWT to acquire a permit from the NWT Commissioner.³⁶⁴

Sandlos describes the period between approximately 1917 to the onset of the Great Depression as one of “wildlife activism” in Canada’s North on the part of the Government.³⁶⁵ Sandlos and Kulchyski/Tester note several factors that support this characterization. One relates to the then-prevailing attitudes within the bureaucracy regarding the state’s role in managing wildlife. By the turn of the century, note Kulchyski and Tester, with the knowledge that bison had vanished from the North American West, and musk-ox “had virtually disappeared from” parts of the Arctic, federal bureaucrats believed that government must play a role in preventing wildlife extinction.³⁶⁶

An additional factor, according to Sandlos, was that many bureaucrats held an “image of the Native hunter as a reckless killer of game,” which developed in part from RCMP reports of wasted kills as well as the testimony of explorer Knud Rasmussen who in 1924 reported caribou overhunting among Inuit.³⁶⁷ Sandlos identifies two distinct strains of this perception. According to one, northern indigenous people were “inherently” negligent in their relationship with animals. The other held that although indigenous people had hunted responsibly in previous epochs, the introduction of firearms and alcohol had corrupted them. The solution to overhunting, both

³⁶³ The Arctic Islands Game Preserve included the Arctic Archipelago as well as some territory “along the Arctic coast” (Sandlos 2011, 172).

³⁶⁴ Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margin*, 172; Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories*, 18.

³⁶⁵ Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margin*, 18.

³⁶⁶ Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, 25.

³⁶⁷ Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margin*, 13-14, 170-171.

strains held, was that indigenous “people and the animals they hunted needed the rational guidance of state wildlife managers in order to have any chance of survival.”³⁶⁸

Tester/Kulchyski note, ironically, that prior to WWII “[t]he science of game management” was still in its early stages, and itself based largely on “socially and culturally constructed norms, values, and experiences.”³⁶⁹

Damas suggests that an important factor behind increased regulation of the fur trade during this period, apart from “wildlife activism,” was a desire by bureaucrats to counter the growing hegemony of the HBC in the region and “protect” Inuit from perceived abuses by the firm. In his view, the mid-1920s to 1931 were characterized by “conflict” between bureaucrats and HBC managers. The origins of this discord lay in a “long smouldering animosity” between RCMP posted in the Arctic and “traders.”³⁷⁰ By 1924, RCMP had witnessed what they viewed as “abuses” by HBC traders towards their Inuit clients (for instance, paying Inuit less than a fair price for furs) and had communicated as much to Department of the Interior officials. The allegations reached the NWT Commissioner³⁷¹ at the time who, in response, wrote to HBC management in 1924 threatening to institute a government controlled monopoly of the Arctic fur trade, comparable to what existed in Greenland.³⁷² Although such a monopoly was not

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁶⁹ Kulchyski and Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, 23.

³⁷⁰ Damas, “Shifting relations in the administration of Inuit,” 12.

³⁷¹ The 1905 “Northwest Territories Amendment Act” created the position of NWT Commissioner. The Commissioner was responsible for “administering... [government activities in] the NWT... with the aid of an appointed four-member territorial council” (Zaslow 1984, 8). No council was appointed, however, until 1921 (Zaslow 1984, 8).

³⁷² Damas, “Shifting relations in the administration of Inuit,” 12.

instituted, continued reports of abuses induced a senior Department of the Interior official to inform the HBC that new posts could only be established with the permission of the NWT Commissioner, and that no new posts could be set up in existing game preserves.³⁷³ Despite continued HBC opposition, an Order-in-Council in 1926 (referenced earlier) implemented this rule, requiring all trading posts to obtain a permit.³⁷⁴ In 1927, two Arctic posts which began operations the year earlier were instructed to close. As well, in 1930, the NWT Council chose to approve the opening of only one of four posts submitted for approval by the HBC.³⁷⁵

This period of rivalry between the HBC and federal bureaucrats ended shortly after the onset of the Great Depression. Due in part to fiscal pressures, the federal government began taking a less interventionist approach to the North. For instance, in 1932, the federal government stopped sending its own supply ships to Arctic RCMP posts, choosing instead to purchase “space for these purposes on Hudson’s Bay Company ships.”³⁷⁶

In addition to enforcing the “the rule of law,” including wildlife/fur trade regulation, an additional manner by which the Government intervened in the lives of Inuit in the pre-WWII period was through the provision of relief (analogous to means-tested emergency assistance) which often was distributed in the form of food and/or hunting and trapping supplies. Jenness

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

³⁷⁴ Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories*, 18.

³⁷⁵ Damas, “Shifting relations in the administration of Inuit,” 16.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 17.

writes that \$30,800 was given to “the trading companies” and “the police” between 1918 and 1923 for Inuit relief.³⁷⁷

During this period, the HBC was tasked with the provision of Inuit relief in part for logistical/practical purposes. The HBC posts were often close to the Inuit and had the necessary resources to provide immediate assistance. This is evidenced by a 1933 NWT Council pronouncement which clarified “in order of priority who should issue relief on behalf of the government.”³⁷⁸ It was determined that foremost relief should administered be a “doctor or medical agent.”³⁷⁹ If no such medical personnel were available, police were next in line to deliver relief. Finally, if no police available, relief was to be provided by “a [designated] missionary or trader.”³⁸⁰

As touched upon earlier, in 1934 the HBC briefly played an intensive and unique role in a Government project which impacted the lives of Inuit. Following a request in 1933 by the HBC to reopen the three Arctic trading posts which it had abandoned in 1928, the bureaucracy responded “that it would welcome an application from the company to set up a post in Dundas Harbour [on Devon Island] and [in return, the Government would] ‘stock’ the district with impoverished natives from Baffin Island.”³⁸¹ As part of the plan, which was implemented the following year, the HBC was ordered to “[a]ssume full responsibility for the welfare and

³⁷⁷ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 32.

³⁷⁸ Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 71.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 56-57.

maintenance of the said natives.”³⁸² As mentioned, due to poor “hunting conditions,” however, the post and the many Inuit lived nearby there were relocated to Admiralty Bay on Baffin Island two years later.³⁸³

The impetus behind the “colonization scheme” appears to be attributable to at least two factors, both tied to the Depression and fiscal restraint. First, as Grant notes, an RCMP detachment on Devon Island, which had existed for the assertion of sovereignty, had closed the year before in 1933. The establishment of the trading post, as mentioned in earlier, was an inexpensive method by which the Government could show the world that Canada’s extreme North was occupied. Second, by placing full responsibility for Inuit relief on the HBC, the Government was potentially freeing itself of expenditures. As both Damas and Jenness note, the Dundas Harbour “colonization scheme” was an “experiment” which Government officials hoped could be a future model for future Inuit economic life.³⁸⁴ Jenness provides an interesting quote from an internal memo from the secretary of the Northwest Territories Council which reflects a point of view held by at least some within the federal bureaucracy at the time:

...There was also the probability of establishing posts at Craig Harbour and on other islands in the Archipelago where game is abundant. The opening of those posts will provide employment and relieve destitution of those natives who are compelled, through lack of transportation and other means to seek better hunting grounds and maintain their independence. *Dundas Harbour is*

³⁸² Cover Letter from the Deputy Minister of the Department of the Interior to the HBC, March 15, 1934 in Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 57.

³⁸³ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 61; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 34; Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski. *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), 111.

³⁸⁴ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 34; Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 57.

*the spearhead of the movement, and upon its success depends the whole future of northern migration and Eskimo independence.*³⁸⁵

Following the “failure” of the Dundas Harbour experiment, according to Jenness, the Government reverted to its previous “inactivity” in matters of Inuit welfare.³⁸⁶ He notes that in 1939 the Government had spent approximately \$88,000 on its Inuit population of 7,000 (for “Education, Health and Welfare”) while \$119,000 was devoted to its arctic police presence. He contrasts this to the U.S. which spent \$844,000 on its Inuit population of 19,000 (in Alaska) for “Education, Health and Welfare” and \$8,000 on police, and Denmark which spent \$338,000 on its Inuit population of 18,000 (in Greenland) for “Education, Health and Welfare” and nothing for police.³⁸⁷

Post-WWII: Intensifying Government Focus on Canada’s Arctic

As mentioned in this Chapter’s introduction, the Government’s interest in the Arctic accelerated after WWII. This development is captured by a (now famous) 1953 speech given by Prime Minister Louis St.-Laurent in Canada’s House of Commons, in which he admitted that to then, the Government had dealt with Canada’s North “in an almost continuing state of absence of mind.”³⁸⁸ St.-Laurent continued that henceforth, “a greater ‘emphasis and scope to work’ would occur in northern policies; care would be taken to maintain sovereignty of the Canadian north;

³⁸⁵ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 57; (Italics are Jenness’s); As for the Memo’s origins/location Jenness writes in a footnote, “In files of Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.”

³⁸⁶ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 65.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.

³⁸⁸ House of Commons, *Debates* (1953), 698 in Mark O. Dickerson, *Whose North?: Political change, Political Development, and Self-Government in the Northwest Territories* (UBC Press, 1992), 63.

and efforts would be made to improve economic and political development in the North.”³⁸⁹ The new focus on Canada’s North can be largely explained largely by two macro-level developments: 1. The region’s increasing geostrategic significance leading up to and during the Cold War; and, 2. The expansion of the “welfare state” in Canada. A growing awareness of the economic potential of Canada’s North (largely relating to its vast non-renewable resources) was a third factor behind its intensified interest in the region post WWII, particularly beginning with the election of the Conservative Diefenbaker government in 1957.³⁹⁰ Government policy aimed at facilitating the development of these resources is discussed in Chapter Five.

Notwithstanding the Canadian “absence of mind,” the U.S. had understood the strategic significance of the broader Canadian North at least as early as its 1941 entry into WWII. Following this event, therefore, “Canada immediately came under [U.S.] pressure to cooperate in numerous ‘joint’ defence projects throughout the ‘Canadian] north” including the Alaska Highway (completed in 1943) and the CANOL pipeline from Norman Wells, NWT to Whitehorse, Yukon.³⁹¹ Although Canada’s involvement was limited, Grant argues that by allowing the U.S. to proceed with these other major projects, the outcome was that “by 1943 American military and civilian personnel were estimated to have outnumbered Canadians

³⁸⁹ House of Commons, *Debates* (1953), 698 in Dickerson, *Whose North*, 63.

³⁹⁰ Frances Abele and E. J. Dosman, "Interdepartmental coordination and northern development," *Canadian Public Administration* 24 no. 3 (1981), 430.

³⁹¹ Shelagh Grant, “Northern Nationalists: Visions of ‘A New North,’ 1940-1950,” in *For Purposes of Dominion: Essays in Honour of Morris Zaslow*, eds. Kenneth Coates and W. R. Morrison (Captus Press Inc., 1989), 49; Coates, *Canada’s Colonies*, 168-176.

residing in the two territories...Ottawa [however] appeared relatively unconcerned about long term implications.”³⁹²

The Government began to take U.S. encroachment in the North more seriously following the war. The technical possibility of a Soviet nuclear attack via Canada’s polar region, combined with the growing tensions between the U.S. and Soviet Union meant that Canada’s North became even more geostrategically important.³⁹³ Canada faced renewed pressures from the U.S. to participate in joint continental defence initiatives including shared weather stations at “Resolute”, Eureka Sound, Mould Bay, Isachsen and Alert”.³⁹⁴ The U.S. military presence at Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit) increased dramatically, with major upgrades to the airfield that had been established during WWII.³⁹⁵

The other key development which contributed to the Government paying greater attention to Arctic affairs was the rapid expansion of the welfare state (at both the provincial and federal levels), a phenomenon which was similarly occurring in most western democracies. As Abele writes in, “The State and the Northern Social Economy: Research Prospects,”

In a period of the relatively strong and interventionist states in Canada and around the globe, there was [following WWII] both the incentive and climate for intervention in the affairs of resident northerners too. As the various elements of... the Canadian welfare state were developed, these were provided in northern

³⁹² Grant, “Northern Nationalists,” 49.

³⁹³ Shelagh Grant, *Sovereignty or Security? Government Policy in the Canadian North, 1936-1950* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988), 157.

³⁹⁴ Coates, *Canada’s Colonies*, 210; Coates writes, “Resolution,” not “Resolute”. This may be a typographical error as Rae writes that a joint-US weather station was constructed at Resolute in 1947 (1951, 21).

³⁹⁵ Coates, *Canada’s Colonies*, 210; Robert V. Eno, “Crystal Two: The Origin of Iqaluit,” *Arctic* 56, no. 1 (2003), 73.

Canada, even as services long available in the rest of Canada were also introduced.³⁹⁶

In Grant's view, increased government intervention in the North was in alignment with the "mood of the country," which wanted to see the Government address the country's social and economic problems.³⁹⁷ She writes that, "if... [as Canadians wanted] the federal government should assume more responsibility for the health and welfare of the nation, nowhere was the need greater than in the remote regions of the territories."³⁹⁸

Government's Immediate Post-War Interest in the Arctic: Sovereignty and Security

Upholding Arctic sovereignty in the face of U.S. encroachment (and not the expansion of the welfare state) was the principal aim of the Government's post-WWII interventions in the region.³⁹⁹ In 1948, Cabinet created the Advisory Committee on Northern Development. A symbol of the Government's new focus on the North, the Committee was mandated "to advise the government on questions of policy relating to civilian and military undertaking in northern Canada and to provide effective coordination of all government activities in that area."⁴⁰⁰

Despite its broadly defined areas of responsibility, the Committee did not consider issues of Inuit well-being during the five meetings held prior to December 1949, instead focusing on how to

³⁹⁶ Frances Abele, "The State and the Northern Social Economy: Research Prospects," *The Northern Review* 30 (Spring 2009), 43.

³⁹⁷ Grant, *Sovereignty or Security*, 161.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 70.

⁴⁰⁰ "Minutes," *6th Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development*, 16 February 1953, in the Public Archives of Canada: RG85/300/1009-3/3 in Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 107-108.

balance participation in continental defence initiatives with the U.S. with preserving Canadian sovereignty.⁴⁰¹

During the same period, however, the creation of universal welfare programs caused the Government to provide new social benefits for Inuit almost by happenstance. In 1945, Inuit became eligible for Family Allowance payments, a benefit extended to Canadian families at large and, in 1949, elder Inuit became eligible to receive Old Age Pensions.⁴⁰² Unlike in southern Canada, the programs were administered on a means-tested basis. The Family Allowance program took the form of a “voucher” system whereby Inuit could swap Government administered chits for products on a pre-determined list from HBC stores.⁴⁰³ In order for a family to receive this benefit, its members had to be “registered” by a government agent, usually an RCMP officer.⁴⁰⁴ Due in part to the dispersed character of the Inuit population, this registration process was cumbersome, with many families not receiving the benefit as of 1948.⁴⁰⁵ Moreover, unlike non-Inuit families who received set benefits (per child) as a right of citizenship, the regulations of the 1944 Family Allowance Act contained a provision giving the Department of Mines and Resources discretion over who would receive it.⁴⁰⁶ The discretion for

⁴⁰¹ Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 108.

⁴⁰² Ronald Quinn Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit since the Second World War* (McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 1988), 145.

⁴⁰³ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 145.

⁴⁰⁴ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 71.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 77-81.

administering the benefits was often left to RCMP, and consisted of both food, clothing and equipment for hunting and “living off the land.”⁴⁰⁷

With respect to Old Age Pensions, although enabling legislation had been passed in 1927, lack of clarity among federal bureaucrats vis-à-vis whether or not Inuit should be considered as Indians (who were not eligible to receive pensions, as per the Act’s text) meant that until 1948 they had not received the benefit. In that year, the Department of Mines and Resources began providing a means-tested benefit to elderly Indians of \$8/month, thus removing any rationale for not providing the benefit to Inuit. In 1949 the RCMP was tasked with identifying eligible Inuit (over age 70, with less than \$400 annual income) as well as administering the benefit, which also took the form of in-kind payments.⁴⁰⁸ This proved to be a challenging administrative task, in part because many Inuit (lacking birth certificates) faced difficulty in providing proof of age.⁴⁰⁹

Currents within the bureaucracy at this time thought that such benefits should be extended to Inuit more liberally.⁴¹⁰ For instance in 1947 the National Health and Welfare assistant superintendent of Indian Health Services, Dr. Percy Moore, argued internally that providing Family Allowance benefits on a means-tested basis was too administratively complex and that, “milk and Pablum should be given out as a matter of course” to combat Inuit child ill-health.⁴¹¹ Rather than implement Dr. Moore’s suggestion, the Government chose according to Tester and Kulchyski - to “educate” Inuit families on how to live in a healthy manner via the

⁴⁰⁷ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 145.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 82-83.

distribution of a pamphlet entitled “The Book of Wisdom,” which included information about cleanliness, illness, child/infant care, and game preservation. The pamphlet’s section on Family Allowances provides a glimpse into state officials’ attitude toward Inuit at the time.

The King is helping all the children in his lands. He is giving aid to the White and Indian children and He wishes to help the Eskimo children also and has instructed His servants the Police to proceed this way... The traders are working with the Police to help you and your families and the King has instructed them to issue goods only when it is necessary. He does not wish you to become lazy and expect to receive goods any time. You are to continue to work hard at hunting and trapping, teaching your children to become good hunters and workers.⁴¹²

As the above quote suggests, despite the introduction of welfare benefit programs to Inuit in the immediate post war years, the Government continued to expect Inuit to provide for themselves. Government expenditures on “relief” payments did significantly increase in the immediate post-war period. Total annual outlays of relief in the “Eastern and Western Arctic” rose from \$10,835 in 1945-46 to \$84,680 in 1949-50.⁴¹³ Because relief payments were intended to support hunting and trapping activities (they were not meant to provide an Inuit with alternative means of subsistence) their more generous provision did not represent a departure from the “Keep the native, native” posture.⁴¹⁴

As previously mentioned, the Government required the HBC to provide relief in Eastern Arctic regions without an RCMP presence and, importantly, was often expected to “absorb the

⁴¹²National Archives of Canada “Notice to Inuit mothers regarding family allowances,” April 1947 in Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 85-86.

⁴¹³ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 55; The “Eastern and Western Arctic” includes Quebec and the NWT.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 63- 64.

(associated) costs.”⁴¹⁵ Although, the provision of relief sometimes aligned with the firm’s profit interest (for instance, when it supported the capacity of “good” hunters to continue trapping and hence trade fur), often the HBC had a clear incentive to deny relief to Inuit, as doing so could reduce profits. As fur trade profits declined in the immediate post-war period (for reasons to be discussed in greater detail), the HBC became decreasingly generous in providing relief, with the firm, “refusing to support inefficient trappers, meaning those who failed to bring in an average of ten foxes a year over the previous five years.”⁴¹⁶ The HBC’s frugality led to accusations of exploitation – in part by U.S military personnel stationed in the Arctic. In response the company tried to lessen the appearance of a “conflict of interest”, noting in a memo issued to its post managers, that relief issued “to able-bodied natives... is and regarded as a part of the normal operating costs of the post.”⁴¹⁷

Shifting Policy Goals: Increasing Focus on Inuit Welfare

By the early 1950s, the issue of the Inuit well-being had moved up the Government’s policy agenda, as evidenced by the creation of the Eskimo Affairs Committee (EAC) in 1952 to be discussed shortly.⁴¹⁸ A brief discussion of changes in the bureaucratic administration of Inuit and northern affairs up to 1952 is useful before discussing the Government’s new approach to

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴¹⁷ NWT Archives, Alex Stevenson Collection, N92023, “Memorandum of instructions to District Managers Concerned, From Manager, Fur Trade Department, Winnipeg,” (July 13, 1944) in Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 69-70.

⁴¹⁸ Peter Clancy, “The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada, 1952-62: The Life and times of the Eskimo Affairs Committee,” *Arctic* 40, no. 3 (1987), 191.

Inuit well-being further. As of 1936, responsibility for Inuit affairs was held primarily by the Department of Mines and Resources – which, incidentally, was also responsible for immigration.⁴¹⁹ In 1950, Inuit affairs and management of the Northwest Territories were transferred to the newly created Department of Resources and Development. These responsibilities were again shifted in 1953 to the new Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR).⁴²⁰

Also of note was the fact that in 1951, the Northwest Territories Council⁴²¹, which until 1946 had been comprised solely of federal public servants in Ottawa, began to include members elected from the population of NWT. Elected NWT Council members, however, remained “in the minority” until 1966.⁴²² As of that year, the Council had very little authority, notes Zaslow, (writing in 1967) that “in the Northwest Territories, the Commissioner as yet controls little more than the staff of the liquor system... All other functions of government are held by federal agencies... As federal civil servants these officials... look to Ottawa, the sources of administrative power”.⁴²³ As is discussed in Chapter Five, post-1967, the Government gradually granted the Northwest Territories Council province-like powers.

⁴¹⁹ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 78; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 83.

⁴²⁰ Abele and Dosman, “Interdepartmental coordination,” 430.

⁴²¹ A four-person council was first appointed in 1921. Its authority came from the 1905 Northwest Territories Amendment Act. It exercised few powers; Morris Zaslow, *The Northwest Territories, 1905-1980* (The Canadian Historical Association, 1984), 8.

⁴²² Morris Zaslow, “Recent Constitutional Development in Canada's Northern Territories,” *Canadian Public Administration* 10, no. 2. (1967), 167.

⁴²³ Zaslow, “Recent Constitutional Development,” 167.

The Government's desire to maintain its international reputation (which had suffered due to perceptions of how Canada treated of its indigenous population) contributed to its taking issues of Inuit well-being more seriously in the 1950s. The belief that the Government had neglected Inuit welfare specifically, was popularized by the release of the 1952 book *People of the Deer* by Farley Mowat, which illustrated the suffering and hardship faced by Caribou Inuit and suggested that it was caused in part by their participation in the fur trade. The book was read by a large international audience and received extensive praise.⁴²⁴ The Government of the day received numerous letters from Canadian and international readers who were dismayed by Mowat's account and it responded to questions about the book in Parliament.⁴²⁵ The episode was particularly unwelcome for the Government, which "under the tutelage of [Minister of External Affairs] Lester Pearson... was trying to play a leading role in world affairs".⁴²⁶

Caribou Crisis in the Kivalliq Region

An internal Government report evaluating the state of the northern trapping economy (prepared by former HBC employee James Cantley) released prior to *People of the Deer* in 1952, foreshadowed Mowat's thesis that Inuit participation in the fur trade was causing Inuit more harm than good.⁴²⁷ It noted that although during WWII arctic fox fur prices had recovered somewhat from their "crash" during the Great Depression, by 1948/49 (at \$8.88/fur) they were

⁴²⁴ C. S. MacKinnon. *Keewatin, 1893-1963: Some Aspects of Government Policy Towards the Caribou Inuit* (University of Alberta, Department Of History, 1984), Chapter 5, page 2.

⁴²⁵ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 57, 100-101.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴²⁷ Peter Clancy, "The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada," 192.

approximately half of their average price between 1944-1948 (\$16.58/fur) and a third of their price in the early parts of the war (\$25.99/fur).⁴²⁸ In Jenness' view, therefore, "For the second time within the memory of living Eskimos then, the foundations of Eskimo economy were crumbling".⁴²⁹ Cantley's report cautioned officials not to respond to this problem by increasing Inuit "relief," for fear of encouraging indigence. He instead recommended increased Government collaboration with the HBC in order to "manage each native's trading account to control his level of credit so as to avoid the accumulation of excessive credits or debts..."⁴³⁰

Lack of consensus within the bureaucracy on whether to accept this suggestion – for instance, the RCMP Commissioner instead advocated the creation of a state monopoly over the fur trading industry – led the Department of Resources and Development to establish a Conference on Eskimo Affairs to hash out this and related Inuit matters.⁴³¹ Held in May 1952, over fifty participants from ten federal government organizations attended, as well as representatives from the Anglican and Catholic Churches, and the HBC. The Conference developed no concrete decisions, except that a committee should meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of Inuit well-being and that for the meantime "the Eskimos were to be encouraged to remain on the land and follow their traditional ways."⁴³²

⁴²⁸ James Cantley, *Survey of economic conditions among the Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic* (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1950), 39 in Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 74; Jenness states that the price of fur was \$26.99 (not \$25.99 as stated above) in the table at the bottom of page 74.

⁴²⁹ Jenness, *Eskimo Administration*, 80.

⁴³⁰ Peter Clancy, "The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada," 192.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 192-193.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 193.

Mid-1950s – Government Transition from “Keep the Native Native” Policy to Prioritizing the Provision of Social Services

One of the first significant Government initiatives aimed at Inuit health occurred in 1950 when the Government ship *C.D. Howe*, sent to the Arctic on patrol, was equipped with a mobile health station including X-Ray and dental equipment to provide medical services to Inuit.⁴³³ Prior to 1945, when responsibility for Inuit health was transferred to the Department of Health and Welfare from the Department of Mines and Resources, Duffy notes that “[t]he northern administration did nothing official about health care or medical facilities in the Arctic.”⁴³⁴ As of 1943, the Eastern Arctic contained two hospitals - one in Chesterfield Inlet and one in Pangnirturg (Baffin Island) - both run by missionaries.⁴³⁵

Another important Government health initiative aimed at Inuit in the 1950s was the temporary relocation of very sick people, particularly those with Tuberculosis, to hospitals in southern Canada. Mackinnon notes that in 1956, 1,578 had been temporary relocated to a southern hospital to receive treatment for TB.⁴³⁶ Inuit of the Kivalliq region were deeply impacted by this policy which continued into this 1960s, with Williamson stating that “[b]y 1964, over seventy per cent of the total Keewatin population had spent some time in southern [Canadian] sanatoria... being tested or treated for pulmonary tuberculosis.”⁴³⁷ In terms of medical facilities in the Keewatin region itself, Williamson notes that the (abovementioned)

⁴³³ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 56.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴³⁶ MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 7, page 1.

⁴³⁷ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 82, 84; MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 7, page 3.

mission-run hospital in Chesterfield Inlet - a “20-bed” facility had existed in there since 1930. Baker Lake, Arviat, and Whale Cove received “Nursing Stations” in 1956, 1962, and 1970, respectively.⁴³⁸ Medical and educational facilities were established in Rankin Inlet during the mining period (discussed in the next chapter).

As with health, prior to WWII the Government had no official role in providing Inuit education. There were only four schools in the entire NWT (all of which were mission run).⁴³⁹ Anglican Missionaries operated the only school in the Eastern Arctic, located in Pangnirtung.⁴⁴⁰ This changed in 1947, when the Department of Mines and Resources “assumed responsibility for Inuit education... intending to [henceforth] provide the same quality of [educational] programming in the North as in southern Canada.”⁴⁴¹

The Government’s post-war Inuit school system consisted primarily of two separate school types: day schools and residential schools.⁴⁴² Day schools were to be constructed in communities “only where sufficient population was permanently located to justify regular school attendance,” otherwise children were to be removed from their families and sent to residential schools “for up to ten months out of each year.”⁴⁴³ Instruction was often provided by non-Inuit, in English, and consisted of a “southern curriculum”, intended in part to facilitate Inuit

⁴³⁸ R.G. Williamson, “The Keewatin Settlements,” *The Musk-Ox*. no. 8 (1971), 17-22; Williamson refers to Arviat by its former name, Eskimo Point.

⁴³⁹ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 95.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit*, 82.

⁴⁴² Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 100-105.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, 103; Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit*, 82.

participation in the commercial economy.⁴⁴⁴ Williamson notes that in the Kivalliq region (apart from Rankin Inlet, to be discussed), day schools were constructed in Chesterfield Inlet in 1951, in Baker Lake in 1957, in Arviat in 1958-59.⁴⁴⁵

In his memoirs, Gordon Robertson, Deputy Minister of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources (DNANR)⁴⁴⁶ in the 1950s, sheds light on various rationales held by bureaucrats who were working to expand welfare state services for Inuit during that period. On one hand, he writes that due to large fluctuations in fur prices and the availability of game, Inuit hunting and trapping-based economy had become unsustainable. As such, the Government had a duty to help Inuit to avoid catastrophe.⁴⁴⁷ On the other, he implies that certain aspects of traditional Inuit life *itself* were simply incompatible with modern society. He writes, for instance that, “it was open to question if the ‘successful independent [Inuit] life’ meant enduring a level of hardship, damage to health, and premature death that was considered unacceptable for other Canadians.”⁴⁴⁸ Concerning the need for the state to provide education services to Inuit children, he invokes a rights-based perspective, noting that “Aboriginal children were Canadian and had the same rights as other children to education.”⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁴ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 101-102.

⁴⁴⁵ Williamson, “The Keewatin Settlements,” 17, 18, 20; Williamson writes that the Chesterfield Inlet school (opened in 1951) was “under church auspices... though the Mission had been providing some form of education... for some time before that.” (page 17).

⁴⁴⁶ DNANR became responsible for Inuit affairs in 1953.

⁴⁴⁷ Gordon Robertson, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: MacKenzie King to Pierre Trudeau* (University of Toronto Press, 2000), 117-118.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 119.

1950s Government Policy towards the Inuit Economy

The abovementioned Government programs aimed at Inuit clientele, while welcomed by many Inuit, implied significant changes to patterns of movement and forms of economic activity. In particular, the services of stationary hospitals and schools are most effectively delivered when their clients are near. For Inuit, this often meant transitioning to a settlement-based life and the abandonment – at least to a large degree – of the semi-nomadic life upon which their resource harvesting economy had been based. Government officials were aware that urbanization would undermine the traditional Inuit economy – resulting in temporary hardship - but considered it a necessary aspect of the larger, and inevitable, project of integrating Inuit into Canada’s social, political and economic structure. In terms of economic integration specifically, this meant increasing Inuit participation in the “white economy”⁴⁵⁰ (i.e., commercial economy).

According to Tester and Kulchyski, one of the Government’s first efforts to facilitate this adjustment was the creation of the “on-the-ground” Northern Service Officer (NSO) position in 1954. The first four NSOs were assigned to the communities of “Aklavik, Coral Harbour, Frobisher Bay, Port Harrison, and Fort Chimo” and by 1958-59 their numbers had increased to nineteen.⁴⁵¹ In their view, the NSO had two main tasks: 1. to manage, in each settlement, the Government’s increasing range of services directed towards Inuit; and, 2. to perform the more

⁴⁵⁰ Government of Canada (Advisory Commitment on Government Activities in the North), “Government Activities in the North - 1954” (Ottawa), 46.

⁴⁵¹ Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 115; Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 326.

abstract goal of Canadianizing Inuit.⁴⁵² Regarding the latter task, according to text prepared for then Minister Lesage, NSOs were to facilitate the process of modifying “[Inuit] thoughts and lives to the changes their culture is undergoing... The objective of Government policy... (is) to give the Eskimos the same rights, privileges [*sic*], opportunities and responsibilities as all other Canadians – in short to enable them to play a real part in the national life of Canada.”⁴⁵³ An important aspect of this policy was the development of a culture of local democratic and civic engagement. An article by Lesage (using much of the same text as above) in the publication *The Beaver* (1955) states that the Government lacked a precise plan to carry out this societal transformation⁴⁵⁴ writing that, “[i]t would be rash to offer a blueprint [and it] will doubtless be necessary to proceed from trial to revision repeatedly.”⁴⁵⁵

The 1954 edition of the “Government Activities in the North” annual document reveals how DNANR was approaching Inuit economic matters during this period of transition. It outlines in the “long-term plans” of the Arctic Division section a two-tracked approach, treating Inuit differently depending on their level of contact with “white civilization”:

⁴⁵² Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 326-329; The NSO took over this function from the RCMP who were relegated to tasks such as monitoring and reporting on issues of Inuit well-being (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 329).

⁴⁵³ NWT Archives, Alex Stevenson Collection, N92-023, “MATERIAL FROM Arctic DIVISION FOR THE MINISTER’S USE” (December 28, 1956), 3-4 in Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 327. Similar text appears in the article by Jean Lesage, “Enter the European,” *Beaver* 285 (1955). 3-9; Text from this article by Lesage is excerpted in Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 113-114.

⁴⁵⁴ Lesage’s article also discusses the need to foster democratic and civic participation among Inuit, writing “It seems obvious that an effort to place the direction of local affairs in the hands of the Eskimo is desirable... [and that] NSOs are to encourage the Eskimos to take responsibility for local decisions to as great an extent as possible” (Lesage, *Enter the European*, 7-8 1955 in Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 114).

⁴⁵⁵ Lesage, “Enter the European,” 8 in Diubaldo, *The Government of Canada and the Inuit*, 114.

Where primitive Eskimos in remote areas are relatively free from contact with white civilization, it is planned to leave their present economy as undisturbed as possible. In those areas where there is already permanent contact, integration with the white economy will be encouraged. Between these two extremes employment of Eskimo will be encouraged provided it does not interfere unduly with their way of normal life. It is also planned to diversify the Eskimo economy and to transfer families from unproductive areas to regions where game is more abundant or employment is available.⁴⁵⁶

One of the Government's first major initiatives to promote Inuit participation in the "white economy" was facilitating Inuit employment in the building of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line. Approved for construction by the Government in 1955, the DEW Line consisted of forty-three "radar warning and communication stations" and was intended to "provide six hours advance notice of [potential Soviet missile] attack."⁴⁵⁷ Over the life of the project (which continued until 1957) there up to 101 Inuit employed at any given time, performing a range of tasks from "snow clearance, the maintenance of roads, (and) airstrips... to maintenance work on mechanical equipment and rigging and towers..."⁴⁵⁸

The Government was aware from early on that the project could have undesirable social effects. Neufeld notes that the treaty signed between the U.S. and Canada (outlining the terms of the DEW Line's development) stated that "Eskimos... are in a primitive state of social development. It is important these people be not [sic] subjected unduly to disruption of their hunting economy, exposure to diseases... or other effects of the presence of white men which

⁴⁵⁶ Advisory Committee on Government Activities in the North, "Government Activities in the North - 1954" (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources), 46.

⁴⁵⁷ David Neufeld, "The Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line: A Preliminary Assessment of its Role and Effects upon Northern Canada" *Arctic Institute of North America* (2002), 5, accessed Oct.29, 2016, http://www.stankieveh.net/projects/DEW/BAR-1/bin/Neufeld_DEWLinehistory.pdf.

⁴⁵⁸ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 158.

might be injurious to them.”⁴⁵⁹ To mitigate potential harm, NSOs were tasked with regulating Inuit participation on the project, ensuring that “[o]nly Inuit who wished to be employed were to be hired...[and to] have constant regard to arranging continuous employment only for such numbers of Inuit as seemed likely to go on working after the construction phase was over.”⁴⁶⁰

Bureaucrats questioned the wisdom of Inuit participation (from seemingly opposing perspectives) on DEW Line construction not long after its commencement. On the one hand, some officials expressed concern that DEW Line jobs were impermanent, and wondered internally how Inuit labourers would secure a living upon the project’s completion. On the other hand, despite the Government’s objective of not recruiting the most “primitive” Inuit to work on the DEW line, some officials complained that they could not attract *enough* skilled Inuit labour to the project, and that the more “primitive” ones could not be properly trained.⁴⁶¹ This view was also held by the principal U.S. contractor responsible for DEW Line construction, the Federal Electric Corporation, which requested that white Canadians be employed instead of Inuit, due to the latter’s perceived poor work ethic, and appeals for unorthodox working hours.⁴⁶²

Inuit participated in wage-labour activities in other parts of the Arctic during the 1950s as well. The 1956 committee entitled, the “Working Group on Northern Economic Problems” (created by cabinet) estimated that between 150 and 200 Inuit (of an estimated population of 2,400 working-age males) were employed in full time wage jobs. Many of these were with the

⁴⁵⁹ Neufeld, “The Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line,” 13.

⁴⁶⁰ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 156.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 157, 158-159.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 160.

Government (e.g., RCMP, Indian and Northern Health Services, Department of Transport), while some worked for the HBC and other occupations.⁴⁶³ Many Inuit participated in wage labour at Frobisher Bay in the mid-1950s largely related to the construction of U.S. military facilities, including the offloading materials from ships.⁴⁶⁴ Of course, beginning in 1953 Inuit were hired as wage-labourers at the nickel mine in Rankin Inlet (discussed in the next Chapter).

1950s Government Inuit Economic Policy in Kivalliq Region

With less than five percent of Inuit in full-time wage-labour jobs, the vast majority of the Inuit population in the 1950s was either working for wages part of the time, doing “traditional” activities (i.e., hunting/trapping), or a combination of both. Indeed keeping Inuit “on the land”⁴⁶⁵ was one element of the Government’s policy towards the Inuit economy during this period. Near Chesterfield Inlet, notes MacKinnon, this took the form dissuading Inuit from assembling near settlements.⁴⁶⁶ One such method of discouragement was to be generally ungenerous with the provision of relief, denying payments to “able-bodied, unemployed...” Inuit unless they lived more than 15 miles away “from of a settlement.”⁴⁶⁷ On several occasions, Inuit were relocated to parts of the Kivalliq region during the 1950s with (it was believe) more abundant wildlife. According to Tester and Kulchyski, Inuit in the Kivalliq “were moved in large groups, as

⁴⁶³ Ibid., 154.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 161.

⁴⁶⁵ Peter Clancy, “The Making of Eskimo Policy in Canada,” 193.

⁴⁶⁶ MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 6, page 10-11.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., Chapter 6, page 11.

communities. They were moved again. Groups were divided and reconstructed. Inuit in the southern Arctic were moved north, inland peoples to the coast...⁴⁶⁸

The tenability of the policy of keeping the “native, native” and “on the land”⁴⁶⁹ in the Kivalliq region came under extreme stress in the 1950s with the “Caribou Crisis.” As discussed, caribou was an essential source of sustenance for the Inuit of the Kivalliq region, particularly those who lived inland. In 1955, Government surveys suggested that the Kivalliq caribou population was quickly waning, prompting alarm within the bureaucracy who conveyed the issue to DNANR Minister Jean Lesage.⁴⁷⁰ Two committees were established to examine the matter, but (unsurprisingly – given the nature of the problem) proposed little to halt the herd’s perceived diminution.⁴⁷¹ Inuit were encouraged to survive on fish and were provided with materials (such as fish nets) in order to survive. A large scale “wolf control” operation was also put into place.⁴⁷² Despite these initiatives and continued relocation schemes – notably movement of the Inuit of Ennadai Lake to Henik Lake - several Inuit from this group as well as Inuit at Garry Lake died from malnutrition during the 1957-58 winter. This was a particularly tragic and avoidable outcome, in the view of Tester and Kulchyski, given that existing “the transportation

⁴⁶⁸ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 206; One particularly tragic major Inuit relocation project in the post WWII period (outside of the Kivalliq region) was undertaken in 1953 when a group of Inuit were transported from Port Harrison (now Inukjuak), QC to Craig Harbour and Resolute (known as the High Arctic Relocation). For more information on the High Arctic Relocation and the reasons for its failure, see: *Out in the Cold: The Legacy of Canada’s Inuit Relocation Experiment in the High Arctic* (1992) and *Relocating Eden: The image and politics of Inuit exile in the Canadian Arctic* (1995) by Alan Marcus.

⁴⁶⁹ Damas (2002) refers to Government actions in this regard as a “Policy of Dispersal”

⁴⁷⁰ MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 8, page 0.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Chapter 8, pages 0-1.

⁴⁷² Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 221; MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 8, pages 3-4; 6.

and communication network” in the Keewatin made possible... regular contacts [by government and other officials] with Inuit of the area”.⁴⁷³

Reports of these starvations greatly embarrassed senior bureaucrats within DNANR, who were already conscious of public sentiment towards their handling of Inuit well-being.⁴⁷⁴ The department tasked two bureaucrats with conducting an investigation, which involved “interviewing survivors” and developing proposals for future action. One of their recommendations was to create a new Inuit settlement to ensure the efficient the delivery of health and welfare services for Inuit in the region.⁴⁷⁵ Although “accessibility” had been a factor in the choice of site for previous Inuit relocations (for instance, in 1950 the Inuit of Ennadai Lake were moved to Nueltin lake, in part because it was near a trading post with relief supplies), this proposal – which was implemented soon afterwards - represented a dramatic shift in policy.⁴⁷⁶ In Mackinnon’s words, the Government’s approach to Inuit welfare in the Kivalliq region transformed from “actively discouraging clustering in settlements... to the other extreme and became nervous about any [Inuit] continuing to live beyond the range of immediate help.”⁴⁷⁷ Despite this reversal, some bureaucrats appear to have been reluctant in accepting that the previous policy of keeping the “native native” had in any way failed, with the then Department Assistant Deputy Minister blaming the starvations on administrative failures.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷³ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 204.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁴⁷⁵ MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 10, page 0-1.

⁴⁷⁶ Tester and Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes)*, 211.

⁴⁷⁷ MacKinnon, *Keewatin, 1893-1963*, Chapter 10, page 0.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Chapter 10, page 1.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion attempted to describe important changes in Government policy towards Canada's North – with a focus on the Eastern Arctic and its Inuit inhabitants - from Confederation to the 1950s. The aim was to establish the historical and policy context in Inuit settled at Rankin Inlet – and associated mining activities began – in 1953.

To summarize, prior to WWII the Government was largely absent from and unconcerned with Inuit territory. Its overall direct impact on Inuit life was minimal. Its first significant interventions in the region in the early 20th Century - namely the commissioning of Arctic sea voyages and the establishment of RCMP posts - were in response to perceived challenges to Canadian sovereignty and were mainly symbolic. The state took some actions prior to WWII which affected Inuit (e.g., establishing an RCMP presence which aimed to ensure Inuit compliance with “the rule of law,” the enactment of hunting and trapping regulations, and the provision of emergency assistance (i.e., “relief”)) however they did not significantly affect Inuit life. As discussed in Chapter Two, the relative lack of state power in the region pre-WWII lessened the ability of commercial actors (e.g., traders and whalers) to exert influence over Inuit.

The Government's indifference towards the Arctic ceased abruptly following WWII. In order to withstand potential new challenges to Canadian sovereignty over the region caused by the technical possibility of a Soviet nuclear attack on North America by way of Canada's Arctic, it participated in various large-scale defence projects in the region with the U.S. This development, combined with the growth of the Canadian welfare state, led state officials to take

greater notice of the region's Inuit residents and consider (more seriously than previously) issues related to their well-being. Initial Government efforts in this regard involved provision of social, health, and education-related services, while most Inuit were encouraged to provide for their own material security through hunting and trapping.

Throughout the 1950s, however, officials came to believe that the Inuit trapping/hunting economy could not provide Inuit with an acceptable level of material security. Across the Arctic, the Government began shifting to a policy which prioritized the provision of social services to Inuit in settlements. This shift appears to have come abruptly in the Kivalliq Region, following the seemingly preventable starvations of 1957. The Government also began promote alternate economic opportunities for Inuit including participation in the "white economy." In addition to serving the immediate aim of supporting material Inuit well-being, efforts in this regard were viewed as part of the larger goal, which the Government had by then adopted, of integrating Inuit into Canadian social, economic and political life.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

This Chapter examines the contributions of Inuit, North Rankin Nickel Mines (NRNM) officials, and the Government to the formation of the institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy between 1953 and 1962, the period in which work occurred on a nickel mine. A confluence of factors in the early 1950s had convinced southern rights holders of a mineral deposit at Rankin Inlet that it could be mined profitably. Developmental work at the site in 1953. Mine production started in 1957 and lasted until 1962, at which time mine management determined it had exhausted profitably accessible mineral reserves.

Beginning in 1953, Inuit began settling in Rankin Inlet to participate in wage labour at the mine site. The number of Inuit employed at the mine increased dramatically in 1956/57 as the mine entered production. Inuit involvement in mine labour activities appears to have been supported by the Inuit themselves who settled in Rankin, the mining company, and the Government. For Inuit workers (and their families) participation in wage labour at the mine offered previously unavailable material benefits. For the mining company, using Inuit labour offered potential cost savings, relative to shipping in its entire labour force from outside of the region. Finally, for the Government, Inuit involvement in mining activities supported its

relatively new objective of providing for Inuit material welfare in the context of a settlements (at little cost), while serving as a test case for future Inuit involvement in the “white economy.”⁴⁷⁹

The institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s economy during 1953-1962 “Mining Era,” was distinct from the three previous eras of Inuit involvement in commercial activity in the Kivalliq region. As mentioned, during the Fort Prince of Wales, Whaling, and Fur Trade Eras, the extended family remained the pre-eminent institution influencing Inuit economic life. During the “Mining Era,” however the role of the extended family diminished (although it did not disappear) with the mining company assuming an important complementary institutional role. Through the provision and withholding of wages (as well as other techniques described in the Chapter) the mining company exerted significant influence over Inuit economic decisions, particularly for the (significant number of) Inuit who worked for the mine full-time.

Despite the mine’s influence, many Inuit continued to participate in traditional economic activities, whose performance remained significantly influenced by Inuit social structures. Indeed it was during the “Mining Era” that a “mixed-economy” - characterized by the use of cash to purchase fuel, equipment and other materials which facilitated participation in traditional economic activities – emerged in Rankin Inlet. Part of the chapter is devoted to understanding how Inuit may have weighed the costs and benefits of participating in wage labour at the mine versus those of performing traditional activities.

⁴⁷⁹ Advisory Committee on Government Activities in the North, “Government Activities in the North, 1954,” (Ottawa, 1955), 46.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous Knowledge of Valuable Minerals at Rankin Inlet

Due to a meager abundance of wildlife compared to adjacent areas, very few Inuit inhabited the area now called Rankin Inlet prior to the start of nickel mine operations in the early 1950s.⁴⁸⁰ Some camped there on a seasonal basis and would hunt, trap and fish.⁴⁸¹ According to Dailey and Dailey, Rankin Inlet's pre-mine Inuit inhabitants were affiliated with the Inuit inhabitants of Chesterfield Inlet (possibly Qaernermiut) located approximately 90km to the northwest of Rankin Inlet, along the coast of (Hudson Bay).⁴⁸² The only non-Inuit living near pre-mine Rankin Inlet, according to Williamson was one "White" trapper who lived in the area "for four or five years between the wars."⁴⁸³ Prior to the establishment of the first fur trade post in Rankin in 1957 by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), the nearest posts would have been Chesterfield Inlet (established in 1911) and Tavani (~1928 – 1958) approximately 100km south of Rankin along the Hudson Bay coast.⁴⁸⁴

The first non-indigenous confirmation that Rankin Inlet was home to a sizable deposit of nickel came in 1928 when documented as such by a team of prospectors working for the Cyril Knight Prospecting Company.⁴⁸⁵ According to McPherson in *New Owners in Their Own Land*, there had been significant prospecting activity throughout Canada's North during the 1920s due

⁴⁸⁰ Williamson, "The Keewatin Settlements," 21.

⁴⁸¹ R. C. Dailey and L.A. Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet: A Preliminary Report* (Ottawa: Northern Co-ordination and Research Centre, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1961), 4.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 91.

⁴⁸⁴ Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories*, 141; Usher puts a "?" next to 1928 as the opening year of the Tavani fur trade post, indicating that the post's exact date of establishment is uncertain.

⁴⁸⁵ John Dryborough, "Nickel-Copper Deposit on Hudson Bay," *The Transactions of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and of the Mining Society of Nova Scotia* 34 (1931), 157; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 91-92.

to “booming metal markets, ease of financing, government geological mapping, and [the] adoption of bush aircraft...”⁴⁸⁶ Prospecting in the Kivalliq region became particularly attractive with the completion of the Hudson Bay Railway in 1929 (running along a North-South route in Manitoba from Winnipeg to Churchill). This project greatly improved ability to transfer goods between the Kivalliq region and the south.⁴⁸⁷

Non-indigenous suspicions of profitable mineral reserves in the Eastern Kivalliq, however, dated at least as far back as 1736, when an HBC vessel from Fort Prince of Wales (Churchill) sailed north along the Hudson Bay west coast to investigate “Eskimo-source rumors of mineral wealth in the area.”⁴⁸⁸ The inquiry was never completed, however, due to “difficult sailing conditions.”⁴⁸⁹ The Kivalliq region’s allure as a potential area for profitable mineral development was renewed in 1893 by J.B. and James Tyrell who surveyed parts of the area (by canoe) on behalf of the Geological Survey of Canada.⁴⁹⁰

The Cyril Knight Prospecting Company conducted further geological analysis (diamond drilling) in 1930, raising the possibility that mineral extraction could be profitable if the (as yet not fully analyzed) body of ore could prove large enough.⁴⁹¹ Company officials decided against further development of the reserves the following year, however, due to “the remoteness of the

⁴⁸⁶ Robert McPherson, *New Owners in Their Own Land: Minerals and Inuit Land Claims* (University of Calgary Press, 2003), 33.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁸ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 91.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ McPherson, *New Owners in Their Own Land*, 33.

⁴⁹¹ J. L. Robinson, “Mineral resources and mining activity in the Canadian Eastern Arctic,” *Canadian Geographical Journal* 29 (1944), 64-65.

area, the lack of transportation, and the depressed conditions of the base metals market.”⁴⁹² The company undertook a new round of drilling over a three-month period 1937, involving the transport of “26 tons of mining material including drill equipment and a radio station... by ski-equipped planes (from Churchill to Rankin Inlet).”⁴⁹³ Based on these operations the company concluded that deposit was too small to warrant further development.⁴⁹⁴

A new round of mineral analysis when 1951 when the newly established company “Rankin Nickel Mines Limited” obtained the rights to the property and conducted “[a] magnetometer and electromagnetic survey... followed by diamond drilling.”⁴⁹⁵ The drilling continued into 1952 after which it was decided that more intensive underground activities would take place.⁴⁹⁶ An important reason for the newfound development of the deposit (which had been considered prohibitively expensive to access seventeen years earlier) was the rapid rise in the demand for and price of nickel caused by the onset of the Korean War in 1950.⁴⁹⁷ Nickel prices had held steady at roughly 0.35(USD)/lb between 1926 and 1948, before rising to approximately 0.55(USD)/lb in 1951. Nickel prices continued to rise after the conclusion of the

⁴⁹² Robinson, “Mineral resources and mining activity,” 65; The article “North Rankin Nickel Mines,” by The Mines Staff, indicates that the follow-up diamond drilling was undertaken by both “Cyril Knight Prospecting Syndicate and Nipissing Mines Ltd” (1957, 93), whereas Robinson states that, “[t]he Cyril Knight Prospecting Company was the only party to return to the west coast of Hudson Bay in 1930” (1944, 64).

⁴⁹³ Robinson, “Mineral resources and mining activity...,” 66; Both Williamson (1974, 21) and The Mines Staff (1957, 93) state that this additional drilling took place in 1936 (not 1937).

⁴⁹⁴ Robinson, “Mineral resources and mining activity,” 66.

⁴⁹⁵ J.C. Browning, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines,” *Canadian Mining Journal* 74, no. 12 (1953), 56; ReSDA, “ReSDA Atlas: Summary of Nunavut Mines (Compilation of Summary Information of Mines Past and Present for Nunavut,” accessed May 16, 2017, <http://yukonresearch.yukoncollege.yk.ca/resda/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/12/Nunavut-Mine-Summaries-for-web.pdf>.

⁴⁹⁶ Browning, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines,” 56.

⁴⁹⁷ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 92; F. B. Howard-White, *Nickel: An Historical Review* (D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1963), 214.

war – in part due to the continual build-up of the US military –reaching nearly 0.80(USD)/lb by 1961.⁴⁹⁸ Weber and Teal note that in addition to a desire to exploit “premium sale in the nickel markets,” the interests backing the mining project in Rankin Inlet saw it as an opportunity to gain “a foothold in the Canadian North” which could “lead over the hill to a bigger and better mine in this virgin territory.”⁴⁹⁹

An additional factor which likely contributed to the calculation that mining at Rankin Inlet could be profitable, was that fact that there is a “natural harbor” less than one kilometre from the ore deposit, which facilitated the on and-offloading of supplies.⁵⁰⁰ This, combined with the nearby port of Churchill (with a rail link to North American markets), would help to mitigate transportation costs which had – in the Mackenzie Region, for instance – been seen as a large obstacle to profitable mineral development in Canada’s North.⁵⁰¹

Mine Development Begins in 1953

In August of the following year (1953), a ship arrived in Rankin Inlet from Montreal with over \$500,000 of equipment for the construction of a permanent mining camp.⁵⁰² By September of 1953, the company had constructed a camp consisting of “eight buildings... includ[ing] a bunkhouse for 40 men, cook house, manager’s residence, compressor and hoist house, garage

⁴⁹⁸ Howard-White, *Nickel: An Historical Review*, 216, 309.

⁴⁹⁹ W.W. Weber and S.S. Teal, “A Sub-Arctic Mining Operation,” *Canadian Mining and Metallurgical Bulletin* 62 (1959), 252.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰¹ Rea, *The Political Economy of the Canadian North*, 118. Dryborough, “Nickel-Copper Deposit on Hudson Bay,” 167-168.

⁵⁰² The Mines Staff, “North Rankin Nickel Mines: Mining and Milling Methods,” *Canadian Mining Journal* (August 1957), 93; Browning, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines,” 56.

and machine shop, diesel oil storage, and mine head.”⁵⁰³ “Shaft-sinking” began shortly after, which by “the end of November [had reached] a depth of nearly 100 feet.”⁵⁰⁴

According to Williamson, between the abovementioned delivery of machinery to Rankin Inlet in 1953 and the first shipment of ore to southern markets in 1957, the mining operations were plagued with “...[t]echnical problems, mainly associated with the fact that this was the first mine to be put into operation in the Canadian Arctic.”⁵⁰⁵ One of these difficulties was that mining in permafrost required “several innovations,” including the heating of ventilation.⁵⁰⁶ In 1954, a memo to Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines shareholders stated that, although mining operations had met the firm’s targets to-date, “[e]xpenditures had exceeded... estimates... and as at December 31, 1953, all funds raised by the company had been expended and liabilities of approximately \$100,000 incurred.”⁵⁰⁷ In the letter, the firm also asked shareholders for an additional \$500,000 which would be used to continue “sinking and drifting” as well as “make a determined effort to increase ore reserves.”⁵⁰⁸ Indeed, although the company had judged the known reserve to be large enough to make a profit, it continued to hold out hope that it would find more reserves nearby.

The company, which was renamed North Rankin Nickel Mines (NRNM) in 1954, continued preparatory mining operations until October of that year, at which time the mine was

⁵⁰³ Browning, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines,” 57.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁵ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 92.

⁵⁰⁶ Terrence Foster, “Rankin Inlet: a lesson in survival,” *The Musk-Ox* no. 10 (1972), 32.

⁵⁰⁷ Author unknown, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines 1954,” *Canadian Mining Journal* 75, no. 3 (1954), 69

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

shut down “to await decisions regarding production.”⁵⁰⁹ Operations resumed in “late 1955” when Mogul Mining Company put forward (in return for a convertible bond) the “\$2 million estimated to bring the mine to production.”⁵¹⁰ In August of 1956 and additional “2000 tons of equipment and supplies” were shipped to the mine site and by May 1957 ore was being extracted and milled.⁵¹¹ As Foster points out, in 1959 the known ore reserve was estimated at 363,500 tons (est. 460,000 tons in 1957) representing at most five years of mining activity. He writes, “Thus, from the beginning, and throughout the early years of production it was known that the ore body was limited and that the mine would have to cease operations after only a few years if no new depositions were discovered.”⁵¹²

The Mining Process

Mining operations between 1957 and 1962 essentially consisted of two distinct processes: the mining itself (drilling and removing the ore from the earth) and ore concentrating or milling (crushing/grinding the mined ore and separating its contents).⁵¹³ In 1957, the “proven” raw ore deposit was estimated at 3.3% nickel and 0.8% copper (also a valuable mineral which the company deemed could be sold for a profit) with large quantities of iron, sulphur, and acid insol and very small quantities of platinum and palladium. The company’s concentration process could produce an “acceptable copper-nickel concentrate” consisting of 13.5% nickel and 2.58%

⁵⁰⁹ Foster, “Rankin inlet: A Lesson in Survival,” 34.

⁵¹⁰ The Mines Staff, “North Rankin Nickel Mines,” 93.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.; Foster, “Rankin inlet: A Lesson in Survival,” 34.

⁵¹² Foster, “Rankin inlet: A Lesson in Survival,” 33; The Mines Staff, “North Rankin Inlet Mines,” 96.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

copper, with recovery levels of 87% and 90% for nickel and copper respectively, at a maximum rate of approximately 250 tons per day.⁵¹⁴ A 1959 article estimates the breakdown of the raw ore deposit at 3.14% nickel and 0.92% copper.⁵¹⁵

Once the concentrate was produced, it was stored until the start of the short shipping season which lasted from August to October.⁵¹⁶ Before 1958-59, the concentrate was placed in paper bags (holding 90lbs each), at which time it was stored and shipped in bulk. The fact that the company was forced to store (and therefore not sell) the concentrate for the greater part of the year, was considered a major cost of doing business, with the company realizing virtually no income for several months at a time.⁵¹⁷ When the shipping season did arrive, the boat that brought a replenishment of supplies for the upcoming mining season was loaded with the previous season's concentrate. The boat would then offload the concentrate at the Port of Churchill, from which point it was transferred into railway cars and shipped south via the Hudson Bay railway.⁵¹⁸

Various Reasons for Inuit Migration to Rankin Inlet

Although Williamson writes that Inuit were not employed at the mine until 1957, both Browning and Damas (who cites an RCMP report) write that approximately ten to twenty Inuit

⁵¹⁴ The Mines Staff, "North Rankin Nickel Mines," 93-94; Foster, "Rankin inlet: A Lesson in Survival," 35.

⁵¹⁵ Weber and Teal, "A Sub-Arctic," 463.

⁵¹⁶ Foster, "Rankin inlet: A Lesson in Survival," 32-33.

⁵¹⁷ Weber and Teal, "A Sub-Arctic," 465.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

were employed when construction-related work on the mining camp began in 1953.⁵¹⁹ Damas (citing correspondence between DNANR officials) and Williamson agree, however, that there was a great surge in Inuit employment in the mine beginning in 1956/57, such that by late 1957 over seventy to eighty Inuit were employed by the mine.⁵²⁰ Similar levels of Inuit employment continued until the mine closure in 1962.⁵²¹

Given that the Rankin Inlet area was largely unpopulated prior to the beginning of permanent mining operations in 1953, nearly all of the Inuit mine employees and their families (with the exception of babies born in Rankin Inlet) were in some sense migrants.⁵²² This raises three important questions: Where did the Inuit workers and their families come from?; Why did they come to Rankin Inlet?; and, How did they get there? To address these questions, a brief recap of Government policy towards Inuit, and a discussion of some of the events and trends which were occurring in the Kivalliq region at the time is useful.

As mentioned in the previous Chapter, during the 1950s, the Government's position regarding Inuit welfare was shifting from "keep the native, native" to encouraging Inuit (in the Kivalliq region and elsewhere) to live in settlements so that social services could be provided efficiently. Damas states that during this transition period, Government policy towards Inuit of the Kivalliq region could be described - when viewed in its totality - as "flexible in the face of

⁵¹⁹ Browning, "Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines," 57; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 83-84; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 111.

⁵²⁰ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 96; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 111-112.

⁵²¹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 130.

⁵²² Notwithstanding the fact that many Inuit may have passed through or visited Rankin Inlet along traditional migration patterns.

recognition of an uncertain economic base.”⁵²³ This “flexibility” refers to the fact that, depending on the local context, officials on the ground would take different measures to support Inuit material security which ranged from supporting their ability to “live off the land,” to encouraging clustering in and around settlements.⁵²⁴

As mentioned, however, after the winter of 1957-58, during which several Inuit near Henik and Garry Lakes starved to death, the Government began to prioritize migration to settlements for Inuit in the Kivalliq region. NSOs welcomed the new policy, writes Mackinnon, who in light of the recent disasters “... would not rest content unless they knew the location and condition of all the Inuit on the land.”⁵²⁵

Government policy notwithstanding, many Inuit of the Kivalliq region were increasingly moving to population clusters in the 1950s because they wanted to. VanStone and Oswalt provide an interpretation as to why Inuit were migrating to the population centre of Eskimo Point (south of Rankin Inlet along the Hudson Bay Coast) during their period of study (1959). They write that in addition to increased arctic fox trapping opportunities near the settlement, “[i]n recent years the people have failed to intercept the migrating caribou and faced starvation. They know that at Eskimo Point where there is a store, the police and the mission, they will not starve. All of these factors contributed to the growing concentration of people in the community and the

⁵²³ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 89. Damas refers specifically to government policy in the Northern Kivalliq (Keewatin) region. However, the characterization of government policy as “flexible” in the 1950s appears to apply to the Keewatin region as a whole.

⁵²⁴ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 89.

⁵²⁵ MacKinnon, *Keewatin*, 1893-1963, Chapter 13, page 1.

abandonment of their aboriginal way of life.”⁵²⁶ In “From Igloo to Mine Shaft: Inuit Labour and Memory at the Rankin Inlet Nickel Mine” Keeling and Boulter support the view that Inuit moved to settlements (including Rankin Inlet) to improve their material security. Summarizing Inuit firsthand accounts (in the *Keewatin Journal* collection of oral history (1979)) of Inuit who settled in Rankin Inlet, they write that “several people recounted how they were no longer able to make a living or survive off the land due to the shortage in caribou, and therefore had no alternative other than to work in the mine.”⁵²⁷

In terms of place of origin, the first Inuit to settle at Rankin Inlet in 1953 - a group of ten to twenty Inuit who moved there to work at the mine (in conjunction with approximately 35 non-Inuit from the South) – likely came from the Chesterfield Inlet.⁵²⁸ They appear to have done so on their own volition. It is not clear to what degree government officials (RCMP or DNANR staff) were involved in facilitating their migration (by providing transportation, for instance), however they likely supported the move. Damas notes that “as early as 1947” the RCMP (which had been permanently stationed in Chesterfield since 1921) had been attempting to discourage Inuit clustering at that settlement (contrary, they believed, to the efforts of the local Catholic mission) in part by denying Family Allowances to Inuit who they considered lazy.⁵²⁹

Government officials in the area, for the most part, encouraged Inuit to return to hunting and

⁵²⁶ James W. Vanstone and Wendell H. Oswalt, *The Caribou Eskimos of Eskimo Point* (Vol. 59. No. 2. Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources 1959), 22 in Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 93.

⁵²⁷ Arn Keeling and Patricia Boulter, “From Igloo to Mine Shaft: Inuit Labour and Memory at the Rankin Inlet Nickel Mine,” in *Mining and Communities in Northern Canada: History, Politics, and Memory* eds. Arn Keeling and John Sandlos (University of Calgary Press, 2015), 42.

⁵²⁸ Browning, “Rankin Inlet Nickel Mines,” 56; Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 83-84.

⁵²⁹ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 83.

trapping activities, but it appears that at least as early as 1956 Inuit participation in wage employment (which Rankin Inlet offered) was considered an acceptable alternative to perceived indigence and a reliance on Government payments.⁵³⁰

In contrast to the early use of Inuit labour at the mine site in 1953, which did not likely involve a large planning effort on part of the Government, the push to rapidly increase Inuit wage-employment at the mine in 1956/57 appears to have been a significant cooperative endeavor between NRNM and Government officials.⁵³¹ Interestingly, the perspectives of Damas and Williamson differ as to the role of each organization in ramping-up Inuit employment. Damas, on the one hand, implies that DNANR officials were the driving force behind the initiative, whereas Williamson indicates that it was NRNM manager A.J. Easton, who arrived at Rankin Inlet in 1957. Damas notes that in 1956, the Chief of the Arctic Division of DNANR, in response to an RCMP report, had expressed his strong approval of Inuit employment in the mine.⁵³² He states that the following year, the NSO from Churchill moved to Rankin Inlet and commenced “[n]egotiations... [with] the mining company... [which] resulted in plans to train Inuit so that they would become the chief working force and replace a number of outsiders there that had been employed.”⁵³³ Williamson, however, writes that A.J. Easton, “strenuously pressed for the employment of Eskimo (to company management in Toronto)” in order to avoid costs associated with the “rapid... turnover of often third-rate White employees brought in... from the

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 96.

south.”⁵³⁴ Regardless of which organization was more enthusiastic, both NRNM and DNANR were supportive of utilizing Inuit labour on the project and worked together to ensure it would happen. Thus, Williamson writes that beginning in 1957,

...[w]ith the co-operation of the Department of Northern Affairs, the Mine actually sent out employees to recruit Eskimo labour from other settlements. Boatloads were brought up from Eskimo Point and down from Chesterfield Inlet. With Government assistance, other Eskimo were flown in from Coral Harbour and Baker Lake. From the winter of 1956-57 onwards, there was a steady migration by dog-team from Chesterfield Inlet to Rankin Inlet. In 1955, the total population of Eskimo trading into Chesterfield Inlet numbered approximately three hundred and twenty. By... 1961 (due to migration to Rankin Inlet), when the population of Chesterfield was sufficiently reduced that the Hudson’s Bay Company felt justified in closing its store there, the Chesterfield Inlet population was slightly over ninety.⁵³⁵

Eskimo Point and Baker Lake had also been points of population concentration in the Kivalliq Region prior to recruitment for the nickel mine. It is therefore likely that the Inuit recruits (and/or volunteers) emanating from these settlements had previously lived in dispersed parts of inland Kivalliq.⁵³⁶ In addition, Damas notes that the Government promised a “contribution of \$20,000” for the project, although he does not specify its exact use, nor does he indicate what (if any) conditions were associated with the release of funds.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 92-93.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁵³⁷ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 94.

By 1958, Inuit were also moving to the nearby Keewatin Rehabilitation Project (KRP) at Itivia (approximately one mile to the South of Rankin Inlet). DNANR established the KRP in response to the starvations in the winter of 1957/58. As mentioned in Chapter Three, following this tragedy officials decided to establish a new settlement at Whale Cove along the coast of Hudson Bay to house the “survivors.”⁵³⁸ However, due to logistical problems (relating to the offloading and assembly of supplies from a ship at Whale Cove) the preparations for the Whale Cove settlement were not completed prior to Winter 1958/59, so it was decided to locate the survivors at Itivia instead.⁵³⁹ To house and support the migrants, writes Williamson, “[t]hirty shack-type buildings were hurriedly erected on a slope... a small one-room school was built, and a large Quonset hut was put up... [which contained] a store stocked and operated by the Government...”⁵⁴⁰ Approximately 130 Inuit settled in Itivia during Winter 1958/59. As of February 1959, thirty-nine of Itivia’s residents originated from “Henik Lake (via Eskimo Point), ten [came] from Chesterfield, five from Rankin, twenty from Baker lake, and...twelve from Povungnituk across Hudson Bay”.⁵⁴¹ Although Rankin Inlet’s Inuit population was never fixed, as “family groups... returned to the settlements from which they came after a year or two of residence,... as birth rates rose rapidly, and as new groups moved in from other settlements,”

⁵³⁸ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 94.

⁵³⁹ Tester and Kulchyski, *Mistakes*, 295.

⁵⁴⁰ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 95.

⁵⁴¹ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 101; Williamson writes that Povungnituk was “the place where the... Government officer-in-charge of the relocation project had recently been serving as a Hudson’s Bay Company Manager” (1974, 95).

Rankin Inlet's Inuit population exceeded five hundred in 1962.⁵⁴² A small number⁵⁴³ of KRP residents became employed at the mine.

Answers to the three questions posed above⁵⁴⁴ can be summarized as follows: First, the Inuit who were employed at the mine came – often indirectly through Baker Lake or Eskimo Point - from nearly all regions of the Kivalliq where Inuit had traditionally lived. A minority of migrants (such as those from Coral Harbour, Repulse Bay and Povungnituk⁵⁴⁵) came from areas outside of Kivalliq. Williamson estimates “the distribution of the population (of Rankin Inlet) by place of origin” during the period in which the mine was open as follows: Chesterfield Inlet (65%); Eskimo Point (25%); Repulse Bay (7%); and, Baker Lake (3%).⁵⁴⁶ As will be discussed in greater detail shortly, the mine likely employed individuals from all five of the “Caribou Inuit” societies (discussed in Chapter Two) as well as individuals from Inuit groups (e.g. Netsilingmiut, Aivilingmiut) not considered Caribou Inuit.

Second, the families who moved to Rankin Inlet did so for variety of reasons. The prospect of wage-labour (and the perceived material security and status associated with such work) attracted many. This seems particularly true for those who migrated from the Chesterfield area who had had previous experience in wage work, either for government agencies, on the

⁵⁴² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 93.

⁵⁴³ The exact number unknown, although few KHP residents likely worked in the mine. Williamson (1974, 95) and Tester/Kulchyski (1994, 295) emphasize that KHP residents were primarily employed in non-mine related activities.

⁵⁴⁴ The three questions are: 1. Where did the Inuit workers and their families originate from?; 2. Why did they migrate to Rankin Inlet?; and, 3. How did they travel there?

⁵⁴⁵ Also spelled Puvirnituk.

⁵⁴⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 93.

DEW line, or for the HBC.⁵⁴⁷ As will be discussed, the fact that some Inuit groups had had greater interaction with non-Inuit (and participation in a wage economy) prior to settlement at Rankin Inlet, would contribute to social stratification at the work site and in the settlement. Other families – particularly those from inland areas – were relocated, at the behest of government officials, to the Rankin Inlet area (Itivia) as part of the KRP, in an effort to avoid another mass starvation. Finally, some families who moved to Rankin were likely ambivalent in their motivations. Faced with a rapidly changing cultural and economic environment, they responded in the affirmative to persuasive efforts on the part of Government and mining company officials offering a more secure life.

Regarding the third question, the families who came to Rankin in some cases used their own dog sleds and in other cases used transportation provided by the government, possibly in conjunction with the mining company. For many of those coming from the Chesterfield area, Rankin Inlet was located on a route that they had travelled prior to the opening of the mine.⁵⁴⁸ For many others, “[b]ecause of the distance involved... had to seek transport by plane or ship.⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁷ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 87; Keeling and Boulter, “From Igloo to Mine Shaft...,” 46; Williamson (1974, 86) states that Inuit from Chesterfield Inlet were not employed on the DEW line.

⁵⁴⁸ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 98.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Inuit Involvement Mining Activities and Life in the Settlement

Inuit Participation in Mining Activities

This section provides a broad overview of Inuit participation in wage-labour at the mine, as well as (Inuit and non-Inuit) life in the settlement. For the most part, Inuit employment at the mine fell into three broad categories, “surface, mill, and mine.”⁵⁵⁰ According to Williamson, Inuit on the surface “worked as labourers, bulldozers’ and truck operators, carpenters’ helpers, plumbers’ helpers’ and electricians’ helpers, with seasonal work available to a few men as prospector’s helps, and boatmen during the navigation period.”⁵⁵¹ Inuit working in the mill were employed as, “crusher helpers... pebble mill helpers... drier helpers... rod-mill helpers... filter operators... mill-mechanics [and in one case as] a crusher operator...”⁵⁵² Finally, Inuit involved in mine-specific tasks worked as, “deck [men]... cage-tender[s]... [which were above-ground tasks]... mucking-machine operator[s]... [and] diamond drillers.”⁵⁵³

A large part of surface work was considered “unskilled” and paid the lowest wages, whereas mill and mine work involved “skilled” tasks that tended to pay more.⁵⁵⁴ There were, however, a mix of skilled and unskilled tasks in each area of operations. The employer would often test the proficiency of workers in unskilled jobs on the surface. If a worker could “prove himself” he would be offered the opportunity to “make more money and work in the mine.”⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁰ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 112.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, 112-113.

⁵⁵⁴ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 78.

⁵⁵⁵ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 82; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 112.

The distribution of mining tasks overlapped somewhat with worker area of origin (i.e., home society). Inuit originating from inland parts of the Kivalliq Region performed the majority of surface work whereas coastal oriented Inuit from Chesterfield Inlet performed the majority of skilled and underground positions. Williamson describes the workers from Chesterfield Inlet - who were considered to be more “acculturated”⁵⁵⁶ and some of whom had had previous wage labour experience - as “the underground élite.”⁵⁵⁷ Mill tasks were performed primarily by inland Inuit although many Inuit from Chesterfield would spend a period of time there before moving to the mine.⁵⁵⁸

In addition to receiving higher wages, Inuit performing higher skilled jobs often had access to more southern-style housing conditions. In November 1957, NRNM constructed fourteen wooden houses (16’x32’) for Inuit mine employees (in an area referred by Dailey and Dailey as the “New Eskimo Settlement” and by Williamson as “Eskimo village”).⁵⁵⁹ Other Inuit lived in “tents and shacks” in an area north of the mine (referred to by Dailey and Dailey) as the “Old Eskimo Settlement”) as well as in smaller houses built by the Government between 1958 and 1961.⁵⁶⁰ Dailey and Dailey write that from NRNM’s perspective, “[l]iving in the new settlement (which at the time of their study in 1958 would have consisted primarily of the 14 larger company-built houses) is viewed... as a reward for ‘good work’.”⁵⁶¹ In Williamson’s

⁵⁵⁶ Keeling and Boulter, “From Igloo to Mine Shaft,” 46

⁵⁵⁷ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 114.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 10; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 98.

⁵⁶⁰ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 14; Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 99.

⁵⁶¹ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 57.

view, the fact that many Inuit lived in conditions considerably less comfortable than non-Inuit workers, affected their ability to work in a manner consistent with the mine manager's expectations.⁵⁶²

With the exception of one English speaking Inuk who worked as a “foreman” (conveying English instructions from management to the workers) management positions were entirely occupied by non-Inuit.⁵⁶³ According to Williamson, in the early years of the mine some non-Inuit workers were expressed their frustration of working with Inuit (possibly due to the inability of many Inuit to communicate in English). Over time, however several non-Inuit workers “successfully adjusted to working with the Eskimo, and a few... had actually formed affable but not very committal friendships with their Eskimo work-mates.”⁵⁶⁴

Key Features of the Settlement

Beginning primarily in 1957, officials representing the state and other organizations established a fixed presence in settlement. A brief overview of these organizations (as well as the geographical layout of the settlement) is useful because they – as is argued later in this chapter – contributed to the overall social dynamics of the settlement..

As Damas points out, in 1957 Rankin Inlet witnessed a “truly remarkable development” in terms of growth of the settlement.⁵⁶⁵ In addition to the rapid increase in Inuit employment at

⁵⁶² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 142.

⁵⁶³ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 113-114. Non-Inuit from the south and from Europe also worked in non-management positions (1974, 142).

⁵⁶⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 141-142.

⁵⁶⁵ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 96.

the mine, “[t]wo missions had been founded, and HBC store opened, [and] a school began operations.”⁵⁶⁶ The mine site itself – in addition to housing the mine and associated industrial facilities - consisted of several buildings for the non-Inuit staff and management including a dining hall, recreation room, staff house, store, and office.⁵⁶⁷ Adjacent to the mine site was the “White Settlement” where the HBC store, school and missions were located, as well as a building for the DNANR staff, and housing for married non-Inuit miners.⁵⁶⁸ For the most part, the heat, water and electricity for the buildings in the “White Settlement” were provided by the mine site which was connected via an enclosed passage (called a utilidor).⁵⁶⁹ A road connected the mine and White Settlement to an aircraft landing strip (constructed by the mining company) approximately two kilometers to the west. The “Eskimo Village,” which was purposely built by the mining company “four or five hundred yards” away from the “White Settlement” (for reasons which will be discussed), was also provided with water (originating from nearby Lake Nipissar).⁵⁷⁰ DNANR built additional housing in the “Eskimo Village” while the mine was open, such that by 1963, there were roughly 70 houses in that area.⁵⁷¹ According to Dailey and Dailey, the mine supplied no utilities or services for what they refer to as the “Old Eskimo

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 2.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid, 6.

⁵⁶⁹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 98.

⁵⁷⁰ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 98; Weber and Teal, “A Sub-Arctic Mining Operation,” 464.

⁵⁷¹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 98-99.

Settlement,” with “[h]eat and light for tents and shacks derived from either a Coleman lamp or a primus stove.”⁵⁷²

Despite the initial eagerness shown by DNANR officials for Inuit employment in the mine and the Government’s growing role for providing social services to Inuit across the Arctic, it appears that NRNM (and not DNANR) was the key provider of social welfare services in the community during the Mining Era. As mentioned, NRNM built the first housing for Inuit. Further, according to Williamson, the school was constructed at least partly in response to calls from NRNM management (although staffed and funded at least in part by the Government).⁵⁷³ Interestingly, Damas cites a 1958 letter from company vice-president W.W. Weber to DNANR Deputy Minister Robertson which recommended “establishing a resident physician, an RCMP detachment, a postal station, a voting district... as well as expanding the airstrip and dredging the harbour.”⁵⁷⁴ According to Damas, Weber received an unenthusiastic reply from the department, stating that it was NRNM’s responsibility to provide medical supplies for both miners and non-miner residents, that the RCMP could not be located at Rankin Inlet at that time, and that he should contact other Government departments and agencies regarding his other recommendations.⁵⁷⁵ In terms of medical services at Rankin Inlet during the period the mine was open, Dailey and Dailey indicate that in 1959, “The mine established a small hospital and hired a

⁵⁷² Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 17.

⁵⁷³ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 103-104.

⁵⁷⁴ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 96.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

doctor and two nurses...”⁵⁷⁶ Prior to this “arrangements had been made” for a doctor to “visit” the community periodically.⁵⁷⁷

Aspects of Inuit Daily Life in the Settlement

This section of the chapter attempts to provide an overview of some aspects of daily Inuit life in Rankin Inlet during the period that the mine was open.

The lives of many male Inuit in Rankin Inlet revolved around performing shift work at the mine which “operate[d] in two shifts, five or six days a week, [and] the mill [which operated] in three shifts, seven days a week.”⁵⁷⁸ Male socialization occurred in the beer drinking hall (at the mine site) outside of work hours, which was (as with virtually all other aspects of community life) highly “segregated” between Inuit and non-Inuit.⁵⁷⁹ Hunting and fishing remained a prominent activity for males, occurring primarily outside of work hours, although (as will be discussed further) several men would, from time to time, show up late for their shifts, or remain absent altogether in order to hunt. The returns from hunting continued to be an important source of food for Rankin Inlet residents, in addition to items purchased from the HBC store..⁵⁸⁰

Dailey and Dailey devote much time to describing what they view as a sense of restlessness on the part of Rankin Inlet’s Inuit women. Although they acknowledge the significant activity women were undertaking within the family unit (such as cooking and caring

⁵⁷⁶ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 29.

⁵⁷⁷ Damas, *Arctic Migrants*, 96

⁵⁷⁸ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 61.

⁵⁷⁹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 142; Williamson writes that “[i]n the beer hall, the Eskimo... sat on the east side of the room and the White men on the west side” (1974, 142).

⁵⁸⁰ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 63, 87.

for children) they emphasize that “[t]he women seem bored. They spend much of their time loitering and gossiping at the Hudson’s Bay Company store... Every afternoon the store is full of women and children who meet there.”⁵⁸¹ They attribute women’s boredom to the fact that the existence of the HBC store had rendered many of their traditional responsibilities – e.g., making clothing and other tools/items for survival - superfluous.⁵⁸²

Male-female socialization, in the form of community dances, also played an important role in Rankin Inlet life. In his autobiography, Peter Ittinuar - who spent some of his childhood years growing up in Rankin Inlet during the mining period - says that children also attended these events, which were put on by the mine.⁵⁸³ Williamson writes that like other aspects of settlement life, the dances were segregated by Inuit society of origin, with people from some grounds attending but often remaining, “by the walls watching... [or] stay[ing] at the doorway, looking in.”⁵⁸⁴

Although Dailey and Dailey posit that, as of 1958, the Inuit residents of Rankin Inlet were “nominal Christian[s]... [in as much as they have not] by any means embraced the substance and implications of Christian doctrine,” according to Ittinuar, “the church” was a central element of life for Rankin Inlet’s Inuit residents along with one’s “own community and

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

⁵⁸³ Peter F. Ittinuar, *Teach an Eskimo how to Read...: Conversations with Peter Freuchen Ittinuar*, ed. Thierry Rodon (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College), 37.

⁵⁸⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 328.

the mine.”⁵⁸⁶ Dailey and Dailey do note, however, that many Inuit did “attend(s) church regularly,” estimating that approximately 85% of Inuit were associated with the Roman Catholic Mission, and 10% with the Anglican mission (established in 1958).⁵⁸⁷

Rankin Inlet Social Dynamics: Qallunaat and Inuit

This section discusses relations of power among key actors in Rankin Inlet during the mining period and provides a hypothetical explanation of why Inuit in Rankin Inlet responded to wage-labour opportunities at the mine as they did. These responses, as will be discussed, were diverse, but can largely be divided into: 1. Choosing to participate in wage-labour; and, 2. Choosing not to participate in wage-labour.

Assessing relations of power among key actors in Rankin Inlet is a useful starting point for this discussion. These relations of power likely affected the cost/benefit calculus faced by Inuit in choosing one action over another. A helpful guide for this analysis is Frank Vallee’s 1962 study, “Kabloona and the Eskimo of the Central Keewatin,” which examines the motives and power dynamics of Inuit / non-Inuit (i.e., Qallunaat)⁵⁸⁸ interaction in the nearby Kivalliq settlement of Baker Lake and assesses the effects of this interaction on Inuit culture. An important assumption of his analysis is that the Inuit residents of the settlement and the Qallunaat

⁵⁸⁶ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 90; Ittinuar, *Teach an Eskimo how to Read*, 36; Ittinuar does not clarify what he means by “their own community” but he could be referring to personal interaction among members of one’s own society of origin. This would be consistent with the writings of Williamson and Dailey and Dailey who note that inter-societal interaction did not occur naturally in the first years of the settlement.

⁵⁸⁷ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 23.

⁵⁸⁸ Vallee calls the non-Inuit population of Baker Lake “Kabloona,” based on the Inuktitut word for non-Inuit people, often spelled today as Qallunaat.

from the south formed distinct social groups with internally shared interests and common characteristics.

Key Characteristics of the Kabloona (Qallunaat) of Baker Lake

Vallee notes a general rigidity and unfriendliness by Baker Lake's Qallunaat in their interaction with Inuit. He attributes this disposition, in part, to the fact that Qallunaat residents were usually in the community at the behest of specific organizations from the south. This fact, combined with the remoteness of the location, caused Qallunaat to view their occupations – such as RCMP officer, NSO, nurse, teacher, or HBC staff – as not merely a job, but rather as a “calling,” grounded in the “mission” of the organization that they represented.⁵⁸⁹ In order to fulfill this organizational-specific calling, the Qallunaat believed they should maintain “limited, precisely defined” dispositions with Inuit in the settlement with whom they interacted. He writes, for instance, that “[t]o the H.B.C., the Eskimo is becoming primarily a customer; to the R.C.M.P., he is becoming primarily a citizen who must be protected and observe the laws of the land... to the N.S.O. [Northern Service Officer] he is becoming primarily a client who needs certain kind of help...”⁵⁹⁰

A similar sense of fulfilling “a calling” was present among Qallunaat from previous eras (e.g., RCMP officers, missionaries, and HBC staff) who also lived in the Arctic at the behest of southern (or European) organizations. Theirs according to Vallee, however, would have been

⁵⁸⁹ Vallee, *Kabloona and Eskimo*, 99.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 104.

more vague and less connected to the specific organization for whom they worked. They all more or less held the general view that Inuit were to be Christianized and “civilized,” while remaining able to provide for their own well-being through traditional means. This less defined orientation toward Inuit permitted greater flexibility in Inuit/Qallunaat interaction.⁵⁹¹

Second, the Qallunaat of Baker Lake tended not to live there for long periods of time, limiting opportunities to develop rich personal relationships with Inuit.⁵⁹² This was compounded by the fact that they tended deal with Inuit in an “idiosyncratic” (and thus, from the viewpoint of Inuit, “arbitrary”) manner related in part to the organization to whom she/he represented, which reduced the incentive for Inuit to invest personal effort in understanding the Qallunaat perspective.⁵⁹³

Third, the Baker Lake Qallunaat adhered to an unspoken code-of-conduct aimed at preserving their separateness from Inuit. This code, notes Vallee, required each Qallunaat, “to be a good example to the Eskimos, to refrain from excessive drinking, overt sex play with Eskimo women, swear, off-colour stories, and so on.”⁵⁹⁴ In addition, Qallunaat faced pressure to present a unified front towards the Inuit, and disagreements among them were to be resolved away from Inuit observation.⁵⁹⁵ Lack of adherence to the code would cause “immediate reactions, such as

⁵⁹¹ *ibid.*, 104.

⁵⁹² *ibid.*

⁵⁹³ *ibid.*, 105.

⁵⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 106.

⁵⁹⁵ *ibid.*, 106, 111.

gossip, scolding, ridicule... In short, among the Kabloona, there is a low tolerance for deviance which makes the Kabloona look bad in the eyes of the Eskimos.”⁵⁹⁶

Fourth, nearly all of the Baker Lake Qallunaat tried to “groom” (in other words, change) Inuit behaviour in some way or another.⁵⁹⁷ Vallee writes that, “[w]ith the exception of a few individuals who are not directly involved with Eskimo affairs, every Kabloona encountered [during Vallee’s period of study] feels impelled to change at least some features of Eskimo behavior and bring them into line with his or her conception of the desirable person.”⁵⁹⁸ Vallee suggests that many Qallunaat viewed Inuit as children, belonging to “a stone-age culture... at a low stage of moral and intellectual development,” who required Qallunaat guidance and education.⁵⁹⁹ Although Vallee notes the Qallunaat’s view of the “ideal” Inuk varied from person to person, she/he was roughly conceived as,

...a steady, predictable bourgeois adult who has a sentimental attachment to the Eskimo past, who is proud of the way in which Eskimos have manipulated nature and kept alive, but who has turned his back on other features of the traditional way of life, such as the traditional religion, unusual marital arrangements, and certain features of daily living... As for social skills he should know both Eskimo [Inuktitut] and English; he should possess a community consciousness, an ability or organize and to deal with community matters within the framework of parliamentary procedure... [h]e will be diligent and hard-working and will plan for the future; he will know ‘value of money’ and not waste it on ‘luxuries’; he will be independent economically and reluctant to depend on government and charity.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 130-131.

In order to assess the possible effects of the Qallunaat-Inuit interaction on Inuit culture, Vallee examines Qallunaat-Inuit power relations in Baker Lake. As should be evident from the above discussion, in Baker Lake the Qallunaat (as a group) had more power than the Inuit, with power in this context meaning one's ability to "will that certain actions should take place and that either he or others then carry out these actions."⁶⁰¹ The Qallunaat's relative power originated in part from their ability to access material resources (both for their own use; as well as for granting/withholding from others), and the knowledge that these resources and their behaviors were legitimated by the organizations they represented and, ultimately, by state violence.⁶⁰² The Inuit, on the other hand, for the most part had access only to "subsistence resources" and did not have the ability to carry out their aims through violence.⁶⁰³ As Vallee mentions (and as will be discussed further) often the most powerful lever an Inuk could employ in an interaction with a Qallunaat person would be to withhold her/his cooperation, which could hinder "the Kabloona [in] achiev[ing] their goals."⁶⁰⁴

Vallee concludes that although Inuit culture had been evolving since the introduction of the Qallunaat in the region since the 1800s, the 1950s gave rise to "an abrupt cultural

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 191-192.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 192-193; The assertion that the Qallunaat's power stemmed in part from "knowledge that these resources and their behaviors were legitimated by the organizations they represented and, ultimately, by state violence" represents an interpretation of Vallee's points by the author (i.e., Vallee does not make this point directly).

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, 192-197.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 192.

discontinuity” largely associated with settlement life.⁶⁰⁵ This discontinuity manifested itself in various ways including, “the routinization and scheduling of life,... putting oneself in the paid employ of others,... [and] conventional practices with respect to sanitation...”⁶⁰⁶ He posits that (the apparent) Inuit ability to change life-patterns “without falling overboard” stemmed from the fact that, “[c]ompared with many other indigenous groups which have been subjected to pressures of change from an overpowering industrial society, the Eskimos are remarkable for the absence among them of individuals and factions with profound material and emotional vested interests in the traditional status quo” (underline Vallee’s).⁶⁰⁷ Notwithstanding Vallee’s assessment of Inuit emotional attachment to traditional practices, it is true (as has been and will further be discussed) that many Inuit were willing to part with aspects of traditional day-to-day living patterns both in Baker Lake, and Rankin Inlet, in order to improve their material circumstances.

This dissertation, however, lacks information or data providing insight into intrafamilial Inuit decision-making structures, particularly as they relate to divisions among men and women. It is possible, for instance, (in the case of Rankin Inlet) that males were more willing to accept the day-to-day changes associated with moving to the settlement of Rankin Inlet than women, who were not offered wage employment at the mine.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 203-204.

In contrast to Inuit daily patterns of life, Vallee asserts that important ideational aspects of Inuit culture had not changed from generations past, including “the general form and process of the family, the lack of a profound attachment between... land and a family name..., (and) the low esteem for the able-bodied person who is chronically poor...”⁶⁰⁸ He also notes that, although Inuit daily life involved less time allocated to traditional activities, Inuit could – and often did – go out “on the land.”⁶⁰⁹

In an effort to predict future Baker Lake social and economic dynamics, however, Vallee suggests that faced with continuous Qallunaat efforts at grooming, which place Qallunaat behavior and ideas above those of traditional Inuit society their elders, Inuit youth would soon identify less and less with their elders’ culture. If this occurs, he suspects, Inuit parents will lose their ability to impart traditional Inuit knowledge upon their children.⁶¹⁰ Consequently, the extended family may lose its prominence as a central governor of Inuit behavior.

Power of the Mine Management

Vallee’s analysis, in combination with the observations of Williamson and Dailey/Dailey, suggest that there was a distinct Qallunaat social group in Rankin Inlet during the mining period, with a tendency to try to influence Inuit behaviour and thought. The most powerful sub-group of Rankin Inlet’s Qallunaat – i.e., those who had the greatest ability to impose their will on other members of the settlement – was NRNM officials, in particular NRNM management.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., 203.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., 205.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 204-206.

The power of NRNM officials (management and employees) emanated from several sources. First, NRNM officials were – by far – the largest Qallunaat sub-group (in terms of population size) in the settlement. Dailey and Dailey write that as of 1958, Rankin Inlet’s Qallunaat population was “approximately 95” of whom seventy two worked for the mine, five as caterers, one for DNANR, three for the HBC store, two for the Roman Catholic Mission and two for the Continental Interior Mission.⁶¹¹ Although the Government’s presence in Rankin Inlet grew slightly throughout the mining period (including the addition of school teachers, at least one RCMP officer, and additional DNANR staff) their numbers never approached those who worked at NRNM.⁶¹²

Second, NRNM officials had an overwhelming (compared to other members of the settlement) access to and control over material resources. The whole settlement was considered to be (by non-Inuit residents) on “mining company property,” and virtually all of the settlement’s infrastructure was built using the mine’s labour and investment (with government support).⁶¹³ Williamson explains below how DNANR’s reliance on the mine for basic services limited the ability of the few Government officials in the settlement to influence the actions of mine management – likely including how it interacted with the Inuit residents. He writes that,

[t]he Department of Northern Affairs personnel were in a situation of dependency upon the Mine for many services, not only for the regular facilities such as, for some years electricity, and always the steam and water supply, but also the technical operation of the Department was such that frequent resource had to be

⁶¹¹ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 24.

⁶¹² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 109, 143, 144.

⁶¹³ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 5.

made for repair assistance and the provision of supplies... The Government was charged by the Mine for all of the services it received, and the Government personnel constantly complained about the nature and the considerable substance of the charges... Area Administrators, constantly said, in a jocular fashion, that the mine was making more money out of the Government than out of the mine. At the same time, the Civil Servants were instructed to maintain a friendly and cooperative relationship with the Mine. The result was a situation of guarded hostility, with the Mine Manager usually extremely vocal in his criticism and expressions of contempt about the Government, while Government personnel evinced, though rarely directly to the Mine Manager himself, feelings of resentment and frustration.⁶¹⁴

Similarly, as chief settlement employer, and purveyor of wages (and other material benefits, including housing) in the settlement, it had immense influence over the material well-being of many of the Inuit, thereby giving it great power to influence Inuit behavior.

A third source of mine power was the fact that (as mentioned) they were – even more so than the few public servants in Rankin Inlet – the lead conduits of Government policy, including providing for Inuit welfare and exploring the feasibility of Inuit involvement in the “White Economy.” Endowed with this knowledge, the mine management would have had considerable leverage in dealing with Inuit and other non-Inuit alike. Consistent with Williamson’s (abovementioned) observation that the mine manager essentially ran⁶¹⁵ the settlement, Dailey and Dailey observed that,

[b]ecause potentially so much seems to “ride” on the success of this venture, the mine gives the impression of exerting pressure in areas where normally private enterprise might find it difficult to do so. Whether the mining company actually possesses this power is... beside the point. The fact remains that... [n]o

⁶¹⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 145.

⁶¹⁵ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 144.

individual at Rankin Inlet is able to avoid being placed in an position of obligation to the company. Since, in the last analysis, they control everything, no one can escape and act as a completely free agent... What he [the mine manager] says goes, and often he reminds members of the community to this effect.⁶¹⁶

The above discussion is not intended to suggest that the other Qallunaat organizations represented in Rankin Inlet (e.g., the RCMP, the HBC, and the missions) did not have power over each other or over Inuit. Nor is it to suggest that Rankin Inlet's Inuit population did not have agency or the ability to respond to the various Qallunaat pressures in accordance with their best interests. These issues will be discussed further in this chapter.

NRNM Officials' Attempt to Influence Inuit Behaviour and Thought

The following analysis - which examines Inuit-NRNM management interaction - proceeds on the assumption, put forward by Vallee, that a Qallunaat individual's orientation towards Inuit was largely influenced by the objectives and ethos (i.e. the "specialized function") of the organization which she/he represented in the settlement. The specialized function of NRNM management – like that of all for-profit enterprises – can be considered relatively straightforward: generate profit for its shareholders. Simply put, if the shareholders did not believe that NRNM could generate a profit, they would not have invested their funds in the first place, and the organization would never have existed.

In support of the profit objective, NRNM management hired labour (Inuit and non-Inuit people) and capital (accumulated wealth transformed into physical objects – e.g., machines –

⁶¹⁶ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 93.

required in the production process) in order to extract the mineral, refine it, and ship for on a market. In order to make the best use of the largely Inuit workforce, NRNM management took action within the context of normal the employee/employer relationship to encourage certain forms of Inuit behavior and thought in support of profit generation (as it would have done for all employees). In part due to its position of relative power within the settlement (described above), NRNM management was also able to promote certain forms of Inuit behavior and thought outside of the narrow employee/employer relationship, which, as noted earlier private firms are normally unable to do. The following section describes NRNM efforts to influence Inuit behavior and thought in both contexts.

Mine Attempt to Influence Inuit Behaviour and Thought within the Employee/Employer Context

A NRNM tactic for fostering certain forms of Inuit behavior – a central aspect of the wage-labour process also employed by employers in the south – was the provision and withholding of wages. NRNM could – within certain limits - bestow more wages for behaviors it valued and/or approved of, and provide smaller (or zero) wages for the reverse. In addition, the company also offered access to more favorable housing conditions “as a reward for ‘good work’.”⁶¹⁷

Williamson argues that the withholding of wages in Rankin Inlet was a particularly effective device for influencing Inuit behavior, partly due to the high costs associated with living

⁶¹⁷ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 57.

in the settlement.⁶¹⁸ Although there was a “general and vague impression” that the Inuit who worked in the mine became relatively affluent, Williamson states that in reality most Inuit employees, “[earned] barely enough to pay basic living expenses from month to month.”⁶¹⁹ Cash was required for the purchase of food and personal items from the HBC store and NRNM deducted rent and utilities from the pay of Inuit in company housing, which Dailey and Dailey indicated was \$30/month in 1958.⁶²⁰ In the same year, the average monthly salary for an unskilled labourer was between \$108 and \$134, while it was between \$294 and \$418 for the skilled muckers (who were fewer in numbers).⁶²¹

In terms of non-material tactics for influencing Inuit behaviour, NRNM management would from time-to-time, according to Williamson, appeal to the employee’s sense of personal loyalty or obligation to the manager. He writes that it was common for workers with unsatisfactory “job attendance... [to be] paraded before the Mine Manager, who would harangue the delinquent with the assistance of the Eskimo ‘straw boss.’ His final dismissal was usually a very dramatic performance, with heartbroken assertions by the Mine Manager that he was disappointed in the delinquent man, that he had ‘let him down’ and that he was ‘finished for good’.”⁶²² Williamson notes that Inuit workers who underwent this “performance” were usually allowed to return to work at a later period, if they so wished.⁶²³ Lower levels of management,

⁶¹⁸ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 117.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁶²⁰ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 14.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, 83-84.

⁶²² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 118.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*

conversely, would show anger to Inuit whose behavior did not adhere to their expectations, and in general gave orders in what Williamson describes as a “violent manner of address.”⁶²⁴

As the preceding account suggests, one of the principal forms of Inuit behavior which NRNM wished to encourage – through use of the above material and non-material tactics – was adherence to a regular work schedule set by the company. Despite their efforts, from the company’s perspective, “unpunctuality and absenteeism” persisted to such a degree that it would retain more official employees than actual positions (in the assumption that some Inuit workers would not show up for their shifts) and asked Inuit to remain “on call.” Both Williamson and Dailey/Dailey note that it was common for Inuit employees to be hunting during the periods they were “absent” from the mine (responsible for as much as 90% of absenteeism).⁶²⁵ This suggests that Inuit workers – in certain instances – considered it more important to hunt than work at the mine during a scheduled shift, despite the probable negative consequences associated with not showing up. The abovementioned authors put forward various possible explanations for the tendency to value hunting above wage employment, including: the desire to escape from onerous mine work; differing Inuit/Qallunaat understandings of periods of time; and Inuit exasperation with the Qallunaat’s aggressive behavior.⁶²⁶ Regardless of the precise reason for Inuit absenteeism, NRNM tactics to influence Inuit behaviour did not always work.

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 115-116.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 115-116; Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet* 78.

⁶²⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 116; Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 78.

Mine Management Attempt to Influence Inuit Outside of the Typical “Employee/Employer” Context

An important manner in which NRNM attempted to influence Inuit behavior and thought outside of the typical southern employee-employer relationship was the regulation of Inuit/non-Inuit interaction, facilitated in part by the physical layout of the settlement (which was largely constructed by the mine) including housing.

The residential layout of Rankin Inlet during the mining period was divided along several lines, for instance between inland and coastal Inuit, between Inuit involved in wage labour, and those not, and between Inuit and non-Inuit. Beginning in 1958/59, several inland Inuit families (many of whom had suffered recent hardship) lived in Itivia, whereas the Inuit from coastal areas tended to live closer to the mine.⁶²⁷ Among Inuit not living in Itivia, some lived in a neighborhood composed of makeshift housing, whereas others resided in more western style housing in “Eskimo Village” (rented from the mine).⁶²⁸ Each of these Inuit residential groupings were geographically separate (by hundreds of meters) from the non-Inuit housing which was closest to the mine site itself.⁶²⁹

The geographical disparity between Inuit and non-Inuit housing (which Williamson describes as “wide and calculated”) served the mine’s policy of limiting Inuit/non-Inuit interaction.⁶³⁰ With the exception of drinking in the beer drinking hall (on the mine site), according to Williamson, Inuit/non-Inuit, “segregation was a matter of firm company rule” with

⁶²⁷ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 95.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁶²⁹ Dailey and Daily, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 10, 14.

⁶³⁰ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 142.

respect to social activity within the settlement.⁶³¹ NRNM forbade non-Inuit from visiting “Eskimo Village” and barred Inuit from entering the non-Inuit miners’ quarters. Non-Inuit men could not participate in Inuit dances, a rule which the RCMP upheld at NRNM request.⁶³²

A stated reason for restricting Inuit/non-Inuit interaction was to protect Inuit women from the sexual advances of non-Inuit men.⁶³³ While NRNM officials’ desire to protect Inuit women may have been sincere, Vallee’s analysis suggests that the policy also would have served to maintain non-Inuit (specifically, NRNM) power within the community by preserving the Qallunaat as a discrete group, separate from and superior to the Inuit. Significant Inuit / non-Inuit social interaction would have implied a level of equality and similarity among the two groups which would have undermined the NRNM’s claims to assert authority over Inuit life.

An additional area of Inuit behavior and thought over which NRNM asserted control related to Inuit political and community organization within the settlement. By the late 1950s, it was DNANR policy to “encourage the development of Eskimo Councils, by election, in every settlement.”⁶³⁴ The creation of such councils (Rankin Inlet’s was introduced in 1959) - aligned with the Government’s objective of “fostering citizen [i.e. Inuit] participation and initiative at the local level.”⁶³⁵ Williamson observed, however, that although Inuit were the principal participants in Council meetings at Rankin Inlet (i.e. Inuit did most of the talking) the NRNM

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁶³² *Ibid.*

⁶³³ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 150.

⁶³⁵ Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, *Advisory Commitment on Government Activities in the North, “Government Activities in the North - 1961”* (Ottawa: 1962), 111.

manager was able to influence meeting agendas and outcomes.⁶³⁶ Indeed, writes Williamson, the NRNM manager stated openly that, “he regarded the Eskimo Council, (through the use of his Eskimo Foreman, who, though not elected, was automatically co-opted to the Council), as an instrument of social organization in the interests of the community as they reflected the interests of the mine.”⁶³⁷ He continues that the “Council met irregularly, and always at the behest of the Mine Manager... and very usually met in the Mine Manager’s house. The Council never met on its own initiative.”⁶³⁸

Public Eskimo Council meetings (open to the community, which occurred shortly after as “in camera” sessions) were led by the Inuit mine foreman, and were “[u]sually... concerned with good work habits, punctuality, saving temperance, maintenance of housing, or village cleanliness involving garbage, night soil, and domestic hygiene.”⁶³⁹ The mine manager personally attended these meetings and would only document their outcome should it serve his interest in discussions with Government officials.⁶⁴⁰

Unsurprisingly, NRNM forbade the creation of an Inuit labour organization that could have provided Inuit workers with influence in determining wages, benefits or working conditions.⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 150-151.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, *Underground*, 150.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁶³⁹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 151.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴¹ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 96.

Examples of Attempted Inuit “Grooming” by Mine Management other non-Inuit in Rankin Inlet

The following (and final) section of this chapter discusses aspects of Inuit behavior and thought that NRNM management and non-Inuit in the settlement attempted to change. The efforts of non-Inuit individuals in this regard closely resemble Vallee’s concept of “grooming.”

The first such area of grooming relates to the “proper” use of wages. Inuit were often discouraged – through various techniques - by the non-Inuit in the settlement from sharing wages (and items purchased with them) at the level of the extended family.⁶⁴² First, each miner, writes Williamson, was “strongly encouraged to open his own separate bank account,” an act which inherently implies that wages earned are the property of the wage earner and not that of his extended family.⁶⁴³ Second, a DNANR official often held control over Inuit bank accounts during the mining period, and would issue funds to the account holder as he saw fit.⁶⁴⁴ Third, non-Inuit in the settlement would “pressure” Inuit “not to respond to the value of sharing and to the expectations of kin in this regard.”⁶⁴⁵ Many Inuit miners (as mentioned) did not net very much earnings (after paying bills) and therefore did not have significant resources to share among family members in any case. The inability to fulfill these obligations – whether due to a

⁶⁴² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 124, 159.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, 156; Williamson does specify who (e.g., NRNM or DNANR officials) encouraged miners to open bank accounts.

⁶⁴⁴ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 121.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

lack of resources or due to pressure from non-Inuit - was a source of discomfort for many miners.⁶⁴⁶

Inuit were also encouraged by non-Inuit to adopt Western notions of time management, both in terms of day-to-day living and long-term planning.⁶⁴⁷ Williamson notes that they were “plentifully supplied with time pieces” and were constantly reminded of the time by the mine’s siren which rang three times per day.⁶⁴⁸ As mentioned, miners who showed up late for their shifts were often scolded, an act which many sought to avoid either by arriving to work on time, or skipping their shift entirely.⁶⁴⁹ In addition, Inuit were encouraged (by officials from several non-Inuit organizations) to focus their mental efforts on planning for their future well-being, which in addition to saving money included “plan[ning] for their own vocational or the education of the children.”⁶⁵⁰

Inuit Responses to non-Inuit Attempts to Influence their Behaviour

This section examines Inuit responses to the suite of non-Inuit (largely NRNM) efforts aimed at promoting certain forms of behavior and thought (i.e., “grooming”) discussed above. It attempts to show that the Inuit of Rankin Inlet (particularly the wage-earners) faced distinct, sometimes contradictory, pressures from the new non-Inuit actors (often NRNM representing the new institutional presence) and Inuit actors (representing traditional Inuit institutions), with the

⁶⁴⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 121, 125, 159.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 123-124, 127.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 123-124.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 127.

former promoting change in behavior and thought, and the latter often to supporting continuity. The Inuit of Rankin Inlet responded (to varying degrees) with a mix of conformity and resistance to these forces of change and continuity. The mixed-economy which emerged during the Mining Era – characterized by the use of cash generated primarily from wage-labour to support traditional subsistence activities (i.e. hunting) - can be interpreted as the as the sum of Inuit responses to these disparate institutional forces.

The Chapter has already discussed instances of Inuit conforming to the influences of NRNM and other non-Inuit actors (described in the previous section). To mention a few key areas, several Inuit chose to participate in wage-labour in the mine, live in housing provided by NRNM or DRANR, shop at the HBC store for food and other items, attend church, attend lessons from DNANR officials, send their children to government funded schools, and participate in Eskimo Council meetings which were largely controlled by NRNM.

The manner by which Inuit chose to resist NRNM and non-Inuit influences and/or conform to forces associated with traditional Inuit society has been touched upon but requires further discussion. As mentioned, during the mining period hunting remained (even for miners) an important part of Inuit life, although likely less important (notably in terms of hours spent hunting) than in previous eras. These traditional activities, according to Dailey/Dailey, tended to occur (during the period of their study) “between shifts or on weekends.”⁶⁵¹ Dailey/Dailey also

⁶⁵¹ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 63.

note that women would participate in ice-fishing for Arctic char.⁶⁵² Although the bulk of miners' hunting/fishing activity likely occurred outside of work hours, Williamson notes that a miner would often choose hunting over wage-work – sometimes without the mine management consent - if he felt he needed to hunt during his scheduled shift (which could happen, for instance, if there was a report that a herd of caribou was in the area).⁶⁵³ Keeling and Boulter quote a former Inuk miner who states that balancing finding time for hunting was sometimes done in coordination with NRNM officials. The interviewee states, “We [miners]... made a request to our supervisors, to the authorities, to go out and hunt... as long as they agreed then we could go out in the middle of the week.”⁶⁵⁴

As for the tools used in hunting, Dailey/Dailey note a combination of traditional and store-bought items. Ivory lures were used for ice fishing whereas rifles were used for caribou hunting. They also note the diminished presence of dog teams and the use of “one-man snow scooter[s] [by which they likely mean snowmobiles]... which are within the reach of the wage earning Eskimo.”⁶⁵⁵ Williamson states that some Inuit would “pool” cash to purchase snowmobiles, “canoes, (and) outboard motors.”⁶⁵⁶

Additional Inuit actions during the mining period which demonstrate the resilience of traditional institutions include the fact that Inuktitut remained the spoken language for the majority of Inuit and that traditional patterns of exchange, social interaction, and group hunting

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 115.

⁶⁵⁴ Keeling and Boulter, “From Igloo to Mine Shaft,” 45.

⁶⁵⁵ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 63, 89-90.

⁶⁵⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 156.

continued to take place largely within the context of what Williamson refers to as Inuit dialect group.⁶⁵⁷

Williamson invents the term “Social Protection Response” (SPR) to describe the manner by which Inuit in Rankin Inlet would resist pressures by non-Inuit to act and think and act in a certain way, when it was deemed that doing so was not in their best (individual or collective) interest. According to Williamson, “the usual manifestations of the SPR [by Inuit facing unwanted pressures] are non-assertion, compromise, ingratiation, minimal response, physical withdrawal, non-committal and opinion-testing before response.”⁶⁵⁸ It represents a “response by individuals to protect themselves from too-penetrating incursions upon their own emotional and cultural stability... and of attempts by individuals to use themselves as a socio-cultural barrier and serve on the behalf of their group.”⁶⁵⁹ The SPR, he argues, is rooted in techniques which had helped maintain the cohesiveness of traditional Inuit society such as “self-effacement... which prevented the individual... [taking] from socially disruptive assertion.”⁶⁶⁰

In the context of the Rankin Inlet mining era, the SPR can be considered an Inuit technique for mitigating risks associated with interacting with non-Inuit, particularly when there was uncertainty (on the part of the Inuit) regarding: 1. the motive of the non-Inuit person (who is attempting to influence Inuit behavior and/or thought); and, 2 the potential outcome of

⁶⁵⁷ Williamson’s use of the term “dialect group” closely related to what Ernest Burch refers to as Caribou Inuit “society” (e.g, the Padlimiut, Qaernermiut, etc.). Williamson classifies the distinct dialect groups slightly differently than Burch, however (Williamson 1974 , Map 2.); Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 169.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 166.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 167.

conforming with the non-Inuit person's suggestions and/or commands.⁶⁶¹ The result of the SPR – whether conscious intended or not – was to resist power projected by new actors and preserve key elements of traditional institutions and modes of survival which to that point, had been essential to Inuit survival. The subtle forms in which the SPR manifested itself - for instance, an Inuk's decision to hunt instead of attend his scheduled shift at the mine - served the same role as Polanyi's "countermovement," the protection of society (and its members) from encroaching commercial forces. Interestingly, this resistance occurred at the level of interpersonal interaction, instead of (as described in *The Great Transformation*) legislative acts.

Despite the assertions of Dailey/Dailey and Williamson, that Inuit did not organize politically during the periods of study, Inuit acts of resistance (falling under Williamson's definition of SPR) and conformity to non-Inuit pressures can be considered "political" acts, inasmuch as they involve efforts to regulate their interaction with powerful actors – normally representatives of the Canadian state - in their own interests. Further, it is possible that Inuit discussed and coordinated strategies and tactics among themselves for dealing with non-Inuit. None of these authors suggest that this took place (they would likely not have been able to observe such discussions if they happened in private) but such planning could have occurred.

As in the preceding Eras of commercial activity, a major factor which permitted "political" Inuit acts of non-conformity and/or resistance (was continued access to the land and sea (combined with traditional Inuit skills and knowledge which facilitated harvesting).

⁶⁶¹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 168-169.

According to Marx, a key event in development of 18th Century British capitalism was the enclosure, in other words privatization, of the common agricultural land and the denial of peasants the right to secure an existence therefrom. As Meiksins-Wood points out, this development ensured that those who did not hold property (former peasants) had to rent their bodies (i.e. work for wages) to the owners of capital in order to survive because they no longer had an independent source of sustenance. Although it is questionable whether or not the Inuit who migrated to Rankin Inlet could have survived solely on traditional land-based activities during the mining period, the fact that they could harvest significant resources from the land meant that they did not become completely reliant on the mine for survival. This harvesting ability endowed many Inuit with a level of material autonomy, and therefore power, which permitted flexibility in the degree to which they conformed with and/or resistance pressures from NRNM officials.

It is interesting to note that a near complete proletarianization of the Inuit of Rankin Inlet would likely have served the interests of NRNM, whose officials were frustrated by the lack of complete Inuit obedience to management orders (which hindered the efficiency of mining operations).⁶⁶² This fact differentiates the Mining Era from the previous Eras of commercial activity, in which the non-Inuit commercial agents benefitted materially from Inuit knowledge of and ability to harvest the land.

⁶⁶² Term “near complete” instead of “complete” proletarianization is used because NRNM mine officials did likely employ Inuit skills/knowledge of the land when performing “exploration” activities in the Rankin Inlet area. (Williamson 1974, 93).

Possible Changes to Inuit Society during the Mining Period

This section briefly explores possible changes in Inuit society during the Mining Era assesses how such changes may have impacted particular members of Inuit society.

The first possible change relates to the role and power of women. As previously discussed, in traditional Inuit society there was a (flexible) division of labour between the sexes with men and women (and often children) performing essential tasks for family and group survival. Such interdependence promoted equality between the sexes. In the mining era, however, as hunting diminished and more day-to-day goods (e.g., food, clothing) were bought at the HBC store with the wages of men instead of crafted by women from the returns of hunting, women had fewer tasks to perform.⁶⁶³ With family survival less dependent on traditional women's skills and tasks, the ability of women to represent their own interests within the family, and influence decisions affecting the whole family, may have decreased.

In her 1992 M.A. Thesis, "Dene Women in the Traditional and Modern Northern Economy in Denendeh, Northwest Territories, Canada," Phoebe Nahann vividly describes how the transition to life in a settlement and a commodity-based economy, beginning in the 1940s, reduced the relative power and security of Dene women (to men). She writes for instance that hide tanning, an important task traditionally performed by women in the production of clothing and shelter, "became archaic in light of the leather goods that could be purchased from the local stores. The dedication that women put into their art of making moccasins, parkas, and so on was

⁶⁶³ Dailey and Dailey, *The Eskimo of Rankin Inlet*, 99; The present author has not encountered any reports of women working at the mine.

overshadowed by the abundance and simplicity of clothing available in the local stores and mail order catalogues.”⁶⁶⁴ Since the store-bought goods were purchased with money usually obtained by men who were more likely to be involved in wage-labour, “no longer were women and men on a bilateral footing. Women depended on their husbands to earn the means of obtaining food and clothing... [which] raised the prestige of men over women.”⁶⁶⁵

The second possible change involves a weakening of the association between “seniority” and “authority” within Inuit society.⁶⁶⁶ As noted in Chapter Two, Inuit children traditionally inherited the necessary skills and knowledge for survival from their parents and older family members by regularly observing and participating in adult tasks. Tied to the fact that senior family members possessed the largest store of knowledge essential for group survival, they could exercise considerable authority over decisions affecting the entire group. In the context of Rankin Inlet, the authority of Inuit adults likely diminished for at least related two reasons. First, children in the settlement spent much of their day in school, and thereby began to see their teachers – an important grooming influence, who promoted alternative values and forms of knowledge - as figures whose authority was at least on par with that of their parents and elders.⁶⁶⁷ Second, as Williamson explains, because survival in Rankin Inlet was based foremost on earning wages to purchase goods at the store (instead of on traditional skills and knowledge as in the previous era), the “experience and wisdom of the senior parents... [was] not seen

⁶⁶⁴ Phoebe Nahann, “Dene Women in the Traditional and Modern Northern Economy in Dencndeh, Northwest Territories, Canada,” (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1992), 77.

⁶⁶⁵ Nahann, “Dene Women...,” 78-79.

⁶⁶⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 158.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 157.

applicable to the problems of the wage-earning macro-living patterns of the modern era.”⁶⁶⁸

Not seeing its pertinence for daily life, children may have been more reticent (than children of earlier eras) to act in accordance with the traditional knowledge imparted by senior Inuit.⁶⁶⁹

A third possible change to Inuit society was an “increasing nuclear family orientation,” which coincided with a decreasing importance of the extended family for Inuit life.⁶⁷⁰ This development (which is related to the diminishing authority of elders) can be partly attributed to non-Inuit various grooming activities discussed in the previous section (e.g., discouraging sharing at the level of the extended family) as well as the newfound importance of cash and wage-labour for Inuit survival. Regarding the latter factor, just as elders’ knowledge was less relevant in the context of a wage-labour existence, so “was the utility of the extended family.”⁶⁷¹ Traditional cooperative hunting activities and the systematic division (sharing) of the spoils of hunting, which had previously been essential parts of survival, became less so during the mining era, with each healthy male (in principle) able to support himself as well as his wife and children through wage work. Other factors contributing to this process included: the fact that many of the families who moved to Rankin Inlet in the first place were only “fragments of extended families rather than complete units”⁶⁷² (indicating a point of discontinuity at the inception of the

⁶⁶⁸ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 157.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷² Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 156.

settlement); and, the availability of housing which was too small to accommodate large families.⁶⁷³

Extent of Change in Inuit Institutions

It is difficult to meaningfully assess of the extent of change in Inuit institutions during the Mining Era by considering whether or not a return to previous patterns of living would have been possible (as was done in Chapter Two), for at least two reasons:

1. The settlement's Inuit inhabitants came from various parts of the Kivalliq Region (and in some cases elsewhere) who, prior to emigrating, likely possessed significantly varying levels of traditional knowledge/skills, material resources, and lived lives with varying degrees of settlement vs. seasonal migration. Therefore previous patterns of living for all Inuit residents cannot be lumped neatly into one category.
2. For many (particularly inland) Inuit of the Kivalliq region, "previous patterns of living" (consisting primarily of hunting/fishing and trapping, supplemented with various forms of government assistance) were becoming unsustainable prior to the advent of the Mining Era (e.g., changing caribou migration patterns).

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

Conclusion

For a confluence of factors including a rise in the world price of nickel, the construction of railway infrastructure extending as far north as Churchill, Manitoba, a regional trend of Inuit moving to settlements, and an appetite by the Government to encourage Inuit participate in wage labour – Inuit began migrating to (and settling in) Rankin Inlet in 1953 in order for men to participate in wage labour at a nascent nickel mine. Like Inuit during the preceding Whaling and Fur Trade Eras, who commercial activity during the mining era appear to have done so in order to support personal and community well-being. Unlike these preceding Eras, however, traditional Inuit institutions did not retain their primacy in influencing Inuit economic life. The cash based economy – largely controlled by NRNM management – in which many Inuit worked in wage-labour jobs in order to purchase goods began to play an equally (if not more) important role. The mixed-economy – which arose during the mining period – represents a manifestation of Inuit economic choices and activities performed under the auspices of these two institutions: the extended family and NRNM.

In addition to their ongoing role in supporting well-being, the continued importance of traditional institutions for Inuit economic life can be attributed to instances of Inuit hesitancy to cooperate with certain actors (often representing powerful commercial interests) when the result of doing so would be harmful or was uncertain. These often discreet acts of resistance represent a non-legislative incarnation of the countermovement described by Karl Polanyi, in as much as they served to protect Inuit from the harm associated with the encroachment of commercial forces to non-commercial aspects of life.

As the following (and final) Chapter describes, Rankin Inlet's mixed-economy continued following the closure of the mine in 1962, with the Government replacing the NRNM as the chief institution fueling its cash component. Within a decade, however, this economic model became exposed to new (external) forces which could alter its balance.

CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction

This Chapter reviews political and economic developments in Rankin Inlet, the Eastern Arctic, and in Canada between 1962 (when the nickel mine in Rankin Inlet closed) and 1999 (when the territory of Nunavut was created) which contributed to the post-1999 institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy. It concludes with a brief overview of key elements of this post-1999 institutional structure and discusses the ongoing (as of 2017) Meliadine gold mine project (located 25km from Rankin Inlet) which will likely significantly impact Rankin Inlet's economy should it begin production in 2018 as currently planned.

Following the closure of the nickel mine in 1962, the state replaced NRNM as the chief institution supporting the cash component of Rankin Inlet's economy, which continued to follow the "mixed-economy" model characterized by the intermeshing of cash-based and traditional economic activities. The Inuit extended family continued to influence Inuit economic decisions as well.

The cash element of Rankin Inlet's economy expanded significantly between 1967 and 1999 as government expenditures – which the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)⁶⁷⁴ were increasingly administering - grew over the same period. Increased government spending in the community contributed to the growth of "spin-off" private sector activities, notably in the service retail and sectors. As the "administrative hub" for the GNWT beginning

⁶⁷⁴ Although increasingly administered by the GNWT, cash entering Rankin Inlet originated largely from the federal government.

in 1975, Rankin Inlet benefitted particularly from the creation of new public service jobs.

Traditional activities such as harvesting of the resources of the land and sea remained important economic pursuits.

Over the same period, opportunities emerged for Inuit across the Arctic to represent their interests at the federal political level. A new cohort of political actors, joined by a sense of shared interests and identity as Inuit,⁶⁷⁵ used these opportunities to call for new political structures in order to increase Inuit control over their own political and economic lives. In 1976, they proposed a treaty to the Crown, per which Inuit would cede existing claims to most Arctic territory in exchange for the creation of a new Territorial government (present-day Nunavut, separate from the Northwest Territories), and special political, economic, environmental and cultural rights for Inuit.

Concurrent with growing Inuit calls for new democratic arrangements, private interests (with state backing) increasingly wanted to extract the Arctic's non-renewable resources. Such projects, if executed, could have significantly affected (and potentially harmed) various aspects of Inuit life. An important element of the democratic control Inuit sought, therefore, was the power to influence the terms by which future large-scale non-renewable development projects could proceed (including the ability to block them). The Government, for its part, actively engaged in the process of settling Inuit land claims (and those of other northern indigenous groups) in order to clarify the legal basis upon which northern resource development could

⁶⁷⁵ Jack Hicks and Graham White, "Nunavut: Self-determination Through a Land Claim and Public Government?" in *Inuit Regain Control of Their Lands and Their Lives*, eds. Dahl et. al. (Copenhagen: IWGIA Document, 2000), 51-52.

proceed, as it had done in signing the numbered treaties (primarily in Canada's west) between 1871 and 1921.

Following over fifteen years of negotiations, Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN)⁶⁷⁶ and the Crown (represented by the Government) signed the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) in 1993. As proposed by Inuit 1976, the agreement provided for the creation of the Territory of Nunavut (which was subsequently established in 1999) with powers similar to Canadian provinces. It also codified Inuit rights in the areas such as: harvesting and wildlife management, representation within the Nunavut public service and receipt of resource royalties. Importantly, by providing for the creation of the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB), local communities attained new levers to control how future large-scale resource development projects would proceed.

At one level of analysis, the basic institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy between the 1960s and the post-Nunavut period has remained largely the same: the state has continued to facilitate a cash-based element while Inuit social structures continue to support a traditional element (with important linkages between the two elements). Significant change has occurred, however, in terms of who controls state apparatuses (implying a change in whose interests they serve) with a trend towards greater Inuit control. An important starting point for this trend was 1967 when the GNWT began electing local Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), including those from Inuit communities. In subsequent decades, Inuit

⁶⁷⁶ TFN was the name of the (ITC successor) organization representing Inuit in the Nunavut Settlement Region in 1993.

control over the state grew as the GNWT gradually assumed more areas of jurisdiction (ceded by the federal government) and as its budget grew. The signing of NLCA in 1993, represented a new era of even greater Inuit control of state institutions through the creation of an important new ones (the Territory and Government of Nunavut) and the establishment of government-like organizations serving the exclusive interests of Inuit (e.g., Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) and subsidiary organizations). While not the focus of this dissertation, small scale, often informal economic activities falling outside of both government and familial auspices (often referred to as the “northern social economy”) have likely also grown in Rankin Inlet’s economy since the 1960s.

The information presented in this Chapter suggests that greater Inuit control of state apparatuses has served to: 1. Entrench the pre-existing (i.e., 1962 to 1999) institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s economy founded largely upon state and traditional Inuit institutions; and, 2. Provide mechanisms to ensure that potential future challenges to this structure – most likely to emanate from outside political or commercial forces - can be managed in a way which accounts for community interests. The efforts of Inuit political actors who worked towards establishing and later implementing this regime are analogous to those of 19th Century Britons and Europeans which Polanyi coined as a “countermovement” in *The Great Transformation*. Both groups (Inuit and Europeans) used available political openings to insulate existing social, cultural, and economic structures from powerful political and commercial forces.

Incidentally, as this dissertation is being finalized (2017), the effectiveness of these new mechanisms is undergoing an important test. Following a years-long review process, in

February 2015, mining company Agnico Eagle Mines Limited (AEM) received approval from the NIRB to proceed to the production phase of a large scale gold mine (called the Meliadine Project) only 25 km away from Rankin Inlet. NIRB has stated in its “Project Certificate” granting approval for Meliadine that, “the Meliadine Gold Mine Project is not likely to cause significant adverse ecosystemic and socio-economic effects.”⁶⁷⁷ In addition, an Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA) has been signed between the Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) and AEM aiming to, “provide benefits and address detrimental impacts on Inuit arising out of the Meliadine Projects, and to ensure that... the Meliadine Project... respects the Inuit traditional way of life, language and culture, and to promote and maintain Inuit economic and social development.”⁶⁷⁸ The experiences of Inuit in Baker Lake (~250km from Rankin Inlet), where the Meadowbank gold mine (also operated by AEM) has been in production since 2010, suggest that both the NIRB assessment and the IIBA will help mitigate only some of the inherent detrimental effects to community well-being associated with mining.⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁷ Nunavut Impact Review Board, “NIRB PROJECT CERTIFICATE [NO.: 006]” (February 26, 2015): section 1.0 (no page numbers, accessed Jan. 23, 2017, <http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/COMPLETED%20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM%20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/12-PROJECT%20CERTIFICATE/150226-11MN034-NIRB%20Project%20Certificate-OT4E.pdf>).

⁶⁷⁸ Kivalliq Inuit Association and Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, “Meliadine Project Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement between the Kivalliq Inuit Association and Agnico Eagle Mines Limited,” (July 13, 2015), 19, accessed Dec. 9, 2016, <http://agnicoeagle.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Meliadine-IIBA.pdf>.

⁶⁷⁹ Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, “Meadowbank, Kivalliq region, Nunavut,” accessed March 24, 2017, <https://www.agnicoeagle.com/English/operations-and-development-projects/operations/meadowbank/default.aspx>.

Closure of the Nickel Mine in 1962 and the Government's Response

Work on the nickel mine ceased in 1962, roughly five years after full-scale production began, at which time NRNM deemed that it had exhausted the supply of ore which could be accessed profitably.⁶⁸⁰ The Government assumed control of most of the community's infrastructure and facilities following NRNM's departure, many of which (e.g., the airstrip and power plant) were essential for its day-to-day functioning.⁶⁸¹ The mine's closure marked the beginning of Rankin Inlet's rapid shift from "mining town" to a "government town" with Government expenditures replacing wages from the mine as the main source of cash into the settlement.⁶⁸²

Williamson, who was then "Welfare Officer" working for DNANR had foreseen the impending cessation of mining operations as early as 1960. In December of that year, he drafted memos for his departmental superiors indicating that the mine could close within months. He argued therein that - in the absence of sufficient planning and action - this eventuality could cause severe hardship for the settlement's Inuit inhabitants who relied on income from the mine for survival.⁶⁸³ In August 1961, he wrote to a government regional administrator in Churchill

⁶⁸⁰ Foster, "Rankin Inlet: a lesson in survival," 33.

⁶⁸¹ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 100.

⁶⁸² William H. Jansen, *Eskimo Economics: An Aspect of Culture Change at Rankin Inlet*, no. 46 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada), 25-26.

⁶⁸³ Williamson, R.G., Correspondence to Regional Administrator, Churchill Manitoba, Dec. 28, 1960, in University of Saskatchewan Library, Williamson Fonds, Box 14, Folder "DNA After," File "Mine Close Down Plan Memos." This assertion is based on a memo (among several) found in Robert Williamson's "fonds" located at the University of Saskatchewan Library, which were donated to the library after Williamson's passing. The author cannot be entirely certain that the memo was ever sent by Williamson and/or received by his superior, although this seems likely. Regardless, this memo (and the others) demonstrate Williamson's impression of the circumstances leading up to the mine's closure.

“personally” (i.e., not via an official government memo) to express his belief that the mine would close within a few months and implored him to begin planning for the community’s economic future. In his words,

The Mine’s finished, now this autumn, as far as our planning should be concerned,... and something realistic, special and thorough-going has got to be done.... For God’s sake – or to be more specific for these people’s sake – get something worthwhile and solid moving rapidly and soon please... The situation is full of urgency. We can’t get let hope for these people slip through our fingers.⁶⁸⁴

In anticipation of the mine’s closing, and likely in order to influence the Government’s response to it, in “the winter of 1961-62” Williamson surveyed fifty-nine Inuit miners, to determine how they would prefer to secure a living should the mine close down. As a “first choice” forty-two (~72%) indicated “Stay at Rankin Inlet and work (if work created),” five (~8%) indicated “Vocational Training,” five (~8%) indicated “Return to place of origin,” and three (~5 %) indicated “Move to a hunting community [Whale Cove].”⁶⁸⁵ Despite a general impression in the settlement that “the Government would take extensive steps to take up the economic slack and provide alternative work when the Mine closed down,” comparable levels of wage-labour did not immediately return to Rankin Inlet.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁴ Williamson, R.G., Correspondence, August 28, 1961 – Box 14, Folder “DNA Esk Corr Record,” File “Misc.”

⁶⁸⁵ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 130-131.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

Schweitzer's 1971 study, *Keewatin Regional Dynamics*⁶⁸⁷ is useful for comparing the sources and levels of cash income in Rankin Inlet during both the mining years (1959-1962) and the immediate post-mine years. As Table 2 shows, following the mine closure, the Government substantially increased payments of "relief" (i.e., emergency assistance) between 1962 and 1964, which largely compensated (at the community level, not necessarily for individual families or persons) for the removal of Inuit income from wage labour at the mine. Williamson confirms this, writing that "[d]uring the exceptionally severe winter of 1962-63, following the Autumn close down of the Mine... a population of some four hundred Eskimo was receiving some Social Assistance."⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁷ The study provides a comprehensive account of the sources of income in Rankin Inlet (and other Keewatin settlements) from 1959 to 1969.

⁶⁸⁸ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 134.

Table 2 - Rankin Inlet Inuit Sources of Income 1959-69 (1971 Dollars)⁶⁸⁹

Year	Gross Salaries, Department of National Health and Welfare	Gross Salaries, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development ⁶⁹⁰	Gross Salaries, RCMP	Estimates of Gross Salaries, North Rankin Nickel Mines	Cash Payments, DIAND Arts & Crafts Programs ⁶⁹¹	Cash Payments from Cannery	Cash Value of Furs sold by Inuit	Cash Payments by Inuit Co-operatives	Social Assistance Cash Payments
1959	922	44,012	2,780	175,500	/	/	5,520	/	5,531
1960	816	40,230	3,684	156,600	/	/	5,100	/	9,856
1961	751	38,903	4,699	153,900	/	/	17,600	/	11,025
1962	901	37,665	4,983	113,400	/	/	22,036	/	89,234
1963	878	66,822	5,045	/	(unavailable)	/	8,540	/	67,667
1964	816	68,725	5,181	/	(unavailable)	/	80,713	/	49,300
1965	945	99,729	5,225	/	49,254	/	30,590	/	9,109
1966	1,141	145,756	5,401	/	82,907	(unavailable)	2,552	/	2,711
1967	1,111	214,819	5,773	/	72,872	(unavailable)	10,360	/	12,159
1968	5,812	287,625	6,258	/	62,473	20,249	2,897	/	9,499
1969	5,612	262,911	6,8777	/	60,026	36,938	2,653 ⁶⁹²	9,065	13,150

⁶⁸⁹ Doug Schweitzer, *Keewatin Regional Dynamics* (Regina, 1971), 139-147.

⁶⁹⁰ Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) was created in 1966. Before that, Schweitzer is likely referring to DNANR.

⁶⁹¹ Data in row 1965 is for the months April to December.

⁶⁹² Figure represents an estimate by Schweitzer.

Table 3- Rankin Inlet Inuit Sources of Income 1959-69 (1971 Dollars) – Labour vs. Unincorporated Business vs. Government Transfers

Year	Inuit Population	Total Inuit Income	Income per Inuk	Labour			Unincorporated Business ⁶⁹³			Government Transfers		
				Income	Per Capita	% of Total	Income	Per Capita	% of Total	Income	Per Capita	% of Total
1959	403	234,265	581	223,214	554	95.3	5,520	14	2.3	5,531	14	2.4
1960	419	216,286	516	201,330	481	93.1	5,100	12	2.4	9,856	24	4.5
1961	435	226,878	522	198,253	456	87.4	17,600	40	7.8	11,025	25	4.8
1962	512	268,219	524	156,949	307	58.5	22,036	43	8.2	89,234	174	33.3
1963	428	148,952	348	72,745	170	48.8	8,540	20	5.7	67,667	158	45.5
1964	387	204,735	529	74,722	193	36.5	80,713	209	39.4	49,300	127	24.1
1965	287	194,852	679	105,899	369	54.4	79,844	278	41.0	9,109	32	4.6
1966	329	240,468	731	152,298	463	63.4	85,459	260	35.5	2,711	8	1.1
1967	364	317,124	871	221,733	609	69.9	83,232	229	26.3	12,159	33	3.8
1968	433	394,813	912	299,695	692	75.9	85,619	198	21.7	9,499	22	2.4
1969	460	397,232	864	275,400	599	69.3	108,682	236	27.4	13,150	29	3.3

⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹³ Under the column, “Unincorporated Business,” Schweitzer counts incomes from “commercial hunting, trapping, and fishing, from handicrafts, and from other unincorporated business.”

⁶⁹⁴ Schweitzer, *Keewatin Regional Dynamics*, 158; except the column, “Inuit Population” which is from Schweitzer, *Keewatin Regional Dynamics*, 54.

Significant Inuit out-migration followed the mine closure, with approximately 235 Inuit (net) moving elsewhere between 1962 and 1965 (representing a ~46% decline in Rankin Inlet's population from its peak of 512 in 1962). Some miners (less than 30) moved to work in other mining projects (sometimes with assistance from the DNANR) in Ungava, QC, Yellowknife, NWT, Lynn Lake, MN, and the Yukon.⁶⁹⁵ Other individuals found wage employment on the DEW line, and others likely moved to settlements in or near their pre-Rankin Inlet home region.⁶⁹⁶

As Schweitzer's data also shows, between 1959 and 1969 some Inuit in Rankin Inlet received salaries from Government sources, including the RCMP, DNANR (whose name changed to Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) in 1966), and the Department of National Health and Welfare. Although not explicitly referenced by Schweitzer, Williamson indicates that four Inuit men also worked for the HBC for "over a year-and-a-half after the close down of the mine."⁶⁹⁷ Schweitzer's data does, however, indicate considerable Inuit income from trapping which may include the income from those Inuit who Williamson considered to be employed by the HBC (the Inuit trappers could have sold their furs to the HBC). Williamson

⁶⁹⁵ Williamson (1974, 132) indicates that several miners who moved to other operations after the close down of the nickel mine in 1962 returned to Rankin Inlet shortly afterwards.

⁶⁹⁶ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 132; D.S. Stevenson, *Problems of Eskimo Relocation for Industrial Employment* (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1978), 13.

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

mentions that the Government also attempted to subsidize some trapping activity during this period.⁶⁹⁸

The first significant DNANR attempt to create an alternate form of Inuit employment was the “Eskimo Handicrafts and Art Project” in 1963.⁶⁹⁹ By 1966, the program represented approximately \$83,000 in annual income for the local Inuit population, almost entirely replacing the funds spend on relief in 1962 (~\$89,000). Kilvert notes that in 1965, the program employed approximately eighty Inuit who “receive[d] payment every week for the work they have done.”⁷⁰⁰

Before examining Rankin Inlet’s post-1966 cash economy which, as Schweitzer’s data suggests, involved an even larger role for government (both in terms of areas of activity and total cash expenditure), the Chapter will review important regional and national-level political and economic events which affected the post-WWII development of Rankin Inlet’s economy.

Government Initiatives Aimed at Developing New Forms of Economic Activity for Inuit during the 1950s and 1960s

As mentioned in the previous Chapter, a central and long-term DNANR objective in the 1950s and 1960s was to integrate Inuit into Canadian society, a component of which involved increasing Inuit participation in the “white economy.” Following the closure of the mine,

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., 132.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 133; Schweitzer (1971) does not have data for 1963-64.

⁷⁰⁰ Barbara Kilvert, “Rankin Inlet,” *The Beaver* (Summer 1965), 16.

however, the department faced the same challenge in Rankin Inlet as in Inuit settlements across Canada's Eastern Arctic (and much of the North, more broadly), namely how to generate cash income in the absence of private sector investment. In his memoirs, Gordon Robertson (DNANR Deputy Minister from 1950 to 1963) states that of all the tasks being undertaken by DNANR with regards to Inuit, "[t]he provision of new economic opportunity was the most difficult problem of all."⁷⁰¹ It was in this context that during the DNANR began to experiment with Inuit cooperatives and promote other non-traditional forms of economic activity for Inuit.

DNANR's thinking on how to tackle the Inuit "economic opportunity" problem evolved fairly rapidly over the late 50s and 60s, as revealed in successive editions of the "Government Activities in the North" annual document. In the 1957 report, the Department conveyed an optimism (unsurprising given that the mine in Rankin Inlet was ramping up employment at this time) that private investment would be able to provide an important role in Inuit economic life. It states,

A new section (of the Arctic division) was established to assist and encourage private economic development of the Arctic with particular reference to the use of Eskimo labour. Other parts of the economic development programme included the investigation of northern tourism, research on possible Eskimo co-operatives and the beginning of area studies as the basis of administrative planning.⁷⁰²

In contrast, the "Review of Operations" section of the 1962 edition acknowledges the economic hardship associated with the closing of the Rankin Inlet mine and appears resigned to the fact

⁷⁰¹ Robertson, *A Very Civil Servant*, 173.

⁷⁰² Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, Advisory Committee on Government Activities in the North, "Government Activities in the North - 1957" (Ottawa: 1958), 60.

that the Government will need to play a leading role in creating “alternative” employment for Inuit, at least in the short term.

The one large change in the employment situation (in the Arctic) resulted from the closing of the North Rankin Nickel Mine which employed over 60 to 80 Eskimos. The Department is attempting to provide alternative employment in maintaining essential services in Rankin Inlet and by beginning an experimental trapping project. The unemployment situation at Rankin Inlet emphasized the need for diversifying the economy especially in the Keewatin Region. The problem goes deeper than the closing of the mine and is in large part a consequence of the long-term failure of the economy of the Keewatin region as a whole... The mine served as a brief palliative in that deteriorating situation.⁷⁰³

The same document continues under “Plans for 1963, Organization”:

[T]he closing of the Rankin Inlet Mine has posed a most serious threat to the economy of the Keewatin Region. As a result of several conferences of regional and area officers a programme is being implemented to offset the situation along the lines of resource harvesting, handicrafts production, and tourism.⁷⁰⁴

The promotion of handicraft production and the creation of Inuit co-operatives were two (related) components of DNANR’s effort to create economic opportunities for Inuit during the 1960s that had lasting impacts Rankin Inlet’s economy. According to Duffy, the notion that handicrafts (i.e., soapstone carvings and other genres of Inuit art) could generate significant income was known as early as 1948-49 when an artist from the south (of Canada) successfully sold thousands of pieces of Inuit creations in Montreal.⁷⁰⁵ The Government encouraged (and

⁷⁰³ Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, Advisory Commitment on Government Activities in the North, “Government Activities in the North - 1962” (Ottawa: 1963), 149.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁷⁰⁵ Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 169.

provided financing for) Inuit communities across the NWT to form cooperatives to organize the “production and marketing” of their art.⁷⁰⁶ Robertson states in his memoirs that DNANR favored the cooperative model of economic organization because it was compatible with, “traditional Inuit way of living and sharing. It would be more natural and comprehensible than any plan involving the establishment of companies based on individual enterprise.”⁷⁰⁷ In addition, officials believed that involvement in the management and organization of cooperatives would promote Inuit understanding and participation in political processes (such as “free elections and the secret ballot”), which was also a department goal by that time.⁷⁰⁸

Interestingly, Robertson writes that following the closure of the mine in Rankin Inlet, “[c]ooperatives were being established there [in Rankin Inlet] for handicrafts to provide alternative employment and income.”⁷⁰⁹ While the department established an arts and crafts program in 1963, which (as mentioned) provided income for dozens of individuals, other sources do not indicate that it was a cooperative.⁷¹⁰ A cooperative (the Kissarvik Co-op) “involved in fishing and whaling” was founded in Rankin Inlet in 1967, however, and has continued to exist to the present day.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 169-170.

⁷⁰⁷ Robertson, *A Very Civil Servant*, 179.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 191.

⁷¹⁰ Williamson, *Eskimo Underground*, 133; Kilvert, “Rankin Inlet”; D.L. Kravitz, “The Mosaic of Rankin Inlet: A Study of Communities” (M.A. Thesis 1974); Foster, “Rankin Inlet: A Lesson in Survival”; Schweitzer, *Keewatin Regional Dynamics*.

⁷¹¹ Institute for Northern Studies Arctic Research and Training Centre, “Information Pamphlet on Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.,” (University of Saskatchewan, 1968), 12 (Williamson Fonds, Box 31); “Contact Us,” Inns North, accessed October 31, 2016, <http://www.rankininlethotel.com/rankin-inlet-contact-us.htm>; The Kissarvik Co-op website

Northern Canadian Economic and Political Developments during the 1950s and 1960s

The Government's presence and involvement in Canada's Arctic grew rapidly through the mid- to late 1950s and 1960s. In 1954, expenditures of the Northern Affairs Branch of DNANR were approximately \$2.9 million. By 1966, this figure had increased to \$34.3 million. The combined budget GNWT grew several-fold from approximately \$600 thousand to \$10.3 million over the same period. In addition to community-level economic development, this money was devoted to education, health, housing, and infrastructure (and other programs/services).⁷¹²

The Government's desire to see the North's natural resources developed – and willingness to use public funds to this end - was also growing, particularly with the election of the Progressive Conservative Government in 1957 led by John Diefenbaker.⁷¹³ Aiming to associate his government with that of Conservative Prime Minister Macdonald, Diefenbaker espoused a “New National Policy” along a north-south (rather than east-west) axis. Under this plan, the Government would fund northern infrastructure in order to facilitate access to remote “northern minerals... [which in turn] would fuel the engine of the national economy by

states that it was incorporated in 1968; Arctic Cooperatives Limited, “Member Co-ops Kissarvik,” accessed May 15, 2017, <http://www.arcticco-op.com/acl-keewatin-rankin-inlet.htm>..

⁷¹² Dickerson, *Whose North*, 66-67; The spending by the Northern Affairs Branch of DNANR was for both NWT and Yukon.

⁷¹³ Rea, *The Political Economy of the Canadian North*, 357-358.

providing export credits, jobs, and investment opportunities.”⁷¹⁴ These investments would have also served the goal of continuing Canada's sovereignty over its northern territory.⁷¹⁵ Large-scale projects including the Pine Point Railroad and the Dempster Highway, however, failed to immediately generate significant new economic activity (due primarily, in the view of Philip Isard, to the lack of discovery of new mineral deposits) and the program was “abandoned” before Diefenbaker’s defeat in the 1963 election.⁷¹⁶

Despite the New National Policy’s disappointing economic returns, the succeeding Liberal Government led by Lester Pearson continued to invest in Northern infrastructure in hopes that it would spark economic development. While rejecting the “the nationalist-protectionist attitude of the previous regime,”⁷¹⁷ the new government shared the philosophy that public investment in infrastructure (e.g., roads) could incent private sector economic activity in the Northern resource sector.⁷¹⁸ According to Zaslow, the new Liberal Minister of DNANR believed that key to Northern resource development was the attraction of international “risk capital” and as such favoured “more government incentives, tax reliefs, (and) assistance grants...”⁷¹⁹ Further, he argues, the Liberal government’s “more acute sensitivity⁷²⁰ to social issues” which, as mentioned earlier, translated into increasing investments in health, welfare,

⁷¹⁴ Abele, “Canadian Contradictions,” 312.

⁷¹⁵ Philip Isard, “Northern Vision: Northern Development During the Diefenbaker Era” (Ph.D. diss., University of Waterloo), 29-30.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 108-109.

⁷¹⁷ Morris Zaslow, *The Northward Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), 339.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 338-339.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁷²⁰ Relative to the previous Conservative government.

education, and community/local economic development, ensured that the Government's presence in the North was continued to grow.⁷²¹

As southern influence and administration in the North grew during the 1950s and 1960s – a trend which was accompanied by increasing prospects of large-scale resource projects – so did calls from local populations for increased local autonomy and self-governance.⁷²² Government actions during the 1950s reveal some agreement with the need for more representative institutions in Canada's North. For instance (as discussed in Chapter Three) in 1951 it increased the size of NWT Council from six to eight members of whom three were elected (an additional fourth elected member was added in 1954) and gave the organ some new powers. The Commissioner, appointed by the Government, however retained executive authority.⁷²³

As early as 1961, the elected members of the Council (all of whom emanated from the western Mackenzie district of the NWT) proposed dividing the NWT into two separate territories along a north/south axis, such that the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic would be in a separate territory from the First Nations of the Mackenzie Valley. Underlying the proposal were the beliefs the First Nations of the Mackenzie Valley had different needs and interests than the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic (requiring unique governance institutions for both peoples) and that the enormous

⁷²¹ Ibid, 338

⁷²² Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 'The Northwest Territories Today: A Reference Paper for the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories' (Ottawa: Queens Printer, 1965), 80-81;

⁷²³ DNANR, "The Northwest Territories Today," 81; Dickerson, *Whose North*, 70; All elected members came from the MacKenzie District. The NWT council was expanded in 1951 via an amendment to the Northwest Territories Act. The Commissioner of the NWT was appointed by the Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources. He also held the post of Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources (Dickerson, *Whose North*, 67).

geography of the NWT could undermine its future governability.⁷²⁴ The newly elected Pearson government initially accepted the logic behind the division of the NWT and tabled two pieces of enacting legislation in 1963. However, both bills were sent to Committee after their second reading – at which time opponents to territorial division voiced their concerns – and did not return to the House for a final vote.⁷²⁵ In 1965, following an appeal by the NWT Council, DNANR Minister Arthur Laing appointed, an “Advisory Commission on Development of Government in the Northwest Territories,” (headed by A.W.R. Carrothers) to further explore the issue of “political development” in the NWT (including the possibility of territorial division) and provide recommendations.⁷²⁶ The Commission released a report (commonly referred to as the “Carrothers Report”) the following year with several consequential recommendations, of which various key ones the Government accepted. These included: the NWT remain a single political entity (i.e., no territorial division); there be a new NWT government with an executive and a legislature having areas of jurisdiction comparable to those of the provinces; and, that the “seat of Government” be located in Yellowknife.⁷²⁷ The Legislative Assembly was to consist of “fourteen elected and four appointed members” of whom certain members would be Ministers

⁷²⁴ DNANR, “The Northwest Territories Today,” 81-82.

⁷²⁵ Ibid. According to “The Northwest Territories Today,” both pieces of legislation “died on the Order Paper” (p. 83).

⁷²⁶ John D. Hamilton, *Arctic Revolution: Social Change in the Northwest Territories* (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1994), 92-93; Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, “Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories” (Ottawa: 1966), 1-2.

⁷²⁷ Hamilton, *Arctic Revolution*, 97, 100-101; Advisory Commission, “Report of the Advisory Commission,” 162.

(for the various territorial departments).⁷²⁸ The Ministers would collectively form the executive council.⁷²⁹ The Government also accepted the Report's recommendation that the new territorial government retain the position of Commissioner which would "be appointed... by the governor general... on the recommendation of the minister of Northern Affairs... [and] hold the rank of federal deputy minister and... be responsible directly to the minister of Northern Affairs... [and] be chairman of the legislative assembly and preside over the legislative assembly... and preside over the executive council."⁷³⁰

Beginning in 1967 (the year seat of government was transferred to Yellowknife from Ottawa) and continuing over the following years, the GNWT gradually assumed the powers and functions of a province, with notable differences. Chief among these differences were the fact that the Commissioner (appointed by the federal Minister of Northern Affairs) held authority over the executive and that the NWT had no constitutional status (i.e., it was a creation of federal legislation, and hence could be eradicated through legislation).⁷³¹ Dickerson describes the GNWT's "growth in size and responsibilities" over the following twelve years (which included the establishment of a two thousand-plus territorial civil service in Yellowknife) as, "nothing short of phenomenal."⁷³²

As the next section of the Chapter discusses, the sustained enlargement of the GNWT during the 1970s and 1980s affected the local economy of Rankin Inlet. Increased government

⁷²⁸ Advisory Commission, "Report of the Advisory Commission," 158.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷³⁰ Advisory Commission, "Report of the Advisory Commission," 158.

⁷³¹ Hamilton, *Arctic Revolution*, 101.

⁷³² Dickerson, *Whose North*, 89.

expenditures increased the level of public service employment in the community and led to spin off private sector activity.

Snapshot of Rankin Inlet's Economy in the 1970s

A vital source of information on the structure of Rankin Inlet's economy in the 1970s is Hugh Jansen's 1974 (published in 1979) study, "Eskimo Economics: An Aspect of Culture Change at Rankin Inlet." It identifies the main sources of cash into the settlement, describes spin off commercial economy, and suggests factors which may have influence Rankin Inlet's Inuit residents in choosing how to participate in various forms (e.g., cash-based and traditional) of economic activity.

As had been the case in Rankin Inlet since the closure of the mine in 1962, (and as was the general case for settlements in Canada's Arctic) Jansen notes that virtually all cash income in the settlement came through government channels.⁷³³ GNWT departments (which by this time had begun to assume responsibility for areas previously administered by the federal Government) employed many residents in various positions such as janitor, labourer, typist, and clerk.⁷³⁴ Others worked as labourers for "southern" firms, whose principal line of business was fulfilling contracts (often in the area of construction) tendered by the GNWT. Individual residents and Inuit organizations (such as the Kissarvik Co-op, established in 1967) also obtained government contracts.⁷³⁵ The Cannery and Arts and Crafts program (funded by the GNWT) similarly

⁷³³ Jansen, *Eskimo Economics*, 33.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

remained important sources of cash income for residents. The GNWT also provided low interest loans for Inuit to start businesses, of which Jansen identifies two, “the community coffee shop-taxi operation and Kudlik Electric,” which provided electrician services within the settlement.⁷³⁶ Rankin Inlet’s private retailers – which at that time continued to include the HBC, a store run by the Kissarvik Co-op, the Moto Ski shop, Kudlik Electric and the hotel (owned by non-Inuit) – largely depended on cash ultimately emanating from government sources (e.g., sales to public employees) and could themselves be considered a form of “spin-off” economic activity.⁷³⁷ It does not appear that the “multiplier effect” from government spending generated significant income in Rankin Inlet beyond the abovementioned retail and service shops. Government social assistance payments continued to play an important role for many residents as well.⁷³⁸

Jansen observed participation in the “traditional” hunting and trapping economy “involving most of the Eskimo men during at least parts of the year,” however he describes it as largely a “supplemental” economic pursuit, noting that securing “[a] living based solely on hunting and trapping does not seem feasible to Rankin Inlet Eskimo.”⁷³⁹ He does not note the presence of any formal purchasers of caribou or seal meat, while the HBC, the Moto-Ski Shop, as and Co-op store would exchange fur pelts for cash.⁷⁴⁰

Jansen developed a categorization of four “economic strategies” which an Inuk individual could pursue to secure a living in Rankin Inlet during his period of study: 1. “Economic

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, 34, 142-143.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 37-41.

Specialization,” defined as “Accepting Full-Time, Year Round Employment;” 2. “Economic Generalization,” defined as “Combining Several Short-Term Seasonal, Part-Time Occupations;” 3. “Entrepreneurship;”⁷⁴¹ and, 4. “Social Assistance Dependence.”⁷⁴²

Jansen also developed a model containing seven personal variables which, in his view, influenced an individual’s decision to pursue one “economic strategy” over another: 1. “Individual background” (in this variable he includes various sub-elements such as one’s sex, “personal or family history” within the settlement, dialect group, extent of kinship obligations); 2. One’s formal education level (some high school was often required to obtain a full-time administrative position); 3. Bilingualism (the ability to speak English – in addition to Inuktitut - would open up the possibility of a range of positions with employers); 4. Skill level (having a trade-related skill, for instance, would increase the range of opportunities compared to someone without a trade-related skill); 5. “Individual preference factor” (by this, Jansen appears to mean personal taste or suitability for certain forms of employment); 6. “White Connections/ Relationships” (strong relationships with the settlement’s non-Inuit residents could increase a person’s chance to learn about an employment opportunity in the first place, and/or be hired); 7. “Opportunity offering” (Jansen believed that sometimes when an employment opportunity was offered to an Inuk she would take it - even if she had relatively little knowledge of what the position entailed - in large part to avoid harming the relationship with the person offering the

⁷⁴¹ Jansen does not provide a definition of Entrepreneurship. He may have been referring to Inuit who operated their own businesses (including those who accepted government contracts).

⁷⁴² Jansen does not provide a definition of Social Assistance Dependence. He cites those who, “Year-Round” relied on government transfers such as “Disability Payments... Old-Age Pensions... [and] Aid to Women With Dependent Children.”; Jansen, *Eskimo Economics*. 60.

position).⁷⁴³ The heterogeneity of the variables in Jansen’s model convey the complex nature of Inuit decision making in choosing how to secure an income.

Interestingly, with the exception of “kinship obligations” (as one sub-element of the variable “Individual Background”) Jansen does not include one’s level of integration in Inuit social structures a variable in his calculus for pursuing a given economic strategy over another. He seems to have considered one’s belonging in such institutions as largely invariable, in that it represented central feature of life for nearly of Rankin’s Inuit residents. He notes the near universal existence of “informal support networks” for Rankin Inlet Inuit, which he defines as “a group of people who maintain common bond of alliance in day-to-day interaction – a bond which has an obvious basis in traditional Central Eskimo patterns of sharing.”⁷⁴⁴ These informal support networks, which, “tend[ed] to be heavily influenced based upon kinship” (and which appear consistent with what this dissertation considers as the Inuit extended family) were central to the material and social existence of nearly all Inuit in the settlement.⁷⁴⁵

As a central feature of life, Jansen notes that informal support networks – in continuity with the preceding mining period – provided Rankin Inlet’s Inuit residents with a floor of material security permitting flexibility in entering and withdrawing from the formal economy. Informal support networks were especially important for individuals pursuing the “economic generalization” strategy, in that, “[w]hen economic problems arise for the generalist, he can turn

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, 70-73.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 65, 68.

to the members of his informal support network for assistance... [T]he support network, acting as a 'buffer' mechanism takes care of the individual in the slumps between period of greater prosperity, providing food, clothing or even information which could lead to a new income opportunity."⁷⁴⁶ Inuit whose material security depended more on participation in the cash-based activities (e.g. economic specialists or entrepreneurs) may been less intensely involved in informal support networks on a day-to-day basis, however few would dare ending all participation therein, because they would "run the risk of social ostracism and of losing the security of the network offers should he ever need it."⁷⁴⁷ Inuit entrepreneurs, in particular, faced the challenge of trying to "balance social forces for sharing among one's support network with the necessity of profit for a business."⁷⁴⁸

Considered as a whole, Jansen's observations suggest that while there were greater cash-based economic opportunities available to Rankin Inlet Inuit during his period of study compared to the preceding mining period (due to increased government expenditures) Inuit social structures continued to influence Inuit economic decisions and participation in traditional activities carried on. Inuit benefitted from their involvement these social structures as well as participation in traditional activities, and made rational choices regarding how much time to allocate in participating in various forms of economic activity.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Important Developments and Events of the 1970s and 1980s affecting the Political and Legal Position of Canada's Northern Indigenous Peoples

A significant development of the post-war period which contributed to the signing of the NLCA and the creation of the territory of Nunavut, was the emergence of a cohort of Inuit political actors (from across the Arctic) united by a common sense of identity and distinct interests as Inuit. Before the large-scale entry of non-indigenous people and institutions to the Arctic, Inuit did not have a strong sense of ethnic or nationalistic identity comparable to that associated with the modern-day nation state or to some North American First Nations. Collective identity did not tend to extend much further than the extended family.⁷⁴⁹ As Inuit experience with (and arguably subjugation by) non-Inuit individuals and institutions accumulated, however, they began to view themselves as a distinct “people” which transcended familial and regional cleavages.⁷⁵⁰ By the 1970s, several Inuit (whom Hicks and White identify as a class of “Inuit political elite”) who, having passed through the non-Inuit formal education system, publicly articulated a vision of the unique interests and aspirations of Inuit as a people. These individuals (some of whom, such as Tagak Curley, were from Rankin Inlet) considered the achievement of self-determination for Inuit as their prime political objective, which in practice,

⁷⁴⁹ Jack Hicks and Graham White, “Nunavut: Self-determination Through a Land Claim and Public Government?” In *Inuit Regain Control of Their Lands and Their Lives*, eds. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks and Peter Jull (Copenhagen: IWGIA document, 2000), 51-52.

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

they believed, required the creation of new political institutions including a new province or territory on land traditionally occupied by Inuit.⁷⁵¹

During the early 1970s, people from northern indigenous societies (including the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic) formed organizations in order to effectively communicate their aims and institutional proposals for self-determination, and participate in land claims negotiations with the Government to this end. The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) was created in 1971 as an advocacy group “responsible for both coordinating and supporting regional Inuit concerns and interests at the national level.”⁷⁵² Similar organizations formed by other indigenous peoples in the NWT were: The Dene Nation (1970, originally called the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories), initially organized by sixteen NWT First Nation chiefs; the Committee for Original Peoples’ Entitlement (COPE) in 1970, representing the Inuvialuit people⁷⁵³ of the Western Canadian Arctic; and, the Métis Association (1972).⁷⁵⁴ The Government provided funds to each of these groups.⁷⁵⁵

In addition to the general belief that existing political structures were incompatible self-determination, northern indigenous people sought to safeguard their existence as peoples, which they considered to be exposed to external forces. The release of the “White Paper” in 1969 by the Trudeau Liberal Government was one event that raised particular alarm in this regard. It

⁷⁵¹ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 51.

⁷⁵² “Who We Are,” Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <https://www.itk.ca/national-voice-for-communities-in-the-canadian-arctic/>.

⁷⁵³ The Inuvialuit of the Western Canadian Arctic are - like the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic - descendants of the Thule.

⁷⁵⁴ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 101, 102, 104.

⁷⁵⁵ Abele, “Canadian Contradictions,” 315.

advocated the repeal of the Indian Act and the elimination of the Government's recognition of "special status" for indigenous people.⁷⁵⁶ In Abele's view, this proposal represented an unusually candid permutation of Canada's tradition of liberal thought, which supported legal equality for individual citizens (i.e., no consideration of special rights for groups) and the integration of all people (indigenous or otherwise) into "mainstream society."⁷⁵⁷

International capital's growing interest in developing the non-renewable resources of the North – which was manifesting itself through "increased oil and gas exploration in the Mackenzie Valley, the Beaufort Sea, and the High Arctic" – was also viewed as a threat.⁷⁵⁸ Northern energy exploration activities had been actively encouraged by the Government since the early the 1960s. According to Dacks, the Canada Oil and Gas Regulations instituted in 1961 by the Diefenbaker government created an intentionally favourable regulatory environment for exploration in the North. These regulations addressed issues such as, "royalty rates on production, liability for oil spills" and clarified how "government and industry... [would share] the benefits to gained from northern hydrocarbons and the risks to be borne in developing them" such that exploration would not be deemed (by industry as) too risky.⁷⁵⁹

Government support for drilling in the Arctic continued into the 1970s. In 1977, the Government created the Frontier Exploration Allowance, a tax benefit for "drilling extra-

⁷⁵⁶ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 100; Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy" (Ottawa, 1969), 5, accessed April 25, 2017, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/cp1969_1100100010190_eng.pdf.

⁷⁵⁷ Abele, "Canadian Contradictions," 315, 319.

⁷⁵⁸ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 100.

⁷⁵⁹ Gurson Dacks, *A Choice of Futures: Politics in the Canadian North* (Methuen, 1981), 129.

expensive wells, the type required in the Beaufort.”⁷⁶⁰ That same year, however, the release of a report by Justice Thomas Berger, head of a public inquiry which (for three years had) examined how government should appropriately regulate the proposed “Mackenzie Valley Pipeline,” diminished private sector enthusiasm for northern exploration.⁷⁶¹ Berger’s report recommended that “that no pipeline be built in the Mackenzie for a period of ten years in order to allow time for the settlement and implementation of the native claims in the [MacKenzie] Valley...”⁷⁶² Although the National Energy Board⁷⁶³ eventually decided not to grant permission for the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline to proceed (thereby relieving Cabinet of the burden of having to respond directly to Berger’s unwelcome recommendations) in Hamilton’s view, Berger’s report “killed the project politically.”⁷⁶⁴

In addition to creating unacceptable levels of risk for private investors in exploration, Berger’s recommendations drastically complicated the Government’s approach to managing

⁷⁶⁰The federal government participated in Arctic resource exploration projects itself in the 1970s, via the company Panarctic, in which it held a forty-five percent share and later through Crown Corporation Petro Canada (Dacks 1981, 130); Dacks, *A Choice of Futures*, 130-131.

⁷⁶¹Cabinet had “favoured and indeed actively promoted the construction of the... pipeline” – which would have transported natural gas from Prudhoe Bay (north of Alaska), through the Yukon and the MacKenzie Valley, to Alberta and ultimately the United States. It initiated the Berger inquiry as a “public-relations” tactic and to quell hostility from the social-democratic New Democratic Party, upon whose support the Liberals relied in the minority parliament (Dacks 1981, 135-136). However, in Dacks’ view, Berger expanded upon the parameters of inquiry given to him by the Government by examining, “the impact not simply of a single gas pipeline, but also of a transportation corridor and of a gathering system in the Mackenzie Delta as it might relate to the pipeline” (1981, 136). Further, Berger provided significant resources in terms of money and time for indigenous groups to testify in opposition to the project, which attracted media attention and “public sympathy” (Dacks 1981, 137).

⁷⁶²Dacks, *A Choice of Futures*, 138.

⁷⁶³The National Energy Board is the federally appointed regulatory tribunal responsible for regulating the construction of pipelines; “Responsibilities,” National Energy Board, accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <https://www.neb-one.gc.ca/bts/whwr/rspnsblt/index-eng.html>.

⁷⁶⁴Hamilton, *Arctic Revolution*, 180.

northern development which (as articulated in the White Paper) did not favour “special political rights for any ethnic group.”⁷⁶⁵ In direct opposition to this principle, Berger asserted that not only should indigenous land claims be settled prior to construction of the pipeline, but that,

these claims went far beyond the land claims in the mind of Ottawa: they embraced special political rights, control over land peripheral to acreage actually ceded to them, control over education, and control over a number of other community services.⁷⁶⁶

The report strengthened the bargaining position of the aforementioned northern indigenous advocacy groups who were seeking to sign comprehensive land claims deals with the Government. One year prior to the report’s release, the ITC put forward its first land claim proposal with four chief objectives:⁷⁶⁷

- (1) preserve Inuit identity and the traditional way-of-life so far as possible;
- (2) enable Inuit to be equal and meaningful participants in the changing North and in Canadian society;
- (3) achieve fair and reasonable compensation or benefits to the Inuit in exchange for the extinguishment of Inuit claims;
- (4) protect and preserve the ecology and environment.⁷⁶⁸

The ITC’s proposal also renewed the call for the creation of a new Territory in the Eastern Arctic, which According to Hicks and White, ITC negotiators considered as essential for

⁷⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 199.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁷⁶⁷ Alisa Henderson, *Nunavut: Rethinking Political Culture* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 96.

⁷⁶⁸ Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, “Nunavut: A Proposal for the Settlement of Inuit Lands in the Northwest Territories (Short English Version)” (1976), ii, accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <https://www.tunngavik.com/files/2012/11/Nunavut-ProposalforhtesettlementInuitLandinNWT-eng.pdf>.

achieving meaningful Inuit self-determination.⁷⁶⁹ Their reasons for this belief were largely consistent with those who backed the 1961 proposal for territorial division, namely: A. Inuit represented only a minority of the NWT population and; B. “the centres of economic and political and economic power in the Northwest Territories [which were in Yellowknife] were simply too remote – both geographically and culturally – from Inuit communities.”⁷⁷⁰ The proposed new Territory of Nunavut would be a “public government” in that all Eastern Arctic residents (Inuit and non-Inuit) would have voting and other political rights.⁷⁷¹ Inuit negotiators likely believed that since Inuit would comprise a strong majority of the new territory’s population they would be able to exercise meaningful control over its areas of jurisdiction.⁷⁷² The initial proposal called for special employment rights for Inuit in the context of the public government.⁷⁷³

Like the land claims proposals being put forward by other northern indigenous organizations⁷⁷⁴ the ITC proposal held that meaningful access to and preservation of the natural

⁷⁶⁹ Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, “Nunavut: A Proposal,” i; Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 53-54; The ITC’s 1976 Land Claim proposal included the area of the MacKenzie Valley above the tree line. This area was eventually included in a separate land claims agreement negotiated between Inuvialuit (1984) and the federal government (referred to as the Inuvialuit Settlement Region). See Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, “The Western Arctic Claim: The Inuvialuit Final Agreement,” accessed April 25, 2017, http://irc.inuvialuit.com/sites/default/files/Western_Arctic_Claim_Inuvialuit_FA_0.pdf.

⁷⁷⁰ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 54; Inuit were a minority group in the NWT whose population also consisted of non-indigenous people and other indigenous and Metis groups.

⁷⁷¹ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 54.

⁷⁷² André Légaré, “An Assessment of Recent Political Development in Nunavut: The Challenges and Dilemmas of Inuit Self-Government,” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 18, no. 2 (1998), 290, accessed May 17, 2017, http://www3.brandonu.ca/cjns/18.2/cjns18no2_pg271-299.pdf

⁷⁷³ Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, “Nunavut: A Proposal,” 9.

⁷⁷⁴ Including the Dene (1976), the Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic (1977) and the Metis of NWT (1978) (Dickerson 1992, 101-104).

environment was key to Inuit survival and well-being (as a people and as individuals).⁷⁷⁵ In addition to the creation of a new territory, the proposal therefore called for Inuit to “[obtain] strong control over hunting, trapping, and fishing... own(ing) at least 250,000 square miles [of land, including subsurface rights]... receiv(ing) royalties from development,” establish a “special Social and Economic Program” and establish shared control over public lands (i.e., those lands to which the federal government would have title following the conclusion of the land claims process).⁷⁷⁶ As will be discussed further, virtually all of these elements of the ITC’s initial negotiating position were contained in the final NLCA signed between the Government and ITC-successor organization, Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN).

In addition to Berger’s Report, other developments impelled the Government to take serious the process of settling of Northern land claims. One such development was the 1973 Supreme Court of Canada decision in “Calder et. al. v. Attorney General of British Columbia” (involving the Nisga'a First Nations of British Columbia) which upheld that claims by indigenous people to land which they had not formally ceded were legally sound.⁷⁷⁷ A second development was, the release of a report by Lloyd Barber (who had been tasked by the Government to “review the basis for land claims”) also in 1973, which recommended that the Government attempt to resolve outstanding claims. The following year, the Department of

⁷⁷⁵Dickerson, *Whose North*, 108

⁷⁷⁶ Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, “Nunavut: A Proposal,” i, 29.

⁷⁷⁷ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 106; Dacks, *A Choice of Futures*, 61.

Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) opened an “Office of Native Claims.”⁷⁷⁸ In Dacks view, therefore, since 1973 the Government has considered resolving outstanding indigenous land claims as important for “dispel[ing] the atmosphere of uncertainty about the outcome of the claims that has dampened northern development.”⁷⁷⁹

Rankin Inlet’s Economy During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s

Government (largely GNWT) expenditures, including public sector wages, continued to grow Rankin Inlet grew during the 1980s and remained the foundation of Rankin Inlet’s cash economy (as Jansen observed in his 1974 study). Private sector economic activity also appears to have picked up, likely as a “spin off” of increasing government outlays.

As Table 4, based on a consultant’s report shows, nearly 80% percent of total settlement income stemmed from government employment.⁷⁸⁰ The report’s calculation of total settlement income includes consumption of country food (using a conversion of \$11/kg of country food consumed) which represented the second highest form of income at 11.6%.⁷⁸¹ Excluding country food consumption in the calculation of settlement income would render government employment, as a percentage of total settlement income, even higher.

⁷⁷⁸ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 106; Dacks, *A Choice of Futures*, 61.

⁷⁷⁹ Dacks, *A Choice of Futures*, 61.

⁷⁸⁰ The data in Table 4 is based on estimates in a report by H.J. Ruitenbeek Resource Consulting Ltd. (generated on behalf of the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism, as part of a larger “Economic Base Study” for the Keewatin Region)

⁷⁸¹ H.J. Ruitenbeek Resource Consulting Ltd, “Keewatin Region Economic Base Study,” 59.

Table 4 - Rankin Inlet, Total Income by Source (estimated) 1982⁷⁸²

Income Source	(\$)	% of Total Income
Private Firm Employment (\$)	804,000	9.7
Government Employment	6,434,000	77.8
Fishing	20,000	0.2
Trapping (Fur Sales)	7,400	0.1
Arts and Crafts	16,400	0.1
Federal Transfer Payments (Family Allowance and Old Age Security)	22,500	0.3
GNWT Social Assistance Payments	249,400	3.0
GNWT Trapper Grants	1,800	0.02
Country Food Consumption	954,900	11.6
Total	8,261,000	100%

Two events in 1975 helped to reinforce government expenditures as the foundation of Rankin Inlet's cash economy. The first (and likely most important) was the naming of Rankin Inlet as a GNWT administrative centre for the Keewatin Region in 1975 (moved from Churchill),⁷⁸³ which involved the transfer of officials in the departments of Social Development, Education, and others.⁷⁸⁴ Although it is unclear precisely how many civil service jobs this brought to the settlement, the 1986-87 NWT data book suggests that the spin-off effect (in terms of new private sector activity) was significant. It states that "[t]he relocation of the Territorial Government offices for the Keewatin to Rankin Inlet has sparked considerable development as well as reaffirming the community's status as the key transportation and communication centre

⁷⁸² H.J. Ruitenbeek Resource Consulting Ltd, "Keewatin Region Economic Base Study," 61.

⁷⁸³ During this period, GNWT "programs and services" were administered on a regional basis. By 1992, NWT had five such administrative regions, "Kitikmeot, Keewatin, Baffin, Fort Smith, and Inuvik" (Dickerson 1992, 91).

⁷⁸⁴ Government of the Northwest Territories, "Government in Transition: Annual Report of the Government of the Northwest Territories" (Yellowknife: 1975), 25.

of the area.”⁷⁸⁵ Also in 1975, Rankin Inlet attained status as a “Hamlet,” which essentially meant that Rankin Inlet became an “incorporated” municipality, as per GNWT legislation.⁷⁸⁶ As such, Rankin Inlet could, for the first time, “enact by-laws and resolutions, hire... [its] own staff and enter into contracts for the provision of essential services.”⁷⁸⁷ The majority of funding for Hamlet operations came from the GNWT.⁷⁸⁸

The population of Rankin Inlet continued to grow during the 1980s (see Table 5) as did the size of the labour force and persons employed (see Table 6, data begins in 1984). As suggested, the growth in employment was likely due to increased government presence (and private sector “spin off” jobs) although it is difficult to be precise vis-à-vis the rate of growth in public vs. private employment. Dickerson shows that overall GNWT expenditures more than doubled during the 1980s, from roughly \$308 million in 1980, to \$536 million in 1985 to \$858 million in 1989.⁷⁸⁹ As a GNWT regional administrative centre, government expenditures in Rankin Inlet would have likely also increased over this period. In terms of growth in private sector employment, the 1981 NWT Data book identifies 19 “local businesses” whereas the 1986-87 NWT Data book (final edition) identifies 34.⁷⁹⁰ The businesses listed (including co-ops) fall

⁷⁸⁵ Ronne Heming, “NWT Data Book 1986-87: A Complete Guide to the Northwest Territories and its Communities” (Yellowknife: Outcrop Ltd. The Northern Publishers, 1986), 196.

⁷⁸⁶ Government of the Northwest Territories, “Government in Transition,” 25.

⁷⁸⁷ C.M. Drury, “Constitutional Development in the Northwest Territories: Report of the Special Representative,” (Ottawa: Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1980), 35.

⁷⁸⁸ Drury, “Constitutional Development,” 35. As mentioned, however, GNWT had little own source revenue and relied significantly on grants from the federal government.

⁷⁸⁹ Dickerson, *Whose North*, 124.

⁷⁹⁰ Marina Devine (ed.), “NWT Data Book: 1981” (Yellowknife: Outcrop Ltd., 1981); Heming, NWT Data Book: 1986-87,” 197.

under various sectors such as retail, taxis, hospitality (restaurants/hotels), professional services, and air transportation.⁷⁹¹ Further, tourism-related businesses appear to have been in operation during this period including, “Boat Trips to historic Marble Island,” as well as other cultural-related industries such as “ceramics, soapstone carving, [and] wall hangings.”⁷⁹² The exact breakdown of Inuit vs. non-Inuit owned businesses is unknown. The degree to which Rankin Inlet’s private sector businesses during this period received government funding/support is also unclear.

Table 5 - Rankin Inlet Population, 1979 to 2011

Year	Total Population	Percent Inuit
1979	956	72.3
1980	980	75.1
1981	1109	77
1985	1315	76 ⁷⁹³
1986	1374	N/A
1991	1706 ⁷⁹⁴	N/A
1996	2055	75 (1540)
2001	2165	78 (1680)
2006	2340	82 (1925) ⁷⁹⁵
2011	2577 ⁷⁹⁶	79 (1810) ⁷⁹⁷

⁷⁹¹ Heming, NWT Data Book: 1986-87,” 197. The “sectors” are generated by the author.

⁷⁹² Heming, NWT Data Book: 1986-87,” 197.

⁷⁹³ Data for 1979 to 1985 from NWT Data Books: 1981 (p. 126) 1982-83 (p. 182); 1984-85 (p. 202); 1986-87 (p. 197).

⁷⁹⁴ 1986 and 1991 data from: Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, “Nunavut Population Counts by Region and Community, 1981 to 2011 Censuses,” accessed May 15, 2017, [http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Nunavut%20Census%20Population%20by%20Region%20and%20Community%2C%201981%20to%202011%20\(2%20tables\).xls](http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Nunavut%20Census%20Population%20by%20Region%20and%20Community%2C%201981%20to%202011%20(2%20tables).xls).

⁷⁹⁵ 1996, 2001 and 2006 data from: Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, “Nunavut Census Population by Region, Community and Inuit Identity, 1996, 2001 & 2006,” accessed May 15, 2017, [http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Nunavut%20Census%20Population%20by%20Region%2C%20Community%20and%20Inuit%20Identity%2C%201996%2C%202001%2C%202006%20\(4%20tables\).xls](http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Nunavut%20Census%20Population%20by%20Region%2C%20Community%20and%20Inuit%20Identity%2C%201996%2C%202001%2C%202006%20(4%20tables).xls).

2016	2842	N/A ⁷⁹⁸
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Table 6 - Rankin Inlet Labour Force Characteristics 1984-1999⁷⁹⁹

Year	Population 15+	Labour Force	Employed	Unemployed	Participation Rate (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)	Employment Rate (%)
1984	715	510	446	64	71.3	12.5	62.4
1989	884	619	529	90	70.0	14.5	59.8
1994	1,319	929	804	125	70.4	13.5	61.0
1999	1,405	1,011	872	139	72.0	13.7	62.1

Before discussing Rankin Inlet’s economy during the 1990s, it is important to mention several developments in the community during the 1970s and 1980s that accompanied its economic and population growth. In terms of what the NWT Data Book describes as “Protection Services,” by 1987 the settlement was home to a fire department with 22 volunteers, a legal aid centre, and two justices of the peace. With respect to medical services, the community had a “nursing station” with four beds, as well as five nurses and one doctor. Other medical specialists

⁷⁹⁶ 2011 Total Population data from: Statistics Canada, “Corrections and updates: Population and dwelling count amendments, 2011 Census,” accessed May 15, 2017, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/news-nouvelles/corr/cgen004-eng.cfm>.

⁷⁹⁷ 2011 Inuit population data from: Statistics Canada, “NHS Aboriginal Population Profile, Rankin Inlet, HAM, Nunavut, 2011,” accessed May 15, 2017, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/aprof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6205017&Data=Count&SearchText=Rankin%20Inlet&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=6205017&TABID=1>

⁷⁹⁸ “Census Profile, 2016 Census Rankin Inlet, Hamlet,” Statistics Canada, accessed May 17, 2017, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6205017&Geo2=CD&Code2=6205&Data=Count&SearchText=Rankin%20Inlet&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>

⁷⁹⁹ Data from NWT Labour Force Surveys, Prepared by the NWT Bureau of Statistics. Note: 1999, 1994 and 1989 includes population 15 years and over. 1984 survey data includes population 15 to 64 years of age.

would fly into the community, and patients flew out (to southern Canada) for medical treatment as required. The settlement had various social services offerings including a “Group Home for handicapped and adolescents” and services for substance abuse. There was a school (kindergarten to grade 9) with over 400 students enrolled and 30 teaching and support staff. Adult education services were available. There were also various community recreation facilities, such as a “community hall, school gymnasium, curling rink, play ground... [l]ibrary... [s]oftball field, ... (and) arena.”⁸⁰⁰ Government supplied housing grew over this period as well. By the 1980s, Rankin Inlet had a community radio station, and received telephone and CBC radio/television services through the Anik satellite.⁸⁰¹

Rankin Inlet’s cash economy also likely benefitted during the 1980s from its role as a regional communications and transportation “hub,” with direct flights to the surrounding Keewatin settlements of Baker Lake, Repulse Bay, Coral Harbour, Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove, Eskimo Point (now Arviat) as well as to Yellowknife and Winnipeg.⁸⁰² Rankin Inlet was also a stopping point for seasonal shipments by sea, although not directly from the south, as shown in Figure 7. The community also housed the Nunasi Corporation (initially named the Inuit Development Corporation), created by ITC in 1976 through “debt financing with the debt being secured from the land claim that was still under negotiation at the time.”⁸⁰³

⁸⁰⁰ Heming, NWT Data Book: 1986-87,” 197.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁸⁰² H.J. Ruitenbeek Resource Consulting Ltd, “Keewatin Region Economic Base Study,” 28.

⁸⁰³ “Financing of Nunasi Corporation,” Nunasi Corporation, accessed May 13, 2017, <http://nunasi.com/blog/history/originally-nunasi-corporation-nc-was/>.

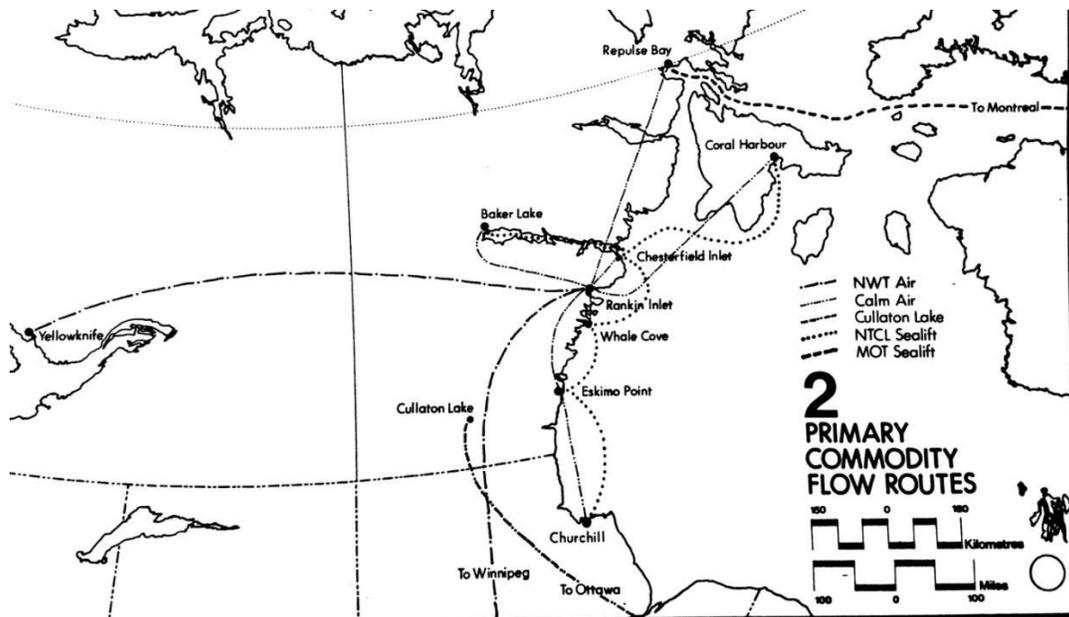


Figure 7 - "Primary Commodity Flow Routes"⁸⁰⁴

Rankin Inlet Economic Development: 1990s to post-Nunavut Period

As Table 4 shows, Rankin Inlet's population continued to grow during the 1990s (by 1996 it had reached over 2000) although at a slower pace than during the 1980s. The GNWT did not publish detailed community-level data for the 1990s comparable to that in the NWT Data Book series during the 1980s, however according to Table 7 (based on Statistics Canada data), Rankin Inlet's labour force and persons employed continued to grow, suggesting that the local cash economy itself also continued to grow.

⁸⁰⁴ H.J. Ruitenbeek Resource Consulting Ltd, "Keewatin Region Economic Base Study," 28.

The Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study (NWHS), a survey of the non-commercial wildlife harvesting activities of Inuit in all Nunavut Settlement Region (NSR) communities performed between 1996 and 2001 (published in 2004) contains the most comprehensive data related to residents' participation in the traditional economic activities during the 1990s. According to the NWHS, there were an average of 369 registered hunters in Rankin Inlet each year over the five-year period (representing 21% of the then Inuit population of 1,730). Of these individuals, the researchers interviewed an average of 202 each year. Of the interviewees, an average of 108 reported harvesting at least once in a given year.⁸⁰⁵ The authors estimate that there may have been an additional 3% of Inuit hunting who were unregistered (as a percent of the total 424 Inuit in Rankin Inlet who were registered at least one year over the course of the study).⁸⁰⁶ The number of registered hunters declined slightly (but consistently) each year from 379 in 1996/97 to 362 in 2000/01.⁸⁰⁷ The researchers identified over twenty species of animals hunted by Rankin Inlet residents over the course of the study with caribou, arctic char, lake trout, bearded seal, and Canada goose as the most harvested (in order from most to least).⁸⁰⁸

Over roughly the same period, between 1994 and 2001, the total number of employed persons (as per Statistics Canada) increased from approximately 800 to 900 persons (see Tables 6 and 7). The overall unemployment rate during this period appears to have remained constant at

⁸⁰⁵ Heather Priest and Peter Usher, "The Nunavut Wildlife Harvest Study: Final Report" (Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, 2004), 19,722.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 37, 724.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 722.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 723; The authors present 24 categories of animal species harvested, although this includes: seals (unspecified) and goose eggs, duck eggs, and fish (unspecific).

around 13 to 14%. Table 7, which contains census data of Rankin Inlet's aboriginal population (which is almost uniformly Inuit) suggests that while significant numbers of Inuit were either employed or looking for work during the same period, their Participation Rate and Employment Rate were lower than for the entire settlement population, whereas the Unemployment Rate was considerably higher.

Table 7 - Rankin Inlet Labour Force Characteristics 1996-2011

Year	Total Population 15+ (Aboriginal Population 15+)	Total Labour Force (Aboriginal Labour Force)	Total Employed (Aboriginal Employed)	Total Unemployed (Aboriginal Unemployed)	Total Participation Rate (%) (Aboriginal Participation Rate (%))	Total Unemployment Rate (%) (Aboriginal Unemployment Rate (%))	Total Employment Rate (%) (Aboriginal Employment Rate (%))
1996 ⁸⁰⁹	1315 (N/A)	1010 (N/A)	875 (N/A)	140 (N/A)	76.8 (N/A)	13.9 (N/A)	66.5 (N/A)
2001 ⁸¹⁰	1380 (1000)	1050* (700)*	895 (570)	137* (130)*	76.1 (70.0)	13.0 (18.6)	66.2 (57.5)
2006 ⁸¹¹	1570 (1220)	1125 (790)	1010 (685)	115 (105)	71.7 (64.8)	10.2 (13.3)	64.3 (56.1)
2011 ⁸¹²	1555 (1,185)	1,145 (815)	970 (655)	170 (165)	74.4 (68.8)	14.8 (20.2)	63.0 (55.3)

*figure calculated by the author based on Statistic Canada data.

⁸⁰⁹ Total Population data for 1996 taken from Statistics Canada 1996 Census data.

⁸¹⁰ Total population data for 2001 taken from Statistics Canada 2001 Census data. Inuit/Aboriginal data for 2001 taken from 2001 Census Aboriginal Profile.

⁸¹¹ Total Population data for 2006 taken from Statistics Canada 2006 Census data. Inuit/Aboriginal data for 2006 taken from 2006 Census Aboriginal Profile.

⁸¹² Total Population data for 2011 taken from Statistics Canada 2011 Census data. Inuit/Aboriginal data for 2011 taken from Aboriginal responses to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). See bibliography for URLs.

Signing of the NLCA in 1993 and the Creation of Nunavut in 1999

As is argued in more detail below, the signing of the NLCA in 1993 by the TFN and Her Majesty the Queen (in Right of Canada) was an important event for the future institutional structure of Rankin Inlet's economy. The NLCA contained several provisions that responded to key demands made by the ITC in its 1976 initial land claims proposal (with respect to Inuit political, economic, cultural self-control). These included:

- The creation of the Territory of Nunavut, with a public government elected by all Inuit and non-Inuit residents;
- Provisions to target “representative level(s)” of Inuit GN public service employment and the allowance of GN develop “preferential procurement policies, procedures and approaches” to encourage the provision of GN contracts to Inuit firms;⁸¹³
- “Priority rights (for Inuit) to harvest wildlife for domestic, sports, and commercial purposes;”⁸¹⁴
- Shared control between Inuit, the GN and the federal government over “wildlife harvesting and management”⁸¹⁵ through the creation of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

⁸¹³ Government of Canada and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada” (Iqaluit: 1993), accessed May 14, 2017, http://www.tunngavik.com/documents/publications/LAND_CLAIMS_AGREEMENT_NUNAVUT.pdf 192, 197.

⁸¹⁴ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 58.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.

(NWMB) with nine members, four of which would be appointed by the “Designated Inuit Organization” DIO;⁸¹⁶

- Shared control between Inuit, the GN and the federal government over how major future non-renewable resource development would proceed, through the creation of the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB), with four members nominated by the DIO,⁸¹⁷ responsible reviewing the “ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of [resource development] project proposals...[and] determin[ing] whether project proposals should proceed, and if so, under what terms and conditions,”⁸¹⁸
- The requirement that an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA) be concluded (between the DIO and project proponent) prior to the beginning of work on any Major Development Projects;⁸¹⁹
- A share of resource royalties received by the federal government (paid to Nunavut Trust) for resource development at the rate of: “(a) fifty percent (50%) of the first two million dollars

⁸¹⁶ The TFN was a Designated Inuit Organization (DIO). It remained intact following the creation of Nunavut, eventually with the name Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI). NTI is responsible “that promises made under the... NLCA are carried out (and) coordinat(ing) and manag(ing) Inuit responsibilities set out in the NLCA and ensur[ing] that the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations.”; “About NTI,” Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <http://www.tunngavik.com/about/>.

⁸¹⁷ The Agreement (12.2.6(a)) states that, “four members shall be appointed by the federal Minister responsible for Northern Affairs, upon nomination by the DIO.” (p. 100).

⁸¹⁸ Canada and Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement,” 99-100.

⁸¹⁹ Major Development Project defined as “any Crown corporation or private sector project that (a) is a water power generation or water exploitation project in the Nunavut Settlement Area, or (b) is a project involving development or exploitation, but not exploration, of resources wholly or partly under Inuit Owned Lands, and either entails, within the Nunavut Settlement Area during any five-year period, more than 200 person years of employment, or entails capital costs in excess of thirty-five million dollars (\$35,000,000), in constant 1986 dollars, including, where Government is the proponent for a portion of a development project or directly related infrastructure, the capital costs and employment projections for the government portion of the project.”; Canada and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement,” 205.

(\$2,000,000) of resource royalty received by Government in that year; and (b) five percent (5%) of any additional resource royalty received by Government in that year;”⁸²⁰

- The establishment of “approximately 350,000 square kilometers of (Inuit owned) land, of which roughly ten percent include subsurface mineral rights;”⁸²¹
- The payment of nearly \$1.2 billion to the Inuit of the NSA, to be held in trust by the “Nunavut Trust,” an organization established by TFN (as per the NLCA) to “provide for the protection and enhancement of settlement assets based on sound management practices.”⁸²²

The main Inuit concession made in exchange for the above “rights and benefits,” was the “surrender to Her Majesty The Queen in Right of Canada, all their aboriginal claims, rights, title and interests, if any, in and to lands and waters anywhere within Canada and adjacent offshore areas within the sovereignty or jurisdiction of Canada.”⁸²³ In other words, the Inuit of the settlement area abandoned all claims to ownership over the territory covered in the agreement, which would henceforth be unambiguously Crown land (except for the relatively small amount of territory retained by Inuit as per the Agreement). Inuit covered under the Agreement would be considered Beneficiaries - the list of whom would assembled by enrolment committees in each settlement - with each Beneficiary meeting the following criteria: “Is alive... [i]s a Canadian citizen... [i]s an Inuk according to Inuit customs...thinks of herself or himself as an

⁸²⁰ Canada and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement,” 203.

⁸²¹ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 58.

⁸²² Canada and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement,” 217, 221.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

Inuk... [i]s associated with Nunavut, and [i]s not enrolled in any other Canadian land claims agreement at the same time.”⁸²⁴

Public Service and Land Claims Organizations Employment in Rankin Inlet post-NLCA

As suggested in the Chapter’s Introduction, the signing of the NLCA and the creation of Nunavut, appears to have entrenched the post-nickel mine institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s economy. Expenditures by government (administered since 1999 primarily by the GN) and quasi-governmental Inuit organizations (e.g., NTI and KIA) have remained the main source of cash into the economy. The continued performance of traditional activities (although not irrefutable proof) suggests that traditional Inuit social structures such as the extended family continue to play an important role in the economic decisions/activities of Rankin Inlet residents. Private business continues to play a significant role in the services, construction, and retail sectors.

This institutional structure – in addition to being the accumulative result of historical and ongoing events – is maintained by targeted GN and quasi-governmental Inuit organizations’ policy and interventions in the economy. The paragraphs below discuss such policies and interventions in various areas, including: public service employment, harvesting, Inuit small business, artistry, and traditional knowledge.

⁸²⁴ Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., “Tukisittiarniqsaujumaviit: A Plain Language Guide to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement,” (Iqaluit 2004) accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <http://www.tunngavik.com/documents/publications/2004-00-00-A-Plain-Language-Guide-to-the-Nunavut-Land-Claims-Agreement-English.pdf>, 69.

Post-Nunavut Public Sector Employment and Government Expenditures in Rankin Inlet

Following the signing of the NLCA, the Government, the GNWT and TFN signed the “Nunavut Political Accord” (NPA) calling upon the Government to pass the “Nunavut Act” which would provide for the creation of the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) and establish the Territory of Nunavut “no later than April 1, 1999.”⁸²⁵ The NIC⁸²⁶ was to undertake planning for the creation of the new Territory and its system of government (e.g., choosing a new capital, election processes, electoral districts, administrative design) while ensuring an “equitable distribution of government activities among Nunavut communities.”⁸²⁷

The NIC released two reports, “Footprints in New Snow” (1995) and “Footprints 2” (1996) “recommend[ing] that Nunavut’s government should be highly decentralized, with programs and services delivered at the regional and community level to the fullest extent possible.”⁸²⁸ Footprints 2 called for creating 1,100 “headquarters and regional positions... in 11 communities across Nunavut,”⁸²⁹ including 490 new positions to be created outside of the capital of Iqaluit. Rankin Inlet was slated to receive 34 new public service positions as per the

⁸²⁵ Hicks and White, “Nunavut: Self Determination,” 64; Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, Government of Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories, “Nunavut Political Accord” (1993), sections 3.3, 6.1, accessed October 31, 2016, http://landclaimscoalition.ca/pdf/Nunavut_Political_Accord_1992.pdf.

⁸²⁶ The NIC was to include nine members, three of whom would be appointed by TFN, three by GNWT and three by the Government. According to Hicks and White, the NIC initially had 10 members (it is unclear if this was concurrently, or not), nine of whom were Nunavut residents (2000, 63).

⁸²⁷ Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, Government of Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories, “Nunavut Political Accord” (1993), , Part 6 and Part 7, accessed October 31, 2016, http://landclaimscoalition.ca/pdf/Nunavut_Political_Accord_1992.pdf.

⁸²⁸ Millennium Partners. “Building Nunavut Through Decentralization: Evaluation Report” (Prepared under contract to: Evaluation and Statistics Division, Dep’t of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Nunavut, 2002), 1, accessed May 17, 2017, <http://assembly.nu.ca/library/GNedocs/2002/000099-e.pdf>.

⁸²⁹ Nunavut Implementation Commission. “Footprints 2,” (1996), F.1.

decentralization initiative, in addition to the 268 existing GNWT positions in the community which would be transferred to the GN.⁸³⁰ In 1999, the newly formed GN affirmed its commitment to public service decentralization (with a slightly lower target of 468.5 total decentralized positions, which again decreased slightly to 459 by 2004).⁸³¹

Table 8 (based on available Nunavut Public Service Annuals Reports) shows that Rankin Inlet experienced strong growth in GN employment following the creation of Nunavut, including the total number positions filled by Inuit beneficiaries . A 2011 report by Oliver Wyman (on behalf of the GN) states that 32 of the new positions created were a direct result of the “decentralization” initiative, in the departments of Community and Government Services (7), Economic Development and Transportation (15), Environment (1), Human Resources (5), Nunavut Development Corporation (4).⁸³²

*Table 8 – Government of Nunavut Public Service Positions in Rankin Inlet 2002-2013*⁸³³

Year	Positions	Positions Filled	% of positions filled	Beneficiary Employees	% of positions filled by Beneficiaries
2002	281	222	79%	99	45%
2003	270	232	86%	101	44%
2004	274	223	81%	107	48%
2005	317	255	80%	128	50%
2006	343	287	84%	158	55%
2007	388	278	72%	159	57%
2008	394	295	75%	173	59%

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*, F.1-F.5.

⁸³¹ Millennium Partners. “Building Nunavut Through Decentralization,” 1; Oliver Wyman, “A Functional Review of Decentralization” (2011), accessed Oct. 31, 2016, <http://assembly.nu.ca/library/GNedocs/2011/000533-e.pdf>, 6.

⁸³² Oliver Wyman, “A Functional Review of Decentralization,” 40.

⁸³³ Nunavut Public Service Annual Reports 2002-03 to 2013-2014 – see bibliography for list of all URLs.

2009	399	287	72%	175	61%
2010	404	304	75%	175	58%
2011	457	314	69%	175	56%
2012	459	314	68%	181	58%
2013	471	360	76%	201	56%
2014	N/A	368	N/A	208	57%
2015	502	388	77%	229	59%

Rankin Inlet Mayor Robert Janes⁸³⁴ confirmed in a conversation with the author that Rankin Inlet’s cash based economy is significantly supported by public sector employment. Mayor Janes, who has lived in Rankin Inlet since 1977, acknowledged that the community economy benefitted significantly from the creation of Nunavut and the decentralization of the public service. He added that that Rankin Inlet’s economy began to increase in the years leading up to the creation of Nunavut, as well.⁸³⁵

As of 2015 there were 502 GN positions in Rankin Inlet, of which 388 were filled. Rankin Inlet houses GN offices under the following departments and agencies (list not exhaustive): Economic Development and Transportation, Education, Health, Justice, Community and Government Services, Environment.⁸³⁶ Visible landmarks of GN employment in the community include the Nunavut Arctic College (Kivalliq Campus); the Kivalliq Health

⁸³⁴ Mayor Janes was Mayor-Elect of Rankin Inlet at the time of the conversation in 2012.

⁸³⁵ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸³⁶ “Children and Family Services,” Government of Nunavut, Department of Family Services, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/family-services/information/children-family-services>; “Contact Us,” Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/environment/information/contact-us>; “Department of Finance (Rankin Inlet),” Government of Nunavut, Department of Finance, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/department-finance-rankin-inlet>. These findings are based in part from a search of the Government of Nunavut’s employee directory which shows that officials from these GN departments are stationed in Rankin Inlet.

Centre; the Leo Ussak Elementary School (grades 1 – 4); the Simon Alaittuq School (grades 5-6); the Maani Ulujuk Ilinniarvik School (grades 7-12); Qulliq Energy Corporation (power plant – approximately 20 employees); Rankin Inlet Healing Facility (corrections institution).⁸³⁷

According to Community Economic Development Officer Evan Morrison (employed by the Hamlet of Rankin Inlet in 2012) the Hamlet itself had approximately 30 employees. The Rankin Inlet Fire Hall (under the Hamlet’s authority) employed two individuals on a full time basis. The Rankin Inlet airport is operated by the Hamlet (via a contract) and employs approximately 8 to 10 individuals (exclusive of those working for the airlines) based on an estimate by Shawn Maley (Director of Nunavut Airports).⁸³⁸ The federal government also employs individuals in Rankin Inlet, including at the RCMP station, Canada Post, CBC radio, Service Canada, as well at an Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) office.⁸³⁹

⁸³⁷ “Leo Ussak School,” Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Teacher Induction Program, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://ntip.gov.nu.ca/kivalliq-school-operations-kso/rankin-inlet/leo-ussak-school>; “MAANI ULUJUK ILINNIARVIK,” Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Teacher Induction Program, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.ntip.gov.nu.ca/community/school/maani-ulujuk-ilinniarvik>; “SIMON ALAITTUQ SCHOOL,” Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Teacher Induction Program, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://ntip.gov.nu.ca/kivalliq-school-operations-kso/rankin-inlet/simon-alaittuq-school>; Quilliq Energy Corporation, “Corporate Plan 2015-2019,” accessed Dec. 7, 2016, [http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%205-4\(3\)%20Qulliq%20Energy%20Corporation%20Corporate%20Plan%202015-2019%20-%20English.pdf](http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%205-4(3)%20Qulliq%20Energy%20Corporation%20Corporate%20Plan%202015-2019%20-%20English.pdf); Thomas Rohner, “Nunavut “healing” centre underused, lacking vision: Auditor General,” *Nunatsiaq Online*, March 20, 2015, accessed April 26, 2017, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_healing_centre_underused_and_lacking_vision_auditor_general/.

⁸³⁸ Information based on verbal conversations with the author. Unclear whether or not the figure of 30 Hamlet employees includes the two fire hall staff or not.

⁸³⁹ Verbal conversation with the author; “Rankin Inlet Service Canada Centre,” Government of Canada, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/tbsc-fsco/sc-dsp.jsp?lang=eng&rc=4929>.

In addition to pure GN, federal government and Hamlet public service jobs, many people in Rankin Inlet are employed by NTI-affiliated organizations with a presence in Rankin Inlet. These include: the Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA, approximately 20 employees; estimate generated from the KIA's employee directory); KPID (approximately 5 employees); Atuqtuarvik Corporation; and Sakku Investments Incorporation.⁸⁴⁰

Other significant forms of government expenditures in Rankin Inlet include transfers to individuals and families (Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, Employment Insurance, "Child Benefits," and "Other income from government sources") which represented 8.2% of individual income (for all Rankin Inlet residents aged 15 years and older) according to the 2011 National House Hold Survey and 11.2% of individual income for Rankin Inlet residents aged 15 years and older of Aboriginal identity.⁸⁴¹ Government contracts to local businesses and non-salaried individuals would also have accounted for some cash expenditures in the local economy.

⁸⁴⁰ "Kivalliq Inuit Association," Kivalliq Inuit Association, accessed Dec.7, 2016, <http://www.kivalliqinuit.ca/downloads/staff-board.pdf>; "Contact Us," Kivalliq Partners in Development, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.kivalliqpartners.ca/contact-us>.

⁸⁴¹ Statistics Canada, "NHS Profile, Rankin Inlet, HAM, Nunavut, 2011," accessed April 27, 2017, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6205017&Data=Count&SearchText=Rankin%20Inlet&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>; Statistics Canada, "NHS Aboriginal Population Profile, Rankin Inlet, HAM, Nunavut, 2011," accessed April 27, 2017, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/aprof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6205017&Data=Count&SearchText=Rankin%20Inlet&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>.

Prevalence of Traditional Economic Activities

As set out in the NLCA, regulation of wildlife harvesting in Nunavut is the responsibility of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB).⁸⁴² Regional Wildlife Boards (RWB) and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO) regulate harvesting at the regional and local level respectively, in cooperation. Each community in Nunavut has an HTO. There are three RWBs, the Kitikmeot Wildlife Federation, the Kivalliq Wildlife Board, Federation and the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, whose members are comprised of representatives from the HTOs in its region.⁸⁴³

The former manager of the Rankin Inlet's HTO (named the Aqiggiag HTO), Norman Ford, estimated that each year approximately 200 hunters in Rankin Inlet apply for a permit to hunt polar bear.⁸⁴⁴ In his view, these individuals are the closest representation of "full time" hunters, in that they are willing to harvest at nearly any time. Mr. Ford stated that as of 2012 there were 1500 members of the HTO and approximately 600 households which had access to country food. He identified caribou, musk-ox, and beluga as highly consumed foods.⁸⁴⁵

⁸⁴² Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, "NWMB Governance Manual," (March 2012), accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.nwmb.com/en/list-all-site-files/docs-for-articles/3758-governance-for-comanagers>. Ultimate authority for wildlife harvesting is shared with a Minister of the GN who reviews NWMB decisions (NWMB 2012, 2). The NWMB is composed of nine members nominated by: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), each of the three Designated Inuit Organizations (DIO); and the federal Ministers of Fisheries and Oceans, Indigenous and Northern Affairs and the federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wildlife Service (NWMB 2012, 14).

⁸⁴³ "Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat," Nunavut Inuit Wildlife Secretariat, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, http://www.niws.ca/_en/index.html.

⁸⁴⁴ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸⁴⁵ Verbal conversation with the author.

According to its 2011 Census Profile there were 714 occupied private dwellings in Rankin Inlet, suggesting a very high access to country food in Rankin Inlet.⁸⁴⁶

Outgoing Rankin Inlet mayor Pujjuut Kusugak (in 2012) confirmed the importance of traditional harvesting for Rankin Inlet, stating many families depend on the returns of harvesting for nutrition, in part due to the very high cost of store-bought food. He noted that country food is an important source of food for elders who, in addition to benefitting from its nutritional value, benefit psychologically from its consumption. Mr. Kusugak also cited the important role harvesting plays in maintaining social and family bonds, and in the transfer of traditional Inuit knowledge, noting that it is a celebratory occasion when a child kills his first seal.⁸⁴⁷

As this dissertation has reiterated, performing traditional economic activities in contemporary Rankin Inlet usually requires interaction with the cash economy in order to buy equipment, fuel, materials, and other supplementary materials. In addition to participation in wage employment, commerce, and the receipt of government income transfers (e.g., social assistance, pensions, child benefit payments), cash for the performance of traditional activities Rankin Inlet (and throughout Nunavut) comes from targeted government and NTI expenditures. As of 2012, the NTI-funded Nunavut Harvester Support Program (NHAP), administered by the local HTO, provided funding for harvesters to buy equipment used for hunting (funds were

⁸⁴⁶ Statistics Canada, "Corrections and updates: Population and dwelling count amendments, 2011 Census," accessed December 7, 2016, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/news-nouvelles/corr/cgen004-eng.cfm>.

⁸⁴⁷ Verbal conversation with the author.

allocated on a lottery basis).⁸⁴⁸ The Atugaksait Program (a sub-element of the NHSP) also provided funds promote the transfer of traditional knowledge.⁸⁴⁹ As of 2008, GN funds were also available for: Disaster Compensation for Hunters and Trappers; HTO administrative activities (up to \$5000); support for fuel and capital equipment for hunters; and HTO-organized community hunts.⁸⁵⁰ GN economic development officer Robert Connelly stated in a conversation that efforts are made in Rankin Inlet to sure that GN funding for traditional activities does not overlap with that provided by NTI through the NHSP.⁸⁵¹

Mr. Connelly also stated that Rankin Inlet benefits from the GN's "Country Food Distribution Program," whose aim is to aid "each community... [in] improving the local harvesting economy and country food distribution system."⁸⁵² In the case of Rankin Inlet, the GN provides funds to the HTO which hires people to harvest animals specifically for people in

⁸⁴⁸"Nunavut Harvesters Support Program Description", Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., accessed December 7, 2016, <http://www.tunngavik.com/documents/beneficiaryProgramForms/NHSP%20Program%20Description%20ENG.pdf>. The NHSP was created in 1993 with equal funds from the GNWT and the TFN (the land claims organization representing the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area which was superseded by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.). As of 2014, the program was suspended to reassess how funds are spent, with the aim of the making the remainder of the endowment (\$13M remaining from the initial \$30M) last for a period longer than five years. ("Nunavut Harvester Support Program Under Review," Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., accessed April 27, 2017, <http://www.tunngavik.com/blog/news/nunavut-harvesters-support-program-under-review/>). Mr. Connelly indicated verbally that funds in NHSP funds in Rankin Inlet were distributed to hunters via a lottery.

⁸⁴⁹ "Nunavut Harvesters Support Program (NHSP) Atugaksait Program Funding Acceptable and Non-Acceptable Funding Expenses," Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., accessed April 27, 2017, <http://www.tunngavik.com/documents/beneficiaryProgramForms/NHSP%20Atugaksait%20Program%20Acceptable%20and%20Non%20Acceptable%20Expenses%20ENG.pdf>.

⁸⁵⁰"Grants and Contributions in Support of Harvesters Policy," Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment, accessed December 7, 2016, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/sh.pdf>. As of 2008, such funds could be provided, "For damage or loss from natural disasters, maximum compensation to individual harvesters including their dependents... not [to] exceed \$10,000 per occurrence. List not exhaustive."

⁸⁵¹ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸⁵² "Country Food Distribution Program Policy," Government of Nunavut, Department of Economic Development and Transportation, page 5, accessed Dec. 7, 2016. http://gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/cfdp_policy_en_0.pdf.

need. Food from these activities is stored in Rankin Inlet’s community freezer (which is also funded under the program). Mr. Connelly indicated that (as of 2012) Rankin Inlet’s freezer was too small for the community’s needs. It had not been upgraded as of 2016.⁸⁵³

Traditional economic activity in Rankin Inlet often interweaves with commercial activity in that its proceeds – in addition to being shared among friends, family, and residents - are sold for money both within the Hamlet and on external markets (i.e., outside of Rankin Inlet). In this sense, probably all of the funding sources mentioned above aimed at supporting traditional economic activity facilitate commercial activity in Rankin Inlet as well. GN Conservation Officer Joanne Coutu Autut stated in a conversation Caribou meat is frequently sold within Rankin Inlet, an activity which would be considered “taboo” in smaller Nunavut communities, and which is frowned upon by elders within Rankin Inlet itself. Facebook and other internet fora have become an important tool for matching prospective buyers and sellers.⁸⁵⁴

The GN and NTI-affiliated organizations also play a direct role in facilitating the sale of the proceeds of traditional activity. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the commercialization and export (to southern markets) of traditional economic activity has been a state-supported approach to economic development in Inuit communities since as early as the 1940s. Rankin Inlet is presently the headquarters of the Nunavut Development Corporation (NDC), a state-owned enterprise of the GN, whose mission is to,

⁸⁵³ “Rankin Inlet Integrated Community Sustainability Plans,” Assembly of Nunavut, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, [http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20200-4\(3\)%20EN%20Rankin%20Inlet's%202016%20Integrated%20Community%20Sustainability%20Plan.pdf](http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20200-4(3)%20EN%20Rankin%20Inlet's%202016%20Integrated%20Community%20Sustainability%20Plan.pdf).

⁸⁵⁴ Verbal conversation with the author.

To make responsible investments in target Nunavut economic sectors including fisheries, cultural industries and tourism that help create employment and income opportunities, stimulate the growth of business and promote economic diversification and stability with an emphasis on investing in Nunavut's smaller communities.⁸⁵⁵

In Rankin Inlet specifically, NDC operates the Kivalliq Arctic Foods (KAF) meat and fish processing plant. KAF general manager Todd Johnson stated in a conversation that KAF purchases caribou from approximately 12 to 15 local hunters and arctic char from approximately six local fishers, which is processed, packaged and sold across Nunavut.⁸⁵⁶ KAF employs roughly six Rankin Inlet residents on a full-time basis. NDC also purchases arts, crafts, music, clothing, and other cultural items produced by Inuit from across Nunavut including Rankin Inlet. NDC president, Darrin Nicol, estimated (in a conversation) that it purchases from approximately 60 or 70 Rankin producers. These items are sold in the (NDC-owned) Ivalu retail shop in Rankin Inlet and on its online website, and are shipped to other retailers in Nunavut and elsewhere in Canada.⁸⁵⁷ Funds from the aforementioned GN Country Food Distribution Program can also be used in the establishment of "community market[s]" although it is unclear if funds have been used as such within Rankin Inlet.⁸⁵⁸

⁸⁵⁵ Nunavut Development Corporation, "Annual Report 2015-16," 8, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, [http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20193-4\(3\)%20EN%202015-2016%20Annual%20Report%20of%20the%20Nunavut%20Development%20Corporation.pdf](http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20193-4(3)%20EN%202015-2016%20Annual%20Report%20of%20the%20Nunavut%20Development%20Corporation.pdf).

⁸⁵⁶ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸⁵⁷ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸⁵⁸ Country Food Distribution Program Policy," Government of Nunavut, Department of Economic Development and Transportation.

The 2010 “Economic Impact Study: Nunavut Arts and Crafts” by Nordicity Group and Uqsiq Communications on behalf of the GN, represents a detailed attempt to quantify the dollar value of arts and crafts produced in Nunavut each year. The study estimates that there were (as 2010), approximately 400 artists⁸⁵⁹ in Rankin Inlet (175 full-time, 225-part time). It states that approximately 95% of the sales channels for these artists was “cottage industry”⁸⁶⁰ whereas only 5% was to purchasers such as the NDC and the local Co-op.⁸⁶¹

Rankin Inlet residents wishing to commercialize their works of art are able to apply for grants from Kivalliq Partners in Development (KPID), an economic development agency headquartered in Rankin Inlet (created by KIA in 1994) which administers funds on behalf of the federal Government, NTI and Nunavut Trust.⁸⁶² KPID CEO Charlene Williams stated in a conversation that funds disbursed by the organization have been used for the purchase of capital equipment such as sewing machines.⁸⁶³ Other funding sources Rankin Inlet residents can access to commercialize the proceeds of traditional activity are described below.

Government Support for Inuit Businesses

Existing and prospective Inuit businesses in Rankin Inlet (and throughout Nunavut) can obtain financial support from various government and NTI affiliated-organization channels. One

⁸⁵⁹ Presumably use of the term “artist” in the study means an artist who wishes to commercialize her/his works.

⁸⁶⁰ Cottage industry refers to sales which are not made through an intermediary (page 5.).

⁸⁶¹ Nordicity Group and Uqsiq Communications, “Economic Impact Study: Nunavut Arts and Crafts” (2010), 81-82, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://assembly.nu.ca/library/GNedocs/2010/000056-e.pdf>.

⁸⁶² “Home Page,” Nunavut Trust, accessed December 7, 2016, <http://www.nunavuttrust.ca/>. Nunavut Trust was “[c]reated... [in] 1999... to manage [funds] paid to the Inuit of Nunavut as” per the NCLA (Nunavut Trust).

⁸⁶³ Conversation with the author.

such example is the Keewatin Development Business Centre (KBDC). Headquartered in Rankin Inlet, KBDC is owned by the Hamlets of the Kivalliq Region. It administers a \$2 million fund (originating from the federal government), and its annual operating budget (of approximately \$400,000) is provided by the GN. KBDC acts as a “developmental” lender for Kivalliq region businesses (for both NLCA beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) by providing repayable business loans. KBDC General Manager Ken Check stated in a conversation that KBDC had provided funding to over 200 business in the Kivalliq region over the past 20 years, including several in Rankin Inlet. He added the point that, in his estimation, virtually every business in Nunavut received some form of government support or another.⁸⁶⁴

The Atuqtuarvik Corporation is another organization located in Rankin Inlet that provides financial support for Inuit (beneficiaries) business in Nunavut. A creation of NTI, Atuqtuarvik provides loans to businesses owned by beneficiaries in the range of \$250,000 to \$3,000,000. It is governed by an all-Inuit Board of Directors and administers funds that are held by Nunavut Trust. Atuqtuarvik Chief Credit officer Ryan Beaton stated in a conversation that Atuqtuarvik sometimes administers joint loans with the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation (a GN organization). Like a bank, Atuqtuarvik aims to reap returns from its loans, however, it is often willing to assume a higher risk than would a bank. Mr. Beaton indicated that Atuqtuarvik has

⁸⁶⁴ Verbal conversation with the author.

provided loans to businesses in Rankin Inlet, although the organization does not name the businesses it has supported.⁸⁶⁵

As referenced earlier, KPID provides financial support to businesses in Rankin Inlet. Created by the KIA in 1994, it administers three separate pools of funds. Two of these pools emanate from the federal government (a \$3,000,000 pool from Employment and Social Development Canada and a \$1,000,000 pool from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) which are used primarily to support employment and training. The third pool of funds is provided by NTI and (as referenced above) is used primarily for grants for small businesses. KPID CEO Charlene Williams stated in a conversation that KPID assists five to ten businesses in Rankin Inlet each year. She believes that there are businesses in Rankin Inlet which would not exist without KPID funding.

An additional source of funding for business in Rankin Inlet comes from the Sakku Investments Corporation (headquartered in Rankin Inlet). Owned by the KIA (and governed by a board of five members appointed by KIA), Sakku differs slightly from the abovementioned funding organizations in that it seeks equity in (and therefore control over) in the companies in which it invests. According to its website it aims to, “develop[ing] sustainable wealth for the Inuit of the Kivalliq Region.”⁸⁶⁶ Three visible companies in Rankin Inlet in which Sakku has an ownership stake are (list not exhaustive): M&T Enterprises, a construction, hauling, snow

⁸⁶⁵ Verbal conversation with the author.

⁸⁶⁶ “About Sakku Investments Corporation,” Sakku Investments Corporation, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.sakkuinvestments.ca/en/about-sakku>.

removal, and civil engineering firm with approximately 60 employees (33% share); Sakku Drugs (pharmacy), and Nunavut Sealink and Supply Inc. (cargo and fuel transportation).⁸⁶⁷ The Nunasi Corporation – an Inuit owned development corporation (created initially in 1976) affiliated with KIA and the other two regional development associations in Nunavut – also owns 33% of M&T enterprises.⁸⁶⁸

Commercial Enterprise in Rankin Inlet

Commercial enterprises – under various ownership structures - are an important part of Rankin Inlet’s economy. A 2013 GN publication indicated that there were about 100 “businesses” in Rankin Inlet, under the following categories: 14 in “Accommodation and Dining”; 16 in “Retail”; 7 in “Transportation”; 22 in “Expediting, Contracting and Equipment Supply”; 8 in “Tourism and Culture”; 14 in “Technical and Communications”; 14 in “Property Management”; and 15 in “Other Services.”⁸⁶⁹ These figures should be understood only as approximations. Some businesses such as the Kissarvik Co-op are listed under more than one category. Further, the list includes enterprises such as Nunavut Power Corporation, Ivalu Ltd. and Kivalliq Arctic Foods which are owned by the GN. The list also includes organizations such

⁸⁶⁷ “Health & Medical Product Supply,” Sakku Investments Corporation, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.sakkuinvestments.ca/en/node/24>; M&T ownership figures based on a conversation with Damian McInnis, M&T enterprises official.

⁸⁶⁸ Nunasi Corporation, “Nunasi Corporation: 100 % Inuit owned business development company” (2014), accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.nunasi.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/2014-04-21-nunasi-info-package-sm.pdf>.

⁸⁶⁹ “Rankin Inlet 2013,” Government of Nunavut, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Rankin%20Inlet%20Profile%20new%20layout.pdf>.

as the Pulaarvik Friendship Centre, the Royal Canadian Legion, Katauyjaq Daycare, which are not-for profit.

Meliadine Gold Mine Project

A recent important development in Rankin Inlet's commercial sector has been the Meliadine gold mine project, located approximately 25km outside of the Hamlet (connected by road). Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s (AEM) predecessor company, Comaplex, acquired rights to the minerals in the 1990s.⁸⁷⁰ AEM performed exploratory diamond drilling between 2011 and 2013.⁸⁷¹ As of December 2016, the project employed approximately 17 people.⁸⁷² The project is located on "Inuit Owned Land" meaning that, as per the NLCA, the KIA manages surface property rights whereas the NTI manages subsurface rights. According to a 2015 AEM technical report, because AEM mineral claims were recognized by Canada before the NLCA came into effect (1999), all resource royalties on the project (should it proceed to extraction) would be paid to Canada, which would then transfer them to NTI. AEM estimates the resource royalty which it must pay at 12% (net of capital and operating expenses).⁸⁷³

⁸⁷⁰ AEM acquired Comaplex in 2010; "Agnico-Eagle completes acquisition of Comaplex," Agnico Eagle, accessed April 26, 2017, <http://ir.agnicoeagle.com/English/investor-relations/news-and-events/news-releases/news-release-details/2010/Agnico-Eagle-completes-acquisition-of-Comaplex/default.aspx>.

⁸⁷¹ Julie Larouche et al. (on behalf of Agnico Eagle), "Updated Technical Report on the Meliadine Gold Project, Nunavut" (2015), 2, accessed April 26, 2017, https://s21.q4cdn.com/374334112/files/doc_downloads/operations/meliadine/Feb-11-2015-Meliadine-Technical-Report.pdf

⁸⁷² "Meliadine," Agnico Eagle, accessed Dec.7, 2016, <http://www.agnicoeagle.com/en/Exploration/Advanced-Projects/Meliadine/Pages/default.aspx>. The link with the figure of 16 employees appears to be down as of April 26, 2017.

⁸⁷³ Larouche et al., "Updated Technical Report," 14-15.

The same AEM Technical Report estimates recoverable gold reserves at the Meliadine site of 3,214,000 ounces (oz.). Based on the Report's price-of-gold assumption of USD 1,300/oz. (CAD 1495/oz.).⁸⁷⁴ it calculates that the Meliadine project could generate \$4.733 billion in revenue for AEM during the Life of Mine (estimated at 9 years, 2019-2028).⁸⁷⁵ The Report estimates Life of Mine capital costs of \$1.505 billion and Life of Mine operating costs of \$1.877 billion, representing total Life of Mine costs of \$3.382 billion. Total Life of Mine (pre-tax) income, therefore, is estimated at \$1.351 billion.⁸⁷⁶ It estimates a "10.3% after-tax internal rate of return" for AEM.⁸⁷⁷ The Report appears to consider royalties as taxes in its calculations.⁸⁷⁸ Using an annual discount of 5%, the report provides an after-tax Net Present Value of the Meliadine Project of USD 267 million.⁸⁷⁹ The report is optimistic that AEM will find additional reserves in the area, which would extend the life of the mine beyond nine years.⁸⁸⁰

In February 2015, NIRB granted AEM a Project Certificate for the Meliadine Mine, a necessary condition for the project to proceed to as per the NLCA.⁸⁸¹ It stated that given the

⁸⁷⁴ The conversion of 1300 to 1495 is the author's, based on the USD/CAD conversion rate of 1.15 used in the Technical Report.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., 190-191; Table 22.2 of the Report predicts a life of mine revenue of CAD 4.733 billion. However, using the reports assumption's of 3,214,000 ounces (oz) of recoverable gold at USD 1,300/oz or (CAD 1495/oz based on a 15% exchange rate) the author calculates AEM Life of Mine revenues at CAD 4.804 billion.

⁸⁷⁶ CAD 4.73 billion (revenue) - CAD 1.309 billion (capital cost) - CAD 1.632 billion (operating cost) = CAD 1.351 billion (pre-tax income).

⁸⁷⁷ Larouche et al., "Updated Technical Report," 6.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., 192.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid., 195.

⁸⁸¹ The NIRB website hosting the ftp files referenced in this Chapter appear to be down as of May 17, 2017.

commitments made by AEM during the review process, in the judgement of the NIRB, “the potential adverse environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the... Meliadine Gold Mine Project is not likely to cause significant adverse ecosystemic and socio-economic effects” and that the “Meliadine Gold Project will enhance and protect the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the Nunavut Settlement Area.”⁸⁸² Also included in the project certificate are 127 Terms and Conditions which AEM must adhere to in Project Implementation in the areas of environment (including wildlife habitat), worker safety, economic development, employment, training, traditional knowledge, archeological resources.⁸⁸³ The NIRB, however, recognized reservations from the community, including,

the permanent nature of the changes to the landscape that will take place during mine development and the potential for cumulative effects on caribou near the mine site and road, and cumulative effects on marine mammals along the shipping route.⁸⁸⁴

As required by the NIRB review process, AEM submitted an 11 Volume “Final Environmental Impact Statement.” Volumes included Atmospheric, Terrestrial, Aquatic, Marine, Socio-Economic, and Human Health “Environment and Impact Assessments.”⁸⁸⁵ The

⁸⁸² Nunavut Impact Review Board, “NIRB PROJECT CERTIFICATE [NO.: 006]” (February 26, 2015): section 1.0 (no page numbers, accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/COMPLETED%20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM%20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/12-PROJECT%20CERTIFICATE/150226-11MN034-NIRB%20Project%20Certificate-OT4E.pdf>).

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁴ Nunavut Impact Review Board, “Final Hearing Report Meliadine Gold Project” (October 2014): ix, accessed December 8, 2016, <https://www.scribd.com/document/242873101/141010-11MN034-NIRB-Final-Hearing-Report-OEDE>.

⁸⁸⁵ Golder Associates and Agnico Eagle, “Meliadine FEIS Document Map,” accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/COMPLETED%20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM%20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/09-FINAL%20EIS/FEIS/140506-11MN034-FEIS%20Document%20Map-IA2E.pdf>.

Socio-Economic volume alone (Vol.9), is based on research and consultation with residents in numerous areas, including: a literature review of present and historical Inuit hunting in the region; interviews with informants, government statistics; and group discussions in various Kivalliq communities (hunters, elders, and youth).⁸⁸⁶ Although assessing the efficacy of the NIRB review process is not an aim of this dissertation, a preliminary review of Volume 9 of AEM's FEIS suggests that AEM and Golder Associates (consulting firm) were thorough in their attempt to demonstrate understanding and concern for the issues which the NIRB review process is intended to address.

In February 2016, AEM finalized an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement (IIBA) with the KIA which is required under the NLCA for any “project involving development or exploitation, but not exploration, of resources wholly or partly under Inuit Owned Lands.”⁸⁸⁷ AEM commitments under the IIBA include:

- a target of 50% Inuit employment across all AEM mines in the Kivalliq Region which are in production in any year,⁸⁸⁸
- encouraging of “the use of Inuktitut” at the mine,⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸⁶Golder Associates and Agnico Eagle, “VOLUME 9.0 - SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) - Meliadine Gold Project, Nunavut,” accessed Dec. 7, 2016, <http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/COMPLETED%20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM%20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/09-FINAL%20EIS/FEIS/VOL%209/Main/140506-11MN034-Vol%209-Socio-Ec%20TLU-Pt%201-IA2E.pdf>.

⁸⁸⁷ Canada and Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, “Agreement,” 205; The IIBA represents “a legal, valid and binding obligation of each of the Parties, enforceable against each of them in accordance with its terms.” (AEM KIA IIBA 2015, 8).

⁸⁸⁸ This includes the Meadowbank Project, Meliadine Project, and the Amaruq Proect. AEM must spend at least \$750000 in promoting Inuit employment for any year it does not achieve the 50% target (AEM KIA IIBA 2015, 62-63).

⁸⁸⁹ Kivalliq Inuit Association and Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, “Meliadine Project Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement between the Kivalliq Inuit Association and Agnico Eagle Mines Limited,” (July 13, 2015), 82, accessed Dec. 9, 2016, <http://agnicoeagle.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Meliadine-IIBA.pdf>.

- permitting “Inuit engaged in traditional activities to have access to the lands and waters upon which the Meliadine Project is located.. (however) Inuit shall not discharge firearms or otherwise pursue access for harvesting within a radius of one mile of a building, structure or facility...”⁸⁹⁰;
- “apply IQ [Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit]⁸⁹¹ to all decision-making affecting the Meliadine Project and, in particular, in assessing and monitoring impacts and mitigation measures;”⁸⁹²
- Special consideration from Inuit firms in contract tendering;⁸⁹³
- A payment of \$1,500,000 to KIA “upon the date of execution of the Agreement” and two additional “milestone payments “of \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 respectively;”⁸⁹⁴
- A 1.2% on revenues minus applicable expenses;⁸⁹⁵
- Take measures to avoid disturbing wildlife and pay KIA cash for any animal “killed or relocated” (according to a schedule) due to the Meliadine Project (e.g., each caribou killed requires a payment of \$2,500).⁸⁹⁶

KIA-AEM IIBA Effectiveness

Recent scholarship has evaluated the “effectiveness” of Impact Benefit Agreements (IBA) in maintaining and promoting the well-being of local indigenous peoples in northern Canada near non-renewal resource development projects.⁸⁹⁷ Unlike in Nunavut, where (as per the NLCA) the signing of an IIBA is a legal pre-requisite for major resource development

⁸⁹⁰ KIA and AEM, “Meliadine Project,” 19.

⁸⁹¹ Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) means Inuit traditional knowledge.

⁸⁹² KIA and AEM, “Meliadine Project,” 20.

⁸⁹³ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸⁹⁶ KIA and AEM , “Meliadine Project...” 29-30, 32, 80, 84, 135-138.

⁸⁹⁷ Jen Jones and Ben Bradshaw, “Addressing Historical Impacts Through Impact and Benefit Agreements and Health Impact Assessment: Why it Matters for Indigenous Well-Being,” *The Northern Review* 41 (2015), 81-109; Jason Pro et. al., “Impact and Benefit Agreements: Are they Working?” (Paper presented at the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum Annual Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, May 11, 2010), accessed January 15, 2017,

http://www.impactandbenefit.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_625664/File/IBA%20PDF/CIM%202010%20Paper%20-%20Prno,%20Bradshaw%20and%20Lapierre.pdf.

projects, IBAs in most other northern Canada jurisdictions (upon which this scholarship has largely been based) have not been mandatory. Instead, mining companies have voluntarily sought to sign such agreements in order to attain social licence from communities potentially affected by extractive operations and avoid legal and public relations obstacles.⁸⁹⁸ The contents of such IBAs in northern Canada have not typically been made public, whereas they have been for IIBAs (including the Meliadine-KIA IIBA) negotiated as per the NLCA.⁸⁹⁹

A brief review of some of scholarship on the efficacy of IBAs reveals a lack of consensus as to whether or not those signed to-date have benefitted impacted indigenous communities. In their 2010 paper, “Impact and Benefit Agreements: Are they working?” authors Prno, Bradshaw, and Lapierre assess whether or not 14 IBAs from the NWT (pertaining the three diamond mines) “work” as measured against various metrics.⁹⁰⁰ The authors show that for the period 1989 to 2007, communities with IBAs performed better than the entire NWT with respect to four economic indicators.⁹⁰¹ They note, however, a lack of proof that this promising economic performance can be directly attributed to IBAs.⁹⁰²

The authors observe divergent perspectives among various groups of local actors in impacted communities regarding IBA effectiveness (based on interviews with key informants

⁸⁹⁸ Ben Bradshaw and Caitlin McElroy, “Company-Community Agreements in the Mining Sector,” in *Socially Responsible Investment in the 21st Century: Does it make a Difference for Society?*, ed. Céline Louche and Tessa Hebb (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2014), 182.

⁸⁹⁹ Prno et al., “Impact and Benefit Agreements,” 4.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁹⁰¹ The indicators are: “Income, Percentage of taxfilers with more than \$50k income, Unemployment rate, Percentage of population with at least high school education, and Number of registered businesses”; Prno et al., “Impact and Benefit Agreements,” 5.

⁹⁰² Prno et al., “Impact and Benefit Agreements,” 4-5.

and focus groups). One on hand, individuals, “whose jobs dealt with... the region’s IBAs... such as administrators from Aboriginal signatory communities, government officials, industry personnel, or consultants” tended to indicate IBAs helped to “*secure local benefits*” (italics are from Pro et al).⁹⁰³ On the other hand, “elders, youth, mine workers and mine worker family members”⁹⁰⁴ felt, on the whole, less confident that appropriate local benefits had been realized.⁹⁰⁵ The following passage from Pro et al describes the results of focus groups with individuals from the above-mentioned demographics:

Though sometimes praised and widely recognized as being ‘delivered’ via employment, training, scholarships for youth, community sponsorships and donations, and payments to Aboriginal organizations and individuals, few focus groups expressed complete satisfaction with the total package of benefits and their distribution within the communities. For example, while employment was often noted as a benefit, it was often “hard to get a good job.”... Others viewed the total package of benefits as simply insufficient given that the diamond mines had been built on “our land,” and were generating profits for the owners that were vastly disproportionate to the financial benefits received by the IBA signatories.⁹⁰⁶

In “Addressing Historical Impacts Through Impact and Benefit Agreements and Health Impact Assessment: Why it Matters for Indigenous Wellbeing,” Jones and Bradshaw note that that a critical weakness of existing IBAs (in terms of their ability to maintain and foster indigenous well-being) is that “what matters to Indigenous communities and what is captured in

⁹⁰³ Ibid., 4, 5.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid., 5, 6.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid., 6.

an IBA... seldom coincide.”⁹⁰⁷ IBAs to date have primarily contained provisions related to minimizing environmental impacts and promoting local “economic development” (e.g., ensuring indigenous people and communities get a share of resource revenue through jobs and other mechanisms). Many of the strongest negative impacts of resource development (described below) for the well-being of indigenous people are of a social/cultural/health related nature and cannot be mitigated solely (if at all) by increased access to cash.⁹⁰⁸

Pertinently for this dissertation, Jones and Bradshaw assess the efficacy of the IIBA developed for the Meadowbank gold mine project near Baker Lake (approximately 250km northeast of Rankin Inlet) by reviewing the various community-oriented studies since production commenced in 2010 (and is scheduled to continue until at least 2018).⁹⁰⁹ Like the IIBA for Meliadine, the Meadowbank IIBA was negotiated by the KIA (as per the NLCA). Jones and Bradshaw that conclude (as of 2015) while many Baker Lake residents have seen increased cash incomes (in part due to IIBA targets for minimum Inuit employment and “preferential contracting provisions”) the IIBA “has done little to manage social impacts beyond that which could be expected to occur in a non-IBA signatory community impacted by a mine.”⁹¹⁰ The “social impacts” they cite include increased drug (including alcohol) consumption, increased

⁹⁰⁷ Jones and Bradshaw, “Addressing Historical Impacts,” 81.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid., 91; “Meadowbank: Kivalliq Region, Nunavut,” Agnico Eagle, accessed May 2, 2017, <https://www.agnicoeagle.com/English/operations-and-development-projects/operations/meadowbank/default.aspx>.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid., 95.

difficulty in meeting “family obligations” due to two-week periods of work/living on the mine site (away from home), and “domestic issues” (e.g., family conflict).⁹¹¹

Unlike many IBAs signed by northern First Nations communities, however, the Meadowbank IIBA addresses issues related to maintaining broader Inuit “wellness” in particular via clauses requiring AEM to, “prepare an annual report on the wellness of the Inuit residents of Baker Lake.”⁹¹² The authors assert, however, that for several reasons, including the fact that these reports have not been populated with meaningful community data (which itself likely does not exist) the IIBA has been “ineffectual” in its ability to support broader Inuit wellness.⁹¹³ Additional community-based research which has examined social impacts of Meadowbank for Baker Lake’s residents, supports Jones and Bradshaw contention that the Meadowbank IIBA has not vigorously addressed negative social impacts which accompany the mine. Rixen and Blangy note, for instance, that discussions with Baker Lake residents revealed, that in the residents’ view, the “negative socio-economic and environmental impacts of mining drastically outweigh[ed] positive ones.”⁹¹⁴ Examples of such negative impacts of Meadowbank cited by Blangy and Deffner in a separate study include increased drug/alcohol abuse, increased violence

⁹¹¹ Ibid., 94-95.

⁹¹² The Meadowbank IIBA requires AEM to document, “the state of the physical and mental health of the Inuit residents of Baker Lake; ... personal and family relationships of the Inuit residents of Baker Lake, including any impacts attributable to employment at a remote work site under a rotational work schedule’ ... Inuit culture and traditional practices.” (the quoted text in both the body of the paper, as well as in this footnote is from the Meadowbank/KIA IIBA and is excerpted from Jones and Bradshaw 2015, 95; ellipses are Jones and Bradshaw’s).

⁹¹³ Jones and Bradshaw, “Addressing Historical Impacts,” 95-96.

⁹¹⁴ Annabel Rixen and Sylvie Blangy, “Life after Meadowbank: Exploring gold mine closure scenarios with the residents of Qamini’tuaq (Baker Lake), Nunavut,” *The Extractive Industries and Society* 3 (2016), 298.

against women, social isolation of women (who live for long periods without their partners), and diminishing health and modified migration patterns of caribou herds.⁹¹⁵

Jones and Bradshaw suggest that indigenous signatories of future IBAs may wish to consider how such agreements could be improved (compared to existing IBAs) in order to mitigate negative social effects of mining.⁹¹⁶ Like the Meadowbank IIBA, while the Meliadine IIBA contains provisions⁹¹⁷ related to “Social and Cultural Wellness,” its most quantifiable and trackable elements relate to Inuit employment, cash transfers (including royalties), and environmental protection.⁹¹⁸

Conclusion

This Chapter attempted to describe key events and developments contributing to the post-1962 institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s economy. Briefly, when the nickel mine closed in 1962, the federal government replaced NRNM as the chief source and purveyor of cash in the settlement. Cash expenditures – leading to spin-off private sector activities - continued to increase throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Beginning in the late 1960s, the GNWT, a public institution over which Inuit in Rankin Inlet (and across present-day Nunavut) were able to

⁹¹⁵ Sylvie Blangy and Anna Defner, “Impacts du développement minier sur les hommes et les caribous à Qamani’tuaq au Nunavut: approche participative,” *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 38, no. 1-2 (2014), 255-256; Article written in French. Its contents were translated into English by the present author.

⁹¹⁶ Jones and Bradshaw, “Addressing Historical Impacts,” 97.

⁹¹⁷ These provisions include: an “Employee Family Assistance Program” for “Inuit employees and their... families, with trained counsellor to address issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, financial planning, family counselling, domestic abuse, and gambling; and, a “Socio-economic Inuit Impact and Benefit Review”. (KIA-AEM IIBA 2015, 80, 82-83).

⁹¹⁸

exercise some control, increasingly administered these expenditures. Rankin Inlet benefitted uniquely from increased government spending when it was named as the administrative centre of the Keewatin region of NWT in 1975. Traditional Inuit social structures continued to influence individual decisions regarding the level/type of participation in various elements of the cash economy as well as traditional economic activities which carried on remained important.

Mounting external state and private-sector pressure combined with internal developments – such as a growing Inuit identity – led Inuit to form an association in the 1970s with the ultimate goal of achieving “self-determination” through the settling of land claims with the Crown. The Government participated in negotiations based on the belief that settling northern indigenous land claims provided the most promising path to unimpeded northern non-renewable resource development. The agreement reached in 1993 provided for the creation of Nunavut, an Inuit-majority territory in the Eastern and special rights for Inuit.

The signing of the NLCA and the creation Nunavut appears to have entrenched the existing institutional structure of Rankin Inlet’s economy based on the state and traditional family institutions. Employment with the GN has continued to grow in the community since the creation of Nunavut in 1999 and the performance of traditional economic activities remains significant. Most importantly, Inuit in Nunavut – as sought by the initial land claims negotiators in 1976 - have new tools of government to create the economy they want and resist and/or exert control over external pressures.

If the Meliadine gold mine project enters production in 2019 as currently planned, this institutional structure will likely modify in the coming years. It will inject a significant amount

of cash into the local economy particularly to employees and local businesses. Rankin Inlet's economy will likely more closely resemble the "three pillar" model of northern indigenous economies mentioned in the dissertation's introduction, based on the state, non-renewable resource, and traditional sectors. Couched in terms of its institutional structure, Rankin Inlet's economy will rest on state institutions, the private sector (principally AEM), and traditional Inuit social structures. Although the Meliadine gold mine project successfully completed a regulatory review process and although AEM has signed an IIBA with KIA, recent experience with the proximate Meadowbank gold mine project near Baker Lake suggests that the Meliadine project may have unwelcome health, social, environmental, and other effects for Rankin Inlet residents.

CONCLUSION

Polanyi implies throughout *The Great Transformation* that constancy in core socio-economic institutions is important for human well-being. Stable socio-economic institutions can provide comfort to those failing under their auspices that there exist avenues to obtain personal security in the future. When institutions change rapidly, as occurred during the British “commercial revolution,” people experience confusion and fear, which can create social unrest and psychological distress. Humans are resourceful and can re-orient themselves during periods of unanticipated institutional change; however, time is required for learning and adaptation to occur. As Polanyi emphasizes through his discussion of the “countermovement,” time also permits humans to use available means to shape and contest existing institutional arrangements such that they become more amenable to basic social and emotional needs.⁹¹⁹ Thus for Polanyi, the time-period in which institutional change occurs appears almost (if not, equally) as crucial for human well-being as the nature of the change itself.

Based on this understanding, Polanyi offers an alternative interpretation of the seemingly “futile” efforts of the British nobility to prevent the conversion of British “commons” into privately owned land over the 15th to 17th centuries:

Such an easy prevailing of private interests over justice is often regarded as a .. sign of the ineffectiveness of legislation, and the victory of the vainly obstructed trend is... adduced as conclusive evidence of the... futility of "a reactionary intervention - ism." Yet such a view seems to miss the point altogether. Why

⁹¹⁹ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 39

should the ultimate victory of a trend be taken as a proof of the ineffectiveness of the efforts to slow down its progress? And why should the purpose of these measures not be seen precisely in that which they achieved, i.e., in the slowing down of the rate of change? That which is ineffectual in stopping a line of development altogether is not... altogether ineffectual. The rate of change is often of no less importance than the direction of the change itself; but while the latter frequently does not depend upon our volition, it is the rate at which we allow change to take place which well may depend upon us...

[B]ut for the... (anti-enclosure) policy of the Tudor and early Stuart statesmen, the rate of that progress might have been ruinous.... For upon this rate... depended whether the dispossessed could adjust themselves to changed conditions without fatally damaging their substance, human and economic, physical and moral; whether they would find new employment in the fields of opportunity indirectly connected with the change; and whether the effects of increased imports induced by increased exports would enable those who lost their employment through the change to find new sources of sustenance.

England withstood without grave damage the calamity of the enclosures only because the Tudors and the early Stuarts used the power of the Crown to slow down the process of economic improvement until it became socially bearable—employing the power of the central government to relieve the victims of the transformation, and attempting to canalize the process of change so as to make its course less devastating.⁹²⁰

To summarize Polanyi's main contention, although the Tudors and Stuarts were ultimately unsuccessful in preventing the wide-scale enclosure of the British commons (as was their aim), by contesting the process of institutional change, they expanded the time period in which this change occurred. The British peasantry was able to use this additional time to find new arrangements for living and avoid far worse outcomes for their well-being. When assessing the broader results of historical (and present) Inuit interaction with commercial activity, one must

⁹²⁰ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 38-40.

be careful to avoid judging its efficacy by evaluating (parts of, or all of) Inuit well-being at any single moment in time or by comparing current Inuit well-being with that of the past. Instead, as Polanyi's analysis of the enclosure movement reveals, efforts at promoting community well-being in the context of externally imposed change may have both long and short-term benefits which are not immediately identifiable.

The above discussion provokes a daunting question: what is human well-being? Despite the enormous nature of this question, much important research has attempted to understand this concept as understood by Canada's northern indigenous peoples, including Inuit. An understandable sense of urgency pervades this work, as scholars seek to support communities wishing to maintain well-being in the context of often rapidly changing social, economic, and environmental conditions.

Through various research methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys) recent studies have identified several components of northern indigenous concepts of well-being including one's ability to participate in subsistence harvesting,⁹²¹ closeness to family and kin, and participation in "family-related activities."⁹²² Jones and Bradshaw assert that northern indigenous understandings of well-being cannot be reduced to a single element, writing that it "is

⁹²¹ Richard G. Condon, Peter Collings, George Wenzel, "The Best Part of Life: Subsistence Hunting, Ethnicity, and Economic Adaptation among You Adult Inuit Males," *Arctic* 48, no. 1 (March 1995), 31-46; Alexandre Morin, Roberson Edouard, and Gérard Duhaime, "Beyond the harsh. Objective and subjective living conditions in Nunavut," *Polar Record* 46, no. 237 (2009), 97-112.

⁹²² Michael J. Kral, Lori Idlout, J. Bruce Minore, Ronald J. Dyck, and Laurence J. Kirmayer, "Unikkaartuit: Meanings of Well-Being, Unhappiness, Health and community Change Among Inuit in Nunavut, Canada," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 48 (2011), 430 (quote); Roberson Édouard and Gérard Duhaime, "The Well-Being of the Canadian Arctic Inuit: The Relevant Weight of Economy in the Happiness Equations," *Social Indicators Research* 113, no. 1, (2013), 373-392.

rich in meaning, and often described through terms such as a good life, connection to land, engagement in traditional activities such as harvesting, practicing Traditional or Inuit Knowledge, sharing food, and being with family.... well-being can be considered holistic and requires attaining and maintaining a balance between a number of different domains in one's personal and community life."⁹²³

Two studies recent based on the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA) have assessed the importance of economic/material circumstances to northern indigenous understandings of well-being. Both suggest that while increasing cash income is positively correlated with Inuit happiness, it is not the most important factor. Édouard and Duhaime note that the top five "predictors" of an Inuk's "feeling of satisfaction with life in their community, would be, in decreasing order of significance: self-evaluation of health condition; geographic mobility index;⁹²⁴ status on the job market; strength of family ties; and solidarity of the extended family."⁹²⁵ The best predictors of an Inuk's "despair" with respect to life in her community are, "strength of family ties; support of the extended family in times of need; condition of housing geographic mobility index; and economic family income."⁹²⁶

In a separate piece the same authors (plus Alexandre Morin) assess why cash income appears to be of secondary importance for Inuit well-being compared to other factors (also referencing SLiCA data). Specifically, they attempt to explain the seeming "paradox" of why,

⁹²³ Jones Bradshaw, "Addressing Historical Impacts," 89.

⁹²⁴ Édouard and Duhaime, "The Well-Being of the Canadian Arctic Inuit," 382; This study uses data for Inuit in "Inuit Nunaat," which includes Inuit in Nunatsiavut (Labrador), Nunavik (Quebec), Nunavut, and Inuvialuit (NWT).

⁹²⁵ Geographic mobility index is a measure "self-reported consideration to move." (Ozkan and Schott 2012).

⁹²⁶ Édouard and Duhaime, "The Well-Being of the Canadian Arctic Inuit," 387.

given that the average objective material living standards of Inuit in Nunavut are lower than those of the rest of Canada, most “Nunavummiut... [are] satisfied with their lives in their community (92.1%) and want to stay there...”⁹²⁷ The authors hypothesize that Nunavummiut are largely content with where they live in part because they see their home communities as the place where they exercise the greatest amount of control over their own lives.⁹²⁸ An essential element of this individual control emanates from familial and non-familial relationships that both provide a sense of material security as well as “sustain[ing] people’s sense of belonging.”⁹²⁹ Such social resources could not be easily replicated (if at all) elsewhere. In addition, the authors suggest that the creation of Nunavut “led by a majority of Inuit” has contributed to a sense of a collective capacity for self-determination which exceeds that of pre-contact times, in which Inuit felt much more constrained by the forces of nature.⁹³⁰ Many Inuit do value and want greater access to wage work, improved housing conditions, and comprehensive formal education, however those who remain in their communities have made the “rational”⁹³¹ choice that they are better off than if they moved south.⁹³²

⁹²⁷ Morin et al, “Beyond the Harsh,” 105; The average “living conditions” of Inuit “are statistically below Canadian standards... [in] household income, employment rate, housing conditions, education and public health levels.” (Morin et al 2010, 105).

⁹²⁸ Morin et al, “Beyond the Harsh,” 108.

⁹²⁹ Ibid.

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

⁹³¹ Ibid., 106.

⁹³² Ibid., 108.

Possible Research and Social/Political Actions Moving Forward

A synthesis of the perspectives of Polanyi and Morin et al suggests that the historical efforts of Inuit (at the individual, family, and political level) have created local economies in Nunavut communities based on institutional structures which provide many Inuit with a level of comfort that their basic material and emotional/social needs can be met. An immediate research question worth pursuing, therefore, in Rankin Inlet specifically is: is the above hypothesis true? Inuit residents of Rankin Inlet (and indeed all Nunavut communities) could be asked they feel secure/well/hopeful in terms of the range of economic opportunities - supported by various institutional elements of the economy – available. Similarly, to the extent that the institutional mix is not meeting residents’ needs, they could be asked how they would like to see it adjusted. The results of such surveys could inform how GN and NTI/KIA policy supports the various sectors of Rankin Inlet’s economy.

In terms of future changes and pressures to the local economy that Rankin Inlet residents will face, the Meliadine Project appears to be the most imminent and largest. As discussed in the Chapter Five, although project sponsor AEM successfully completed an intense regulatory approval process and has signed an IIBA with KIA, recent scholarship (and experience with gold mining in Nunavut) suggests the community may feel unanticipated and/or unwelcome effects. The existence of such negative impacts – which appear to be inherently associated major non-renewable resource in the north – should not be viewed as “failures” of the review process, the IIBA, or even the government and quasi-governmental structures set up by the NLCA. Coming to such a conclusion would indicate that the bar for measuring the effectiveness of these

institutions and mechanisms has been set unrealistically high. Any assessment which adds up the negative effects of a major non-renewable resource development must at the very least consider *what the impacts on the community likely would have been* in their absence.

Further, it may be the case that the community is willing to accept negative impacts in order to achieve some other benefits. A more appropriate measure of the effectiveness the abovementioned institutions/mechanisms could be:

1. the degree to which they permit local residents to meaningfully input into the form and extent of social, health, environmental, economic (and other) changes associated with a major non-renewable resource development; and,
2. The degree to which local residents to are able to enforce their expressed will.

These two evaluation metrics are consistent with the “Free, Prior and Informed Consent” (FPIC) principle which form part of the United Nation’s “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”⁹³³

Research should (and likely will) be performed - once Meliadine enters production, and after it closes - to determine if Rankin Inlet residents’ expectations regarding how the project would impact the community were realized. This information can inform residents of other Nunavut communities, which are in the process of deciding to proceed with a major non-renewable project or not, of the likely consequences of their decision. Such research will also

⁹³³ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, “Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples,” accessed March 31, 2107, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/FreePriorandInformedConsent.pdf>

inform whether or not institutional and/or process adjustments are required to ensure to maximize the above two evaluation metrics.

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