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TRACING SEAL

UNSETTLING NARRATIVES
OF KALAALLIT SEAL RELATIONS

BY
NAJA DYRENDOM GRAUGAARD

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2020

AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

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by

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AALBORG UNIVERSITY
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Thesis submitted

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This PhD thesis is dedicated to the memory of Ejnar Jakobsen, who knew the Arsuk fjords, seas, lands, mountains, and animals with a depth that was channeled into his lifeworks. With honour, I still listen to our conversations. Ejnar, qujanaq!

CV

Naja Dyrendom Graugaard holds a Masters in Environmental Studies from York University (Toronto, Canada) and a Bachelor of Arts in International Development Studies/Politics from Trent University (Peterborough, Canada). Inspired by her own mixed background in Denmark and Greenland, her university studies have focused on colonial and postcolonial relations in *Kalaallit Nunaat* [Greenland], Inuit knowledges and stories, and Greenlandic processes of decolonization. Her PhD research specifically focuses on Kalaallit-seal relations. Besides this work, Naja has also published poetic, theatrical, and auto-biographic writings that shed light on the (inter-)generational experiences of colonization, racialization, and resurgence in mixed, Indigenous families in Denmark. Naja is also a mother of two, artist at heart, lover of fresh air and waters, and an aspiring doula.

ENGLISH SUMMARY

Seals have carried an essential role in the unfolding of Greenland as an Indigenous homeland, colonized territory, and self-governing nation. During the past many decades, seals have also been a topic of controversy between international political actors, animal welfare groups, and Inuit communities. This doctoral thesis explores Kalaallit [Greenlandic Inuit] relations with seals as they arise in these historical and contemporary political landscapes. By tracing 'the seal' through various narrative trajectories in Greenland, the thesis engages with the complex processes through which coloniality and Indigenous lifeways collide and interweave. While dominant narratives on Inuit seal hunting – such as those forwarded in the EU Seal Regime – seem to undermine lived and place-based Kalaallit-seal relations, Kalaallit narratives of seals also *unsettle* the very same 'seal regimes'. Suggesting that narratives encompass and navigate relations between Kalaallit, Qallunaat [non-Inuit], and seals, the thesis examines how seal narratives engage and unsettle processes of colonization in Greenland.

This article-based doctoral thesis consists of four academic articles. Each article is based on a specific, focused study which has emerged from the research process of 'tracing seal' in Greenland. The four articles span topics that relate to colonial and postcolonial sustainability narratives, processes of Kalaallit seal hunting, and the seamstress work of creating Greenlandic regalia. One of the articles, specifically, deals with the methodological process of undertaking this thesis research. By paying attention to the various ways in which seals are engaged, narrated, and part of Kalaallit 'worlding', the articles destabilize the tendency to reduce diverse Kalaallit-seal relations to simplified narratives within European conceptual vocabularies.

Empirically, this research is based on different materials that are generated from seven months of fieldwork in Greenland, from archival research, and from Greenlandic media sources. It draws substantially on interviews with hunters, seamstresses, and other persons whose professions relate to seal hunting or sealskins in Greenland. Theoretically, the thesis seeks to elaborate on postcolonial theoretical applications in contemporary studies on Greenland by engaging decolonial and Indigenous scholarships from within and outside of the Arctic. The thesis suggests that this is a necessary move in order to unsettle colonial research relations in Arctic scholarship and make way for other modes of thinking, knowing, sensing, and being in knowledge production. This approach transpires into the methodological framework of the thesis which works, auto-reflexively and practically, to interrogate and disrupt researcher positionality, academic privileges, and borderland transgressions in the claims to knowledge on Greenland. Altogether, the thesis engages with the very process of 'tracing seal' as a way to explore the theoretical and practical tracks for Greenlandic decolonization.

KALAALLISUT EQIKKAANEQ

Puisit, Kalaallit Nunaata nunap inooqqaavinut nunagisatut, nunasiaatitut aamma nunatut namminersortutut ineriartornerata ingerlaneranut pingaaruteqarluinnarsimapput. Ukiut qulikkaat amerlasuut kingulliit ingerlaneranni, nunat assigiinngitsut akornanni politikikkut ingerlatsisut, uumasut atugarissaarnerannut eqimattakkaat aamma inuiaqatigiit Inuit akornanni, puisit akerleriinnermi aamma sammineqartarsimapput. Ph.d.-mut ilisimatuunngorniarnermi ilisimatuutut allaaserisap matuma, Kalaallit [Kalaallit Nunaanni Inuit] aamma puisit imminut atassuteqarnerat, oqaluttuarisaanermi aamma nalitsinni politikikkut isummat inississimaneranni pilertarnerat malillugu misissuiffigineqarput. Kalaallit Nunaanni oqaluttuarisaanermi aqqutit assigiinngitsut aqqutigalugit `Puisip´ malinneratigut, ilisimatuutut allaaserisaq allanngoriartornernik katitigaasunik sammisaqarpoq, tassani nunasiaaneq aamma nunap inoqqaavisa inuusaasaat aporaapput imminullu ikaartiterneqarlutik. Massa inuit puisinniartarneri pillugit oqaluttuat saqquminerpaat – soorlu taakku EU-p `puisit pillugit aqutseriaasaanni´ saqqummiunneqartut – Kalaallit puisillu akornanni atassuteqarnernik inuunermi aqqusaakkanik aamma sumiiffimmut tunngaveqartunik tunngaviannik aserorterisut, Kalaallit puisinik oqaluttuaasa aamma `puisit pillugit aqutseriaaseq´ taannarpiaq apeqquserpaat. Aallaavigigaanni oqaluttuat, Kalaallit, Qallunaat [Inuit ilaginngisai], aamma puisit akornanni atassuteqarnermi ilaqartut aamma aqqutissiuisuusut, ilisimatuutut allaaserisami misissorneqarpoq qanoq puisit pillugit, Kalaallit Nunaanni nunasiaateqarniarnerup ingerlaneranik sammisaqarnersut aamma apeqqusiinersut.

Allaaserisanik tunngaveqartumik ph.d.-mik ilisimatuutut allaaserisaq una, ilisimatusarnermi allaaserisanik sisamanik ilaqarpoq. Allaaserisat immikkut tamarmik misissuinermik aalajangersimasumik aamma ukkataqartumik tunngaveqarput, taakku Kalaallit Nunaanni `puisimik malittarinninnermi´ ilisimatusarnermi suleriaatsimit saqqummersimapput. Allaaserisani sisamani, nunasiaataanermut aamma nunasiaataanerup kingorna piujuartitsinermik oqaluttuanut, Kalaallit puisinniartarnerani pisut ingerlasarneranut, aamma mersortartut kalaallisuuliortarneranut attuumassuteqartunik sammisat imaqarput. Allaaserisat ilaat ataaseq, immikkut, ilisimatuutut allaaserisap matuma suliarineqarnerani periaatsip ingerlaneranik sammisaqarpoq. Kalaallit nunarsuarmioqataallutik inuuneranni puisit assigiinngitsumik atorneqartarnerannik, oqaluttuarineqartarnerannik aamma ilaanerannik maluginiagaqarnikkut, allaaserisat Kalaallit puisinut atassuteqarnerat katitigaasut, Europamiut paasinnittarnikkut oqaatsit inuit atortagaasa iluani oqaluttuanik oqilisaalluni nassuiaasarnikkut annikillisitseqqajaasarnerannik, qajannarsisitsipput.

Misilittakkat misissuinikkullu paasisat tunngavigalugit, ilisimatusarneq una Kalaallit Nunaanni qaammatit arfineq-marluk ornigulluni sulinermit, allagaataasivinni

ilisimatusarnermit aamma Kalaallit Nunaanni tusagassiutitsigut pissarsiffinnit najoqqutassanik assigiinngitsunik katersorneqarsimasunik tunngaveqarpoq. Piniartunik, mersortartunik aamma inunnik allanik Kalaallit Nunaanni puisinniarnermik imaluunniit puisit amiinik attuumassuteqartunik inuussutissarsiortunik apeqqarissaarfiginninnernik annertuumik atuivoq. Ilisimasaqarfigisat aallaavigigaanni, ilisimatuutut allaaserisap, maannakkut Kalaallit Nunaanni ilisimatusarnermi nunasiaataanerup kingorna ilisimasaqarfigisanik atuilluni itisiliinissaq anguniarneqarpoq, Issittumit avataanilu nunasiaateqarnermi aamma nunap inoqqaavinik ilisimatusarnerit, ilanngunnerisigut. Ilisimatuutut allaaserisap matuma tikkuarpaa, Issittumi ilisimatusarnermi nunasiaateqarnermi ilisimatusarnermut atassuteqarnerit qajannarsisinniarlugit ingerlariarnissaq, allatullu eqqarsartariaatsinut, ilisimasanut, malugisanullu aqqutissiuinissaq aamma ilisimasanik pilersitsinermiinnissaq pisariaqartoq. Suleriaaseq taanna, ilisimatuutut allaaserisap pilersinneqarnerani periaatsimut tunngaviuvoq, nammineq inissisimanermut tikkuartumik eqqarsaatersorneq aamma ajornaatsumik, ilisimatuutut-inissisimanermik, ilisimatuutut immikkut pisinnaatitaanernik aamma Kalaallit Nunaat pillugu ilisimasanik peqarnerarnermi killigititanik qaangiinernik, unammillernissaq aamma akornusersuinissaq – tassani sammineqarput. Ataatsimut isigalugu, ilisimatuutut allaaserisap matuma, `puisimik´ malittarinnilluni suliap ingerlanerpiaa, Kalaallit Nunaata nunasiaajunnaarsinneqarnerani ilisimasaqarfigisat aallaavigalugit aamma aqqutinik piviusunik misissueriaatsitut sammisaqarpoq.

DANSK RESUME

Sælen har haft en afgørende betydning for den måde Grønland har manifesteret sig som hjemland for et oprindeligt folk, et koloniseret område og en selvstyrende nation. Gennem de sidste mange årtier har sælen også været genstand for konflikter mellem internationale politiske aktører, dyrevelfærdsgrupper og Inuit-samfund. Denne ph.d. -afhandling undersøger relationerne mellem sælen og Kalaallit [grønlandske Inuit], som de udfolder sig historisk og i det moderne politiske landskab. Ved at følge 'sælen' gennem en lang række narrative spor i Grønland, beskæftiger afhandlingen sig med de komplekse processer hvori kolonialitet og oprindelige livsformer kolliderer og væver sig sammen. Mens de dominerende narrativer om inuitisk sælfangst – fx i EU's 'sælregime' – underminerer de lokale og levede relationer mellem Kalaallit og sælen, så anfægter Kalaallit narrativer de selvsamme 'sælregimer'. Med det udgangspunkt at narrativer omfatter og manøvrerer relationer mellem Kalaallit, Qallunaat [ikke-Inuit] og sælen, undersøger afhandlingen hvordan sælnarrativer adresserer og forstyrrer koloniseringsprocesser i Grønland.

Denne artikelbaserede ph.d.-afhandling består af fire akademiske artikler. Hver artikel er baseret på et specifikt, fokuseret studie, som er opstået igennem denne forskningsproces med at 'følge' sælen i Grønland. De fire artikler spænder over emner, der beskæftiger sig med koloniale og postkoloniale bæredygtigheds-narrativer, processer vedrørende Kalaallit sæljagt, og syerskers arbejde med at skabe den grønlandske nationaldragt. En af artiklerne behandler specifikt den metodiske proces, som har fulgt med afhandlingens tilblivelse. Ved at kaste opmærksomhed på de forskellige måder som sæler fortælles og engageres i Kalaallit livsverdener, destabiliserer artiklerne tendensen til at reducere komplekse Kalaallit-sæl relationer til forenklede narrativer i europæiske konceptuelle vokabularer.

Empirisk er denne forskning baseret på forskelligartet materiale som hidrører fra syv måneders feltarbejde i Grønland, fra arkivforskning og fra grønlandske mediekilder. Den trækker i væsentlig grad på interviews med fangere, syersker og andre personer, hvis erhverv berører sæljagt eller sælskind i Grønland. Teoretisk søger afhandlingen at elaborere den postkoloniale teoriramme i den nuværende Grønlandsforskning ved at inddrage dekolonial og Indigenous forskning fra såvel Arktis, som udenfor. Afhandlingen peger på, at dette er et nødvendigt skridt i retningen mod at destabilisere koloniale relationer i Arktisk forskning og skaffe plads til andre måder at tænke, vide, føle og være i vidensproduktion. Denne tilgang er grundlaget for tilblivelsen af afhandlingens metodiske ramme, som arbejder med – selv-refleksivt og praktisk – at udfordre og forstyrre forsker-positionalitet, akademiske privilegier, og 'grænselande' i forskningen om Grønland. Samlet set, beskæftiger afhandlingen sig med selve processen at følge 'sælen' som en måde at udforske de teoretiske og praktiske spor for grønlandsk afkolonisering.

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Jakobsen and Ole Madsen in Nuuk, Hanne and Ejnar Jakobsen in Arsuk, and Karina and Akatu Jakobsen in Aasiaat. I feel deep gratitude to Akatu's contributions and insights which have been priceless to my research – and to Avi and Alfred for reading and feedback, *qujanaq*. Thank you to the people of Arsuk who welcomed home the new generation of Aapi and Atsa Louise, you have a special place in our hearts.

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PART 1. INTRODUCTIONS

1.1. THE NARRATIVE TRAJECTORIES OF SEAL

This PhD thesis presents a multifold study which explores narratives of Kalaallit[1]-seal relations in colonial and postcolonial processes in Greenland. In this study, 'seal' is a prism to examine (some of) the complex processes that are involved in the unfolding of Greenland as an Indigenous homeland, colonized territory, and self-governing nation. Here, Kalaallit-seal relationships emerge as sites in which coloniality and Indigenous lifeways collide and interweave. By tracing 'seal' through different narrative trajectories, the four academic articles which comprise this PhD thesis, engage with the entangled and placed ways in which (post)colonial relations are made and remade, contended and circumvented, in Kalaallit lifeworlds. The thesis engages this very process of 'tracing seal' in Greenland as a way to cultivate a research approach that unsettles colonial relations and knowledge productions in Arctic scholarship. This summary chapter elaborates how 'tracing seal' is also vested in exploring the theoretical, methodological, and epistemological tracks for decolonizing the existing Arctic research field (of which the thesis is part of).

When following the seal through Greenland's history, the role of seals in Kalaallit communities appears to change along different colonial and postcolonial trajectories. As an Indigenous hunting practice, seal hunting was once fundamental to the thriving of Inuit communities across the Arctic, and it contributed to the daily necessities of food, clothing, transportation vessels (*qajaq* and *umiaq*), tools, light, and heat (Peter et al., 2002). Through mechanisms of Danish colonial strategies, Kalaallit seal hunting (also) became a commercialized and nationalized profession which was to supply Denmark's colonial enterprise with the trade products of blubber and sealskins (Marquardt, 1999; Rud, 2006; Thomsen, 1998a). Once integrated in the global market and vulnerable to trade fluctuations (Marquardt & Caulfield, 1996), Greenlandic (and other Arctic) sealing economies were devastated by the decades of Euro-American anti-sealing campaigning and the eventual international sealskin market crash in the 1980s (Lynge, 1992; Wenzel, 1999; ICC, 1996). Since then, the Greenlandic Home Rule (and now Self-Government) has subsidized Greenland's sealskin trade in order to support hunting families and to protect 'the cultural heritage' of Kalaallit sealing practices (Graugaard, 2019). The transformation of Kalaallit sealing from being a self-sufficient practice to becoming a 'cultural heritage' arguably presents a story of the colonization of Indigenous ways of life and its postcolonial consequences. In this way, tracing 'the seal' can elucidate the coloniality of our

[1] *Kalaallit* is the local-specific term for 'Greenlanders' in Kalaallisut [the West Greenlandic Inuit language] and it usually refers to Greenlandic Inuit (see also word explanations in Appendix 4.1).

current, so-called 'Arctic age'. This thesis is however not written, nor read, as a linear study of the development of Kalaallit seal relations and practices. That is, I do not attempt a disciplined or 'charmed storyline' (Cameron, 2012) of Kalaallit-seal relationships, but instead trace some of their different narrative trajectories. The outcome of this research is manifested in the four thesis articles, which each presents a focused study of specific colonial and postcolonial encounters over and through seal.

This research is motivated by the overarching question: '***How do lived and studied narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations engage and unsettle colonial processes in Greenland?'.*** In an immediate way, this question impels considerations of human relations with non-humans (here, seals) in past and present political processes. The question grounds inquiries into the ways in which Kalaallit narratives of seals respond to and challenge colonial structures in their historical employments and their contemporary manifestations in Western modernity, global capitalism, climate crises, et cetera. As seals often emerge as a site of struggle that involves contrasting perspectives and practices between local, national, and international actors, the thesis points to narratives of seals as involving and navigating Inuit-Qallunaat[2] relationships (O'Connor et al., 2018; Todd, 2014). When national and international institutions currently seek to legitimize, govern, and manage Inuit seal hunting by employing concepts and criteria of *sustainability, subsistence,* and *tradition* (as is exemplified in the 'EU Seal Regime', European Commission, 2016), the thesis considers some of the ways in which (the diversity of) Indigenous stories of seals may be compromised and undermined. While these dynamics have serious implications for the role of seals in Kalaallit lives[3], they do not impede the continuous significance of Kalaallit narratives. It follows that accounting for Inuit narratives of seals may also *unsettle* the current 'seal regimes'. By discussing *some* of these encounters of differing conceptualizations of Inuit sealing practices, the thesis articles inquire in various ways how narratives of seal re-inscribe or unsettle colonial relations in Greenland (see the specified sub-question for each article in section 1.2). Meanwhile, the overall research question impels considerations of how *studies* of seal narratives also engage colonial relations and legacies. In this sense, the thesis queries its own research practice as a way to reckon and interrupt the colonial dynamics that are embedded in the processes of studying, analyzing, and (re)presenting narratives of Inuit lifeworlds in scholarship. Attending to 'unsettling' narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations is thus coupled with (self-reflexive) interrogations of how the practice of studying them may settle or unsettle historical and contemporary colonization of Indigenous lifeways in Greenland. The following parts of this summary chapter (Part 2. and 3.) discuss the theoretical and

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[2] *Qallunaat* is the (plural) term for white, foreigners, Danes in Kalaallisut [the West Greenlandic Inuit language] and other Inuit languages (see also word explanations in Appendix 4.1).

[3] For example, due to the EU Seal Regime, Inuit seal products have to be certified as originating from *traditional, subsistence-based* hunting in order to enter the EU market. Yet, these criteria may not always relate to practice (discussed in Article #1).

methodological aspects of this work. In the overall research question, the 'postcolonial' is intentionally omitted and I generally use it with caution; While Greenland is today often referred to in the realm of the postcolonial, Denmark-Greenland relations are also criticized for their persistent coloniality. This is an underlying tension which this research subtly 'unsettles'.

Elaborating on the intentions and ambitions of this thesis, the overall research question also directs a different reading of history which does not entirely rest on an analytic of the scope and terms of colonization. Instead of merely focusing on colonial formations, strategies, discourses, imaginaries, and their counter-responses in Greenland, seal narratives also provide an analytical orientation towards the lived, place-based, and practiced relations between Kalaallit, Qallunaat *and* land, sea, and animals. In this sense, this storying of contemporary Greenland is vested in storying *from below*; 'that is, from the ground up' (Walsh, 2018, p. 19). While this draws connotations to postcolonial 'history from below' movements, like those in Subaltern studies, the research is not only framed by an objective 'to explore the capacities and limitations of certain European social and political categories in conceptualizing political modernity in the context of non-European life-worlds' (Chakrabarty, 2008, p. 20). Rather than simply focusing on the limitations of European conceptual vocabularies in the existing seal regimes, the thesis also seeks to displace them as the primary points of departure for this research. This underscores a shift of attention towards Kalaallit relations with storying seals, storying Greenland. In this approach, narratives of seals appear to be 'composed of networks of relations between people, places, and things' *and* other living entities (p. 21). These narrations signify a 'plurality of ways' in which Kalaallit actors conceptualize and engage with seals, which include hunting, preparing, sharing, selling, tanning, sewing, eating, theorizing, storytelling, philosophizing (Todd, 2014). Responding to the overall research question 'from the ground up' thus disrupt the conceptual limits of Qallunaat narratives by also considering how they may *unrelate* to Kalaallit lifeworlds. In this sense, the thesis also works through some of the ways in which Kalaallit relations with seals are 'grounded elsewhere' than in colonial modes of ordering (Cameron, 2015, p. 19).

The thesis thus inquires narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations as they entangle, compliment, unsettle, *and* transgress colonial modes of ordering. This research gives birth to a subsequent pondering upon: ***What is the role of seal narratives in decolonization processes in Greenland?*** In this question, decolonization is not (necessarily) mirrored in an independent nation-state. Rather, it springs from a reckoning with the *coloniality* of the Greenlandic present which may be termed as 'the long-standing patterns of power' which have survived colonialism and which are maintained in various aspects of modern experience (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243). While it points to the constitutive relations between coloniality and modernity (Mignolo, 2018; Quijano, 2007), decolonization also orients 'a critical mode of relating to pasts, presents, and futures that cannot wholly be defined in relation to the colonial' (Cameron, 2015, p. 19). In Indigenous and decolonial scholarships, this implies an

attending to the practices, knowledges, subjectivities, aspirations that precede and transgress the colonial enterprise (e.g. Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Coulthard, 2014; Icaza, 2017; Simpson, 2011; Walsh, 2018). My question above thus attends to Kalaallit engagements with seals as spaces for nurturing and cultivating other modes of life, being, and thought (Walsh, 2018). This pushes my research beyond outlining how Kalaallit narratives respond to colonial narratives and towards considering the ways in which they may also be sites of resurgence and world-making. This not only concerns the ways in which seal narratives are lived and practiced in Greenland, but also the ways they are approached, studied, and told as part of this research. 'Tracing seal' may then also be understood as a seeking of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological tracks for decolonizing the modes of narrating Greenland, and the Arctic at large.

In this way, the 'tracks' of decolonization are not merely searched for, nor found, in the answers to my research questions, as they are substantiated in the empirical studies and analyses of the thesis articles. Searching the tracks of decolonization also engages the ways in which research and knowledge inquisitions in Indigenous communities in the Arctic entangle and re-inscribe colonial relations (Smith, 2012). My research is therefore not merely interested in asking these questions 'but also in problematizing the terms upon which I might seek to answer them' (Cameron, 2015, p. 13). As an elemental part of approaching seal narratives in Greenland, I seek ways to interrogate and destabilize the colonial mechanisms that are embedded in researcher positionality, approaches to the Arctic field, and claims to knowledge *on* and *about* Greenland. 'Tracing seal' is then also – in itself and by example – an exploration of the theoretical and methodological steps that may move my research towards decolonizing its own practices. The intention here is not to search for set resolutions, but to continuously dedicate my research to unsettle itself. In this sense, I also consider my research as part of the ongoing 'serpentine movement [or zigzagged seal movement?] toward possibilities of other modes of being, thinking, knowing, sensing, and living; that is an otherwise in plural' (Walsh, 2018, p. 81).

In another way, 'serpentine movements' also characterize this PhD thesis. Here, the thesis articles – individually and together – are driven by and respond to the overall research questions; Yet, premised by the format of an article-based thesis, the individual, focused studies of the articles do not line up for a linear storyline from A to B. In other words, the analytical work of the thesis does not appear in the chronology of a monograph. Instead, the research findings are presented in four individual academic articles. These form a kind of patchwork in which each study contributes a 'patch of threads' that tie into the overall research question, while each 'patch' is simultaneously a work in its own terms[4] and developed through its particular materials and focal points. As is required, this summary chapter then performs the role of a

[4] Intended (and published) as journal articles or anthology chapters, the articles also follow the terms, requirements, and peer reviews of academic journals.

'linking text contribution' (Doctoral School of Humanities, 2016, p. 11), which provides the theoretical liner and methodological backdrop of the analytical work in the articles. Here, I also discuss and review the existing academic literature that intersects with Greenlandic postcoloniality and sealing identities, and I suggest new ways of orienting in the field, drawing in Indigenous and decolonial scholarships. In this sense, the summary chapter provides the grounds from which the thesis articles spring, while the articles provide the analytical outcomes of the process of 'tracing seal'.

In the next section of the thesis introduction (1.2), I recount and map the narrative trajectories of the articles, providing a backdrop and overview to keep in mind in the further readings.

1.2. THE ARTICLES AND THEIR TRAJECTORIES

In its sum, this thesis presents the outcomes of 'tracing seal' over the course of my PhD studies. This has resulted in four different articles that, together, build a comprehensive study of narratives of Kalaallit-seal relationships as they navigate in and through (post)colonial structures, Indigenous lifeways, as well as my own research encounters. While these studies, in different ways, engage with some aspect of the overall research question, each article also presents its own particular focus and analytical framework. Thus, the articles, altogether, do not solicit a straightforward line of academic progression. Instead, they reflect a research journey that has evolved through tracing different narrative trajectories of seal. In order to establish their contributions to and linkages with the overall analytical inquiry, I here contextualize and summarize the articles and their research trajectories. This provides the grounds for the following sections of this summary chapter (Part 2. and 3.) which draw up the theoretical and methodological conceptions in my research. By introducing (in broad outlines) some of the major themes and conclusions that run through each of the articles, this preview also provides a preliminary 'texture' of the thesis which may guide the reader when reading through and across the articles.

Like many PhD projects, my research commenced with a set project description. As part of a larger research project, 'Politics of Postcoloniality and Sustainability in the Arctic' (POSUSA), led by Associate Professor, Ulrik Pram Gad, and Associate Professor, Jeppe Strandsbjerg, my research set out to analyze 'sustainability', as a political concept, in the differing discourses and narratives on Inuit seal hunting. While this framework has been the platform that offset my studies, the point of departure seldomly ends up being the end point. My research particularly changed its course during my seven months of fieldwork in Greenland. The experiences and conversations that I had while I was in *Nuuk, Aasiaat, Qasigiannguit, Sisimiut, Arsuk* and *Qaqortoq* brought in new aspects of and perspectives on the study topic. While it is not

the purpose here to exhaust the many and detailed changes to my preliminary research statement, two major revisions are worthy to mention because they pushed my research in other directions which are now comprised in the thesis. These revisions concern my initial focus on *sustainability* and seal *hunting.* As a major learning from my fieldwork, the significance of Kalaallit relations with seals extend beyond the mere act of hunting them; It therefore seemed critical to broaden my research focus on *hunting* to encompass various conceptualizations and engagements with seals in Greenland. As an example, sewing *kalaallisuut* [the West Greenlandic women's regalia] also appeared as a site of engagement with seal(skin), and this resulted in my writing of Article #4. Furthermore, I learned that a Western concept like 'sustainability' was not necessarily an appropriate point of departure as it was often 'lost in translation' in the fieldwork interviews. In contrast to my expectations, the interviews did not simply offer alternative and place-based conceptualizations of the sustainability concept, but also pointed to its inapplicability in Kalaallit lifeworlds. This pointed to a dissonance between the conceptual vocabulary in dominant narratives and Kalaallit narratives of seals. Rather than focusing narrowly on the concept of 'sustainability', it seemed pertinent to work with the general conceptual dissonances between diverting narratives of seals. Such dissonance is for example also reflected in narratives that stress Inuit sealing practices as 'subsistence-based' and 'traditional'. While my preliminary research focuses on *sustainability* and seal *hunting* did not lose their relevance to my studies, they also did not come to direct the entire course of researching.

As a consequence of these experiences, 'tracing seal' became the organizing focus which lays the connecting tracks in my studies. 'Tracing' organizes and focuses my research on the narratives that surround and unleash through seals and their relations. In this work, seeking and following the various routes of seal narratives is not limited to historical or genealogical maps; It also elucidates specific ways in which seals weave in and out of contemporary Kalaallit lifeworlds. In the words of Emilie Cameron (2015), this makes way for 'a kind of *organizing focus* that draws attention to some of the complex relations through which past, present, and future Norths have been made possible, sensible, and legible' (p. 13, emphasis added). The articles (#1, #2, and #3) explore some of these relations through their focused, empirical studies of different narratives of seals in Kalaallit lives. Article #4 deviates somewhat from these studies, as it focuses on the methodological aspects of undertaking this research. From this outset, I will here 'trace' through the articles:

Article #1 is titled ***'Without seals, there are no Greenlanders'*** **– colonial and postcolonial narratives of sustainability and Inuit seal hunting**. By tracing 'the seal' through Greenland's colonial and postcolonial history, this article suggests

that varying *sustainability narratives* that surround Inuit seal hunting[5] have been pivotal to sustaining Danish colonization. The article therefore argues that the emergence of concepts of sustainability in relation to Greenland's sealskin industry does not appear in a vacuum. It is also conditioned by the particular development of Inuit sealing as a colonial – and to some extent, postcolonial – undertaking which has sought to transform an Indigenous practice into a mono-cultural commercialized occupation. Through a narrative genealogy, the article elucidates traces of colonial narratives in postcolonial approaches to Inuit seal hunting, as well as it explicates how these narratives are being challenged and resisted. This article is written as a chapter contribution to the anthology, 'The Politics of Sustainability in the Arctic – reconfiguring Identity, Space, and Time' (Gad & Strandsbjerg, 2019), which is an outcome of the POSUSA project. Employing the analytical strategy that is forwarded in the anthology, this article approaches 'sustainability' as a political concept which defines and shapes different discourses about future developments (Gad et al., 2019). As the first article in the sequence of PhD articles, this work provides a historical grounding for exploring Kalaallit relations with seals and seal hunting.

• *Main research question in Article #1: What is the coloniality and postcoloniality of historical and contemporary narratives of Kalaallit seal hunting?*

In Article #2, **Sensing seal in Greenland – Kalaallit seal pluralities and anti-sealing contentions**, I question the conceptual terms upon which Inuit hunting practices are deemed 'acceptable' in current international seal regimes (e.g. European Commission, 2016). I argue that the narratives of Inuit seal hunting as a 'sustainable, subsistence' practice risk coopting Indigenous worldviews to suit Western interpretations. I suggest that, while such narratives may soothe European anti-sealing sentiments, they may not resonate with Inuit knowledges and practices. By engaging with my fieldwork interviews with hunters in Greenland, I suggest that Kalaallit ways of 'sensing', knowing and engaging with seals reflect reciprocal, as well as complex, human-animal relations. Utilizing Zoe Todd's analytical framework of 'fish pluralities' (2014), I suggest that seals exist in Greenland in a 'plurality of ways' which extend beyond a simple needs-based use of a natural resource. The article picks up on some of the contemporary dynamics of the colonial definitions and sanctions on Inuit seal hunting, as they are reflected in Article #1. Whereas Article #1 mainly focuses on the mechanisms of dominant, colonial narratives, this article privileges Kalaallit narratives and non-Qallunaat epistemes – and necessarily, it expands the focus on hunting to a plurality of Kalaallit-seal relations.

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[5] Please note that, in this article, I use the word 'Inuit seal hunting'. As an evolvement of my research, the other articles usually refer to 'Kalaallit seal hunting' in the context of Greenland. This does not change the meaning, as Kalaallit is the local-specific term for Greenlander and it usually refers to Greenlandic Inuit. See also word explanations in Appendix 4.1.

• *Main research question in Article #2: How do Kalaallit-seal relations and 'seal pluralities' in Greenland unsettle the current seal regimes?*

In Article #3, **Greenlandic regalia – seaming Kalaallit pasts, presents, and futures**, I discuss the seamstress work that is engaged in the creation of *kalaallisuut* [the west Greenlandic women's regalia]. Over the past decades, the Greenlandic regalia has appeared as a 'turbulent object' (Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018) that has sparked public discussions on cultural appropriation. Condoning local *and* external use of and alterations to the regalia, Kalaallit scholars and seamstresses have challenged current attempts to fix *kalaallisuut* in images of 'tradition'. Elaborating on these discussions, I argue that *kalaallisuut* does not easily comprehend the conceptual circuit of 'tradition' vs 'modernity' which is reflected in current discussions. Moving away from linear storylines of progress, I instead approach the regalia as a place of encounters between Kalaallit, Qallunaat, seals, land, and sea. Through interviews with Kalaallit seamstresses, I suggest that sewing regalia can be recognized as part of Kalaallit world-making. In seamstress work, *kalaallisuut* is thus also a site of re-narrating Kalaallit relations to pasts, presents, and futures. For some, this involves 'developing the regalia to come back' to incorporating more sealskin. In the sequence of PhD articles, this article exemplifies that Kalaallit-seal relations are engaged in a plurality of ways and beyond the acts of hunting seals. Furthermore, they partake in recreating Kalaallit lifeworlds.

• *Main research question in Article #3: How does kalaallisuut, as a site of encounters, negotiate Kalaallit temporalities?*

Article #4, **Arctic Auto-ethnography: unsettling colonial research relations** discusses a central element in my methodological approach to researching in the field of Arctic studies. Particularly, it considers my employment of auto-ethnography in research encounters in Greenland as a way to destabilize the coloniality of doing Arctic research. In this article, I suggest that auto-ethnography provides certain reflections and tools that are useful in breaking with the tradition of 'hit-and-run' research, experienced as problematic and neo-colonial in Greenlandic communities. By providing three vignettes from my own fieldwork experiences in Greenland, I provide *cycles of reflections* on the relation between researcher and informant, on the positionality of the researcher, and on resisting to reproduce the colonial gaze by reversing it. In such ways, I propose that reflexivity can be a process and practice with the potential to unsettle colonial self-other relations, subject-object, researcher-researched. Here, auto-ethnography works as a way to position myself within my research and to provide a (self-)interrogation of the dynamics of positionality in Arctic knowledge productions. The article is written as a chapter contribution to a forthcoming anthology, 'Collaborative Research Methods in the Arctic: Experiences from Greenland', edited by Professor Anne Merrild Hansen and Associate Professor Carina Ren. Therefore, the article is written in the context of elaborating more collaborative and participatory research methodologies in the Arctic. Even though this article discusses some of the

main aspects of my methodological approach to researching in Greenland, I have chosen to place it as the last article in the sequence of thesis articles. This is partly done to allow Article #1, #2, and #3 to provide their narratives and analyses in their own right and without being overshadowed by the focus on auto-ethnography in Article #4. Furthermore, Article #4 provides *cycles of reflection* on research relationships in order to ground some of the 'next steps' in the current and future efforts to decolonize the Arctic research field. In this sense, it also works as a stepping stone for developing and elaborating new contributions to decolonizing Arctic research (for example, a post-PhD publication, see Figure 1).

• *Main research question in Article 4#: How does auto-ethnography inform my methodological approach? In which ways can reflexivity and 'cycles of reflection' unsettle researcher positionality and destabilize colonial research relationships in the steps to decolonize the Arctic research field?*

This contextualized preview underlines the different narrative trajectories of the articles. While each article presents a focused study (empirically and theoretically), it should now be clear that they all provide a contribution to 'unsettling narratives' in this 'tracing of seal' in historical and contemporary Greenland. In Article #4, this contribution is focused on the research encounters that arise as part of this overall work. To assist this overview, I have provided an illustration that draws up the articles in relation to each other, and in the context of the overall thesis, see Figure 1 on the next page. Notably, I have visualized it as a circular form to contrast linearity. The tentacles are the 'feelers' and associations which move the articles, individually and together. The summaries that I have provided above mainly focus on the major themes and problematics which the articles deal with. Yet, as an underlying 'trace', they all grapple with colonialities in current knowledge productions on Greenland. In different modes, they search for ways to nurture a 'research sensibility' (Donald, 2012) that may open new grounds for non-Qallunaat epistemes within this academic structure. This will be elaborated in the summary chapter's part 2. and 3. which elaborate on the theoretical and methodological frameworks of the thesis – as well as it is exemplified in the articles themselves.

In the last section 1.3 of this introductory part, I story my first encounters with seals in order to introduce the thesis' inaugural relations to the topic of study, as well as to ground the reflexive work that is embedded in orienting in new ways to the Arctic research field.

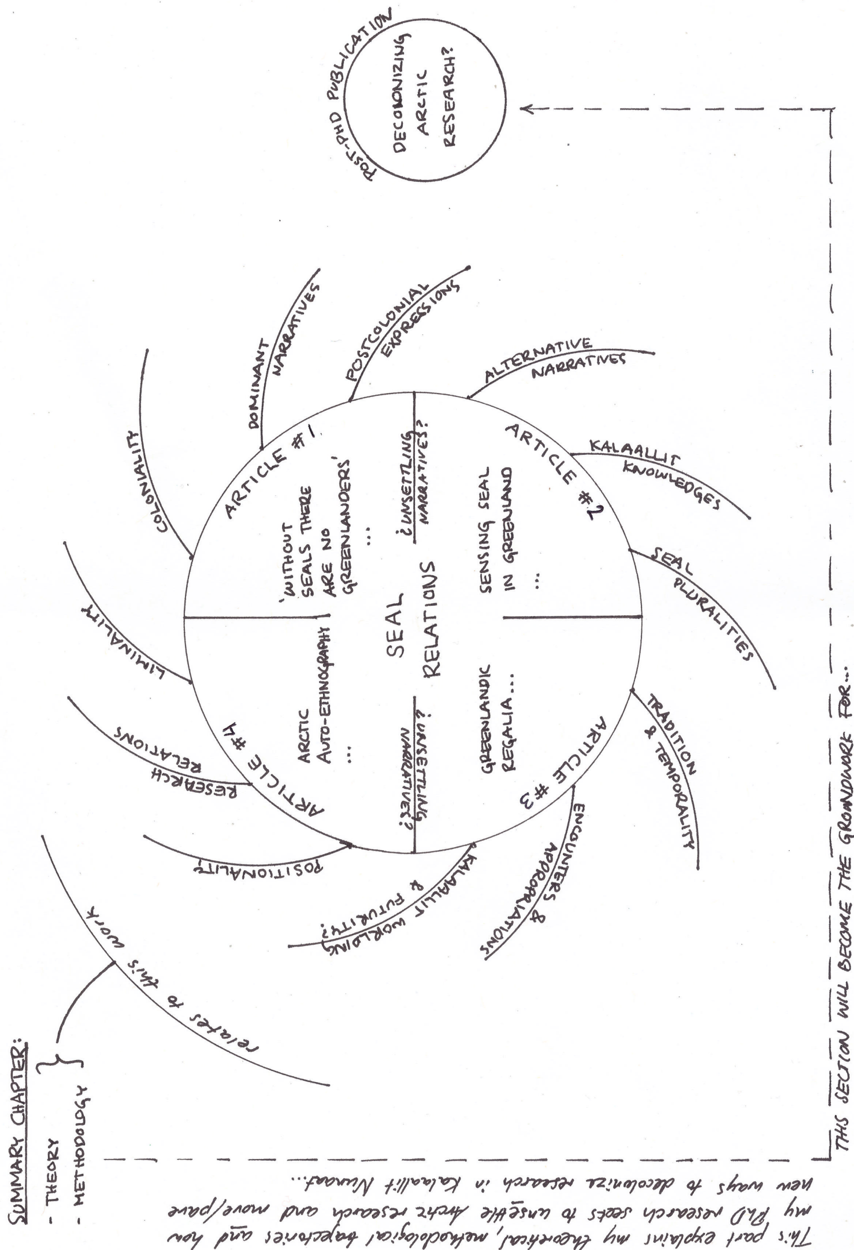

Figure 1. Illustration of PhD thesis

1.3. FIRST ENCOUNTERS: THE SEAL AND THE COLONIAL CHILD

The thesis works from a main premise of research as an embodied and positioned undertaking. In the same way as the research engages with the 'storying Greenland' as a relational practice (Cameron, 2015), it also engages with the subjective location of the researcher (myself) as being conditional to knowledge production (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). Seeking to challenge colonial relations within Arctic research and the claims to 'objectivity' and 'expertise' by researchers, my research is premised in reflections on how my positionality, personal baggage, relations, and interactions shape my findings, arguments, and explanations (Tomaselli et al., 2008). One starting point for employing this kind of reflexivity is to enunciate my own relations to and encounters with the topic of study: seals.

My first encounters with seals were during my childhood days at my *ningiu*'s [grandmother] house in Aalborg, Denmark. Along with the beaded table coasters, soapstone figures, and paintings of *Sermitsiaq*[6], my grandmother's sealskin curios filled her home as memories from the homeland, *Kalaallit Nunaat* [Greenland]. Most of my grandmother's keepsakes were gifts from visiting friends and family, or from returning trips to her birth village in southern Greenland. In retrospect, my grandmother's Kalaallit keepsakes were the tangible connection points in her expanded network of Greenlanders, who lived in Greenland or Denmark, at the time. To me, *ningiu*'s keepsakes bridged the distance to the homeland where I had never been, but heard so much about. With a backdrop of stories about my *ittoqqii*'s [great-grandfather] and *ningioqqii*'s [great-grandmother] accomplishments as a hunting family, the sealskin ornaments animated the visions of my ancestries. Yet, too young to grasp or rationalize the affective significance (Ahmed, 2004) of *puisit* [seals], my first experiences with seals were primarily tactile and sensible encounters through my grandmother's sealskins. I remember running my fingers over the embroideries on purses and photo frames sewn from sealskin. I enjoyed studying their fine and meticulous patterns. Mostly, I remember the smell of fur and how it itched and prickled the soles of my feet when I was wearing my mother's *kamiit* [kamiks] and *kalaallisuut* [the west Greenlandic women's regalia].

When my parents started to sail in the Danish fjord, *Limfjorden*, as a leisure time activity, I grew accustomed to passing by grey seals resting on sandy banks in the sun. But they were different from my grandmother's seals; They were not for hunting or eating or sewing, and they were not accompanied by stories. It seemed to me that they were mostly for looking at. Years passed by while gazing on the Danish grey seals, and I was a grownup before I encountered my first seal in Greenlandic seas. It was on my

[6] *Sermitsiaq* means 'the saddle' in Kalaallisut [the West Greenland Inuit language] and it is the name of a mountain near Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. *Sermitsiaq* is considered to be Nuuk's landmark.

very first hunting trip in the Disko Bay with my young cousin, Viktori, and his friend, Uka. Shifting between laying still and sailing, we followed a harp seal for a good few hours. Then, Uka shot and hit, boarded the *aattaaq* [harp seal] into the dingy, and we went to skin it on some rocks in the coastal waters. I was elated, as we ate the raw liver and cut up the meat – but conflicted, when we left the sealskin behind on the rocks. I began wondering about the dynamics and structures which render sealskins superfluous or indispensable in Kalaallit lives.

As a child, I had seen the occasional images of crying 'baby seals' on bloody ice sheets on the Canadian East coast appear on TV, but never connected them to the seals that I knew from my *ningiu'*s stories. I was well into adulthood before I learned of the consequences of anti-sealing campaigns to Inuit hunting families. Moreover, I did not personally encounter the international condemnation of seal hunting before 2009 when I participated in a COP-15 rally, outside the Danish Parliament. The rally was organized to express a shared concern with the lack of ambition to reduce global C02 emissions in the UN goals. I had not been at the rally long, before a fellow participant from Germany pointed at the sealskin mittens I was wearing. With great agitation, she shared her opinions on the wrongs of wearing fur, particularly sealskin. Perhaps, this outburst did not need to come as a surprise to me. It was, after all, the same year that the European Union (EU) had implemented an overall seal product ban, responding to three years of intensive anti-sealing campaigning in Western countries (European Union, 2009). Still, I was overwhelmed that my mittens – purchased from a local seamstress outside the main supermarket in Nuuk, Greenland – could cause such fuss, and I tried to explain the origins of this sealskin and the ways of Inuit hunting. But my opponent was not convinced by my arguments. She responded that today Inuit hunt with rifles from motorboats and this has changed the nature of hunting. According to her, Inuit now engage in an inhumane commercial market of seal products. We did not come to any agreement. I had joined the rally as an act of alliance with shared concerns for the critical state of our globe, but I left it again, sensing more the breaches in the present visions and worldviews.

In the protest against environmental degradation, my proudly worn sealskin mittens were conceived as a symbol of uncivilized brutality towards natural and animal environments. As a white-coding, Danish-speaking Danish-Kalaaleq woman with a future dependent on my university degree, I had the privilege to shed my mittens had I wished to dissociate myself with the negative badge of sealskin – *unlike* those of my relatives for whom seal hunting is an important part of daily life, food substance, and income supplement. My sealskin mittens became a reflection of the power asymmetries in the current disputes over seal hunting, as well as my privileged ability to bypass them. As I entered this 'dispute' as a field for research, it therefore seemed critical to search for ways to hold my positionality, relations, and privileges accountable and to resist reducing Kalaallit-seal relations to a badge or image of dominant narratives. Finding a voice in the 'borderlands' that I inhabit (Anzaldua, 2012) has been a continuous struggle in my years of studying Denmark's 'forgotten

colonialism', Danish-Greenlandic relations, and Greenland's self-determination process (Graugaard, 2009; Graugaard, 2016). At times, it has felt as navigating a stifling dialectic between Qallunaaq and Kalaaleq, shadowed by 'consuming internal whirlwinds' that threaten my work and motivation with negations of being *neither/nor* (Anzaldua, 2012; Graugaard, 2016). In my searching for places from which to 'speak' and research, Gloria Anzaldua's labour with borderlands has become instructive: 'Our greatest disappointments and painful experiences – if we can make meaning of them – can lead us toward becoming more of who we are. Or they can remain meaningless. The Coatlicue state [explained as, for example, 'consuming internal whirlwinds'] can be a way station or it can be a way of life' (Anzaldua, 2012, p. 68). In my work, making meaning of the impending whirlwinds which hover this particular field of study has required a (painful) insistence that I enter it as a child of colonization. As much as I aspire the title of a 'decolonial daughter' (Brown, 2018), it would easily escape the recognition that I am also the birth of colonial relations, and I continue to enjoy the privileges which their oppressive structures have bestowed on me through the dispossession of many others. It is this predicament that holds me to the struggle of 'becoming more of who we are' and to work towards decolonizing my work in ways that become more than a metaphor (Tuck and Yang, 2012). For these reasons, I do not claim a Kalaaleq or decolonial perspective[7] on the topics of study because such claims quickly reproduce the academic tendencies to *settle* decolonization (ibid). In my in-between position, I hold that the colonial bundle that I carry is not one that can be shed, it is an academic venture point to continuously scrutinize and trouble. This thesis is thus the outcome of an encounter between a colonial offspring and *puisit* [seals].

[7] Current academic attempts to make claims to Greenlandic perspectives is exemplified in the recent publication with the title: 'The Greenlanders' view on Denmark' (Høiris, Marquardt & Reimer, 2018, own translation). The edited book seeks to unearth Greenlanders' views on Danes, from the colonial period until today. Notably, only two out of the fifteen contributing chapters are written by Greenlandic authors, and one of those two chapters is a re-publication of Robert Petersen's article 'Colonialism as Seen from a Former Colonized Area' from 1995.

PART 2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL TRAJECTORIES

2.1. POSTCOLONIAL APPLICATIONS AND DECOLONIAL OPTIONS

Working with a conceptual lens of 'seal' provides an opportunity to revisit existing knowledge productions on Greenland, and particularly, the role of Kalaallit sealing practices in these knowledge configurations. Notably, seals became a central object of Danish colonial policies and commercial interests from the beginning of Greenland's colonization, while it was also a frequent area of study in colonial ethnographies which sought to describe, define, and govern 'the Eskimo' by way of subsistence practices and racialized typologies of 'children of nature' (Article #1; Rud, 2006 & 2010; Thomsen, 1998a & 1998b; Petterson, 2012 and 2014). Considering that the founding of Greenland as a field for scientific research was inextricable from Danish colonization, finances, and state interests (Thuesen et al, 2017), the pursuit of knowledge on the topic of Kalaallit sealing can be defined as embedded in imperial and colonial practices by which Denmark, and other colonizing nations, came to 'see', 'name', and 'know' Indigenous communities in Greenland (Smith, 2012). Meanwhile, Kalaallit sealing has been a central site for formulating counter-colonial discourses and self-governing policies since the establishment of the Greenlandic Home Rule (Article #1) – and sealing has thus also entered contemporary scholarship as a topic for discussing postcolonial identity formations in Greenland. Postcolonial approaches have particularly been put to work to deconstruct essentialized discourses on the 'authentic native' captured in images of happy seal hunters (e.g. Bjørst, 2008; Gad, 2009; Graugaard, 2009; Petterson, 2014; Rud, 2006 & 2014; Thisted, 2003; Thomsen, 1998a and 1998b). By discussing some of the theoretical applications in this contemporary scholarship, I seek to meditate on their contributions and limitations in terms of articulating an Arctic – and specifically, Greenlandic – postcolonial research field. These meditations point out my study's indebtedness to 'postcolonial moves' in recent scholarships on Greenland *and* dissatisfaction with their academic perspectives (and lack thereof) on processes of decolonization. My dissatisfaction seems to be partly attributed to limitations in poststructural and postcolonial discourse-oriented theories, and partly attributed to the ways in which they have been trafficked and applied in current studies in and on Greenland.

In this lies a critique of unmarked Danish scholar positionalities[8] and what may be termed a 'danification' of the Greenlandic research field. I write 'danification' with a

[8] Danish scholars and other predominantly white scholars often appear as unmarked beings in Arctic scholarship which their whiteness authorizes (Cameron, 2015)

certain level of hesitation, as Greenlandic scholars have made and are making significant contributions to shaping Greenlandic studies (and Arctic studies, at large). Notably, Greenlandic scholars such as Robert Petersen, H. C. Petersen, Inge Kleivan, Finn Lynge, Mariekathrine Poppel, Gitte Adler Reimer, Daniel Thorleifsen and Birgit Kleist Pedersen have been part of founding and forming Greenlandic studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences in the growing research environment at Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland). Yet, contemporary Greenlandic studies has *also* emerged through colonial mechanisms, and, unlike the development of Subaltern Studies and 'history from below' movements (Chakrabarty, 2007), the contours of 'Greenlandic' postcolonial studies are primarily shaped by Danish scholars (such as Bjørst, 2008; Gad, 2009 & 2016; Jensen, 2015; Rud, 2006 & 2014; Thisted, 2002 & 2004). Meanwhile, the development of postcolonial thought in Denmark is relatively new and still in fruition. Until recently, studies on encounters and relations between Denmark and Greenland rarely referenced to Danish colonialism. On the contrary, scholarly works have long employed the image of Denmark as an 'exceptional' or benign colonizer (Jensen & Loftsdóttir, 2012; Lynge, 2006; Graugaard, 2009) – a view which certain Danish academic works still seek to validate (e.g. Kjærgaard, 2019). The lack of critical attention towards Danish colonial exploitation and suppression in Greenland, and in Denmark's other colonies, feeds into a general Nordic self-narrative which is 'to a large degree constructed in stark contrast to colonial activities' (Eidsvik, 2012, p. 14). Erlend Eidsvik holds that a Nordic postcolonial theoretical framework is lacking, but on the verge of emerging (ibid). Thus, postcolonial studies have not gained solid ground in Denmark nor Greenland. This does not mean, however, that Greenlandic scholars have not and do not offer analyses of and critiques to Danish colonialism (e.g. Petersen, 1995; Lynge, 2006). While such critiques have a place in Greenlandic scholarship, many years of dependency on Danish scholars and scholarly practices may also have restricted the unfolding of Greenlandic critiques which draw on postcolonial frameworks. They may also have been resisted by Greenlandic scholars; As Birgit Kleist Pedersen suggests, 'the postcolonial question' may not be 'a big deal' anyway for young people and she urges the rest of us to 'move on' from the colonial past (2014). The academic positions and takes on Danish colonialism are, of course, heterogeneous and manifold within and outside of Greenland. In this sense, the genealogy of Greenlandic studies is marked by diffused lines of exchange, dependence, adoption, compliance, resistance, and contestations across the borders – and my remarks on 'danification' is not easily located by drawing stark lines between Danish and Greenlandic scholarship. Thus, my critiques focus on colonial modalities in knowledge productions on Kalaallit-seal relations, *across* the field of Greenlandic studies. Furthermore, while my critiques are mainly directed at the specific applications of postcolonial theoretical frameworks in current studies on Greenland, they are also directed at works which do not declare a postcolonial reference but are still part of defining Greenlandic studies as an emerging postcolonial study field. Through examples of such 'postcolonial moves', I discuss general dilemmas in (their) postcolonial applications and I consider 'decolonial options' by drawing on critical, Indigenous, and decolonial scholarships.

The topic of seal hunting has played a tremendous role in the formulation of postcolonial approaches in the Greenlandic study field. Contemporary scholarly works have vigorously deconstructed the prominence of sealing as a colonial construct in Greenlandic notions of national identity. They shed light on the Danish colonial administration's dependency on seal products and the resulting late development of the fisheries (Marquardt, 1999; Marquardt et al., 2017; Sørensen 2007; Thorleifsen, 1999); the Greenlandic counter-movements to a sealing identity and calls for modernization in the inter-war years (Heinrich, 2012; Thuesen, 2007); and the resurrection of the 'idealized hunter' in the Greenlandic anti-colonial nationalist movements in the 1960s and 1970s (Kleivan, 1969; Thomsen, 1998a & 1998b). These analyses of the role of seal hunting in Greenlandic identity formations – at times resisted, and other times consolidated – have made way for a postcolonial critique, which targets contemporary tendencies to solidify and stereotype Greenlandicness in essentialized, romanticized images of 'happy hunters'. Applying Edward Said's conceptualizations of Othering in cultural representations (1978), the discourses of 'happy hunters' have been part of defining what Ann Fienup-Riordan termed 'eskimo orientalisms' (1990 & 1995). In this vein, postcolonial critiques have argued that eskimo orientalist discourses have imposed dichotomies of authentic Greenlanders (often depicted in the image of seal hunters) and inauthentic Greenlanders (often depicted as enveloped, or destroyed, by modern civilization). They argue that the dualisms that arise from colonial discourses have made it a perplexing task for young generations to identify as Greenlandic while living modern lifestyles (e.g. Bjørst, 2008; Graugaard, 2009; Pedersen, 2008; Thisted, 2003; Thomsen, 1998b).

Emerging from the poststructuralist tradition, postcolonial critiques of colonialist discourse have contributed important analyses of the interrelations between knowledge production and imperial domination. They have shown how the fabrication of western literary, cultural, and historical texts have depended on and instilled strategies of 'flexible positional superiority'. As Edward Said clarified, processes of Othering in such productions are not just a necessity of imagination, but a will to possess and control (Said, 1978). In such ways, postcolonial studies have demonstrated that colonial texts and discourses may be constructed and misleading, but they are politically and materially consequential. Nonetheless, Emilie Cameron also critiques postcolonial studies for having 'tended to assume that the ideas and relations that they can diagnose in stories are themselves the scope and terms of colonization' (Cameron, 2015, pp. 23-24). I argue that postcolonial works in the field of Greenlandic studies reflect similar tendencies and particularly, in their analyses of Greenlandic adaptations of colonial story modes. Here, Greenlandic reproductions of romanticized imageries are often interpreted as the only and aggregated sources of, and references to, own histories and past. For example, (drawing on other scholarly works) Ulrik Pram Gad writes: 'While the image of the noble savage – fitted by his close connection to nature to relate to both man and beast in a respectful and ecologically functional manner – originates in European romanticism, it has been taken over by the Greenlanders themselves as an adequate depiction of their ancestors'

(Gad, 2009, p. 142). In such analysis, the problem at stake often appears to be: 'that they [Greenlanders] are ideologically imprisoning themselves in mythical conceptions of their past' (Thisted, 1990 qtd. in Thomsen, 1998b, p. 274). This analysis tends to read Greenlandic conceptualizations of the past and of ancestry, simply, as ethno-symbolic (even mythical) representations, which reproduce colonial discursive tropes. Implicitly, this reduces Inuit histories and experiences to a story of loss; It assumes that Greenlanders are 'without history' (Wolf, 1982) and if any, it has no other reference points than the European. As Cameron suggests, the postcolonial discursive field has focused narrowly on *colonizing* narratives and their capacity to naturalize – and one could add, internalize – domination, but in effect ignored the stories and histories that are told by Indigenous people. In such analytical cultivation of the imaginative and representational importance of colonial discourses, Indigenous stories effectively do not matter (Cameron, 2015, p. 21). Exemplified in the quotes above, I suggest that the Indigenous stories that *are* accounted for in this scholarship are recognized and interpreted as mere representations of ethno-symbolic colonialist imageries. This may explain why Inuit narratives in the sealing dispute are analyzed as 'strategic primitivism' (Rodgers & Scobie, 2015) and described in terms of counter-discourses, but are otherwise stripped of meaning outside the circuits of (colonial) discourse (see next section 2.2).

Taking Kalaallit (sealing) narratives seriously is likely also limited by the 'imaginative geographies of indigeneity' (Cameron, 2015, p. 22) in contemporary scholarship on Greenland. With an air of 'loss' and 'assimilation', academic works seem to avoid aligning their conceptualizations of Indigeneity in Greenland with contemporary and present livelihoods. In the discursive field, Indigeneity is occasionally described as a political 'trump card' or as a 'casted character' that is flashed by Greenlandic politicians in order to obtain desirable rights (e.g. Thisted, 2019; Bjørst, 2019; Jacobsen & Gad, 2017). For example, I have been questioned by senior scholars in the field on 'how I will manage to search and find Greenlandic indigeneity', as if it is 'something' encapsulated in pre-historic fossils that have unfortunately vanished. Arguably, this academic inclination may underscore 'temporal fantasies […] in which contemporary indigenous people and cultures are assessed in terms of the persistence of the traditional and 'premodern'' (Cameron, 2015, p. 22). Indigenous scholars have argued that these conceptions of Indigeneity relegate Indigenous peoples to past tense, advance perceptions of 'otherness', leave out histories of colonization, and erase Indigenous agency, survivance, and futurity (De Leeuw & Hunt, 2018; Doxtator, 2011; Hunt, 2014; King, 2011; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Specifically, Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson argues that in North America, 'the condition of Indigeneity […] is to have survived' colonization and, thereby, 'to have called up the failure of the project itself' (cited in Cameron, 2015, p. 19). Thus, Simpson stresses that to speak of Indigeneity is to speak of colonialism. It was through colonial contact, that people left their own spaces of self-definition and became 'Indigenous' (Simpson, 2007). It bespeaks the colonization of people's lands and cultures, denial of their sovereignty, and 'the unfinished business of decolonization' (Alfred & Corntassel,

2005; Smith, 2012). A reminder that colonization is never complete, Indigeneity is observed to prompt various forms of settler – and here, academic – anxiety (Tuck and Yang, 2012). Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and co-author Wayne Yang point to the anxious double movements of invoking Indigeneity as 'tradition' and insisting on 'nativelike spirituality', while evading Indigenous sovereignty and the modern presence of (urban) Indigenous peoples (ibid, p. 28). Much academic work on Greenland assumes that Indigeneity is found in something 'authentically' pre-colonial, uncontaminated by coloniality and modernity, and this assumption seemingly hampers the ability to recognize the Indigenous presence and present in Greenland. One recent way of sidestepping Indigeneity is the returning emphasis on the Danish legal recognition of Greenlanders as a 'people', since the establishment of Self-Government in 2009, and is used to discuss whether this recognition unseats being 'Indigenous' (e.g. Thisted, 2019). Kwagu'ł scholar Sarah Hunt cautions against the tendencies to reduce Indigeneity to an idea, words on a screen, theorizations, discourse analysis, or case studies: 'Indigeneity is also lived, practiced and relational', as well as it is heterogenous (Hunt, 2014, p. 29). I suggest that academic claims on the lived and contemporary irrelevance of Indigeneity in Greenland nudge towards a 'Qallunaat fragility' (ala 'white fragility', DiAngelo, 2018) and desire to deem the current political situation as one that is *post*colonial, despite the continuous enmeshing and unravelling of colonial Danish-Greenlandic relations.

Sidelined with a lost past, the conceptual 'troubles' with Indigeneity seem to hover in contemporary (pre-dominantly discursive) analyses of identity formations in Greenland. This draws lines to the critiques of modern-tradition dichotomies and essentialized discourses on Greenlandic authenticity (often depicted in the image of seal hunters). While academic conceptualizations of Indigeneity are often left unresolved or packaged with 'the traditional', scholarly works have mobilized analytical efforts to challenge the reductive workings of tradition vs modernity dualisms. Specifically, they have associated postcolonial concepts of *hybridity* to subvert 'essentialist claims for the inherent authenticity or purity of cultures' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 83). Attributed to the postcolonial theoretical work of Homi Bhabha, 'hybridity' is thought to invoke a negotiated liminal space which hosts contradictions, 'displaces the histories that constitute it' and 'enabl[e] other positions to emerge' (Rutherford, 1990, pp. 211 & 216). In this framework, concepts of hybridity have been forwarded to question essentialist notions in Greenlandic identity discourse (Gad, 2009). Effectively, Greenlandic postcoloniality is accentuated as the (in)ability to navigate and challenge categories of either/or, traditional/modern, Kalaallit/Qallunaat (e.g. Graugaard, 2016). The Greenlandic (often metropolitan) youth is here accentuated as exemplary: They are able to inhabit a sense of belonging in their cultural heritage while they embrace modern lifestyles (Pedersen, 2008; Rygaard, 2002; Rossen, 2017). As Rygaard states, '[t]he young people in Greenland eagerly grab at the temptations of the global world. […] But at the same time, they have their feet planted in their local culture […]' (Rygaard, 2002, p. 182, own translation). Arguably, recognizing the agency and capacity in cultural transgressions has been a significant critique to

essentialism. Meanwhile, I hold that the applications of hybridity in Danish-Greenlandic relations slip towards infusing the concept with 'potential success' and easily end up untroubling existing power asymmetries (see also Gad, 2009). 'The problem is […] that the very equation of hybridity with harmonious fusion or synthesis […] simplifies matters significantly and produces power effects of its own" (Ang 2001 cited in Frello, 2006). In his utilization of 'Indigenous Métissage' as a decolonizing research sensibility, Papaschase Cree scholar Dwayne Donald also critiques postcolonial theories of hybridity for underscoring notions of 'placelessness', which in return disregards Indigenousness as a critical and viable subject position. In consequence, celebrating hybrid subjectivities can be at 'expense of sustained deliberations on socio-economic power and problematic notions of difference' (Donald, 2012, p. 540). In scholarly works on Greenland, the notion of hybridity in postcolonial thought arguably becomes a 'slippery' concept in which some hybrid identities figure as more desirable than others; They are often captured as the accomplished, educated, 'modern', metropolitan youth (e.g. Pedersen, 2008; Rossen, 2017; Rygaard, 2002). In this sense, the concept of hybridity has given way to a celebratory analogy of 'completed' colonial encounters in Greenland and potentially successful adaptation to modern, globalized life.

The analytical work on the potentials of Greenlandic hybridity often alludes more to uncritically consolidating modernity than to creating 'third spaces' where 'new positions emerge' (Bhabha, 1994). Reflecting similar concerns, decolonial scholars have theorized with *modernity/coloniality* to shed light on the constitutive relation that exists between modernity and coloniality (Quijano, 2007). In decolonial thinking, modernity is analyzed as inseparable from colonial conquest. This lens stresses how modernity has been cast and staged as a unilineal universal history through narratives of progress and 'good things to come' (Mignolo, 2018; Icaza, 2017). As Walter Mignolo (2018) explains, 'the consequences of the word (and narratives weaved around it) results in the invention of an ontology of history that extends from the origin of humanity to its modern (and postmodern) times and forms'. Coloniality, explained as a decolonial concept, demonstrates that 'all the narratives and celebrations of modernity are only half of the story' (p. 17). In this sense, the argument holds that modernity cannot be thought, sensed, experienced without its underside, coloniality. As the 'darker side of modernity', coloniality denotes the movements of erasure of other worlds, forms of being and living through processes of oppression, exploitation, and dispossession (Icaza, 2017; Vazquez, 2018; Mignolo, 2018). Decolonial scholars thus suggest that decolonial thinking departs from postcolonial thought, because a decolonial approach does not assume modernity in its different facets (unfinished, hybrid, plural, post-, etc.) as the totality of reality. Instead, decolonial thinking seeks to depart from the limits and exteriority of modernity (Vazquez, 2014 cited in Icaza, 2017). Notably, Greenlandic-Danish artist-scholar Pia Arke, has expressed similar concerns with the limits to creating a 'third place' through a purely postcolonial theoretical lens. Formulating her 'ethno-aesthetics' in 1995, Arke noted that: 'You may want to stress that postcolonialism is an intellectual invention combining

postmodernism and anti-colonialism in a way that conceals the continuation of colonialism by other forms of suppression and exploitation of the Third World. However, this is not an insight that in itself will transcend the regime of Western intellectualism from which it has sprung' (Pia Arke, 2010, p. 27). 'Decoloniality' thus seems to respond to Arke's concerns, as it insists on the analytics of modernity/coloniality *and* the creative processes *for* possibilities of an otherwise (Mignolo, 2018; Walsh, 2018). As it is articulated by Catherine Walsh (2018), 'decoloniality denotes ways of thinking, knowing, being, and doing that began with, but also precede, the colonial enterprise and invasion. It implies the recognition and undoing of hierarchical structures of race, gender, heteropatriarchy, and class that continue to control life, knowledge, spirituality, and thought, structures that are clearly intertwined with and constitutive of global capitalism and Western modernity' (p. 17). Importantly, Walsh stresses that decoloniality does not imply the absence of coloniality, because it will likely never disappear. Rather, she explains decoloniality as a 'serpentine movement' towards possibilities of other modes of thinking, knowing, sensing, being and living: 'an otherwise in plural' (p. 81).

Dissatisfied with the conceptual and analytical ways in which postcolonial applications in Greenlandic studies continue to reproduce colonial modes of thinking – often constituted in the promises and narratives of modernity – this research can be seen as orienting towards decolonial thinking and decolonization. This orientation is motivated by the limitations in postcolonial analytical developments on the role of seal in Greenlandic political processes. While postcolonial works have contributed important insights on the relations between colonial constructs and Inuit seal hunting (and other seal relations), their insufficiency is also expressed in the ways in which seal-Kalaallit relations are persistently analyzed within the limits of colonial discourses. This has led to analytical conclusions that tend to relegate contemporary seal relations to a colonial or pre-colonial past and read Kalaallit seal narratives almost exclusively as reflections of regressive traditionalism, ethno-symbolism, or 'strategic primitivism' (see next section 2.2). In this framework, Kalaallit stories seem stripped of their lived relevance, except if they figure as counter-narratives that directly address (but are still confined to) colonial representations. Here, the discursive struggles embedded in *either/or* dualisms (such as that of the 'traditional' vs 'modern') are often sought to be resolved in conceptual hybrids of *both/and*. Focused on demonstrating the transfusions between Greenlandicness and modernity, scholars have ignored the constitutive relations to coloniality and paved way for a celebratory narrative of 'moving forward' through a globalized modern world. In this narrative, which springs out of the specific applications of postcolonial thought in Greenlandic studies, the 'seal' – and the practices, knowledges, worldviews, and epistemologies which narratives of Kalaallit-

seal relations inhabit – is often reduced to a colonial stereotype which impedes postcolonial liberation[9].

In my theoretical approach, orienting towards decolonial and Indigenous scholarship is not a wholesale discarding of poststructural, postcolonial thought as unimportant or un-useful (Smith, 2012). This thesis also draws on theoretical insights and conceptual tools, such as deconstruction and discourse, developed in the post-schools of thought. Yet, as highlighted above, my research is troubled by the ways in which current and cursory scholarly applications seem to *settle* certain ways of knowing coloniality, postcoloniality, Indigeneity, modernity, nature-culture, and human-nature relations in contemporary Greenland. In my approach, moving towards decolonization involves destabilizing the ways in which these academic settlements underscore 'epistemic ignorances', which reproduce invalidation and inferiority of non-Qallunaat epistemes within academic structures (Kuokkanen, 2007, pp. 66-68) – and further, how they confine Greenlandic decolonization processes to specific (Qallunaat) imaginaries and materializations of postcolonial emancipation. Attending to the possibilities for the plural otherwise (Walsh, 2018), Cameron asserts that decolonization does not only demand 'reckoning with colonial practices, structures, knowledges, and relations but also require nurturing the practices, subjectivities, and aspirations grounded elsewhere' (Cameron, 2015, p. 19). As is argued by decolonial and Indigenous scholars, this entails attending to that which has been and is being erased (e.g. Alfred and Corntassel, 2005; Coulthard, 2014; Vazquez, 2011 & 2018; Simpson, 2011) – that which 'has been produced as absent through colonial modes of ordering' (de Sousa Santos, 2004 cited in Cameron, 2015, p. 19).

Attentive to the various ways in which my research recreates asymmetrical, colonial relations by way of its undertaking, its language, its knowledge forms and academic constellation (et cetera), I do not claim to be undertaking 'decolonial research' (Article #4). Importantly, 'decolonization is not a metaphor' and using it as an explanatory or legitimizing term can quickly derail from the hard work and process of decolonizing (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Rather, a decolonial orientation provides my work with a lens to *unsettle* the approaches and conclusions which hold Kalaallit-seal relations as 'empty

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[9] This tendency is exemplified in a recent DR3 video, which was campaigning for making education about Greenland and the Faroe Islands a compulsory part of the Danish school curricula. In the video, Anton and Kristine from Greenland criticize seal hunting and sealskin regalia as Danish stereotypes about Greenland. These 'sealing stereotypes' are furthermore aligned with their critiques of Danish images of Greenland as a 'banana republic'. They seem to distance themselves from sealing to refute colonial, racialized stereotypes of Greenlanders as 'happy hunters' and 'children of nature', and simultaneously fail to comment on the racialization embedded in the rhetoric of 'banana republic'. Borgerforslaget: Sæt Rigsfælleskabet på skoleskemaet: https://www.borgerforslag.dk/se-og-stoet-forslag/?Id=FT-01661&fbclid=IwAR0aEZkO7YaCXsnPBoskIXLBwo0AT950d4rUsxJPEMiMiRj4YiTz0mnoAcY

signifiers' in discursive struggles (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; section 2.2.). This implies a dwelling on and working through my agitation with intellectual positionings on the meaning and role of 'seals' in Greenland, which often seem abstracted from the lived experiences of those who hunt for seal, eat seal, sew with seal, story-tell with seals and so on – and who may think, sense, experience, and practice otherwise. In my approach, 'unsettlement' thus involves theoretical work which aspires to unsettle taken-for-granted epistemologies rather than settling on one. In other words, it formulates a movement away from 'epistemic ignorances' (Kuokkanen, 2007) and towards 'epistemic disobedience' (Mignolo, 2009). In my research, epistemic disobedience is reflected in an underlying hesitance towards the discursive, the ethno-symbolic, the representative, and the *post*colonial conceptual frameworks; and it is reflected in a privileging of the plurality of ways in which Kalaallit relate, conceptualize and narrate seals, as valid forms of knowledge. In this work, *unsettling* colonizing knowledges is not only concerned with the ways in which 'seal narratives' may re-inscribe or counter colonial discourse, but also with the ways in which they, as 'seal pluralities', participate in decolonial struggles. This makes way for a theorizing with seals and people as relational, active agents in processes of decolonization (Todd, 2014), as discussed in the following section. Overall, it articulates an aspiration towards conceptually recognizing the ways in which Kalaallit-seal relations nurture and reciprocate Kalaallit world making, which may also be 'grounded elsewhere' (Cameron, 2015, p. 19) than in colonial modalities.

2.2. THEORIZING WITH SEAL

Decades of global disputes over seal hunting have presented clashes of perspectives and worldviews between animal rights activists, international political actors, and Inuit communities (Lynge, 1992; Wenzel, 1991). According to Dauvergne and Neville (2011), these disputes have been framed by competing 'mindbombs'[10] of right and wrong, which seem to operate in an 'increasingly crowded discursive landscape' of anti-sealing movements and counter-movements (p. 192). In these ways, seals have entered global political discourse as symbolic representations of competing claims over rights and resources in the Arctic. In these contentions, seals have been framed in an 'image politics' to privilege certain approaches to animals over others (ibid; Rodgers and Scobie, 2015). Specifically, the semiotic transformation of seals into *white* and *cuddly babies* has become a central representation in the formation of the animal rights movement's 'affective' politics (Ahmed, 2004). The anthropomorphic image of the seal

[10] The term 'mindbombs' was initially coined by Greenpeace's co-founder, Bob Hunter. 'Mindbombs' are intended to convince people that some choices and practices are morally and/or environmentally wrong, using emotional language and images to change global consciousness. Dauvergne and Neville use the expression to analyse the image politics employed by anti-sealing movements and counter-movements (Dauvergne and Neville, 2011).

as a 'white baby' has thus performed as a (victorious) banner in the animal activist mobilizations to shut down the international sealskin trade (Lynge, 1992; Wenzel, 1991). The political poetics of 'baby seals' continuously recirculate across various platforms, from the European Parliament, to Oscar nominations in Hollywood, to social media like Twitter (Arnaquq-Baril, 2016; Rodgers and Scobie, 2015).

In response, Inuit advocates have voiced the cultural-specific importance of seals to Arctic livelihoods through #sealfie campaigns, videos and films, public demonstrations and interviews. Confronting the logics of Euro-American animal ethics, these mobilizations forward a different presence of seals in global arenas by displaying images of sealskin clothing, seal meat, and freshly harvested seals in Inuit daily lives (Arnaquq-Baril, 2016; Delaney, 2018; Enuaraq-Strauss, 2014; Inuit Sila, 2013; Peter et al, 2002). In discursive theoretical frameworks, this Inuit self-imagery and authorship come to represent a 'tactical primitivist' approach (Rodgers and Scobie, 2015), drawing lines to Gayatri Spivak's coining of 'strategic essentialism': the temporary essentialization in minority groups' self-representations aimed at achieving specific political goals[11]. In this framework, Rodgers and Scobie (2015) conceive the Inuit narratives as a kind of strategic 'primitivism', which appeals to colonial romantic notions through 'exoticized' imagery while it also enables Inuit to defend the continuous cultural relevance of seal hunting. Here, seals – and Inuit storying of seals – are framed theoretically as political symbols or 'emblems' to *mark* Inuit culture and identity (Briggs, 1997) in discursive processes of group formations. In poststructural readings of the sealing disputes, the seal then appears as a kind of 'floating signifier', emptied of meaning, but subject to competing discourses in political struggles (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

In this thesis, I seek to move away from the theoretical confines of these discursive fields which tend to disregard the knowledges, practices, and lived experiences of Inuit relations with seals. Challenging the academic tendencies to reduce seals to political identity markers in Inuit lives, my research treats seals as being 'intimately interwoven' into various aspects of Greenlandic life. Drawing on Métis/Otipemisiw scholar Zoe Todd's study (2014) in Paulatuuq (Arctic Canada), contemporary Kalaallit-seal relationships appear as an 'under-theorized' but 'active point of engagement'. In my theorizing with seals, I utilize Todd's notion of 'fish pluralities' which denotes the multiple ways of knowing and defining fish (in my study: seals). 'Seal pluralities' point to the plurality of ways in which Kalaallit engage with seals – including hunting, preparing, eating, sharing, tanning, sewing, storytelling, et cetera – and which encompass 'cosmologies that place humans and animals in ongoing and reciprocal relationships' (p. 222). Importantly, this approach does not hinge on seals as a way to map Inuit cosmologies, but seeks to open up a conceptual framework in which seals

[11] Gayatri Spivak coined the term 'strategic essentialism' in an interview with Elizabeth Grosz in 1990. Spivak has later criticized the use and misunderstandings of the term and disavowed it, but has not completely deserted it either (Chakraborty, 2010; Spivak, 2008)

and people, together, are recognized as active agents, entwined in the political landscape (ibid; O'Connor et al., 2017) of Greenland. Importantly, being 'co-residents' in the Arctic (Wenzel, 1991) as a *colonized* space, relations between Kalaallit and seals mediate colonial processes. In this sense, this framework questions anthropological inclinations to place cosmologies of human-nature relations as "pre-colonial" and thereby fail to center an analysis of colonization (Cameron, 2015; Todd, 2014). In this study, Kalaallit-seal relations are recognized as a site of colonial encounters, which enmesh and entangle coloniality and Indigenous life-making.

In this framework, the seal emerges as a conceptual lens, or prism, to examine the Greenlandic (post)colonial present. Therefore, the seal does not just figure as a focal point where perspectives and worldviews meet and clash. In this study, seals exemplify ways in which non-human entities, as active agents, also partake in processes of colonization, capitalization, modernization, nation-state formation and decolonization (Belcourt, 2015; O'Connor et al., 2017; Todd, 2014; White, 2017). Importantly, this is a differently placed critique of anthropocentric nature-culture and human-animal divides than those placed in the 'ontological turn' and post-humanist thought. This is, in one way, cautioned by the ways in which post-humanist insights (on more-than-human agency and sentience) are being framed within Euro-American narratives and thereby risk to invisibilize Indigenous epistemes and locations (Todd, 2016; Sundberg, 2014). In another way, my theorizing with seal is intentionally located in contemporary Kalaallit lifeworlds which engage and relate with seals, but do not live as seals. The study is thus not attentive to animal life forms, neither is it focused on conceptualizing the 'humanimal' (e.g. Haraway, 2008). In this sense, my framework does not claim an un-anthropocentric perspective, but instead labours human-nature divides as a racialized, colonized site (Belcourt, 2015). In this approach, it is not possible to consider 'more-than-human worlds' (Whatmore, 2002) without also addressing the ways in which they are historically and continuously ordered by logics of white supremacy – as, for example, when seals are portrayed as 'white babies' to be protected from 'savage hunters'. My lens of 'seal' therefore employs 'animality' as inseparable from the historic (and ongoing) erasure of Indigenous lives through colonial mechanisms (Belcourt, 2015). In this way, seals do not enter the study as individual bodies, but through their various and temporal relations in colonized spaces. In other words, in my study, seals do not in or by themselves relay stories of the Greenlandic present, but their 'relationality' does.

From this conceptual standpoint, the seal becomes a critical *narrative trace* to follow, because seals in Kalaallit lives activate sites of engagement in which colonial strategies and Indigenous lifeways intercede and interpose (Todd, 2014). In these sites, 'conceptual, historical, political, and material geographies collide and interweave' (Cameron, 2015, p. 23). Yet, tracing them should not be confused with searching for a disciplined or 'charmed storyline' (Cameron, 2012), which organizes colonial encounters according to a development from pre-colonial to colonial to postcolonial temporalities. Rather, the lens of 'seal' immerses the messy, entangled, and placed

ways in which colonial relations between Kalaallit, Qallunaat, land and sea are continually made and remade. In this way, the prism of 'seal' offers an analytical opportunity to explore the complexities and nuances of how Kalaallit narrate, negotiate, and contend with the (post)colonial present (Todd, 2014). In such ways, engaging with contemporary 'seal pluralities' may cultivate a critical mode of relating to pasts, presents, and futures that cannot be separated from colonial processes, but which are not wholly defined by coloniality either.

2.3. THINKING IN THE BORDERLANDS

Crucial to formulating the theoretical trajectories of this research, my conceptual research framework is placed and framed by 'thinking in the borderlands'. In a specific sense, this is conditioned by my in-between yet privileged positionings as a Danish-speaking, white-coding, cis-gendered, Qallunaaq-Kalaaleq researcher – raised in Denmark, as a person who has learned and still learns to navigate between my Kalaallit/mestizaje family and white Danish family (Graugaard, 2016). In a broader sense, thinking in the borderlands connotes the ambivalence, unrest, and 'intimate terrors' which accompany the creation of borders (Anzaldua, 2012) – borders which are not only geographic but also racial and sexual, epistemic and ontological, linguistic and national, and which run along the interior routes of modernity/coloniality (Mignolo, 2018). In some of the first formulations of borderland thinking, Gloria Anzaldua explained that borderlands are formed 'where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country – a border culture' (Anzaldua, 2012, p. 25). In the preface to the 4th edition of Anzaldua's work, 'Borderlands/La Frontera – The New Mestiza', Hurtado and Cantu articulate the borderland as a place where oppositions meet and mix, not to obliterate each other or subsume into larger wholes, but to combine and create new, unexpected ways (p. 6). Interrogating colonial history through her personal Greenlandic-Danish 'bastardization'[12], Pia Arke (2010) also pointed to the resurgent places in between borders: 'If we are to belong in a place, we shall have to create that place ourselves. We need an expansion of the border; we need to create a third place that will seriously disturb the binary logic of First and Third World relations' (p. 28).

Arguably, borderlands draw comparisons with postcolonial concepts of hybridity and 'the third place' (e.g. Bhabha, 1994), which have carried importance for contemporary arguments of non-binary fluidities and for resisting colonial dichotomies. Yet, I have also criticized the cursory applications of these concepts in Greenlandic studies, which tend underscore and endorse celebratory narratives of global modernity in ways 'that

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[12] This reference to 'bastard' is taken from Arke's own expression and terminology (Borelli, 2010; Gregory, 2017).

concea[l] the continuation of colonialism by other forms of suppression and oppression' (Arke, 2010, p. 27; section 2.1). In my view, borderlands are thus not to be confused with an imagined *post*-scenario or accomplished relief from the epistemic and multi-faceted violence of borders. Rather, they embody 'the colonial wound, a terrifying positionality from which coloniality is vivid and is resisted non-dichotomously [...]' (Lugones, 2018, p. 14). In this elaboration, borderland thinking may thus be articulated as an offspring of colonial encounters – conditioned by its colic, tense and unsettling birth. Unable to pass through the confines of 'the normal' (Anzaldua, 2012), I labour borderland thinking in the ways that it suspends the uniformity and universalization of thought and being. In this sense, thinking in the borderlands is thinking with 'the pluriverse'. As opposed to concepts of universality, the pluriverse recognizes and enacts the world as inhabited by multiple, distinct worlds with different histories and worldviews, ways of knowing, sensing and being (Blaser, 2013; Blaser & de la Cadena, 2018; Mignolo, 2013; Law, 2011). These comprise different place-based lived realities, ontologies and epistemologies, and temporal trajectories 'which bring themselves into being and sustain themselves even as they interact, interfere and mingle with each other, most often under asymmetrical circumstances' (Blaser, 2013, p. 552). By thinking with the pluriverse, modernity or modern knowledge is thus situated within its own epistemological limits, allowing for and making visible more ways of knowing (Erhnström-Fuentes, 2016). Importantly, the pluriverse does not signal worlds as independent units, but stresses their entanglements with and through colonial mechanisms. Thinking 'pluritopically' does therefore not connote 'studying' or 'crossing' borders, but rather a dwelling in the entanglements, dwelling in the border (Mignolo, 2013). Crucial to my research, this kind of border dwelling is also a kind of residing that concedes with the encounters between humans and non-humans (de la Cadena, 2009; Erhnström-Fuentes, 2016; O'Connor et al., 2018; Todd, 2014). Coincidentally metaphorical, the etymology of *puisi* [seal] in Kalaallisut [the Greenlandic Inuit language] refers to 'someone who breaks the surface'[13]. Moving in borderlands between air, land, and sea, human and non-human worlds, seals thus also call upon the pluriverse. In itself, this is not an insight that originates in scholarships on pluriversality, but in Inuit cosmologies in which seals and people inhabit distinct worlds, but meet, relate, and reciprocate as human and non-human persons (Fienup-Riordan, 1990, 1995 & forthcoming; O'Connor et al., 2017; Peter et al., 2002; Sonne, 2017; Todd, 2014).

While this approach is premised in and foster a 'multi-epistemic' world and literacy (Kuokkanen, 2007; Sundberg, 2014), it also brings attention to the partiality, particularity, and situatedness of knowledge (Haraway, 1988). From borderland thinking, it follows that 'any attempts to fix Indigenous [or any form of] knowledge can only be partial' (Hunt, 2014, p. 31). In this sense, the pluriverse also entails a theoretical rendering that subjective locations and relations are conditional to and co-creative of knowledge production. Arguably, this destabilizes claims to 'omnipotent scholarly expertise' (Article #4), as well as settler and settling ways of 'how we come

[13] Thanks to Kennet Pedersen, Associate Professor at Ilisimatusarfik, for sharing this in our 'History of the Seal' class, Spring 2017, Nuuk (see also Article #1).

to know Indigeneity' in academic structures (Hunt, 2014, p. 27). In my approach, this carries conceptual and analytical consequences to academic attempts to represent or relay Inuit and Kalaallit ways of knowing and being. Recognizing that they may be embedded in other worlds also presupposes that they may not be known easily. Academic efforts to translate and making them readily understandable to majority populations by creating analogies and equivalences, risks erasing differences (De la Cadena, 2015 cited in Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018; Article #3). As Helen Verran (2013) states, 'learning to recognize and value such difference, learning to refuse the steps which require a colonizing reduction to a shared category and acceptance that we may not be metaphysically committed to a common world, is what is involved in cultivating a postcolonial impulse' (cited in Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018, p. 78). To Cameron, in her positionality as a Qallunaaq scholar, such approach includes pointing to spaces in between knowledges and acknowledging the limits of what can be known. According to Cameron, this demands greater responsibility for what 'we do not know and must know' and recognition of the rich contributions of Inuit intellectuals (Cameron, 2015). Importantly, Cameron's approach does not reflect an ambition to undertake 'better ethnographies' (Braun et al, 2016). It is not *about* Inuit or about extracting knowledge for use in other places; it rather enacts a movement towards *placing* and *displacing* Qallunaat knowledges and claims, acknowledging 'that we know far less than we think we do' (Cameron, 2015, pp. 35-36). Theorizing with an 'ethnographic limit' in order to break with existing techniques of representation and analysis, Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson (2007) has introduced the concept of 'ethnographic refusal'. In their elaborated theorization of *refusal*, Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and co-author Wayne Yang (2014) propose an analytical starting point of 'unbecoming claims', that is: 'resistance to making someone or something the subject of research; it is a form of objectless analysis, an analytical practice with nothing and no one to code' (p. 812). While these analytical frameworks connect with and spill over into questions of research methodologies and ethics (as will be discussed in Part 3.), they also point to the theoretical limitations in knowledge production and propose a radically different relation with it, which displaces scholarly ability and claim to 'know' the Arctic.

PART 3. APPROACHES TO THE FIELD AND METHODOLOGICAL TRAJECTORIES

3.1. METHODOLOGIZING THE CONCEPTUAL LENS OF SEAL NARRATIVES

The theoretical attention to unsettling (post)colonial knowledge inquisitions on Kalaallit-seal relations (Part 2) relates to the methodological approach to working with seal narratives. The examination of how lived and studied narratives engage and unsettle colonial processes in Greenland calls for a methodology that seeks to center an analysis of colonial relations beyond the confines of postcolonial and poststructural discursive analysis. As discussed in Part 2, the analytical traditions of discourse (and to some extent, deconstructionist) analysis tend to focus on the ways in which seal narratives in Greenland re-inscribe or counter colonial discourse – but in effect, they risk ignoring the experiences, practices, and knowledges of Kalaallit who live and engage with seals. Such analyses often reduce seals to political identity markers in Inuit lives, but fail to recognize Kalaallit narratives of seals as informative to understanding colonial encounters between Indigenous lifeways and colonial practices.

Seeking to avoid reproducing analytical approaches that tend to ignore Indigenous lifeways and perspectives, the thesis seeks to operationalize 'lived and studied narratives' of Kalaallit-seal relations as another way to examine colonial relations in Greenland, then and now. Rather than analyzing processes of colonization primarily through discourses or historical documentations in the progression of historical events, lived and studied seal narratives are approached as the vantage points for analytical inquiry. This approach proposes a research process which begins through the lens, or prism, of seal narratives. This is inspired by the work of Julie Cruikshank in which narratives are approached as sites and modes of colonial encounters in which local stories and the material world collide, interweave, and intersect with larger historical, social, and political processes (Cruikshank, 2005). Suggestively, this framework is then not tied to tracing and mapping progressions from pre-colonial to colonial to postcolonial periods, but it calls for inquiries that are more interested in what and how seal narratives can tell of the various, ongoing, and complex processes provoked by colonial encounters. I argue that this approach brings forth other stories of colonization, 'from the ground up' (Walsh, 2018, p. 19), that may be blindsided in (post)colonial historical analyses. Figure 2 illustrates this method to examine colonial relations in Greenland which begins by and through the lens, or prism, of lived and studied seal narratives. Here , the different topics and focal points of the thesis articles have arisen through this 'prism of seal':

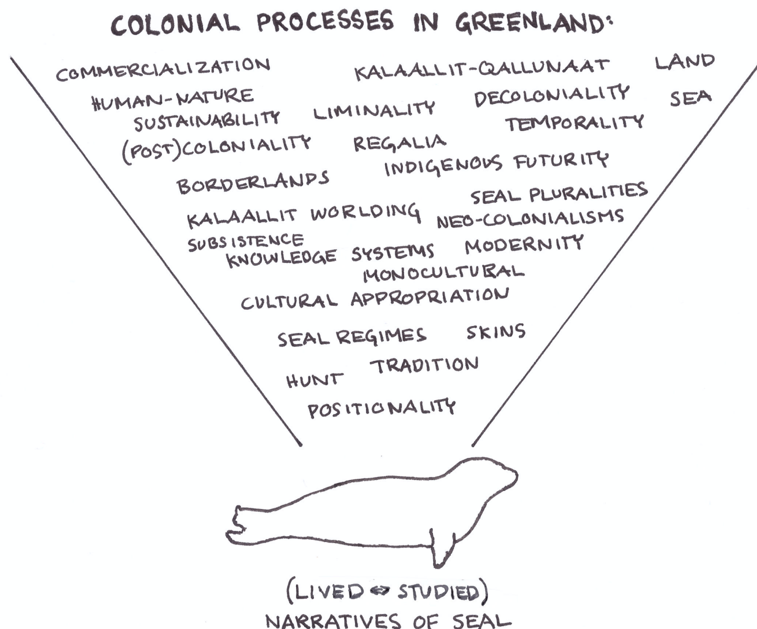

Figure 2. (Lived ~ studied) narratives of seal.

While this approach points to two kinds of narratives, the lived and the studied, I am aware of the artificial and positivistic dualism it potentially creates. 'The lived' and 'the studied' are thus not approached, here, as separate and mutually exclusive categories; They are rather utilized to pinpoint the 'abtraction-ness' (Kramvig and Flemmen, 2018) from Indigenous lives and stories and the luring 'placelessness' (Donald, 2012) which studies of (the ethno-politics of) sealing practices in the Arctic often gravitate towards (Part 2). In this framework, lived narratives is an articulation that intends to bring attention to lived, practiced, place-based Kalaallit ways to story (with) seals. They are not merely discursive representations, but include the in-situ, embodied engagements and relational practices with land, animals (and all else), worldviews and belief systems. Lived narratives may then be understood in line with Julie Cruikshank (1998), as 'particular formulations' which 'continue to complicate – and to surprise – universalizing, commonsense, expectations about what we mean by knowledge' (p. 69). Paying attention to lived narratives as a research practice then also allows recognition of how narratives (may) unsettle colonial knowledge inquisitions on seals within Western epistemes. In this sense, acknowledging and holding space for lived narratives in the thesis research becomes a method to interrogate and 'reframe' studied narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations. In the articulation by Māori scholar

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 'framing' is about making decisions about the parameters of a problem; what is in the foreground and in the background; what shadings or complexities exist within the frame. Reframing is then 'about taking control over the ways in which Indigenous issues are discussed and handled' (Smith, 2012, p. 154). Lived narratives of seals, as part of Kalaallit lives, are thus approached as part of reframing studies of colonization in and of Greenland. Notably, the wording of 'lived' and 'studied' narratives is not operationalized in the thesis articles; It should instead be read as post-reflections on the thesis' approach to orienting its research in Indigenous stories as part of the work to problematize existing (including its own) knowledge epistemes and inquisitions in the Arctic.

As part of 'reframing' studies of colonial processes in Greenland, this methodological approach to working with seal narratives is informed by Indigenous scholars' critiques of the ways in which knowledge *on* and *about* Indigenous peoples has been collected, classified, and represented for the benefit of researchers and colonizing nations (e.g. Smith, 2012). In Greenland (and the Arctic at large), this critique invites for a consideration of the colonial dynamics in Arctic research and the active roles of ethnographies, anthropologies, and other scientific descriptions in underscoring Danish colonization (Krupnik, 2014; Thuesen et al., 2017). This poses a methodological challenge to disrupt the traditions of ethnography and anthropology and their legacies of gazing on, collecting, and describing the Eskimo other (Fienup-Riordan, 1990). In my research, this requires cultivating a sensibility towards how my own research is embedded in and reproduces multiple layers of colonial practices (Article #4). As Papaschase Cree scholar Dwayne Donald suggests in his articulation of 'Indigenous Métissage', such research sensibility should be cultivated 'in light of the ways in which [researchers] themselves are implicated in how the research is carried out and interpreted' (Donald, 2012: 546). In my methodological framework, this involves employing reflexivity about the ways in which positionalities and relations within qualitative research *condition* knowledge production and representation (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Tomaselli et al., 2008). As a challenge to and redefinition of the traditional fields of ethnography and anthropology, I thus approach the stories that emerge in and through my research as being *co-constructed* through research encounters that entangle colonial relations between researcher and researched (Article #4). In this perspective, (colonial) research encounters then also shape and structure texts, arguments, and explanations (Tomaselli et al., 2008). Exposing the particularity, partiality, and situatedness of knowledge productions (Haraway, 1988; Lapina, 2017), an auto-ethnographic approach to the research into seal narratives is utilized as a way to unsettle scholarly claims to omnipotent expertise in Arctic research (Article #4). In this framework, auto-reflexivity responds to Kwagu'ł scholar Sarah Hunt's statement: 'If we accept the alive and ongoing nature of colonial relations, and the lived aspects of Indigeneity […], any attempts to fix Indigenous knowledge can only be partial' (Hunt, 2014, p. 31).

Approaching seal narratives (lived and studied) as partial, situated, and co-constructed through colonial relations in research encounters, emerges in this research as a method to disturb the naturalized position of contemporary Arctic scholars to 'conceptualize their gaze as neutral, helpful, objective and necessary' (Cameron, 2015, p. 14). This further underscores a methodological move away from approaching Inuit stories as a field of empirical 'data' to be used, represented, and expropriated for the sake of academic analysis. Here, Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson's introduction of 'ethnographic limits and refusals' (2014) to techniques of representation and analysis becomes informative (as further discussed in next sections). This requires considerations of how my fieldwork and interviews are relayed in ways that does not objectify, codify, or Other research participants and the stories they have shared (ibid; Tuck & Yang, 2014). In the work by Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and co-author Wayne Yang, such practice is the analytical starting point of 'unbecoming claims' (ibid). While I do not suggest that the thesis works with ethnographic refusals and unbecoming claims as a formalistic practice, they still inform (in different ways) considerations of what, when, and how to include and analyze empirical materials in the developments of the thesis articles. My methodology is thus not invested in depicting and capturing Kalaallit ways of relating to seals for the sake of anthropological descriptions, a 'better ethnography', or a more confident colonial critique (Braun, 2016). Rather, this methodological approach seeks to acknowledge and engage partial, placed-based, lived, practiced Kalaallit narratives in relation to how they surprise, comply, complicate, disturb, and reframe existing 'seal regimes' in and outside academia (including my own). The following section 3.2 explicates how this approach to seal narratives forms the methodological framework of *tracing* seal narratives. Section 3.3 explicates the methodological considerations in relation to the practical processes of my fieldwork and data collection. Section 3.4 then discusses how the methodology is unfolded in the engagement and analysis of (lived and studied) seal narratives.

3.2. TRACING AS A METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The methodological approach to working with seal narratives described above prescribes a way of 'doing' and 'moving' in the research process of tracing narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations. That is, the practice of *tracing* seal narratives forwards methodological considerations of *how* they are traced, studied, and told in the process of researching. These methodological *hows* are informed by the developments in Indigenous scholarship over the past two decades on decolonizing research designs and methodologies (review in Asselin and Basile, 2018). The efforts to destabilize colonial research relationships in Arctic research necessarily form the methodological components, terms, and ethical principles of the methodology of tracing seal narratives. Meanwhile, they are situated in my particular, cultural- and place-specific research experiences in Greenland. This includes, as well, my aspirations and (sense of) failures to decolonize my research methodology. Altogether, these components and

considerations constitute the methodological framework that is described in this section and illustrated in Figure 3. The following sections, 3.3 and 3.4, explicate in greater detail how this methodology is engaged in the fieldwork and interviews, as well as in processing and analyzing the empirical data, and writing up of research findings.

Substantive work by Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) scholars has been done to formulate research practices that disrupt colonial research relationships, and that recognize and support the self-determination of Indigenous peoples and communities. While there are varying, diverse, and context-specific formulations of decolonizing methodologies, Indigenous (including Inuit) scholars have forwarded a focus on changing the terms of contemporary research to being *by* and *for* the communities involved (e.g. Bishop, 1999; Holm and Basile, 2019; Kovach, 2009; Markussen, 2017; Pfeifer, 2018; Porsanger, 2004; Smith, 2012; Williamson, 2014; Wilson, 2008). Challenging positivist and post-positivist research frameworks, such work has posited critical questions to academic inquiry, by asking: *For whom is the research being undertaken and for what purposes? Who owns the process? Who benefits?* (Smith, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Such proposition urges critical assessments of control over research topics and distributions of knowledge, forms of consent with research participants, access to research findings, accountability of the researcher, as well as the locus of power in the research setting. Importantly, Inuit scholars, Ulunnguaq Markussen (2017) and Pitseolak Pfeifer (2018), stress that, while involvement of Inuit in research projects is necessary, involvement is in itself insufficient for decolonizing and locally orienting research frameworks, designs, and expectations. As Pfeifer argues, the turn to research *by* and *for* Inuit also requires changes to research assumptions of what counts as valid knowledge and scientific evidence (2018). This requires more than 'sprinkling' concepts or principles into research frameworks and calls on 'new paradigms and epistemic relationships that will transgress and subvert the prevailing logic of hegemonic rationalism and colonial superiority' (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 157). Similar concerns have been taken up by Indigenous scholars, across the globe, who are formulating and employing research methodologies so that they make sense from Indigenous knowledge perspectives (e.g. Bishop, 1999; Kovach, 2009; Porsanger, 2004; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008).

These considerations and methodological propositions to changing research and knowledge relationships have underscored the process of tracing seal narratives. Yet, working with or (re)claiming Inuit or Kalaallit knowledge perspectives can be complicated to the mixed researcher (like myself) for whom self-location within knowledge systems is not a straightforward act (Graugaard, 2016). Drawing on Dwayne Donald's work on Indigenous Metissage (2012), Métis scholar Leonie Sandercock (2018) writes: 'One of the challenges of existing methodological work is that it forces those who find themselves working within complex spaces to employ overly simplistic and polarized notions to explain their relationships to place, people, and politics, rather than taking a more relational view of how these interactions unfold over time' (pp. 24-25). To counter polarized notions of 'choosing sides', Dwayne

Donald (2018) proposes to present stories that highlight complex and entangled Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships, emphasizing that 'they are both simultaneously and paradoxically antagonistic and conjoined' (p. 543). In my methodological approach to Kalaallit narratives of seals, this urges a component of **acknowledging researcher's location and positionality** as a way to employ reflexivity about the ways in which my own body-knowledge, epistemological, and ontological assumptions, and positional privileges shape the research process and outcome (Sundberg, 2014). Article #4 discusses and exemplifies the use of auto-ethnography to work with and through this complex. Figure 3 illustrates how this is one of the key components of the methodology of tracing seal narratives.

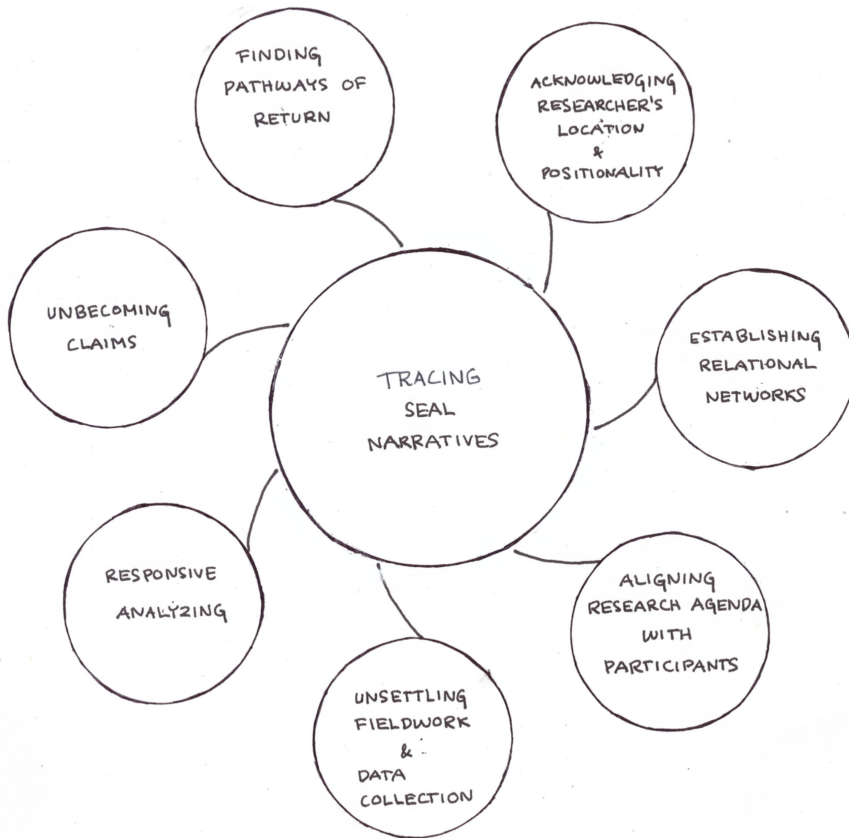

Figure 3. Methodological framework of tracing seal narratives.

Importantly, this practice involves more than flashes of 'positional confession', before proceeding as usual (Tuck and Yang, 2014, p. 814). Rather, 'it underscores how important it is for engagement to be named as partial and political, for it to be overseen

and checked for accuracy, for boundaries and protocols around knowledge to be respected, for it to be sincere, serious, and long-term, and for it to be grounded in relationships' (Cameron, 2015, p. 28). Here, **establishing relational networks** is a necessary method of moving towards researcher accountability and checking that the research's undertakings, doings, and results correspond with the participants and communities involved (see Figure 3). To establish and work through relational networks is also a way to counter the recurrent patterns of 'hit-and-run' research by which external Arctic researchers frequently enter and exit Greenlandic communities as anonymous, unmarked bodies without correspondence, exchange, or report with locals or Greenland at large (Hauptmann, 2016; Article #4). As a key component of my methodology, I have planned and set up fieldwork locations and interviews primarily through existing personal relations, connections, and networks in Greenland, but not exclusively (for details, see section 3.3). As Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2008) argues, this way of establishing contact with research participants through the intermediaries of personal relations, family, and friends is an important aspect of Indigenous research practices. It is important for 'establishing rapport with research participants and placing the researcher within a circle of relations. This in turn enforces accountability of the researcher, as they are responsible not only to themselves but also to the circle of relations' (p. 130). Furthermore, this allows participants to ask critical questions to the intermediary about the research and its motives, or to decline the request to participate – which may be difficult to do through the direct interaction between researcher and participant (ibid). In this way, relational networks can also be critical to establish and assess forms of consent and agreements regarding the participation and use of interviews. This method potentially leaves some challenges to the process of data collection, because the selection of interviewees involves aspects of contingency and serendipity. However, as my research objectives were to converse with informants whose lives, positions, or professions relate with seal hunting, the possible 'participant group' was already specified to persons who could qualify, validate, and contribute to my studies of seal relations with their experiences. This means that the process of finding interviewees was not merely left to coincidences. In turn, working through relational networks often allowed access to interviews with, for example, full-time hunters who may not otherwise have participated due to our lack of relations or issues of translations – or simply because I would not have been able to know who the hunters were and establish the initial contact. Besides working through existing relational networks, I have also set up interviews through phone calls or e-mail with research participants whose position or profession related to the research objectives. (See table in Appendix 4.2 for the specific details on the establishments of contact, forms of consent, and post-interview correspondence etc.). The challenge then is to foster continuous and long-term accountable relationships, and this will be further discussed in the next sections.

Arguably, establishing relational networks and relationships does not in itself make a research project, its process and outcomes, agreeable or relevant to the participants and communities involved. As such, decolonizing research has been articulated as

centering the aims of research to the agenda of Indigenous people (Asselin and Basile, 2018). To Smith (2012), responding to Indigenous research agendas involves asking: *Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so?* (p. 175). These questions reverberate throughout the process of tracing seal narratives, and they challenge my research framework to consider whether the questions I ask and the processes I engage to answer them are appropriate, consensual, and relevant to the involved individuals and communities, as well as to Greenlandic research and society at large. In this sense, **aligning the research agenda with participants** figures as a key component of my methodology (see Figure 3). This also encompasses an approach to research encounters that is transparent and opens the possibilities to co-create and co-produce interview questions, form, and premises of conversation. While the process of 'tracing' reflect different efforts to decenter researcher control (Nicholls, 2009), it also exposes the limitations to do so. In the development of this methodological framework, it has been important to learn that my preconceived ideas of what 'aligning' means and entails may not necessarily match the views of participants. In my fieldwork, this has required adaptions and changes to the interview model that *I* thought would provide the premises for co-creation and co-production, but did not work for interviewees. Sharing, editing, and translating the interview questions with a local contact person ('intermediary'), who was knowledgeable on the research topic, instead emerged as a method to check the relevance and appropriateness of the questions (see section 3.3 and question sheet in Appendix 4.3). Thus, aligning research agendas is not merely a formalistic exercise, but necessitates attention and reflexivity towards whether and how a research practice is agreeable and responsive to the research participants. Moving towards a more responsive and reciprocal research methodology also carries consequences to the ways of engaging 'fieldwork' and 'data collection' in the processes of research. Here, the concepts of 'data collection' and 'fieldwork' do not escape their relation to colonial processes through which Inuit lives and stories have frequently been reduced to a mining field of 'data' to be discovered, collected, and processed in the name of (Polar) research (e.g. Krupnik, 2016). This poses a methodological challenge to engage fieldwork and data in ways that do not reproduce and settle on the objectification of Indigenous knowledges and experiences to processes of appropriation and expropriation (Porsanger, 2004; Smith, 2012). Taking measures towards **unsettling fieldwork and data collection** is thus key to the methodological process of tracing seal narratives (see Figure 3). These are discussed further through the engagement with my fieldwork in Greenland in section 3.3. Importantly, this methodology involves working with and through the ways in which it *also* fails to unsettle its own anthropological inquiries. Auto-ethnographic tools of journaling and vignetting are suggested as a method to continue reflecting on ways to destabilize colonial relations and power asymmetries in research encounters (Article #4).

Resisting to reduce Kalaallit narratives of seals to sources of 'data mining' implicate the ways of processing and analyzing the empirical data that the research generates. The methodology of tracing seal narratives therefore engages a process that challenges

(its own) academic writings and representations towards more **responsive analysis** (see Figure 3). This connotes a process of analysis that aspires to respond to and reciprocate with the stories, locations, and research participants that it engages, rather than taking the empirical data and 'running with it' (Hauptmann, 2016). In one level, this process involves analytical attention to how placed-based, lived Kalaallit narratives interfere with anthropological and historical studies and data on Kalaallit-seal relations (as further discussed in section 3.4). On other levels, 'responsive analysis' reflects an analytical process that is open to the comments, validations, corrections, and deletions by participants and informants. As part of writing up my research findings, I have therefore shared the draft thesis articles with the research participants – whose stories and statements have informed the particular analysis – and encouraged their comments, corrections, and potential deletions. This poses logistical and translation challenges to bridge the distance between my location (Denmark) and language of writing (English) with the informants in Greenland. This has frequently required me to translate passages into Danish and communicate them through intermediaries via e-mail. Arguably, this conditions and limits the possibilities of direct analytical engagement with research participants. As a consequence and ethical principle, the thesis articles do not include citations and names of informants and interviewees who have not had the opportunity to do read and edit the writings. In light of the challenges towards 'responsive analysis', it has thus also been important to share and discuss the thesis articles with Kalaallit researchers and professionals to expand the circles of academic peer review to those who relate more intimately with the research topics. Yet, considering the shortcomings of co-creation and responsivity with research participants in the process of analyzing, the thesis also works with notions of ethnographic limits, refusals, and **unbecoming claims** (Simpson, Tuck & Yang; see Figure 3). As is discussed and explicated in the following section 3.3, this is a methodological choice to oppose the processes of objectification in analyses. In light of the potential harmful consequences to Indigenous individuals and communities, practices of *refusal* and *unbecoming claims* question what can and should be shared in academic analysis (ibid). While my research undertakings and academic representations of are consistently at odds with 'unbecoming claims' (as it constantly navigates in a maze of colonial relations and entanglements, Article #4), this analytical ethics challenges the thesis research to resist extensive exposure of intimate stories and knowledges of informants, to refrain from making claims on them, and to consider that '[n]ot all stories are to be told and enacted anywhere' (Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018, p. 80).

Returning research results to participants, involved communities, policy makers, and the public is a central concern in the Greenlandic research community[14]. While this is not merely an end-point of my methodological framework (as it is also reflected throughout the process of researching), finding **pathways of return** of the research

[14] To exemplify, this was a returning question and topic at presentations and debates during the Greenland Science Week in Nuuk, 2019.

to Greenland is an important aspect of the thesis work (see Figure 3). It puts to test the necessary questions on ownership, control, access, and possession of research data and results in Indigenous scholarships (e.g. Asselin and Basil, 2018). While the efforts towards 'responsive analysis', a teaching course on 'The History of the Seal' at Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)[15] and two public presentations in Nuuk has been part of it[16], finding pathways of return also point beyond the completion of the thesis. Some of the future visions of this work involve more public presentations and reports to Greenlandic newspapers, as well as translations of the thesis articles.

While the methodology, as discussed here, highlights and elaborates the methodological components of *tracing* narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations, they are not labored as linear, progressive steps. Instead, they encircle, correlate, and complement each other. In this sense, tracing as a research practice does not hinge on the methodological framework as a prescribed set of methods to unsettle seal narratives. Rather, they underscore a methodological process of cultivating a 'research sensibility' (Donald, 2012) towards the ways in which my research is embedded in and reproduces multiple layers of colonial practices – and how it can 'actively dismantle colonial structures and relations of power, while building (re)newed ones that are accountable' to Kalaallit individuals and communities (Naylor et al., 2018, p. 201). Meanwhile, my methodological framework of 'tracing seals' has also developed from (senses of) failure to reorient my research in such ways (Article #4). I have engaged with anthropological and ethnographic traditions through fieldwork, conduction of interviews, and empirical data collection – but whilst working through an underlying skepticism towards 'the field' and its practices. In this sense, my 'moving' and 'doings' in the Greenlandic research field is shaped and at times stifled by oppositional pulls of compliance with and distancing from anthropological inquiry. In similar ways, Greenlandic-Danish artist-scholar Pia Arke (2010) pointed to the ambiguities of navigating this complexity. Insisting to belong neither within the ethnographic object nor subject, she noted that 'there is a sense of urgent necessity about our play with the pieces of different worlds' (p. 28). This sense of urgency, the hesitance, perplexity, and uncertainty that arises, as I have planned and carried through my research, may be said to drive a methodology that insist on 'sticking-to-the-struggle'. As Donald (2012) holds, remaining in the midst of the difficulty, tensions, ambiguity, and messiness of research situations is essential to cultivating 'research sensibility'. Arguably, this does

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[15] As is also mentioned in section 3.3., I developed and taught a Masters level course on 'the History of the Seal' together with Associate Professor Kennet Pedersen, during the Spring semester 2017 at Ilisimatusarfik.

[16] I held a public presentation: *'Uden sæler er der ingen grønlændere'* based on my research findings in Article#1, at Nuuk Lokalmuseum as part of Nuuk Nordisk Festival (October 19th, 2017). I also held a public presentation: *'Grønlænderes relationer til puisi'* based on the overall scope of my thesis work, at the Cultural Centre in Nuuk as part of the Public Outreach Day during Greenland Science Week (December 4th, 2019).

not in itself restructure colonial relations and power asymmetries in the research endeavor, but it does not reassure them either. Rather, it is labored as a way to nurture recognition of, responsiveness to and reciprocity with the relations that I engage and the stories that need to be told. In the next sections, I describe how this way of 'moving' in the field is unfolded through undertaking fieldwork and data collection (section 3.3.) and how it orients 'ethnographic limits' and aspirations towards 'unbecoming claims' in the processing and analyzing of the empirical data.

3.3. UNSETTLING FIELDWORK AND DATA COLLECTION

In this section, I situate and explicate the methodological framework in relation to the conduction of my fieldwork and data collection. On the basis of the methodology discussed above I describe the ways in which I *planned to* as well as *did* carry out my research practice 'in the field'. As such, this section reflects the process and development of my methodological applications. This also accounts for the practical *how* of aspiring (and often failing) to *unsettle* the coloniality in approaching Greenland and Greenlanders as a field to 'mine for data'. Much of this specific work is discussed and applied in Article #4: 'Arctic Auto-ethnography: Unsettling colonial research relations'. Thus, I have attempted to avoid repetitions, but I also include and elaborate examples, references, and arguments from Article #4 with the purpose of explicating the overall methodological process of undertaking fieldwork.

As an essential part of my PhD research, I spent seven months in Greenland with my partner and two children in the period between the 30th of January 30th to the 26th of August, 2017. As this stay encompassed both fieldwork and a stay-abroad program, I spent the first three months in Nuuk exchanging with Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland). At Ilisimatusarfik, I developed and taught a Master levels course, 'The History of the Seal', together with Associate Professor, Kennet Pedersen. While staying in Nuuk, I also undertook archival research and conducted interviews. In the following four months of my research stay, I travelled the Greenlandic Westcoast as the major part of my fieldwork. Besides Nuuk, I conducted fieldwork in Aasiaat, Qasigiannguit, Sisimiut, Arsuk, and Qaqortoq. These fieldwork locations were primarily based on family relations or friends, who also helped to set up contacts and interviews. Moreover, I visited Sisimiut to visit *Kalaallisuuliornermik Ilinniarfik* (Greenland's national regalia school) and Qaqortoq to visit *Great Greenland* (the Self-government supported sealskin tanning company). As explained in section 3.2, it has been an intentional methodological choice to primarily plan and set up fieldwork locations based on personal relations and connections who have acted as 'intermediaries'. In light of the recurrent 'hit-and-run' position of Arctic researchers (Hauptmann, 2016), endorsing personal relations and connections was a method to identify and work with 'the coordinates of [my] location' (Sundberg, 2014, p. 39) and

to place my work within a circle of relations as a way to check my accountability as a researcher (Wilson, 2008).

My fieldwork in Greenland consisted of a mixture of activities which have informed my research endeavor in various ways. Part of the fieldwork has been directly related to collecting empirical data in the form of interviews, archival research, and visits to institutions, organizations, and companies. During my research stay in Greenland, I formally interviewed 28 informants whose lives, positions, or professions relate with seal hunting (see table in Appendix 4.2). About half of the informants are full-time hunters, with a couple of exceptions of 'leisure-time' hunters. 5 of the informants are experienced, leisure-time or professional seamstresses. Importantly, 13 of the informants were speaking in Kalaallisut and these interviews were therefore interpreted. Over the span of my fieldwork, seven different interpreters helped me with the interviews. In most cases, I met with the interpreters prior to the interviews in order to introduce the topic, my questions and approach. Out of all the interviews, one informant did not wish to be recorded. Statistically, two thirds of the informants are men and one third women. About a third of the informants were representing institutions, organizations or companies. As such, some of my interviews included visits to local representations of KNAPK: The Association of Fishers and Hunters in Greenland (Nuuk and Aasiaat), Greenland's Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources (Nuuk), Kittat (the municipal sewing workshop in Nuuk), World Wildlife Foundation Greenland (Nuuk), Great Greenland (Qaqortoq), Kalaallisuuliornermik Ilinniarfik (Greenland's national regalia school, Sisimiut), and the locally-run sealskin company Qiviut (Sisimiut). Another part of my fieldwork is informed by more experience-related activities, ranging from on-going conversations with family, friends, and students to participation in sewing and Kalaallisut language courses. I participated in a sewing workshop in Nuuk with the intention of gaining a better understanding of the embodied process and skills involved in sewing sealskin, particularly for the creation of *kalaallisuut* [the West Greenlandic women's regalia] (Article #3). While the language course − which is not the first of the kind in my lifetime − did not enable me to converse or communicate in Kalaallisut [the West Greenlandic Inuit language], I consider it an important step to displace Danish or English as the granted language of Arctic research and to continue expanding my understanding of the relations between language and worldview. Altogether, my research is thus informed by both *formal* and *informal* sources of data.

All the while, I kept a research diary in which I made notes and reflections on topics related to the study, research encounters, and the ongoing process of the fieldwork. Importantly, the diary did not underscore a method of 'participant observation' employed to record more detailed, insightful, and 'accurate' ethnographic data (Kawulich, 2005). Rather, the diary was used as an auto-reflexive tool to onset cycles of reflections on the ways in which 'a researcher's embodied self also produces the realities which she experiences' (Mainsah & Prøitz, 2015, p. 183). This kind of journaling was thus also a way to challenge the idea of 'data' and 'data collection' itself

(Vannini, 2015) and to unsettle my position as a researcher who is undertaking anthropological research *on* Greenlanders. As an example, I once went to *Kalaaliaraq* (the local meat and fish market) in Nuuk with student and interpreter, Tina Kûitse. With no relations established with the hunters there on beforehand, we went to initiate conversations on my research and hoped for an opportunity to set up an interview. Uneasy with the situation, I journaled the encounter in order to continue learning from it and to check my doings as a researcher:

> *The woman looks at my card. Hej Naja, she says. Hej, I say, qanoq ateqarpit? Sara. Maybe we can talk one day? I ask. Sure, she says. I regret I forgot to ask for the others' names. Now they can appear as nameless anonymous hunters in my research diary, and I wonder how much other anthropological arrogance I will get to practice during my claim to 'scientific fieldwork'. On our walk back, Tina says that this is Greenlandic hunting culture. It takes time. I say I understand. Why on earth would they speak with me just because I showed up? Exactly, says Tina, and we laugh* (Excerpt from research diary, March, 2017).

Different from making notes on Others and claiming to observe as a neutral, objective participant-researcher (e.g. Kawulich, 2005), journaling was rather a tool to continue reflecting on, unfolding, and destabilizing my methods of and approaches to 'data collection'. These reflections carried an important role in terms of formulating and reformulating the conduction of research interviews, which took up a great deal of my fieldwork.

Prior to conducting my fieldwork interviews, I developed an interview model which reflected my aspirations to decenter 'researcher control' (Nicholls, 2009) and to open opportunities for co-production and co-creation with research participants in the research encounter. This involved critical assessment of the decision-making processes in relation to interview topics and questions, as well as the access to and distribution of research findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Smith, 2012). As a result, I envisioned an interview process which potentially involved four meetings. In this model, the first interview meeting should establish the purpose, positions, and premises of the encounter between myself and the interviewee. The second meeting was intended for the co-development of interview questions, after introducing my own pre-prepared question sheet as a starting point. The third meeting was intended as a recorded conversation based on the co-created interview questions. The final meeting was to be held after the interviewee had listened to the recorded interview, and it should provide a space to validate, correct, re-formulate, and evaluate the recording and its outcomes (see Figure 4 for an illustration of this interview model). While this was the planned progression of the interview sessions, the model was supposed to be open and flexible to the un-linear and circled routes of Kalaallit ways of storytelling, which I know so well from the storytellers in my family (Graugaard, 2013).

For various reasons, the full interview model was never carried out in practice, and the model was therefore redefined in a number of ways. During the process of interviewing, I experienced that committing to four meetings was often too demanding on the interviewee in terms of time, energy, and interest. This also concerned the time and availability of interpreters for those interviews which required translations. Furthermore, I also experienced that my ambition to co-create the interview questions often seemed to spark discomfort and confusion on behalf of the interviewees. In my focus on challenging the locus of power in the research setting (Nicholls, 2009), I initially contemplated that interviewees' reluctance to contribute ideas for interview questions was either a reflection of communication gaps or a legacy of colonial authoritarianism in Greenland (Lynge, 2006). It was not until my interview with Salomine Ferdinandsen, who bluntly asked me to create the questions myself (Article #4), that I also comprehended that it might appear disrespectful to ask someone, older and more experienced than myself, to pose questions for herself. In the end, I was the one who had asked for the interviewees' insights and expertise on the topic! As a consequence, I re-worked my back-up question sheet together with my mother's cousin, Paviaaraq Jakobsen, who is an experienced leisure-time hunter; He also functioned as a local 'intermediary' who helped to set up contacts and interviews. Jakobsen checked, edited, and translated my questions (see interview guide in Appendix 4.3). These questions were particularly intended for hunters. Over the span of my fieldwork, I adapted the questions so they aligned with the specific position and profession of the interviewee. In practice, I often left out the question sheet altogether and let the conversation flow on the basis of the stories and direction of the interviewee (Article #4).

On the basis of these experiences and reformulations of my initial interview model, the actual interview process was frequently reduced to one meeting session. However, most interviews involved a brief and informal pre-interview conversation – in person, in a phone call, or through a local 'intermediary' – in which I introduced the conversation topics and my research objectives. The pre-talk became an important step to share my purpose and approach, to articulate expectations, and to give the interviewee a chance to prepare as well as consider whether it was agreeable to participate. Whenever it was possible and agreeable to the interviewees, we met over more sessions than merely one. As a result, one in four of the informants gave 2-3 interviews. While these sessions did not closely follow all the steps in my interview model, meeting more times seemed to create a better outset for establishing relations and decentering the decisions over conversations topic and process (Nicholls, 2009). In one way, it provided me more opportunities to check my positionings, doings, and assumptions as an interviewer during the process (Tomaselli et al., 2008). In another way, having more sessions *and* reflection time, in between the sessions, may also have provided more opportunities for the interviewee to prepare, clarify, and evaluate his or her responses and desired ways of participating. Meanwhile, having a progression of interview sessions does not, in itself, define a more equitable or ethical research process. This became apparent to me, when I switched positions to becoming an

interviewee for a film documentary during the stay in Nuuk (Article #4). The filming process involved three interview sessions, and even though the person behind the camera was a heart-warm, well-intended documentarist, I was deeply troubled and affected by the experience. Thus, my reflections on this encounter became instructive to further develop my methodological approach to interviewing:

> *This particular interview process has revealed a few things for me. And I am still reflecting on the aspects which I found deeply problematic. It was not only the camera, but also many other dimensions of the interview, which unsettled me: the questions which were posed, the way they were posed, the lack of reflection time, the lack of preparation time, the impossibility of revising, deleting-and-rewinding, returning and answering in a different way. The ethics? The purpose? The lack of transparency. Moreover, and perhaps central to my research: It seems misleading to approach a research interview as 'objective knowledge', instead of considering it as a process of knowledge production which is dependent on the space and conditions that we create and partake in, as researchers. There is a risk of leaving these theoretical considerations at home and going out 'in the field' to simply 'observe' and make notes on 'reality'. In this process, people and their lived experiences quickly become reduced to 'interviews' and 'informants' in an intransitive, stagnant and frozen-in-time frame* (Excerpt from research diary, March 2019).

The experience of becoming the interviewee underlined the propositions of auto-ethnography that research encounters are co-constructed by researcher and researched (Lapina, 2017), and that academic creations are conditioned by positionalities and processes of 'encounters, movement and entangling' (Mainsah and Prøitz, 2015, p. 170). Experiencing that my responses, as an interviewee, was as much shaped by the *situation,* as they were by my personal convictions and reflections, highlighted the importance of being able to revisit, revise, retake, and sometimes even delete interview statements (Article #4). Even though the film documentarist declared to me that "I'm on your side" (he did not clarify what was meant by 'your side'), it did not reassure me that the interviews, or his future use of them, would not misrepresent my statements. In the light of the critiques of misrepresentation and appropriation of Indigenous peoples, experiences, and knowledges in the name of research (Smith, 2012), it thus seemed important to create possibilities for the interviewees, who participated in my research, to edit and validate my use of our interviews and their statements. As discussed in 3.2, I have therefore shared my writings with the research participants and encouraged their comments, corrections, and potential deletions. Furthermore, I have attempted to continuously approach and reflect my research process and outcomes as in-situ, partial knowledge productions grounded in places and/as bodies (Haraway, 1998; Lapina, 2017).

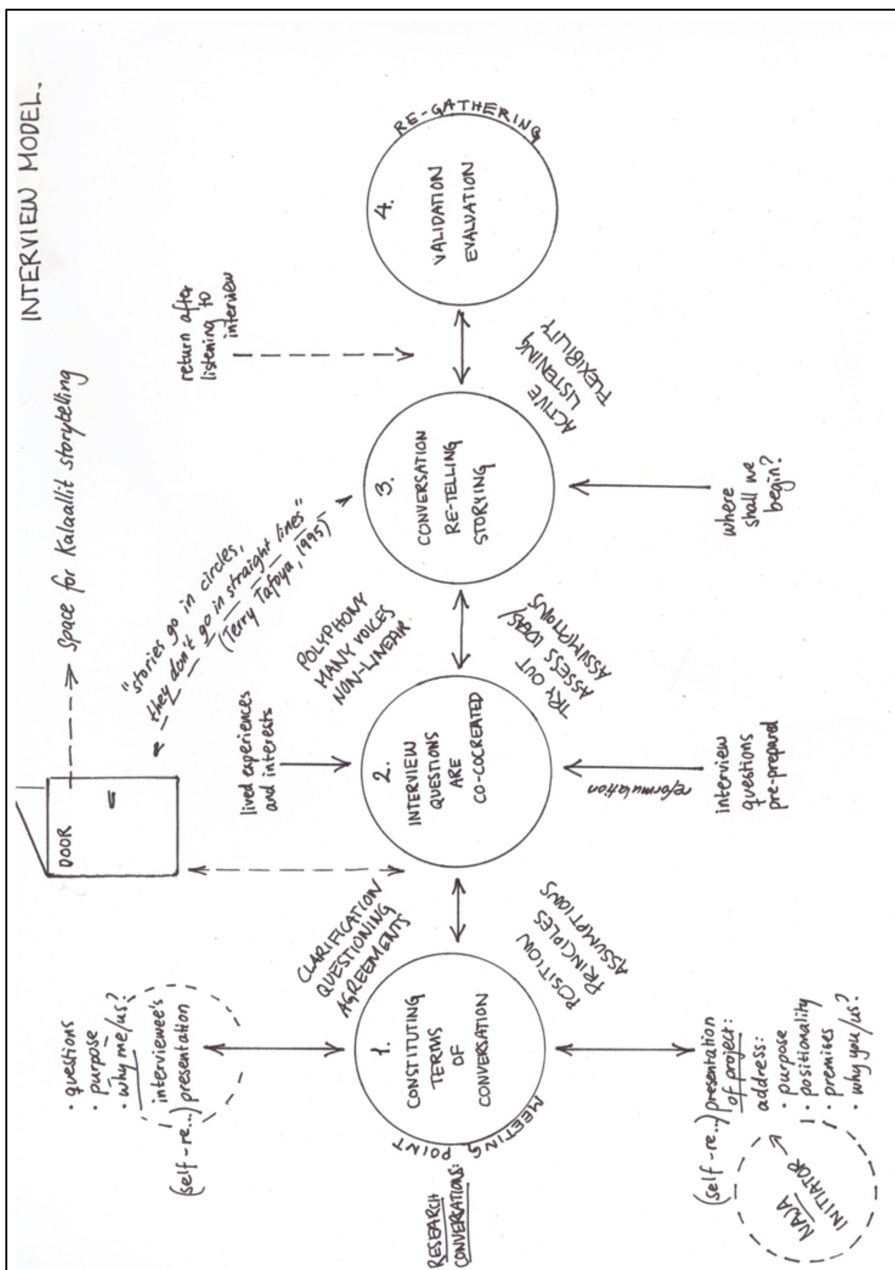

Figure 4. Interview model (developed by author).

In such ways, my methodological framework of interviewing and collecting data continuously unfolded throughout the fieldwork. Rather than simply applying my

preconceived interview model, the terms and process of interviewing was reformulated and redefined according to experiences, reflections, and relations. In practice, all interviews were therefore different from each other in considerable ways. For example, one of the interviews was conducted in a group of four, as was requested by the interviewees. Another interview was conducted with a couple. Some of the interviews took place in the workplace with colleagues present or in public space over a cup of coffee; Some took place in homes, where the interviewee's family members were often present and sometimes engaged too. A couple of the interviewees were my own relatives, and the interview therefore often extended beyond the 'formal setting' with the tape recorder. When interviews involved translations, interpreters were often friends of or relatives to either the interviewee or myself, and it was not unusual that the interpreter would engage in and contribute to the interview as well. Notably, prior to the fieldwork, I had not envisioned or planned for group interviews, but in practice the majority of interviews often reflected a group setting rather than a one-on-one setting. Importantly, the variations from the envisioned model to the actual fieldwork practices have not been part of a methodological process of 'prototype testing' and adding-and-subtracting in order to refine and develop a better interview model. Rather, they have encouraged a process of practicing ways of moving and 'walking with' (Sundberg, 2014) research participants in the research process. Instead of developing and affirming a formula for interviewing, this practice underlined and motivated the importance of: *establishing relations* and *researcher accountability*, *auto-reflexivity*, *listening* and being *flexible* to the routes of the storyteller, practicing *sensitivity to (mis)representations*, and leaving the process and outcome open for *participant editions*. Yet, these learnings and practices do not reset research encounters as equitable, safe, or ethically sound spaces. In my approach, they instead reflect a dedication to account for and continuously disturb the maze of colonial relations and power asymmetries in research encounters. Rather than affirming and settling on best ways to undertake fieldwork, this approach seeks to inhabit the spaces of uncertainty and reluctance with the process of 'collecting data' – as a movement towards more reciprocal and responsive research processes.

3.4. UNBECOMING CLAIMS

The methodological question of *unsettling* the processes of undertaking fieldwork in Greenland (section 3.3) is connected with considerations of *how* to work with, analyze, and write up empirical data. In this sense, destabilizing the colonial dynamics of research (Smith, 2012) and moving towards more responsive and responsible research methodologies necessarily also implicates approaches to processing research findings. In my approach to processing and analyzing empirical materials, I pay specific attention to the present risks of asserting a colonial gaze, of academic extractivism ('stolen knowledge' in Porsanger, 2004; Smith, 2012), and of making disembodied, authoritative claims to knowledge on Greenland. Thus, I reflect on and work with

'ethnographic limits and refusals' (Simpson, 2007) and possibilities of '*un*becoming claims' (Tuck & Yang, 2014) in my practice of processing 'data' and academic writing.

My methodological approach to processing empirical material is motivated by a discontent with the disembodied, observant, and authoritative 'voice and style that Qablunaat are encouraged to take up as scholars' when they analyze and write about the Arctic and Arctic peoples (Cameron, 2015, p. 34). Building on a scholarly cannon written primarily by white male explorers and colonialists (Krupnik, 2016), these stories have come to constitute ideas and imaginaries of the Arctic (Bravo & Sörlin, 2002; Cameron, 2015; Medby, 2018). When working with my empirical material, I have sought ways to disrupt the naturalized subject position of witnessing and claiming knowledge on the Arctic 'from afar', with no or limited experience in a 'corporeal, bodily sense' (Cameron, 2015, p. 10). In this process, it became of significant importance to *be* in Greenland, not only for the sake of fieldwork but also for processing a large part of my historical research and data (much of this work is constituted in Article #1). Here, I experienced that the present stories and lived narratives that were shared with me, during fieldwork, began to interfere and interrupt the written history, which I was simultaneously processing. Not surprisingly, I sometimes encountered quite different accentuations between *lived* and *written* Greenlandic history. For example, while scholars stress the internal Greenlandic wishes to 'modernize' and transition from hunting to fishing in the 1920s (Ebdrup, 2012; Heinrich, 2012; Thuesen, 2007), a Kalaaleq leisure-time hunter shares stories of colonial execution of orders and force in this transition (research diary, May 2017). As this was shared outside of a formal interview and I did not have the chance to follow up on the conversation, I have (as a consequence) refused to reproduce the scholarly narrative: that Greenlandic modernization and the abduction of hunting to a fishing industry was singularly supported and encouraged by Greenlanders (Article #1).

In a general sense, these discrepancies connote Janet Abu-Lughod's argument (1989) that 'if history is written by the victor, then it must, almost by definition, 'deform' the history of the others' (p. 118). In a specific sense, they also underline the often disembodied and unlocated gaze and voice of contemporary Arctic scholarship. As an example, the 'seal hunter' has been an epitomized figure in historical and anthropological works on Greenland, as well as in postcolonial critiques of colonial stereotypes (section 2.2; Marquardt 1999; Thomsen 1998a and 1998b; Rud, 2006 & 2010). While reading and processing these works, I was not aware of the underlying abstraction in the concept of 'seal hunter' until the students in our class, 'The History of the Seal' at Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland), noted that it is an awkward operation in Kalaallisut. As was explained to me, the word itself is usually not used, because seal hunting is rather a *part* of being a hunter, and is not singled out as an identity in itself[17] (Article #1 and Article #2). Drawing on Verran (2014), this kind of

[17] Thanks to students for discussion and translation. Special thanks to Tina Kuîtse for pointing out the dilemma and for extended discussions on this topic.

'abstraction-ness' in the scholarly employment of 'seal-hunter' implies that the concept *comes without stories* or place (cited in Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018). Arguably, such scholarly abstraction is authorized by the legacy of witnessing 'from afar', by which neutral and objective expertise has been claimed without recognizing or challenging the conceptual limits of one's location (Cameron, 2015; Sundberg, 2014). From such position, it may even be experienced as 'fun' and 'entertaining' to write about Greenland's colonial history and its pathological symptoms, as a Danish scholar once described it to me (research diary, July, 2017; Rud and Christensen, 2013). Engaging with my historical findings *while being in Greenland* and encountering (some of) my own conceptual limits (such as 'the seal-hunter'), encouraged me to keep checking my locations and to seek ways to reciprocate my research with place-based (his)stories. Rather than being characterized as 'fun', this process was embodied by struggle, frustration, and grief over the historical injustices that I encountered in my research, the discrepancies between the *written* and the *lived*, and the seemingly 'neutral' but frequently self-justifying academic tone in Danish historical writing. While writing the majority of Article #1 at the local school in my family village in southern Greenland, the implications of my work seemed particularly present. This presence turned into methodological questions in the process of writing:

> *As I left the school yesterday, the questions were swarming in my head. They are actually there all the time. Check in. How is my spirit? (Smith, 2012). Why am I writing what I am writing? With what purpose? What are the consequences of what I write? Can I stand for what I write?* (research diary, July, 2017).

These questions also point to the implications of 'knowing' and representing Indigenous peoples, cultures, histories, and knowledges within academic structures (Hunt, 2014), and they are cautioned by the extraction of and claims to Indigenous knowledges and ways of life in the name of research (Smith, 2012). In the processes of analyzing, writing, and presenting my research, I have therefore worked with (and searched for) the methodological implications of resisting to reduce Kalaallit stories and knowledges to 'sources of data'. This has sparked questions on how to account for and respect the stories which have been shared with me, while avoiding to represent them or make them representational (Cameron, 2015; Todd, 2014); How do I insist on the partiality, situatedness, and insufficiency of my research, as a method of writing and presenting?

In working with these questions, my inability in speaking Kalaallisut has carried an important role, because it required and engaged different levels of translations – not only translations of terms and practices, but also of the knowledge systems which they 'speak' from. Undoubtedly, the need for language interpretation is a considerable weakness in my work with Kalaallit stories and knowledges on seal relations. This has sometimes caused critical difficulties; For example, during an interpreted interview session, the interpreter and I got stuck with my question which referenced the (Western) word and concept of 'sustainability'. While different and diverting

conceptualizations of 'sustainability' was a main focus in my initial research, I then realized that the interpreter, interviewee, and I did not have any 'shared conceptual references to help find appropriate translations' (Article #2). This was a major lesson to my research practice. In one way, it demonstrated that Western concepts such as sustainability are not easily translated nor always meaningful in Kalaallisut and in Kalaallit knowledge systems (Sejersen, 2002; Thisted, 2019). Reversely, the experience highlighted the significant role and consequences of Kalaallit *untranslatabilities* to my research approach and methodology. As Marisol de la Cadena (2015) has argued, concepts and practices may be translated but 'this does not mean that they can be known easily' (cited in Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018, p. 65). Recognizing that Kalaallit ways of knowing and being may be embedded in other worlds – in which I do not, presently, live or speak – advanced the research premise (presented by Cameron, 2015): There are limits to what I (as a researcher) do know and can know. Furthermore, this premise puts to work the risk of erasing differences, when attempting to create analogies and equivalences in order to make them readily available to majority populations (De la Cadena, 2015 cited in Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018). Attentive to this risk, I have not aspired to make 'better translations' when processing my empirical data and interviews. For example, a colleague suggested that I get the recorded interviews re-translated, as a method of looking for and explicating possibly lost details in the existing interpretations[18]. While this may have provided interesting explications of Kalaallit terms and practices, I also reckoned with the choices and decisions made by the present interpreters. In this sense, I approach the interpreted conversations as a reflection and practice of that which *can* and *cannot* easily be translated. As such, they embody the research encounter as a co-created, partial, in-situ production of knowledge (Article #4; Haraway, 1988; Lapina, 2017), which furthermore help shape and structure explanations, arguments, and text (Tomaselli et al., 2008). Moreover, these processes of working with and through translations reverberated Rosalba Icaza's (2017) and Rolando Vazquez' (2011) different ways of questioning: which analytical mechanisms force me to name forms of knowledge which may be untranslatable? – and what are the methodological consequences of unlearning self-ascribed privileges of interpretation and representation of worlds?

Rather than proposing a prescribed set of methodological *answers,* I have utilized these questions as a way to destabilize my ways to analyzing and writing. This has been a process of paying attention to and practicing 'ethnographic limits', as coined by Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson (see also section 2.3). Discussing the experience of undertaking research in her home community of Kahnawá:ke, Simpson (2007) argues for analytical forms which are attentive to the limits of what is and can be shared in and through academic work. As Simpson states, she reached her own ethnographic limit 'when the data would not contribute to our sovereignty or complicate the deeply simplified, atrophied representations of Iroquois and other Indigenous peoples' (p. 78).

[18] At the one-year-evaluation of my PhD research, CIRCLA, Aalborg University, September 2017.

This methodological approach has formulated an ethnography of refusal which involves a calculus of 'what you need to know and what I refuse to write in' (p. 71). Instead of conceptualizing it as an impediment to knowing, this may instead expand different forms of analysis which 'can both *refuse* and take up *refusal* in generative ways' (p. 78). Tuck and Yang (2014) elaborate on refusal in qualitative research as a method of actively resisting to undertake damage-centered research that trades in stories of pain and humiliation. More than simply reversing the gaze, such practice also blocks 'the settler colonial gaze that wants those stories' (p. 812). Specifically, Tuck and Yang suggest an analytical starting point of 'unbecoming claims', which resists 'making someone or something the subject of research' and instigates 'a form of objectless analysis'. In such methodological approach, there is nothing and no one to code (ibid). While I have not practiced refusal and unbecoming claims as a formalistic methodology, these approaches have informed a methodological aspiration to disrupt the analytical habit 'of striving to uncover meanings and values that apparently await our discovery, interpretation, judgement and ultimate representation' (Lorimer, 2005 cited in Vannini, 2015, p. 4). Evidently, my analytics does not present one way of doing so, neither does it pretend to succeed with it. Yet, it is orientated towards refusing and unbecoming claims.

Undoubtedly, this defines an undetermined, unresolved methodological application and analytical strategy. This is particularly reflected in Article #2 and #3 in which I incorporate and build on conversations and interviews from my fieldwork. Arguably, these two articles reverberate different ways to work my methodology. In Article #2, I have sought a style of writing and analyzing which resists to explicate and represent Kalaallit hunters' knowledges regarding seals and seal hunting. Here, I have worked with 'ethnographic limits' to avoid exposing specific details apt for appropriation, and I have refused to include statements for the mere sake of anthropological description. Instead of attempting to translate and chart hunters' stories and knowledges in order to make them readily available (Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018), the analytical ambition has been to '*point to* that they are there, and that they, in their presence, suggest of other-than-Euro-centric and more-than-human lifeworlds' (Article #2). The extent to which the hunters' statements are included are *also* conditioned by the limitations to engage in more 'responsive analysis' due to the logistics of bridging the gaps of language and physical distance (as discussed in 3.2). In Article #3, I have referenced and included much more from the fieldwork interviews. In one sense, this seemed more attainable as these interviews were not interpreted but were conducted in a shared language (Danish). This allowed for more reciprocal and responsive research conversations, without extensive (post-)interpretation. As the interviewees had already been involved in cultural research projects that work with the topics of Article #3, the possibilities of aligning research purposes and premises were more feasible. In another sense, my relations to *kalaallisuut* [the West-Greenlandic women's regalia] as intimately interwoven in my personal lifeworld also changed to 'the coordinates of my location' (Sundberg, 2014) to the conversation topic and the stories that were shared. *Kalaallisuut* was thus a point of relational meaning-making between researcher (myself) and

interviewee (Article #4; Hunt, 2014) that did not navigate through long distances and epistemic translations and untranslatabilities. Nonetheless, these epistemic relationships do not decenter researcher control (Nicholls, 2009) nor do they resolve the colonial dynamics engaged in analytical representation, altogether. In this sense, citing the interviews in Article #4 has still been a reluctant and hesitant employment. Attempting to avoid the analytical habit of objectifying the interviewees and their statements to my discovery, interpretation, judgement and representation (Vannini, 2015; Tuck and Yang, 2014), I have of sought ways to let the seamstresses' statements and voices stand for themselves without my extensive analyzing of them.

In such ways, my ways of analyzing do not present a stringent strategy or formula. Yet, they do share an analytical resistance to reduce Indigenous lives and stories to sources of data. Such resistance is expressed in the moves *towards* more disruptive, un-claiming, and unsettling research methods and *away* from expropriating, representing, and claiming knowledges. In this lies an aspiration for an analytic that traces and accounts for the different, plural, and complex Kalaallit narratives which unsettle colonial logics of seal regimes and narratives. The ethnographic limits are here reached when the data does not contribute to complicating 'the deeply simplified, atrophied representations' (Simpson, 2007, p. 78) of Kalaallit-seal relations that attempt to arrange lived narratives of seal in linear storylines of progression from, for example, subsistence to commercialization (Article #2) or tradition to modernity (Article #3). While this may describe my methodological orientation, my work does not necessarily prescribe nor exemplify its application. My methodology rather relishes to be uncertain of itself and 'to be restless and willfully immature' (Vannini, 2015, p. 5) as part of the serpentine movement towards other modes of sensing, thinking, knowing, practicing (Walsh, 2018). This approach does not, in itself, restructure the multiple colonialities of my research, but it does not rest in them either.

SUMMING UP

(*It is recommendable to read the articles before reading this sum-up.*)

The four academic articles, which comprise this PhD thesis, have (in different ways) questioned how lived and studied narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations engage and unsettle colonial processes in Greenland. This has impelled inquiries into how Kalaallit relations with seals respond to and challenge colonial structures, in their historical employments and their contemporary manifestations. When tracing the seal through the unfolding of Greenland as an Indigenous homeland, colonized territory, and self-governing nation, the role of seals appear to transform from being central to the thriving of Kalaallit communities to becoming related with a 'cultural heritage'. Yet, rather than examining colonial processes through linear storylines of historical progressions, the thesis has engaged with a lens, or prism, of seal to inquire into the entangled, complex, and ongoing processes in which coloniality and Indigenous lifeways collide and interweave in (post)colonial Greenland. Here, seal narratives emerge as sites of colonial encounters in which stories make and remake, contend and circumvent (post)colonial relations. While the articles have not operationalized the concepts of 'lived' and 'studied' narratives in their studies, they have questioned the ways in which (studied) narratives of seals are often abstracted from Indigenous lives and stories, and instead, sought to acknowledge the lived, practiced, place-based ways Kalaallit story (with) seals. In this sense, the articles have paid attention to 'lived' narratives as 'particular formulations' (Cruikshank, 1998, p. 69) that can complicate, surprise, and unsettle colonial knowledge inquisitions on seals within Western epistemes.

Attending to 'unsettling' knowledge inquisitions on seals in Greenland has necessarily posed questions to the ways in which the thesis, itself, is embedded and entangled in multiple layers of colonial research practices (Smith, 2012). In other words, the research objectives to examine how seal narratives unsettle colonial processes necessarily also problematize the practice of researching them. In light of the active roles that ethnographic and anthropological studies on Kalaallit lives have played in underscoring Danish colonization (ibid; Krupnik, 2014; Thuesen et al., 2017), the thesis has sought to cultivate a 'sensibility' (Donald, 2012) towards how researcher positionality and research relations *condition* knowledge production and representation (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Tomaselli et al., 2008). Challenging the colonial dynamics of claiming omnipotent and 'objective' knowledge on the Arctic, I have approached the stories that emerge in this study as being *partial, situated* and *co-constructed* through research encounters that entangle colonial relations and power asymmetries between researcher and researched (Article #4). The processes of tracing, studying, and telling seal narratives have thus entailed reflexivity on how research practices reproduce or dismantle colonial structures and relations of power – and how they may build (re)newed ones that are accountable to Kalaallit individuals, research participants, and communities (Naylor et al., 2018). This has moved an analytics that is oriented

towards 'unbecoming claims' (Tuck and Yang, 2014) which resist to reduce and objectify Kalaallit lives, stories, and knowledges to sources of 'data' for the mere sake of academic analysis or representation. Instead, the thesis articles have aspired to attend to the diverse, plural, and complex ways in which Kalaallit narratives complicate 'the deeply simplified, atrophied representations' (Simpson, 2007, p. 78) of Kalaallit-seal relations in the existing 'seal regimes'.

Through three different empirical studies (Article #1, #2, and #3), this thesis has traced 'the seal' through dominant, varying, differing, complementary narratives that surge through the historical and contemporary landscapes in Greenland. In these studies, I have argued that contemporary Euro-American narratives of *sustainable, traditional, subsistence* Inuit seal hunts (reflected in the current EU Seal Regime, European Commission, 2016) tend to underwrite the authority of Inuit stories and narratives of seal. As a point of departure, I have proposed that the existing 'seal regimes', which seek to legitimize, manage, and govern Inuit sealing practices, do not occur in a vacuum; They also have origins in the specific colonial histories in the Arctic. In Article #1, "Without seals, there are no Greenlanders' – Colonial and postcolonial narratives of sustainability and Inuit seal hunting', I have traced 'the seal' through *sustainability narratives* in Greenland's history to elucidate how specific colonial mechanisms condition contemporary ways of narrating Inuit seal hunting as *sustainable* or *unsustainable*. In this narrative genealogy, I have discussed how the sustainability concept is tied to the Danish colonial aspirations of transforming Kalaallit seal hunting into a mono-cultural, commercialized, national occupation. Until the late 19th century, Kalaallit seal hunts financed the Danish colonial enterprise (Marquardt, 1999). The sustainability of Danish colonization was thus vested in striking a 'golden balance' which should ensure that Kalaallit lives were continuously rooted in hunting, to secure the Royal trade. When the world market prices on sealskin and blubber stagnated, the colonial conception of 'sustainability' shifted in the transition towards a Greenlandic fishing economy. As fishing became the new sustaining backbone of the colonial enterprise, the (un)sustainability of Kalaallit hunting was increasingly narrated in terms of *the past, tradition, culture* and fishing became associated with *the future, progress, economy*. These narratives have been forwarded, reproduced, and countered in the Greenlandic business enterprises, *Great Greenland* (sealskin) and *Puisi A/S* (seal sausage), after the establishment of Greenland's Home Rule. In these cases, I have argued that the colonial sustainability narratives on Kalaallit hunting have confined postcolonial narratives to, primarily, position seal hunting as a heritage- and culture-sustaining practice – incidentally, attempted (and failed) to be relieved as a profit-generating practice in the business of *Puisi A/S*. In light of this narrative genealogy, this article has called attention to the consequential silencing of the diversity of Kalaallit relations with seals and hunting in the colonial grammar of sustainability, and in their postcolonial applications. Having constructed a reductive narrative of the 'Greenlandic seal-hunter' with a singular purpose of hunting seals, (post)colonial sustainability narratives have ignored the 'plurality of relationships' (Todd, 2014)

between Kalaallit and seals – reflected in hunting, sewing, cooking, eating, storytelling, philosophizing, theorizing, et cetera.

This thesis has thus paid attention to the dissonance between dominant narratives on Inuit sealing practices and the particular, lived, place-based narrations of Kalaallit-seal relationships. Instead of merely focusing on the colonial mechanisms of historical and contemporary discourses and their counter-responses, I have considered (some of) the ways in which Kalaallit narratives of seal encompass 'material, relational practices through which we order our relations with each other and with the land' (Cameron, 2015, p. 11). In Article #2, 'Sensing seal in Greenland – Kalaallit seal pluralities and anti-sealing contentions', I have argued that Kalaallit 'seal pluralities' – being the multiple ways of knowing seals – unsettle the logics of existing seal regimes which purport and sanction *subsistence* and *sustainable* Inuit hunts. Referring to my fieldwork interviews with Kalaallit hunters, I have proposed that the sustainability concept does not (easily) translate into Inuit knowledges and practices, neither does an oppositional division between subsistence and commercial purposes of hunting. In Kalaallit hunters' narrations, seal hunting is not simply engaged through a calculus of using and replenishing a natural resource. Rather, hunting for seals is driven by various and changing aspects that span local demand, food staple, need for income, a friendly request, or because other options fail. Meanwhile, the possibility of hunting seals is grounded in and allowed by place-based, learned, and ancestral knowledges of Kalaallit-seal relations; and they encompass 'cosmologies that place humans and animals in ongoing and reciprocal relationships' (Todd, 2014, p. 222). As was explained to me, catching a seal corresponds with having, or gaining, "a sense of seal" (Paviaaraq Jakobsen, interview), which entails an ability to endorse seals as active, respondent beings. Extending beyond the actual catch, 'sensing seals' is also navigated by multi-relational orientations in seasonal cycles, weather systems, animal migrations, and *all else.* In this article, I have thus argued that Kalaallit seal hunting is not captured in the European conceptual vocabularies of *sustainable, subsistence, traditional, humane* hunts – in turn, they risk to underwrite the authority of Inuit relations and practices in the Arctic. Instead, I have suggested that Kalaallit narratives point to a relational ecology in which Kalaallit, seals, waters, skies and all else are entwined in the historical and political landscapes (O'Connor et al., 2017; Todd, 2014).

Recognizing seals as beings 'intimately interwoven' into various aspects of Greenlandic life, this thesis has challenged current academic tendencies to reduce seals to political identity markers in Inuit lives. More than a platform for an ethno-symbolic politics, Kalaallit-seal relations have also emerged as sites of colonial encounters through which Kalaallit narrate, negotiate, and contend with the (post)colonial present (Todd, 2014). In Article #3, 'Greenlandic regalia – seaming Kalaallit pasts, presents, and futures', I have suggested that *kalaallisuut* [the west Greenlandic women's regalia] is a site of colonial encounters which 'touches the past' and negotiates Kalaallit presents and futures. Here, Greenlandic regalia has appeared as a 'turbulent object' which sparks debates and differing approaches to the scopes of regalia-making

(Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018). Challenging public conventions which seek to limit (external and internal) regalia alterations and to fix *kalaallisuut* in an image of 'tradition', Kalaallit seamstresses and academics have argued that Greenlandic regalia has always been 'developing' through the recreative agency of Kalaallit foremothers in colonial encounters. They point to the incorporation of European fabrics and materials, which are seamed together with sealskin parts in the regalia. In their academic representations (Rosing-Jakobsen, 2011; Rossen, 2017), the arguments against 'fixing' regalia tend to employ a dualistic narrative spectrum in which tradition is associated with *past, fixation, stagnation* and modernity with *innovation, change*. However, in my work, *kalaallisuut* has not (easily) endorsed linear storylines of 'progress'. Instead, I have argued that the regalia denotes the messy, entangled, and placed ways in which colonial relations are made, remade, and transgressed. In light of the deeply specialized *sealskin* work of Kalaallit seamstresses (passed down through generations), I have suggested that *kalaallisuut* enacts particular, place-based, and sometimes otherwise worlds which comprise dynamic relationships between Kalaallit, seals, land, and sea. More than an 'ethno-cultural symbol' (Rossen, 2017), I have argued that *kalaallisuut* enacts, seams together, and distributes Kalaallit worlding (O'Connor et al., 2017), and holds a space for recreation and resurgence. As seamstress Nikoline Kreutzmann envisions that Greenlandic regalia could 'develop to go back in time, to more sealskin', *kalaallisuut* has emerged as a site for recuperating sealskin as part of the future (again).

In Article #4, 'Arctic Auto-ethnography – unsettling colonial research relations', I have discussed the ways in which auto-reflexivity has been employed as a tool to destabilize (my) claims to omnipotent expertise in Arctic scholarship. By reversing the gaze and tuning in on my (uneasy) researcher-ways and -doings in fieldwork encounters in Greenland, this article has elucidated that 'what we sense and what we create as academics is a process of […] encounters, movement and entangling' (Mainsah & Prøitz, 2015, p. 170). Aspiring to decolonize this practice (Smith, 2012), I have laboured my shortcomings and (senses of) failures to do so, as a way to continuously disturb my research 'doings' and 'findings' and to reflect on ways to hold my studies accountable, reciprocal, and responsive to the people and places it has involved. Resisting to settle on set answers or manuals – because decolonization is not a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012) or a fixed accomplishment – I have argued that reflexivity can be a tool to inhabit the spaces of uncertainty and failure as a way to pursue accountability. This entails a willingness to move into these liminal, in-between spaces as a process *away* from notions of objective control and *towards* a (possibility for) reciprocity between research, researcher, and research participants (Nicholls, 2009). While auto-ethnographic writing is not reflected in all the forms and shapes of this thesis, Article #4 has substantiated that knowledges and narratives, as they arise in scholarly productions on Greenland, are always *partial, situated, embodied,* and *placed* (e.g. Haraway, 1988; Lapina, 2017). This learning has onset recursive *cycles of reflections* in the processes of tracing seal narratives, which has impelled the studies to continue searching for ways to unsettle (their own) claims to knowledge.

This sum-up is does not present the thesis as a seamless whole or a 'charmed storyline' (Cameron, 2012). Each of the articles present their own unsettling (of) narratives on Kalaallit-seal relations within their particular trajectories, which may only be grasped through individual readings. Yet, as studies which all work through a prism of 'seal', they together present a different orientation (and option) than the current postcolonial scholarship on Greenland. Whereas this scholarship tends to approach and analyze postcolonial relations in Greenland within the limits of colonial discourses (section 2.1), my studies have paid attention to how lived seal narratives disturb, interrogate and 'reframe' (Smith, 2012) studied narratives of Kalaallit-seal relations. Undoubtedly, current scholarship has provided important insights on the representational significance of Kalaallit (seal) narratives, their discursive reproductions of colonialist imaginaries, and occasional counter-discourses (e.g. Bjørst, 2008; Gad, 2009; Graugaard, 2009; Thisted, 2003; Thomsen, 1998a). However, within the analytical circuits of (post)colonial discourse, Kalaallit narratives often become relegated as mere reflections of regressive traditionalism, ethno-symbolic performances, or 'strategic primitivism' (Rodgers & Scobie, 2015). Thus, seal relations in Greenland quickly become reduced to political symbols or 'emblems' (Briggs, 1997) in discursive formations – which in effect strip seal stories of their lived relevance. In my thesis, I have sought to orient differently towards Kalaallit narratives by considering how they also encompass relational practices which order, navigate, comply, and contend relations between Kalaallit, Qallunaat, seals, waters, skies (Cameron, 2015; Todd, 2014). In this sense, a prism of 'seal' has facilitated a shift of attention towards the relations through which humans and non-human entities are entwined as active agents in historical and contemporary political landscapes (ibid; O'Connor et al., 2017). More than political or ethno-cultural symbols, these relations encompass particular, place-based Kalaallit cosmologies and 'worlding' which cannot be separated from colonial processes, but which are not wholly defined by them either. The 'prism of seal' has thus provided an analytical possibility to attend to the colonial processes through which Kalaallit-seal relations have been de-futured and relegated to a past tense in the form of a 'cultural heritage', *and* to recognize the continued significance of seals in the lives of those who hunt, process, sew, eat, and live with seals. Here, the intention has not been to create a 'better ethnography', a more confident colonial critique (Braun, 2016), or to claim, expose, and translate intimate non-European lifeworlds (as translations risk erasing differences, Kramvig & Flemmen, 2018). Rather, the thesis has intended to *displace* the conceptual vocabularies of existing seal regimes (e.g. European Commission, 2016) as the primary points of departure for conceptualizing seal relations in Inuit communities. By doing so, the hope is to unsettle Qallunaat (political and academic) claims to knowledge, policies, and sanctions on Inuit lives which underwrite the authority of lived (seal) narratives in the Arctic. By elucidating the mechanisms through which Kalaallit ways of knowing, being, doing, and thinking have been produced as absent in the existing seal regimes (Vazquez, 2011; Walsh, 2018), the 'prism of seal' reckons with the coloniality of the Greenlandic present. Meanwhile, such reckoning is also allowed by the presence, the resurgence, and the re-narrations of seal relations in Kalaallit lives – and attending to these, may

provide (some of the) tracks to re-imagine and shape Kalaallit futurity in the Greenlandic decolonization processes.

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APPENDIX

4.1. WORD EXPLANATIONS

In this summary chapter, I use some Greenlandic words to reflect a cultural-specific meaning or to indicate local-specific identifications. They may also be understood as small interventions to English (and Danish) as the granted language for academic inquiry. Underneath, I have included concise explanations, as well as clarifications of when and how I use the lexemes. As a disclaimer, I have not considered the specific conjugations of the words when they are inserted into English sentence structures.

Aataaq means a harp seal.

Inuk is the singular form of **Inuit**. Inuk literally means 'person'. The meaning here refers to Indigenous peoples in Alaska, Canada and Greenland who share same lineages in terms of culture, language, and traditions. Inuit groups and communities may also employ more local-specific terms, like 'Kalaallit' in Greenland.

Kalaaleq is the local-specific term for Greenlander in the Greenlandic languages. In accordance with how it is used in lay terms, I have invoked it here as the local-specific term for Greenlandic Inuit. **Kalaallit** is the plural form.

Kalaallisut is the West Greenlandic Inuit language.

Kalaallisuut is the West Greenlandic women's regalia.

Kalaallit Nunaat is the word for Greenland in Greenlandic languages. Literally, it translates 'the land of the Greenlanders'.

Kamiit is the plural term for sealskin boots.

Qallunaaq is used as a term for a Dane, European, or white person. Originally, it has been used to refer to those who ventured into Inuit lands from the south, and is today also invoked as a term for non-Inuit across the Arctic. **Qallunaat** is the plural form.

Puisi means a seal (in singular, *-t* in plural). It likely originates from referring to 'one who breaks the surface'. I have not used this term consistently.

Qajaq is a kayak.

Umiaq is a skin boat, usually used by women.

It is important to note that the shifts between referring to 'Inuit in Greenland', Kalaallit and Greenlander are rather fluid and interchangeable in my thesis. As an evolvement of the thesis, Article #2, #3 and this summary chapter use a more consistence reference to 'Kalaallit' as identifications. However, Article #1 and #4, (which are already published or in press) reference to 'Greenlander' and 'Greenlandic Inuit'. Throughout the thesis 'Inuit' is invoked as a shared denomination for those who identify as such across the Arctic – unless I specifically refer to 'Inuit' in the context of Greenland.

4.2. TABLE OF INTERVIEWEES, INTERVIEW PROCESSES AND FORMS OF CONSENT

Interviewee	Way of establishing contact	Place/time of interview	Number of meetings	Language of interview	Forms of consent	Post-interview correspondence
Seamstress/representative of *Kittat* (the municipal sewing workshop in Nuuk)	Through a phone call	*Kittat*, Nuuk, February 2017	1	Danish	After being introduced to the overall PhD project, the interviewee agreed (orally) to being recorded and that I could use the interview in my research. I added that I will contact the interviewee if I would like to cite from the interview directly. ↓	I contacted the interviewee through e-mail/messenger for permission to quote the interviewee. I wrote a letter in which I explained my use of the interview and clarified the extracts in which the interviewee is referenced (in Danish) + I shared the particular article in which the interviewee figures (in English). In this correspondence, I encouraged the interviewee to delete or edit if there were

						parts that disagreed with the meaning and intention of the interviewee.
Leisure-time hunter	Through a friend	The interviewee's home, Nuuk, March 2017	1	Danish	(Same as above)	(Same as above) This correspondence was mediated through the interviewee's appointed contact person (daughter).
Master's student at Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)	Through Ilisimatusarfik	Café in Nuuk, March-April 2017	3	Danish	(Same as above)	(Same as above). This was through direct correspondence with the interviewee.
5 full-time hunters	Through a visit to *Kalaaliaraq* (local meat market) in Nuuk	*Katuaq*, the Cultural Centre in Nuuk, March 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	(Same as above). This correspondence was only with one of the five interviewees whose name and quote figured in one of the articles.

Representative of the Head Office of KNAPK (The Association of Fishers and Hunters in Greenland)	Through e-mail	The interviewee's office, Nuuk, March 2017	1	Danish	(Same as above). Due to technical problems, the interview was not recorded.	E-mail correspondence to set-up a second meeting. However our calendars failed to accommodate a second meeting.
Representative of Greenland's Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources	Through e-mail	The interviewee's office, Nuuk, March 2017	1	Danish	(Same as above)	E-mail correspondence concerning useful documents on seal hunting in Greenland. Interviewee also expressed a wish to see the final PhD thesis and results.
Representative of Great Greenland (1)	Through e-mail	Via skype (as plan to meet in Nuuk failed due to travel cancellations), March 2017	1	Danish	(Same as above)	E-mail correspondence about a second meeting in Qaqortoq. As the interviewee's calendar did not allow for this, a meeting with a colleague was

						established instead.
Representative of World Wildlife Foundation, Greenland	Through a friend	The interviewee's office, Nuuk, March-April, 2017	2	Danish	(Same as above)	-
Full-time hunter	Through a phone call	The local KNAPK office, Aasiaat, April-May 2017	2	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	-
Seamstress	Through a friend	The interviewee's home, Aasiaat, April-May, 2017	2	Danish	(Same as above)	I contacted the interviewee through e-mail/messenger for permission to quote the interviewee. I wrote a letter in which I explained my use of the interview and clarified the extracts in which the interviewee is referenced (in Danish) + I shared the particular article in which the interviewee figures (in English). In this

						correspondence, I encouraged the interviewee to delete or edit if there were parts that disagreed with the meaning and intention of the interviewee. This correspondence was mediated through the interviewee's appointed contact person (daughter).
Full-time hunter and leisure-time hunter	Through a local family member	Municipal office in Aasiaat, May 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted by one of the interviewees)	(Same as above)	(Same as above). This correspondence was mediated through the interpreter, who also became an interviewee during the interview.
Full-time hunter	Through a local family member	Café in Aasiaat, May 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	-

(Kalaaleq) expedition traveler	Through local contact person	Office at the library in Aasiaat, May 2017	1	Danish	The interview was not recorded, as it was set up ad-hoc, upon the request of the local librarian and the interviewee.	-
Full-time hunter	Through a local contact person	Interviewee’s home, Qasigiannguit, June 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	E-mail correspondence was initiated but fell through, as the interviewee’s appointed contact person (interpreter) fell seriously ill. For this reason, direct quotation from the interview was annulled.
Full-time hunter	Through a local contact person	Interpreter’s home, Qasigiannguit, June 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	(same as above)

Full-time hunter	Through a local contact person	Interpreter's home, Qasigiannguit, June 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	(same as above)
Seamstress/Representative of *Kalaallisuuliornermik Ilinniarfik* (Greenland's National Regalia School)	Through a phone call	Workshop in *Kalaallisuuliornermik Ilinniarfik,* Sisimiut, June 2017	2	Danish	(Same as above)	I contacted the interviewee through e-mail/messenger for permission to quote the interviewee. I wrote a letter in which I explained my use of the interview and clarified the extracts in which the interviewee is referenced (in Danish) + I shared the particular article in which the interviewee figures (in English). In this correspondence, I encouraged the interviewee to delete or edit if there were

						parts that disagreed with the meaning and intention of the interviewee.
Seamstress/Representative of *Qiviut* (local sealskin shop in Sisimiut)	Through a visit to *Qiviut*	The workshop of *Qiviut*, Sisimiut, June 2017	2	Danish	(Same as above)	(Same as above)
Full-time hunter and hunter's wife (seamstress)	Through a local contact person	The interviewees' home, Arsuk, June-July 2017	2	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	(Same as above)	(Same as above). This correspondence was mediated through the interviewee's appointed contact person (niece).
Full-time hunter	Through a local contact	The interviewee's home, Arsuk, June 2017	1	Kalaallisut (interpreted)	The interviewee wished that the interview did not get recorded.	-
Full-time hunter	Family relations	The interviewee's home, Arsuk, July 2017	1	Danish	The interviewee agreed that I record and use the interview in my research process,	Due to the unfortunate decease of the interviewee, I have received permission to refer to the interview in one

					after being introduced to the overall PhD project. I have added that I will contact the interviewee if I would like to cite from the interview directly.	of my articles from family members of the deceased. In order to do so, two family members have read the concerned article.
Representative of Great Greenland (2)	Through colleague	Great Greenland, Qaqortoq, August 2017	1	Danish	(Same as above)	-

4.3. INTERVIEW GUIDE IN KALAALLISUT AND DANISH

PERSONLIG ERFARING, ANSKUELSER AF SÆLEN OG SÆLFANGST:

(KALAALLISUUT:) Imminut oqaluttuarilaarsinnaaguit qujanassaqaaq aamma qanoq ilillutit piniarneq ilinniarpiuk? Qanga pusinik pisaqartalerpit? Puisinniarneq qanoq ilinniarpiuk?
(DANSK:) Kan du fortælle lidt om dig selv og hvordan du lærte at gå på fangst. *Hvornår startede du med at fange sæler? Hvordan lærte du at fange sæler?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Ullumikkut piniartuunerup qanoq innera oqaluttuarilaarsinnaaviuuk. Piniartutut inuussutissarsiu-teqarninni puisinniarneq ilinnut qanoq isumaqarpa? Isertitat? Puisinniarneq ullumikkut inuussuti-gienqarsinnaavaa? Allanngortoqarnikuuaa?
(DANSK:) Kan du fortælle lidt om hvordan er det at være fanger i dag. *Hvad betyder sælfangsten for dit erhverv som fanger? Og din indkomst? Kan man leve af at fange sæler i dag? Har det ændret sig?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Qanoq puisinniartoqartarnersoq tusarusulaarpara. Puisimik pisqarniaruma qanoq iliussaanga? Pisaqarluarnissaq qanoq qulakkiissavara? Pisaqaraangavit sumut atortarpiuk? Pisarineqartoq qanoq suliarineqartarpa? Neqi amialu qanoq pineqartarpat?
(DANSK:) Jeg kunne godt tænke mig at høre lidt om hvordan en sæljagt forløber. *Hvad skal man gøre for at fange en sæl? Hvad kan man gøre for at sikre sig en god fangst? Hvad bruger du sælen til, når den er fanget? Hvordan behandler man det fangede dyr? Hvad sker der med kødet og skindet?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Puisip qanoq ilinnut isumqarnera oqaluttuarilarsinnaaviuuk? Ilaquttannut? Aasiannut? Nunatsinnut? Ummasunullu allanut sanilliullugu?
(DANSK:) Kan du fortælle lidt om hvad sælen betyder for dig. *For din familie? For Aasiaat? For Grønland? Og i forhold til andre dyr?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Ullumikkut puiseqassuseq oqaluttuarilaarsinnaaviuuk? Siusinnerusumut sanilliullugu pusiikinneruaa imaluunniit puiseqarneruaa? Allannguutit? Puisi ulorianartorsiortinneqarpaa? Silap allanngornera issittumi puisinut sunniuteqarpaa? Qanoq?
(DANSK:) Kan du fortælle lidt om sælbestanden i dag? *Mindre/større end tidligere? Forandringer? Er sælen truet? Har klimaforandringer indflydelse på sælerne i Arktis? Hvordan?*

SÆLFANGST, NATUREN og "BÆREDYGTIGHED":

(KALAALLISUUT:) Pinngortitaq uumasullu ilinnut pingaaruteqassusii oqaluttuarilaarsinnaavigiit? Pinngortitaq uumasullu paarissavaguut illersorlugillu? Sooq? Sooq naamik? Qanoq?
(DANSK:) Kan du fortælle lidt om hvad naturen og dyrene betyder for dig. *Skal vi passe på og beskytte naturen og dyrene? Hvorfor/Hvorfor ikke? Hvordan?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Asseq / Plakat takuara. Isigaarput asseq 1. Tassani allassimasoq: *Pisuussutit uumassusillit nungusaataangitsumik atorluartigit aamma siunissami. Qanoq isumaqarfigiviuk? Qanoq ilinnut isumaqarpa? Isumaat, soormitaavaana puisi assimi ilaatinenqanngitsoq?*
(DANSK:) Jeg så et billede/en plakat. Kig på billede 1 sammen. Der står: *Pisuussutit uumassusillit nungusaataangitsumik atorluartigit. Lad os udnytte de levende ressourcer bæredygtigt – også for fremtiden.* Hvad synes du om det? Hvad betyder det for dig? Hvorfor tror du at, sælen **ikke** er med på billedet?

(KALAALLISUUT:) Oqaaseq "piujuaannartitsineq" pillugu oqaloqatigiissutigitigu. Eqqarsartaaserput malillugu isumaqarnerluni? "Piujuartitsineq aallaavigalugu puisinniarneq" oqaluuserinissaa isumaqarpaa?
(DANSK:) Jeg kunne godt tænke mig at snakke lidt om begrebet "bæredygtighed". *Betyder det noget i "grønlandsk forstand"? Giver det mening at snakke om "bæredygtig sælfangst"?*

SÆLFANGST, DET INTERNATIONALE SAMFUND og FREMTIDEN:

(KALAALLISUUT:) Puisinniarneq pillugu akerliuniarluni paasisitsiniaanerit EU-mullu (1993 – 2009) puisit amiinik eqqusseqqusaajunnaarnerup nunatsinni pinartumut sunniutai / kingunerisai paasissallugit soqutigaakka. Assit 2-4 oqaluuserilaartigik. Ilinnut imaluunniit piniartoqatinnut kinguneqartitsi-nikuuppaat? Suullu?
(DANSK:) Jeg er interesseret i anti-sælfangstkampagnernes og EU import-forbuddenes (1983 og 2009) konsekvenser for fangere i Grønland. Snak om billede 2-4. *Har det haft nogen konsekvenser for dig eller kollegaer? Hvilke?*

(KALAALLISUUT:) Nunatsinni puisinniarnerup ulorianartorsiortinneqarnera Inuit Sila-p paasisitsiniaanerani taaneqartarpoq. Illimmi qanoq isumaqarfigiviuk? Piniartumut puisinniarnerlu pillugit siunissaq qanoq isikkoqarpa? Puisinniarneq tapersersorneqassava attattuarneqarluniluu? Sooq / sooq naamik? Qanoq ililluni.
(DANSK:) Der nævnes i Inuit Sila's kampagner, at grønlandsk sælfangst er truet. *Hvad er dit syn på det? Hvordan ser fremtiden ud for fangere og sælfangsten? Skal sælfangsten støttes og bevares? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? Hvordan?*

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