

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

Do Not Step on the Farmer's Grass:

On Global Food Economy, Inuit Food Security and Sheep Farming in South Greenland

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Do Not Step on the Farmers Grass:
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Farming in Greenland

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Cover page: Potatoes in South Greenland, Upernaviarsuk experimental farm.
Photo by the author.

To my son, Uljas Qusoraq, the one who speaks with the ravens.

Erninnut, Uljas Qusoqqamut, Tulukkanik oqaloqateqarsinnaasumut.

Abstract

Do not step on the farmer's grass: On global food economy, Inuit food security and arctic agriculture is a thesis with a focus on Greenland as a part of the Inuit Nunaat, the Inuit homeland. This thesis is about the importance of indigenous food, harvest, and consumption. It is about connecting to indigenous cultures through food systems. Food systems that, in the case of Inuit, have sustained over thousands of years.

Today this is not the case, and we all are consumers in what is called a global food economy. There is a vast range of literature suggesting that many indigenous peoples would still choose an indigenous diet, and participate in the food production, instead of being alienated from it. However, indigenous food production is largely perceived as ineffective and also non-profitable, thus it has had to change from large-scale industrial projects and mono-crop commercial agriculture.

This thesis aims to illuminate the reasons for Inuit food insecurity beyond most often-stated reasons such as climate change or poverty. The argument set forth here is that indigenous people's food insecurity cannot be separated from the colonial history, nor the current dominance of the global, capitalistic market forces: These issues being two sides of the same coin.

Regardless of the destructive impacts on many indigenous societies, there is evidence of indigenous peoples' resistance to seek solutions in circumstances of food insecurity, which be illustrated in the case of indigenous agriculture, and within sheep farming in South Greenland.

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1 Introduction

There are potatoes on the cover page of this paper. However, they are not just any potatoes – they are Greenlandic potatoes, waiting to be planted in the ground in South Greenland. There is great excitement over local potatoes in Greenland, not only because they are grown in the most northern areas of the world, but for their particularly sweet taste. *They are the best potatoes in the world!* is a commonly heard statement from the local people. It's also common to hear the proud manner in which the Inuit speak about their food, their indigenous country food harvested fresh from the ocean, land and air. For centuries, the Inuit in Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Russia have hunted marine mammals such as seals, whales and walrus, birds and land animals, which have provided them with all the necessary materials for maintaining a distinct culture in the high arctic. Much of Inuit culture has developed around hunting grounds, arctic waterways, and the vast sky above. The appreciation of one's indigenous food and its productive means, is not unique for the Inuit, but recognized among all human groups.

Who eats what, who eats with whom, and whose appetites are satisfied and who's denied, are all profoundly social dynamics through which identities, relationships, and hierarchies are created and reproduced. (University of London, 2016)

Today the Inuit (approximately 160.000) living in Russia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland, still value and consume their country food, and there are still hunters in all of the Inuit land, however, full-time hunting has been decreasing for decades, as has the consumption of country food (Inuit Circumpolar Council, 2012). So, there seems to be a contradiction between the high importance given to country food and the decrease in consumption and access to it. The most common answers provided by research results and national reports, to the decline of country foods are climate change and decreasing hunting way of life, lack of interest among the young, and the high cost of hunting activities. All these reasons are well documented by the Inuit themselves as well as by non-Inuit researchers. The decline in consumption of country foods and increasing consumption of commercial food have had an impact on the food security among Inuit, including Inuit health.

The Inuit land, *Inuit Nunaat*, includes territory around the circumpolar north and covers four countries. Throughout this territory, there is food insecurity. In Canada, for example, 62.6 per cent of the Inuit households are food insecure, compared to national average of 8.4 per cent in 2011-2012 (Government of Canada, 2017). The Inuit in Canada are more likely to go to bed hungry, than other

Canadians, since there is not enough food at home (Papatsie et al. 2013; Inuit Health Survey, 2010). In Greenland, it is more expensive to buy Greenlandic, local food, than food imported from Denmark, thousands miles away. The consumption of imported food is increasing and the change of diet has had multiple effects on the Greenlandic society and people.

My initial thoughts, after arriving to Greenland for the first time, were questions such as how is it that country food is more expensive than food produced in China, transported to Europe for further transportation to the north. What are the consequences of this to modern, arctic, indigenous societies? Can these communities increase their share of the food production chain? This thesis is based on these reflections. There are three main objectives in this study. First, to look for the reasons of low-consumption of county food beyond already given reasons, from dependency, capitalistic food economy and colonial history of the Inuit, with an emphasis to Greenland. This thesis illustrates how Greenland became part of the world system through colonialism and the establishment of trading posts in 18th century. Secondly, I will seek answers on questions such as, what makes us so concerned and connected to the food we eat? Answers will have a strong emphasis on the local Inuit food culture. Lastly, I illustrate how indigenous peoples, in this case the Inuit, can increase food security by their own initiatives, and increase their food sovereignty. In addition, I ask how food production and consumption can be perceived as empowering, especially for the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic who have had to encounter and endure the loss and transition of their cultures and to gradually adjust to western lifestyles.

The work is divided into six chapters, first introducing the field of study and describing methodologies used, followed by a case study of Greenlandic sheep farming. The middle section is about colonization, capitalism and hunger in the arctic. The last section illuminates indigenous food sovereignty. It shows how indigenous agriculture can contribute to increase food sovereignty but may also have a positive impact on people's self-understanding, by strengthening belonging and empowering people. I hope my work will contribute to the theoretical discussion about western market economy and often colonizing and totalitarian ways, at least in advantageous impact to many indigenous societies today, still presenting an alternative, a form of resistance and perseverance to be less dependent from the global food economy by increasing local food production.

1.1 The relevance of food studies among the Inuit and the connection to world system

In 2012, Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) published a report *Food security across the Arctic* with focus on the food security in the Inuit communities. According to the paper, food security in the Arctic has been a longstanding problem, including issues of geography, pollution of the country food by contaminants, the impact of climate change and economic vulnerability. “Remoteness, limited transport infrastructure, difficult climatic conditions, high global prices for commodities and oil all combine to make the cost of food and its distribution a significant driver of food insecurity for many Inuit communities.” (ICC, 2012:5).

Although the report prepared by ICC makes an important contribution to the global discussion on food sovereignty by shedding light on the urgent issue of Inuit food security, that report, like many others rarely addresses the impact of colonialism and particularly the impact of global food economy. In particular, they do not address the growing dependency of remote indigenous communities on the market economy, and the power and speed it has had in transforming indigenous societies, including the Inuit. In Greenland the commercial fishing and in Canada, the fur trade established the Inuit connection with the global economy, also referred to as world system (Wallerstein, 2004). These commercial activities were initiated by the colonial authorities, with hopes of increasing national economies and private investments in Canada and Greenland. Whereas Inuit societies, traditionally based on equality in relation to means of production, which did not have any value for gaining profits neither did they recognize private land ownership, and which have been rather self-sufficient until the turn of the century (Gombay, 2010). Gradually more commodities and trading posts began to flock to the local markets and communities, to the extent that by 1920, commodities had replaced subsistence hunting as a main source for food and necessities. The introduction of new food items and commodities produced by large national and multinational companies with more resources than the local, indigenous subsistence, affected the eating habits and survival strategies of all Inuit.

The reason why I have chosen to use world system analysis in this work and in examining the decrease of hunting, change of diet, food insecurity, are all explainable to some extent by the functioning of global, capitalistic, economy. Here I refer to this mainly as global food economy, since food has long since become a commodity for the people worldwide. This is also the understanding of Tania Li (2014) that the causes at the root of food insecurity cannot be comprehended without taking a

historical, macro-perspective to explain the situation we are dealing with, when discussing food security. The theoretical concepts of world system and dependency are very useful tools to grasp the bigger picture. Immanuel Wallerstein, although not an indigenous scholar, but a representative of macro-economic history, has spent a lifetime in research for these connections between colonialism and capitalism, which he dates back to 16th century, in the wake of Columbus. World system theory has been criticized of oversimplifying and failing to address the internal structures and relationships in a given society, and I agree with this criticism. However, it does not mean that world system theory should be outdated, but rather complemented with a culture specific knowledge. For this purpose, I present a case study in the beginning of the paper, reflecting a specific form of food production, sheep farming in South Greenland, still supporting Wallerstein's argument about the power global economy has on transforming societies into a desired direction, profiting the elite of the world.



1.2 Research question

Although this thesis have several objects, my main research question is:

What is the relationship between food security and the empowerment of Inuit? In order to answer this I will describe the food security situation among the Inuit, in Greenland and Canada today, and examine why does country food matter? Secondly, I will represent a case study from

South Greenland, and sheep farming. This relates to the discussion about indigenous peoples food sovereignty. Food Sovereignty is “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.” (Food Secure Canada, 2017). Further, all of these will be related to a bigger context and connected to a global food economy, to examine the impact and scope of global food industry affecting the Inuit food consumption.

The research question includes an assumption that people and communities are better off if they have control over harvesting of natural resources and sense of power and self-determination.

1.3 The concept of indigenous in Greenland

Throughout the paper, I will be referring to concepts such as traditional and modern, indigenous and western and for the purpose, I have defined these terms as they are used in this work. By traditional can be referred to several things, including prequest or precolonial past. Tradition has referred to a time-honored custom, respected beliefs, and an active process in which beliefs are handed down from generation to generation and require only two generations to become tradition. (Shanklin, 1981). According to Stuart Hall, ‘West’ and ‘western’ represents complex ideas and have no single meaning. Western refer to ideas beyond place and geography, although it emerged from Europe during 16th century. Western society is developed, industrialized, urbanized, capitalist, secular and modern. Any society, which shares these characteristics, can be said to belong to ‘the West’. (Hall, 1997). For the term indigenous, I have reserved more space, and it will be discussed here in the context of Greenland.

The question of indigeneity in Greenland should be addressed briefly. One of the most used definitions of who are indigenous peoples is the one spelled out by Jose Martinez Cobo, UN special rapporteur. This definition includes aspects as occupation of ancestral lands, common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands, culture in general, language, residence in certain parts of the country and self-identification as indigenous. (United Nations, 2004). It is clear that Greenlandic Inuit as peoples fit all of these categories, however, although not stated in this definition, *marginalization* and *minority position*, are often added for the definition, whereas this is not the case in Greenland today. Once I referred to Greenland as a colonized country, due to the dominance of the Danes and officially being part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Where my informant Paul, an already retired sheep farmer and local politician, gave me the reply that “we have not been colonized for several decades by the Danish, we have our own Home Government now, we are responsible for ourselves” (Field

notes, 2016). It is true that the Inuit consist 80 per cent of the population and are a clear majority in the parliament, *Inatsisartut*. Also, whereas United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) refers to self-determination as a right for internal self-determination, and thus not having a right for secession from the state. In the case of Greenland, external self-determination, the independent state of Greenland has been on the agenda since the Home Rule 1979, with an intensifying progress. (Åhren, 2016). As can be interpreted from the appointment of Ministry for Independence, Nature, Environment and Agriculture in 2017 (Naalakkersuisut, 2017). However, if looking at the rate of dependency of Greenland from Denmark, it is also true that Denmark has a fair grip of Greenland, as long as it still pays one third of its annual budget to Greenland, and as long as the top posts are filled by Danish employers and the trade guided by Danish firms, as will be illustrated later.

In Greenland, people identify themselves as Inuit and Greenlandic, while the official definition of ethnicity is through birthplace, since all Greenlandic people are Danish citizens, with a Danish passport. However, ask nearly any Greenlandic person and she or he feels offended by being called as Danish (Field notes, 2016). What seems to play an important part of self-definition is the difference made between the Danish, *Qallunaat*, and the Greenlandic, *Kalaallit*, but also the ability to speak Greenlandic, *Kalaallisut*. Because of these internal debates over the Greenlandic identity I have chosen to refer people born in Greenland as Greenlandic and when extending the discussion to Canada and USA, to Inuit. The reason for this is that in Greenland there is a lack of data on the issue of food security, and even less so from the Russian side. For the purpose here, it can thus be concluded that Greenlandic identity is as much a political, national identity as it is an identity of being an indigenous person in a modern world, and it is not my aim to take any position on this debate.

1.4 Methodology, methods and ethics of research: Participant observation, interviewing and reflection

Methodology refers to a general approach to studying research topics, methodology outlines the way in which research is to be undertaken (Silverman, 2012). During the research process there can be several methods used to receive data, which are specific research techniques (Ibid.).

The main two methods of obtaining data for this research has been through participant observation and interviews, I have used these two methods specifically to support the case study. It is recognized

that participant observation among other methods can provide data, which is detailed and rich (Rutterford, 2012). In addition, participant observation can provide surprisingly rich data, in brief episodes, as my fieldwork was. What I value in participant observation, is that it also taught how other people viewed me (Bhatt, 2012). Participant observation has been at the core of anthropological research since Bronislaw Malinowski, and it did transform the characteristics of anthropology to great extent, especially if compared to the previous so called ‘armchair anthropologists’ who even did not enter the field in the first place, but drew their theories of human kind while seated around their documents. It is widely recognized that while participating on the activities, by observing events that goes around on the field, provides better understanding and teaches more deeply about the issues of interest. I can only agree with this notion, also I would claim that it makes the presence of a researcher more comfortable and less awkward, especially in farming communities, where there is always need for an extra pair of hands. I used participant observation as part of another study project, internship for MA-program *Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas*. For the purpose nearly one month was spent at the Greenlandic Government’s agricultural research and training center in Upernaviarsuk, in close proximity of the largest town of South Greenland, Qaqortoq. This period gave me the opportunity to participate in the work done at the two greenhouses and fields, which surrounded these. It also gave me some understanding of the spatial and family structures of farms and farming activities done in South Greenland. During the weekdays, I spent 2-3 hours a day working on the fields or inside the greenhouse, while another 2-3 hours was spent on preparing a policy assessment of Greenlandic Governments’ agriculture policy.



Picture: Greenland Sagalands

In addition to this, I had the pleasure to spend 20-days at a local farm in these surroundings and eat dinners, which mostly consisted of Greenlandic food. The farmer and his family are relatives to my partner, and he has spent many summers together with them for over years. They have a close relationship, and I was introduced to the place for the first time during the fieldwork.



Picture: Author

There were many things I wanted to learn and know about farming in Greenland, but after a while, I realized that I might have to leave without ready-made answers. For the farmers, there is a lot work to do, especially during the summer months. Days begin early and the final tasks of the day are accomplished not far from mid-night. Sheep farmers have to work diligently, every day (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009). In a setting like this, it is not quite suitable for anyone to go around asking too many questions. In the farm, I was reminded by Tim Ingold's reflections from the time he lived among the Sámi people in Finland, that asking people to tell what they know, is no good, and he would have to find out for himself. Although the people Ingold lived with could not provide him with ready-made knowledge, they provided him with an opportunity to learn (Ingold in Sejersen, 2004). Ingold's reflection also applies to my fieldwork to some extent. I had the opportunity to have two structured interviews and two semi-structured interviews with the farmers. However, instead of being given ready-made answers on all my questions, I was given the opportunity to see and learn myself. In addition to interviews most of my data comes from the government's documents, news articles and was supported by the information provided to me by the farmers. In addition, there exist a beautiful

documentary about the sheep farmers in South Greenland *Nipaannerup Anersaa* (2009) which I have used as a source here.

We were welcomed to the farm with the warmest manner and leaving the place with astonishing beauty and tranquility was the hardest part of the fieldwork. During our stay I had the chance to see how a larger than average size sheep farm is being run and managed by a family of five persons. This particular farm is among the first established, and today it is the third generation who is the head of the farm. In addition to this two surrounding farms were visited. I got an invitation to visit two more farms, but due to the financial and time restrictions that was not possible. I did not find any previous social scientific research done, that would address agriculture in Greenland.

During the fieldwork, I conducted ten interviews, from which four were structured, three semi-structured and three were non-structured and open-ended. Interviews included two stakeholders within the government's agriculture sector, four sheep farmers and one other actor within the farming occupation. To sheep farmers I refer with letters A, B, C, D, and thus respecting their anonymity in a small farming community. I met two representatives of Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland in Nuuk and one interview was held at INUILI, catering school in South Greenland, with an emphasis to use Greenlandic raw materials. Prior to the interviews, I always introduced myself and the project with clarity, and I sent a recommendation letter written for me by the Center of Sami Studies, the Arctic University of Norway. All of the interviews lasted an hour. Two interviews were interpreted from Kalaallisut to English, with the help of my partner. All the other interviews were held in English. Beside the interviews, I had several conversations with the residents of Qaqortoq, Narsaq and Nuuk, from whom some were relatives, and some not. Discussions were wide ranging, but my favorite topic was always Greenlandic food.

There is no social scientific data existing about the agriculture in Greenland, at least nothing has come to my attention. Thus, the final analysis I conclude about sheep farming is based on the aforementioned data and applied to historical documents on the Inuit past. It is a probability, a hypothesis – that no sheep farmer neither previous research have confirmed, but would be an interesting topic to read more eventually. The lack of previous research has put me under some pressure to collect and analyze my material when there is no previous data available for comparison.

1.5 Celebrating survival - resistance of indigenous peoples

Indigenous cultures are cultures of survival.
(Sissons, 2005:13)

Indigenous peoples are recognized as a vulnerable group. The reason is not their vulnerability per se, but because of the previous, unethical research done on them by the western-minded scholars. Sometimes with traumatizing consequences. Smith (2012) reminds us that science and academia are based on western philosophy and thus the word 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. Often indigenous peoples have not made a separation between traveler's tales and expert researchers' (Ibid.). "Research has been an encounter between the west and the other, still much more is known about the other side" (Smith, 2012:8, see also Said, 1978). After the colonization and assimilation of the majority of indigenous peoples, it was widely held belief that indigenous peoples would come to extinct, they would mix in with the majority cultures and peoples. However, this belief has been proved false, and the international indigenous movement began to strive for uniting indigenous rights during the 1960's, leading to the establishment of the permanent forum on indigenous peoples and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. Despite the fact that indigenous voices have become heard in a manner not before, they are still living in the margins and silenced by many governments and officials. Still, clearly less entitled than the mainstream population.

Suicide, child abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, domestic violence, are all common topics of research about Greenland and other Inuit societies. Even more so of journals and news articles as well as images of the public. These expressions have a power to draw certain, biased, picture of Inuit communities to outsiders as well as it has on discouraging many people towards a positive development. Many ills of the contemporary Inuit societies are consequences of colonialism. Colonialism itself is considered to be long gone by many, however, the state of affairs is unarguably resonance from the past, or as some put it, forms of mental colonialism still prevails (Field notes, 2016; Petersen, 1995). Especially discussions of the Inuit food security often do not include the consequences of colonialism as having an impact on the issue. I argue that it cannot be ignored or polished. Otherwise there is a danger that indigenous communities are being accused of not *being capable* for improving their own conditions, as of lacking some abilities to step out from the poverty and step in the wealthier layers of society. Especially among the Inuit this is a true danger, since USA,

Canada and Denmark are all among the wealthiest nations of the world, with more support network for reducing poverty than many other countries with an indigenous population.

For me it was clear from the beginning that I want to focus on the good and positive aspects of the Greenlandic society. The celebration of continuous Inuit food system, and celebration of indigenous foods. In addition, it should be noteworthy that the Greenlandic people achieved a Home Rule in 1979, which granted the Inuit self-determination within their internal affairs. In 2009 this was extended into a Home Government, *Naalakkersuisut*, which gave the Greenlandic people control over natural resources, the court system but also the right to be ‘peoples’ in international law and representation in United Nations. This is the highest degree of indigenous self-determination in the world and seen as a flagship-case for many indigenous peoples (Dahl, 2014). Moreover, the beauty of the country does not compare to anything I’ve seen earlier. Despite the difficult socio-economic conditions faced by many Greenlandic people it is the relation to land, to silence, language and family that makes people proud of being Greenlandic and stay in Greenland although residency in Denmark would guarantee higher incomes and cheaper living costs. (Field notes, 2016; SLiCA, 2015).

1.6 Indigenous research as non-indigenous – Reflection and challenges

During the past decade, there has been an increase of *indigenous* research methodologies (See Kovach, 2010; Smith, L.T., 2012; 2003; Chilisa, 2010; Wilson, 2008). This is clearly a positive development that indigenous peoples are becoming active researchers in issues about them. Non-indigenous peoples who have studied indigenous peoples over centuries, sometimes with unwanted consequences for the people who have been regarded as pure objects of research. Often in a manner how natural scientists pursue on testing their samples, measuring physical features for example (Evjen, 1998). The ways knowledge has been obtained from indigenous peoples and communities have most often profited a single researcher in her/his career path, academic community or served the colonial administrations, than actually been of any use for the indigenous peoples themselves. This is also the reason why it is not a surprise that among many indigenous peoples there exist distrust towards research and researchers (Deloria, 1969).

Although, according to some informants, the information I provided about my purpose to be in Greenland was sufficient, I came to learn that research and researchers are seen with certain reservation, distance and even untrust. “Researchers come and go, and we never get to hear what was it all about” or “great deal of resources is being placed for a researcher to the job, but what has really changed here? – Not much.” As Ivalo once said to me (Field notes, 2016). Being aware of this background and struggles that many indigenous peoples have had to endure on the behalf of insensitive researchers coming from outside, I have paid much attention on my own position and positionality on the field. Also being aware of the relations that are in effect while on the field. Since I left to Greenland with my Greenlandic partner and son, I was aware that I would be welcomed as a guest and a relative from the side of people I met there. However, for me it was important to emphasize to these same people that I was also conducting a research. Although it is clear that I received an access to several places and peoples, majority of whom I have interviewed, I took great care not to take advantage of this position. The encounters and interviews with the people were smooth processes in wider web of relations and roles. It is also obvious that it was not possible for the people to perceive me solely as a researcher, since so much of the daily activities, are tasks performed within a family circle: food preparation, household tasks, visiting relatives/welcoming relatives, meeting with friends and discussion of more intimate matters. However, all of the activities that took place within this inner circle are excluded from this research, with the exception of few comments given by closer family members: Minik and Ivalo, with their consent.

Cross-cultural encounters are commonplace in research processes and sometimes they are solved with mutual agreement, sometimes not. Within anthropology there is a bulk of literature where single anthropologists have clearly articulated the challenges they have had on the field. (See: Briggs, 1971; Metcalf, 2012; Powdermaker, 1967). My main challenge as an outside to Greenlandic society was the lack of competency in Kalaallisut, but also more broadly in the local communication culture. What appeared for me as silence, and lack of words, was full of meanings for many. It has been written that in traditional Inuit societies conflicts were to be avoided between people, to avoid open confrontations. All the members of small communities were needed in securing the continuation of life. It was crucial not to show discontent or to show strong emotional expressions as these were perceived as weakness. (Gombay, 2010). Probably one of the most well know ethnography about the Inuit emotions is the one by Jean Briggs, *Never in Anger* (1971).

A Dane, who has been living in Greenland for years, said that it is sometimes challenging to hear people's opinions over matters, since there is a concern that others would not agree, and creating thus a risk of causing a conflict. Alternatively, just that people would start to gossip. (Field notes, 2016). For me, it was sometimes impossible to anticipate the flow of discussions held in Kalaallisut, since the tone and intonation stayed the same during conversations. Often I found myself thinking, a subject seems serious, only to hear later that a child had been born! Sometimes during the interviews similar silent flow prevailed, making open-ended questions challenging, or leaving me with a feeling of being too talkative. In spite of this challenge, I slowly began to learn an appropriate way of communication, which in my case was to learn to use less-words than I was used to, and give more space for silence. This is for the people to decide, how successful I was in the end of the fieldwork. Nevertheless, the time spend in the field gave me some understanding of the position of a researcher in an indigenous community. It gave me understanding of abstract concepts such as trust, relationality, continuation and silent communication. All these could be divided into sub-chapters and explained further. However, within the limits of this work, I hope these would speak for themselves throughout this thesis.

Without my gatekeeper, my partner, or the internship period at the Upernaviarsuk, getting an access to sheep farming community would have been a challenge, maybe even an impossibility. Often I caught myself thinking, what is it I actually do here? The farmers are busy enough outside on the fields and repairing their machines, the women have their hands full with taking care of the children, house and welcoming guests, relatives and tourists, in addition to helping out their husbands. For sure, my case is different since we were visiting relatives, still I found it difficult at times to justify my presence there as an academic. I never fully succeeded to let go of my academic lenses. However, despite the great difference between myself and the people I met on the field, there was something shared, bigger than the sum of small differences.

During my time as a student of Indigenous Studies, the following features of research have amalgamated into my head: Respect, reciprocity and responsibility are key features of any health relationship and must be included in research methodology. The responsibility to ensure respectful and reciprocal relationships with the studied people and communities (Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008). With these thoughts and research ideals, I set out for my fieldwork from Tromsø, Northern Norway early May 2016. It took few days for us – my Greenlandic partner and our one-year old son, to reach

Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. The pleasure of reaching a country we all hold a great value in our hearts and minds was overwhelming. The sun was high up on the sky, as it is during the bright, arctic summers. The ocean was all around surrounding us. Suddenly a knock on the back, and there he was, *ittu*, the Greenlandic grandfather meeting his grandson for the first time. *Kiisami* – finally he said. This was the beginning of a four months long fieldwork and my part as an observer, listener, student, mother and a relative, had to be put into place and delicately balanced in order to accomplish the task ahead.



2 Case study: Sheep-farming in Greenland

The profit I want is to have my ewe calving with two lambs.

(Farmer, Qassiarsuk)

It is a very special land, all the vegetables are sweet, even the radishes and turnips are sweet. (Peter Stougaard in Nobel, 2013)

Microbiologist Peter Stougaard has discovered that a certain bacterium present in Greenland's soil prevents the pathogenic potato fungi that can wipe out entire crops back in Denmark. Even though

he has a concern that warming of the climate, might affect the bacterium and have an unwanted impact on Greenland's potatoes. In spite of this threat, Stougaard is mostly optimistic and argues that Greenland could increase its production of potatoes and other crops. He sees it ultimately as a question on whether the people and Home Government are up for the task. "There's a big potential, but at the moment they are not fulfilling this potential." (Nobel, 2013).

Agriculture in Greenland is mostly done on the subarctic region of South Greenland, in Kommune Kujalleq. There has been agriculture since the time of the Norse people, around year 900 when the place was called Brattahlid, named after the Viking Erik the Red who had been exiled from Iceland. It is a historical mystery, what happened to the Norse people, but it has been estimated that they left or perished during the 14th century, and there is no evidence of the contact between the Inuit and Norse people, other than a saga telling about a fight over a woman between a Viking warrior and an Inuit hunter.

The beginning of modern Greenlandic sheep farming dates back to the year 1924, established by Otto Frederiksen from Qassiarsuk. A settlement where sheep farming tradition is well and alive today, five farms in an area where the population count was 46 in year 2015. This is also a settlement, which is popular among tourists for its Norse ruins and a part of a larger region that was chosen on the UN World Heritage Site List in summer 2017 (Kujalleq, 2016; Fægteborg & Olsen-Siegstad, 2015). Total there are 37 sheep farms in Greenland, whereas in 2010 there were 43, so there has been an increase. Nevertheless, among young people the interest towards sheep farming has increased in South Greenland (Mølgaard, 2015). A sheep farming school located in Upernaviarsuk educates up to seven new farmers annually, since 1975 (Field notes, 2016). Most of the nation's 20,000 sheep are farmed in fjords, where steep mountains and rugged shores act as natural fences. Still, fields are filled with stones and large quantities of fodder is imported from Denmark. There is not enough arable land within the immediate closeness of the farms that would be enough to feed the sheep. In 2004 cattle was introduced, and in 2014, there were 175 cows, however keeping cattle is more on an experimental level (Naalackersuisut, 2016). Thus, agriculture in Greenland refers mainly to the sheep farms in Kommune Kujalleq, but also the past years have seen increasing amount of potatoes produced alongside the farmsteads, in addition to lettuce and cabbage (Field notes, 2016).

The main goal of Naalackersuisut's agriculture policy is that sheep farming occupation, cultivation of vegetables and introduction of cattle breeding and dairy production should be developed. As well

as to strengthen the competitiveness of the occupation in close cooperation with the Sheep Farmer's Association and related occupations (Naalakkersuisut, 2016). The previous head of the Agricultural Consultation Services, Aqqalooraq Frederiksen has stated that "We are trying to develop more agriculture in Southwest Greenland, but we need more money — it is expensive to start farming." (Field notes, 2016).

Despite the successful development of the sheep farming occupation in Greenland, there has been criticism towards it. The debate over cost-efficiency has led to a situation where it is argued that those farms producing more meat, should receive more support. The critics of sheep farming occupation are using the market value and profit aspects in assessing Greenlandic farming.

For instance, a member of the Greenlandic Parliament, *Inatsisartut*, Michael Rosing, has argued that farmers should be able to cut costs and their dependency from the government subsidies, or combine sheep farming for instance with reindeer husbandry, which would be economically more viable. Rosing continues, Greenlandic sheep farmers are using more money per/kilo to produce sheep meat than is the global price for sheep meat (Atuagagdliutit, 2016). However, agriculture sector everywhere in the world requires government support, and receives it, since domestic food production is highly regarded value within national states (Fraser, 2017).

Nevertheless, there is some point within the critique. Most of the farmer's challenges are financial; the occupation cannot support itself and is dependent on annual subsidies from Naalakkersuisut. "Without government subsidies the whole occupation would go out of business" (Qvist, 2016).

To balance with the high costs, such as diesel and fodder many farmers are supplementing their incomes by selling sheep wool to Iceland. Tourism sector is also growing in South Greenland after some active campaigning, and many farmsteads offer accommodation and activities for the tourists during the summer months.

However, due to the heavy workload of the farmers, and the demanding nature of the occupation, it is a challenge to find resources to combine farming activities with tourism business or cultivation of commercial crops (Field notes, 2016). Neither keeping cattle beside sheep is straightforward, due to the different demands of two different animals (Farmer B, 2016). Alongside, one of the interviewed farmers said that, there would be arable land available to grow potatoes, but they just don't have the

time to do it themselves (Farmer C, 2016). In principle, farmers agree that sheep farming occupation could be developed, but in practice, they need more resources than they currently receive to do so. Despite the financial challenges, the first ten years of the new millennia were the most productive in the history of sheep farming. Moreover, most importantly there is a great support towards Greenlandic agricultural products from Greenlandic consumers. Especially after the harvest, there is actually an option between perishable food produced in Greenland and imported ones. This means much for the people, but the quantities now are just not large enough to supply all, also the price for Greenlandic sheep meat is more expensive than imported meat from Iceland or New Zealand for example. Still, many people I talked with prefer to buy Greenlandic meat over imported one, when there is an option (Field notes, 2016).

Social structure of the farms and sense of place

People have been born and died in the farmsteads. An already retired sheep farmer told me that his father was born and passed away in the family farm, despite his sickness he refused to leave the place. The same farmer continued that he would himself have wanted to continue living in the farm and welcome the old age there. However, because of the statements by the doctor, he decided to move away to the nearby town. He says that everything has been good in the farmer's occupation during his 50-years of farming. (Farmer C, 2016).

I heard other similar stories about the farmer's close connection to their farmsteads. Despite the remoteness and the time and effort that are required in transportation, connecting to internet or receiving signals to cellphones. Children have to be taken to school, sometimes through difficult weather conditions. Sometimes the roads and waterways can be blocked by ice and snow, preventing attendance to school at all. In the older times, before the machines came, children had to walk or go with a horse, in this case total of 14 km in the middle of mountains, which took at least two hours one way (Farmer C, 2016). Nonetheless, this is the lifestyle many farmers feel content with, and would not choose to live outside the farming settlements. Life at the farm offers a sense of freedom and space around, one can be the master of himself (Farmer D, 2016).

When Otto Frederiksen established himself and his family to Qassiarsuk in 1924, there was no machinery, all the fields needed to be ploughed by hand, houses and other farm buildings constructed.

In addition there was suspicion from the other residents, what would come out of Frederiksen's dream to become a sheep farmer, and create rentable business, in world's largest island which is 80 per cent covered by ice, and with fierce winds. (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

Frederiksen was determined and devoted. The 3000 Danish Kroners and 146 sheep, which he had borrowed from the government, he paid back only three years after, and became an independent sheep farmer. After Otto Frederiksen, his children and grandchildren and their children have continued live by breeding sheep. Although the numbers are variable for each year, the farmers have succeeded in breeding more lambs and today the situation is better than in the past (Ibid.). The last ten years the production of sheep and lamb have come up to 20,000-24,000 slaughtered animals in the slaughterhouse Neqi A/S located in South Greenland (Naalakkersuisut, 2016).

Mark Nuttall has argued that the sense of community belonging is quite strong in Greenland (Sejersen, 2004). This is also true within the sheep farmer community. Sheep farmers form a rather closed social group, and according to farmer C, sheep farmers help one another, since nearly all of them are family or related. Those who are not family, will be left outside. (Field notes, 2016).

In many cases in the farmstead, there lives only one family in one farm, sparsely scattered along the fjord systems and coastlines, far from the major towns. This also makes them to rely each other's help in situations when help is needed.

While collective landholding is a built in feature of production systems such as pastoralism and hunting and gathering, it makes less sense to treat collective landholding among farmers as a natural given (Li, 2010:385). However, in Greenland there is no private land ownership and often the farms are run as a co-operative units with two generations and some of the farming activities, like collecting the sheep from the mountains, is a co-managerial task which brings all the regions sheep farmers together, from the planning, to collecting, separating and for over a supper and good time spent together. The lifestyle of the farmers differs from other occupations in Greenland. It is a difficult way to live, since one has to work physically hard every day, year after year, still many are willing to do so for the freedom gained. (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

This, that we live among very few on the sheep farm and to live in so amazing places, literally embraced by silence. This gives us a unique strength

(Ernst Lund in Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

It can be argued that many social problems faced in other, non-sheep farming Inuit communities are absent, or have minimal impact on sheep farmers. Unemployment or idleness at the farm is practically impossibility; there is always something to do. Whereas unemployment is well-recognized problem in many Inuit communities (SLiCA, 2015). The children of the farmers are introduced to farming activities from young age, out of habit but also of practical need. (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009). The children of the farmers grow into the occupation, much like in other traditional subsistence activities. Marginalization and inequality of social class do not have similar negative impacts than for the people living in towns, since the majority in these settlements are active within the occupation. In addition, many are relatives and family with one another. This creates a strong social bond between the members, and network of caring.

Climate change and green energy

The impacts of climate change are widely recognized in Greenland as other Inuit regions, and thus cannot be ignored here either. Since 2005, extraordinary dry summers and drought have been a burden for the sheep farming occupation (Farmer B, 2016). In addition, I have heard people saying that it was in the early 1990s when the summers begun to get more hot and winters drastically milder (Field notes, 2016). The past few years the climate has shown its instant impact on the fragile arctic ecosystem, and the vulnerability of the farming occupation, which is dependent on the climatic conditions. Whereas in the past weather conditions were predictable, today this is not the case anymore. It is not possible to plan the work anymore in similar manners than before. However, farmer Erik Knudsen says that this just have to be accepted (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

For instance, hay production has dropped 40 – 50 per cent during the past two years (Farmer C, 2016). Hay production and proper nutrition are the most essential for a successful calving of a sheep, if the sheep have had access to proper nutrition most likely the sheep will have twins during the May month. To keep the amount of sheep population profitable twin lambs are necessary for a farmer. (Ibid.). Drought has been the secondary cause that has affected hay production, however the primary reason for the recent shortcomings have been decrease in calving (Farmer A, 2016). Recent droughts with these consequences, have led to a situation where farmers have had to struggle to be able to feed the animals, apply for additional financial support from the government and at worst - went into

bankruptcy. For example, one farm lost approximately 140 sheep of total 600 in 2015 due to a dry summer and foxes carrying rabies. In the recent years' foxes have also been an irritation for the farmers, since after the foxes have bitten a sheep, it will eventually die (Farmer E, 2016). The loss to an average size farm, which is approximately 450 sheep/per/farm, the amount is nearly one third and the amount that keeps the occupation profitable. For this particular farm, it will take up to three to four years to increase the sheep number prior to 2015 (Farmer A, 2016; Naalakkersuisut, 2016b).

Beside climate change, the increase in oil prices have had a negative impact on the farmers and it creates uncertainty for the future of sheep farming. For instance, one farm consumed 15.000 liters oil a year. (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009). Many farmers are painfully aware of the large quantities they need to consume fossil fuels, to operate the farms and households. Large part of the incomes is spent on buying diesel, but there are environmental concerns also among the farmers, and many have succeeded to replace their energy source to hydropower. In fact, eight to nine farms are using hydropower and are fully governed for the entire year. From six to seven farms are using solar panels and are governed 70 per cent by their annual electricity consumption (Field notes, 2016). According to an expert within the agriculture sector, investments on hydropower could make the sheep farming financially more liable, and increase sheep production 50-60 per cent. However, this is an investment that would need to be done by the Government, since installation of sufficient hydropower is expensive, but still cherished by the farmers (Field notes, 2016).

Extracting uranium in the midst of the farmer's lands

In 2013, an Australian mining company, Greenland Minerals AS, has been given a license to explore Kuannersuit mountain for future extraction of rare earth minerals and uranium as a byproduct. In Greenland, there has been a zero-tolerance for uranium and other radioactive minerals since 1988 (Nuttal, 2013). However, in 2013 the parliament decided to lift the sanctions, without referendum. This caused great unrest among people and have ever since led to several protests and policy debates between the two biggest parties: Siumut and Inuit Atagatiigit, and divided the Greenlandic society into two camps in relation to the uranium debate. The atmosphere in the parliament got so tense eventually, that in 2016 the parties had to drop the uranium-debate for now because of the deadlock situation. Despite this, there are continuous debates concerning the opening of the mine in the close proximity of town Narsaq. A Danish researcher, from the Department of Culture and Global Studies,

Lill Bjørst, says that the opponents are in minority but opposition is increasing, especially in Nuuk and bigger town, whereas people in settlements are supporting mining (Persson & Christiansen, 2016).

The local people, especially residents of Kommune Kujalleq, including majority of the sheep-farmers are highly alert because of the issue. Kuannersuit is located only 7 km away from one of the three towns in South Greenland, Narsaq and Kuannersuit is surrounded by several farms. This debate concerns also Greenlandic identity in relation to the purity of the environment and good quality of the raw ingredients, the country can be proud of. These are also central for the regional identity of South Greenland, as a potential “breadbasket” and attraction for tourists who seek to experience one of the last remaining regions in the world, which is not polluted by large-scale industries (Olsen-Siegstad & Fægteborg, 2015). But this discussion is also a question of rights, the right of the farmer’s to be secured against third parties of polluting their land, it is about indigenous people’s right to continuous livelihood strategies and it is about food sovereignty, a right to choose one’s food system. It is about the right to a place and belonging.

The decision made by Naalakkersuisut to give the green light for extracting uranium is in contrast with UN’s recommendation on *the right to adequate food* which states that: States have to protect the right to food against violations by third parties. For example, “States should prevent third parties from destroying sources of food by, for instance, polluting land, water and air with hazardous industrial or agricultural products or destroying the ancestral lands of indigenous peoples” (ICC, 2012:10).

Preceding the decision made by the Greenlandic Government, there was no negotiations neither consultations on the issue. After, the mining company has facilitated town-hall meetings, but these have been highly questioned by many people. There has not been given enough time for questions neither no one has really explained the potential consequences of an operating uranium mine, and what to do in a case of an accident (Fægteborg & Olsen-Siegstad, 2015). The reason why majority of the population are eager to develop the mining sector is because of economic prospects, and there is a long-term plan included, to become independent from Denmark. To achieve independency, national economy needs to be secured, since Greenland still receives one third of its total expenditure from Denmark. As long as it is dependent on this so-called block money, separation will not be realistic. Despite that, the majority of Greenlandic people wants independency, they are also much concerned

over the environmental- and social consequences uranium mining could bring, should independency be traded for environmental pollution?

Mia Olsen Siegstad and Mads Fægteborg from ICC Greenland, published a report in 2015 about the inclusion of the local people and the information flow between the residents and the company about the Kuannersuit project. After traveling around Kommune Kujalleq and interviewing local people, including several sheep farmers, it became obvious that there is a lack of proper knowledge towards the project, whether it is about the dangers of uranium itself or the impacts of the mine to the environment. The especially strong concern is whether the strong winds in South Greenland will carry the radioactive material from the open pit mine to farmlands, and thus pollute the grazing lands of the sheep, making sheep farming occupation an impossibility. Also lake Taseq, the place planned for the tailings, is just 5 km above the nearby mountain of Narsaq (Ibid.). According to the report, neither Naalakkersuisut nor the Greenland Minerals A/S are willing to take responsibility of the compensations if an environmental catastrophe would happens.

The farmers are willing to come in terms with all the other issues with the government, but not in the case of uranium mining, and below are some of the comments I recorded from the field (Field notes, 2016).

As a bare minimum, there should be no tailings from the mine but Naalakkersuisut don't want to listen (Farmer B, 2016).

There should have been elections over the issue, since the clear majority is against uranium mining (Farmer B, 2016; Farmer E, 2016).

Once the radioactive content leaks to the nature and the surroundings, it is the end of the farming occupation and it is an enormous environmental threat in general. Some farmers are willing to abandon their farmsteads if the uranium mine will open (Farmer C, 2016).

It is scary. (Farmer A, 2016)



Source: Sermitsiaq, 2015

For the people who have followed indigenous people's plight on a global arena, this is a commonplace situation. The government and multinational or large industries are bonding and creating alliances. The situation in the mining sector is much the same as within the global food industry, which I will represent later. The history of indigenous peoples is all about this, forced relocations, exhaustion of their land, and complete ignorance of what the perception of a good life means to indigenous peoples and leaving them outside the decisions-making processes that primarily affects them. However, in the case of Greenland it is a different setting, since 80 per cent of the people are Inuit and they are the majority in the parliament. Greenland shows an example of the heterogeneity within indigenous nations and groups in themselves. Attitudes towards nature and the need to stand as stewards of the environment, the value of sharing and traditional knowledge vary within all indigenous societies, including the Inuit.

Naalakkersuisut is an indigenous peoples' institution for governance, and the issue around the development of the mining sector in Greenland challenges often-commonplace ideas that indigenous peoples stand as a united frontier against large-scale industrial processes, and oppose national policies concerning these. This is clearly a false image.

Nevertheless, what does apply in the case of Greenland with the majority of indigenous people's is a desire for greater self-determination, or full self-determination. And right now, the development of

mining sector in Greenland has received the strongest support for gaining much wanted independency and establishment of a Greenlandic state. It remains to be seen will this be at the cost of the farmers or will the mining sector find areas with less harmful and more respectful areas for the purpose. The debate over uranium mining is still ongoing, and yet no uranium has been extracted commercially. However, an operating uranium mine is clearly in the agenda of the current government, and it might be given green light already in 2018, regardless the gaps on consultations and acceptance of the local people. “Ajorpoq, we are not given answers”, crystallizes the sentiments of the local people (Fægteborg & Olsen-Siegstad, 2015).

Conclusion

The choice I made to begin with representing a case study among the farmers in Greenland was because of I wanted to introduce a rather unique, and rarely discussed way of living in Greenland, if compared to a vast literature on hunters. However, the sheep farmers are a relatively small social group living in a specific region in Greenland. In addition, due to the remoteness from largest towns and villages, the farming communities have been less affected by many socio-economic changes that have characterized many other Inuit communities, and the colonial- and post-colonial influence of the Danes has been less felt.

The issue of Inuit food security has not particularly addressed the rates of food insecurity among the farming communities, since research on food security is lacking from Greenland in general. However, based on my observations and readings, it could be assumed that the rate of food security is higher among the farmers, since they make a living of sheep breeding, and the farmers have sufficient equipment for hunting and fishing, if compared to many other people living in Greenland.

Nonetheless, the statements given by the official agriculture sector, the development of agriculture is not among the priorities within Naalakkersuisut. The comment made by Stougaard, is true to a large extent, there would be potential but there seems not to be enough political will to develop the agricultural sector. This is for the reason that agriculture would not provide the Greenlandic government with much needed money revenues, the priorities are currently within the development of mining sector and in fisheries, with more prospects on economic growth. It should also be added that even with the sufficient support mechanism, agriculture in Greenland most likely would stay small-scale, since the areas of arable land is restricted (Field Notes, 2016).

The next two chapters will discuss on the issue of food security, which has been recognized by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right for food, as a serious concern, especially among the indigenous peoples in Canada, and specifically among the Inuit (CBC, 2012).

3 Anthropology of food, Inuit country food and diet transition

When I eat Inuit foods, I know who I am. I feel the connection to our ocean and to our land, to our people, to our way of life.

(Egede in Silent Snow)

Takanna, there you go, an invitation that always indicated something good was on the way. My way of giving back and saying thank you is by writing about the food that was served during my stay in Greenland, contemporary Greenlandic food that brought so much joy and content. It was food that truly stands out in freshness and quality, Greenlandic food caught from the Arctic Ocean or hunted from the mountains, blueberries and blackberries, those delightful little spots in the vast landscape, waiting a wanderer to sit down and eat what the land has to offer. To look at the sky where an eagle is the only companion, almost whispering that there is enough space for both if we just are in silence. Food has always been associated with several meanings in human cultures; it is not only means to fill our stomach. Food is the center of cultures and saturated with meaning and values. People as groups have organized themselves around food in order to survive. Social institutions have been established and the relationships within these institutions have had their special relation to food, which has manifested in the organization of kinship, dividing gender roles, strengthening taboos and the sphere of sacred, food has determined location and form of habitation.

The study of food and eating has a long history in anthropology, dating back to the nineteenth century. Food and eating is important both for its own sake since food is utterly essential to human existence and often insufficiently available. (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002). In addition to physiological needs, food is interconnected with much wider patterns of behavior among us all, especially in the way food connects or disconnects peoples and how food can symbolically connect a man to god. “Food studies have illuminated broad societal processes such as political-economic value creation, symbolic value creation, and the social construction of memory” among others (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002:99). World

is full of examples of such relations between food and people and food and belief systems. It is just because eating and the material and social aspects of it are such a routine, that we rarely come to think about, it appears as mundane to us (Julier, 2013). For this reason, food studies are interesting in the way it can tell us something we all have an intimate knowledge, feeling and connection – food concerns everyone.

Sidney Mintz has written, “Our awareness that food and eating are foci of habit, taste, and deep feeling must be as old as those occasions in the history of our species when human beings first saw other humans eating unfamiliar foods. Like languages and all other socially acquired group habits, food systems dramatically demonstrate the intraspecific variability of humankind.” (Mintz, 1985:3). William Robertson Smith was interested of eating together as a social act. He examined this within the context of sacrificial meal and concluded that “those who sit at meal together are united for all social effects; those who do not sit together are aliens to one another, without fellowship in religion and without reciprocal social duties” (Mintz, 1985:4).

Eating country foods is important not only because of its nutritional benefits but also because of the broader importance of harvesting, in supporting traditional knowledge and skills (Ibid.) In addition consumption of country foods maintains important family and community bonds which goes beyond what’s experienced in the western diet (Charleyboy, 2012). Country food is the name that Inuit use to describe traditional foods. Country food is things like arctic char, seal meat, whale caribou etc. Originally, these foods were consumed for day-to-day survival; as people ate what the land and sea provided. Also before standardized, western education system, hunting, gathering food and fishing were the education system of indigenous peoples. It was a process of life-long learning and it was secured that every generation came to learn the most essential part of cultural continuity, the quest for food. Among the Inuit training was gender-divided, boys were taught to become hunters and girls learned to process leather and housekeeping. (Lennert, 2015).

Danes often think the food Greenlandic people ate before their contact with the Europeans must have been extremely simple compared with food today (Kleivan, 1996) The simplicity of traditional Inuit food is true to some extent, since before the World War II, Greenland was an isolated community with a widely scattered population. Until the 19th century, several families had usually lived together in one house and the food, almost exclusively from animal origin, was distributed among and within

families according to special rules (Petersen in Pars et al., 2001). However, the methods of putting a dish together was far from simple. The lack of preservation technologies, other than ice and burying food underground, forced the Inuit to invent most sophisticated (and lethal if not conducted properly) ways of preserving and preparing a meal. The methods of the earlier times included smoking, fermenting and rotting (Larsen & Oldenburg, 2000). Enrique Salmón emphasizes that indigenous foods are far more complex than the simple examples of food that have only been raised, harvested, dried and eaten. Indigenous foods “involve a process that reflects centuries of creativity and innovation” (2012:140).



Photo: Raffy Dikranian

Although many of the traditional ways of preparing food are not used anymore due to the development in technology, many Inuit living in circumpolar north would still prefer to eat country food. In Nunavut 81 per cent of the people would like to eat more country food, but due to the high cost of it, access to it is difficult (Inuit Health Survey, 2010). Reasons behind the insufficient access to country food is discussed below. In addition, every household I visited did consume Greenlandic country food, most often sheep meat, whale and fish (Field notes, 2016).

The West Greenlandic word for food is *kalaalimineq*; *kalaaleq* meaning a Greenlander and *mineq* a piece of meat. Imported food is called *Qallunaamineq*, from *Qallunaaq*, which means Dane, or foreigner. (Pars et al.2001). *Neri* means meat, as this is synonymous to 'eat' and 'food'. Greenlandic food is closely associated with hunting and fishing, which besides the economic aspect has great cultural and symbolic importance. Greenlandic country food consists of meat from sea mammals – various kinds of seals and whales, and meat from land mammals – caribous, muskox, and birds. To this, one adds fish, shellfish, shrimp, and a limited number of edible plants and berries. In addition, meat from slaughtered Greenlandic reindeer and sheep is considered Greenlandic food (Bjerregaard & Jeppesen, 2010; Kleivan, 1996).

Nevertheless, the Inuit in Greenland have undergone a transition from a fisher-hunter society, with physically active lifestyle and a diet based on the food available from the natural environment, to a westernized society and today the diet consists mainly of industrial food acquired from the grocery stores (Jeppesen et al. 2012). The rate and speed of this change has varied in different parts of the country, but major changes in hunting-fishing patterns and diet emerged during the 1930's, when the consumption of country food declined drastically. The contribution of county food to total energy intake by consumers was estimated in 1930 to be 37 per cent (Pars et al. 2001). In 1994, seal meat was the most frequently consumed traditional food, eaten daily by 20 per cent of respondents, followed by fish 17 per cent, wildfowl 10 per cent, whale meat 6 per cent, and terrestrial animals 2 per cent (Ibid.). Today diet transition is reflected in the low consumption of country foods and increased consumption of market foods, which are unfortunately often low in nutritional value and do not compare to the healthy nutrition intake of the traditional diet (Fillion et al.2014; Nobel, 2013). For instance, seal meat has four times the iron of beef, more vitamins than any other consumer meat and is low in saturated fat. Mattak, the whale skin, together with whale blubber, is believed to lower cholesterol levels (Cold Cuts, 2015). In general, it is widely acknowledged by the Inuit and dominating health research that the importance of country food is connected to Inuit health and nutrition, but also country food has physical, cultural and spiritual importance to its consumers (Pufall et al. 2011).

Before the increased consumption of imported food, Inuit were healthy people, and the main causes of pre-mature death were accidents that occurred on hunting trips (Field notes, 2016). The earliest scientific work done among the Inuit is actually connected to their diet. The people had minuscule

rates of heart diseases and this has been confirmed to be due a diet rich in omega oil and the active lifestyle of semi-nomadic people. Whereas, in connection to a rapid nutritional transition, the prevalence of lifestyle diseases led to growing public health problems, such as type 2 diabetes and obesity, which are today common among the Inuit cross borders. Being overweight and obesity are especially pronounced among women (Jeppesen et al. 2012; Kuhnlein et al. 2012; Bjerregaard et al., 2013).

Despite the decline of consumption of country foods, according to the study by Pars et al. conducted in Greenland (2001), traditional food items are rated significantly higher by the Greenlandic people than imported foods, most popular *mattak*, seal meat, guillemot, dried cod, and crowberries. All age groups gave high ratings to the importance of traditional food, but especially the elders, who have been harvesting the country foods throughout their lifetime. The preference towards country food increases with age, and younger generations do not use traditional foods as often as the older generations. However, Kuhnlein et al. (2012) have evaluated that most likely the Inuit youth of the day, will consume and value country food more as they grow older. The study by Pars et al. found out that especially for young people, it was not the cost of traditional food that determined consumption but variation. In addition, “making food choices is equivalent to choosing what kind of life and identity is wished to have” (Holm, in Pars, 2001). “Today traditional food culture in the towns is something you can buy and choose, whereas in the villages, traditional food culture cannot be bought and chosen; instead you inherit the culture” (Pars, 2001:26).

Here lies the paradox of the thesis; why are the Inuit not consuming more country food, although there is much evidence they would like to, and given the fact that the ocean is still as abundant with marine mammals and the land still has healthy populations of caribou, reindeers and muskox? In addition, we ask, why does country food matter in the first place, if it is replaceable at least to some extent with industrial food? Our food choices are related to availability, but human beings never eat every edible and available food in their environment. There seems to be no objective reason for a certain food being selected over another, but there are cultural reasons. Julier argues, “Peoples choices are embedded in moral and social discourses” (2013:16). The strong relationship that exists between local, everyday food items and identity is a commonplace in anthropological writings, how food is capable of symbolizing the manner in which people view themselves with respect to others and outsiders of society. Food can serve as a basic marker of individual and collective identity, and as

such contribute to the basis of coherent social ordering: people who eat together become 'we' as opposed to 'them' and the food shared becomes a metaphor for the social group. (Freeman, 1996). The importance of everyday food events relates to the role they play in enabling members of society to signify and structure their customary social order, gender relations, and self-identity within the family, household and community (Ibid.).

We are trying to eat like Europeans, not our indigenous food, nor are we preserving our indigenous seeds. In terms of food as medicine, we have a lot of indigenous vegetables and herbs which are also passing out of existence and giving way to new vegetables. Actually, if you look back at our people, they were healthy, very strong, and there was no blood pressure. However, today we find that even young children have high blood pressure due to being overweight. They eat junk food; the food is not really originating from the indigenous people but from the Western world. It is not prepared in the way it should be; because it is not their food. (Maria Cidosa in Ulvila & Pasanen, 2009)

Food preferences are close to self-identification. People who eat strikingly different foods or similar foods in different ways are thought to be strikingly different, sometimes even less human (Mintz, 1985).

Some Greenlanders talk with profound contempt about cheap frozen mixed chicken pieces from industrialized chicken farms as a symbol of food products from a sick western society, as the opposite of sea mammal meat caught by Greenlanders in harmony with nature. (Kleivan, 1996:150)

Although eating Greenlandic food is still today an important identity marker, and I heard several youth speak of having cravings for *mattak*, the whale skin, eating habits are changing.

The western research on food security often places importance on such issues as calorie intake, nutritional values or the money needed to buy food (Inuit Circumpolar Council – Alaska, 2015).

For example, several studies recommendations' emphasize nutritional aspect of food insecurity and include the importance of creating programs and health initiatives on nutritional education of the Inuit. However, for indigenous peoples the emphasis on diet change is not in nutrition but within the whole way of being in the world. Food security is a holistic concept, as access to indigenous food maintains, according to the Pueblo, "the responsibility of growing food for one's community is connected to one's identity as a member of the community. This identity of 'being-ness' is tied to the history of the people on a landscape" (Salmón, 2012:32). For the Inuit, food security is broad concept and for many, food security is about culture. (ICC – Alaska, 2015). According to report on food security by Inuit Circumpolar Council – Alaska, food security is foremost characterized by environmental health. Moreover, environmental health is achieved through availability, Inuit culture,

decision-making power and management, health and wellness, stability and accessibility (ICC – Alaska, 2015).

4 Hunger and food security among the Inuit

I don't believe this is happening in Canada.(Papatsie, 2013)

Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2017). Today, there are around 780 million undernourished people in so-called developing countries and another 14.7 million in the developed world (Ibid.). Although today more people suffer from malnutrition than ever before also obesity kills more often than lack of food (Yleisradio, 2017; Kuhnlein et al. 2012; Whit, 1999). The Finnish newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat* (2017), stated that over half of world's food production is being wasted, and one fifth of the food that reaches consumers gets inedible, or is not consumed in households. At the same time, the recent report by World Health Organization confirms that third of the adult population in the world are overweight or obese. One reason is the consumption of industrialized food, containing too much fat and sugar, especially among the low-income countries and households (Organ et al., 2014).

The research on food security can at best – and worst, illuminate global inequality starting from the access to necessities – water and nutrition. The other part of the globe is suffering from obesity while the other experiences undernourishment. One group throws food in the trash, while at the same time the other part is starving because of lack of food. To understand reasons behind hunger is to understand inequality and the right to food, rights which every human should have (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2017). Food security is not a new phenomenon within human history, but more people are becoming aware of the socio-cultural, environmental and economic factors that have an impact on the access and availability to food (Organ et al. 2014). Especially in relation to indigenous peoples, these factors are becoming more visible; after all indigenous peoples have had the knowledge and tools to communicate with the environment and with each other in order to sustain long-term food security for centuries.

In this chapter, I discuss the issues of food security among the Inuit in Greenland and Canada. In addition, the connection between colonialism and food security is illustrated.

4.1 Hunger and food insecurity as a lack of entitlement and rights

Most people believe that there is just not enough food to go around...
(Lappe & Collins in Whit, 1999:14)

Food security is inextricably linked to a person's ability to exercise his or her right to food. That right is included in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequately for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food and it is a state obligation to protect the right to food. "Every man, woman and child has the right to be free from hunger and malnutrition", states the Rome Declaration on World Food Security. (UN, 1996). In spite of what many people believe, that there is not enough food to secure this right,

The world is producing, each day, two pounds of grain, or more than 3000 calories for every man, woman and child on earth... and this estimate does not include... beans, potatoes, cassava, range-fed meat... The idea that there is not enough food to go around just doesn't hold up.

(Lappe & Collins in Whit, 1999:14)

If there is enough food for everyone, why do malnutrition and hunger persist? There are several answers to this question, and not all of them can be examined here. I briefly summarize the most common explanations, which are 1) demographic justification 2) liberal analysis, and 3) world system theory.

Garret Hardin (1978) provided the classical demographic justification 'of doing nothing' (in Whit, 1999). It was Hardin's understanding that "starvation is God's way of punishing those who have little or no faith in capitalism". He ultimately saw the peasant values as source of hunger and malnutrition, but also the underdeveloped government's failure to plan for 'lean years'. Hardin went as far as classifying peasant mentality as 'survivalist'; meaning that peasants work only to subsist, and not to get rich (Ibid.). Furthermore, conservative analysis has supported demographic justification of the non-interference on hunger, since this view has gained support as a useful tool for population control in an overpopulated world (Whit, 1999). Conservative analysis on hunger aims to protect the elite

and blame victims of poverty and malnutrition. In this view, the victims of malnutrition have caused and ended up in hunger, because they have not been implementing the capitalistic values successfully enough. The conservative solution is to let hunger continue.

Another way to approach hunger is to put hope in technology; that technological innovation will come and solve the problem eventually. Liberal analysis relies mainly on agricultural innovation and technological fixes (Whit, 1999). However, as Diamandis and Kotler (2014) argue, technological solutions to world hunger have not been profitable enough for those who would have the resources to alter hunger. In addition, Japan has used just about every technology available to them, and still the rice yields have not increased in the past fourteen years (Ibid.). Moreover, when examining the results of technological innovation to increase food production it seems that it has just created conditions for sustainable food production to become even worse (See Diamandis & Kotler, 2014).

The last explanation on why does hunger persists today, is an analysis of hunger from the perspective of world system theory. In an effort of explaining why there is so much malnutrition in the world, world system theory looks first into the political and economic structures and then at societal norms, values and ideologies (Whit, 1999). From this perspective, the economic system is composed of two parts: ownership patterns and technology. In a world capitalist system, the basic ownership pattern is that of private capitalist elites owning most of the productive apparatus in the world. (Whit, 1999). In this system, workers sell their labor to those in control in one form or another. Within this system, the elite controls most of the significant productive tools relating to food. Elites in all parts of the world have similar interests in extracting surplus value from workers – regardless of the cost to single countries or their environments. Technologies they use involve land, farming, machinery, chemicals, seeds and knowledge (Whit, 1999). Capitalists also finance and support technological innovations that are biased for their interests (Ibid.). These resources, strengthened by technology and business innovation within food production today, leaves few options for those producing their own food as independent farmers or to those who need to sell their work. Most of the time available is spent at the workplace, and not producing food for own consumption. For people like the Inuit, the majority of whom still live on the land, surrounded by country food, and who would like to supplement their diet from subsistence hunting and live in mixed economy, finding the time and money is strained. Employment within the government structure “makes it hard to be a true hunter when working.” (Sheutiapik in Cold Cuts, 2015).

Keesing (1981) argues that hunger, poverty, exploitation and dependency are all connected to colonialism and the extension of capitalism. From a historical perspective, the problem of poverty and hunger is rooted in colonialism, since most indigenous people's knew how to produce enough food for themselves for centuries (Whit, 1999).

4.2 Inuit food (in) security today

Food security is an issue most studied in developing countries and rural areas, with less attention given to the circumpolar north. Food security has been mainly discussed in the context of poverty, and for the public it is associated with whether a group of people are obtaining enough food. Thus, one reason for the absence is unarguable that Alaska is the northernmost state of USA, Nunavut, and other Inuit communities along the coast of Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Labrador, belong to Canada and Greenland is still part of the Kingdom of Denmark - all among the wealthiest nation-states in the world.

It is my understanding that issue of hunger (or other social problems) among Inuit is not a public topic, it is not being talked about openly, yet it still can be seen and felt.

A comment from a Greenlandic social worker that touched upon this topic by saying that it is difficult for them to do their work, since people don't talk or tell them which households have difficulties in finding sufficient sources for providing the children (Field notes, 2016). In addition, the leader of *Værestedet Amarngivat* in East Greenland became unpopular person for some time, after she spoke about hungry children in Tasiilaq. She thought this was the case because children came to the center to eat every time when they served some buns. Today she is more careful when addressing the issue (Krogh-Andersen, 2008:198). This might also be a reflection of what Canadian Inuit activist, Leese Papatsie, said after launching her campaign *Feeding My Family* in Nunavut. In the beginning of the campaign, there was some opposition against raising voices about the food insecurity, since confrontation is not seen as "the Inuit way". However, as the project continued, more people came to understand the importance of speaking up in order to make changes. They want to stand up and say something and share the stories how hard it is living in northern community (Feeding Nunavut, 2012). Food security research in Greenland is nearly absent, and studies of living conditions in Greenland have never been institutionalized. However, it has been acknowledged that the material conditions between the Inuit in Alaska, Canada and Greenland are similar enough to justify meaningful

comparison (Poppel & Andersen, 2015). There is one report from 2007 *Meeqqat Inuusuttullu Pillugit Ilisimasaqarfik* (MIPI), which examines the poverty in the households with children. In 2007 in Greenland, an expert group prepared a report *Meeqqat Inuusuttullu Pillugit Ilisimasaqarfik*, (MIPI). Preceding discussion had taken place in Greenland about the living standards and poverty among children, but due to a lack of statistics, it was difficult to value how many children actually do face problems related to poverty and MIPI aimed to fill this gap (Schnohr et al. 2007). The report is based on quantitative research from Statistics Greenland and it compares household incomes, indicating that nine per cent of the children live in relative poverty if the incomes are 50 per cent of the median of an average of the country. In addition, 39 per cent of the households with children received social support in 2004 (Schnohr et al. 2007). Nevertheless, the report did not include informal economy, which is still strong in Greenland.

Much of the evidence and knowledge about the prevalence of food insecurity and hunger is held by the people observing what goes around within their communities. I was told by Ivalo, who has decades of experience of working with children, that the problem of hungry children has been increasing within the past years. She said that as long as she remembers there have been children who do not have enough food to eat and they have to attend school hungry. Based on her observations, the children have become more restless and more difficult to work with in the past few years – and she sees the lower attendance in school, concentration abilities and low grades as inevitably linked to not having enough to eat at home (Field notes, 2016).

In South Greenland, Ivalo told to me that, “we need development here; things have gone on a bad direction for a long time... We need someone to come here and develop this place.” However, she continues by saying that “when people are hungry and they don’t have money, they don’t have the energy to develop, all the time goes on living the days through and in the end of the day you are tired and just want to rest.” (Field notes, 2016). By saying this, and referring to development, Ivalo means that the town where she lives has suffered from unemployment, and all the major development programs, building of new infrastructure and activities for residents are taking place in the capital and in the largest town of South Greenland, Qaqortoq.

A few days ago, it was in the news that within the European Union there is a variation in the content of food products. For example, the food produced for Eastern European markets contains palm oil,

whereas the same food processors produce food for Western European markets without palm oil. Alternatively, the quantities of fruits are higher in Western Europe than in Eastern Europe. This can be easily interpreted as treating consumers unequally, depending on the region where the consumers come from. A woman from Lithuania said in the news article that it feels like being treated as B-class. The food industry defends itself by arguing that different content of ‘the same in principle’ product is due to cultural preferences. (Helsingin Sanomat, 2017).

In the circumpolar north, there exists a huge gap between supply, quality and price of food between southern regions. Canadian Department of Indian and Northern Affairs conducted a price survey in 2006-2007 in 49 northern communities, which illustrated that a food basket providing a nutritious diet for a family of four for one-week costs between C\$ 350 and C\$ 450 while the same basket cost between C\$ 195 and C\$ 225 in southern Canada. The price disparity exists although indigenous communities in Canada are on average less food secure than other Canadian households, especially northern indigenous communities are food insecure. (Ibid.) The insufficient access to food in northern Canada has led to a situation described as ‘food security crisis’, and this has resulted in several publications, reports and action at federal and regional levels, especially after 2010.

In general, it was not difficult to find the frustration of many Greenlandic people towards the low quality, imported food and perishable food that goes bad during shipping, arriving to grocery stores already half-rotten. This is even noted in the Greenlandic Department of Statistics, “a fifth of the imported meat is classified as “edible offal” and “sausages etc. made of meat and offal” (Larsen & Oldenburg, 2000:203). In addition to this, Minik said with frustration, “the meat that is no good for the Danish is being imported to Greenlanders” (Field Notes, 2016). In addition to lower quality, insufficient access to food is even worse problem in many Inuit communities. In Nunavut, Canada, household food insecurity rates are five to six times higher than the national average. Researchers from the Inuit Health Survey (2010) estimated that 70 per cent of Inuit preschool children live in food-insecure homes and those Nunavut students are more likely than other Canadian students to go to bed hungry, because there is not enough food at home. Community based studies in Nunavut indicate rates of food insecurity range from 50-80 per cent and some have recorded that 18.5 per cent of the households are severely food insecure (Papatsie et al. 2016; Gilmour & Couture, 2015). These results indicate that Nunavut has the highest documented food insecurity prevalence rate for any Indigenous population residing in a developed country in the world (Gilmour & Couture, 2015).

There are three people living in our household, we spend about CAN \$ 500 per week to feed ourselves and others (Inuit will share their food among family members – this is the norm for us). For example, frozen concentrated juice can cost CAN \$ 8.59. We are lucky compared to other families as both my husband and I have jobs and we have a house. Nunavummiut (The people of Nunavut) struggle to buy food, but often have to borrow money for food before their next salary payday. Many households have one or two working folks supporting eight to ten people.(Papatsie et al., 2013)

An Inuit woman and mother of four from Nunavut said, “It makes me feel useless when I can’t feed them (children), I try everything I can, it is very hard”. Seven out of ten Nunavut preschoolers live in food insecure households. (Feeding Nunavut, 2014). In another family, the father is skipping meals so that his family can have one to two meals a day (Ibid.). “You know, we are hungry”, Leese Papatsie states, however, she recognizes that the high cost of food has always been there, but it was never really highlighted. “It was just something we lived with” (Feeding Nunavut, 2014).

Sharing food is still common practice among the Inuit – even though feeding others beyond the close family circle might mean running out of money before the next salary day. Leese Papatsie is very familiar with the fact that there is just not enough food available for many people in her home community. Despite of the severe lack of food, she continues by saying that at least there is no starvation because Inuit share their food, as they’ve been taught to do. The morality of the Inuit dictates that sharing food should always take precedence over selling it (Gombay, 2010; Papatsie, 2014).

4.3 Causes behind Inuit food security

Poverty is a major cause of food insecurity, and there is a direct connection between low nutrition and low incomes (UN, 1996; Gilmour & Couture, 2015). This is the case with the Inuit also; high cost of food and low incomes has created the situation of food insecurity. Many Inuit communities have confirmed that people don’t have enough income to balance the high cost of food, as other expenses are higher than the national average, including electricity and fuel. Higher prices of these are explainable by the long distances the goods and commodities needs to travel, to reach the northern communities. (Papatsie et al., 2013; ICC – Canada, 2012). However, the notion of food insecurity cannot be discussed alone in terms of physical and nutritional transition, and in isolation from the simultaneous shift in cultural and societal structures. Transitions facilitated by the federal governments’ creation of permanent Inuit settlements, or the Danish modernization project, have led

to Inuit communities being disproportionately food insecure in Canada and Greenland (Organ et al. 2014; Ford et al. 2012).

Shifting socio-economic conditions are also a threat to food security. In previous times the Inuit did not need *any* incomes to provide for themselves and the Inuit never had to buy food (Feeding Nunavut, 2014). An Inuit elder in Nunavut reminds, “When you were in my father’s role, that you did not need to earn incomes, but your income was to survive with country food”. He continues by saying that “we were taught how to support everybody, support ourselves within the small community” (Cold Cuts, 2015). Less than 50-years ago survival depended on hunting, today it is a matter of balancing expenses and incomes. The relatively recent shift to a cash economy among Inuit has brought challenges in money management skills (ICC Greenland, 2012). Nicole Gombay gives an account based on her experiences in Puvirnituk, Nunavik, that some people have had a hard time adjusting to the rapid changes facing the Inuit. “Ideas about how to behave, knowledge that was required to survive, the spaces that people occupy, notions of time, the social scale...” are only some of the ways in which people’s lives have changed within one decade, or less, and all these aspects have had a close relationship between the Inuit and hunting – the source for food. (Gombay, 2010:164). I got a hint of what these challenges in money management skills could mean for some people in Greenland. Twice a month the local grocery store was packed with people, filling the shopping carts full and carrying away boxes of food and beverages. The atmosphere at the shop was always rather festive, happy faces everywhere. During these days’ public drunkenness and partying often followed too. This was commented on by Ivalo, tiredness in her voice, “people would have enough money for the whole month, if they would not drink it away. If they would save the money, it would last”. (Field notes, 2016). Minik explained the same situation for me in a following manner:

During those days when you still have money, you want to feel that you have plenty. For few days, after being hungry for so long, you want to feel a moment of bliss – until the money runs out again. And then you just are without. (Field notes, 2016).

Nevertheless, it is true that famine has always been a very real threat for the people in Greenland, since people have been extremely dependent on the changes in nature. Along with famine, there have come suffering and deprivation. Seasons of scarcity did occur, but these were balanced with periods of extraordinary abundance (Kuiper, 2012; Larsen & Oldenburg, 2000).

We were, as you know, hunters. Sometimes we had a lot – sometimes we had nothing. That was all right, after all, this is the way I was raised. Sometimes we suffered hardships, but even if we had to go without meat, there was always fish. Our country is surrounded by fish. After all, one was used to laying up stores for bad times or to be prepared for bad times.

(Gotfred Gotfredsen in Larsen & Oldenburg, 2000:156)

The major difference today is that while in the earlier times famine was a tragedy that faced the whole community, today it is more on an individual level, due to the socio-economic structure of western societies. Moreover, this is the reason that makes hunger and food insecurity more troublesome to be admitted publicly. Today a lack of food is often perceived as an individual's inability to provide the necessary conditions for securing the continuation of life, or as said previously by Hardin, as a punishment to those who have little or no faith in capitalism.

Behind the reason for low incomes, no incomes, or reliance on social security is often unemployment, which is another common answer for the question of food insecurity (Inuit Health Survey, 2010). Nevertheless, here too, we further question, why is there such a high degree of unemployment in Inuit communities? Research has shown that the reason behind Inuit unemployment is often caused by low education levels or no education, substance abuse or illness (Statistics Canada, 2017).

One reason for low-education rate in Greenland is that nearly all the higher education and professional training required in most jobs today are only provided in Denmark. For many Greenlandic people it is not an easy option to leave ones country and family behind and live in another culture and society for many years. Many high-school graduates leave for studies to Denmark, but return back home before finalizing their studies. For many this a continuous circle, moving between two countries, in a search for better education and better work experiences, while still not necessary succeeding. This is true for many other Inuit communities, the higher education and best job opportunities are in south, but living outside one's culture requires many skills, courage and sacrifices (Field notes, 2016). In addition to low education levels among the Greenlandic people, in Greenland and Canada there is a relatively high percentage of non-Inuit in managerial positions and other white-collar jobs, and often the salaries and job benefits are better than an Inuit person would receive for doing the same job. Jonsson has argued that because of this, many Greenlandic people are not motivated to pursue higher education, or higher occupations, since they know from past experiences that Danish people will be

eventually employed for these positions, since they have the right background and education. Often the Danish working in Greenland are over-qualified. (Jonsson, 1996).

This discussion comes down to different cultural understandings and needs for education, “indigenous peoples have their own way of thinking about what there is to know” (Oskal, 2008:333). This is a widely recognized topic in academia but also within indigenous communities. The western education system has been a central part of colonization and assimilation projects of indigenous peoples (Ibid.). The system is not their system, and it has not been taught them as a way to better know and understand themselves. Instead, it has aimed to assimilate indigenous peoples into the mainstream societies, with the goal of complete assimilation. The most traumatic and painful experiences of the Inuit, similarly to many other indigenous groups occurred in boarding schools and in western education institutions.

4.4 Impact of colonialism in Greenland and cultural imperialism on food systems

The concerns over transformation of the diet and the social- and cultural aspects and identities involved in livelihoods, are not concerns specific to Inuit. During the past few decades in western part of the world, people have also become aware of the connection between food and health. Industrialization, which originated from England in 19th century, accelerated food production, delivery and consumption, and has had a major impact on globalization and fast food culture, which are now recognized as having negative impacts on the social and communicative aspect of traditional or national food systems. (Hämeen-Anttila & Rossi, 2015). One major contributing factor behind this change of traditional food systems into more standardized, industrial food regimes is the strength that industrial food processors have had on food cultures and their ultimate disappearance (Ibid.).

Dietary changes over time have also been connected to climatic changes as well as changes in technologies used. The reasons for dietary changes are many, but the focus here will be on the impact of colonialism and western ideas and trends on food consumption. Sometimes transformations have been slow adaptations as in the case of immigrants and ethnic minorities, and other times quickly emerging trends, often in relation to identity building or as a means of domination and use of power, as has been the case among many indigenous peoples.

An interesting starting point for an analysis of a dietary change is to examine how eating habits of the immigrants started to change at the turn of the century. For instance Bentley (1998), Avakian (1997) and Ray (2004) have analyzed how immigrants in America became American “by deliberately de-emphasizing aspects of their ethnic food ways, and at least partly assimilating certain food habits” (Julier, 2013). Many social reformers and cooking schools were designed to “teach servants to cook all deliberately promoted Americanization through food habits. Where in United States and Britain, proper meals were perceived to consist of ‘meat and two vegs’, which is essentially white western model of a meal (Ibid.). Laura Shapiro (1986) argues how “white food encouraged by social reformers and home economists from early American cooking school was an assentation of middle-class morality, racial virtue, and health, about drawing boundaries between the assimilated and the immigrant.” (In Julier, 2013). For example, in the United States, *The Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper, “had a regular column where the housekeeper urged African American women to prepare foods that were fashionable in the white women’s magazines of the day, emphasizing European dishes” (Julier, 2013:42). On the contrary, spiced foods of the Mexicans and Indian curries were considered as less sophisticated, than European form of meal. Salmon (2012) has argued that the assimilation of diet can be marked by the amount of modern foods found in the diet, at least in relation to indigenous peoples.

In the case of Greenland, many people learned Danish cooking by working in Danish households, and to a limited extent transferred these skills to their own households. Especially after the publication of the first Danish cookery books in Greenlandic in the beginning of 1930’s, the opportunity grew for many Greenlandic women to learn Danish cooking. This was encouraged by the Danish, who often used to make insulting comments about the food Greenlandic people ate. The diet of the two nations became an issue of the degree of sophistication. In addition, young Greenlandic women were directed to travel to Denmark and spend a year in a host family at the age of fifteen to sixteen, primarily to learn cooking skills and other important household tasks. Still today this is an alternative for young people. Although it is a good opportunity for many to travel outside Greenland, it unarguably bears a connotation with the former Danish aim to ‘create a good Greenlander, by teaching them how to become a good Dane’, which has directed much of the colonial and post-colonial presence of the Danes in Greenland (Field notes, 2016; Rosing, 1981).

The traditional way of living began to gradually disappear after the establishment of the Danish trading posts and churches, followed by priests and trading people. These two groups worked in close relation to 'civilize' the Greenlandic people. It was a Danish-Norwegian priest Hans Egede who arrived to Greenland in 1721 and started the extensive Christianization of the Inuit and official colonization of the country began soon afterwards. The geographical and climatic conditions in Greenland were such that European occupations could not be directly transplanted to the country. This meant that the Dano-Norwegian presence in Greenland came to be based on the native population's practice of what Kongelige Grønlandske Handel (KGH) called 'the national occupation', catching seals from kayaks and ice hunting. For this reason, the Dano-Norwegian representatives in Greenland were traders, and not independent producers to any significant extent. The whole colonial engagement was dependent on the local populations' supply of hunting products and their willingness to trade. (Jonsson, 1996). The official policy from the beginning was to keep Greenland closed to foreigners and outside forces, the Danish controlled who was allowed to travel to Greenland (Andersen, 2015). In fact, it has been argued that KGH had most power in the colonization project than any other instance. In addition, it was the strategy of KGH to create a need among Greenlandic people, and make them dependent on their selection of commodities. These needs were solely assessed by the KGH (Andersen, 2015). Today this is still an issue to some extent. Papatsie critiques the retail-chains in Nunavut for supplying communities with foods that have not been part of the Inuit diet, like lentils, "how to you cook them". Many Inuit do not know how to use and make out of the selection of food at the stores. The consequence can be that many people choose to cook something "easy" which is not necessarily the healthier option (Papatsie, 2012).

In comparison to other colonization projects across the world, the colonization of Greenland was drastically different, oppression by force was never used against the native people as a means to convert them, and there was no military presence needed during the colonization process (Petersen, 1995). Moreover, the geographical distance between Denmark and Greenland, and the small number of Danes (15 per cent) in Greenland, are two reasons that made decolonization different from the processes normally encountered in countries with indigenous population. In Greenland, the major shift from traditional Inuit hunting culture to an urban, labor based cash economy began in the 1950's. The contemporaries called this shift 'the new order', and for a scholar Ivar Jonsson it was 'a process of planned modernization from above' (Jonsson, 1996). For the Danish it meant establishing and developing Greenland society suitable for fish production, in order to benefit Danish, private

investments. However, it did not succeed due to the collapse of cod stocks - investors had relied on - during the 1970's (Jonsson, 1996; Andersen, 2015). Nevertheless, export-oriented strategy was the cornerstone of Greenland's industrialization and the basis for modernization of Greenland. (Ibid.) It was said that the Inuit would benefit from this development – it was a great leap towards modernity, which was the key word of post-war world, modernity and development, in western terms (Allen & Thomas, 2000).

What followed was an intentionally and artificially developed Greenlandic society scattered into coastal fishery communities and towns, where the wage labor was introduced for the first time to men and women, into a society where before there had been a clear division between gender roles. It has been said that re-location of the people from traditional settlements into coastal towns was voluntary. Whereas in fact, those people who left, were granted loans, and thus Jens Dahl has questioned the “voluntary” basis of re-location (1986). The modernization process was not sensitive to the previous Inuit way of life, and it created many hardships and confusion among many people. At the heart of the problem was the speed at which the demographic concentration of the population took place. The majority of the population had its roots in a culture based on the hunter's mode of production, which had suddenly been faced with a very different political and management culture, imported from the highly industrialized country, Denmark (Jonsson, 1996).

Once the hunters were settled into Danish planned and built coastal towns, the hunters lost their position as the head of the communities. The men with dignity of identity fell in the lowest position of the Greenlandic society, as wage labor factory workers (Rosing, 1981).



Once in towns, living in blocks and working for factories, many Greenlandic people lost their sense of identity and self-respect. This was furthered by the Danish attitude of teaching Greenlanders how to become “good Danes” (Rosing, 1981). This was promoted with a change of the official language

to Danish and maintenance of the *birthplace criteria*; people born in Denmark had a higher salary than people born in Greenland, which still exist today to some extent (Petersen, 1995; Field notes, 2016).

The official status as a colony ended in 1953, which was followed by a period of so-called *Danization* or equalization. Even though the Greenlandic public was at first in a favor of this development, believing that the salary inequality would be removed, Greenlandic people soon came to understand that they would not be considered equal with the Danish, and the cultural imperialism was to continue (Petersen, 1995). What was desired was a Greenlandic society with self-determination, the power to make decisions relating to their own language and culture, and the power to develop their country in their own terms. For the first time in the history, the Greenlandic people confronted the Danish authorities, and this led to the establishment of a Greenlandic Home Rule in 1979, voted for in the Parliament in Copenhagen. The Home Rule was developed further to a Government of Greenland, *Naalakkersuisut*, in 2009, and today Greenlandic people have self-determination over all the other areas except international affairs and security policy. *Naalakkersuisut* has law and decision making power which is probably the highest degree of self-determination among indigenous peoples in the world. In modern times, Danes have predominantly looked upon Greenland as the land of Greenlanders, while for example, the Native people in America have had to negotiate internally as well as externally about the demarcation of areas they considered appropriate as the basis of the land claim agreements (Dahl in Sejersen, 2004).

Currently, there are serious discussions within *Naalakkersuisut* to create an independent state of Greenland, and the new coalition government confirmed this after positioning Ministry of Independence, Foreign Affairs and Agriculture (*Naalakkersuisut*, 2017). However, the introduction of Home Rule in 1979, and later the Home Government in 2009, put an end to confrontations and conflicts between stakeholders in management questions. Many hunters feel overlooked and claim that they cannot see much difference between what they experienced during Danish supremacy and what they experience today (Sejersen, 2004). This argument is a part of broader debate about indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination, while many indigenous governance systems, such as *Naalakkersuisut*, are in fact purely indigenous since they are mimicking the colonial systems, and they are established on the principles of the western parliamentary system.

Sejersen (2004) has argued that the main difference characterizing Inuit in Canada and Greenland stems from different political and economic histories in relation to colonizing centers. In Canada, there are rather strong regional, de-centralized governance institutions whereas in Greenland the power is centered in the capital. In addition, it is acknowledged that whereas the Inuit in Canada are proud of the strengthening of their cultural values and practices, including the harvest of country food, in Greenland there has been a stronger emphasis on national building, more similar to that of other modern states. This has led to a low appreciation of hunters, among other issues, and it has been thought that the image of Greenland as a land of kayaks and hunters, does not fit well with the modern image of the Greenlandic society (Rosendahl, 2013). This belief is rather unfortunate, and it does not support the need to increase food security through the appreciation of hunter's occupation as ultimately serving the national interest. Greenlandic scholar Robert Petersen has recognized that problems such as this arise when the ideology of colonizers is adopted by the colonized peoples themselves, especially by educated individuals who are more likely to be employed in positions of influence (Petersen, 1995).

Today over 80 per cent of the Greenlandic population lives in towns, and as research and statistics show, there are less full-time hunters in urban areas than in villages and settlements (Pars et al. 2001; Sejersen, 2010). In practice, this means that less people with political power in the Government are themselves active hunters and many have become alienated from the practical aspects of hunting culture. Nevertheless, hunting as a mode of production and as a lifestyle is still practiced in Greenland and hunt products are important part of the Greenlandic identity (See Dahl, 2000). In summary, it can be concluded that from a social scientific perspective the modern story of Greenland is a post-colonial society, which went through a rapid modernization process. Benefits of the process include being infrastructure, health care and education, and the downside of this process alienation, urbanization and capitalization (Arnford & Andersen, 2014). The next section focuses on the position of the hunters today, and how in addition to the Danish modernization project of Greenlandic society, international attitudes towards hunting have affected hunters.

Decrease of hunting occupation

Prior to 1950's, nearly all of the men were still full-time hunters in Greenland, today the amount is 2100 and for leisure hunters 5,500. The full time hunters constitute only 7 per cent of the work force,

approximately 32,000 total in Greenland (Naalakkersuisut, 2009). In Greenland, a full-time hunter's occupation was established in 1999. It was established to support hunters so that they could sell their catch legally and sell sealskin as well. In practice, it means that to be a hunter you need a license, applied through the bureaucratic system of Naalakkersuisut. Hunters can sell their catch to two of the slaughterhouses in Greenland, where it will be processed further into meat products, ending up in the grocery stores. Other places to sell game are the open hunter's markets, where meat is not processed but cut and sold by a hired personal. Often this 'Greenlandic model' is cherished by the Canadian Inuit as an exemplary way of supporting hunters and guaranteeing the supply of hunt products into the Greenlandic society, and Nunavut has been applying this model to certain extent (Papatsie, 2012). This is an undeniably convenient way for the hunters to sell their catch, if not given or consumed by their own families. However there are drawbacks in both of the supply routes for country food. Country food that is processed in the slaughterhouses, and sold in the grocery stores, mainly muskox, caribou and sheep meat, and is expensive and thus not available for everyone. The meat provided from the hunter's market is less costly, but during my stay in South Greenland, the municipality decided to close the only farmer's market in town of Narsaq. The reason was not overtly stated within the media, but I read a short news letter saying it was because the personnel there had been fired to save costs (Kommune Kujalleq, 2016). During the following week, I saw the hunters themselves outside the grocery store, trying to sell their catch, standing outside in the pouring rain. If this trend continues in other towns, the hunter's way of earning cash-incomes will be just strained further. "If you are a licensed full-time hunter, you have no right to apply for social welfare", my informant Minik added (Field notes, 2016). Given that hunting is a highly unpredictable occupation, and especially since the climate change has had its impact in the Inuit homeland, there is no guarantee that a full-time hunter can support himself and his family. The incomes of hunter households are the lowest within the Greenlandic society – and some claim, the gap is just growing (Inuit Ataqatigiit, 2017). Although an access to country food might appear to be an inexpensive or even free alternative of supporting food security, this is not necessarily the case. It is expensive to obtain guns, boats, snowmobiles and other supplies for the hunting trips. In addition, hunting is decreasing because of sociocultural reasons, young people do not have the knowledge, skills and the equipment to hunt, or people have no interest and without interest and expertise, it is too dangerous (Lougheed, 2010; Organ et al. 2014). A set of events, which took place on a global level, and impacted local Inuit communities, is important to bring up here. By the end of 1970's an anti-sealing (or anti-whaling) campaigns originated from the western world had reached a level which was to be a lethal strike for Inuit hunters

with a long-lasting impact, one still felt today by hunters. What began from the work of environmental activists groups was to become a regulation within European Economic Community, after the anti-sealing directive was appointed by the community for a ban of all seal products from Greenland (Lynge, 1991). As a direct consequence of this, Greenland's total national income fell from 13 million dollars to under 3 million dollars. The individual Inuit hunters incomes fell as low as a hundred dollar a year (Ibid.). A Greenlandic politician and author Finn Lynge, has argued in *Arctic Wars, Animal Rights, Endangered Peoples* (1991) that after this change, the Inuit hunting economy was destroyed and the hunters livelihoods criminalized. "The job of the seal hunter has now been relegated to the lowest place in society, a despicable profession nobody wants to advertise, a hate object of the entire world" (Lynge, 1991:33). After false and staged images of Inuit seal-pup hunt in the Canadian Inuit homeland, the Inuit way of hunting became targeted as especially cruel and something that should not be accepted. What Lynge and many others found disturbing during the peak of the anti-sealing debates and the assumed predatory manners of the Inuit, was that no one seemed to question the western industrial way of raising animals in captivity and subjecting these animals even more severe acts of violence than free animals the Inuit hunted. In the end, the western perception won and the Inuit hunter's lost the battle in what Lynge described as "a struggle between cultures, wherein one – earnestly and with a great deal of self-righteousness – believes itself to have a natural authority to dictate how things ought to be" (Lynge, 1991:35). "This culture has been pushed into a corner and sacrificed to forces it does not understand and by which it is not understood." (Ibid.). Because of this, hunters in small Inuit settlements in Canada and Greenland have become recipients of social welfare, and a complete culture started to falter (Ibid.). Until this day, the amount of full-time hunters is decreasing.

Trade policies with an impact on food security

Despite the negative consequences of dietary change, it can be argued, "the stability of food supplies has been one of the most dramatic changes wrought by industrialization and urbanization." John Goody (in Julier, 2013) points out that commercial and industrial food have drastically improved the nutrition and health of many populations of people across the globe. (Julier, 2013). This is true for the Inuit also. People are no longer fully reliant on hunting and starvation is not a threat today as it was for centuries before. As earlier stated, sharing food is not a necessity for communities; it has more symbolic and cultural value among most people. Due to the imported food and the connection

to world economy, the supply of food is secured. Still, the main problem remains, that many people do not have the means to buy enough food, to connect to the food system they would prefer. Research results often states that the price of food in Inuit communities is high due to the long transportation by air or sea; still the food reaching an average American is transported over 1,500 miles away. Often the food we eat travels over 2,000 miles from the production source to our homes (Salmon, 2012). Therefore, clearly the mileage alone is not a problem, the food travels faraway to all of us already.

What is important to add to the discussion why the prices are so high, other reasons that solely long-distance, is that Inuit communities are relatively small all around Inuit Nunaat, and thus the markets are small. For business, Inuit Land is not appealing; there are no large profits to be gained, with the exception of mineral-, oil-, and gas extraction – or future prospects from these. Given that, Greenland is a vast country with a small and geographically dispersed population, where only fishing sector contributes significantly to the national economy. These factors pose a particular challenge for a natural resource - based economy. Greenland is thus in many respects unique and yet has to find a way to ensure a self-sustaining economy, argues Torben M. Andersen (2015). The background factors thus include disadvantages (difficulties in releasing economies of scale) and difficulties in meeting even the most basic principle of a market economy, namely the potential entry of competitors to curtail market power and ensure a competitive market process (Ibid.).

Greenland is strongly dependent on fisheries and on few species particularly, which makes Greenland's economy vulnerable and dependent on world market price for fish. This is also a reason why the Government of Greenland makes major economic investments based on demand on the global market and not necessary on the basis of needs of the subsistence hunters. (Andersen, 2015). In addition salary rates are high, which is explainable by the influence of Danish economy policies and Greenland's colonial history with Denmark (Jonsson, 1996).

Within the context of the development of Greenlandic society, Jonsson places importance for the concept of dependency. Greenland is dependent on Denmark in terms of specific institutions and techno-economic programs. With specific institutions, Jonsson refers to for instance trade relations. Jonsson argues, "Danish elite directs almost all trade towards Denmark and Danish firms, and it is in their interest to direct trade towards Denmark and Danish firms... ". This is partly because the interest of Danish firms to trade and direct business activities to Denmark in order to reproduce their own business network and secure their own future career in Denmark. (Jonsson, 1996:140-141). Jonsson

adds that because of this, the prices are higher than if for instance trade and business would be directed from USA, since imports and quicker technology transfer would be cheaper (Ibid.).

From Jonsson's account it is possible to make conclusion that first it seems that the century-old Danish control over trade and business would still be in place, to some extent, and that Wallerstein's world system analysis would apply here too, in connection to steering politico-economic decision making by serving the interests of the global- and national economy.

In Canada the problem are gougers within the retail chain. According Leese Papatsie, the prices are high because grocery stores aim to make as much profit as possible, and in order to make the situation better for the Inuit in Canada, there would need to be mechanisms of simple regulation to prevent gougering, and thus decrease the prices (Papatsie, 2014).

Inuit food insecurity balanced with community ties and sharing

The Survey on Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA), the largest study done of arctic living conditions, conducted among the Sami in Sweden, Inuit in Greenland, Alaska and Canada emphasizes that livelihoods and living conditions of indigenous peoples must be measured with quality of life criteria they themselves choose (Poppel et al., 2015). This research found out that although incomes are acknowledged to impact on several aspects of living standards among the Inuit, and social problems are acknowledged by 70-90 per-cent of the respondents, nine out of ten participants replied they are satisfied in living Greenland (Duhaime, 2015). The Inuit Health Survey (2010) found similar results from Nunavut, which is said to have the highest food insecurity rate of all Inuit. Despite the estimated food insecurity rate of 70 per-cent, over 70 per-cent of respondents reported that their health is good, very good or excellent. Despite the challenges, the majority are content with their lives, and thus it can be indicated that there must be a plethora of other support mechanisms outside formal economy and official statistics, that has a strong impact on Inuit well-being.

According to the SLiCA research, there are more important factors in play than incomes and money, such as the strength of social networks, presence of family or the principle of reciprocity, which all form a wider category of social capital (Ibid.). Although alarming rates of food insecurity are found especially within Inuit communities across the arctic, the Inuit also have solutions to address these, and thus balance the situation through sharing and community ties. In Nunavut 65 per cent of the respondents who run out of country food, did receive country food from family, friends, community

freezers or Hunters and Trappers Organization. Only twenty per-cent were without country food (Inuit Health Survey, 2010). In addition, it is actually shown that for every hunter, he is feeding eight households. (Papatsie et al, 2013). The strength of community ties, sharing and social networks in supporting and strengthening many Inuit communities cannot be easily analyzed from statistics or qualitative data. Still these are at the heart of what is essential to Inuit culture. In this case, culture means *a strategy for survival*, (borrowing an expression of an Inuit woman). The Inuit culture especially has been a culture of resilience, adaptation and survival for centuries and Papatsie is sure that her people will find a solution and they will strive (2013).

Conclusion

The conventional wisdom that growth leads to improved welfare is controversial in the context of food security. While I agree that there is a historical link between growth of the formal economy and improvements in human wellbeing up to a point, Ulvila and Pasanen (2009) are arguing that such a link becomes weaker, or even become negative, as soon as the level of the formal economy has exceeds a certain level. Insufficient living conditions have increased during the past 40-years and much of the reason is hierarchical power relations and growing inequality in incomes and wealth. (Ibid). For example, in the case of food and nutrition, we can see a global pattern that people with minimal incomes have too little to eat. In addition, people with low incomes are dependent on the food produced by the multinational food processors. The situation of food insecurity is often presented as a failure of the government or as part of the profit motive of the industrial complex (Julier, 2013). In an international capitalist system, food goes to those who can afford to pay for it (Whit, 1999). Conversely, the Inuit perceive access to food, as natural right of all Inuit (ICC – Alaska, 2015).

In a narrow sense, it is true that lack of sufficient incomes and poverty are the reason behind food insecurity, whether the person is dependent on the imported food or hunting. This has led to a situation where the price of food determines what is being eaten at home; the diet of many Inuit consists of ultra-processed, low nutritional foodstuff. Food security is thus linked especially from the western perspective, to other problems such as mental health, obesity, chronic diseases and low educational outcomes, since nutritious and sufficient food is a requirement for maintaining proper health (Gilmour & Couture, 2015). In a broader view, the reasons and consequences of food security and hunger are

much more complicated issues, combining colonial history, the low value given to the hunting occupation, climate change, remoteness, low incomes, dependency from the global markets and fluctuating prices of food commodities, all of which have an impact on why food insecurity exists. My aim in this chapter has not been to explain the reasons behind food security in comprehensive manner but to illustrate the connection, or junction, between Inuit food system and global food system, which has been an encounter of two drastically different cultures, essentially drawing from different set of morality and the physical but also mental and spiritual closeness to food.

For Amartya Sen “hunger is usually not about lack of food, it’s about lack of entitlement and rights” (Julier, 2013:4). This is the case with Inuit. For them, achieving food security is about more than ensuring people are free from hunger, it is about the right to harvest and pursue a traditional subsistence way of life (Papatsie et al., 2013) It is about the right to define one’s own food system. Let us look now at the consequences of the global food economy on the Inuit and the arctic, and how it has transformed the nutritional and diet transfer of the Inuit living in Canada, Greenland and Alaska. The next chapter continues the discussion addressed in this chapter. However, there I discuss the ultimate reason why the prices of industrial food products are lower than indigenous foods and how multinational food processors have become so powerful, that they have had the ability to change centuries old consumption and food harvesting habits of indigenous people, and traditional farmers. In the next chapter, I present more closely my theoretical framework that has guided my thesis along the way.

5 Colonialism, capitalism and global food economy

Morality depends the way people would like the world to work – whereas economics represents how it actually does work. (Levitt, in Browne 2008)

Thinking of the market system as morally neutral is dangerous.

(Hausman & McPherson, in Browne, 2008)

To think or write about colonialism and capitalism really depends on one’s relation and position to these subjects. It depends on whether one’s status as a colonized individual. To value capitalism as a

rational driver behind one's conduct, depends much on institutional structures of one's society and culture, but also on individual values and one's place in a society. There is no right way of addressing these large issues, with hundreds year history in this short thesis. The question is about morality: "Conventions, values, dispositions and commitments regarding what is just and what constitutes good behavior in relation to others..." (Sayer in Browne, 2008). Nevertheless, we can say that indigenous resource management and western capitalism originates from different set of morality, however, capitalism has had more negative impact on indigenous peoples, than indigenous resource management has on western societies.

Using world system theory in explaining the functioning of global food economy in relation to one specific people, particularly the Inuit, is a challenging task. First, Wallerstein's theory is an economic theory, based on criticism of capitalistic world system, and a theory which has been criticized for dealing such a vast system of relations, that it cannot say much about the specific states and societies. Also some (see Hakovirta, 2012) have argued that world system is an economic theory, and using it in political analysis is another challenge. While being aware of these criticisms, I still argue that understanding the basic arguments of Wallerstein's analysis can lead to a crucial point of comprehending how our societies have developed towards capitalistic systems and what keeps them going so strongly worldwide, without having had yet, any serious alternatives to date (Wallerstein, 2014). In addition I illustrate, that the reason why it has so much power, is precisely that political decision-making done in seemingly democratic processes, is supporting the interests of capitalists nearly in every state of the world today (Frasier, 2017). Despite the criticism, anthropologist Eric Wolf has suggested that world system theory is one way of building explanations for cultural phenomena (1999). My understanding of Wolf, and further Wallerstein, is to analyze specific cultural processes to examine first how western politico-economic rationales and morale have influenced socio-cultural change within single societies. My aim in this chapter is to briefly examine the development of capitalism in connection to colonialism and indigenous peoples, and to argue why this understanding is central if we wish to deepen our understanding of the totalitarian grip the global food economy has on shaping our more individual food consumption habits. Moreover, I examine why it is so challenging for many indigenous peoples to continue providing themselves with country food and why indigenous subsistence has been in decline for decades, including the Inuit. The people themselves would prefer to eat their own indigenous food, which has an intimate link to one's culture. The criticism of capitalism and the negative impacts it has on indigenous (as other) livelihoods is

nothing new. Neither is the use of world system analysis within anthropological multi-sited research and ethnographies (Marcus, 1995). However, I would hope to see this criticism connected to food security discussion more often in the context of the arctic, as it is currently been debated. Capitalism does matter and it is fundamental to cover since “capitalists want to get into our stomachs.” (Frasier, 2017:3).

5.1 Western discourse on capitalism and colonialism

Prominent discourse on western philosophy on money and trade goes back to Aristotle, and his condemnation of both of these. The Aristotelian ideal was a self-sufficient household, with a production for use. According to him, the human is naturally self-sufficient and his desires finite (Bloch & Parry, 1989). He perceived trade as natural only when it is for the restoration of self-sufficiency, since sometimes there just happens to be too much there and too little here. For Aristotle, profit seeking was unnatural and destructive for the bonds within household, and especially money lending was the most contrary to nature (Ibid.). Centuries later Thomas Aquinas brought up the thoughts of Aristotle during the 13th century and centuries later by Karl Marx (Bloch & Parry, 1989). For Aquinas it was church’s material acquisition and notions of “merchant’s creating nothing, while the usurer earned money even as he slept.” (Ibid.). Despite these perceptions of trade and money as amoral and destructive, it was Adam Smith and Bernard Mandeville whose views about the tendency of humans “to truck, barter and exchange” for the happiness and prosperity of society, which was based on the individual pursuit of monetary self-gain.” (Bloch & Parry, 1989:3). England and western Europe dominated the global trade since the 18th century and at the same time, the doctrines of classical economics over shadowed and explained economic thinking and behavior in Europe, and across the world as the ideology spread through colonialism and European hegemony (Valtonen, 1987; Frasier, 2017). Ever since, western money- and market economy has been perceived as a final stage for development that was led by inevitable natural laws (Valtonen, 1987). In colonies, economic systems were seen as unchangeable and stone relics from the archaic times. The western economic system was the only and natural system to secure the wellbeing and wealth of the citizens and people. (Ibid.). According to this evolutionary thinking of the era, it was necessary to connect the colonies as part of the same natural laws, and thus paved way for their development since “the classical economic thinking, considered these laws as universal, objective and independent from humans.” (Valtonen, 1987:9). This, *homo economicus*, was an economic being, who in every choice pursues the biggest possible profit (Ibid.). The relationships between humans as based on profit seeking, was believed to

be universal rationale behind human conduct and it dominated classical, and neoclassical economic theories, restricting cultural comparison of economic phenomena's for a long time:

Since it was after all accepted that all cultures were bounded by the same natural law: There was nothing to be found! The differences were only qualitative of nature and variations between techniques and methods. (Valtonen, 1987:10).

Early anthropologists came to critique the view of homo economicus as a universal. Moskowski (1911), Koppers, (1915) and Schmidt (1920-21) were among the first to introduce a new approach to economic thinking. Most famous of them all, Bronislaw Malinowski, put forward a new approach in his *Argonauts* (1922). Malinowski abandoned the economic universals and the concept of homo economicus and linked economic behavior firmly within the social-cultural context. (Valtonen, 1987). It has even been argued that Malinowski freed indigenous- and tribal economies from the western economic model, where it had fitted uncomfortably in the first place (Ibid.). Although his (as all of his contemporaries) use of words such as 'primitive people' when referring to Trobriand Islanders, is not cherished by the indigenous peoples today, his argumentation of the need to understand other values impacting on people's lives, such as environment, nature and exchange for non-profit, is being supported by indigenous scholars today (Salmon, 2012). This has led to wide-ranging discussions within the discipline of anthropology on 'primitive money' and results telling about the various, different, cultural meanings attached to money, as state-issued currency. This has challenged the previous understanding of profit as a goal of everyman, and anthropologists have played a crucial role in describing alternatives to capitalism (Li, 2010).

The views of Aristotle, Marx, Smith and Mandeville, just to name a few, all originate from western tradition, and in despite being extreme ends, these all have in common a notion that "money acts as an incredibly powerful agent of profound social and cultural transformations." (Bloch & Parry, 1989:39). However, Bloch and Parry illustrate in *Money and Morality of Exchange* (1989) that this intrinsic power, believed to revolutionize society and culture, should be handled with some degree of doubt. The collection of case studies among indigenous peoples from Latin America to Asia and Africa illustrate that although indigenous communities have used money for centuries, the values and morality linked to money differs a great deal from the western perception of money as having intrinsic value.

In addition, in spite of the damage done by the capitalist economic and political structures, one must guard against romanticizing images of “a world in which production was for use and the interdependence of the human community had not been shattered by exchange.” (Bloch & Parry, 1989:4). Capitalism is not necessary as a sole base for reckless, egoistic calculation. Eric Wolf wanted to make his point in *Europe and People Without History* (1982) that incorporation of capital and wage labor under capitalistic conditions was not a uniform process but was likely to vary according to the circumstances in different parts of the world. Wolf relayed also to world system analysis, in an effort to examine how societies, including indigenous, have developed in contact to one another, and not existing in cultural vacuums in the past, as often has been thought (Wolf, 1999). For instance, many indigenous peoples have successfully integrated in to the global economy. The Yupik villagers of Togiak, in Alaska, have purchased five aircrafts to extend their subsistence caribou hunting, in addition to all-terrain-vehicles, rifles, and fishing vessels (Sissons, 2012). Alternatively, the art created and sold by the Inuit supports the processing and storing of country food. Many indigenous peoples are using the global economy “in order to reproduce their indigenous cultural orders” (Sissons, 2012:15). In addition, it has been argued that greater is people’s success in money economy, and the greater their participation in indigenous cultures (Ibid.).

Still, regardless of the values and morale connected to money and the benefits of it to diverse people and cultures, the undeniable truth is that the people living in capitalistic societies have become proletarian, have been divorced from the land, need to earn wage to survive and have become workers, including indigenous peoples (Frasier, 2017). This discussions leads us to the so called ‘proletarian food question’ and partly explains the framework in which global food economy and national governments have come together to avoid demands for higher salaries and avoid riots (Ibid.).

5.2 Global food economy and colonization

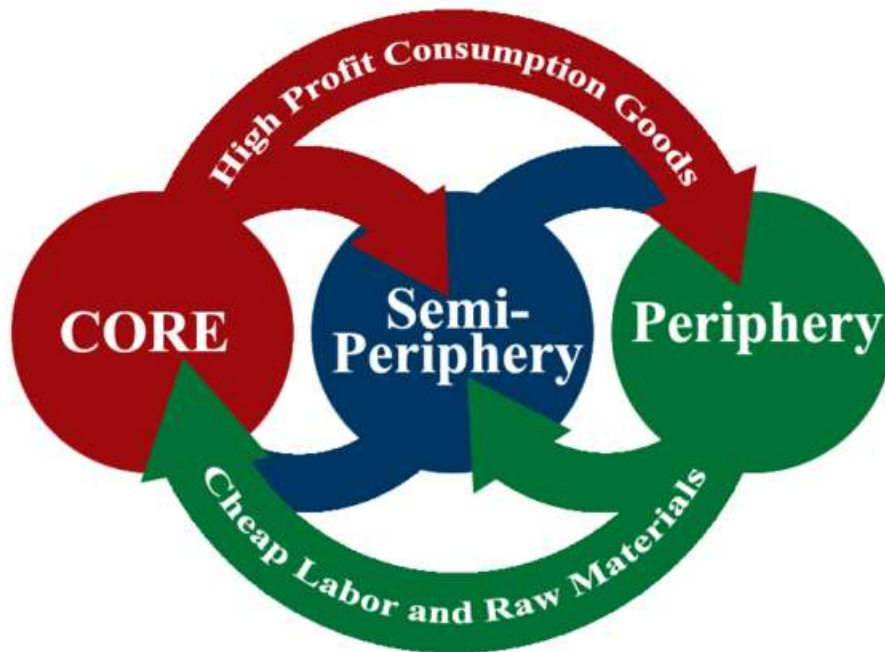
Global food economy refers to a worldwide system where food is conceived, grown, reared, traded, processed, sold and consumed. Global food economy is a massive network of peoples and places that needs to be produced and connected in order for us to eat. (Frasier, 2017). We are all dependent on this system, whether as consumers, farmers or traders, but we all have different roles and power within it. “The food system is simultaneously a great example of human achievement and a testimony to just how awful life can be on this planet” (Frasier, 2017:8). Alistair Frasier critically examines a

range of problematic and oppressive processes that emerge from global food economy. His theoretical analysis is based on Iris Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990) and Frasier divides the global food economy into five stages of oppression: violence, marginalization, powerlessness, exploitation and cultural imperialism. Incidentally, all these forms of oppression have been intimately regarded as experiences of indigenous peoples as colonized peoples.

The beginning of colonialism in the late 15th century and resource extraction from 'periphery' to 'core' already set relationships in place, dictating the soon-to-be-felt imperial power of Europe, and later the rest of the western world. Columbus had realized that the New World was ideal for cane plantations, but it required a massive workforce. Plantations were created, and staffed with slaves from Africa to fulfill the demands of Europeans. The next four centuries followed with transportation of 11 million slaves from Africa to New World. (Hämeen-Anttila & Rossi, 2015). Sugar extracted from cane came to be consumed with coffee and tea by the Europeans; for them it was a pure luxury, for the others slavery (Mintz, 1985). Ever since this development, variation of exotic fruits and other food products have been grown and produced in developing countries and consumed by the people in developed countries. Some of the world's largest food processors date back to 19th century.

Li argues that especially in Asia and Africa, "considerations of profit required that segments of the colonized population be displaced from the land they occupied to make room for plantation agriculture or white settlement" (Li, 2010:386). Today colonialism is abandoned from the public rhetoric; still many argue that certain forms of capitalism are continuation of colonialism for many (Ulvila & Pasanen, 2009).

Wallerstein argues that in every part of the core but also within periphery, there is an elite and this elite is trying to maintain their relations with one another, by serving the interests of both. This bond is mutually beneficial – despite the fact that the elite within the core has more power and influence. World system analysis thus recognizes a web of relations maintained by the elite across the world, in a manner that seeks their profit and serves their best interests (Wallerstein, 2014). Anthropologist,



Wallerstein's World System Theory Model

Roger M. Keesing, already wrote in the early 80's that, “a dream of a genuinely integrated world system is at hand – not through political unity, which seems as far from reach few decades ago than today, but through economic unity”. (1981:456). Furthermore, Muller continues, “The men who run the global corporations are the first in history with the organization, technology, money and ideology to make a credible try at managing the world as an integrated unit” (Barnet & Muller in Keesing, 1981:13). It is because of these factors, *organization, technology, money and ideology* that the global food economy is as powerful as it is today. In addition, it is the reason why many indigenous and small-scale farmers have a hard time making a living out of their harvest or creating indigenous businesses in their own territories.

Rarely, the companies behind the global food economy are national, but private, multinational corporations, supported by the national governments and international trade agreements and organizations, such as World Trade Organization and Free Trade Agreements. For instance all “the major free trade agreements have been signed in the absence of consultation with indigenous communities” (Gombay, 2010: 221). Given the private ownership structure of these companies, they

might be hard to track and there is no demand on similar visibility than national firms would be required to show. The firms are focused on profit and there are just a dozen of them who dominate the global food market, companies such as Nestle being the largest food processor, employing 276, 000 people around the world. Others are Unilever and Kraft which owns Mondelez. All these companies have a long history of merging and acquisition (Frasier, 2017; UNCTAD, 2007). Because their position is so powerful and many nation states have become dependent on them, they are capable of manipulating the food producers, but also global prices for food commodities. Wallerstein's world system theory is all about explaining these unequal relations, elite network and accumulation of capital for the benefit of the 'core' drawn from the 'periphery'. The strength and effectiveness of the global food economy relies on capitalistic firms, which again relies on competition. They compete over cost or quality, innovation and creation of new products and services, and they must do this while continuing to yield profits (Frasier, 2017). However, these firms also have obstacles, and the way they overcome these obstacles are the reasons why they are so powerful, and why even governments have given them the approval to operate despite the environmental, animal or human right abuses that are not rare in the functioning of the global food economy.

Some examples Frasier gives of adjustments that governments have made in order to provide capitalistic firms what they need are detailed here. First, they need labor and people who look for wages, but supply is not always available. This is a clear obstacle; most likely, and not much later, the government makes 'an immigration reform'. In similar ways insufficient road networks or property laws and regulations might not be in a favor of capitalistic firms. What follows are 'infrastructural investments' or 'legal changes' initiated by governments to serve the interests of capitalistic firms (Frasier, 2017). This is how these firms can pressure governments, and they do it well. Frasier argues that even though contemporary societies are diverse, "they are still liable to become subordinated to the logic of the capitalist firm, to keep production going, to keep on making profits" (2017:5). These firms make demands on governments, and not vice versa. For example, Nestle has refused to recognize the trade union in Indonesia. Still, governments have good reasons to work with Nestle, such as employment of the people and national economic growth (Frasier, 2017). It is also important to note, that the products that end up to consumers from this complex net of production are often unhealthy, ultra-processed foodstuff: snacks. Although the firms are aware of the health impacts on humans, they do not care, despite the fact that some governments have required them to reduce the use of trans-fats, which is a high risk for heart diseases for instance. Companies'

response to criticisms like these are that consumers are free-thinkers and they make their own decisions. (Frasier, 2017). However, Frasier continues that, this is not a very through answer, since these firms have the power to dictate where their products should be sold and they are capable of keeping the prices so low, that healthier food ends up more rarely in the customer's diet. In addition, governments give most agricultural subsidies to farmers whose crops end up as ultra-processed food, instead of providing tax-cuts for those farmer's and food processors who are providing more healthier choices.

Other means and resources capitalistic firms have to secure their effectiveness and profit making is to expand their output via purchasing smaller companies and through horizontal strategic alliances, since this increases the production and eliminate competitors (Frasier, 2017). Food chemistry and food engineering are also at the heart of global food economy. Concerning the ways in which food can be made to last longer and still look appealing for customers. In addition, this industry is interested in how proteins and carbohydrates can be manipulated. Billions of people today consume food processed through these processes such as adding preservatives, food irradiation, which x-rays the food to kill bacteria, and treats food with high-energy electrons (Ibid.). Offshoring refers to common practices of these companies to move labourintense parts of their production to lower-wage regions, as is the case with US companies operating in Mexico. The food processing industry have all the mentioned resources that Keesing refers as a key for an integrated world system: organization, technology, money and ideology.

Farmers are the people who have to pay for all of the processes the food goes through before it ends up as a cheap choice for the consumer. It is the farmers who are squeezed within the process (Frasier, 2017). And here is another set of problems arise, such as the dependency of small-scale farmers who are still responsible of 70 per cent of the total food production of the world, their growing dependency on the global economy, and being severely indebted. There is a growing dependency on agricultural chemicals and fertilizers, which are produced by capitalistic firms themselves, and a growing demand for monocrops. These last aspects within the global food economy have affected many indigenous peoples, and received a lot of criticism from indigenous farmers, since at the heart of indigenous peoples survival has been the deep knowledge of how to keep ecosystems healthy and combine a variety of crops: knowledge obtained with centuries of experimentation and use of natural resources. For instance, crop genetic diversity is highly crucial for the long-term sustainability of food system

(Frasier, 2017; Seeds of Sovereignty, 2009). The global food economy has had a devastating impact on crop diversity around the world. Ninety per cent of the world supply system comes from fifteen species of crop plants and eight species of livestock (Frasier, 2017). For instance, in China, in 1949, nearly 10, 000 wheat varieties were cultivated, but by 1970, it had decreased to 1, 000. In Mexico, only twenty per cent of 1930's maize crops are today recognized (Ibid.).

Capitalistic firms and food processors are a serious threat for the world's crop diversity and indigenous people's subsistence farming, and a reason why many indigenous peoples are shifting away from subsistence livelihoods to money economy, because food has become a commodity long ago, and as such, one must pay for it. Because of the pressures that the global food economy has on acquiring more land and natural resources, many indigenous societies have been forced to leave behind their rather self-sustaining indigenous food systems, and to pursue livelihoods as commercial farmers. The shift to one cash crop or monocrops has been especially harmful (Li, 2014). Li provides an example of this in *Land's End* (2014) from Central Sulawesi among the Lauje people, who used to be rather self-sufficient farmers relying on a diversity of crops, based on generation's old knowledge of crop rotation and shift farming. Due to the structural changes in the early 1990's promoted by Indonesian government, many Lauje highlanders moved away from these practices to monocrops. When Li asked people, what were they growing, they did not know how and what to make out of the cacao bean. As such, it was of no use for them, essentially it was the money they were paid for. Money they used to buy the food they had previously produced themselves, on their own land, with the control of the whole community, now controlled by the government, capitalistic firms and private ownership of the Lauje.

It is mainly in Asia, Africa and South America that indigenous peoples are directly affected by the dark side of the global food economy, and Young's categories of violence, marginalization, powerlessness, exploitation and cultural imperialism are part of the everyday life of the communities there. Since in the arctic it is not possible to produce food on large scale, with the exception of the fishing industry, it has not proved to be a profitable ground for making large profits. However, the Inuit in the arctic are impacted in other ways of the global food economy, especially on their indigenous ways of food production and consumption, as will be discussed on next chapter. Why then, given this totalitarian, oppressive, and undemocratic dimension of the global food economy, do

we not stand up against it? The answer relates to the last point of this chapter, and was already mentioned ‘proletarian food question’.

Today, 54 per cent of the world’s population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 66 per cent by 2050 (UN, 2017). This means that the majority of people are separated from the land and cannot produce food to last a whole year, and thus they are dependent on the food coming to them (Frasier, 2017). Since part of the wages and incomes of people goes to food, they are structurally dependent on a food system they can afford. In addition, the employers, the capitalists, and individuals are dependent, in that they rely on food of relative low cost. Wage levels and food prices are intimately connected: when the prices of food arises, it is often followed by demands for higher wages (Ibid.). This structural dependency of the majority of the people refers to the proletarian food question. The system will stay in balance, as long as the workers are supplied with a consistent flow and sufficiently low prices of food, to avoid demand for wage increases and riots. Herein lies the key to understand why and how capitalistic firms and government have sought alliances and are trying together to manipulate the agricultural sector: through low cost production, simplification of crops, the use of chemicals and fertilizers, machinery, waged labor and through agricultural subsidies. “All of this at the expense of environment and people who work in these diverse foodscapes”. (Frasier, 2017:6).

Conclusion

Some complexities of global food economy includes taxation, agricultural subsidies, commerce and marketing, government regulations and legal environments. It is necessary to include all of these topics in the discussion on how the global food economy succeeds in keeping prices so low, and paying so little. These prices are so low that the small-scale farmer’s, workers and ecosystems barely survive, and may in fact, die. Many indigenous and rural peoples have been forced to give up their subsistence farming and other traditional occupations to become part of the global food economy. So that many of us can buy low cost food, have more money at our disposal, and stay satisfied with the system, without a real need to confront it. As long as the proletarian food question remains to be solved in some way by capitalistic firms, it seems that few governments around the world are willing or capable to challenge their power (Frasier, 2017). With a reference to indigenous peoples, the government priorities and policies have rarely aimed at benefiting indigenous peoples at the expense

of the mainstream society and national economic growth. More likely, governments are willing to work *with* these corporations and this leaves very few options and very little space for those for whom agriculture and farming is more than an economic activity. Still today 2.5 billion people rely on eating food they produce: for them agriculture is about eating, surviving, protecting the land and it is something to transmit to their children and generations to come (Ibid.).

6 Indigenous food sovereignty, resilience and sheep farming

Gathering or growing even a tiny part of one's own food can have a powerful impact on a person's self-understanding and orientation. The more one engages with the natural world in this way, the easier it is to adopt a more sustainable worldview.

(Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO)

For many, agriculture is not about profits and accumulation, it is about sovereignty and freedom, it is about a lifestyle and culture with close connection to one's identity.

Enrique Salmon, an indigenous scholar, speaks about his childhood memories, family gatherings, and indigenous Rarámuri knowledge, from northwest Mexico, often in connection with local food in his book *Eating Landscape*, which contains American Indian stories about food, identity and resilience. Salmon "eats" these memories of joy and stories, in a manner that the act of eating also becomes a socially reaffirming act through indigenous foods of the Rarámuri (Salmon, 2012). Alistair Fraser also connects resilience and food in his book *Global Foodscapes*. Salmon teaches us about the connection of environment, people and food in a beautiful and eloquent manner, whereas Fraser reminds us that although less people are connected to the land today, we still have options and choices at our disposal to support local and indigenous food ways. Both agree with Vandana Shiva who stated "eating is a political act" (Salmon, 2012:8). Shiva writes from an Indian perspective, and she's trying to answer questions such as why 200, 000 Indian farmers have committed suicide since 1997, farmers who have been known for their strategies of resilience and recovery. She points her finger towards the big corporations flooding the country with GMO-seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, so that the farmers could produce more with less cost for the corporations and consumers, whereby the farmers end up so badly indebted that there is no hope in sight. Given this context, we can say that eating as an act, and eating indigenous food can both be a form of resilience, it can provide a source of empowerment, but also the ways food is produced today is highly oppressive for millions of peoples. The oppressive and often violent reality of many indigenous and local farmers is sad part theme outlined in this thesis; the depth and totality of the global food economy forces many people to turn

away from their indigenous livelihoods. Indigenous societies, regardless of geophysical space, have been built around self-sustaining production systems, with a moral emphasis on taking care of the people and the land, so that the next generations could have an access to the same resources. Being aware of the need to protect the land one is dependent upon, has enabled indigenous peoples to live and maintain distinct cultures for many centuries. There is also a strong link between cultural diversity and biodiversity (Salmon, 2012). This is one reason indigenous cultures are called for cultures of survival; as I refer to indigenous food systems as celebrating survival. On the other hand, the western, industrial way of producing mono-crops has exhausted the planet's natural resources within just few decades, and is unarguably self-destructive (See Diamandis & Kotler, 2014; Ulvila & Pasanen,). Despite this, governments and politicians continue to cherish economic growth and consumption as signals of a healthy society. This is one disparity between indigenous and western ways of being, I argue that the former would have a lesson to learn from the latter, if we are to stop the oppressive and imperial global food economy and turn towards something more sustainable and justified mode of production and food systems granting the right of food to everyone would eventually be achieved. After all, there is enough food for everyone (Holt-Gimenez, 2012). As Salmon argues, "our current hope for a future of safe, tasty, and sustainable food rests in the knowledge of the small number of quickly disappearing small farmers and their farmlands" (2012:10).

The good part of the story here is that although the global world system is dominating societies and individuals to a great extent and often seems that global politico-economic decision making is based on never-ending profitseeking of a small elite, which is stronger than that of distinct societies and cultures. In this chapter I illustrate that it is valuable to set aside the global perspective, and focus on what's happening in communities and what the values are still upheld by many indigenous peoples outside the capitalistic resource management.

My aim is to illustrate that despite the fact that Inuit communities are severely impacted by the global politico-economic decision-making and have to live by the rules of this global, capitalistic system, people are finding ways to resist and become resilient in the process. And as people succeed within these ways of resisting, it is something we can truly see as celebration of a culture and strength of the indigenous peoples; to be strong in knowledge and believe in much larger values than solely those driven by economic forces. Cautiously stated, and after researching the issue for some time now, as the oppression and dominance of the global food economy increases the indigenous resistance

towards this system is also increasing. There is a growing interest towards food sovereignty among indigenous peoples, as one form of cultural revitalization (Salmon, 2012). A look into the traditional Inuit resource management and ways of increasing food sovereignty in the arctic follows.

6.1 Food sovereignty and resilience among indigenous peoples

Food sovereignty means, 1) The right to define one's own food system 2) Food produced through ecologically sound and socially just means (Seeds of Sovereignty, 2014). Food sovereignty is a synonym for freedom. Indigenous food systems are defined as being composed of items from the local, natural environment that are culturally acceptable. (Ibid.).

The United Nations have had several projects related to food security and empowering local communities. Whether it is about empowering women and increasing gender equality, poverty eradication, or supporting indigenous communities, it is widely recognized that the value of producing food for own consumption and/or for the markets has empowering impact on people's lives. Empowerment is a term at the core of much of the UN's work, and is defined as "the goal of ensuring that people have the opportunities they need to live better lives in dignity and security" (Ban Ki-moon, 2012).

Among indigenous peoples in the Arctic, empowerment has been closely connected to boundaries and belonging, which have been pursued especially in land claim negotiations "to gain control over demarcated geographical and social space" (Sejersen, 2004:50). Leese Papatsie et al. found that in Nunavut, empowering communities goes hand in hand with increasing food security (2013).



However, there are as many definitions of empowerment as there are people, it is a matter of the innermost feelings and desires. But it can also mean “the process of enabling people to increase control over their lives, to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives, to increase their resources and qualities and to build capacities to gain access, partners, networks, a voice, in order to gain control.” (UN, 2012). It can be said that food sovereignty, empowerment and freedom are all closely connected.

For many traditional farmers, seeds represents life, and are considered to not be owned by anyone, it is a common property. The seed stands for wealth as it stands for life (an Ethiopian farmer, in *Seeds of Sovereignty*, 2014). Food sovereignty has come to stand for “building back diversity into farming again, building back all the complex systems, which traditional farmers are so good at maintaining and keeping alive” (Hobbelink in *Seeds of Sovereignty*, 2014). Especially in the era of climate change, wide varieties of seeds are the farmers’ best bet, as they are more resilient during dry spells (*Seed of Sovereignty*, 2014). Eric Holt-Gimenez (2013) states food sovereignty is about “how to build social power to create political will”. Because of decreasing global crop diversity and the oppression of indigenous and traditional farmers by the corporate agroindustry, more farming communities have begun to take action, to reintroduce their indigenous seeds and thus safeguard the continuity of their communities. One generation of farmers has been lost in many farming communities due to perished soils and rocketing cost increase, with the cost of nutrition of the people, this is a global trend happening all over the world (Salmon, 2012).

Alongside local NGO’s many farmers are now pulling their farms back from the brink, to ecologically safe, socially just and nutritious ways of farming with the resilience from diverse crops and with the adoption of original, indigenous seed varieties. (*Seeds of Sovereignty*, 2014). Examples and results of seed revival among traditional farmers from Africa are encouraging, where the revival movement is gathering pace. These actions are examples of hope, and what Frasier (2017) emphasizes, one must dream for alternatives, to actually reach them. The revitalization of indigenous food sovereignty and indigenous food ways is worldwide today, among Native Americans, Inuit, traditional farmers in Africa, Aboriginal Australia and among Asian traditional farmers. (See: Kamal et al., 2015; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013, Hutchings et al., 2013; Cote, 2016). This is happening now for the reason that many indigenous peoples have been pushed to the edge of losing their indigenous crop diversity and

indigenous food systems to western agroindustry and industrial food consumption, and the time for action is now more evident than ever before (Salmon, 2012).

Many indigenous peoples around the world still subsist on what they grow and harvest, and these practices maintain crucial legacies on the landscapes they manage (Salmon, 2012). For instance, the Hopi have learned that their impact on the land is lasting and therefore must be light” (Salmon, 2012:58). This is something more broadly shared among indigenous peoples, many have been careful not to overuse local sources, and thus implemented various techniques and beliefs to avoid heavy imprints on the land. The land has offered everything needed, thus the land has needs to be taken care of. In addition, a common feature within indigenous resource management has been the responsibility of growing or harvesting food for one’s community. This responsibility has been reflected in one’s identity as a member of the community (Salmon, 2012). Eating country foods is specifically important not only because of nutritional benefits but because of the broader importance of harvesting, and in supporting traditional knowledge and skills. In addition, the consumption of country foods maintains important family and community bonds which goes beyond what’s experienced in the western diet. (Charleyboy, 2012). This is also true for the Inuit. If one has not seen the enormous land mass, the ocean shores and endless amount of mountain peaks, it can be difficult to grasp how small the human being is in the vast entity of Inuit lands. In addition, the land, ocean and weather, do not always there to provide gentle access for human beings. The arctic climate, with winds reaching as high as 50-90 meters per second. The *piteraq* does, a katabatic wind, called by Inuits ‘the one that attacks you’, inspires respect and wonder towards the techniques Inuit have invented, whether for material-, social-, or mental conditions for survival. Out of respect I chose to write about Inuit food systems, as the people still continue to maintain distinct ways for ensuring the continuation in a place that has been home for over 4,500 years, and as people who have seen many *piteraq* blowing across the Inuit Nunaat. A relative of my partner used to say nearly every time I met him “it is the God and weather who decides”, and very often during our stay it was the weather that decided the course and dates of departures, mood, and the flow of activities (Field notes, 2016).

For centuries, hunting provided the basis for everything in traditional Inuit societies: language, art, clothing, legends, celebrations, community ties, economy and spirituality were all reliant on the hunting way of life (Charleyboy, 2012). The Inuit got everything from animals and from the surrounding land. The animals Inuit hunted were considered much more than just food, the animals

were like people, with a soul. Minik described that animals were eaten were believed to give a person a certain energy. Eating whale meat for instance would provide the person with some of the powers of a whale or eating muskox transferred some of the strength of the animal. For the Inuit, food was a form of energy, creating a spiritual relationship between human and animal. It was the animal who allowed itself to be hunted by the hunter and ultimately killed. More broadly, this is referred to as animism. (Field notes, 2016). In this relationship, the hunters had responsibilities towards the game they hunted. For example, after the animal had been killed, the hunter had to make sure that the animal's soul could return back to the ocean. For example, immediately after killing a seal a hunter must give the newly killed seal fresh water and let it drink the water. In doing so the hunter shows respect for the seal and wishes safe passage for the seal's soul (Field notes, 2016). This account refers to the connection between people, land and animals, which could reach a spiritual level, still supporting a practical necessity, to safeguard the availability of food. Before the standardized western education system, hunting, gathering food and fishing was part of the education system of indigenous peoples. Indigenous education was a process of life-long learning and secured that every generation learned the most essential part of cultural continuity, the quest for food. Among the Inuit, training was gender-divided, boys were taught to become hunters and girls learned to process leather and housekeeping. (Lennert, 2015). However, since not all the members of communities were able to hunt or fish, food sharing has been regarded as a characteristic of small-scale societies such as hunter-gatherers, constituting an essential part of the subsistence economies, or what is today called, mixed economies (Kishigami, 2004). Often sharing has been perceived as based on reciprocity and pure altruism. Marcel Mauss, in a well-known work *Essai sur le don* (1925), argued using several ethnographic examples, that gift exchange is a principle in human societies and is the reason of forming and expanding social relationships and establishing social solidarity among people (Mauss, 2006). Among the Inuit, the practice of sharing has been thought to follow the logic below:

Having killed a large animal with a bow and arrow, a hunter cuts it up and because there is more meat than he can use before it would rot, he generously gives it out to his relatives and friends so that, when they in turn kill animals, he can claim meat back from them. He insures himself against the unpredictability of his own future hunting success by acting as a donor and benefits by accumulating claims on the hunters who may make kills when he does not. (Woodburn in Kishigami, 2004:345)

This view is contested though, since hunter-gatherers did know how to preserve meat. In practice, food was often saved for later use. It seems that the obligation to share has been and still is more an ideology rather than a pragmatic need to dispose (Kishigami, 2004). Kishigami also criticized this

perception to some extent, since there are limitations on the concept of reciprocity and exchange among hunter-gatherers. According to him, types of exchanges depends on social distance. Often the case is that giving and receiving parties do not have the same pool of resources at their disposal, which creates unequal exchange patterns. Therefore those who have access to more food, give more, and those with less, give less. (Ibid.). According to George Wenzel and Harder (2012), the Inuit distribution of meat is a result of a meat owner's willingness to share.

Moreover, a more important form of exchange than the market place, has been gifting and reciprocity. After all, within the Inuit vocabulary there was no word for 'profit' until the turn of the century (Gombay, 2010). Research by anthropologists finds out that "the way the totality of transactions form a general pattern which is part of the reproduction of social and ideological systems concerned with a time scale of far longer than the individual human life" (Bloch & Parry, 1989:1). This refers to the communal roots and traditions of indigenous peoples, where several relations must be nurtured, whether among communities, or with the deceased belonging into a realm of ancestry, to secure the continuation of the society as a whole. Bloch and Parry argue that among indigenous communities one finds 'a cycle of short-term exchange' which is the legitimate domain of the individual (often acquisitive) and a cycle of long-term exchanges concerned with the production of the social and cosmic order (1989).

Regardless of the theoretical perception chosen, sharing is acknowledged by the Inuit to be a central part of their culture. Sharing, as an Inuit way is easily felt when in Greenland, especially in the form of gifting and sharing food among friends and extended families. A few times, I saw a local hunter bringing some fish into the house I was staying, as my host does not have the opportunity to fish or hunt herself. In addition, she received fish from another hunter. I learned from my host that they used to be good acquaintances with the hunter's wife, while she was still alive. After the wife passed away, the hunter remembers her with occasional gifts from the ocean.

Among the Inuit, it is clear that we cannot speak about crop revival, since Inuit have traditionally been hunters, still the broader framework of food sovereignty includes the Inuit, as the people in the circumpolar north seek solutions to connect with their indigenous food systems, which is a form of resilience in support of one's cultural values and traditions. Food sovereignty is not only about holding on to traditional food sources, but also about having control over one's own food, which may

include the introduction of new techniques, like farming. Without food security there is no food sovereignty (Inuit Circumpolar Council - Alaska, 2015). The Inuit are currently trying to increase their food sovereignty, and make initiatives that would support hunters and fishers, to involve and educate younger generations to eat and value country food, and develop mechanisms on how rates of food insecurity can be brought down, in culturally sensitive manners. These cannot be discussed here due to the length and depth of this work (See: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; Center for Indigenous Peoples Nutrition and Environment; Nunavut Food Security Coalition). An example of strengthening food sovereignty and one which has concretely impacted on food security, in addition to empowering people, is the sheep farming occupation in South Greenland, Kommune Kujalleq. However, this is something that cannot be implemented in many regions in Alaska or Canada, due to permafrost and thin soil layer. Yet in Greenland, there is the potential to develop agriculture further, and this discussion takes us to practices of farming that are socially just and ecologically safe, and have a close connections to traditional lifestyles of the Inuit. *Nipaannerup Anersaa* translates the sound of silence. It is this silence I referred to in the introduction of this thesis, as having a close and intimate connection for many people in Greenland. Ernst Lund, a farmer from Saqqaq, says *Nipaannerup Anersaa* with a great pleasure, the silence they listen to every single day. “Of absolute silence, an amazing whizzing sound” (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

Once, the pieces outlined in this thesis are sown together, it can be argued that for many sheep farming is a source of empowerment, resilience and connection to the land and environment, which is something indigenous peoples around the world are striving towards, and the farmers in Greenland have succeeded to achieve to a great extent. However, the farmers are dependent on government subsidies and exposed to criticism and comparison with the global prices of sheep meat, and the work is demanding, a burden making many vulnerable. It seems that strong social networks, kinship, collective identity and environment offers great sources of strength, balancing some of the hardships recognized within many other Inuit communities. “One has to give the sheep farmer credit for obtaining the result they’ve achieved in the work for the development of the breeding and decreasing the number of viable lamb per ewe” (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009). Lambs which are the main source of wealth and success for the farmers in Greenland.

In relation to food security, the prices of commodities, variation of supply (especially of perishable food) is on a same level as in other Greenlandic communities. However, since the farmers are living

within immediate closeness to nature, and have equipment like boats and four-wheelers, a necessity for a farmer, especially the supply of fish and marine mammals their success seems to be ensured to a great extent. In addition, people need to plan and store food differently from larger villages and towns, since the only grocery store in Qassiarsuk, for instance is closed for winter months. Thus it is common to see several big freezers, stuffed with food supplies, in family homes and planning and making the food last is a crucial skill.

Whereas many hunters have been said to lose their sense of self-respect because of the dominant attitude towards the hunter's occupation as low-earners today, many farmers are proud of their past and positions today. In addition, another challenge for the contemporary Inuit communities besides unemployment is money management skills. Nicole Gombay argued that the recent introduction to the cash-economy has caused confusion among many Inuit yet it is money management that the sheep farmers have had to master. According to a sheep farmer from Qassiarsuk, money management is the most important skill for a person to learn, since the farmers receive payments for their meat once a year. If the money runs out before the next year's payment "there isn't a thing we can do" (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

After my travels in South Greenland in a variety of places, and after meeting many people there, it is my impression that the sheep farming communities today resemble the traditional Inuit settlements, prior to urbanization to some extent. Clearly this is not the case within the material aspects of contemporary Greenlandic culture, but on a level of social structure of these communities. Farming communities are often within settlements with less than fifty people, and the strong social network and sense of community is strengthened by kinship and within farmer households. The consumption of country food seems more frequent, if not part of every meal, as was the case in my host family. The year is clearly divided into seasonal variations, due to the demand of sheep breeding tasks, and during the summer season people gather for celebrations and co-management. The annually held sheep farmers meeting, invites all the farmers within Kommune Kujalleq to attend seminars, annual reports, games and food events, in one town in South Greenland. During the winter period traveling connections are hindered or variable to climatic conditions and can reduce access from ones settlement to other places.

In addition, many farmers have sense of pride of their achievements as a collective, a sheep farmer acknowledges that their ancestors “were capable of sustained effort, had deep resistance and incredible determination” (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

Sheep farming and sheep breeding is a unique way to live in Greenland and the farmers carry pride and respect towards their profession, as self-employed and free people. They acknowledge “the sustained effort, deep resistance and incredible determination” towards their ancestors; it is their way of living (Nipaannerup Anersaa, 2009).

7 Conclusion – Inuit food security, a challenge within the capitalistic world system

My motivation to write about the connection between indigenous food and global food system is because of the injustice done to indigenous peoples in the name of colonization and capitalism ongoing for centuries.

Colonialism, capitalism, and global economy all originate from the western tradition, but these have been promoted to the extent that today it can be said we all live in a capitalistic world system. For a long time it was a commonly held belief that individual profits and national economic growth increases the wealth of everyone, including those living in the margins, and therefore economic growth is necessary to reduce poverty and in the development processes of countries and communities. This belief in the “general good” has strengthened the acceptance of capitalistic values and ideals into many non-capitalistic societies also. Nevertheless, today there exist extensive pool of literature, which shows that in poor countries, and particularly after 1980s, both the economy and inequality have grown side by side (Ulvila & Pasanen, 2009). In the name of capitalism much have been lost, and there is still much to lose, if we don’t assess the functioning of global food economy more critically, which has devastating impacts on indigenous livelihoods, and seek alternatives from local and indigenous food systems. Frasier states, resiliency starts from dreaming alternatives (2017).

While food safety and availability of foods are more stable than in earlier times, widespread hunger continues to exist and is often the result of global political decision-making, inequalities, and most

centrally a lack of entitlements and a failure of distribution. Rather than a lack of available foodstuffs. (Julier, 2013). In global food economy, those eat who can afford to eat; it is not a guaranteed human right, as it should be. However, the debate over food is profound and divisive. Particularly since the reliance on a global industrial food supply can be presented as either “a triumph of modernity and technology creating choices and opportunities for more people, or as a moral failure of governments and individuals who allow corporations to run rampant and people to acquiesce to convenience” (Julier 2013:18).

In this thesis, I have illuminated processes within the context of global food economy and colonization and how these together with morality for profit, have affected indigenous ways of food production and food consumption, and led into a situation of food insecurity among the Inuit living in circumpolar north. I have argued that issues such as remote location of Inuit communities, decreasing of hunting way of life, high cost of food and low incomes are causes for Inuit food security. However, to understand these explanations deeper there must be an analysis of global food economy in place. Examining this phenomenon through the lenses of Immanuel Wallerstein’s world system theory, it reveals endless profit seeking by global elite, people who share ideology and morale for capitalism, rooted in western tradition, ownership structures and wage labor. World system theory applies when examining reasons for perseverance of hunger and malnutrition. The global food economy takes different forms in different parts of the world, still nearly all people have become dependent from it and many are directly oppressed by it. Olivier De Schutter, Special Rapporteur on the right to food has clearly stated "The right to food is about politics. It’s not about technicalities. It’s a matter of principle and it’s a matter of political will” (Payton, 2012). In addition, the relation of indigenous peoples and food security is a matter of rights.

In the Arctic, the situation of food insecurity is different from the heartlands of agricultural production, since there it is not possible to produce commercial crops in large quantities. Instead of being directly oppressed by the global food economy, it has had power to affect food choices of Inuit, by keeping the prices of industrial food and snacks lower than the prices of country food, if the cost of hunting is included. Because of dietary change, and an increase of imported non-indigenous foods, many Inuit are suffering from chronic diseases and the nutritional intake is lower what is required for sufficient health or food secure households.

However, I have emphasized for the Inuit food security is more than a matter of incomes and nutrition, it is about culture. An access to country food and processing, preparing, eating and sharing food are all intimately connected and cannot be separated from the discussion of Inuit food security. Although Inuit communities today are mixed economies, combining subsistence and market economy, the act of sharing and the value given to country food bears a strong connection to the Inuit identity and being in the world. The morality on sharing food has prevented starvation, and strengthened social relations, and this is still the case among many Inuit.

Despite the oppressive and seemingly totalitarian global food economy, and its impact on people food choices and consumption, resistance towards global food economy has begun and among many indigenous peoples, this resistance is about food sovereignty, the right to decide one's food system. Food system that is at the heart of cultural transition, sense of self and others and intimate part of one's memories and belonging. All these aspects are crucial for human wellbeing and continuation of a culture. I have represented a case study about the sheep farmers in South Greenland and it can be argued that they have succeeded to carry on their occupation, form on indigenous resource management, through colonial and post-colonial times. Sheep farmers have continued their traditional occupation, away from urban areas and away from many social problems, other Inuit communities are facing today. One of the problems being a lack of sufficient amount of food and access to country food. Sheep farmers have strong sense of communal belonging and identity as a sheep farmer, an identity that for many farmers represents determination, perseverance and continuation.

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