

Nordic
National Museums
**Strengthening
Arctic
Heritage**



Nordic Council
of Ministers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – Danish

'Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums' blev gennemført fra november 2017 til januar 2019 af Nationalmuseet i Danmark (NMDK) og Kulturhistorisk Museum i Oslo (KHM), takket være en bevilling fra Nordisk Ministerråds pulje, Naboer i Vest.

Projektets hovedresultater, inden for dets tredelte formål, var:

1. At Nationalmuseet i Danmark (NMDK) og Kulturhistorisk Museum i Oslo (KHM), har kunnet engagere sig i en serie samarbejdsaktiviteter og det har været muligt at dele arkiver, kulturhistorisk og datalogisk viden og kulturarvsperspektiver med canadiske Inuit organisationer. Nationalmuseet har desuden digitaliseret, metadata-ficeret og tilbageført en række ekspeditionsfotografier, optaget i inuitiske samarbejdspartneres områder i årene 1921–1924.
2. At en omfattende analyse af nordiske kulturinstitutioner i ABM sektorens digitale baser har konstateret og lokaliseret udbredte og afgørende udfordringer, og anbefalinger til hvordan disse kan imødekommes. Analysen (Wold 2020) udgives som et selvstændigt TemaNord volume, på norsk, samtidig med dette volume.
3. At et stort behov for at etablere et nordisk tvær-arktisk museums netværk er blevet tydeliggjort og imødekommet. Med forankring i de to partnermuseer, samt svenske og finske hovedmuseer, er et netværk nu etableret. Netværket vil fremover fungere som en platform for at afdække de bedste ("best-practice") kuratoriske metoder og strategier, kuratorisk koordinering og ikke mindst udvikling af fælles musealt baseret forskning i Arktis. På basis af erfaringer fra disse forskelligartede projektområder er vores anbefalinger til andre kulturarvsaktører i de nordiske lande, der også opererer i Arktis:
 - For det første opfordrer vi til en intensivering af kulturarvssamarbejde og udveksling af viden mellem nordiske kulturinstitutioner og inuitiske organisationer i Nunavut, Nunavik, Inuvialuit og Nunatsiavut. Arktiske kulturarvsorganisationer er i senere år blevet mere aktive og er determinerede i deres kamp for at revitalisere truede inuitiske dialekter, genskrive deres historie og dokumentere immaterielle praksisser og viden om truet kulturarv. Med dette bidrager og beriger de potentielt til menneskehedens globale diversitet.
 - For det andet, er det en væsentlig erkendelse, at det er afgørende at afsætte ressourcer til grundigt at undersøge spørgsmål om kulturelle rettigheder i sådanne tværkulturelle samarbejdsprojekter.
 - For det tredje fordrer kulturarvssamarbejder betydelige institutionelle videnskabelig, teknologisk og økonomisk ressourcer allokeres til disse samarbejder, men også at fundraising må finde sted i et tæt samarbejde med de involverede arktiske interessenter. Kun derved skabes den afgørende gensidighed og forankring af samarbejdet. Sådanne solide samarbejder forudsætter, at tidsperspektiverne er så langvarige, at fælles udvikling bliver muliggøres.
 - Endelig, for det fjerde, anbefales det eftertrykkeligt, at fremtidige digitale projekter fokuserer på brugerperspektiver og praktiske anvendelsesmuligheder ved udvikling af nye databaser. Digitale udviklingsprojekter kommer ikke i mål uden at tage udgangspunkt i brugerperspektiver og imødegå dem allerede i udarbejdelsen af projektdesigns, i testninger og i alle andre projektfaser.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – English

The project *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums*, was successfully executed from November 2017 to January 2019 by the National Museum of Denmark (NMDK) and the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo (KHM), thanks to a major grant from the Nordic Council of Ministers program *The Nordic region and its neighbors to the west*.

The three major outcomes of the project have been:

1. that the collaborative activities have enabled the two Nordic museums to share archives, cultural historical, knowledge on digital strategies, and heritage perspectives with Canadian Inuit organizations and to digitally return archives that were collected among the ancestors of the latter about 100 years ago;
2. that a comprehensive analysis of Nordic cultural institutions' digital databases in the ABM sector, has localized some widespread and pertinent challenges and proposed how to meet them in future digital efforts. TemaNord publishes the resulting report in the Norwegian language (Wold 2020), separately;
3. that the establishment of the Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network turned out to be highly relevant and sustainable. It now provides a platform for synergetic collaborations, curatorial coordination and museum research development. Based on experiences from these diverging project fields, our recommendations to other cultural heritage agencies in the Nordic countries who operate in the Arctic, are as follows:
 - we strongly encourage further collaboration, knowledge exchange and sharing of heritage between Nordic cultural institutions and Inuit organizations, not the least in Nunavut, Nunavik, Inuvialuit and Nunatsiavut. Arctic heritage organizations are increasingly active, determined to revitalize Inuit languages, rewrite their histories, and document intangible heritage practices and knowledge; elements that enrich and contribute to our global human diversity;
 - dedicating resources for critically examining cultural property rights issues are demanding, yet, must be compulsory in such collaborative projects;
 - thirdly, that the involved parties from the outset recognize that heritage collaboration is institutionally, scholarly, technologically and economically demanding, and funds must be raised on both sides, and should strive towards long-term engagements; and
 - fourth and finally, in the field of digital strategies for Nordic cultural institutions we can hardly recommend warm enough that future digital projects focus much more than hitherto on end-users' practices, and take them into account right from the construction of the project design, through testing and at all other project stages.

1. Introduction

Curating practices of Arctic Collections in the Nordic Cultural History Museums have undergone dramatic changes in current years. We have experienced a renewed interest in the Arctic among the public, the international research communities and not least the Arctic source communities themselves.¹ In this global era of decolonization, increasingly self-conscious Arctic populations are gaining more autonomy, and negotiations over Sámi, Inuit, and other indigenous identities are vivid all over the Arctic. Accordingly, the field of cultural heritage management has received intensified attention regarding both immaterial and material Arctic heritage. As the Arctic and Nordic regions share a long history of connectedness, Nordic museums today hold thousands of Arctic objects and rich archival documentation, and Nordic museum collections have now come to constitute important sources for indigenous interpretations of history, just as they are Nordic cultural heritage. In recent years Inuit and Sámi populations have reinterpreted their history and written their own versions in multiple formats. They are engaging in the revival of almost lost languages, and revitalizing customs, traditions and skills in handicrafts, hunting, fishing, sledging and more. They organize archaeological summer camps and recuperate knowledge about the land, the ancestors, mythologies and genealogies. Museum collections and curatorial knowledge serve as important resources in these processes.

In 2017 The Nordic Council of Ministers provided a grant from the program *The Nordic region and its neighbors to the west* to the National Museum of Denmark (NMDK) and the Museum of Cultural History (KHM) in Oslo for the project *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums*. The project had three objectives. First, it would support initiatives and collaboration between the NMDK and Canadian Inuit partners that have links to the museum due to the 5th Thule expedition that conducted extensive research in the Canadian Arctic in 1921–24. It would strengthen the sharing of knowledge and digital data with Canadian Heritage societies in order to support cultural identity and widen opportunities for some of the most vulnerable Arctic populations. Second, the project would support the Nordic museums' curatorial works with Arctic collections and with partners in the Arctic by strengthening collaboration and coordination between these museums. Third, it would examine the specific conditions of the new digital museum reality, and the potentially new dialogues and possibilities for accessibility that the digital museum enables.

All of the national Nordic cultural history museums have in recent decades made major Arctic collections accessible to indigenous source communities. Most recently, the KHM and Sámi groups are gaining extensive experience of collaborating on museum objects and digital databases in the major Norwegian–Sámi repatriation case *Bååstede*. Since 2012, KHM and Norsk Folkemuseum have collaborated with the six Norwegian Sámi museums under the Sameting to divide the collections into two almost equal parts and transfer about 2,000 items to the latter. There is a widespread consensus among ethnographic museum professionals in Nordic cultural history museums, on ethical and scholarly grounds, to welcome such requests from source communities. The museums are rewarded with new insights and knowledge about their collections. Yet at the same time, extra resources are required when collections related to a specific ethnic group or geographical area are to be organized, digitized and/or re-registered in the databases. Field visits and archival consultation are costly; as are the means are needed to record and embed the new knowledge gained in these processes. The general picture is that funds have to be raised for such purposes because museum budgets rarely leave room for them as a part of the basic curatorial work. The Nordic Council of Minister's grant for *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums* made such collaboration possible: it has funded the NMDK to interact with Canadian Inuit organizations, most notably the Canadian Kitikmeot Heritage Society (KHS), and to digitally return archives that were collected among their ancestors about 100 years ago.

1. By 'source communities' we mean communities of descendants of people among whom the museum objects were originally collected.

Recognizing these new fields of work, the requests of increasingly interested audiences and colleagues, and – at the same time – the need to secure curatorial resources in Nordic museums, the Arctic curators from the Nordic cultural history museums agreed to work towards coordination of our curatorial work and increase collaboration. In 2018 we were able to lay the foundation of a *Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network* by establishing an operational group with members from the national museums in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The network will expand, on an ad hoc basis, to include other museums holding Arctic collections in the Nordic region.

This volume presents the achievements of the project *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums*. It also provides information regarding the specific conditions of the Nordic museums that hold major Arctic collections and archives, as well as indicating some of our further ambitions. The structure of the volume reflects the three project objectives. Therefore, the first part presents the NMDK's sharing of collections with Canadian Inuit in the *Tumisiut* project, both digitally and virtually in museum visits and re-visits across the Atlantic. The second part narrates the constitution of the curatorial network and outlines its background and activities, providing a profile of the Arctic collections at each of the participating museums, including the objects and archives, the exhibitions and research at each museum. The final part presents the project outputs, among these a comprehensive analysis, conducted by the KHM, of the digital databases and projects that cultural history museums in the Nordic region have engaged in to share their archives and collections. The resulting report, 'Vision, ambisjon og virkelighet' (Wold 2020), is published as a separate TemaNord volume.

2. Sharing Museum Collections With Arctic Source Communities

2.1 Colonial legacies, Nordic cultural history museums and repatriation

A long history of expeditions and research links the national Nordic cultural history museums with source communities all across the Arctic. Collections stemming from encounters between explorers and researchers hold the potential to become important sources for histories of the indigenous populations in the Arctic. These objects can illuminate a wide range of issues, and together with documents and images they may be fundamental for reconstructing and recovering historic indigenous perceptions and valuations. In recent decades, European and North American ethnographic museums have therefore received requests from Arctic source communities to return objects, single items or entire collections, or to make them accessible in one way or another. Some of these requests have resulted in the repatriation of artefacts, human remains and/or archival material, while others have led to collaborations on sharing knowledge or data in alternative ways.

The first major repatriation of collections was from the NMDK to the new National Museum of Greenland between 1982 and 2001, as already described in the last section. In a process of research, reflection and negotiation, called *Utimut* (meaning 'return' in Greenlandic), the Arctic collections were shared between the two museums, and a total of 35,000 ethnographic and archaeological artefacts, along with archival material, were moved to the museum in Nuuk. In Norway in 2012, after several years of preparations, the Norwegian Folkemuseum, the KHM, along with the Sámi Parliament (*Sámediggj*), decided to return half the collection of Sámi artefacts owned by the two museums to six regional Sámi museums, and engaged in a repatriation process called *Bååstede* ('return' in the southern Sámi language). Seven years later, in June 2019, they met in Kautokeino and signed a contract that transferred ownership of 2,000 items, out of 4,500, to the Sámi museums.

In 2017, the National Museum of Finland drew attention when it signed a letter of intent with the Sámi Museum Siida in Inari, northern Finland, which outlined the repatriation of the entirety of its Sámi collections to Siida. 2,600 Sámi objects, one third of them Skolt Sámi objects, will be returned. The collection contains the oldest Sámi objects found in Finland. The first artefacts came to Siida in 2019; the rest will be transferred when the museum finishes expanding its facilities, in 2020. In Sweden the Museum of Ethnography chose to deposit its Sámi collections at Ájtte, the Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum (*Svenskt fjäll- och samemuseum*), when it opened in Jokkmokk in 1989. Ájtte became the main Swedish museum for Sámi culture, a voice for the Sámi presenting Sámi perspectives. The deposition of these materials has been interpreted as an act of repatriation to Sápmi, the traditional Sámi areas (Silvén 2011). Nordiska Museet has also lent out an important part of their Sámi objects, namely half of their Sámi drums, on long-term loans to other museums, mainly Ájtte. Although no ownership transfers have been signed, the Sámi society has in this way taken some control over its heritage. Another way has involved locating all the objects of Sámi origin kept in museums and other institutions, and entering them into a database.

We may perceive both the physical repatriation of collections and the creation of these digital databases as examples of how indigenous populations are redefining themselves in relation to colonial and national histories, as well as in global contexts of indigenous agency and identifications, and political discourses of power.

2.2 TUMISIUT – Reactivating the Collections from the 5th Thule Expedition

With an aim of sharing collections and knowledge obtained and recorded by the 5th Thule Expedition in 1921–24, the *Tumisiut* project, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the National Museum of Denmark, shared the cultural heritage of that expedition in ways alternative to repatriation. It was two Canadian organizations, the Kitikmeot Heritage Society (Cambridge Bay, Nunavut) and the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University, that in 2014 invited the National Museum of Denmark to engage in collaboration. The aim was to make the ethnographical, archaeological, photographic and other materials from the Inuinnait (Copper Inuit) collected in today's Kitikmeot Region during the 5th Thule Expedition digitally available, first to people in Cambridge Bay, and then to a wider public. The Canadian invitation fired up a series of discussions that had been smouldering for some time, and became the starting point for new ambitions. The NMDK decided to make the totality of the 5th Thule Expedition material collected across Arctic Canada, Alaska and easternmost Siberia digitally available, and to reach out to share it with source communities in Arctic Canada.



Figure 1. Elders and researchers from the Canadian Kitikmeot Heritage Society visit the ethnographic stores to study and discuss the objects with museum curators and conservation specialists. Brede, December 2017.

Photo by Arnold Mikkelsen © Nationalmuseet.



Figure 2. One of the elders, Bessie Omilgoetok, recognizing and describing ancient sewing techniques that have gone out of use, but for generations secured survival in the Arctic.

Photo by Anne Mette Jørgensen © Nationalmuseet.

The NMDK therefore invested in the digitization and ordering of the 5th Thule Expedition images, and provided them with metadata in the museum database. The photographic records have been organized and made ready for online publication, and will be sent in photo packages to a range of Inuit heritage communities along the route of the expedition. The initial ideas and first experiences of the *Tumisiut* project are outlined in a Nordisk Museology article (Appelt et al. 2018) in a special issue on the 'Nuts and Bolts of Digital Heritage', edited by KHM partners (Gowlland and Ween 2018). A comprehensive project website has been established. Here, one can listen to seven podcasts that describe the 5th Thule Expedition, read about the project activities and find links to publications and media about the *Tumisiut* project.

Sharing the Inuinnait archival and object images with the Kitikmeot Heritage Society (KHS) has served as a pilot project for revisiting the communities along the extensive expedition route. First, in the sense of technological experimentation, the NMDK has supported KHS and the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre (GCRC) at Carleton University in their development of an online interactive map that links photographs, oral stories, the expedition journal, people, objects and places in the Kitikmeot region. Researchers of the KHS and the NMDK have published a joint article (Keith et al. 2019) describing the background of and work on the online application *The Fifth Thule Expedition Atlas* (<https://thuleatlas.org/index.html>), and the potential of such online databases to maximize the knowledge accessible to current and future generations of Inuit in ways that encourage them to both reinterpret and contribute to that knowledge, and integrate it back into their lives.

Secondly, it has served as a pilot project for how to develop collaboration practices with other source communities, in the sense that NMDK staff have had the opportunity to search for information on, and analyze, political networks, Inuit organizations, the Nunavut political constitution and the agencies that regulate the areas of cultural heritage management, heritage revitalization and preservation. Based on this the NMDK now collaborates with a range of heritage organizations to deliver packages of relevant photographs to each of the areas. NMDK

curators also took part in a joyful and highly productive knowledge-sharing event in December 2017 when the museum invited two elders, two researchers and the Director of the KHS to visit the NMDK's exhibitions and museum stores. On a return visit to Cambridge Bay in September 2018 a researcher from the NMDK, together with a KHS researcher, observed how the expedition journals and photographs were enabling people to trace family kinship trees, localize place-names and familiarize themselves with the material culture of their Inuit forefathers. The two researchers continued to Gjoa Haven, where the KHM has a longstanding collaboration with the Nattilik Heritage Center. The center's exhibitions are built upon objects collected by Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen in the early twentieth century and now repatriated from the KHM. Photographic and textual documentation of these visits are available on the *Tumisiut* project website (<https://en.natmus.dk/historical-knowledge/research/research-projects/the-tumisiut-project/>).



Figure 3. A bow, snowgoggles, a miniature ship and other items collected by Roald Amundsen on Victoria Island, recently repatriated and exhibited at the Nattilik Heritage Center in Gjoa Haven.

Photo by AMJørgensen © Nationalmuseet.



Figure 4. Mary Akhayok Avalak with an image of foremother Hikhiik photographed by the 5 Thule Expedition in 1923.

Photo by AMJørgensen © Nationalmuseet.

2.3 Analyzing Nordic Digital Museum Databases: 'Visjon, Ambisjon og Virkelighet'

NMDK and KHM have engaged in various fruitful experience and knowledge exchanges while collaborating with source communities in the Arctic, involving the repatriation of objects as well as digital returns and databases. Another such event was a 'Digital Day' at the KHM in December 2018, with the participation of NMDK and KHM personnel as well as archaeologist Dr. Sara Perry, who convincingly elaborated on the advantages of emotional storytelling in heritage management projects, and Professor for Culture Information Science, Dr. Robin Boast, who shared his analysis of contemporary digital media contexts.

KHM's and Norsk Folkemuseum's collaboration with Sámi museums in the *Bååstede* process has, as mentioned above, resulted in transfer of the ownership of 2,000 items. However, as the Sámi museums lack resources for storage and exhibitions, KHM has worked on alternative ways of making the objects immediately accessible. The production and development of the travelling exhibit *NyARKTIS* is just one example; KHM has also investigated various methods of sharing museum collections in digital databases and the affordances, challenges and advantages thereof. Other relevant projects include the Amundsen portal and the collaboration with Mittimatlik women, both mentioned above.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' grant enabled KHM to conduct a comprehensive analysis across the Nordic databases of the ABM (Archives, Libraries and Museums) sector. The resulting report, 'Visjon, Ambisjon og Virkelighet' ('Vision, Ambition and Reality') (Wold 2020) is published as a separate TemaNord volume (in the Norwegian language). Here, Wold shows that the Nordic

museums are at the forefront of digitizing and sharing museum collections and archives online, and that digital databases serve as contact points with Sámi and Inuit communities. Online databases are widely perceived as democratizing instruments due to their potential appeal to large audiences. At the same time, digital 'returns' serve as valued alternatives to repatriation where this is not yet possible or desirable. On the other hand, analysis of the results, in particular the actual gains for end-users, have so far been sparse, and Wold addresses a range of related critical issues. She warns that in major digital initiatives such as the national digital museum databases SARA (Denmark) and DigitaltMuseum (Norway and Sweden), and the EU-sponsored monumental work on the Europeana portal, political ambitions call for rapid development, but the actual digitalization work progresses in slower, segmented processes, which sometimes stagnate and have to be restarted when infrastructures become obsolete, or stakeholders demand new standards of quality or inter-operationality. Typically, major museums have to support the development of new digital infrastructures and digitization of collections and archives through a combination of self-financing and externally raised funding. Funding opportunities have been favorable in the era of digitization, and Nordic museums have generally been successful in fundraising. However, Wold outlines a discrepancy between expectations and resource allocations that results in a range of challenges to the individual institutions. As a consequence, it has for instance become a norm that institutions in the ABM-sector respond to resource pressures with low-budget solutions, where people in work rehabilitation programs, without curatorial qualifications, are brought in to carry out the time-consuming work of digitization. She concludes that issues of sustainable long-term storage, copyrights, inter-operationality, data quality and common standards demand increasing public investment and call for collective solutions.

Remarkably, Wold has observed that expectations of the potential for crowdsourcing to retrieve information, and to engage audiences to take ownership of knowledge-generating processes, have often been disappointed. In surveys, the fields for comments are often left empty, showing that they fail to entice users into the dialogues expected. This raises the question of whether the museums are overestimating their imagined digital audiences. On a larger scale, Wold notes, an 'astonishing lack of knowledge about end-users' is an urgent challenge to many digital projects. Without knowing who the end-users are and what kind of information, contextualization and quality they expect, it is impossible to meet their needs. Wold concludes with an urgent call to increase the empirical knowledge on audiences in these major digital projects, which are currently characterized by being highly complex, immensely time- and resource-consuming, engaging large numbers of stakeholders and repeatedly demonstrating enormous divides between visions for the future and practical lived reality (Wold 2020).

3. Supporting Arctic Curatorship at the National Nordic Museums

3.1 Constituting the Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network

In January 2019 curators and other museum personnel from the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish national museums came together for a two-day seminar in Copenhagen in order to learn about each other's Arctic collections, look into the curatorial resources at each museum and debate whether it would be meaningful to establish a network for Arctic curators in the Nordic cultural history museums.

During the seminar the participants came to acknowledge that we share a range of issues, paradoxes, concerns, advantages and challenges in our contemporary working contexts, and that many of them can be derived from entangled or parallel historical experiences. Nordic national museums share histories of wars, conflicts and dependencies, colonial expansions – and withdrawals – Scandinavism and a present of ongoing decolonizing processes. In the Nordic countries postcolonial reflections have been carried out at a national level, but we have not yet had an international Nordic dialogue on postcolonialism. For decades, we have all been living in welfare states, and to a large extent share socio-economic traits, values and norms. As museums we understand ourselves within a 'Nordic horizon', and often favor such perspectives as inclusion, diversity, sustainability and co-creation. Finally, we are all striving to find ways to cope with budget cuts and increasingly commercial realities.

The premise for this workshop was to bring together people working in those museums that house major Arctic collections from groups outside their own countries. Collaboration with Greenlandic or Sámi museums and other cultural heritage agents is high on the agenda, and we profit from sharing knowledge and collections, collaboration and co-creation. Inter-institutional collaboration has most recently come to the fore, for instance with the *NyArktis* travelling exhibit that the KHM in Oslo has co-produced with Sámi museums, and Nordiska Museet's newly opened *Arctic – While the Ice is Melting*.

In Copenhagen we decided that we would visit and discuss this latter exhibit at the next meeting, and the network therefore came together again in December 2019 at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm. We will continue to visit each others' museums in this way. Whereas the Nordic Council of Ministers generously provided the means for these two first network meetings, the economic structure will be decentralized for future meetings. A core activity has been – and will continue to be – a presentation from each participating museum of its current work on its Arctic collections and relevant contexts. The most interesting links between our curatorial practices and our Arctic collections are here discovered and debated, reflecting the interlinked histories of collecting and national museum practices of collaboration and exchange. Ethnographic objects entered the European and Russian *Royal Art Chambers* throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and were at times exchanged or given as gifts among royal families. When expeditions, sailors, colonizers and officials later brought larger collections to the museums, the practices of exchange continued and ethnographic objects were valued on a par with pictorial arts and jewellery. Museum directors, curators and collectors have also sometimes divided their collections between museums. As a result, during the presentations there are frequently interesting connections between the collecting agents and the objects and collections in the four participating Nordic ethnographic museums. Many of these links appear to hold research potential.



Figure 5. The participants of the inaugural Copenhagen seminar, January 2019 (from left): PhD Candidate Eirik Haug Røe (Groningen and NMDK); Research Professor Bjarne Grønnow (NMDK); Head of Research Lotten Gustafsson Reinius (Nordiska Museet); Curator Anne Mette Jørgensen (NMDK); Keeper of Collections Anna Fahlén (Världskulturmuseerna); Curator Cecilia Hammarlund-Larsson (Nordiska Museet); Curator Mille Gabriel (NMDK); Curator Pilvi Vainonen (National Museum of Finland); Head of Research, Modern History and World Cultures Christian Sune Pedersen (NMDK); Vice Director Tiina Mertanen (National Museum of Finland); Curator Martin Appelt (NMDK); Research Coordinator Tone Wang, and Keeper of Arctic and Australian Collections Gro B. Ween (both from the Museum of Cultural History NO); Curator Martin Schultz (Världskulturmuseerna).

Photo by Lone Riis © Nationalmuseet.



Figure 6. Discussing the ethnographic exhibitions in Copenhagen.

Photo by Anne Mette Jørgensen © Nationalmuseet.



Figure 7. The second Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network Meeting, at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, 6 December 2019.

Photo by Anne Mette Jørgensen © Nationalmuseet.

3.2 Research Collaborations

During the spring of 2019, the KHM and NMDK collaborated on research funding applications. The KHM applied to the Norwegian Research Council with the project *Crafting relations around Sámi heritage: museum collections after the Bååstede repatriation process (Post-Bååstede)*, and the NMDK applied for a Sapere Aude grant at the Danish Research Council with the project *Hybrid Heritage: Reinterpreting the Nordic Arctic*. Neither were successful but both developed into new research ideas – together, individually and with third partners. Scholars from the two museums came together to sketch out a project on Arctic resources, craftsmanship, technologies and materiality at a workshop at Enø in southern Denmark in September 2019, and at a meeting in Oslo in October of the same year. From here, the project took a new direction when the NMDK decided to apply for the Nordforsk Programme for Interdisciplinary Research in November 2019, together with veterinarian scientists from the University of Copenhagen, the Norwegian Institute for Bio-economics (NIBIO) and the Norwegian Veterinarian Institute, and with ecology and history scholars from the University of Turku. The aim of this project is to renew and strengthen the inherent resource potentials of working dogs and reindeer in the Nordic region. Both are objectified as prominent cultural heritage; both are highly appreciated as everyday companions in private spheres; and the roles of both are undergoing dramatic changes in the northernmost parts of the Nordic region. The project will not only analyze the current human–dog and human–reindeer relations – it will also contextualize these historically, and, not least, develop practices to raise animal welfare and health. The outcome of the application process was still unknown at the time of publishing this volume. In all of these application processes the Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network has served as a resource base for the formation of research groups and the development of research ideas and designs. This will form the basis of future research applications to national and Nordic research agencies and we aim, ultimately, to apply for an ERC grant within three years.

3.3 The Nordic National Museums and their Arctic Collections

3.3.1 The Arctic Collections at *Nordiska Museet*, Sweden

By Curator Cecilia Hammarlund-Larsson

Nordiska Museet (the Nordic Museum) was founded in 1872 by Artur Hazelius. On 24 October 1873 Hazelius opened his first exhibition. The museum then was called the *Skandinavisk-Etnografisk Samling* (Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection). In 1880 the name changed to *Nordiska Museet* and the institution became a foundation; it remains so today. With the intention to reflect life and work in all of the Nordic countries, artefacts from all over Scandinavia, as well as the Baltic region and North Germany, were added to the collections. The museum collections as well as its archival material and photos grew rapidly. The exhibitions, then located in two small former pavilions at Drottninggatan in the city of Stockholm, attracted considerable public attention. They were popular not merely for their content, but also for their design. Artur Hazelius wanted to stimulate visitors' curiosity and imagination, and many objects were therefore displayed in dioramas. For instance, peasant life was staged with cottage interiors and life-size mannequins, dressed in traditional rustic clothes, outfitted and installed like actors in a play. In 1891 Hazelius founded the open-air museum *Skansen*. For more than 70 years the museum and *Skansen* were united, but in 1963 they became separate institutions.

Today the museum has about 1.5 million objects in the collections, extensive archives and a research library. The Sámi objects have been collected in Sweden (the largest part), Norway, Finland and Russia, and number in total approximately 8,400 objects. About 50% of the objects entered the museum before 1910. A huge part of the collection came to the museum during the spring and summer of 1891, in preparation for the establishment of the open-air museum *Skansen*.

In August 1874 Artur Hazelius opened a second museum pavilion. Here, visitors could see exhibits of both interior and exterior scenes from the northern part of Sweden, including a Sámi scenography called *Höstflytt i Lule lappmark* (Autumn Migration in the District of Lule, in Lapland). At the opening of the open-air museum *Skansen* in the autumn of 1891, one of the first tableaux was a Sámi camp, then named *lappläger*. Here, a Sámi family, with their reindeer, dogs and goats, was contracted to live in the tent and to work both as guides and as representatives of the Sámi people.

When the new museum building at Djurgården, near *Skansen*, opened to the public in June 1907 an extensive Sámi exhibition could be seen on the ground floor. The objects were exhibited in a more traditional way here, and there were no tableaux or stagings as there were at Drottninggatan. In 1947, a new Sámi exhibition was constructed by curator Ernst Manker and it was reorganized and modernized in the 1970s. And finally, in 2007, the museum once more opened a new permanent Sámi exhibition.

The museum holds about 1,600 objects from Greenland, mainly Inuit. With some exceptions the majority of these were collected between 1874 and 1905 by Danish colonial administrators C. Brummerstedt and R. Müller. It seems that Artur Hazelius was planning a Greenlandic exhibit in the museum in Drottninggatan as early as the 1880s, but that this plan did not materialize. Later, in 1896, he exhibited a summer tent from Greenland at the open-air museum *Skansen* and in 1898 he created an *Eskimåhydda*, a West Greenlandic winter house, in the northern corner of the *Skansen* area. The construction material, mainly driftwood, was sent from Greenland by Danish colonial administrator Conrad Brummerstedt, and the turf material was dug on the outskirts of Stockholm. Letters in the archives tell us that Hazelius also had plans to bring an Inuit family to *Skansen*, which did not succeed as Conrad Brummerstedt could not arrange it. Some years after Hazelius' death in 1901 the museum apparently lost interest in the Greenlandic turf house and it was eventually torn down. In 1933 a large proportion of the objects (1,005) were moved from *Nordiska Museet* and deposited in the new Ethnographic Museum at Djurgården on the outskirts of Stockholm. However, they have never been included in a permanent exhibit there.

Nordiska Museet has about 1,200 objects from Iceland in its collections. The greater part of these were repatriated, though as a deposit, to the National Museum of Iceland in 2015. Most of

the objects were collected while Hazelius was the director, in 1874–1901; a few were collected in the 1950s. The artefacts from Iceland were on display in the exhibitions in Drottninggatan, yet never as a diorama.

With this brief presentation of material from the Arctic in the collections and exhibitions of the Nordiska Museet, we wish to indicate topics relevant for further research, for example: the practice of collecting; the collectors' backgrounds; and the presentation of the collected artefacts in exhibitions or through other activities arranged by the museum.

In 2007 the Nordiska Museet set up a permanent exhibition about Sámi life in Sweden, '*Sápmi*. It is a story of possibilities and difficulties, power and resistance, rights and unrighteousness. *Sápmi* also seeks to show how the Sámi have influenced the Swedish and the Swedes have influenced the Sámi. In October 2019 the Museum opened a temporary exhibition *Arctic – While the Ice is Melting*. This exhibition allows visitors to learn more about people living in the Arctic, its resources and the impact of climate change on the region. The centerpiece of the exhibition is a 400 m² iceberg with a deep crack in the middle, symbolizing the rupture between now and the future of the Arctic. The museum offers its visitors a comprehensive experience, with a large selection of original art pieces and artefacts, projections, films and documentaries, as well as interactive installations.



Figure 8. Professor Lotten G. Reinius gives a tour of the exhibition *Arctic – While the Ice is Melting*.

Photo by Anne Mette Jørgensen @ Nationalmuseet.



Figure 9. Reindeer harness. Skolt Sámi. Russia, Pechenga. Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1909. 0112751abd.

Photo by Fanny Oldenburg © Nordiska Museet.



Figure 10. Pencil drawing by the Sámi artist Nils Nilsson Skum (1872–1951). Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1940. NM.O 222583.

Photo by Bertil Wreting. © Nordiska Museet.



Figure 11. Oil painting by the Sámi artist Nils Nilsson Skum (1872–1952). Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1939. NM.0219683.

Photo by Karolina Kristensson. © Nordiska Museet.



Figure 12. Hunting bag made of seal skin. Greenland, Asiaat. Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1881. NM.0041888.

Photo by Karolina Kristensson. © Nordiska Museet.



Figure 13. Float for fishing line. Faroe Islands, Torshavn. Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1956. NM.0253825.

Photo by Karolina Kristensson. © Nordiska Museet.



Figure 14. Saddle blanket. Iceland. Acquired by Nordiska Museet in 1891. NM.0071844.

Photo by Karolina Kristensson. © Nordiska Museet.

3.3.2 The Arctic Collections at Statens Museer for Världskultur

By Curator Martin Schultz

The National Museums of World Culture (*Statens museer för världskultur*, or SMVK) in Sweden were founded in 1999 by merging four, formerly independent museums in two cities. The Ethnographic Museum (*Etnografiska museet*), the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (*Östasiatiska museet*), and the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (*Medelhavsmuseet*) in Stockholm were joined by the formerly city-owned Ethnographic Museum – now the Museum of World Culture (*Etnografiska museet*, now *Världskulturmuseet*) in Gothenburg. The museums are home to about 500,000 objects and 1,000,000 photographs.

The Arctic collections at the National Museums of World Culture in Sweden currently comprise close to 20,000 inventory numbers. The largest part (about 10,000) comes from Greenland, and there are substantial collections from the Chuckchee, Nanai, Nenets and Sámi, as well as minor collections from all other parts of the Arctic. Additionally, about 2,000 photographs, 400 drawings and paintings, 31 wax-cylinder recordings (Greenland, 1913) and an unknown number of films can be found in SMVK's collections. Several of these collections are deposited with the Ethnographic Museums from other (mostly state-owned) institutions. Over the past more than 150 years, several exchanges with other institutions and collectors enriched SMVK's Arctic collections, for example with Denmark's National Museum and the *Kunstkamera* in St. Petersburg. Some other institutions within Sweden also took permanent loans from the Arctic collections at SMVK.

The library at the Ethnographic Museum has an Arctic section that is constantly being enlarged. Archives and libraries are in-house and kept with the collections. At the World Cultures Museum in Gothenburg, the library and archives are housed within the storage facility. Workspace for curators and visiting researchers is available in both places and the storage, library and archives can be visited by appointment via the SMVK's website (<http://www.varldskulturmuseerna.se/en/research-collections/research/research-service/>).

In 2001, SMVK went online with a collection database that contains more than 90% of its objects. The database can be found on the museum's homepage and the search function is available in Swedish and English, though the object information is largely in Swedish (<http://www.varldskulturmuseerna.se/forskning-samlingar/sok-i-samlingarna/>).

Ethnographic collections in Sweden have a rich and diverse history, some dating back to the seventeenth century. With the founding of the Ethnographic Museum as an independent branch of the Natural History Museum in 1900, the collections of several other institutions were partly or fully transferred there, including those of the Natural History Museum, Royal Academy of Sciences, Nordic Museum, Historical Museum, and Royal Collections. The largest part of SMVK's Arctic collections are housed here. The Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg was formerly a department (1865) of the Museum of Gothenburg and became an independent institution in 1946. It houses fewer than 5,000 objects from the Arctic.

In 1722, the oldest Arctic objects collected in the field and now housed at SMVK reached Stockholm (collections number 1939.51). They included a Yakut woman's outfit collected by a Swedish prisoner of war, Peter Schönström (1682–1746), and a harpoon head from Alaska collected by Anders Sparrman (1748–1820) during James Cook's third voyage (collection number 1799.02). In 1878–79 the General Ethnographic Exhibition (*Allmänna Etnografiska Utställningen*) in Stockholm united ethnographic collections from public and private sources and proved a strong motivation to develop these collections further and turn them into an independent museum. The exhibition was organized by the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography, founded in 1877. The Ethnographic Museum's Sámi collection consists of about 600 objects, most of which have been on permanent loan to Äjtte, the Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum in Jokkmokk, northern Sweden, since 1988. The oldest items were collected on the Kola Peninsula and reached Stockholm in 1876. Large collections were also gathered in the field by Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld (1832–1901), who led several expeditions to Greenland and was on the Vega Expedition, the first expedition to navigate the Northeast Passage, in 1878–80.

The World Culture Museum holds about 1,300 objects collected during the Greenland expedition of Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld in 1870–71 and about 200 objects (collection number 1910.04) gathered in West Greenland in 1909 by Otto Nordenskjöld (1869–1928). Another part of the same collection is housed in St. Gallen, Switzerland. Other important parts came as exchanges with the National Museum in Copenhagen.

There is not a separate department for the Arctic within SMVK, the curator for collections from North America being currently responsible for Arctic materials. The Ethnographic Museum and World Cultures Museum both have permanent exhibitions including objects from the Arctic collections. In Stockholm, the permanent exhibitions *With the World in a Backpack*, *North America*, *Three Climates* and *The Storage – An Ethnographic Treasury* all encompass a focus on the Arctic and show single objects in thematic contexts. Gothenburg features single objects in the *Together* and *Crossroads* permanent exhibitions. In 2019, two temporary exhibitions focused solely on the Arctic – *Voices from the Arctic* features contemporary Inuit art on loan from the Museum Cerny Inuit Collection in Switzerland and additions from the museum's collections. The exhibition focused specifically on climate change. *Interruptions* was a loan exhibition showing contemporary photographs of Sámi women.

The collections are still growing; the newest addition is a model kayak in a Baffin Island style, the outcome of a collaboration with the Inuit Heritage Trust. In recent years mostly pieces of modern and contemporary art have been added. Current work with the Arctic collections focuses on Ossian Elgström's Greenland drawings from 1915, the Greenland paintings by Emanuel Petersen and the material gathered during the Vega Expedition. A publication on the Chuckchee material is planned for 2020.



Figure 15. General Ethnographic Exhibition, Stockholm, 1878. Ethnographic Museum, Inv. No. 0004.0242.



1939.51.1

Figure 16. Siberia, collected before 1722 by Peter Schönström. Ethnographic Museum, Inv. No. 1939.51.0001.



Figure 17. Mask, Inupiak, Alaska, collected during the Vega Expedition, 1878–80. Ethnographic Museum, Inv. No. 1880.04.1238.



1924.2.34.A-B

Figure 18. Alaska, Axel Lönnquist Collection. Ethnographic Museum, Inv. No. 1924.02.0034.



1968.19.38

Figure 19. Painted Hat, Alutiiq(?), Alaska, collected before 1853 by Samuel Benjamin Pontén. It was exhibited in the General Ethnographic Exhibition in 1878–79. Ethnographic Museum, Inv. No. 1968.19.0038.

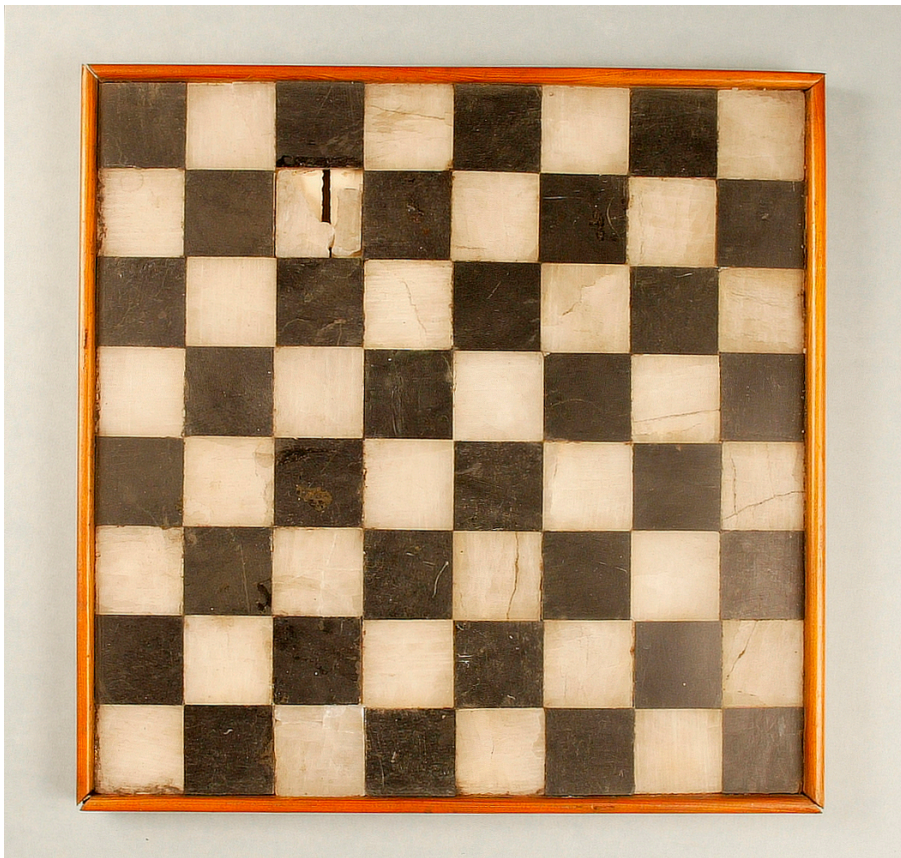


Figure 20. Chessboard, Inuit, Paamiut, Greenland, collected in 1909 by Otto Nordenskjöld. Museum of World Cultures, Inv. No. 1910.04.0119.



Figure 21. Tasiilaq, Greenland, collected in 1973, Freddy Nielsen Collection. Museum of World Cultures, Inv. No. 1980.16.0016.

3.3.3 The Arctic Collection – 10,000 items at Kulturhistorisk Museum, Norway

By Associate Professor Gro B. Ween, PhD

The first contributions to what was to become the Ethnographic Museum in Oslo came as a result of a request from the British philologist and ethnologist Dr. Robert Gordon Latham, commissioned to create an ethnographic museum within the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations at Crystal Palace in 1851. Latham asked his friend, the scholar, politician and journalist Ludvig Kr. Daa to help him obtain objects for a "Lappish" collection. In return, Latham would gift the *Kongelige Fredriks Universitet* (now the University of Oslo) a collection of ethnographic objects from Borneo and Sumatra. Daa formed a committee, and the committee suggested that they collect two sets of artefacts: one to be shipped to Latham in London, and the other to be kept in Oslo, together with Latham's Asian artefacts. *Kongelige Fredriks Universitets* Ethnographic Museum opened to the public in 1857, with L.K. Daa as its first director.

At the establishment of the Ethnographic Museum in 1857, there were 197 numbers in the catalogue. 45 of these had an Arctic origin, and represented the foundation of the museum's Arctic collection. The iconic artefacts from this early collection, listed under the catalogue number NFSÅ 3564, are the three plaster-cast heads of named Sámi: Mattis Hætta, Peder Rik and Nils Karasjok. These plaster casts were made in Oslo, by the maker Guidotti, whose famous works included a number of other copies of things such as stave church portals, which found their way to museums all over the world, at a time when good plaster copies were essential to any ambitious museum collection.

Another early Sámi collection is closely associated with the Kautokeino rebellion, Lars Jakobsen Hætta, its leader, was first sentenced to life imprisonment, not death, as he was only 18 at the time. He was moved to Kristiania Tugthus (Ophus Mathisen in print) to be of service to Professor Friis in his studies of the Sámi language. In prison, Jakobsen Hætta translated the bible into Sámi. Professor Friis enjoyed working with him and fought hard to improve the conditions in the

prison. Following the death of two other Sámi inmates, he even succeeded in having the prisoners freed. Lars Jakobsen Hætta also crafted a very large and beautiful collection of miniatures with tiny name-tags bearing their Sámi names. All were of objects used in reindeer herding. Items from this collection ended up in many European collections, such as at the British Museum, the Pitt Rivers, the Horniman museum, and the National Museum of Denmark (Ophus Mathisen in print). Like the plaster casts, then, the valuable Hætta collection had a particular origin, associated with significant moments in colonial history.

From the earliest days of the Ethnographic Museum's collection, the Arctic figured prominently. A number of artefacts from Sámi were collected by Daae and Yngvar Nielsen. Daae, Nielsen and Solberg bought items from artefact dealers, in Copenhagen and Hamburg, but also received and bought collections from explorers, scientists, merchants, captains, missionaries and bureaucrats. Amongst the most significant contributors to the Arctic collection are explorers such as Roald Amundsen and Harald Sverdrup, the academic Ørjan Olsen, the Danish bureaucrat Harboe, and royal inspector Dr. H. Rink and his wife Signe.

Artefacts in the Arctic collection range from very small and seemingly insignificant sewing needles made from owl bone to visually extravagant items such as Ørjan Olsen's shamanic costume from Tuva. All the artefacts document crafts, skills and expertise, often illustrating creative approaches to uses of materials. Every available material is used, including fur, bone, horn, leather, stone, metal, fabric, wood, plastic and social media, in ways that both surprise and impress. Artefacts document vernacular activities such as hunting, fishing, collecting, food preparation, the making of clothes and related technologies. The artefacts represent narratives about the Arctic seasons, nomadic lifestyles, herding of reindeer, taking care of children and the place of Elders in society.

The Greenlandic collection, consisting of 4,500 items, is both early and very beautiful. Many of the most spectacular items are from the Rink collection, of photographs, sketches and aquarelles made of the Greenlandic priest and artist Aron. There are large early collections from Captain Holm and Conferentsraad Thomsen from the 1850s to 1890s, and a very large collection from Justitsraad Harboe, from Johan Petersen, Willie Knutsen, Søren Richter and Giæver and Johnson in the 1930s. Many of the artefacts were bought by Yngvar Nielsen at *Grøndlandsk handel* (the Greenlandic shop) in Copenhagen.

There are 1,000 artefacts from Alaska and 1,500 from Canada, collected by Adrian Jacobsen and Olaf Hansen, Helge Ingstad and Roald Amundsen. Amongst these there are a number of beautiful pelts and gut skin parkas, but also a lot of early technology. For the items from Canada the significant collectors are Leden, Steneng, Adrian Jacobsen, Helge Ingstad and Roald Amundsen. The Amundsen collection that stands out is that stemming from his Northwest Passage expedition in 1903–06. As part of their scientific investigations, Amundsen and his crew spent almost two years in Gjøahavn (Gjoa Haven) on King William Island. Through friendship and connections with Inuit in the area he became a great admirer of local technology and expertise in dealing with the extreme conditions. He used his network to purchase and document local material culture in what he regarded as its entirety. As a result, the then Ethnographic Museum at the University of Oslo could in December 1906 present a unique collection of some 1,200 objects to the local public. Objects from the collection have remained on display in the museum as one of its important draws, and have been, and are, at the center of later educational work, research and community collaboration both in Oslo and in Gjoa Haven. The Amundsen collection comprises not only artefacts collected while over-wintering in Gjoa Haven, but also a renowned photo collection, which is also displayed as part of the current Arctic collection. Both the photographs and Amundsen's original diaries have been digitalized and made available, also on their own platform, bringing together all the Gjoa Haven material. The catalogue has been translated into four languages: Norwegian, English, French and Inuktitut.

The current Arctic collection was curated by Tom G. Svensson in the 1990s, with a focus on the lives and crafts of circumpolar Arctic peoples. This followed the establishment of the Arctic Council. The exhibition heavily features the Amundsen collection, including two of the gut skin parkas that he collected while in Gjoa Haven, as well as two kayaks, a significant amount of fur clothing and hunting technologies as well as two of Amundsen's dogs. Dogs were first used as sled animals, then eaten; their pelts were brought back to Norway, to be taxidermied and put in museums.

These collections came to the museum as part of ongoing research efforts, which has long been the tradition at KHM. Tom G. Svensson, spent most of his career working on Sámi rights, as well as with Sámi crafts traditions. In the 1970s he wrote a book about Sámi roots basketry, and as part of this effort, he bought a beautiful collection of Kitok family root basketry work, including a wedding crown. He was also interested in repatriation work from early on. When the KHM shamanic drum deposited at the Norwegian Folk Museum, was given to the Karasjok museum on a long-term loan, Svensson ensured that a copy of the drum was made by the famous *duojar* (artisan) Ingvald Guttorm from Tana, to be displayed in the KHM Arctic exhibition. Svensson also collected a series of soapstone figures from Nunavut, taking seriously new postcolonial strategies for acquisition.

KHM still collects material from the Arctic in a very small format. In the last few years, several items have been collected from Nunavut and from Sapmi. From Nunavut, the KHM has purchased a bright pink *Amauti* trimmed with pink fox fur, a *kakivak* from Gjoa Haven made of new material, plastic shaped from found objects, and sharpened metal nails rather than bone. From Pond Inlet the museum acquired a pair of mittens of seal fur, made for fly-in-fly-out workers in the local mine, and sewn by local craftswoman. From Sapmi, KHM collected a summer *gákti*, a women's costume from Karasjok, sewn by *duojar* Kirsti Irene Pedersdatter. The *gákti* is made with Marimekko material. KHM has also been gifted a Skolte Sámi *gákti* (costume), including a *ladjogahpir*, or horned hat, formerly in use by women in East Finnmark, Finland and Russian Sápmi.

As part of a dialogical framework between the museum and Gjoa Haven, regarding the Amundsen collection, 16 artefacts were returned to the Nattilik Culture Centre in Gjoa Haven. KHM keeps this dialogical initiative happening as part of the Gjoa Haven digital platform, bringing together all the material after Roald Amundsen, including photographs, diaries and artefacts, all displayed in four languages: Norwegian, English, French and Inuktitut. Among the current research activities involving the collections DNA work is also being undertaken on Amundsen's dogs, in a collaboration with the Natural History collection, the Natural History Museum in Copenhagen and the curator of the Arctic collection.

Half of the Sámi collection, which was deposited at the Norwegian Folk Museum, has also just been repatriated, in a collective effort between KHM, the Folkemuseum, Samediggi and six Sámi museums. Ownership has been signed over of 2,000 out of 4,500 items. The 2,500 items remaining in the capital are to be co-managed by the Norwegian Folkemuseum and the KHM and kept in the capital, although these artefacts can be borrowed by the Sámi museums upon request.

Together with University of Aberdeen the KHM participates as a member of the Mittimatalik Arnait Muqsuqtuit Collective, in Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) in Nunavut. This collective focuses on producing sewing masterclasses: how-to films for creating sealskin products, made by women in Mittimatalik, for other Inuit women, and for the most part only in Inuktitut. The curator of the Arctic collection is also currently finishing an anthology on one of the first managers of the ethnographic collection, Yngvar Nielsen. As previously mentioned, Nielsen contributed significantly to the Sámi collection, as well as collecting a number of other items from all over the world.

Other reindeer-herding nomadic peoples are also represented, in the Evenki collection, which also partly comes from Mongolia and Inner Mongolia, and was collected by Oscar Mamen and his wife Ethel Lindgren. The museum also holds a large collection of photographs from Mamen and Lindgren. Both the Gjøahaven collection from Amundsen, and the photographic collection of Oscar Mamen have been digitalized and made available online. The Gjøahaven collection and the Amundsen material also has its own digital platform, holding the collection, the photographs and the texts written by Amundsen. The platform is texted in four languages. Currently, a PhD student is working on this collection. In time the Mamen collection too will have its own platform. The museum has recently hired a PhD student who will work on this collection too.



Figure 22. Tuvan shamanic costume Ørjan Olsen, 1914. UEM22717.



Figure 23. Plaster head. NFSA 3564

BÅÅSTEDE

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Figure 24. *Bååstede* report.



Figure 26. UEM6577. Gut skin parka from Captain Holm.



Figure 27. UEM30047. Aron from S. Rink.



Figure 28. UEM27648. Reindeer coat, Sverdrup and Amundsen.



Figure 29. UEM6036. Greenlandic girl's costume, from S. Rink.

3.3.4 The Arctic collections at The National Museum of Finland

By Curator Pilvi Vainonen

Some of the oldest collections at The National Museum of Finland belong to the museum's non-European collection. The National Museum was founded in 1916, and a considerable part of the older collections of the Ethnographic Museum of the Imperial Alexander University of Helsinki and the collections of the Academy of Turku were transferred there on its foundation.

Today, the ethnographic and the Finno-Ugrian collections contain some 54,000 artefacts from every continent. The artefacts collected from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards from Arctic peoples are of special significance, even on a global scale – the Alaska collection and the artefacts from Siberia are among the cornerstones of the ethnographic section of the National Museum. There is also a vast collection of pictures and photographs, which is hosted by the Picture Collection of the Finnish Heritage Agency.

The Arctic materials have continued to accumulate, and at present from Alaska and its surroundings there are about 750 artefacts, from Siberia, about 3,900 artefacts (SU/Finno-Ugrian 2667, VK/ethnographic 1260), and from Greenland, about 230 artefacts. A rather exceptional collection of contemporary art from northern Canada (Nunavut) was acquired in 2013. It consists of about 80 statues of bone and basalt stone and some 90 pieces of graphic work, all by indigenous artists. It was acquired by documentarist Markku Lehmuskallio, who has been filming in the Arctic regions since the 1960s.

The Sápmi collection consists of about 2,600 artefacts, which are almost all going to be transferred to Siida, the National Museum of the Finnish Sámi. The project was started in 2017 and the repatriation should be completed in 2022. A joint exhibition by Siida and the National Museum of Finland is also in course of preparation, concerning the Sápmi culture in particular and questions of repatriating cultural heritage in general.

The accumulation of the older Arctic collections has a strong link to the history of Finland, as an autonomous protectorate of the Russian empire until 1917. In this historical context working possibilities were available for Finnish professionals in Siberia and also Alaska, which belonged to the Russian regime until 1867. Accordingly, the majority of the Alaskan artefacts at the National Museum were gathered in the first half of the nineteenth century by Finns who were working for the Russian-American Company, i.e. the Russian colonial administration.

The most prominent collection was gathered or commissioned by Admiral Adolf Etholén, who spent 25 years in Alaska in the Company's service, and partly by Reverend Uno Cygnaeus, who worked in Sitka for five years. The collection is known as the Etholén Collection and it is internationally well known. It has attracted much interest during recent years, since in Helsinki (and in St Petersburg) some artefacts have been preserved which have been lost in their places of origin. The collecting was not systematic, but Etholén was aware that ethnographic museums were founded widely at that time, and he probably had in mind the establishment of one in Finland as well. The catalogue *The Etholén Collection* was published in 1991.

Another important Alaskan collection was received as an exchange with the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in 1951. Most of the 97 mainly archaeological items are from both the Baffin Island and the mainland.

Concerning Siberia, Finland gaining her independence in 1917 and the founding of the Soviet Russia put expeditions and collecting activity to an end. It took decades before it was possible to continue the research; the first to do so were the two film-makers and anthropologists, Markku Lehmuskallio and Heimo Lappalainen, who have contributed to the collections as well.

From Greenland there have been three main acquisitions. Two of them are from the Angmagsalik, collected by Knut Rasmussen in 1921 (VK4997:1–22) during the Fourth Thule Expedition (1919–1920) and Therkel Mathiassen (VK5168:1–77) respectively; the latter was received as an exchange from the NMDK in 1933. The third is a collection from western Greenland donated by inspector H. Lindow in 1923 (VK5023:1–29). It contains a kayak and a sledge, tools, lamps, some pieces of clothing and two sledge models.

It is mostly the North American collections that have been displayed in several exhibitions in Finland and abroad (*Alaska – The Russian America* 1988–1990, *Gifts from the Great Land – Alaskan Artifacts from the National Museum of Finland* 1991, *Fetches From Afar* 2004–2013 and *The Arctic Spirit* 2017, for example). Artefacts have also been loaned for temporary exhibitions, for example by the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia (MOA), Canada (2018), and the Anchorage Museum, Alaska (2013).

There are three curators working on the non-European collections, but no one full-time. After the closing of the Museum of Cultures in 2013 (the ethnographic museum in Helsinki and a branch of the National Museum), all the Arctic and other ethnographic collections have been taken into storage, apart from some temporary displays. Now there is a plan to open a permanent exhibition of world cultures on the National Museum's premises in the next few years, and the northern cultures will be in a prominent place. At the moment, the Arctic collections are being studied in some academic and other projects by people other than the Museum staff, and with funding from outside. The collections have also always been accessible to representatives of the source communities, especially Alaskan artisans. There has been cooperation with the Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak, and the Chugachi Llangaklluku Lluclerpet project in 2016, for example.



Figure 30. Miniature house, mammoth bone. 1876, the Yakuts, Siberia. VK979.

Photo @ by The Finnish Heritage Agency.



Figure 31. Statuette portraying a crying person, walrus tusk. Early twentieth century, the Chukchi, Cape Dezhnev, Siberia. VK5794-31.

Photo @ by The Finnish Heritage Agency.



Figure 32. Polar Bear, serpentinite. Iola Abraham Ikkidluak, 1986. Kimmirut (Lake Harbour), Nunavut, Canada. VK6478-39.

Photo © by The Finnish Heritage Agency.



Figure 33. A festive parka, cormorant skin, sinew thread, ermine fur, seal skin, fabric; fringes sea lion esophagus membrane, snowshoe hare fur, wool yarn and hair. The glinting green of cormorant clothing makes it the most valued among bird leather clothing. Such garments were used in ceremonies. The Koniag, Kodiak Island, Alaska. A. A. Etholén, 1847. VK81.

Photo @ by The Finnish Heritage Agency.



Figure 34. A hunter's visor. The fir tree frame has been sewn with baleen, the ornaments are made of walrus tusk with glass bead eyes and the plume is duck feathers. The headgear probably belonged to a walrus hunter. The stylized seagull heads are amulets. It was believed that birds would tell the location of the prey. The Yupik, Norton Sound, Alaska. A. A. Etholén, 1847. VK208.

Photo @ by The Finnish Heritage Agency.

3.3.5 The Arctic collections at the National Museum of Denmark

By Curator Anne Mette Jørgensen and Senior Researcher Martin Appelt

Founded in 1807, the NMDK houses possibly the world's largest collection of Inuit objects, in addition to sizeable collections from the Sámi and Siberian peoples, and from the Norse settlement in Greenland. [Research into the Arctic regions](#) of the world has always been an important focus at the National Museum; the museum's collections are comprehensive and generally well-documented, and a range of them are internationally famed. The Arctic collections number approximately 21,500 ethnographical records, 100,000 archaeological records, 25,000 photographs, 72 films, a large number of diaries, drawings, maps and other documents, and several thousand human remains, a majority of which are from Greenland.

The oldest 32 objects in the Arctic collections stems from the Ethnographic Museum, one of the world's first of its kind, which opened in the Prince's Palace in central Copenhagen in 1845. Here, Director Christian Jürgensen Thomsen added considerably to a core of about 1,200 pieces in the Danish Kings' *Kunstammer* (in operation 1650–1825), collecting, exchanging with other museums and instructing Danish officials and sea travelers to bring collections home when travelling around the world (Gabriel, Gulløv and Jensen 2007). Today, these ethnographic collections are incorporated in the wider National Museum. They number around 250,000 objects, about half of them archaeological and the other half ethnographic. A selection is on permanent display in the first-floor exhibit *Peoples of the Earth* and the second-floor exhibit *Ethnographic Treasures*. One permanent senior researcher curates the Arctic collections. The ethnographic collections from around the world are curated by a total of three senior researchers. Since 2009 there has also been a research professorate in Arctic archaeology. A varying number of temporarily employed researchers work at the Ethnographic Collections, and continuously carry out anthropological and archaeological field work, collect objects and documentation and collaborate with source communities on co-creation and knowledge sharing. The Ethnographic Collections belong to the administrative unit Modern History and World Culture, but have separate facilities that include rich and diverse collections of photographs and historical records together with the only [ethnographic research library](#) in Denmark, with a particular focus on material culture within the fields of ethnography, anthropology, museology and archaeology.

A large majority of the ethnographic objects in the collections, more than 14,400, were collected in Greenland. About half of these are from the northernmost people living in Greenland, the Inughuit of today's Avanersuaq. Almost one third of the around 3,225 objects from Canada are from the Igloodik area, and another third came from the Netsilik Inuit in the central parts of present-day Nunavut. There are around 860 Alaskan objects, around 1930 from Siberian groups and 40 from the Japanese Ainu. Sámi objects number around 1,070, of which around 450 are from Sweden, 260 from Norway and 140 from Finnish Sámi. Regarding the archaeological records, the main part, about 80% of the total of approximately 100,000 objects, were excavated in Greenland.

The first major Danish expedition with an ethnographic purpose visited the Greenlandic east coast between 1883 and 1885, and its leader, Gustav Holm, brought a significant number of household objects, weapons, costumes etc. to Copenhagen. In 1921–24 the 5th Thule Expedition, led by Knud Rasmussen, collected around 15,000 ethnographic and archaeological artefacts in Arctic Canada, Alaska and Siberia. After his homecoming, the archaeologist on that expedition, T. Mathiassen, followed up on his theories on the prehistory of Inuit and other Arctic peoples, and he brought further large collections to the National Museum in Copenhagen from five succeeding field campaigns in Greenland in the early 1930s. Other prominent archaeological collections that have changed the general understanding of how succeeding populations migrated across the circumpolar Arctic include Helge Larsen's excavations of the Ipiutak culture at Point Hope, and the Trail Creek caves on Seward Peninsula in Alaska. An unbroken genealogy of Danish archaeologists and ethnographers (though the latter are fewer in number) visiting Greenland and other parts of the Arctic have continued this quest for knowledge on the cultural history and contemporary lives of people inhabiting the Arctic, meaning the collections, archives and knowledge have been constantly growing.

In 1982, following the introduction of Homerule in 1979, archaeology in Greenland became a responsibility of the Greenlandic government and all excavated objects now stay in the country. The two National Museums collaborated from 1984 to 2001 on a major repatriation, called *Utimut*. In an investigatory process a secretariat with staff from the two museums selected specific objects and groups of objects that would cover all regions and all cultural history periods up to 1900. Many collections were divided in two, for instance the Gustav Holm collection, of which 235 objects were brought to Nuuk and 229 stayed in Copenhagen. In total, about one third of the Greenlandic collections were transferred from Copenhagen to Nuuk. Research collaboration on the material culture of Greenland thus continues, not only because collections and archives are being shared but also due to the long and substantial research history that exists for these collections. Online sources for current and former Arctic research projects are available on the National Museum website and include an online database, *Skin Clothing Online*, with high-resolution, 360 degree-rotation photos and detailed information on the NMDK's and

the National Museum of Greenland's collections of fur clothing from indigenous peoples in Greenland, North America, Siberia and North Scandinavia from 2500 BC to the present day.



Figure 35. A selection of objects that have been returned to the National Museum of Greenland, from the 1883–85 'Konebådsekspektion', led by Gustav Holm, to East Greenland.

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Figure 36. This *Nivkh* fish-skin coat (probably originating in the Lower Amur area) and became part of the collections of the National Museum of Denmark in 1927, through an exchange of ethnographical and archaeological artefacts with Museum für Völkerkunde (Leipzig, Germany). This and other Siberian garment pieces can be accessed at <http://skinddragter.natmus.dk/>. Recorded in the collections as K.523.

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Figure 37. *Irci* – mask produced at Nunivak Island (Northwestern Alaska) in 1926 or 1927. The mask was commissioned by Knud Rasmussen at the end of the 5th Thule-expedition, while in Nome in 1925. The mask along with comprehensive description and other note was send to the Museum by the tradesman Paul Ivanoff. Recorded in the collections as P33.110.

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Figure 38. Approximately 1300-years old *Ipiutak* harpoon socket piece from the so-called Deering Site (Seward Peninsula, Alaska). Was excavated by Dr. Helge Larsen and his archaeological crew in 1949. Recorded in the collections as P.3973.

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Figure 39. Knud Rasmussen sketched by Harald Moltke during the Christmas-days of 1903 at Uummannaq (Avanersuaq, Northwestern Greenland). Both were part of the so-called Literary Expedition, which became a turning-point not only in Knud Rasmussen's career, but for the relationship between Denmark and Greenland.

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Figure 40. *Gievrie/goavddis* (Sámi drum) which became included in the Royal Danish *Kunstammer* in 1690, and in 1849 in the Ethnographical Collections of the National museum of Denmark. Recorded in the collections as La. 3.

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3.3.6 The Arctic collections in the Nordic museums – towards a comparison

By Senior Researcher Martin Appelt

During discussions at the meetings in the *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums* it became increasingly clear that the history of the Arctic collections housed in the five involved Nordic museums not only have distinct parallels, but also is the result of multi-stranded and concrete entanglements. Thus, our archives contain correspondence and other documents that attest to the deep scientific and administrative networks between our institutions, and even the exchange of collections that took place. Furthermore, a number of collectors, travelers and tradesmen

donated or sold various parts of their collections to our different institutions.

This is certainly of great interest in relation to building a nuanced understanding of the histories of our institutions, and among others their role in the external colonial endeavors of our nations, and the internal nation-building processes. It even becomes of pressing concern when it comes to gathering information on and enriching the context of the objects required for the collaborative efforts with Arctic source communities. Considerable parts of the collections are only recorded and labelled within categories that are far too generalized and Eurocentric to support the kinds of local or regional history- and identity-building processes that presently take place across the Arctic. Our preliminary discussions strongly indicated that a more detailed biographical record of the artefacts could be developed by research performed across the archives and collections in the involved Nordic institutions. One of the leading members of *Arctic Heritage in Nordic Museums*, Anne Mette Jørgensen, therefore applied to the Independent Research Fund Denmark for seed-money aimed at developing research into this understudied field. The application was not met, but during the coming year a re-worked version of the project "*Hybrid Heritage*" will be submitted to other possible sponsors.

Figure 41 and Table 1 provide a first and somewhat superficial comparison of the ethnographical Arctic collections of the five involved institutions. The numbers should be considered merely as indicative of the overall composition of the various collections for several reasons, i.e. several of the involved institutions are in processes of re-assessing their collections and databases, and the "labelling" and "categorizing" of different artefacts and archival assemblages are being re-evaluated in order to accommodate the needs of various source-communities. It should furthermore be stressed that overview does not include the very substantial Arctic archaeological collections at the institutions. The archaeological collections for example makes up close to 80% of the total Arctic collections housed in the Danish National Museum.

A number of important observations can however be made. All involved institutions have very considerable Arctic collections which, seen in concert, are of crucial significance for indigenous groups across the circumpolar North. About 50% of the collections originate from Inuit communities, while an estimated 30% of the collections originate among Sámi-groups, i.e. undoubtedly the largest Sámi and among the largest Inuit collections in the world. We can thus safely state that collections from the Arctic housed by the Nordic institutions are of very real and international significance, and should remind us of our responsibilities to make the collections available to northern communities, as well as to contribute to an international understanding of the history of the Arctic.

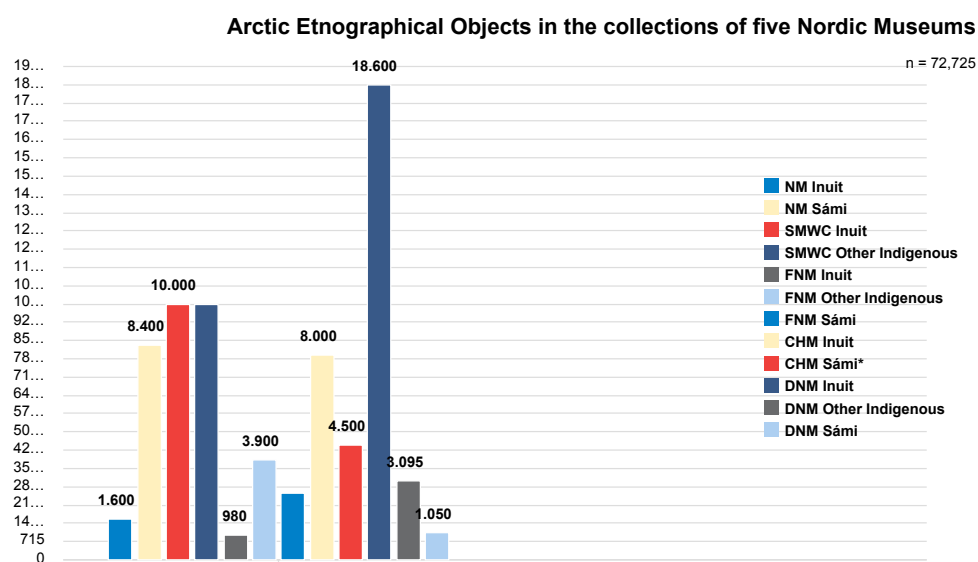


Figure 41. A coarse-grained overview of the Northern/Arctic collections housed by Nordiska Museet, Statens Museer for Verdens Kultur (the Ethnographical Museum in Stockholm), the National Museum of Finland, The Cultural Historical Museum in Oslo, and the National Museum of Denmark. Please see Table 1 for the specific counts.

** The number provided includes the artefacts housed at Norsk Folkemuseum.*

Institution	No. of Arctic Ethnographical Objects
Nordiska Museet, Sweden	Approx. 10,000
Etnografiska Museet, Sweden	Approx. 20,000
Museum of Cultural History, Norway	Approx. 12,500
National Museum of Finland	Approx. 9,480
National Museum of Denmark	Approx. 21,700

Table 1. Arctic Ethnographical Objects in the collections of five Nordic Museums – in numbers

The above numbers of objects can further be specified as here below.

Institution	No. of Arctic Ethnographical Objects
Nordiska Museet, Sweden: Inuit	Approx. 1,600
Nordiska Museet, Sweden: Sámi	Approx. 8,400
Etnografiska Museet, Sweden: Inuit	Approx. 10,000
Etnografiska Museet, Sweden: Non-Inuit	Approx. 10,000
Museum of Cultural History, Norway: Inuit	Approx. 8,000
Museum of Cultural History, Norway: Sámi	Approx. 4,500
National Museum of Finland: Inuit	Approx. 980
National Museum of Finland: Non-Inuit	Approx. 8,500
National Museum of Denmark: Inuit	Approx. 18,600
National Museum of Denmark: Non-Inuit	Approx. 3,100

Table 2. Arctic Ethnographical Objects in the collections of five Nordic Museums – in numbers, further specified

For the National museums of Finland and Norway the above numbers of objects can further be specified as here below.

Institution	Origin of Ethn. Objects	No. of Arctic Ethnographical Objects
National Museum of Finland	Greenland	230
	Canada	170
	Alaska	750
	Siberia	3,900
	Sámi	2,600
National Museum of Denmark	Greenland	14,500
	Canada	3,280
	Alaska	915
	Japan	40
	Siberia	1,914
	Sámi	1,050

Table 3. Specified numbers of Arctic Ethnographical Objects in the collections of five Nordic Museums

4. Conclusion

This report has sketched the achievements, challenges, contexts and courses of events of the project *Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums*, made possible by a Nordic Council of Ministers grant under the program *The Nordic region and its neighbors to the west* to the National Museum of Denmark (NMDK) and the Museum of Cultural History (KHM) in Oslo, and carried out between December 2017 and December 2019. The three objectives of the project have been pursued in the following ways.

In the *Tumisiut* project we have shared the cultural heritage of the famous 5th Thule Expedition (1921–24) with Inuit partners in the Canadian Arctic, in the shape of digital photographic records and by inviting Inuit partners into our museum collections. These activity has considerably widened our background knowledge on our collections from these areas, and we have also gained precious lessons about collaboration with Arctic source communities that may potentially serve to enhance museum collaboration with partners in other parts of the world. Two important lessons were, first, that our ambitions of returning all photographic material had to be levelled with cultural property rights, and after consideration we decided to return the expedition photographs decentrally, to a range of heritage societies on the route of the 5th Thule Expedition. Second, as a museum holding major historical ethnographic collections we experience in current years increasing interests from Arctic source communities, as well as from other parts of the world. We hold prominent and substantial collections from these areas that interlinks our histories. Repatriating objects is but one way of supporting these communities and their legitimate identity political movements. Combining our curatorial knowledge and the rich documentation of the material with the knowledge of a generation who eagerly searches for authentic sources to their own history, learning potentials on both sides are immense. However, despite the achievements of the *Tumisiut* project we conclude that there is a notable discrepancy between, on the one side, the expectations from source communities and, on the other side, our capacities to meet them both in terms of available curatorial resources and development of digital systems.

By nourishing existing bonds between the Nordic museums and by organizing two workshops for museum curators of Arctic collections, we have established the Nordic Cross-Arctic Museum Network as a resourceful base for knowledge exchange, inspiration and coordination, and for developing future research projects together or with other partners in each other's extended networks. Initial ambitions of integrating our network to the extent that we could coordinate our curatorial works, however, had to be abandoned, as we all work within diverging national frameworks and institutional cultures. In a wider time-perspective, we foresee that the Museum Network will over time develop both curatorial, exhibition and research collaborations.

The report on digital databases in the ABM sector (Appendix 1) has outlined how Nordic institutions are at the forefront of digitization, yet it has also shed light on a range of pertinent challenges, generally resulting first from discrepancies between expectations and allocation of means and second from a prevalent and detrimental lack of knowledge about the expectations of end-users. Most urgently, the report therefore calls for analysis of the needs and wishes of end-users in advance of large investments in digitization projects.

Arctic heritage in Nordic museums. Strengthening Arctic efforts in Nordic national museums expires with the coming of the New Year 2020. However, it has resulted in both new and stronger links between Nordic museums with major Arctic collections, and with Canadian Inuit organizations – our neighbors to the West. The project has also sparked off new initiatives for celebrating the 100-year jubilee of the 5th Thule Expedition in 2021 to 2024, together with partners in Canada, Greenland and the US. As mentioned above, in 2021 NMDK will publish the expedition's entire photograph collection online. Furthermore, *Upcycling the Past* is a new umbrella of initiatives from the National Museum of Denmark that will take place in Canada and Denmark (and hopefully Greenland) in 2021–22, based on co-creation and dialogues bringing

together curators, researchers, artists, designers and activists from Canada, Denmark and Greenland, and involving workshops, events, communications and an experimental exhibition. *Upcycling the Past* is part of the EC-funded Creative Europe project *Taking Care*, and hopes to become part of a wider Nordic and Canadian framework as well. Its aims are to facilitate and promote cultural collaboration between Denmark, Greenland and Canada, and to promote Nordic and Canadian art and culture within the network of the 12 European partner museums of *Taking Care*. We intend to reactivate the indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship inherent in the 5th Thule collection through cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural collaboration; to create awareness of and interest in Arctic heritage in the Danish and Canadian publics through various formats of dialogues and dissemination; and to demonstrate how the past is of direct relevance for the present and future.

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Anne Mette Randrup Jørgensen (ed.), Martin Appelt, Cecilia Hammarlund-Larsson, Martin Schultz, Pilvi Vainonen, Gro Birgit Ween and Taran V.R. Wold

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