

Ceremonies of possession: performing Sovereignty in the Canadian Arctic

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Rosanna Catherine Elizabeth Oriana White, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed:

Date:

Abstract

This thesis explores 'performances' of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and builds upon critical scholarship that interrogates Arctic Nationalism and geopolitics. Routinely described as a 'Northern Nation', the Arctic has often been framed by successive Canadian Governments 'as integral to our identity and our Sovereignty'. In September, 2014, Sir John Franklin's Arctic expedition made global headlines when it was announced that one of the missing ships, *HMS Erebus*, had been discovered after nearly 170 years of searching. The commemoration of Franklin's 1845 expedition, through diverse, visual material, particularly as part of the 150th anniversary celebrations, ignited new debates concerning the networked relationships between Arctic Sovereignty, visual culture, Indigenous-settler-colonial relationships and performative practices.

Performing Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is an assemblage of sites, actors and practices which, collectively, this thesis contends, generates an ever-evolving 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty. By employing an assemblage of methodologies, this thesis is able to draw upon a range of visual material to demonstrate that the sites at which Sovereignty is performed are diverse and permeate quotidian life. Thus, by interrogating some of the diverse practices which constitute this assemblage, this thesis concludes that performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty cannot be adequately examined without looking through a socio-historical lens. In this respect, performances of Sovereignty by contemporary Canadian governments are continuously 'unsettled' by its settler-colonial past. At the same time, this thesis maintains that the vibrant material agency of bodies and the environment within the Arctic can facilitate and simultaneously frustrate such Sovereignty performances, further contributing to the complexity of Canada's occupying atmosphere of Sovereignty.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Mum, Cathy, whose passion for travel and history first ignited my interest in the subject. Although you are no longer with us and are missed greatly every day, your belief in me from the very beginning is still with me today, as it will be always.

Chapter 1

Introduction

On 9th September, 2014, Sir John Franklin's missing British expedition ships once again made global headlines with reports of 'Franklin Fever' (Chase 2014; Long 2014a; Maki 2014; Rennie 2014). Prime Minister Stephen Harper made the momentous announcement that Canada had finally been successful in discovering the location of one of the two missing ships on the seabed of the Northwest Passage. Harper 'proudly' stated that this discovery 'solved one of Canada's great mysteries...which laid the foundations of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty' after almost 170 years of searching in the Arctic by a plethora of private and government-led expeditions from three countries (Harper 2014). This discovery was accompanied by increasing commentary amongst political geography scholars and media commentators alike who were interested in exploring the role that Franklin played in constructions of Canada's identity as a 'Northern nation' (see Grace 2001; Hulan 2002; Davis-Fisch 2012; McCorristine 2012; Craciun 2014; McDiarmid 2014; Long 2014b; Burke 2018).

This renewed interest in Franklin also ignited scholarship interrogating the impact upon contemporary Canadian Arctic geopolitics of climate change, missing objects, science and Inuit testimony (Bravo 2009, 2017; Watt-Cloutier 2009a; Nichol 2010; Dittmer *et al* 2011; Hodgetts 2012; Dodds and Powell 2013; Powell 2008; Wright 2014; Stoddart and Smith 2016; Hulan 2017). However, whilst many geopolitical scholars returned to exploring the connections between geopolitical bodies, performativity and material worlds (Vannini *et al* 2009; Elden 2013b; Dittmer and Klinke 2014; Steinberg and Peters 2015; Squire 2016; Dodds 2018), a limited number of scholars have truly engaged with how these function together as assemblages of Sovereignty (Gerhardt *et al* 2010; Jeffrey 2013; Jorgensen 2013; Shadian 2014; Dodds 2016). Furthermore, a deeper and more focused enquiry into how these diverse performances of Sovereignty are subsequently

disseminated, encountered and consumed by public audiences in everyday, mundane sites is undoubtedly necessary (Painter 2006; Raento 2006; Powell 2009; Penrose 2011; Hawkins 2013; Houtlz 2013; Waterton and Dittmer 2014; Ingram 2017; Wood-Donnelly 2017). To this end, this thesis is particularly concerned with 'occupying atmospheres', enabling it to engage in a more nuanced analysis of the various assembled, sites, actors and practices that are simultaneously brought together to articulate Canadian Arctic Sovereignty.

An assemblage of Arctic imaginations

The Arctic is an environment that has been continually inhabited by diverse groups of Indigenous communities with varied and vibrant cultures who, since 'time immemorial', view it as their homeland (Nicol 2010; Shadian 2014; Wright 2014). Despite the fact that the Arctic is 'fundamentally, [a] lively and lived in space' (Dodds and Powell 2013:4), for centuries the enduring allure of filling in the last 'blank spaces' on European and later settler-colonial maps, of conquering imagined pristine and 'empty' wildernesses, and of securing and exploiting potentially abundant resources, has inspired 'outside' actors to travel North to explore, encounter, scientifically survey, and lay colonial claim to Arctic territory (see Short 2009; Barrow 2011; Blomley 2014; Hatfield 2016). Attempting to overcome the material agency of this imagined, 'exceptional' space, where the harsh, frigid, yet fluid environment of the Arctic is capable of resisting, challenging and even haunting, became the backdrop for many encounters by European and American explorers, fur traders, missionaries, whalers, journalists and scientists, who routinely framed the Arctic as a 'sublime' testing ground (Levere 1993; Driver 2001; Powell 2008; Cosgrove and Della Dora 2009; Coddington 2011; Craciun 2016; McCorristine 2018).

These encounters would, in turn, provide the visual culture and mythical narratives of how the Arctic was geographically imagined, disseminated and

'consumed' by the general public in literature, museum exhibitions, dioramas, commemorative postage stamps, artwork and other performative and visual everyday experiences (David 2000; Potter 2007; Cavell 2008; Hill 2008; Craciun 2012). 'Relics' of historical polar exploration have been treasured in many national museums and they stand as a testament to the way in which the Arctic has endured as a framed, 'exotic' space where 'heroic', and yet sometimes 'tragic', achievements continue to captivate public audiences (Ferguson 1995; Delgado 1999; Maxtone-Graham 2000; Hulan 2002; Lambert 2009; Aarekol 2014; Craciun 2014; 2016). These framed, heroic explorations, which also produced a wealth of visual and material heritage, such as maps, novels, travel journals, photographs, sound recordings and film, have been carefully preserved, curated and displayed within national, region and local public institutions ever since (British Library 2010; Craciun 2014; Hatfield 2016; Ryan 2017). These material and visual relics would also captivate settler-colonial societies; exhibitions displaying these relics in public would both shape and be shaped by geopolitical imaginations of the Arctic.

The capacity for art and museums to unsettle geopolitics has received considerable academic interest over recent years (see Karp and Lavine 1991; Hooper-Greenhill 2000; Luke 2002; Macdonald and Basu 2007; Sylvester 2009; Driver 2013; Williams 2014; Ingram 2016); as the political geographer Alan Ingram observes, 'art galleries and museums are sites where the international and political are both enacted and reworked' (Ingram 2017:720 see also Moser 2010). Whilst there is little existent scholarly analysis of the geopolitics of polar exhibits in museums, particularly with respect to their ability to construct and disseminate imaginations of the Arctic for political ends (Wheeler and Young 2000; Houltz 2010; 2013; Waterton and Dittmer 2014; Hatfield 2016), Canadian national museums and other government-sponsored exhibition spaces are no exception: performing an assemblage of collecting, curating, preserving, displaying and exchanging geopolitical and

cultural Arctic artefacts they serve to disseminate geopolitical imaginations of the Arctic to public audiences (Craciun 2016; Ryan 2017).

Crucially, historical exploration and settler-colonial narratives of the Arctic often excluded, marginalised and dispossessed the long history of the Indigenous cultures and communities that were unequivocally present in the region. Ironically, it was frequently members of these Indigenous communities who practically aided, and even made possible, these explorations as they were capable of drawing upon an intimate and first-hand knowledge of the environment (Jones 2010). Instead, colonial narratives favoured romanticising and constructing public imaginations which celebrated and took pride in commemorated, heroic renditions of bravery by the often white, male body who was 'conquering' a harsh Arctic 'awaiting the civilized imprint of Europeans' through an attempted Settler-Sovereignty (Dodds and Nuttall 2016:viii, see also Bloom 1993; Lambert 2009; Ford 2011; Cameron 2008; Driver and Jones 2009; Craciun 2014). However, the Arctic is a geophysical environment that is harder to 'ground' in traditional possessive occupying practices. Thus, it continually frustrated and resisted the traditional possessive occupying performances that had been employed during the colonisation of the New World and the Canadian south (Seed 1995).

Canada has had to grapple continually in its efforts to 'settle', performatively and visibly, the Arctic; to combat the inherent material challenges the Arctic environment presents, even in the present day, it employs creative adaptations of these historical settler-colonial practices. It is this legacy of awkward settler-colonial dispossession and the continually challenging agency of the geophysical Arctic environment that has shaped, to a substantial degree, Canada's contemporary assembled performances of Arctic Sovereignty through visible enactments of effective occupation and governance (Abele and Stasiulis 1989; Coates and Powell 1989; Marcus 1992; Tester and Kulchyski 1994; Baldwin *et al* 2001; Cameron 2005; 2008).

During what has been a remarkably sensitive time in Arctic geopolitics, the region is currently undergoing accelerated geophysical changes, within an already dynamic environment, triggering what has been described as a 'new scramble' (Craciun 2009; Sale and Potapov 2010; Dittmer *et al* 2011; Dodds and Nuttall 2016); this includes, amongst a host of other things, the desire for resources, territory and political control, calls from environmental groups that the region needs to be protected, preserved and saved from destruction and calls from Inuit leadership for greater devolved power. In the last fifty years, one of the principal narratives of 'change' in the Arctic has been climate change. The changing geophysical materiality of the region, through thinning and shifting sea ice, changing ocean and wind currents, and melting permafrost (Hodgkins 2014), is a narrative that has shaped and populated many imaginative 'framings' of the region by different stakeholders (Koivurova 2010; Peters *et al* 2018). Calls for governments and non-governmental organisations to build upon an emergent and developing culture of environmental stewardship of the Arctic by a range of stakeholders has also influenced how Canada approaches territorialising the North (Griffiths *et al* 2011; Soliman 2014; Dodds 2016; Burke 2017). Yet, there are also 'changes' occurring by different actors and at different registers – commercial, political, scientific, environmental, social and cultural – which is greatly affecting how the region is now encountered, consumed, negotiated and sometimes resisted by different actors (Craciun 2009; Sale and Potapov 2010; Steinberg *et al* 2015). As Canada's problematic settler-colonial history is a legacy that has continued to unsettle its relationship to its Arctic territories, calls to include Indigenous knowledge and practices into contemporary stewardship discourses has also gained traction amongst 'post-colonial' States as a form of Sovereignty-anxiety management (Appiah-Opoku 2007; Fondahl and Irlbacher-Fox 2009; Beckford *et al* 2010; Nicol 2010; Ferrara 2015; Quinn 2018). With the relatively recent acknowledgement by the Harper and Trudeau administrations of Canada's dark history of colonisation as one of dispossession, 'humiliation, abuse and neglect', the policy of reconciliation and increased Indigenous self-determination has

fundamentally influenced and adapted some of the practices that Canadian governments perform in re-imagining and re-territorialising its Arctic North (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada 2016; Trudeau 2017).

Introducing the thesis

Within the sphere of political geography, the changes occurring within the Arctic have generated a renewed scholarly interest in critical geopolitics and the social sciences; this line of critical enquiry has frequently returned to the question of how the Arctic has been historically and contemporarily imagined by a multiplicity of actors and, in turn, disseminated to wider audiences outside of the Arctic through various popular, geopolitically visual and performative representations (see Gerhardt *et al* 2010; Depledge 2013; Elden 2013; Craciun 2016). This thesis contributes to this field of research and explores the diverse ways that Canada's Arctic Sovereignty has been historically and contemporarily performed through various affective and emotional 'assemblages'. By thinking of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty as an ever-evolving assemblage of discourses, actors, objects, emotions and practices that are shaped by each other and by historical assemblages, it allows for infinite possibilities when one considers the processes and discourses through which contemporary governments continually construct Canada as an Arctic State and, simultaneously, perform Arctic Sovereignty (McFarlane and Anderson 2011).

In performing Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, Canada continually frames the Arctic in many different ways at the same time in order to project the most comprehensive and wide reaching assemblage of its Arctic Sovereignty: as a vibrant homeland; as an environmentally challenging region in need of stewardship; as a scientific and technological testing ground in which to assert themselves as world-leaders in the collection of knowledge and data; and as a region that is critical to the formation and construction of its own national identity. The idea of the Canada as an Arctic nation also carries

profound 'emotional legitimacy' (Anderson 1991:4) and all of these framed narratives work in an assembled and relational way to create a continuous, yet precarious, performance of affective and effective Sovereignty at different sites and by different actors. These assemblages of ceremonial, emotive, performative practices create a nebulous and diffuse 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty which is constantly being made and re-made and permeates numerous spaces, including everyday life.

Building upon the concept of 'affective atmospheres', in material and political geography (see Anderson 2009; McCormack 2008; Closs Stephens 2016), I suggest that, as an ever-evolving 'occupying atmosphere', the Canadian Arctic is not an easily demarcated space that can be contained within lines on a map. From flags and maps to political statements and tweets, the role of material cultures, affect and emotion in shaping the practices, performances and resilience of political sovereignty, help to forge new publics and create certain bodies, both human and non-human, as 'objects of governance'.

Ben Anderson theorises that atmospheres are singular, affective qualities that emanate from, but exceed, the assembling of bodies, and, as such, is highly conscious of the ambiguities of affect and emotion (see Anderson 2009). As such, I use the term 'occupying atmosphere' to stand for the various sites, actors and performances which are brought together as heterogeneous component parts to create an affective and emotional performance which portrays the Canadian Arctic as an ever-present, delimited entity.

I contend that an assemblage of ceremonial performative practices is required because 'traditional' ceremonial displays of Sovereignty in the Arctic are routinely frustrated and hampered by the agency of the environment: flags can wash away; patrols can be stuck in the ice; and bodies, both human and non-human, have their own agency so can simultaneously facilitate yet frustrate projects when they are enrolled by the state to act as objects of settlement. However, the continuous anxiety that the government has to confront and wrestle with is a sense of credible 'belonging' in the region and,

more importantly, how to be visually acknowledged and accepted as such. This fundamental anxiety, I maintain, means that these laboured Sovereignty practices need to be continuously performed, evolving and adapting as the region continues to change politically, environmentally, economically and culturally.

Expanding Arctic Sovereignty

Whilst an analysis of 'formal', geopolitical, elite-level government policy texts demonstrates that 'official' government rhetoric is undoubtedly geared towards securing Canada's Arctic Sovereignty – something which has already been explored by many political geographers interested in Arctic Sovereignty (Cavell and Noakes 2010; Grant 2010; Lackenbauer 2011; Pigott 2011; Burke 2018; Wood-Donnelly 2018) – this thesis primarily analyses the 'popular', performative and visual practices that are disseminated to public audiences to provide a more nuanced understanding of the performative plurality and assembled nature of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, which is constantly evolving and being performed at different registers and sites (see Dittmer 2005; Dittmer and Dodds 2008, Dittmer 2013).

By also exploring the prosaic dissemination of these performances outside the sphere of the Arctic itself, despite the fact that very few southern Canadians will ever venture that far North, I contend that the Canadian Arctic is drawn closer, in social consciousness, through the dissemination of popular, often banal, everyday visual material (Painter 2006). As contemporary visual materials have the capacity to be disseminated rapidly to wide audiences, their material performances mean that they become actors enrolled by the state in their own right. Furthermore, encountering these materials in mundane, everyday, banal situations serves to demonstrate how everyday life is continuously permeated by the relationship between State effects and public society.

Thesis structure

In the following chapter, *Chapter 2: Contributing to a Critical Polar Geopolitics*, I explore and collate some of the numerous strands of academic literature, predominately produced by scholars of historical, political and cultural geography, to bridge theories between material and visual culture, performativity and critical geopolitics. By engaging in the ongoing academic debate amongst scholars within critical geopolitics concerning how territory is produced, this chapter concludes that Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is best understood as an assemblage of visual, material and performative relational interventions which are diverse, complex, ever-evolving and not without contestation from a multiplicity of actors (see Gerhardt *et al* 2010; Depledge 2013; Elden 2013; Klinke 2015; Squire 2015 and Steinberg *et al* 2015).

In the third chapter, *Chapter 3: Assembling the Visual Arctic: Thinking through collaborative assemblages as a method of research*, I reflect upon the decision to use a mixed methodological apparatus in analysing a diverse range of primary source materials. By approaching the methodology as an assemblage of methods and sources, which includes archival, ethnographic, and qualitative content and discourse analysis of mixed media, I explain the benefits of utilising a mixture of methodological practices to address debates within the field of critical geopolitics and to transcend mere representation. The decision to include a variety of material sources, such as social media posts, museum exhibitions, archival photographs and journals, provides this research with a more empirically nuanced understanding of the performative and visual aspects of 'popular' geopolitical Canadian Arctic rhetoric which contribute to the wider assemblages of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. I also reflect upon the benefits to this research of being a collaborative PhD student and upon the opportunities provided from actively participating in the construction of a museum exhibition on historical and contemporary polar encounters at the British Library in 2014.

In the first of three empirical chapters, *Chapter 4: Occupying atmospheres: regulating bodies within the Canadian Arctic*, I provide a historical account of

some of the performative practices through which Canadian government-sponsored expeditions and police patrols attempted, visually, to settle and occupy the High Arctic in the first half of the twentieth century. These practices were initially influenced by historical British practices of settler-colonialism, although the agency of the geophysical Arctic environment challenged the traditional practice of 'grounding', occupying performances. I maintain that the practice of continuously and repetitively surveying the environment and the various bodies within it enabled the Canadian government to construct a narrative of banal administration and governance within the Arctic. Thus, despite the challenging environment, by providing a discourse of 'nativising' settler-colonial bodies in 'everyday' mundane practices, such as the creation of Post Offices in the High North, the Canadian State creates an 'occupying atmosphere' of settler-colonial rule similar to that of the occupation and settlement of southern Canada. I also contend that these highly visible practices were also a form of Sovereignty-anxiety management. These practices were a response to the unsettling anxieties that the successive Canadian governments since Wilfrid Laurier have had over their ability to regulate effectively 'non-settler-colonial Canadians' who were performing their own 'lively occupations' in the Canadian Arctic, particularly foreign whalers and Greenlandic Inuit.

I determine that, historically, Canadian governments have sought to reconcile two contradictory discourses. Firstly, in attempting to 'nativise' settler-colonial government administrators in the North, the State implemented a system of political technologies for possessively occupying space, such as collecting the customs and tax duties from whaling crew and enforcing controversial 'health and welfare' management schemes for Northern Indigenous communities. In doing so, they sought to frame the Arctic as a mere extension of the Canadian State through mundane and prosaic state effects (Painter 2006); thus, they sought to project the impression that the administration in the Canadian Arctic was wholly similar to the banal everyday State effects performed in southern Canada. In doing so, it

established procedural norms which were used to colonise it as aligned with the rest of Canada. Whilst discourses of 'exceptionalism' persisted in imaginings of the Arctic, this exceptionalism referred to the interpretive, 'reasonable' displays of visual performances of territorial possession and governance that could be realistically achieved in the harsh Arctic environment. Yet, concurrently retaining the Indigenous populations of the Arctic as both essential but separate to the colonising settler-colonial Canadian, reflects the inherent contradictions of the settler-colonial state where Crown-Indigenous relations were complex and often contractionary. This interpretive discourse of settling and occupying the Arctic would, subsequently, influence and directly shape contemporary government-enrolled practices of performing Arctic Sovereignty.

In the following chapter, *Chapter 5: Reconciling Settler Stewardship, Performing Leadership in Scientific, Non-human and Inuit Stewardship*, the analysis shifts to contemporary performances of Canadian occupation and governance. I maintain that these contemporary performances creatively use the discourse of stewardship to re-frame effective occupation and governance practices in an attempt to reconcile the past, problematic settler-colonial histories of possession explored in the previous chapter. Because the Arctic is a challenging environment that is not traditionally 'settled', this chapter reveals how Canada, as a 'post' settler-colonial State, utilises 'stewardship' as a discourse to incorporate Indigenous voices and action into alternative ways of organising and 'civilising' the bodies, animals, ecologies, elements and spaces of the Arctic. I contend that this re-branding of Canada, in large part to reconcile and atone for its unsettling history, has fostered a discourse in which it frames itself as a world-leading steward of the Arctic. This stewardship discourse encompasses diverse actors enrolled in assorted practices. The narratives employed in the performance of Arctic Sovereignty are varied; narratives of environmental stewardship, scientific, archaeological, heritage and those that include and promote stewardship that champions Indigenous knowledge, rights, empowerment and culture

have all been visibly adopted in Canada's contemporary, enrolled performances of Arctic Sovereignty.

In the final empirical chapter, *Chapter 6: Displaying the Canadian Arctic Nation*, I explore the critical geopolitics involved in polar museum exhibitions and the construction of a national-identity discourse which celebrates and commemorates historical and contemporary 'polar heroes'. I explore how Sovereignty-labour performances, interrogated during the course of the preceding two chapters, become subsequently commemorated and preserved through museum exhibitions and national art exhibitions, which, in turn, are then consumed by the Canadian public. For example, the Arctic has routinely been framed by Canada as a space of cultural legacy. I maintain that connecting narratives from the climax of polar exploration to contemporary notions of national identity do more than simply narrate a nation's history: they help to legitimise its Sovereignty claims. Establishing a historical, Canadian and cultural link to the Arctic, one that extends further back than independence or the Confederation, serves to bolster not only legitimacy in claims to Sovereignty, but provides credibility to successive Canadian governments that seek to mitigate the underlying, yet inescapable, anxieties of 'not belonging'.

Commemorating historical expeditions helps to focus and draw attention to new possessive performances by contemporary 'Canadian explorers'. This is particularly significant as it highlights that Canada's Arctic Sovereignty and constructed identity as a Northern nation are inextricably linked to the narratives of past explorations by European explorers, most notably the Sir John Franklin expeditions in the nineteenth century. Connecting visuals of nineteenth and early twentieth-century polar exploration with images of newly commissioned Canadian icebreakers, for instance, helps to construct a constant, sweeping national Canadian Arctic narrative over the past two hundred years; it embeds a Northern, sovereign identity as an integral part of the nation through a valid narrative of 'constant' Canadian Arctic occupation.

The chapter concludes that Canada's performance of 're-enactment rituals' of activities in the Canadian Arctic, whether in museum displays or commemorative explorations, aid in demonstrating how historical explorations of the Arctic remain culturally and politically significant to contemporary Canadian Sovereignty claims and to the process of cultivating national identity brandings. Thus, re-enactments and commemorations of various 'polar heroes' function and serve as strategic tools for legitimising and justifying government polar ambitions in the Arctic.

In the final chapter, *Chapter 7: Conclusions*, I summarise the research carried out in this thesis. The thesis concludes that successive Canadian governments have continued to be unsettled by two fundamental anxieties: their ability to 'successfully' overcome the environment and their problematic colonial history that results in the underlying sense that they do not really 'belong' in the North. It is these emotive anxieties that affectively contribute to contemporary Sovereignty rhetoric and practices that favours highly visual and performative elements that enrol a wide range of actors. By incorporating a diverse range actors, both human and non-human, in varied performances, it provides the most comprehensive example of Canada's Arctic Sovereignty. These assembled practices generate an 'occupying atmosphere' which is a lively space, even if the agency of bodies and the environment can practically frustrate certain performances.

Overall, in doing so, this thesis contributes to the emerging interest within critical geopolitics concerning the relationships between geopolitical bodies and material worlds and the more-than-human by exploring the agency of non-human objects to facilitate and simultaneously frustrate occupying performances (Dittmer and Klinke 2014, Peters *et al* 2018).

Chapter 2

Contributing to a Critical Polar Geopolitics

The conceptual context of this thesis reflects calls by political geography and international relations scholars for an emergent 'polar geopolitics', one which will engage critically with and interrogate the space-making and territorialising practices in the Polar Regions (see Powell and Dodds 2014; Steinberg *et al* 2015; Evengard *et al* 2015; Wegge and Keil 2018). The Polar Regions has been routinely framed as 'exceptional', thus demanding 'extraordinary actions by States and their sanctioned agents, including scientists, military personal and local administrators'. At the same time, this region has also been framed as exceptional by non-governmental organisations, Indigenous communities, commercial enterprises and a multiplicity of other actors and stakeholders (Powell and Dodds 2014:3; see also Cosgrove and Della Dora 2009; Peters *et al* 2018). The desire to interrogate 'taken for granted' territorialising practices in framed 'exceptional spaces' sits within the field of critical geopolitics where there has been an emergent, ever-growing interest in interrogating the spaces of politics and the politics of spaces. Research into the political geographies of knowledge and the wider spatialisation of politics considers how such practices are being situated within larger 'affective assemblages' that include the agency of non-state actors and geophysical elements, both human and non-human (see Anderson and McFarlane 2011; Anderson *et al* 2012; Dittmer 2014; Depledge 2015; Sohn 2015). It is in this context that Andrew Barry has asserted that a critical understanding which recognises that 'material artefacts and physical systems [are not] passive and stable foundations', and that they in fact possess their own agency, is integral to theorising how material is important in assemblages of territory (Barry 2013:1).

The ability for the material world and its affective agency to challenge and influence constructions of political space has been relatively recently explored by scholars of critical geopolitics and is undoubtedly worthy of

further enquiry. As Jane Bennett attests, the active agency and participation of non-human forces in events contributes to a 'vibrant materiality' that affects various bodies in ad hoc assemblages and is of value when one addresses political events and practices (Bennett 2010; see also Vannini *et al* 2009; Gerhardt *et al* 2010; Steinberg 2010; Peters *et al* 2018). For example, in 2014, to explore such assemblages, Jason Dittmer and Ian Klinke began the process of editing a collaborative, inter-disciplinary series entitled *Geopolitical Bodies, Material Worlds*; it sought to publish studies that explored the 'geopolitical entanglements of bodies, discourses and technological networks' and acknowledged the more-than-human or 'posthuman' geopolitics and independent agencies of non-human material bodies and the geophysical environment, thus rematerialising our understandings of relationships between geopolitics and space (Dittmer and Klinke 2014; see also Steinberg 2013; Bear 2013; Adey 2014; 2015, Dodds, 2018). Unsurprisingly, the dynamic, changing materialities of polar geophysical environments complicate assertions of power and authority over diverse material elements, such as ice, water, soil and air, by a multiplicity of actors, because of their affective abilities to effect and simultaneously be affected by relational materially heterogeneous assemblages. This chaotic social-material assemblage of relationships – between the effects of the production of geopolitical discourses of knowledge, power and authority over the Polar Regions in shaping expressions of Sovereignty and the effects of the dynamic agencies of material interactions by human and non-human forces – is unequivocally worthy of further, developed enquiry and underpins a significant proportion of the theoretical framework outlined within this chapter (Powell 2010; Anderson *et al* 2012).

As one of the core research questions of this thesis concerns how contemporary Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is visually performed within the region, understanding that the precarious geophysical materiality and agency of the Arctic can frequently undermine or evade traditional territorialising practices fundamentally shapes and underpins this thesis and its overall,

theoretical approach. I contend that such a space as the Arctic requires Sovereignty to be asserted repeatedly, frequently through highly imaginative and creative means and mediums, in an attempt to overcome – or, at least, to repress – the associated anxieties of dispossession which are associated with being unable to assert true territorial control through occupation. Dodds and Powell make a significant assertion in their analysis of how actors attempt to assert themselves in the region:

‘[Actors must acknowledge that Arctic spaces are] being shaped by human and non-human forces [simultaneously] which sometimes facilitate but also frustrate projects such as infrastructural development, resource extraction and Sovereignty exercises. Too often the Arctic and Antarctic are represented as passive spaces, simply awaiting ever-greater human impact and intervention. While humans have their own material and indeed geophysical agency, the Polar Regions are fundamentally lively and lived spaces.’

(Dodds and Powell 2013:4)

Dodds and Powell rightly observe, as this chapter and thesis will go on to demonstrate, that the Arctic is a networked space that is constructed and emerges as a result of the relational components of its assemblage. The second research question of this thesis explores at what sites, by what actors, and through what practices are the performances of Sovereignty undertaken? In this way, Arctic space can be thought of as an infrastructure of affect, reflecting how it is lived, encountered and spatially constructed at different scales, often through everyday mundane encounters by a multiplicity of actors (Dittmer and Gray 2010). Not only can the agency of the environment destabilise and influence territorialising processes, the mobility and agency of non-state actors themselves can resist and undermine their

intended function as enrolled by the State in these territorialising performances. Thus, I contend, whether it is through the geographies of globalisation, the agency of the environment or the ever-increasing calls for devolved Indigenous government, territorialising practices in the Arctic are never static, are not always successful and are forever being influenced by a range of networked heterogeneous actors. The final research question at the heart of this thesis is concerned with how and why, and through what material and visual means, are these performances of Sovereignty subsequently disseminated to the general public. By extension, this thesis also engages with how, as a consequence of this dissemination, Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is then re-ordered and performed at other sites.

Chapter structure

In order to analyse – in the following three empirical chapters – a range of diverse, historical and contemporary practices of visually ‘performing’ Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, whilst acknowledging the challenges affected by environmental and material bodily agency, the concepts of performativity, materiality, territory and assemblage need to be addressed before they can be assembled together in a collaborative, theoretical epistemology. This theoretical epistemology brings together the scholarship of political geography with interdisciplinary theories from historical and cultural geography as well as art history and museum practice. I maintain that the constructed assemblages of the Canadian Arctic are also disseminated through popular government-sponsored material, such as postage stamps and museum exhibitions, to widen what I refer to as the ‘occupying atmosphere’ of Sovereignty. So, whilst there has been scholarship on the power and agency of mundane government-sponsored visual material, such as postage stamps and bank notes (see Brunn 2011; Penrose 2011) and scholarship on geopolitics and visual culture (Hughes 2007a; Macdonald *et al* 2010) alongside research exploring popularly disseminated representations of the Arctic by different actors (see Potter 2007; Cavell 2008; Herrmann 2015;

Fjellestad 2016), this scholarship has not addressed these materials collaboratively to contribute to the assembled performances of Sovereignty, alongside 'traditional territorialising practices'. I contend that, in order to expand upon current scholarship that is concerned with Arctic Sovereignty and the process of territorialisation, an interdisciplinary approach is better served to address how and why the visual and audiences matter in different permeations of performances of Arctic Sovereignty. Such an approach provides a far more nuanced, useful and valuable understanding of how power is conveyed through diverse visual and material practices. The structure of this chapter is divided into four parts to address and develop what underpins these various issues and critical concepts.

The first section addresses the concepts of materiality and performance in dynamic and improvised constructions of State Sovereignty within critical geopolitics. In conceptualising Sovereignty, I argue that it ought not to be viewed as having an 'end state', rather it is more helpfully viewed as a constructed assemblage that needs to be constantly repeated and worked on. As Alex Jeffrey notes, performances of Sovereignty are 'fleeting, dynamic, and [are a] contested set of practices that are always incomplete, evolving and constrained by available resources' (Jeffrey 2013:19). The second section focuses on the theoretical construction of territorial assemblages, interrogating the assumption and socio-critically embedded perception that territory is a 'fixed' and 'static' entity. Recent scholarship within political geography has sought to examine how bodies of States, institutions and individuals operate as an assemblage of continuous improvised 'performances' to construct spaces like sovereign territory (see Jeffrey 2009; Depledge 2013a; 2015).

The third part explores how assemblages of contemporary territorial performances in post-colonial spaces are rooted and influenced by historical settler-colonial practices of symbolic 'ceremonies of possession' (Seed 1995). By drawing connections between historical practices, my contention is that the various, contemporary ceremonial performances that have been enrolled

by successive Canadian governments are easy to identify by audiences because they are repeating accepted, historical and symbolic performances of territorial acquisition. Such performances also provide Canada with a neat narrative of continuous occupation of the region, concurrently providing legitimising narratives of 'belonging' in the Arctic through colonial 'entitlement'. 'Entitlement' is a mixture of emotive, possessive belonging and a perceived, legal authority through effective occupation and governance; yet, despite this, such claims are not without their own epistemological tensions (see Huggan and Tiffin 2010). Such connections are not without their own, unsettling challenges and, in this respect, Canada is forced to contend with the associated dispossession anxieties of a settler-colonial state, namely the fear of *not* really belonging – an anxiety which is not easily overcome. Furthermore, the problematic and multi-layered traumas of Canada's settler-colonial history, of racialised, biopolitical dispossession, marginalisation and abuse of Indigenous bodies that were 'abjected by normative and normalising (sic) powers which regulate[ted] the distribution of ownership of one's living body, subject to imperial violence and biopolitical subjectivation' (Butler and Athanasiou 2013:2), is a narrative of dispossession which affectively haunts Canada and subsequently influences contemporary Arctic territorialisation discourse and performances. As a consequence of this problematic legacy, I assert that contemporary symbolic performances are creatively adapted in an attempt to appease and remedy the past, problematic unsettling ceremonial performances of colonial possession; whether this is successfully achieved is, naturally, subject to intense debate. Such an enquiry into contemporary territorialisation must also acknowledge the material agency of a multiplicity of actors and a precarity of bodies who also can frustrate and challenge performative territorialising displays (Butler 2004). Feminist scholars such as Jennifer Hyndman, for example, have criticised critical geopolitics for prioritising analyses of agency that have been produced at the largest, elite-level global scale; her concern is that critical geopolitics are reduced to repetitive, discursive critiques of predominant knowledge productions (Hyndman 2010). In her view, rather than prioritising

other scales of agency, critical geopolitics has become a practice that maintains 'the intersection of Sovereignty and governmentality as important political fodder for critical geopolitics two decades after its inception' (Hyndman 2010:247 see also Dowler and Sharp 2001). Whilst I concur with Hyndman's deduction that critical geopolitics can risk privileging elite-actor analysis, there are still benefits to interrogating critically State-level practices and constructions if one is mindful of the vibrant agency of other bodies, objects and environments and their capacity to resist and challenge State-enrolled practices. Thus, in doing so in this thesis, I contribute to an emergent scholarship within Arctic geopolitics that utilises an assemblage of methods and sources to provide a more nuanced analysis of the performances of State Sovereignty. Furthermore, this thesis, therefore, concerns itself primarily with highly visual performances, those which are intended to have an audience, rather than merely 'formal policy' decisions that occur at the highest, political level.

Finally, the fourth part of the chapter addresses alternative representations and performances of Sovereignty which are disseminated to audiences. Because of the precarious, materially fluid Arctic environment, which can frustrate and wash away traditional static displays of authority or prevent these performances from effectively being carried out in the first place, possessive performances of occupation and 'settlement' enrolled by a State in such harsh spaces are often highly visual in nature. As settler-colonial bodies cannot practically inhabit the Arctic in the same way that they have done in the more temperate climates of the New World, the purpose of such visual performances is to flag symbolic, effective occupation. Consequently, the places where these performances are disseminated by government-sponsored, visual material take on even more significance in their meaning. I maintain that this is because government-sponsored material, such as postage stamps, museum exhibitions, bank notes and adverts, which represent such performances of occupation, ensure that audiences are still able to witness these performances symbolically and whilst physically

removed or at a distance from the region in question. Furthermore, it is the authority and banal nature of these everyday objects, which permeate the Canadian public and social consciousness, which provides the platform upon which the State can construct a national identity that, in turn, helps to legitimise the performances taking place in the Arctic itself. Thus, in order to interrogate these practices in the empirical chapters, the final part of the literature review provides a brief summary of the scholarship concerned with museums, postage stamps and other government-sponsored, visual material. By incorporating a collaboration of interdisciplinary scholarship, this thesis contributes to a more nuanced examination of contemporary performances of state Sovereignty in the Canadian Arctic.

Conceptualising materiality and performance within critical geopolitics

Beginning in the 1990s with two political geographers, Simon Dalby and Gearoid O'Tuathail, the emergent field of critical geopolitics challenged the assumed materialism of earlier, reductive theoretical approaches to State power and its strict adherence to environmental determinism – something which had been the basis of crude geopolitical reasoning in the previous century. Out of this materialism, which formulated geopolitics and State power as the outcome of material concerns, a collaborative theory that incorporated both 'political geography' and 'world systems theory' emerged in the 1970s; it determined that 'geopolitics' represented the ultimate control and distribution of resources and labour: the materialism of capitalism (Flint 2012). Yet, as critical geopolitics developed into the 1990s, academics increasingly called for focus to shift towards the analysis of textual and visual discourses that would generate representations of the material world and its role in the production of knowledge, shifting away from the drive to privilege geopolitics through an understanding of material landscapes, resources and labour exclusively (Dodds 2001). In this respect, it was theoretically understood that text and discourse do not describe a pre-existing reality; instead, they provide symbolic representations, which

although constructed, were nevertheless often valued as reality and that, by extension, these accepted 'realities' ought to be interrogated and challenged in contemporary scholarship. As Dennis Cosgrove suggests, vision and visual imagery have always played an important part in geographical scholarship (see Cosgrove 2008). By interrogating visual images from the sixteenth century to the present day, such as maps, photographs, paintings, drawings and cartoons, Cosgrove asserted that geographers could gain a better understanding of the complexities of geographical imaginations of imagining and representing the world (Cosgrove 2008).

Subsequently, with the emergence of non-representational theories, which always consider bodies in relation to other bodies and things affectively, there has been a renewed focus on 're-materialising' the geopolitics of space within the discipline of political geography. This refocusing was born out of a wider social-material analysis of performance previously made by cultural and social geographers, and partly as a result of Nigel Thrift's concern that critical geopolitical inquiry had become too mesmerised by 'texts and images' in the representational referential dimensions of life (Thrift 2000a:381). By contrast, non-representation consists of a multiplicity of theories of practice, primarily concerned with the embodied performances of human and non-human actors in the construction and interpretation of meaning. Such performances or practices are composed of a diverse range of modalities, including emotion and affect, which are caught up in modern formations of power, including through biopower.

This return to the material helped to forge an expanded, theatrical framework within which one was able to explore how geopolitics was 'performed' in practice and the implications of 'effects' onto socially constructed spaces by a multiplicity of actors at different sites and at different registers: formal, practical and popular. Thrift contends that performance, as a concept, is one of the most 'pervasive metaphors in the human sciences' (Thrift 2000b:225); its popularity stems from current theoretical interests in embodiment and the production of things through

everyday, repetitive practices. The theoretical understanding of performance differs, however, in its attitude and approach to power and agency (see Gregson and Rose 2000). Judith Butler's feminist theory of performativity, for example, describes a process by which bodies and identity, as social objects, are produced through active, lively, repetitive and mundane performances (Butler 1988). Performativity, she argues, sought to 'counter a certain form of positivism according to which we might begin with already delimited understandings of gender [and] the state' (Butler 2010). She suggests that identities are not pre-determined, such as gender identity or that of the State; instead, it is the very material performance of a given or assumed identity that brings it into being. However, such performances can be subverted and challenged. Thinking of the body as a performance of objects, practices and sites, is a useful example in drawing attention to the ambiguities surrounding the unevenness of power as embodied experiences of power are exercised on, over and through the material body.

Whilst performances by practitioners of a State, which seeks to represent its power and authority, can be 'spectacular' (Jeffrey 2013:2), such as the ceremonial celebrations involved in commemorating the opening of a parliament building or the celebration of a significant military accomplishment, the performances which practically construct a State into being, as a collective body, are more often prosaic (Painter 2006). Such performances are considered to have been commanded and regulated by repetitive, everyday, banal, social norms. For Painter, mundane socio-technical practices, such as accounting and bureaucratic record-keeping, generate specific state effects and state geographies (Painter 2010). In practice, these might take the form of State jurisdiction through routine police patrols, passport stamping at borders or bureaucratic biopower through the record-keeping of surveyed data about various bodies, both human and non-human, within its territory. Such prosaic practices reflect the difference between formal and popular forms of authoritative practice and, as such, this analytical approach incorporates methodologies that call for

geopolitics to be considered, simultaneously, as a localised, everyday practice (see Dittmer and Gray 2010).

It is through active and lively performances, by human and non-human forces, that material spaces such as the 'Canadian Arctic' are perceived, produced and lived (see Lefebvre 1991). As Bruno Latour observes, actor-network theory traces the relational, laboured performances by different actors which bring a 'thing' into being in its current form, a current form which is constantly capable of evolving (Latour 2005; see also Law and Hassard 1999). The spaces through which States operate and assert themselves, therefore, do not take place in abstract 'taken for granted' entities (Rose 1999). As Gregson and Rose suggest, the relationship between space and performance is a paradoxical one; they assert that 'performances do not take place in already existing locations, [rather] specific performances bring these spaces into being' (Gregson and Rose 2000:441). In actor-network theory, it is understood that the State can only exist, as Timothy Mitchell suggests, when the effects of material bodily performances are undertaken in its name; it is their networked, material agency and labour which aids in constructing the State, bringing it into being in its current form (see Mitchell 1991). Thus, whilst these performances are part of a wider social and temporal representation of the State, these performances also actively construct the State in its current form. At the same time, this serves to highlight that, whilst the solidity of the State was once assumed, the State actually consists of an assemblage of performances and, as such, is constantly improvised upon and subject to change.

Constructed spaces, namely 'territory', should also, therefore, be understood as a networked and fluid symbolic set of socio-technological ideas or processes, attempting to legitimise State authority, rather than as an existing, fixed and static entity (see Bilgin and Morton 2002; Mitchell 2006; Painter 2006; Jeffrey 2013). For example, judicial performances at the Canadian border by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) would not only establish the RCMP as a regulated, affective, social identity, representing the

legitimacy of the State and conveying its capacity to govern effectively and assert authoritative control, but simultaneously these lively, judicial, yet framed as mundane and banal, performances by the RCMP would possessively construct the space in which they operated as an inherent part of Canadian territory. Thus, 'jurisdiction' concurrently refers to the exercise of power through legal authority and simultaneously to the territory over which such authority and power extends. However, at the same time, it is problematic to view States as holding an exclusive sphere of jurisdiction that cannot be frustrated or challenged by the agency of other States and bodies:

'...usually we imagine the international system as consisting of sovereign units that all claim an exclusive space but whose authority does not go any further. In a way this notion is correct in that no jurisdictional claim against a foreign sovereign acting in official capacity can be sustained, but it is incomplete and thus misleading. States have traditionally interfered with each other through competing jurisdictional claims, precisely because States claim jurisdiction not only on the basis of territoriality, but among other things, nationality.'

(Kratochwil 2011:12)

Territory is more than merely the juridical control of space by States; it is used as a means of 'uniting' and thus containing national identities. In this way, the notion of territory is simultaneously constructed through juridical, political, economic, social and cultural affective discourses and practices. It is through an assemblage of these discourses that territory is constructed and given meaning; yet, it always relies upon the improvised ability of the State to assert its control effectively and in this respect, as Jeffrey suggests, States are fundamentally improvised entities (Jeffrey 2013). As such, a State's legitimacy and ability to claim to rule relies upon its capacity to perform and exert their

power in a way that, sometimes, possesses the potential to evolve in its representations and practices. Jeffrey focuses on the State as a process and, as such, improvisations of Sovereignty are always trying to reproduce a stable and solid state, often through prosaic everyday performances. In a similar respect, Saskia Sassen conceptualises territory as a 'capability with embedded logics of power and of claim-making.' (Sassen 2013:23). These 'capabilities' are partly manifested through political, legal, scientific, cultural performances by material bodies which become enrolled by the State. However, it is not just formal or traditional State actors who are enrolled by the State in space-making practices. Throughout history, Canada's governments have undertaken territorialising practices have involved many non-State actors, utilising human and non-human forces, in seeking to secure its Arctic Sovereignty. However, Sovereignty practices in 'exceptional' environments, such as conflicted, post-war Bosnia, are often fragile and have an element of precarity to their associated, effective performances. As such, in the context of the Canadian Arctic, the ability and capacity to perform State power and authority is forced to evolve, performed by a range of actors, both within and beyond the Canadian Arctic, which can sometimes be frustrated by precarious and unpredictable internal and external forces and actors.

The claim to territorial authority is not made only in a speech declaration. As such, rather than theorising State authority by means of its actions alone or in isolation, States are best analysed through their material effects (see Mitchell 2006; Painter 2006). In other words, State analysis should not just focus on just the capacities of the State to act, but how this subsequently and practically effects and impacts upon other bodies. Claims to territorial authority often, for example, involve material objects which stand to represent materially the State and to 'ground' its authority within territorial spaces. These material objects visually perform territorial authority, though it is through the effects of the performative and lively act of an RCMP patrol house itself, viewed and encountered by others, that ought to be analysed.

Flying the Canadian flag over the threshold of these patrol houses, for example, further conditions an audience to accept the building and its location as symbols of the State in a framed, 'remote' landscape: in other words, the State effects. Perhaps unsurprisingly, States are frequently far more concerned with explicit and overtly visual, symbolic displays and performances in precarious 'exceptional' places, those which are intended to be witnessed by others where authority is more exigent to enforce or where authority is more easily subject to a challenge: a location that generates anxieties of dispossession. The relationship between the various material elements in a geopolitically precarious geophysical space, such as the Arctic, constitutes an assemblage of geopolitical machinations and is, at the same time, constantly subject to adaptation and change. As Elizabeth Grosz asserts in her discussions concerning 'geopower', the continuous changes to the earth incite new life and 'generat[e] problems, questions and events that must be addressed and negotiated, symbolised or left unrepresented' (Grosz 2005:51); not only does the assemblage of these relationships between material actors in material geophysical elements become enrolled in the inscription of space, these relationships and their distinct individual agencies also effect the physical constitution of this space itself and can also effect other assemblages of space (see Anderson and McFarlane 2011). Whereas actor-network theory would suggest an object or 'thing' ceases to exist if the networked relations break down, recognising that objects constitute an assemblage of elements and, at the same time, that they possess an ability to construct wider assemblages, acknowledges that objects can re-assemble in other situations whilst retaining their own autonomous capability.

Applying conceptions of territory and authority

Historically, within geography and international relations theory, territory has traditionally been imagined as fixed, static, and clearly bounded. At its most basic level, the State is viewed as a hierarchical 'mechanism for fixing political power to geographical space through the establishment of Sovereignty over

territory' (Jeffrey 2013:4). Exercising power over space and the organisation of bodies, human-and non-human, into territorial cells was often achieved through the use of boundaries. The calculable element to the construction of the State, as Deborah Cowen and Emily Gilbert observe, means that territory is 'a bounded space where there is a compulsion to defend and secure it...to claim a particular kind of Sovereignty...against infringements by others' legitimising security-led actions (Cowen and Gilbert 2008:16 see also Giddens 1985).

Academic literature concerning the implications of a territorially ordered world has grown extensively (See Agnew 2005). Within the discipline of political geography, Stuart Elden draws upon Foucauldian criticism in developing his own theories concerning territory. He argues that the construction of territory arose as a direct consequence of the development of technologies that helped to demarcate and exert State power over terrain, particularly the ability to measure land through surveying and through cartography. A corollary of this was that space could, therefore, be appropriated and constructed as part of a political technology employed by the State, meaning that territory could be calculated, bordered, controlled and, in turn, possessed (see Elden 2007; 2010). Since John Agnew's seminal paper, *The Territorial Trap*, which was concerned with the contested nature of territory and Sovereignty (Agnew 1994), territorial dimensions of sovereign power are no longer given. Agnew asserts that States are not contained by the boundaries of their territory, rather territory is an *effect* of State-making practices and, thus, it is always subject to change. Territoriality was put into practice through the popular acceptance of discourses which classified space, such as 'our space' versus the 'outside Other', through discourses which disseminated a sense of place, and through performative practices of practically enforcing the accepted and legitimised control over space through the organisation of bodies. Through a spatial assemblage of these discourses and material performances and their effects, the State becomes a 'vehicle' through which it gains the capability to instil administrative powers to and

within a given territory. As Joe Painter discerned, territory is not ‘an irreducible foundation of State power, let alone the expression of a biological imperative’; instead, territory must also be thought of as being an *effect* between power relations and identity formations (Painter 2010:1093). In this way, territory ought not to be understood as having the potential for an ‘end state’, or as an actual, physical space seen as the ‘timeless and solid geographical foundation of State power’ (Painter 2010:1116); rather, it is more convincingly understood as a provisional, porous and volumetric product of an assemblage between socio-political and material technologies that needs to be continuously produced through repetitive labour, what Klaus Dodds has termed ‘Sovereignty labour’ (Dodds 2012). These re-worked perspectives resonate and reflect the shift in nearly all aspects of critical human geography and post-structuralism, which called for scholars to re-explore the relationships within the production of space, its representation to audiences and the multiplicity of power (see Crampton and Elden 2007). Such relationships, when viewed as an assemblage, draw attention to the ever-evolving nature of geopolitical space-making acts and how, by extension, ‘Sovereignty labour’ becomes something that has to be constantly adapted, improvised and then repeated.

Drawing upon Michel Foucault’s discussions concerning the notion of ‘biopower’, such laboured practices could be thought of, on the one hand, as the regulation of individual behaviour by State institutions (see Foucault 2004). Regulating bodily behaviour is a means of asserting authority in order to territorialise space. For Foucault, regulating bodily behaviour stemmed from a seventeenth-century practice of political rule which became increasingly medicalised and, simultaneously, mathematised. By being able to measure a group of bodies accurately, through a range of scientific and calculable statistical practices and knowledges, one can more effectively assert territorial authority. This analysis has prompted several scholars within the spheres of geography and the social sciences to engage critically with security practices that are entangled in geopolitics and biopolitics (see Dillion

2007; Dillion and Lobo-Guerrero 2008). Such institutional practices, including authoritative power, can permeate public health campaigns and programmes for the control of disease, for example, producing individuals that Foucault described as the subjects of knowledge. Considering and analysing the process of subjectification has been hugely influential upon research concerned with colonial modalities of power and is particularly relevant to Canada (Grant 1991, 2016; Marcus 1992; Alia 1994; Cameron 2015). In the Canadian Arctic, authoritative power was exerted through problematic programmes of ‘health and social improvement initiatives’, such as the annual health voyages and surveys conducted over Inuit bodies in the 1950s and the forced relocation of Indigenous communities to residential schools and hospitals for the treatment and management of tuberculosis (see Tester and Kulchyski 1994; Grygier 1997; McGrath 2007; Bennett 2016). Whilst there has been extensive scholarship that is concerned with the imperial, racialised and gendered biopolitics of past Canadian administrations, there is a gap in the literature that links these prior narratives to contemporary reconciliation discourses and, by extension, to the ongoing production of practices of administrative Sovereignty. In this respect, I contend that an understanding of the colonial discourses and practices of the Arctic region ought to shape our understanding of the contemporary narratives employed by the two most recent Canadian governments, who sought to unite all Canadians through a constructed narrative of ‘stewardship’ – a topic which I go on to address extensively in Chapter 5.

Assemblages of territory

‘Assemblage theory’ is a concept which has been put to work most notably in the studies of Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze on the assembled processes of territorialisation and de-territorialisation in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Here, they argue that assemblages are created from the relational connections of internal and external, heterogeneous elements across space and time: ‘there is no longer a tripartite division between a field

of reality (the world) and the field of representation (the book) and the field of subjectivity (the author). Rather an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:25). They rightly perceive these relational entanglements to be ad hoc, evolving and infinite, and rather than focusing on material properties, it is the infinite capabilities of these material interactions between component parts – what they have coined as the 'lines of flight' – which is most relevant. Assembled territory, which has infinite capabilities between relational components, by definition, also possesses relational components that are precarious and have the potential to collapse; in such an instance, a form of 'de-territorialisation' could be the consequence. As Stuart Elden observes, de-territorialised elements can forge new relational connections and networks that produce alternative, re-territorialised assemblages, such as those which occur as a direct consequence of the process of globalisation which encounters and encourages the movement of people and things across container-like nations and forming their own networked spaces outside of the traditional Nation-State (Elden 2005). There can also be a myriad of territorial systems over time in a specific geographical space, particularly when one considers pre and post settler-colonial encounters between colonisers and the colonised. The process of settler-colonialism, by definition, must break down one territorialising system before it can then impose a new form of settler-colonial territoriality. Yet, at the same time, to use contemporary Canadian Arctic governance as an example, the increasing demand for a devolved Inuit government in the Arctic demonstrates that current territorialising systems also have the potential to 'evolve' without ever completely breaking down. Thus, as Deleuze and Guattari stress, such processes are always ongoing and should not be thought of as having the capacity to reach a static end state (see also Brenner *et al* 2003).

Ben Anderson and Colin McFarlane develop the notion of an assemblage further, asserting that assemblages allow for the blurring of divisions between the 'social-material, near-far and structure and agency' (Anderson

and McFarlane 2011:124). Because any assemblage will contain a mixture of material and expressive component parts, which distribute agency across the assemblage, they all have different *capabilities* at any one time (see DeLanda 2006). For example, understanding the physical properties of ice in geopolitical assemblages of the Arctic is not the most important feature of analysing assemblages. Rather, it is the infinite *capabilities* of ice to affect other relational encounters because of its properties – its fluidity, precarious nature and its ability to frustrate and challenge navigation of the NWP – that is most relevant. Furthermore, component parts which can aid in territorialising assemblages are constantly evolving and capable of producing new assemblages that can, simultaneously, ‘exercise a capacity to de-territorialise it’ (see Dittmer 2014:387). Yet, despite this, it is important to distinguish that the agency of ice, as with any of the relational elements that constitute an assemblage, is always distributed across the assemblage rather than being fully responsible for all actions (see Dodds 2018).

Nigel Clark has interrogated the concepts of assemblages and the relationships to the role of agency. He asserts that greater attention needs to be paid to the potential capabilities of non-human and geological, chemical and biological forces, through their own distributed agency and capacity to affect space and to participate in geopolitical dramas – not just as features, but also as active and lively agents themselves (Clark 2011). Focusing on the material agency of non-human objects responds to calls by Jane Bennett that non-human materials possess a vibrant materialism, and that, when methodologically investigating assemblages, one must consider a diverse range of actors, sites and practices as there is rarely a single ‘site of reform’ (Bennett 2010). Anssi Paasi concurs and develops this notion further when he asserts that ‘several important dimensions of social life and social power come together in territory: material elements such as land, functional elements like the control of space and symbolic dimensions like social identity’ (Paasi 2003:109). The Arctic environment consists of a number of distinct components, including the material elements of ice, wind/air, water,

subsurface geology and components of non-human bodies, that are embedded or encountered, such as shipwrecks, flags or mines; each possesses their own, distinct agency that further contributes to this complexity of the Arctic's assemblage.

As such, this thesis acknowledges that the assemblages of Canadian Arctic territory are far more than a mere, simple set of social constructions or inscriptions by the State. Instead, the Arctic is more convincingly understood as being rendered through an ongoing and ever-changing assemblage of capabilities from various components, composed at any one time from the performances of affective materials, including bodies, environments and technologies and their capable agency.

Historicising settler-colonial ceremonies of possession

In an effort to establish and draw subtle distinctions between the various performed rituals and ceremonies that had been employed and enacted by European States from the fourteenth century onwards – in their quest to legitimise claims to Sovereignty over territory within their newly expanding empires – the term 'ceremonies of possession' was coined by Patricia Seed in 1995. She argues that each of these diverse, enacted ceremonies aided in legitimising 'Sovereignty': the claim to ultimate political authority and jurisdiction over territory, also known as territoriality. Such performances were rooted in everyday, colloquial linguistics and visual culture; each of them was embedded within the socio-historical and cultural context of everyday life, reflecting a shared legal code that was specific to each European power.

For example, in her analysis of the way that the Spanish utilised speech as their primary tool to possess territory, Seed observes that they would often enact formal and solemn speech proclamations of Sovereignty within their empire, often to diverse audiences. The performative utterance of linguistic statements, such as 'I proclaim this land...', was itself an act that performed

the action to which it was referring; it is such a 'performance [that] brings to centre stage, an active, world-making use of language' (Culler 1997:97). In a context where the traditional, Islamic-Iberian practice of declaring war was through the process of a fixed, solemn speech being read out, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella commanded Christopher Columbus to follow suit in his exploration and colonisation of the New World in the fourteenth century. Columbus and his crew were ordered to read out a declaration decree whilst upon the land to be possessed in the name of the Spanish crown. What Columbus perceived to be a legitimate, legal claim stemmed from the Spanish-born Pope, Alexander VI, who signed a Papal line of demarcation on 4th May, 1493, which decreed that all lands west and south of the pole-to-pole line belonged to Spain, and that any territory there belonged to Spain by virtue of Divine Right. The consequence of this was the 'Treaty of Tordesillas' that divided the Earth into two equal hemispheres: the west for Spain and the east for Portugal. Unsurprisingly therefore, for Spanish geopolitical imaginations, the Pope's assertion of Divine Right and the subsequent speech-act was wholly sufficient for the purposes of establishing a Sovereignty claim. Seed drew attention to the fact that during Christopher Columbus's initial reports and letters he made no explicit mention of having 'discovered' territory. Instead, Columbus describes his actions as the process of 'taking possession' of encountered lands and their populations. Although seemingly unwitting or inadvertent, Columbus' distinction between 'discovery' and taking 'possession' of a land by a seemingly innate Divine Right is a semantically significant one and also alludes to a sense of 'belonging'. Early twentieth-century speech declarations by Canada functioned in much the same way. The performative speech declarations conducted by Captain Joseph-Elzéar Bernier aboard the *CGS Arctic*, for example, echoed the imperial, possessive declarations of the past. In this respect, I contend that Canada believed itself to be formally 'taking possession' of the Arctic Archipelago by framing the region as one which already 'belonged' to Canada. This approach, as it was historically when Columbus used similar language, is advantageous as it avoids the

connotations of 'discovering', which would still leave room for external actors to question their right to 'belong'. Yet, despite this, though perhaps unsurprisingly, such speech acts remain intensely complex and are sometimes contradictory; specifically, this thesis demonstrates how successive Canadian governments have been forced to address the persistent, internal anxiety that is intrinsic to the role of a settler-colonial State: the sense that they do not truly 'belong' in the Arctic.

By contrast, Seed observed how Englishmen held the firm belief that the rights to the New World were acquired through the construction of physical objects, including building houses, erecting fences and planting agricultural gardens: all acts that functioned as a means of occupying and domesticating the land in a highly visible and possessive way, rather than through a proclamation. This conception of territorial possession was embedded within a distinct understanding of the English legal code based on the principle of *Uti possidetis* ('as you possess') that required land to be actively occupied. During the voyages of Sir Francis Drake in the sixteenth century to the New World, Queen Elizabeth remarked that the Spanish acts of sailing around the coast and giving a name to a cape or river 'does not entitle them to ownership...prescription without possession is worth little' (Gent 1635, quoted in Seed 1995:10). I contend that this historical context is hugely significant in shaping our understanding of Canada's contemporary approach to its Sovereignty claims; early Canadian governments made proclamations of ownership over the Canadian Arctic, yet subsequently, possessing an anxiety triggered by the same perception as that uttered by Queen Elizabeth herself in the sixteenth century, felt compelled to 'settle' the Arctic in order to secure a sense of possession. Yet, due to the harsh Arctic environment, traditional settling practices were inherently complicated and impelled Canada to implement ever more imaginative and diverse means of overcoming this obstacle.

The English constructions of fences and buildings acted as a visible, stable, permanent structure and, as such, served as markers of effective occupation

and, by extension, Sovereignty. Unlike the Spanish and English practices of territorialising space, which predominately relied on abstract speeches or static, fixed objects, the French were preoccupied with human, bodily performative gestures. The French territorial performances were embedded within the socio-historical practices of the French Court. Seed describes how French explorers of the New World enacted ceremonies of possession in front of the native populations; these ceremonies, which had evolved from highly theatrical rituals of the medieval French court, frequently involved raising the King's standard and the holy Cross whilst also enrolling the natives in a ritual where they would swear their allegiance to the King of France and to Christianity. For the French, authority stemmed from rituals and gestures within the territory they were trying to possess; most importantly, these ceremonies were meant to be seen and sought to collaboratively include others. During Jacques Cartier's second voyage to Canada in 1535 for example, Cartier describes how the Indigenous Iroquois were 'marvellously attentive' to the French and 'willingly' paralleled the French in their ceremonial gestures (Cartier translated Biggar 1924). I contend, like the French of the fifteenth century, Canadian claims to Arctic territory also included theatrical, performed ceremonies where the flag was erected as an overt demonstration – to the Indigenous, foreign whalers and scientific actors already present in the region – that this territory was Canadian. This particular practice is inherently shaped by Canada's early colonisation by the French and is explored further in the first of the empirical chapters.

The complexity of an act of possession is intensified when it concerns regions that are 'framed' as exceptional, vast, inhospitable, remote, or challenging to occupy as they are removed from the centre of political and commercial activities. States such as Canada are faced with the challenge of establishing the robust perception that they are both physically and symbolically present in a frontier region like the Arctic in their efforts to assert the legitimacy of any sovereign ownership claim made through the principles of effective occupation and effective governance. This in effect tried to ensure the Arctic

was populated by Canadian bodies, and the Inuit were enrolled, as framed Canadians, into these possessive performances of occupation. Possessive performances by early, white settler-colonists were also culturally embedded within everyday objects that their fellow countrymen would recognise back home. Planting gardens and partaking in early agricultural husbandry practices in the New World stemmed from a distinctively Christian and biblical interpretation of the role of husbandry and the associated duty to 'improve the land', which resonated throughout the British Empire. Such discourses which inherently shaped the imperial settler-colonisation of Canada, as part of the British Empire, I argue, have in turn been embedded within the contemporary discourse of environmental stewardship. Whilst geographers such as Mark Nuttall and David Anderson, for example, have explored alternative 'cultivating' narratives of Northern places, and the relationship between Indigenous management of caribou, contemporary Canadian governments simultaneously use a discourse of stewardship in order to cultivate the Canadian Arctic as a lively, managed and populated place.

I also contend that, not only are contemporary discourses of environmental stewardship rooted in settler-colonial history, but anticipated and future imaginations of an Arctic environment 'as the ground zero of catastrophic climate change' (Bloom 2010:30), one which has not been protected by any form of stewardship, are also utilised and implemented within present-day discourse and practice. It is through using a narrative of 'anxiety of potential imagined futures', that current stewardship practices are legitimised and made credible as alternative performances of Sovereignty. Recent work by geographers concerned with this sphere of analysis, including Ben Anderson's work on the geopolitics of anticipation, for example, 'emphasises the ways in which futures are brought into the present in order to remake the present making these features more or less likely' (Dittmer 2014:388; Anderson 2010).

In her analysis of Portuguese methods of asserting sovereign claims, Seed argues that their practices were rooted in the Islamic traditions of astronomy and mathematics. Thus, for the Portuguese, sovereign legitimacy was founded upon possessing a superior nautical knowledge; the Portuguese 'claimed that their technological achievements granted them a kind of intellectual property which in turn granted them right to a commercial monopoly in regions they had uncovered' (Seed 1995:14). As Michael Bravo writes, 'in the eras of imperial expansion and colonisation of Northern Canada, the field sciences were a key vehicle for describing and taking sovereign possession of the Arctic...In the post 1945-era, science has had an authoritative role in Northern development both as the arbiter of nature and as ideology of colonial management' (Bravo 2000:469). For example, by mapping uncharted areas of the seabed and geological terrain, monitoring conditions via weather stations or conducting fieldwork through the fourth International Polar Year Project, Canada asserts that it possesses a superior intellectual knowledge to other nation States, like that of the Portuguese in Seed's description (see Powell 2008). Such practices can be thought of as political technologies that facilitate the State and serve, to borrow Andrew Barry's term, 'political machines'. He argues that a 'distinction can be made between a technological device, conceived of as a material or immaterial artefact, and a technology, a concept which refers not to just to a device in isolation but also to the forms of knowledge, skill, diagrams, charts, calculations and energy which make its use possible' (Barry 2001:9). In this context, maps act as a source of authority and geographical reference (see Dodds 2010); in a literal sense, by mapping a territory it ceases to be an 'uncharted' territory or a 'final frontier' to be questioned. In a contemporary context, by continuing to map space, including the subterranean terrain that modern technology has opened up as something which can be defined as 'uncharted', Canada asserts its possession of the region both through its superior knowledge of the landscape and thereby prevents other States from subsequently 'discovering' it and playing upon the narrative of discovery in pursuing a claim.

At the same time, because of the fluidity and dynamism of the physical environment of the Arctic, any permanent physical territorial inscription is rendered effectively impossible. Instead, maps provide the State with a useful, mobile, permanent description of their territory which can be circulated and displayed strategically. Whilst the Dutch were enormously influenced by Portuguese, 'Dutchmen registered their claims primarily in maps and highly detailed descriptions rather than numbers', both of these European powers placed great emphasis on being able to measure and reproduce knowledge claims that represented the territory of the newly acquired spaces they were trying to possess (Seed 1995:6). Such techniques were crucial in establishing and representing modern-day boundaries as something that transcended a line simply carved into the terrain. Thus, cartography's significance cannot be understated as, paradoxically, it not only represents territory, it actively produces it (see Strandsbjerg 2008; Steinberg 2009). In terms of asserting a Sovereignty claim over a given territory, the performative act of mapping becomes a highly important practice (see Crampton 2009). The performative act of mapping also functions as a 'possessive' gesture. It is my contention that enrolling settler-colonial, often white, male Canadian bodies as active actors in the Arctic, particularly in the performance of State-sponsored cartographic surveyors traversing through landscape and seascape space, imbues a more effective form of agency to these practices as the very act of carrying out the cartographic exercises enables a more 'lively' kind of performed territorialisation (see Crampton 2009; Steinberg 2009). These lively, performed practices are, therefore, directly involved in the Sovereignty claims and the production of an assemblage of power.

During the exploration and settler-colonising of the Arctic, it was often framed as empty and passive, or a stage for 'heroic masculinity where adventure could still be faced whilst also 'as a representation of physical terror and the sublime' (Bloom 2010:30). Nick Megoran writes that geopolitical scholarship traditionally perceived space as something that was

devoid of bodies. He suggests that, by 're-peopling' the discipline, the embodied and lived socio-spatial relationships can help us to interrogate our understanding of how territory is constructed, experienced and consumed (Megoran 2006). In the instance of Canada, I interrogate in Chapter 5 how bodies, both human and non-human, have been used to territorialise the North West Passage (NWP) through the discourses of stewardship over a highly populated and lively Arctic, and simultaneously frames the Arctic as a homeland, a space of culture and as a testing space for scientific adventure. Whilst, on one hand, Canada continues to depend on embedded shipwrecks, both literally and symbolically – for example, how *HMS Erebus* acts as a 'flagpole' anchoring Canadian claims to the NWP – the process of enrolling Parks Canada divers in lively, archaeological stewardship enacted performances of scientific collection and surveying transcends an overtly reductive interpretation of their ceremonies of possession. Not only are these dives providing Canada with repetitive performances of effective occupation and an active, lively bodily presence within an exceptional, ever-changing environment, these dives have been enrolled into the social consciousness through their intensely public displays in the media and through representations on disseminated government sponsored visual material. The divers and their dives are *meant* to be seen by others: effectively, through the discourse of stewardship to 'legitimise' a sense of belonging in the Arctic, their actions suggest 'we are here and very much actively present in the region'. In this way, such a practice aids in legitimising a claim to possess territory, echoing and paralleling those of the French explorers alluded to earlier.

It is clear that ceremonial gestures, speeches, objects and bodies, used historically to claim political possession, all differ. Each performance was rooted in the common practices and culture of everyday life unique to each European State; the ceremonial practices enacted by explorers featured familiar actions, gestures or speeches that could be readily understood by the populations of the State back home. Ironically, historically, it was primarily

their fellow citizens and, particularly, the political elite that colonists and explorers had to convince of the legitimacy of their actions when asserting sovereign possession of territory. In asserting its claim to the Arctic, Canada's ceremonies of possession are akin to a figurative melting pot of the various practices that have been used to claim territorial authority in the historical colonisation of the New World. Such performative practices still exist because ceremonial and highly visual performances are the most easily recognisable. Whilst the geophysical environment of the Arctic and the independent agency of bodies enrolled can frustrate and hamper practically some of these territorialising performances, attempts to plant flags, root settlements and enrol Indigenous bodies in these performances persisted as an assemblage of sites, actors and practices, albeit in sometimes creative and adapted ways. I contend that Canada has not only historically embedded bodies and enrolled certain performances to claim territorial space in the Arctic, but that it is this very history which directly impacts upon and shapes how the contemporary Canadian Arctic is assembled today. Jason Dittmer rightly observes that 'each assemblage has its own particular historical trajectory, with regard to both its own composition and emergence and its interactions with other assemblages, it becomes crucial to investigate the particularities of each' (Dittmer 2014:296): historical analysis of past assemblages can enable understandings of contemporary ones.

Unsettling settler-colonial performances of possession within Canada

There has been considerable scholarship that has sought to interrogate constructions of the Canadian Arctic, through colonial ideologies and practices, that seeks to 'unsettle' the 'histories of colonial dispossession and State intervention [by being] retold through Indigenous self-determination' and increased enfranchisement (Powell 2009:179). These works have ranged from a critical analysis of the racialised and gendered discourses of imperial, polar exploration (see Grace 2007; Cameron 2015) to the interrogation of the ongoing celebrations 'of great white male explorers...as heroes of the

national culture' (Bloom 1993:ix). Other research has sought to contextualise Canadian scientific knowledge, practices and the emergence of its nationhood with territorial concerns at the beginning of the twentieth century, situating it within the colonising practices of scientific exploration in the Arctic by the British Navy (see Levere 1993). In order to interrogate critically how contemporary Canadian governments assemble performances of Arctic administration and governance, and national culture, by both the State and non-State actors, it is important to recognise that these practices are 'haunted' by the historical and cultural discourses of imperialism and colonialism within which they belong (see Jansson 2007; Coddington 2011). Within the Arctic, the practice of assembling Arctic territory through possessive performances by diverse actors is entwined within the wider historical discourses of contestation and dispossession through the exploitation and resettlement, including, but not limited to, the Indigenous populations who were undeniably already present in the region before European settlers arrived (see Bravo and Triscott 2010; Nicol 2010; Watts 2012). However, Richard Powell has observed that, as relatively newly enfranchised actors within the 'precarious' Canadian nation, the Inuit have simultaneously challenged and disregarded national culture, whilst also sometimes embracing it. Thus, whilst the problematic encounters between Inuit and the settler-colonial State were rooted in racism and epistemic violence, contemporary encounters in the 'ethnographic present' are also equally capable of creating new narratives and discourses (Powell 2009). Originating in the works of Jacques Derrida, geographers have sought to conceptualise the concept of 'haunting': referring to the 'repressive, historical forms of power that remain hidden from view, yet haunt people in the present' (Mountz 2013: see also Cameron 2008; Gordon 2008). As this thesis is innately subject to the constraints of time, it does not explore alternative claims to territory and Sovereignty by different actors other than the nation State, such as Indigenous Sovereignty claims (see Fondahl and Sirina 2006; Fondahl and Irlbacher-Fox 2009; Nuttall 2008; Shadian 2014). Yet, it is important to acknowledge this in order to provide a framing context

for this thesis and, at the same time, to draw attention to the fact that competing claims only further complicate the already complex assemblages of territories by the State in the 'colonial present' (Gregory 2004). In recent decades, Canadian governments and their scientific agents are increasingly publicly celebrated; the use of Inuit knowledge and expertise in scientific projects of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station, the search for Sir John Franklin's ships and the benefit of Indigenous environmental stewardship is explored further in Chapter 5. However, this is not just the product of an elite top down approach. Northern Indigenous communities have also sought to challenge State-sponsored scientific activities which have traditionally privileged 'western science' over Indigenous expertise and practice. Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) has started to be adopted by State-sponsored scientific activity in the Canadian Arctic as a legitimate, alternative or complementary intellectual environmental authority. Whilst the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge undoubtedly enriches scientific research and activity, it has other useful, performative functions. Firstly, in an effort to avoid repeating the problematic colonial policies initially adopted in Canada's approach to Northern governance, the Trudeau administration, in particular, has branded the government as being meaningfully committed to working with Inuit and Indigenous communities across Canada. I contend that not only does this function to assuage Canadian State anxieties concerning not belonging in the Arctic, the incorporation of increasingly devolved Inuit governance, but it is also representative of a determined effort to prevent Inuit independence which would, fundamentally, challenge Canada's ability to assert Sovereignty over the Arctic. Thus, by working in partnership with the Inuit, as part of a collaborative effort, whether through land claims agreements or by including the possession of shipwrecks in the NWP with the government of Nunavut, the current Canadian government is actively managing Sovereignty anxieties in the Arctic (see Roussel and Payette 2011; Arnold 2012). The inclusion and celebration of Inuit partnerships, which has extended to government-sponsored visual material representing these

performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, is explored in detail in the final empirical chapter.

Disseminating performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty

By exploring the different spaces and materials capable of framing the Canadian Arctic, I seek to broaden the existing literature concerned with the 'occupying atmospheres of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty' and to respond to calls within the sphere of critical geopolitics to add 'volume' to such re-imaginings (Elden 2013a). I contend that, by conceptualising Sovereignty as an assemblage of performances, the sites within which Arctic Sovereignty is performed are also practiced through the prosaic dissemination of visual and performative 'banal' material outside of the Arctic, such as that which appears on postage stamps and in museum exhibitions. As these visual materials have the ability to travel and be readily disseminated to wider audiences in quotidian life, the very materiality and agency of these materials construct performances of Arctic Sovereignty through the very power they are meant to be communicating geopolitically (Painter 2006; Penrose 2011). The very fact that States use mundane, government-sponsored, visual material to represent and further their own interests, they affirm how visual symbolism is an important facet in legitimising the claims of State practices and effects.

Stamps, for example, are official, State material; their communicative power resides in their institutional status to represent the State through their everyday, mundane circulation (Raento 2006). Concurrently, I analyse the representations which are geopolitically communicated within these everyday materials through elite-chosen imagery and objects, situating this research within the context of other academic literature concerned with the visual cultures of Arctic Sovereignty and Nationalism (see Dittmer and Larsen 2011). Like other identity-political iconographies, such as passports, currency and street place-naming, stamps and museums can enrol public audiences in

the creation of banal Nationalism and imagined communities (Anderson 1991; Greenberg 2015; Brunn 2011; Houtlz 2013). Michael Billig's view of banal Nationalism, stressed through the banal reproduction of 'complex beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices' that create a visual culture representing government policy and constructed national identity, is one that becomes so normalised and mundane as to be wholly assailable (Billig 1995:7). Encountering such materials in mundane, banal situations serves to reveal how quotidian life is continuously permeated by the relationship between State effects and public society. Canadian State effects are rooted in the history of British imperialism; for example, through the analysis of early Canadian nation-building, Emily Gilbert argues that particular images used on the territorial currency of Canadian banknotes are heavily influenced by British, cultural imperialism on its own banknote content and production. It was by forging a connection to these previous, banal forms of Nationalism that Canadian national identity was constructed by the Canadian State and subsequently disseminated to public audiences.

Visual material, such as postage stamps, for example, can be thought of as 'silent messengers of the State' (Wood-Donnelly 2018:112; Raento and Brunn 2005). Their inherently visual components enable the State to project constructions of itself, constructions of Nationalism and to 'flag' possessive Arctic Sovereignty performances to audiences in quickly recognisable ways (see Shields 1991; Coates *et al* 2008). It is in the everyday, mundane interactions with these materials that their prosaic agency is encountered, which in turn normalises the ideas that they purportedly represent.

Government-sponsored museum exhibitions situate themselves, like the postage stamp, as part of an assemblage of State authority and its effects. These exhibits become a vehicle for the public dissemination of knowledge and representations of culture and national identity by the State. A museum in itself is also an authoritative institution; this authority is established upon a museum's capability to be perceived as a 'purveyor of truth'. Rarely do museum exhibits inform the visitor that the exhibition is in fact a curated

collection of material which narrates a specific interpretation of a theme or space, regardless of whether it is consciously or unconsciously determined. The authority of a museum exhibit relies upon the ability of a museum to accommodate both objects and themes within specific, pre-established classifications. A museum relies upon the acceptance, by an audience, that the exhibition stands in for the reality of a representational theme or place, including representations of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. Functioning in a similar way to a map, the museum exists to inform and reproduce for an audience spatial and temporal distances.

By thinking of performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty as an ever-evolving assemblage of bodies, sites and practices, whilst also situating these performances within the agency of material elements and the lively Arctic environment, acknowledges the precarious nature of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. This theoretical approach to conceptualising these performances contributes to research by political geographers which considers how such practices of knowledge and the wider spatialisation of politics are being situated within larger 'affective assemblages' (see Anderson and McFarlane 2011; Anderson *et al* 2012; Dittmer 2014; Depledge 2015; Sohn 2015). By including the analysis of performances of Sovereignty in the Arctic, with the mundane practices of disseminated government sponsored visual material, attempts to widen the field of critical geopolitical enquiry into the lively Arctic and its geopolitics and the various sites and practices through which Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is performed, and is worthy of enquiry.

Chapter 3

Assembling the Visual Arctic: Thinking through Collaborative

Assemblages as a Method of Research

Introduction to public engagement with the Canadian Arctic

On the 14th November, 2014, at the start of my collaborative doctoral research, the British Library opened a free exhibition in its Entrance Hall Gallery entitled *Lines in the Ice: Seeking a Northwest Passage* (British Library 2014) (see *Figure 3.1, below*). This exhibition displayed material relating to past, present, and future assemblages of Arctic exploration and provided a contemporary forum in which to engage with and discuss the relevance of the Polar Regions in the twenty-first century, particularly as the exhibition had coincided with the recent discovery of *HMS Erebus* by Parks Canada. This geopolitically significant find and its highly visualised media promotion by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government had reignited public engagement with the Arctic, which was re-framed as space for political, cultural and economic opportunity. The exhibition, which I was fortunate enough to collaborate on, provided me a reflective and powerful entrée into the various historical and geopolitical research sites where I could conduct fieldwork exploring diverse imaginings and visual cultures of the Canadian Arctic. Whilst the British Library holds an amassed archival collection of curated material relating to polar exploration and the Canadian Arctic since the fifteenth century, (see British Library 2010; Hatfield 2016) it also contains archival items specifically intended for public audiences whose enthusiasm for the Arctic captivated them by 'Arctic Fever' on the return of colonial Arctic expeditions to European metropolises. These items include artwork, panoramas, theatre bills, fiction, poetry, and other publicly engaging visual material which communicated Arctic exploration through the performance of 'Arctic spectacles' (see David 2000; Potter 2007; Garrison 2008; Hill 2008; Craciun 2014).

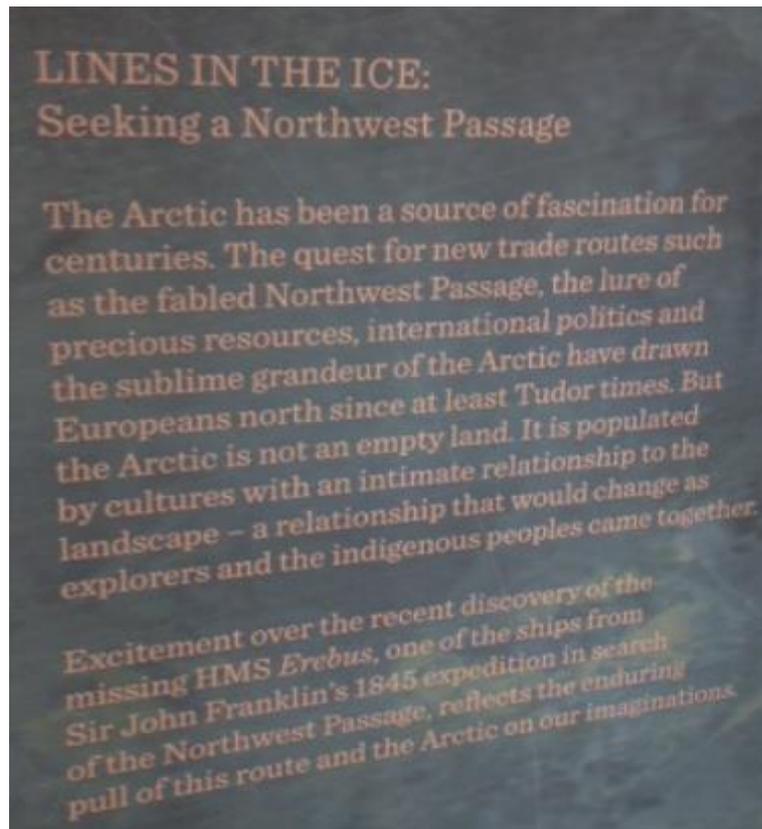


Figure 3.1: Introductory paragraphs and signage on display alongside the *Lines in the Ice: Seeking a Northwest Passage* exhibition. Source: Rosanna White.

The exhibition provided me with an ethnographic opportunity to reflect critically on how the Canadian Arctic has been 'branded and displayed' to different audiences through public exhibitions. The exhibition through the curated display of carefully chosen and visually engaging material sources sought to contextualise diverse historical narratives of polar exploration to modern imaginations of the region. The exhibition also explored the relational links between these explorations with the enduring fascination of the Arctic within European and American imaginations, of government, private and popular general public audiences from the nineteenth century onwards to the present day (Hatfield 2015). The Arctic has been 'displayed' and engaged with by public audiences in Britain for centuries. Notably, one of the first performances included Martin Frobisher returning to Bristol in the autumn of 1577 with three Inuit hostages from Canada. The public were fascinated by them, and the Mayor of Bristol even held a reception on the River Avon so that the public could witness the Inuit putting into practice their kayaking and hunting skills. They were even intended to be 'presented' to Queen Elizabeth, as such was their 'curiosity' and potential value to provide credibility for continued expedition support, but disease sadly killed them all within three weeks of arriving. Kidnapping natives and then taking them home to be 'presented' to the monarch as well as to the public was a fairly widespread practice during the modern European conquest and expansion of the New World; these bodies on display effectively served as living human evidence of their colonial accomplishments: '[they were] icon[s] of the extension of Sovereignty and power...which followed the classical Roman model of triumphal processions displaying in public exotic prisoners' (Harbsmeier 2002:37). Maintaining public support for exploration in the Arctic was vital if continued financial and logistical backing was to remain a possibility for subsequent colonial Arctic expeditions. Lady Jane Franklin is a prime example of someone who used public support to persuade the British Navy and private financial backers to fund numerous expeditions to the Arctic to search for her missing husband and his crew. The networked relationship between social, cultural, metropolitan engagement and Arctic exploration is a

legacy that has continued throughout British history. Displaying the Arctic to public audiences was bound up in wider geopolitical assemblages of colonial exploration, politics and metropolitan engagement as part of an enmeshed network that constructed and determined how the Arctic was defined.

Interrogating how the Canadian public were 'presented' with the significance of the search and recent discovery of Sir John Franklin's ships to justify government expenditure and administration was a research question I was keen to explore. This particularly appealed to me as Stephen Harper, the then Prime Minister of Canada, and his government routinely engaged in highly performative displays of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, and repeatedly framed the ships as an integral part of Canadian history and culture, as well as an opportunity to 'display' to global audiences contemporary and active performances of laboured-Sovereignty in the North. In December 2014, Harper publicly stressed the significance of the find:

'The discovery of the wreck is something all Canadians can be proud... But it's clear that, while the discovery of *Erebus* is a great new chapter in Canadian history, the act of searching...by these modern-day explorers... has done much to benefit not just Northerners, but all Canadians. For example, the search for the wreck has required us to map extensive sections of the seabed...to better understand the geography of the North, and give us a better understanding of how to navigate these waters...It just goes to demonstrate one more time that we're up to the challenge of mounting significant technical and military operations in the harsh conditions of the Canadian Arctic, something all Canadians can be proud of.'

(Geiger 2014)

As is reflected in his speech, Harper clearly linked the search and discovery of the ships with contemporary highly performative, visualised displays of Canadian Sovereignty. Exploring such contemporary performances, particularly how and where they were then disseminated to public audiences, would enrich my research into the performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. Whilst there has already been extensive scholarship that analyses and considers the significance of audiences in displays and performances of State Sovereignty and national identity (Collis 2004; Powell 2009; Dodds 2011; 2012; Busbridge 2013; Jeffrey 2013), limited research currently exists upon the role of government-sponsored museum exhibitions in disseminating these Sovereignty performances to wider audiences and their function as a performance of Sovereignty in their own right. I contend that these exhibition spaces are an extension of the assembled performances of Sovereignty that, in functioning as such, expand the assembled 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty and, as such, are worthy of further, critical investigation (Wallis 1994; Wheeler and Young 2000; Sylvester 2009; Houltz 2013).

The sources chosen for the *Lines in the Ice* exhibition were assembled from the British Library archives and in collaboration with borrowed material from other archival-led institutions. Assembled sources from both historic and contemporary sources, including print media, ship illustrations, maps, captain's journals, sound recordings, poetry, and oral interviews, conveyed the valuable potential for a wide range of material sources to represent, affectively, a more nuanced understanding of Arctic geopolitics and its complex and sometimes contradictory elements.

The exhibition also provided me with an early opportunity to think critically about how I was going to engage methodologically with the prospect of researching the assemblages of contemporary Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, particularly as it is a region that is rapidly evolving geophysically, politically and culturally. For example, the exhibition included a range of archival material relating to the Indigenous societies who encountered western

explorers. Presenting such materials to audiences alongside more ‘traditional’ exploration narratives of the Arctic highlighted that historical and contemporary explorations, were ‘not without their own stories of dispossession, exploitation, marginalisation and violence’ (Dodds and Nuttall 2016). As I explored earlier in Chapter Two, I contend that the Arctic can be best understood as being rendered through an ongoing and ever-changing assemblage of *capabilities* from various component parts. The capability for archival material to evolve and continually take on new meaning and the ‘infinite possibilities of that’ is one of the key tenants of a Deleuzian epistemological approach to assemblage theory (see McFarlane 2009; Anderson *et al* 2011). Thus, in an era of increased cultural diplomacy and calls for the decolonisation of the institution within museum collections, and whilst grappling with the challenges of plurality, the exhibition was mindful also to include Indigenous narratives which frame the Arctic as a homeland and space of culture more generally. Whether it is framed in singular terms as a scientific laboratory, a fragile ecosystem, a potentially resource-rich region, a militarised zone, a politically and internationally cooperative zone, or, as I contend, simultaneously as an assemblage of these aforementioned imaginations, the various ways in which contemporary Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is visually and affectively performed within and outside of the Arctic needs to be researched through diverse assemblages of material sources from a multiplicity of sites, both temporally and spatially.

Assemblage as a methodological-analytical framework

Assemblages are a continuously evolving, fluid set of component capabilities as various elements are entangled with other elements at any one time (see McFarlane and Anderson 2011). Understanding that each assemblage has its own historical trajectory, through its composition and relational interactions with other assemblages, ‘return[ing] to the archive can provide [critical geopolitics] with new objects of study and interpretive sources’ and can help to cast a new light upon the critical landscape (Dittmer 2014:396).

There are advantages to utilising assemblages as a research methodology. By simultaneously incorporating different methods of research, as well as different types of material sources, I was able to explore better the lively and fluid nature of the Canadian Arctic performances that I encountered during my research and which would simultaneously enhance the quality of the critical geopolitical analysis of these relational geographical imaginations. I determined that utilising archival methods in collaboration with contemporary research methods, such as internet-mediated research alongside ethnographic participant observation and performative research of visual materials, would highlight the nuanced, relational connections between past and present assemblages of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. This responds to calls by Ben Anderson and Colin McFarlane, in addition to others, to employ assemblages in research methodologies; assemblages, they assert, provide 'a certain ethos of engagement with the world, one that experiments with methodological and presentational practices in order to attend to a lively world of differences...Montage, performative methods, thick description, stories all have been used by geographers and other in an attempt to be alert to the processes of [diverse assemblages]' (Anderson and McFarlane 2011:126; see also Buegar 2014). This experimentation with the potentially 'messy' and somewhat potentially precarious aspects of assemblage methods is also championed by the sociologist John Law. Law critiques the conventional ways of conceptualising methodologies as neatly defined actions which attempt to forge an idealised view of methodological practice. For Law, methods should be used to explore, experiment and delimit the 'realm of the possible' whilst simultaneously being bounded in material, social and cultural terms (Law 2004).

However, assemblage ontology has also been scrutinised within academic debates over its apparent lack of normativity and its 'aversion to pre-given social categories' (Baker and McGuirk 2017:428). Brenner *et al*, for example, have objected to the 'mercurial nature' of assemblage ontologies and that the emphasis on capabilities means its defining parameters can become

extremely vague (Brenner *et al* 2011:229; see also Tonkiss 2011; Peck 2014). Whilst they are critical of assemblage ontologies, Brenner *et al* do support a 'primarily methodological application of assemblage thinking' (Brenner *et al* 2011:232). Tom Baker and Pauline McGuirk provide a useful set of four epistemological commitments, revealing multiplicity, processuality, labour and uncertainty associated with assemblage methodologies. The practices of 'adopting an ethnographic sensibility, tracing sites and situations, and revealing the labours of assembling' offers a framework to approach assemblage thinking in research (Baker and McGuirk 2017:430).

Being 'alert' to the processes of diverse assemblages also required me to reflect on my own positionality in constituting the assemblage of the occupying atmosphere of the Canadian Arctic. When utilising assemblages as a theoretical and methodological framework, the positionality of the researcher, both through their embodied traits and how they are represented and perceived by others, necessarily needs to be understood as also a relational element in the very assemblage they are researching. Fieldwork is inevitably affected by the researcher's positionality, the choices of research questions, methodological approaches and spatial and temporal considerations will always affect to some extent the type of fieldwork data that is being collected (McFarlane 2009). As a white, British woman undertaking research on and within Canada, I was often questioned by various actors I encountered during fieldwork about my credibility to understand fully the nuances of Canadian imaginations of the Arctic as an 'outside' actor (Mullings 1999). Furthermore, as I was undertaking research in an archive as a collaborative PhD student sponsored by the British Library, I was enmeshed in an academic community dominated by similar traits which likely made my access to certain archival material easier than it possibly might have been for others. This acknowledges that I also had the capability to affect and, simultaneously, be affected by the other component elements of the assemblage, therefore, further complicating my ability to undertake critical research as a 'objective' researcher.

The importance of attending to the researcher's own positionality in conducting fieldwork is an element of research that has been extensively theorised in qualitative methodological research literature (Tracy 2012). Engaging with research in a postmodern context of multiplicity, discontinuity and ambiguity of messy and precarious elements has its own challenges. Adding to the complexity of research practices, qualitative research is also 'continually evolving and shifting in perspectives, methodologies, methods, and theoretical frameworks...and as a result, tensions and conflicts exist not only in our personal research projects but also within the field of qualitative research' (Bettez 2015:933).

Collaboration of an exhibition: reflecting on the benefits of being a collaborative PhD Student

As I was collaborative PhD student being sponsored by the British Library's Eccles Centre for American Studies, who had also sponsored the *Lines in the Ice* exhibition, I had a wonderfully opportune moment within the first three months of my PhD research to participate collaboratively in the exhibition's construction. I actively participated in and, in doing so, affected the relational elements of the exhibition through conversations concerning the selection of materials the library held on polar exploration that could be displayed. I also engaged in discussions with British Library curators concerning the affective performance of physically curating an exhibition intended to engage general public audiences with a remote environment like the Arctic. An advantageous by-product of the exhibition was that it served to highlight how Arctic encounters had been historically 'framed' in particular ways and then disseminated to audiences far removed from the geographical region who would then visually engage with these Arctic 'framings' in often popular, geopolitical, everyday scenarios, such as on postage stamps, in plays, or even in a museum exhibition space. Thus, not only did the exhibition provide me with a timely sample of the types of material sources I could use in my research, the exhibition itself provided me with an affective space within

which I could engage with one of my core research questions. Namely, rather than focusing on the elite-level discourses of government in formal material, such as policy reports and parliamentary speeches (see Hyndman 2001; Dowler and Sharp 2001; Dittmer and Dodds 2008), I determined that this thesis would concern itself with how Canadian Arctic Sovereignty was collaboratively curated and geopolitically 'performed' to affect general public imaginations of the Arctic in popular, everyday spaces.

My own methodological labour was also reflected early on within the planning of the *Lines in the Ice* exhibition. Because of the relatively small size of the exhibition space, roughly eighty objects could be displayed; clearly, there would not be an opportunity to display all of the materials that the British Library held in its collections. Discussions regarding what would be excluded and included in the display's reminded me of the limitless, yet also endless, possibilities of archival research and researching a PhD generally; unsurprisingly, I would not be able to analyse every case study or object I encountered during the course of my research and would need to prioritise. Furthermore, the Library's collections are constantly expanding with the ongoing addition of twenty-first-century publications; by engaging with a contemporary and ever-evolving subject matter, it had to be accepted that there could never be a neatly contained parameter to the entirety of my research. The evolving nature of the collections inspired me to think about contemporary Sovereignty performances. As such, I took the decision not to include what would have been a wholly wishful and wholly incongruous, neatly defined time-period for my research.

A timely discovery within the NWP

As the British Library is a UK institution which holds within its repositories vast amounts of archival material pertaining to the search for a navigable trade route through the NWT, this exhibition placed a particular emphasis upon the North West Passage (NWP) and how it has been 'framed'.

Furthermore, having taken place at the height of an apparent ‘polar scramble’ within the region over the course of the last decade, triggered by, amongst a host of other things, the desire for resources, territory and political control, calls from environmental groups that the region needs to be protected, preserved and saved from destruction and calls from Inuit leadership for greater devolved power, the timing of this particular exhibition was very fortunate.

Using the abundant, archival material the British Library held in its polar collections, the exhibition displayed how historical relics from the Arctic were visually assembled and presented to audiences back home. Fortuitously, my thesis research and the opening of this exhibition also coincided with the geopolitically significant and well publicised discovery –vigorously promoted by Harper in particular – of *HMS Erebus*, one of the British Navy’s fabled missing ships, in September 2014. The discovery of the missing British ship in the NWP was the accumulation of almost one hundred and seventy years of searching by a profusion of private and government-led voyages by both British and Canadian actors. The search for *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* had been reinvigorated in 2008 by the Harper administration with a collaborative, public-private partnership search led by the Canadian government agency, Parks Canada. Whilst I had always planned to include in my research how successive Canadian governments, since Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier’s in 1896, possessed an ongoing fascination with finding these missing British shipwrecks, the discovery of *HMS Erebus* in 2014 provided a welcome boost to the project. ‘Franklin Fever’ amongst the public and within the Canadian Government was heightened in light of the media news releases and excitement surrounding the discovery, drawing equally heightened attention to the public’s overt fascination with the mythology of finding relics in the Arctic. At the same time, it also served to re-focus discussions within political geography concerning the challenges posed to Indigenous peoples striving to get their voices heard when the discovery of Franklin’s ships reignited an attention that was framed within a white, imperial, settler-colonial Canadian

history. This fascination with the spectral hauntings of historical explorations is reminiscent of Victorian audiences who were captivated by the narratives of the searches back home. These material, popular narratives were also displayed in the exhibition from 'everyday' sources such as the *Illustrated London News*, for example.

Assembling material and performative sources

Whilst the Library could easily have filled the exhibition by solely drawing upon its own material sources, an important decision was made early on in the process to include borrowed material from other Institutions. By including material from other institutions, the exhibition incorporated within it a plurality of voices; in this respect, it succeeded in being more successfully representative of the alternative narratives and imaginations of the Arctic that exist and the affective responses to the various bodily encounters of exploration, particularly including those of the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic. The Canadian Museum of Civilisation renamed the Canadian Museum of History in December 2013, for example, loaned the British Library two sound recordings from their *Dorothy Eber Collection* archives. This important collection of sound recordings made in the 1990s and 2000s by the journalist Dorothy Eber, entitled 'Encounters on the Passage', assembled Inuit oral histories from various communities with knowledge of Sir Franklin's party. One loan from the Scott Polar Research Institute was a reproduction of the wooden 'Ammassalik maps' (see *Figure 3.2, below*). These maps were, in the same vein, an alternative material source which provided a more nuanced assemblage of Arctic encounters and material imaginations within the exhibition. It drew attention to the fact that the region was and continues to be populated by an assemblage of voices and bodies, including Indigenous cultures with a unique relationship to the Arctic landscape. The emphasis placed upon the independent agency of the Indigenous populations of the Arctic, rather than describing them as a mere casualty or by-product of European exploration, was an approach that is, surprisingly, not as common

as might have been expected in the early twenty-first-century curations of Canadian Arctic heritage.



Figure 3.2: Ammassalik map, carved by Kunit fra Umivik. Source: Scott Polar Research Institute

The aforementioned exhibition also coincided with the hosting of public events about the Arctic, such as the March 2015 panel on the *Future of the Arctic*. Although again fortuitous in its timing, this event provided me with an opportunity to analyse first-hand a contemporary public performance of a government-led narrative, including the views of the Canadian representative and Deputy High Commissioner, Alan Kessel. Rather than choosing to

interview civil servants in a formal setting, these events provided me the opportunity to witness the ‘public performance’ of Arctic Sovereignty and to analyse the alternative means through which the government of Canada disseminates Arctic narratives. In this respect, the desire to engage with public performances led me to include the output of social media accounts as part of my assembled, methodological process.

Archival material

The exhibition’s aim was to question what circumstances led the Arctic to be continually maintained in the interest of European geopolitics, extending as far back as the Tudor period, by exploring and displaying an archival assemblage of the visual material pertaining to the historical and contemporary quests for trade routes, resources, mythical relics, and scientific and technological advancements. There is a diverse range of archival material held in the British Library repository, particularly within its excellent Cartography Department, pertaining to Arctic exploration. Archival material that was concerned with the Arctic included inaccurately drawn maps that rudimentarily incorporated exaggerated Indigenous testimony of the size of America, beautifully drawn, and gold-leaf-embossed atlases of the Northern Hemisphere commissioned by King Charles II (*see Figure 3.3, below*), intricate geological maps produced by the USSR during the Cold War and contemporary Nunavut maps from the 1990s which reinstated and ‘reinscribed’ Inuit place names to the Canadian Arctic – there was certainly a remarkable choice available for the purposes of my research. As the collection ranged from the late thirteenth century to the twenty-first, it afforded me a wide and broad-ranging period within which I could work when considering temporality and how the Arctic has been imagined and spatialised over the course of history. The British Library also holds a diverse collection of material that one might not initially associate with the library. Not only does it hold maps, historic journals and ship illustrations that belonged to fabled ‘heroic’ explorers who ventured into the Arctic, it also

possesses various types of media material; this included nineteenth-century photographs, sound recordings of whales and bearded seals in the Arctic, Charles Dicken's polar playbill posters, postage stamps, aerial footage from Amundsen's first flight over the Arctic, a collection of modern Greenlandic poems entitled 'Washing Lines in the Ice', and sound recordings of Inuit oral interviews and musical throat singing. It was clear from a thorough exploration of the storerooms of the British Library that archival material meant much more than simply printed collections and included a diverse mixed media of oral and visual encounters within the Arctic. At the same time, I was also acutely aware of the performative nature of some of these materials as well. All of these materials were able to portray formal and popular geopolitical statements by different actors, in diverse and nuanced ways that concerned European and Canadian interests in the Arctic and would provide me with an assemblage of varied, empirical contributions. Ultimately, my involvement in the construction of the exhibition reminded me that there would be a number of varied material examples of the performance of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty with which I could engage with whilst researching my thesis.



Figure 3.3: 'A map of the North Pole and parts adjoining', Moses Pitt, from The English Atlas 1680, the personal atlas of King Charles II. Source: Photograph courtesy of the British Library.

When it came to my own research, as alluded to earlier, I determined that I would not simply engage with material such as formal foreign policy statements and speeches in parliament, rather I would also look into other empirical 'sites' and bodily 'encounters' providing diverse examples of how the State performs its Sovereignty, such as the artwork on postage stamps, or the social media accounts of Canadian Ministers and government agencies. Exploring the various situations and sites where Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and policy-making actions would take place responds to recent calls in the field of critical geopolitics to engage with the more-than-human shift in actor-

network and non-representational affects (Dodds 2012; Dodds and Powell 2014). I realised that this thesis would also benefit from conducting fieldwork in Canada, not only at the Library and Archives Canada, but also at museums in Ottawa, Vancouver and Toronto that engaged with and displayed the Canadian Arctic in various ways.

Performing the 'visual' in exhibitions

Lines in the Ice was the most popular and visited exhibition in the Entrance Hall Gallery that the British Library had ever produced, roughly 20% more people visited the exhibition than the next most popular display (Hatfield 2015:81). The Library's official footfall for the exhibition was calculated to have been just over 100,000 visitors. As I was a student researching at the Library most days, I was able to witness the diverse range of audiences who encountered the exhibition in its four-month run. Not only do the raw numbers serve as a reflection of the continuing fascination that the Arctic holds within the consciousness of the British public, it also emphasised to me the power of the visual and auditory within museum exhibitions as a means of conveying geopolitical narratives to a wider, public audience. These types of highly visual media often command authority and legitimacy through its apparently 'truthful' positionality. In an environment where they remain relatively unchallenged as 'ocular truths', these types of media have continued to have a defining impact on how the Arctic is portrayed, circulated and consumed by audiences (Berger 1972). The ability of the internet to transcend the physical location of a museum building through virtual portals allows Canadians, people in remote locations and across the world to engage with an exhibition, making museums, as sites of Sovereignty performance, even more significant than they have been in the past. At the same time, the capacity for exhibitions to be preserved digitally, as they were presented at the time of their conception, provides Sovereignty performances of this nature a longevity that has not been seen heretofore. Furthermore, digital collections also facilitate the display of objects and

materials that would otherwise be too fragile or challenging to exhibit physically to the public, thus enabling a greater number of objects to be curated within a museum or exhibition and, by extension, to be consumed by its audience. As a consequence, the British Library being no exception, many museums are now able to engage in a collaborative assemblage of physical and digital resources under the framework of a single exhibition narrative.

For the *Lines in the Ice* exhibition, the British Library employed its first interactive fiction Writer-in-Residence, Rob Sherman, who designed narrative games – known as ‘choose your own adventure’ games – for the exhibition. To accompany the exhibition, he created physical and digital versions of his interactive game, available online and in the exhibition hall itself. The game that he designed was called ‘On My Wife’s Back’; the game centred around the nineteenth-century sailor Isaak Scinbank, who was meant to be a rescuer of Sir John Franklin (see *Figure 3.4, below*). He created a fictional diary based upon Scinbank which he continually updated and based upon historical and contemporary real-world events, including those that were taking place during the period of the exhibition itself; for example, it included a research map, musical recordings, digital cairns, pen and ink drawings, fictional scholarship and references to artefacts. Sherman’s fictional online diary for Scinbank – which he has continued to update to the present day, long after the end of the physical exhibition – gives longevity to the exhibition which is, consequently, able to shape and influence the perception of real-world events, such as the discovery of *HMS Terror* in 2016. At the same time, this interactive digital and physical project, which was integrated into the exhibition itself, was designed to engage more actively audiences and to illuminate the stories and themes revealed by the objects on display; this functioned to create an affective atmosphere in which the public engage with the exhibition and, in doing, the British Library utilised an assemblage of practices and methods in curating the exhibition, including the collaboration with other institutions and other fictional writers-in-residence. In 2015, the Department of Canadian Heritage produced an interactive YouTube ‘choose

your own game', called 'Journey into the Arctic', which was released in the run up to the 150th anniversary celebrations and was centred on celebrating the recent discovery of *HMS Erebus* in 2014. Thus, inspired by the exhibition, which functioned like a microcosm that demonstrated the benefits of using an assemblage of practices, sites and actors to perform a particular narrative, simultaneously engaging an audience within this narrative, I determined to apply this approach when thinking conceptually about how successive Canadian governments enrolled an assemblage of practices in their performance and dissemination of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty to various audiences. In this respect, it is this which further informed my decision to consider and analyse online government websites, the official social media accounts of Ministers and government agencies, physical visual material, such as postage stamps, physically visiting government-sponsored museum exhibitions, archival records, digital exhibitions and interactive games and adverts commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage – to name but a few – and how they function concurrently and in collaboration to create an ever-evolving, affective, occupying atmosphere of Arctic Sovereignty.

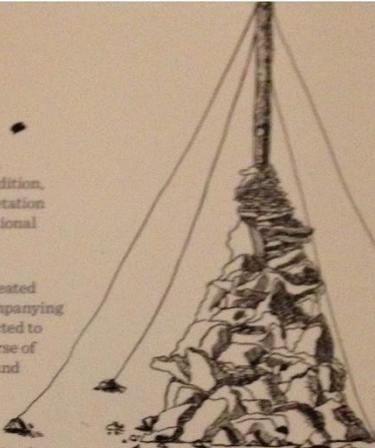
On My Wife's Back

Rob Sherman is the British Library's Writer-In-Residence for *Lines in the Ice*. Researching John Franklin's 1845 expedition, Sherman has devised a creative interpretation of the exhibition, centred around his fictional explorer, Isaak Scinbank.

Amongst the items that Sherman has created are Scinbank's sea-journal and an accompanying online game. The game's story is connected to the journal, and will evolve over the course of Sherman's residency. To play the game and discover more about the project visit: <http://onmywifesback.tumblr.com>

Sherman has also created a 'digital cairn', only accessible here in the exhibition space. Cairns were used in the Arctic to leave messages, supplies and act as landmarks. You can explore this digital version by connecting to the Wi-Fi network named 'caddismarian' (no password required), and then opening a web browser.

On My Wife's Back is in partnership with the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library and CreativeWorks London.



Isaak Scinbank and the Finding of Franklin

'Amidst the stories of Victorian derring do here in the exhibition, one has been overlooked; history has dealt an unfair hand to Captain Isaak Scinbank, the "Arctic Angler".

Born in Derby in 1808, Scinbank sailed to China and Siberia as a privateer. In 1852, Lady Franklin selected him to search for her husband because of his "competence and entire lack of adventure or Peril".

Sailing in his ship the *Otranto* from London on 25 November, Scinbank travelled north through the barely-charted Wellington Channel. Against all the odds Scinbank eventually found Franklin on the then-unnamed Axel Heiberg Island, close to death. The return journey almost killed both men, but they arrived home just over a year later.'

To discover more about the fictional explorer Isaak Scinbank and the work of British Library Writer-in-Residence Rob Sherman visit: <http://onmywifesback.tumblr.com/scinbank>.

On My Wife's Back is in partnership with the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library and CreativeWorks London.



Figure 3.4: Introductory paragraphs to 'On My Wife's Back'. Source: Rosanna White, taken August 2015.

Whilst there has been a superfluity of books published on the subject of the search for the North West Passage and the fate of Sir John Franklin and his crew, allowing audiences to interact physically with materials relating to the disappearance and subsequent searches achieves something different. Photography and film have been repeatedly used to captivate audiences, bringing to life more remote and abstract places such as the Arctic. For example, the Dominion government of Canada repeatedly sent photographers out alongside their early government-sponsored expeditions to the Arctic, not only to photograph and record the landscape, but to photograph the explorers and scientists 'at work' as they surveyed the land in situ. By doing so, it drew attention to the very performative nature of practising Arctic Sovereignty; all of these ceremonial performances were meant to be seen and publicly consumed, regardless of who the intended audience was. The practice of employing photography upon Arctic explorations is something that has been influenced by a longer, historical process of illustrating, drawing and sketching on earlier European voyages – it is many of these illustrations that the British Library holds in their collections. Such images and multimedia material also could be easily circulated and their different threads are capable of permeating diverse, intended audiences.

Therefore, I determined to use an assemblage of methods that would explore and consult mixed media material. Digital technologies are now commonly used within academia as online research spaces and digital technologies for data collection are becoming an increasingly significant facet of methodological techniques in geography. Not only is the internet a source of data, it can facilitate the analysis of material, such as ethnographic and visual discourse analysis; Annette Markham suggests that the internet, as 'a social phenomenon, a tool, and also a field site for qualitative research' is hugely beneficial to critical study (Markham 2008:455). As technologies continue to evolve, digital technologies and methods become ever-increasingly important for the methodology of any political geographer (see Collins 2009; Marlowe *et al* 2016; Sparks *et al* 2016). As such, I determined that the archives would

only form a single part of my assembled methodological approach. The need to diversify my methodology to include multi-sourced and multi-sighted material naturally led me to define the parameters of 'performance'. Ultimately, I chose to incorporate publications, public events, social media platforms, adverts, websites and museum exhibitions into my research. I resolved that my research questions would ultimately be concerned with how the Canadian Arctic, as a space, has been articulated and publicly performed by successive Canadian governments to audiences through popular geopolitical means. In turn, I would also provide and engage with alternative examples of how Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is performed through visual and laboured practices by different Actors.

Assembling sources from multiple sites

In deciding to conduct fieldwork in Canada in the summer of 2015, I was also able to immerse myself within an exhibition experience. I experienced first-hand how the recent discovery of *HMS Erebus* and the relics that the shipwreck contained were disseminated by Parks Canada staff in a popular, geopolitical way through that of a 'pop-up' event. The display highlighted to me how the non-human agency of certain bodies and materialities could be enrolled by Parks Canada staff to affect the intended audience of the Canadian public in non-representational ways. This event was only on display for one day outside the Vancouver Maritime Museum and, although I had planned on visiting the museum archives to conduct research, I had no way of knowing that this extra display would be erected during the limited time I was in Canada. I effectively 'stumbled' across this display; whilst it subsequently provided me with rich material to engage with in my research, I was reminded of the inherent limitations of conducting research in a limited time frame and the element of luck involved in uncovering relevant primary material.

Access to material sources

Whilst conducting fieldwork in the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), I also experienced the frustrations of having research interests which would require the repositories of sometimes sensitive and restrictive government material. For example, under the *Access to Information Act*, whilst I was still in the LAC archives, I applied in August 2015 to access certain closed files which I had come across in either rudimentary finding aids, or subsequently mentioned in open access folders I had viewed earlier. Titles such as *Boundaries – Canadian Arctic and Scientific Expeditions for Canadian Sovereignty* were, unsurprisingly, intriguing and a high priority for the purposes of my research. I promptly requested access to this file, along with roughly ten other folders. I was told that the usual waiting process for files to be released was a few weeks, up to a maximum of a thirty-day statutory time limit, and I could expect to receive a letter and a CD sent to me back in the UK with the digitalised images of the folder's contents – all, remarkably, for only a few Canadian dollars. At the end of August, I received a letter from a Senior Analyst from the Referenced Services Division of the LAC with a promised CD. The CD was a wonderful addition; however, the quality of some of the images and documents were very poor due to the inherent difficulties of microfilming certain documents, which proved frustrating at times, and is a frequent limitation I experienced of working with archival material. Whilst the majority of the folders I had requested to gain access to were released to me, albeit with redacted portions, disappointingly, the file on *Boundaries – Canadian Arctic and Scientific Expeditions for Canadian Sovereignty* was missing. The letter stated that this file was still being examined and I would be contacted again at a later date 'when a determination as to whether they can be released is reached'. Had I stumbled across a metaphorical 'gold mine'? Was this a piece of primary material that would greatly benefit my research? Quite possibly. The letter went on to explain that 'consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development is necessary to comply with the request and cannot reasonably be completed within the

original time limit...an extension of ninety days would apply for the consideration' and I was entitled to make a complaint if I so wished. I was then contacted again in mid-January 2016 with a final response to the request missing file. However, whilst indeed this file was released to me, the document was so heavily redacted that only about 15% of the material remained accessible. The second letter explained again that in 'consultation with Foreign Affairs, Trade Development Canada, certain portions thereof have been withheld'. In this way, whilst this document did not provide me with the anticipated primary material I had initially hoped for, I had gained first-hand experience of the process by which the Canadian government analysed and reflected upon its own records. Presumably, the government withheld the information contained within this folder on Arctic Sovereignty as it deemed it too important for the 'security and defence of Canada' and international relations more broadly. In this instance, it was what was the act of concealment, rather than what was revealed, in the archives that would prove most interesting.

A timely anniversary

Researching the thesis also coincided with the 150th Commemorative Celebrations of the inception of the Canadian Federation in 2017. Partly due to the 'success' of locating both of Franklin's missing ships and the reinvigorated efforts to declare and construct a narrative in which Canadian national identity is intrinsically linked to the North, my subject matter was again at the forefront of public policy. This, yet again, afforded me the inadvertent opportunity, towards the end of my research time, to consult and explore the varied ways the Canadian government 'celebrated the North' in public and performative ways. Whether this was through overtly political advert campaigns released by the Harper administration in the run up to the federal election in 2015 or through government websites and social media branding the North in visual marketing campaigns, the Canadian Arctic was constantly being engaged with by different actors. One of the major

controversies surrounding the Canada 150th government campaign was from Indigenous Canadian groups which criticised colonial celebrations for romanticising and idealising the past, consequently celebrating a 'white settler society' and perpetuating racism and dispossession. The celebrated achievements of 'white, often male, explorers' was prioritised, whilst its detrimental impact upon other Canadian communities was repressed; as such, it was subject to intense criticism for its attempts to establish and celebrate a national-identity narrative that was not shared by all. By failing to engage with Indigenous voices and for whitewashing the atrocities associated with historic Indigenous dispossessions in Canada, the government was accused by some of concealing Indigenous Canadian narratives and downplaying the controversy of past government-run, residential schools. Two multimedia projects, one on Twitter named #Resist150, led by a Metis artist, and one entitled Idle No More, seeking to promote Indigenous rights and to resist neo-colonialism, serve as apt reminders of the geopolitical importance of including Inuit voices and narratives, Inuit agency and the role of the disobedient body in the Arctic within this research. Furthermore, partly due to these complaints, the Trudeau government very publicly sought to address these concerns through increasingly devolved Northern governance and through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, emphasising that an apparently unifying celebration of Canadian heritage and identity is not without its own discourses of resistance.

At the same time, over the course of my period of research, I was able to research a shift in government rhetoric concerning the discovery of *HMS Erebus and HMS Terror* through the analysis of Twitter accounts and digital news reports that now actively sought to include and even champion Inuit, oral testimony: something that had been overshadowed when Harper first announced the discovery of *HMS Erebus* on a publicly co-opted photoshoot aboard a Parks Canada research vessel. Had the thesis not coincided with this anniversary, and subsequent backlash, I might not have been exposed to

these diverse narratives – the project would undoubtedly have been poorer for it.

Concluding thoughts

This chapter has served to explain the rationale underpinning my approach to researching contemporary performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. I determined that the most advantageous means of compiling my applied research methods was through an ‘assemblage’ of mixed methods for data collection and analysis. I utilised a mixture of qualitative discourse and visual content analysis of both historical and contemporary resources found in archives and online public media platforms as well as a critical ethnographic analysis of museum exhibitions. This meant I was able to assemble diverse empirical chapters which engaged with a great variety of primary sources. These material sources allowed me to apply a theory of practice that critically interrogated historical and contemporary performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty by analysing these performances within the wider ‘affective occupying atmospheres’ of Nationalism and Sovereignty.

Thus, methodologically, the exhibition inspired my choice in assembling a research methodology that included analysing different types of material sources from multiple institutions and locations. A concurrent benefit of this research approach was that these assembled, multiple methods, ranging from archival to ethnographic participant observations, enabled me to include multiple representations of the Arctic which could not be achieved as successfully if I only engaged with the British Library’s archives. The exhibition also illustrated to me how the very materiality of a library was also, in itself, an assembled space; not only was the library a material archive where objects from and about the Arctic could be carefully stored and curated, something arguably much harder to achieve in the precarious geophysical environment on the Arctic itself, it was also a place of exchange, where ideas

and sources could be encountered, negotiated and challenged by different actors and stakeholders.

By utilising an assorted collection of resources, such as mixed media reports, museum exhibitions, public events and archival material, I was able to overcome some of the methodological challenges of representation and plurality when engaging with Arctic Sovereignty within and outside of Canada. These diverse, material sources provided me with the opportunity to think critically about how the Canadian Arctic has been framed and curated in the past, present and future, by different actors to public audiences, whilst simultaneously being reminded of the need to be mindful of the inherent, underlying issues of representation and resistance, dispossession, power and plurality of the colonial-settler State. There are, inherently, many contradictions within colonial-settler State atmospheres; the relationship between Arctic governance and Indigenous-Crown relations within Canada are complex, unpredictable, and continuously evolving. Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is, therefore, most convincingly perceived as and treated as an 'assemblage': it is simultaneously displayed, performed and articulated in a myriad of sites and spaces, which are relational to one another and are affectively encountered by different bodies and actors within and outside of the Arctic.

My assembled research methodology also responds to calls within political geography to engage with the visual and the performative aspects of geopolitical discourses and objects to move beyond merely analysing text. Visual discourses are an important consideration within political geography because they can quickly communicate complex ideas and engage audiences with a subject matter more easily interpreted than text alone. Similarly, engaging with the performative nature of geopolitical encounters acknowledges the process by which social subjects and spaces are produced. By acknowledging the multiplicity of sites and material bodily, both human and non-human, encounters where Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is performed, disseminated and sometimes resisted, I reveal the benefit of also

critically engaging with alternative sites, such as public museum exhibitions, where narratives of 'the Arctic' are produced, disseminated and engaged with. The exhibition, *Lines in the Ice: Seeking a North West Passage*, displayed a range of primary material which all had a highly visual and performative component. Visual objects are often more engaging to the general public as they can help rapidly portray and embody a theory or discourse. Texts typically have to frame a similar discourse over multiple pages. Furthermore, the accompanying video games and interactive displays of the exhibition engaged audiences to embody and produce certain geopolitical discourses of what it meant to encounter the Arctic.

Finally, I reflected on my position as a collaborative doctoral student, sponsored by the Eccles Centre for American Studies, and the beneficial opportunities and challenges it afforded me in working affectively on and within an exhibition space and the archival repository of the British Library. In particular, I drew attention to the sometimes unpredictable nature of working with and within the sphere of archival research, as well as the opportunities that it provided me with of working with multiple archival collections, full of possibilities, when it came to including and excluding primary material sources.

Chapter 4

Occupying Atmospheres: Regulating Bodies within the Canadian Arctic

The dynamic, fluid and often turbulent material geographies of the Arctic complicate questions concerning how the Canadian Arctic, as an imagined, networked space, was and continues to be encountered, negotiated, ordered and ultimately spatialised. By acknowledging the significance of 'affect' to the experience and production of social spaces, such as the Canadian Arctic, the 'successful' effective occupation of this remote colonial territory in the early twentieth century was without doubt affected – and sometimes frustrated – by the independent agency of this geophysical environment: extreme snow, ice, cold and darkness. The exceptional, geophysical material geographies of this specific colonial region, as opposed to the temperate and tropical climates of the 'New World' America, made traditional settler-colonial ceremonial performances of territorial possession uniquely challenging (Seed 1995). Nonetheless, colonial, Canadian bodies were still being enrolled by successive Canadian governments in the twentieth century in highly performed ceremonial practices of Sovereignty, such as flag planting and coercing 'the Eskimo' to swear allegiance to the King. They were also enrolled, however, in more imaginative and alternative displays of 'effective occupation and jurisdiction' because of the sometimes-uncooperative environment and, therefore, by effectively making the Inuit 'Canadian', they claimed Sovereignty over the region as part of a networked and continuously negotiated space.

The Arctic environment is 'slippery' and unstable and the awkward history of co-opting Indigenous peoples as a colonising subject further complicate these ceremonial performances – particularly in a contemporary, global context. For example, the physical presence of a bronze plaque declaring the Arctic Archipelago as Canadian, erected by Captain Joseph-Elzéar Bernier on his annual voyage to the Arctic, attempted to act as a stable marker in what is an unstable, fluid, icy environment. As it did with Bernier's plaque and the

colonial, English practice of territorial authority that is physically achieved through the construction of fences and buildings. In this way, the physical materiality of the newly built Canadian High Arctic Research Station, CHARS, acts as a visible, stable, permanent structure in an ever-changing fluid environment. Thus, a scientific research station, like a flag or a plaque, becomes a stable marker of effective occupation and, as such, Sovereignty. However, in light of the insecurities surrounding the settler-colonial State not belonging in the Arctic, the plaque and the research station, in fact, function merely as a chimera.

By considering how Canada frames its Arctic Sovereignty as part of a broader 'occupying atmosphere' between environments, technologies and bodies, this chapter contributes to the academic debate within scholarly literature that is concerned with the ways in which Sovereignty transcends mere representation and 'textuality'. Sovereignty is more than simply a speech act; it is affectively practised and performed, real and imagined, lived and simulated, represented and non-represented as an assemblage. Canada's contemporary assemblage of Arctic Sovereignty is inherently shaped by the historical assemblages that have preceded it. This chapter asserts that the occupying practices at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Canadian Arctic are rooted, inherently and historically, within the context of European exploration and encounter of the New World over the previous five centuries. Furthermore, it is equally persuasive to observe how these practices have continued to shape and underpin contemporary sovereign performances by the successive Canadian governments to the present day. The act of publicly displaying and commemorating effective occupation practices are continuously performed within contemporary Canada, precisely because they were informed by the historical settler-colonial occupation atmospheres of surveying, building, occupying and governance. Through diverse activities within the Canadian Arctic, the Canadian State seeks to establish a continuous and historical narrative of successful governance of the Arctic through occupying atmospheres. However, I argue that there is a perpetual,

recurrent insecurity at play that contributes to an underlying anxiety within the settler-colonial Canadian State: namely, that it cannot escape the feeling that it does not really 'belong' in the Arctic.

This chapter explores and engages with a range of possessive, ceremonial and bodily performances of 'effective occupation' that have, historically, been enrolled by Canadian governments since the twentieth century to 'settle' colonial territory in the Canadian Arctic. Considering time-periods that are roughly fifty years apart, between 1903-1922, 1950-1960 and 2010-2018, I explore how a range of legal, technical, scientific, and cultural performances by human and non-human bodies were produced, embedded and enrolled by Canadian governments as a means of asserting Sovereignty over the geographically imagined 'Canadian Arctic'. A crucial commonality between these performances, despite their different historical contexts, is their thoroughly public, performative staging: they were actions and objects intended to be seen. Embedding material 'bodies' within the Canadian Arctic as sites of inscription, such as using non-human objects like flagpoles, police posts and scientific buildings as highly visible displays of Sovereignty, in conjunction with enrolling human-performed activities by Indigenous, scientific, military and political bodies in affective performances, served as a twofold approach to establishing effective occupation. The performances analysed include judiciary patrols by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as well as other performances of construction, mining, environmental stewardship, fishing regulations, Sovereignty patrols, seabed mapping and scientific data collecting (see Shadian 2014).

Becoming the 'Canadian Arctic'

Great Britain relinquished its conceptual 'rights' to the Arctic islands in North America in 1880 when they were formally transferred to Canada. These territorial rights were founded upon the notion that past British explorers, such as John Barrow in the second half of the nineteenth century, who was

commissioned by Admiralty and had 'discovered' and subsequently proclaimed ownership over the islands he encountered prior to 1880 (Fleming 1998). Such a claim of ownership would be further bolstered, it was believed, by incorporating the historically British tradition of territorial colonial possession in the temperate New World: the establishment of a visible and permanent occupation (Seeds 1995). Undoubtedly, this would have been best achieved and legitimised through the performance of effective occupation by Canadians who would build permanent communities as a settler-colonial State; over time, the settler-colonial community would become 'nativised' and, consequently, cease to be viewed as outside settlers at all (Cavell and Noakes 2010). However, because of the extreme geophysical environment of the Arctic and its remote location, making the region physically challenging to travel to, the creation of a permanent 'homeland' by settler-colonial communities seeking to integrate into the region was wholly impractical – even impossible. Consequently, the government was forced to rely upon ever more imaginative ways of, symbolically, asserting its continued presence within the region. Alternative methods included enrolling '*non-human*' 'Canadian bodies' – at least, crucially, those which were *perceived* to be Canadian – which served as another means of a Canadian body occupying and 'settling' the region. Initially, this was performed by hoisting a flag on remote islands and leaving written proclamations of Canadian ownership within cairns along the coastlines of those islands, ideally ensuring that they were visible even from the deck of a passing vessel.

However, inanimate, 'non-human' objects would subsequently go on to be seen as insufficient in seeking to declare successful effective occupation of the region by Canada. Such static flagpoles of occupation could easily be ignored without a government presence to enforce sovereign ownership and, worse still, because of the harsh and extreme geophysical environment of the Arctic, such objects could be eroded and washed away all together without regular upkeep. Furthermore, anxieties concerning foreign whalers

commercially operating in the Canadian Arctic without jurisdictional control meant that the Canadian government was repeatedly tasked with having to send police patrols out into the Arctic to collect customs duties and to bring the whalers under Canadian order and control. Such patrols, however, served a dual purpose: not only did they mean that Canada, in practical terms, was better positioned to govern the foreign whaling stations in the region, these police posts functioned as additional 'non-human', visible markers of effective occupation in the region. Furthermore, whilst buildings represent physical markers of occupation, the very performative act of enforcing and performing police patrols provides a more lively and visible presence of effective occupation. Thought of in the same light, it is instructive to recognise that conducting scientific surveys in the region can function in the same way that a police patrol can. Whilst surveys are undoubtedly beneficial for collecting data on the region and further bolstering knowledge claims concerning their Arctic territory, the physical act of carrying out this research in the Arctic served the concurrent purpose of functioning as another visible and lively example of a continued, effective occupation by Canada.

However, whilst the Canadian government would subsequently seek to assert control over the territory by means of settler integration, achieved through commercial, military, juridical and scientific means, over the next one hundred and fifty years, they failed to overcome wholly the anxiety that they did not truly belong in the region. As all of these activities are fundamentally temporary in their nature, Canada was still vulnerable to the perception that colonial-settlers were 'outsiders' who had not truly 'settled'. Yet, at the same time, such a binary proposition, of colonial-settlers and Indigenous occupants, is one that consciously represses the geopolitical and biopolitical considerations of the Indigenous populations of the Canadian Arctic, who were undeniably present in the region prior to Canada becoming a colonial-State. Consequently, Canadian governments within the twentieth century sought, simultaneously, to enrol Inuit bodies into their territorial claims in two, competing ways. Whether it was the problematic act of relocating Inuit

communities in the 1950s to serve as human flagpoles of Canadian occupation on distinct islands or surveying the health of the Inuit aboard vessels and treating them within traditional notions of colonialism, marking the coloniser and colonised as distinctly separate, effective occupation in the Arctic has tried, simultaneously, to incorporate both approaches. The subsequent case studies provide examples of the diverse practices of occupation within the Canadian Arctic; in doing so, this chapter observes that contemporary occupying practices by the Canadian government have been directly informed and affected by the 'occupying atmospheres' of the past.

Despite formally receiving the Arctic islands in 1880, there were anxieties in the first decade of the twentieth century within the Laurier government that Canadians had yet to occupy the Arctic truly. Naturally, this perception ignored the fact that many different Inuit communities and families had continually occupied parts of the Arctic Archipelago for thousands of years. Between 1897 and 1911, during his tenure, Laurier commissioned six government-sponsored expeditions to the Arctic. On these expeditions, symbolically raising the Union Jack in photographed ceremonies and placing written declarations in visible cairns from the coastline on remote islands became routine. Additionally, Laurier petitioned for permanent police posts to be established and scientific surveys of the area to be undertaken. All of these practices contributed to a type of anxiety management and these different types of occupying practices acted as nuanced markers of a government presence in the region.

Anxieties at play: whalers and authority

In the Western part of the Canadian Arctic, ninety miles east of the international Yukon / Alaskan boundary with America and roughly thirty-five square miles in circumference, lies Herschel Island. This previously 'unoccupied' island became a strategic base at the end of the 1890s for the Western Arctic whaling fleet, nearly all of whom were American. The island

was an ideal spot to winter in the Beaufort Sea in-between the whalers' short, open water, summer hunting seasons. On Herschel Island, American whalers constructed warehouses and limited land dwellings for the crew to shelter in and endure the harsh winter environment in the North. Creating these huts was no mean feat, however, as supplies of wood were non-existent in the region; any building material had to either be shipped in or re-appropriated from elsewhere. By 1903, there were four frame buildings owned by the Pacific Steam Whaling company, and fifteen sod houses (NWMP Report 1903). These structures were the only indication of a 'western' presence in the 'unoccupied region' at the time; unsurprisingly, these buildings made the Canadian government intensely uneasy in their territorial claims as they were *not* built or occupied by Canadian bodies. Except for the Inuit and the resident missionary, who owned a further two frame buildings, there were no Canadian or even British subjects living on Herschel Island.

For the first fifteen years, these whalers, although probably indifferent to claims of Canadian Sovereignty over the island, enjoyed little to no jurisdictional regulation, paid no customs for the whales hunted nor faced any police regulation and control. The ambiguous legal and geopolitical status of these whalers was comparable to that of pirates during this time and they were able to operate outside much of the political and territorial sphere of control from Canadian, government-operated stations further south. It was unlikely that these whalers even realised they were in Canadian waters; this was often the case when other whalers found themselves in the Canadian Arctic. Without a clear government presence, whalers often incorrectly noted the international boundaries; the page heading of a logbook kept on-board one American whaler in Hudson's Bay mistakenly identified their ship as anchored and 'Lying in Repulse Bay, Greenland', for example, rather than in Canada (Millard 1866). Even within the Canadian government, there were concerns as to whether the Hudson Bay waters were truly Canadian. In July 1906, the question of the territorial waters of Hudson Bay were finally

addressed in Parliament. A motion to amend the Fisheries Act was passed and its purpose, as F Goudeau, the Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries wrote to Comptroller White, was to 'assert that Hudson Bay is wholly territorial water of Canada and therefore the license fee of fifty dollars per annum will be chargeable on all vessels' (Comptroller correspondence 1906 vol. 408). By 1908, it was reported that one thousand three hundred and forty-eight whales had been captured by the Western Arctic Whaling Fleet, meaning that revenue valued at \$13,450,000. However, this revenue was not being taxed by the Canadian government; this was partly because whaling operations frequently took place outside the three-mile limit where Canada passively claimed control, though it also stemmed from the practical limitations of there being no Canadian government representatives there to collect or monitor whaling activities (see RNWMP Report 1908:140). Alongside this, whalers also profited from unregulated coastal trading of furs with the local Inuit, generating a further \$1,400,000 in revenue that was, again, not being taxed by the Canadian government at the time.

Mounties at work: occupying atmospheres through a police presence

It became clear to the Laurier government that, to assert effective political and economic control and to ensure that Canadian Sovereignty *was* being recognised by American whalers, a police detachment would be needed on Herschel Island. This detachment would assume responsibility for asserting everyday judicial authority over the whalers and were also charged with the economic job of collecting customs duties in the region. However, at the time, there were anxieties and doubts about the feasibility of such a detachment becoming operational and the related expenditure that would be incurred in manning and supplying an island post in such a remote part of the Arctic. In 1901, the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) Comptroller, Frederick D. White, wrote that 'it is certainly desirable that Canada should assert her authority over the Arctic Ocean, but it is questionable whether the results would justify the expenditure at present' (Comptrollers'

Correspondence 1901 vol. 314). White was referring to the relative inaccessibility of Herschel Island, upon which access was completely reliant upon favourable weather conditions. The long and costly voyage – often a whole sailing season – would be reliant on an ice-free Beaufort Sea, near the Barrow Strait, highlighting the often-disobedient agency of the environment and its capacity to frustrate and hamper government activities. However, the potentially damaging presence of the whalers and their seeming indifference towards Canada's Sovereignty proved too detrimental for Laurier's government to continue to ignore and contributed to Canadian anxiety concerning their sovereign presence in the North. In 1900, Comptroller White had already begun to make enquires as to how the NWMP could be used successfully to assert effective territorial authority over American whalers when he wrote to Superintendent A. H. Griesbach on the 8th May, 1900:

'...the time has arrived when the Canadian Government should take steps to protect Canadian traders in that vicinity and what I am most anxious to get at is...the character and extent of the trading done by the whalers with the Natives for furs-trade which properly belongs to Canada, or upon which Canadian customs duties should be paid.'

(Comptrollers' Correspondence 1900 vol. 314)

Comptroller White's anxiety concerning the 'character of the trading done by the whalers' draws further attention to the complicated and ambiguous geopolitical status that they held in the police force's eyes. Their potential ability to circumvent and undermine Canadian authority, to trade with the Inuit, for example, outside political control, underpinned the anxiety surrounding Canada's claims of Sovereignty and authority in the region.

By 1903, to order to address the whaling problem, a government-led expedition to the Western Arctic had been secured through 'secret'

negotiations. On the 21st March, 1903, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, J. A. Smart, stated that the official justification for the expedition, under the pretext of environmental protection and stewardship, was to extend the fisheries protection service and monitor the whaling practices in Canada (Northwest Territories Correspondence 1903). In reality, as Smart reveals, the Canadian government was more concerned with publicly projecting and ‘flagging’ visible examples of Canadian Sovereignty through effective occupation by Canadian bodies than they were with protecting the environment:

‘It is feared that if American citizens are permitted to land and pursue the industries of whaling, fishing and trading with the Indians without complying with the revenue laws of Canada and without any assertion of Sovereignty on the part of Canada, unfounded and troublesome claims may hereafter be set up.’

(Comptrollers’ Correspondence 1903 vol. 293)

These potentially awkward and ‘troublesome claims’ spurred Canada to go ahead with the 1903 expedition, led by Superintendent Charles Constantine, to secure the establishment of a lively and, most importantly, *visible* Canadian presence in the region through the government-sponsored 1903-1904 voyage of the *Neptune* (see *Figure 4.1, below*). This expedition received wide publicity in the national newspapers; headlines such as ‘Canada claims all Arctic America’ in the Toronto’s *The Globe and Mail* celebrated that ‘Canada’s rule will be visibly demonstrated there’ (*The Globe and Mail* 31st October 1903). As had been the case with American whalers in the Beaufort Sea and on Herschel Island, the North-eastern Canadian Arctic was occupied in commercial activities by two, foreign whaling nations who were operating with few regulations. These included a Scottish fleet hunting whales in the waters of Baffin Bay and Cumberland Sound and an American whaling fleet operating around Hudson Bay, the latter of which had also established a

wintering station at Cape Fullerton. The potential anxieties for Canada concerning the presence of unregulated, foreign whalers, as it had done with the whalers at Herschel, spurred the Canadian Government to launch an expedition to Hudson's Bay so that they could visibly flag Canada's Sovereignty over the region. The geologist Tyrell explains that 'although by the Treaty of Utrecht, [when] the Sovereignty of Hudson Bay was ceded to Great Britain, it is just possible that, through the long continued acquiesce these foreigners (American whale men) may be establishing rights whilst ours are being allowed to lapse' (McGrath 1904). In order to address the political concerns, as expressed by Tyrell, it was important for the government to be seen to be present in the region, even symbolically, precisely because the Arctic was perceived as a remote and far-removed territory; thus, a marker of subjectivity was equally important. When considered through the lens of this socio-political context, it becomes convincing to assert that this approach and philosophy is one that is still important and one which continues to underpin contemporary Canadian government strategy today.



Figure 4.1: 'Officers of the *CGS Neptune*. Commander A.P. Low seated centre, Dr L.E. Borden seated on right.' Source: Dr Lorrin Elijah Borden Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E.



Figure 4.2: '*CGS Neptune* frozen in Cape Fullerton, Hudson's Bay' A.P. Low. Source: Dr Lorrin Elijah Borden Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E.

The *Neptune*, captained by Sam L. Bartlett, departed Halifax on the 23rd August, 1903. On its way to Hudson Bay, the ship picked up a native interpreter and pilot, called Ford, to help with the navigation and to facilitate communication with the Inuit. The reliance upon Inuit knowledge to navigate the region emphasises the Canadian government's lack of knowledge and inherent reliance upon an Inuit presence in order to be able to explore, and, paradoxically, govern the region. Subsequently, they sailed into Hudson Bay, debarking and wintering at Cape Fullerton Harbour in 1903 (see Figure 4.2, above). As this was reported to be *Era*, an American whaling vessel, wintering spot, Major John Douglas Moodie decided this would be the suitable location to build his first police post (Low 1906). As the Deputy Minister of the Interior, J. A. Smart, stated, this endeavour was 'for patrolling and exploring and establishing authority of the Government...our knowledge of the Northern portion of the territories in question being so inexact no very definite instructions can be given as to the location of the [police] post' (J. A. Smart memo, Comptroller's Correspondence 1903 vol. 293). The government in Ottawa had very little knowledge of this remote region and relied heavily on the intuition of the expedition party to decide the best places for building detachments. Albert Peter Low, for example, suggested that a customs post be established at Whale Point, on Southampton Island, as he observed that regular whale hunts happened in the region and that it was also the location of the summer camp of the Aivillik natives (Low 1906:34). Yet, it did not really matter for Ottawa where the outposts were; it was more important that outposts were visible to foreign whalers and that they were capable of asserting their jurisdiction over them. Major Moodie was tasked with heading a six-man, North West Mounted Police detachment and was promoted to Superintendent during the expedition. He stated that the purpose of the NWMP presence on the *Neptune* was to 'impress upon the captains of whaling and trading vessels and the natives...[that] laws will be enforced as in other parts of Canada' (Unsigned memo 5th August: Comptrollers).

During this first winter, the NWMP personnel on-board was tasked with scouting the surrounding region for future detachments, including Repulse Bay, Churchill, and Pond Inlet and building several small outposts for future use in Fullerton. Comptroller White reported to Laurier, on the 8th August 1904, that the NWMP had 'established a post there and built huts, and I feel sure that we have now made a fair start in opening up those regions' (Comptrollers' Correspondence vol. 293). Moodie also recognised the strategic importance of utilising Inuit knowledge at these remote outposts, recommending that 'two Natives [Inuit] be employed at each outpost' who ought to be paid \$4.50 a month for their services in translating and providing hunting skills for meat (NWMP report 1904:8).

Comptroller White informed Superintendent Constantine that at all police posts which were to be established in the region, each post should display the flying of the Union Jack flag, overtly displaying a visible and branded Canadian presence (Constantine Papers vol. 5). Yet, the establishment of a police detachment on Herschel Island was not without its problems. By August 1903, two NWMP men had reached the island; however, these men were reliant on the whalers and missionary already present for supplies and shelter. It is somewhat ironic that the detachment's objective was to assert and emphasise Canada's authority over the region, yet their own survival relied completely on the presence and cooperation of the 'foreigners' already established there. There was no wood on the island and the police post's success and survival depended on coal being bought from the whalers and the rental of one of the frame buildings from the Pacific Steam Whaling Company. Their effectiveness at collecting customs duties from the whalers was also chaotic and relied on the voluntary cooperation of the whalers. Their endeavours were also hampered by the harsh environment and their lack of technical mobility in the region. Because the police post did not have an effective means of transport to patrol the region and visit different island outposts, if a whaling captain did not wish to pay customs duties on his haul or the trade goods brought from America to pay the Inuit they employed, the

Captain could simply bypass Herschel Island altogether safe in the knowledge that the police detachment was relatively impotent. Further adding to their embarrassment, on one occasion, the Sergeant in charge at Herschel, F J Fitzgerald, remarked that he was obliged to feign ignorance of any untruthful customs goods declarations by the foreign whalers for fear of further undermining his already tenuous position of authority: 'I could not let the captains know that I knew that tobacco was traded, as that would show them that I could take no action at the present time' (NWMP report 1905:129). The tenuous authority of police patrols was not confined to patrols at Herschel Island and was the case throughout the North West Territories. An undated letter to Major McKeand describes the challenges faced by police in asserting credible authority during annual patrols in Quebec and their lack of impact upon the local population:

'The Annual visitation by the Police is regarded in the light of a joke by the Eskimo and the Hudson Bay Company, as he [RCMP officer] usually walks around looking important and accomplishing very little good. A summer Policeman can do little more than accept the statements of the Hudson Bay Company employees which may be correct or incorrect according to the sobriety of the man being questioned, and if the Policeman is of the wrong calibre according to his own sobriety.'

(RNWMP Report, 1905)

Thus, as this report highlights, the police force in the region possessed inherent anxieties concerning their ability to assert meaningful authority over the whalers and Inuit. In this respect, despite the initial objective being to use the police force to as a representation of Canadian authority, governance and administration in the Arctic region, the geographical remoteness and the inherently limited government presence frustrated these attempts. Thus,

whilst persistence anxieties remained, concerning the credibility of the NWMP to assert authority over the whalers, the police force and the other crew members of the *CGS Neptune* fundamentally relied upon the presence and cooperation of the whalers during their early occupation of the Arctic. During the winter at Cape Fullerton, in 1903, the whalers and the crew would frequently participate in recreational activities that would attempt to create or replicate a sense of 'home' and to generate a sense of camaraderie amongst the men. Whether this was through weekly dances on-board or recreational sports on the ice, enabling them to take part in everyday, banal experiences – something as simple as playing a game of football, as seen below in Figure 4.3, for example – the interaction with the whalers served as a banal representation of a Canadian homeland and, by extension, of occupation (see Billig 1995). Ironically, therefore, whilst the presence of the whalers generated and played upon Canada's anxieties of belonging and possession, at the very same time, they served as evidence of their occupation.



Figure 4.3 'Recreational football on ice near cape Fullerton, 1903-04 between crew of *Neptune* and American schooner *Era*. Dr Borden at right near referee.'

Source: Dr Lorrin Elijah Borden Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E.

Performing authority on-board the *CGS Arctic*, a police patrol ship

In 1904, Laurier commissioned a coast guard polar ship which was to be purchased by the government for the purpose of increasing the visible and mobile government presence in the Arctic; the ship that was acquired was aptly renamed the *CGS Arctic*. By establishing jurisdictional police outposts in the Eastern Arctic, even if this governing presence was temporary and mostly symbolic in nature, Laurier's government continued with the planned expansion of police outposts – even after the relative failure of the police post at Herschel the previous year. The 1904-1905, government-led Dominion Expedition to Hudson Bay and the surrounding Arctic islands, on-board the newly commissioned *CGS Arctic*, was initially intended to be solely commanded by Captain Joseph-Elzéar Bernier. Bernier was a merchant captain with a few years of Arctic experience; he possessed a personal fascination with Arctic exploration and, notably, he expressed the desire to be the first person to reach the North Pole (Cavell 2013). He had repeatedly sought support from the Canadian government over the previous decade to sponsor his endeavours to reach the North Pole on Canada's behalf. However, despite his popular press campaigns, Laurier chose not to support Bernier's request, partly because his planned route was expensive and partly because this was not a 'territory' about which they were anxious, for practical and political reasons, to avoid losing. Furthermore, Laurier dismissed Bernier's request because his proposed route would not have taken place entirely internally within Canadian maritime territory (Cavell 2011); Laurier's decision not to sponsor this voyage to the North Pole highlights the importance the government placed upon the act of performing voyages of exploration within Canadian waters.

However, whilst Bernier would command the navigational aspect of the 1904-1905 voyage, the jurisdictional command of the voyage would fall once more to Moodie. The decision to place a police officer in charge of this voyage is, symbolically, an important statement by Laurier government. The decision implies that the government had decided that effective occupation

of these Arctic islands could still be achieved by establishing a jurisdictional governing presence, regardless of how small that presence was, even if settler-colonial communities were not present to occupy the Arctic region because of the harsh geophysical environment. Whilst settler-families could not have been asked to endure that environment, the expectation was that police officers were capable of enduring and overcoming the harsh wind, ice, cold and darkness on tours of duty; this perception was consistent with the narrative of the heroic white male being able to overcome the Arctic: a historical narrative that was routinely employed by the earlier British sponsored expeditions to the Arctic over the previous two hundred years. In a memo on the 1st August, 1904, Comptroller White instructed that 1904-1905 voyage would be tasked with establishing police posts and ‘the introduction of the system of Government control as prevails in the organised portion of Canada, will be assigned to the Mounted Police’ (Comptrollers’ correspondence 1904 vol. 293). The expedition left Quebec on the 17th September and arrived in Fullerton on the 16th October. Rather than one which would conduct scientific investigation, this voyage was viewed by Moodie solely as a police endeavour. The main tasks Moodie was responsible for were the establishment of new detachments and the consolidation and expansion of active police patrols around the bay, ensuring that a police presence was visible in the bay by the Inuit and foreign vessels and, concurrently, that visible Canadian bodies were on display and enrolled in symbolic effective occupation activities. In order to build the police post’s storehouse at Cape Fullerton, in such a harsh and remote environment, Moodie relied upon the cooperation of whaling captain George Comer of the *Era* to sell him his ship to be used as building materials as there were no trees in the bay. As there was no carpenter on board, he even required Comer to loan him the ship’s carpenter to help with the engineering (RNWMP report 1905:10). The detachment also relied upon the local Inuit at Baker Lake to provide the detachment with hunted meat in the winter (Comptrollers’ correspondence 1904 vol. 329). Although Fullerton remained a remote outpost which constantly relied upon supplies being brought in from Churchill

and further south, it remained an important outpost that visibly displayed Canadian authority in the region: it was 'the only point in the vast area tributary to the Northern part of Hudson's Bay where there is an established authority' (RNWMP report 1918:15).

The tradition of establishing police posts was continued in 1922, when the RCMP were given a new post to occupy at Fram Fjord on Ellsemere Island. The new settlement was to combine the roles of a police station, a customs house and the most Northerly post office in the world, even though no Canadian citizens were living or present within hundreds of miles from the detachment. These combined activities by the RCMP provided Canada with solid, stable markers in the Arctic and ensured the repetitive claim of effective occupation through repeated, mundane practices. In this respect, Janice Cavell rightly observed that 'there was no formal declaration of Sovereignty at the new post. Instead, the performance of scientific and administrative work affirmed the fact of Canada's ownership' (Cavell and Noakes 2010:167). These mundane performances are linked to wider forms of settler-colonialism, a practice that the British were particularly fond of; instead of solemn proclamations of ownership, Canada was asserting itself in the region through physical markers that served to flag visibly a Canadian presence.

Post Offices as banal forms of occupation

Apart from monitoring whalers and attempting to collect customs from whaling companies, the RNWMP were often involved in other banal performances of Sovereignty by maintaining a post office post in the area and through the distribution of mail around the western Arctic. Carrying official mail was a means of demonstrating that the area was being actively occupied both in symbolic displays and through controlled jurisdiction. The police also distributed Inuit postal correspondence through a rural delivery system; in 1910, an Inspector Jennings observed that the 'patrol leaving Herschel Island

took 184 letters, exclusive of official correspondence. Eight of them were written by Eskimo to other Eskimo along the coast' (Comptrollers correspondence 1910 vol. 383).

Flags, cairns and Sovereignty

In 1906, Bernier again sailed North on the *Arctic* to collect custom duties. At each Island Bernier visited, he and the ship's crew would find a strategic geographical location, such as a high point, and erect a stone cairn containing a metal box containing a written proclamation that claimed the island for Canada. This practice has also been adopted on the earlier 1903 *Neptune* voyages. In Albert P Low's 1906 report on the 1903-1904 *Neptune* voyage, he writes that 'it took little time to attend to the duties of the landing at Cape Herschel, where a document taking formal possession in the name of King Edward VII, for the Dominion, was read and the Canadian flag was raised and saluted. The document was placed in a large cairn built of rock on the end of the cape' (Low 1906:46). An ostensibly identical document – bar the name – was placed in a cairn on the North coast of Devon Island by Low on 15th August, 1904; the proclamation stated that 'in the name of his most Gracious Majesty, King Edward the VII, and on behalf of the government of the Dominion of Canada, I have this day taken possession of the Island of Devon, and all the smaller islands adjoining it. And in token of such formal possession, I have caused the flag of the Dominion of Canada to be hoisted, upon the land of North Devon: and have deposited a copy of this document sealed in a metal box, in a cairn erected on Beechy Island' (Low 1904). Just as the colonial French had done, having frequently employed the practice of enrolling native bodies in their own ceremonies of possession, Inuit bodies were regularly photographed and included as a part of these Canadian rituals on many of the early Arctic expeditions. The photograph below (*see Figure 4.4, below*), for example, depicts the crew in the Arctic and alongside Inuit in a flag-hoisting ceremony on Baffin Island.



Figure 4.4: 'Large group of Inuit with crewmen of *Arctic* at ceremonial taking of possession by Capt. Joseph-Elzéar Bernier, Baffin Island, NWT, 9th November, 1906.'

Source: George Lancefield, Library and Archives Canada, PA-165672.

However, in 1909, Bernier concluded that sailing around all of the islands was both time-consuming and unnecessary. Instead, he unveiled a bronze plaque on Melville Island, with the written proclamation stating Canada's claim to the whole Arctic Archipelago (*see Figure 4.5, below*). Bernier felt that a strategic bronze plaque would act as a symbolic flag of all of the Arctic Islands of the Arctic Archipelago which he felt already belonged to Canada anyway. Thus, the proclamation on the plaque only served to reaffirm Canada's entitled possession of the Arctic. Echoing the behaviour of the Spanish in the fifteenth century, who felt that certain regions belonged to them as a result

of Divine Right, Bernier believed that, through the 1880 transfer of the Arctic territories by the British to Canada, the same was effectively true of this region.

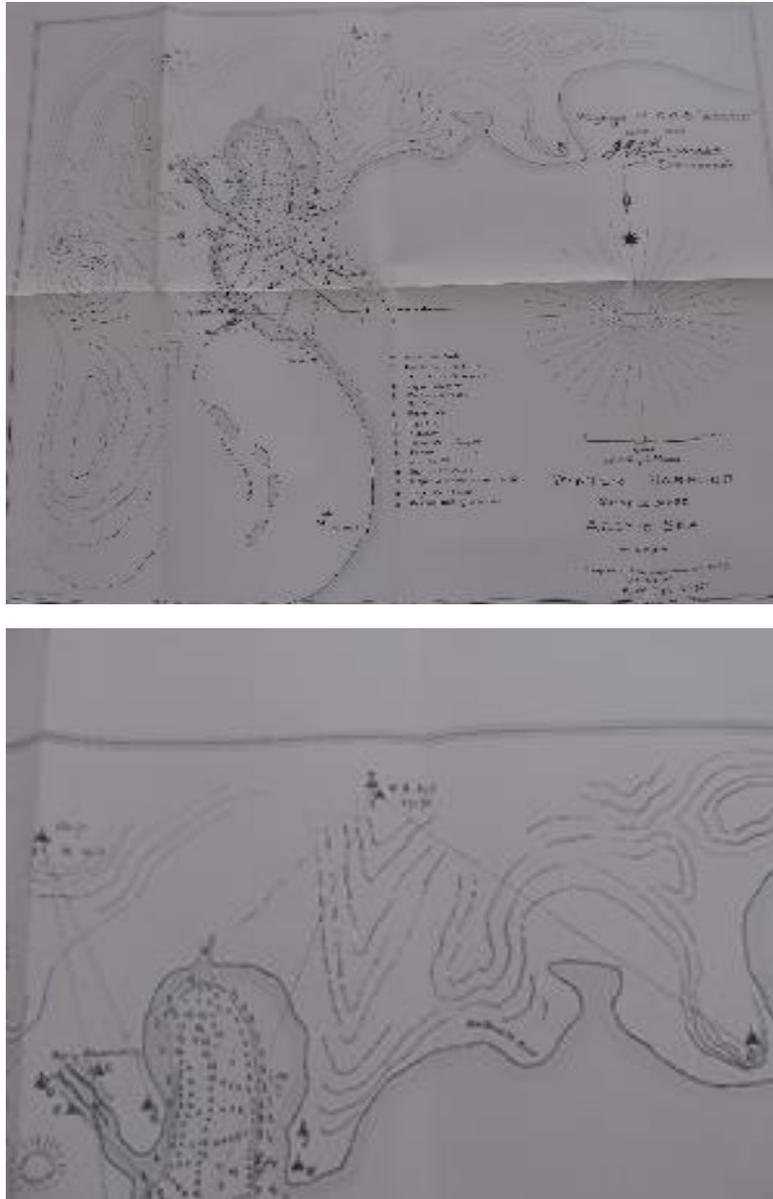


Figure 4.5: 'Voyage of *CGS Arctic* 1908-1909. Winter harbour, Melville Island Arctic Sea, 1909. Drawn by E.M. Longtin November, 1909.' Source: Library and Archives Canada. R12567-193-0-E, Box 2000538990.

Despite Bernier's alternative approach, Canada persevered in the practice of placing strategic cairns across various islands in the Arctic to flag its Sovereignty. For example, in 1944, Henry Larson, the captain of the RCMP vessel *St Roch*, also constructed cairns. On the 24th November, 1944, the commissioner of the Northwest Territories, S.T. Wood, deemed it significant enough an issue that he wrote a memo to the Deputy Minister of the Department of Mines and Resources, listing all of the cairns Larson and his crew built over the course of their voyage (Wood 1944). In this way, the Canadian administration demonstrated that it was acutely aware of the role that such cairns would play as visible flags of Canadian Sovereignty. Whilst a plaque was, realistically, unlikely to be seen by many – even more so in a period prior to social media – because of the remoteness of the Arctic and the challenges associated with navigating through it, the repeated use of the physical marker of occupation through a cairn disseminated the message of the plaque around the Arctic in a far more visible way, even more so in an environment that lacked many distinctive markers. Crucially, cairns could be viewed from the decks of ships, not requiring people to dock and disembark.

Not only did the Canadian State recognise the importance of constructing cairns within the Arctic for the purposes of visually projecting Canadian occupation within the region, historic cairns, left by earlier explorations of the region were also appropriated and co-opted by the Canadian government. In dealing with the potentially problematic nature of historic cairns, the Canadian government sought to use two, albeit paradoxical or counter-intuitive, approaches. Expeditions were required to report information regarding any cairns and any written or physical material found within them. For example, Robert Gordon Robertson, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Northern Affairs Canada and Commissioner of the Northwest Territories in 1953, issued a written guideline to accompany Northern patrols in the Arctic should they come across explorers' cairns; he stated that 'the various cairns through the North are of considerable historical interest as they confirm the claims made by explorers. Sometimes they provide the most

important clues to the fate of an expedition. For these reasons, explorers' cairns are protected under the Northwest Territories Act. If you find an original record inside an explorer's cairn, unless circumstances prevents you, copy it, sign and date the copy, and leave it in the cairn in place of the original...The record should be accompanied by a description of the location of the cairn and its condition, and if possible the cairn should be photographed'. On the one hand, such cairns, particularly those in strategically significant locations, could provide Canada's contemporary construction of cairns with an advantageous link to a long-standing narrative of occupation. Minister Robertson also highlighted the strategic importance of the RCMP coming across cairns that were 'made by Eskimos to mark a route or cache'. These houses and cairns were also protected under the Northwest Territories Act and, as Robertson suggests, the careful excavation of these cairns could reveal the early history of the Inuit. Thus, Robertson's guidelines serve to reflect the importance that the Canadian government placed upon locating historical relics which had the potential to be used as material examples of the historical occupation of the Arctic by 'Canadians'.

Yet, at the same time, historical cairns that were found on government-sponsored expeditions also had the potential to prove problematic. For example, the written materials left by Norwegian explorer Otto Sverdrup, were removed and replaced by a Canadian proclamation. For example, Figure 4.6, below, is a map found by Bernier on 12th August, 1907; it is a tracing of a map showing the locations of cairns, drawn by Gunerius Isachsen, a cartographer with the 1898-1902, Fram Arctic expedition that was headed by Otto Sverdrup. Removing this material and subsequently sending it back to the Norwegian government, fulfilled the request written by Sverdrup which accompanied the material that was discovered. On the surface, Canada's behaviour is wholly objective, merely fulfilling the request left by Sverdrup at face value. However, it is far more convincing to view Canada's behaviour as a means of cleansing the region of any records of 'foreign' encounter that could, subsequently, lead to territorial claims by external actors.

Furthermore, in a government file which indexes the documents and relics located in the Eastern Arctic, the physical and symbolic value intrinsic within the materials of Bernier and Low are revealed in the fact that they were held in Ottawa until 'a fireproof museum is built at either Regina or Ottawa' (Memo of GT Hann, Departmental Secretary, 6th February, 1945).

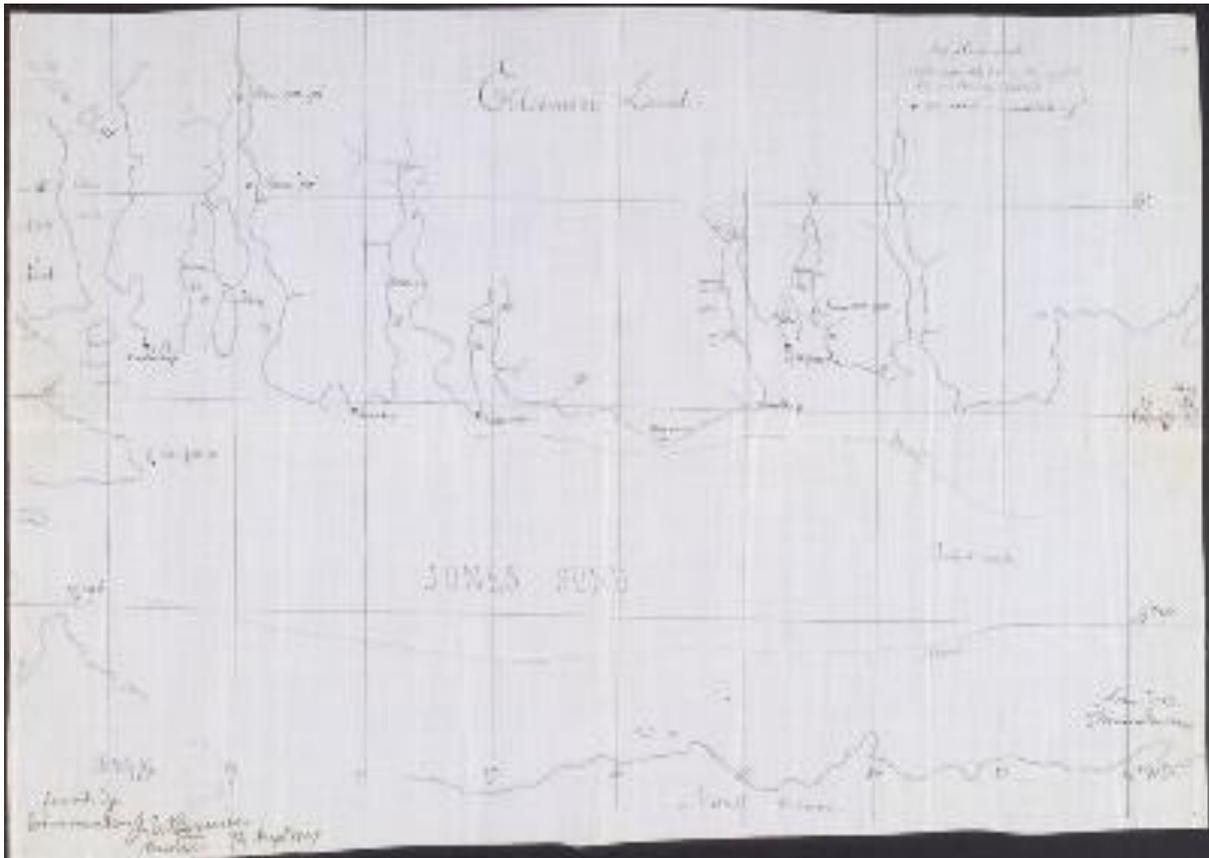


Figure 4.6: 'Ellesmere land, chart found by Capt. Bernier 12th August, 1907, on Cone Island; left behind by Sverdrup, 18th March, 1902.' Source: Library and Archives Canada, Microfiche NMC193769.

Buildings as static flag-markers on maps.

The map below demarcates, through a red flag symbol, the observatory stations set up during the government-sponsored 1884 expedition through

Hudson Bay (*see Figure 4.7, below*). This was the first of three annual expeditions to investigate the accessibility of Hudson Bay and Strait in the hope of discovering a short, navigable route for Canadian trade with Europe. Despite the fact that this expedition's purpose was concerned with shipping and trade routes, the map serves to reveal that numerous scientific observations were also being conducted. These stations functioned as solid, stable markers of effective occupation by Canada. The reports which were created by the Geological Survey of Canada were widely disseminated to prospective investors in the hope that they would embark upon various projects and investment opportunities that developing the North would allow for. However, whilst prospective investors might have viewed the Canadian North as 'empty', by flagging observation stations on a map, the Geological Survey of Canada were concurrently emphasising both its relative emptiness and its 'peopling'.

Almost a century later, the same practice can be seen being employed; in 1974, the Canadian government released a fourth edition to an atlas of Canada, newly named 'The National Atlas of Canada'. This name change alluded to the need for a summary of special information on environment and socio-economic subjects that were deemed of a national interest to Canada. In this edition, an intriguing 'Developments of Northern Settlements' map was included (*see Figure 4.7, below*); it depicted the chronology of selected facilities in settlements North of the 60th parallel. The selected facilities, which are demarcated on the map, include trading posts, mission houses, RCMP Posts, Post Offices, weather stations and DEW line stations. Similarly to the map of the 1884 expedition, the emphasis on specifically flagging buildings in the Canadian North served as a means of demonstrating the 'peopling' of the Canadian Arctic. These markers, therefore, functioned as representations of a lively occupation, not just as static flagpoles, but by representing the intended facilities, they were also emphasising the performative practices that were being carried out at these locations – such as scientific research or everyday, banal administration. Thus, not only did

these buildings function in a similar way to the cairns that were constructed within the Arctic, through the mobility of the maps to travel and be disseminated, the cairns and buildings were effectively ‘brought down south’ where they could be consumed by audiences, both Canadian and international. Importantly, it is the occupying efforts by non-Inuit Canadian bodies that are featured on both maps; ironically, even though the Inuit were routinely enrolled as examples of lively occupation of the Canadian Arctic, they were also effectively erased from representation.

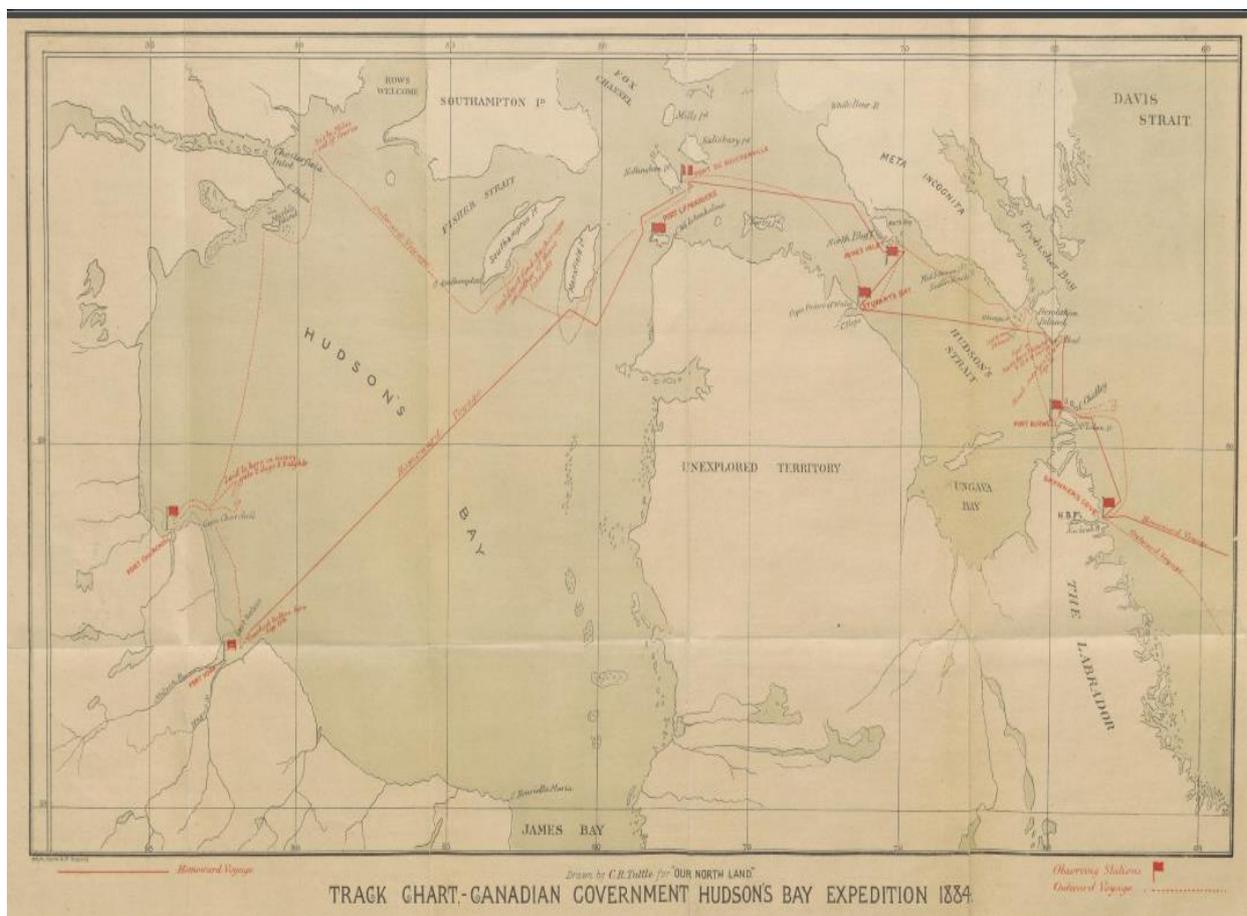


Figure 4.7: ‘Route of Canadian Government Hudson’s Bay Expedition on board the SS *Neptune* 1884. The Canadian government’s geological survey of Canada.’ Tuttle, CR, (1885) ‘Our North Land.’ Source: British Library.

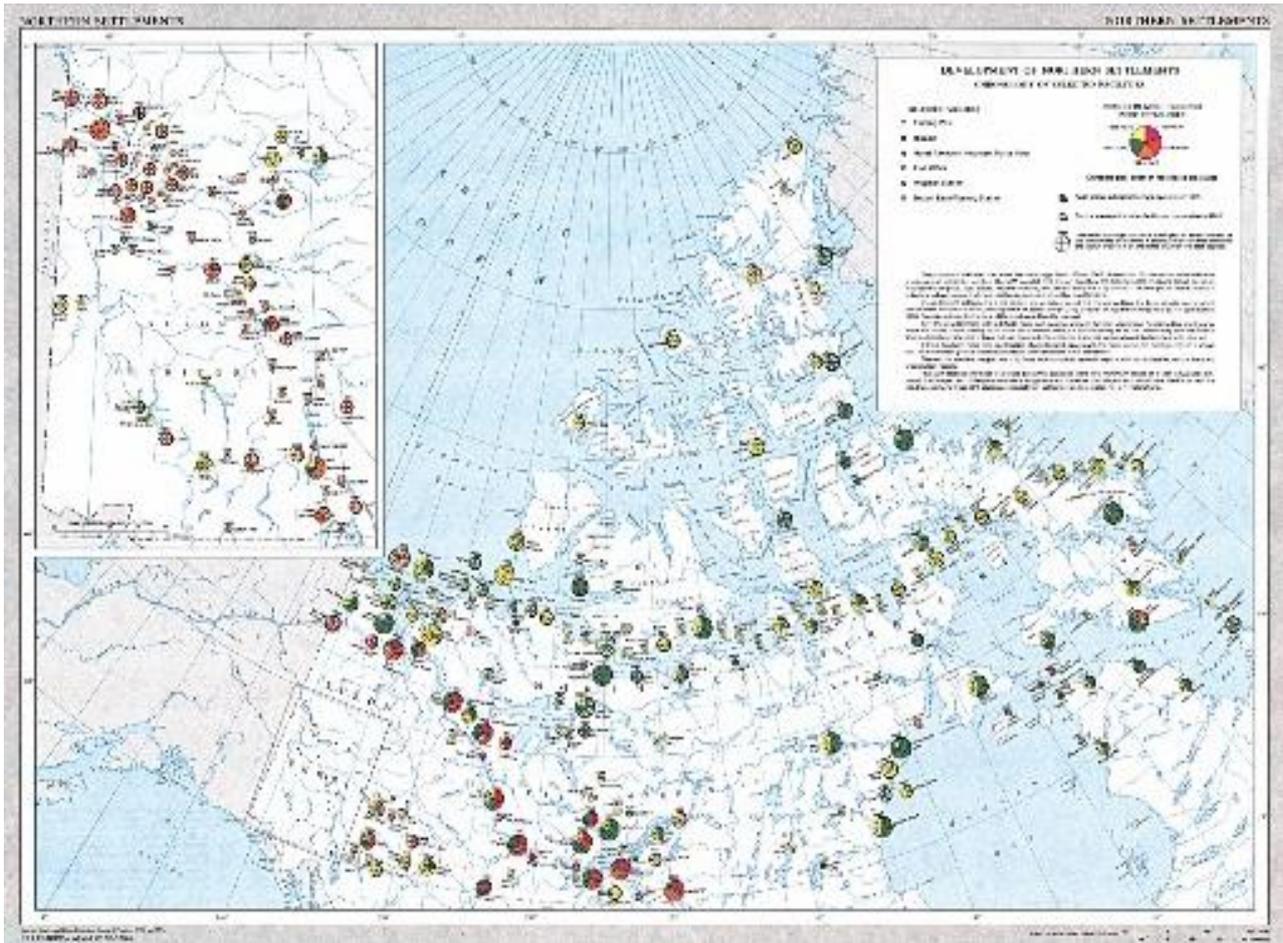


Figure 4.8: ‘Developments of Northern Settlements.’ National Atlas of Canada, 1965. British Library.

Relics, Rituals and Spectral occupations

On the 1903 *Neptune* voyage, Low wrote a detailed account of the expedition’s visit to Beechey Island to view the Franklin monument. He stated that as many of the crew as could be spared were given permission to land at Beechey Island to visit this ‘historic spot, where the ill-fated and heroic Franklin and the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror* spent their last winter on land’ (Low 1906:51) (see Figure 4.9, below). Low describes the remains they found at the ‘ancient settlement’, including the ‘ice-battered’ remains of a small sloop and a large mahogany lifeboat that was badly broken by the ice.

This 'ancient settlement' is described by Low using language that domesticates the explorers' remains and functions as a means of evidencing the continued occupation of the Canadian Arctic, albeit by means of British objects. A frame of an ancient house and low, stone wall was explored by the men where they found inside many casks of provisions that were broken and their contents spoiled. Their expedition, like Bernier's, saw a value in bringing home objects as a souvenir: 'a small platform cart, showing few signs of exposure to the weather, stood beside the house, and was brought home as a souvenir' (Low 1906:51). It is interesting to note that the 'cart' is described as not having succumbed to the harsh 'ice-battered' Arctic environment; whilst the men might not have recognised it, the cart's value and importance also stems from the fact that it serves as physical and symbolic evidence of the ability to endure and overcome the environment.

The crew decided to take a photograph to commemorate their performance of raising the flag, saluting in front on the wooden cenotaph and delicate marble slab brought by the McClintock expedition (*see Figure 4.10, below*). The materiality of the marble slab is also commented upon by Low, who suggests that 'if another expedition visits this place the material for a suitable foundation for the slab should be taken so that it may be erected as originally intended' (Low 1906:52). Not only is Low suggesting that the memorial to Franklin should be in permanent performance of commemoration, not as they found it on the floor, but that the slab in a solid, stable foundation would act as a permanent Canadian marker on the Arctic landscape.



Figure 4.9: 'Neptune crew at the Sir John Franklin's monument, Erebus Bay.' Source: Dr Lorris Elijah Borden Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E.



Figure 4.10: 'Members of Canadian Geological Survey, Arctic Expedition, around Franklin's cenotaph, Beechey Island, Northwest Territories (Nunavut), 1923.' Source: J. Dewey Soper Fonds, Canadian Museum of History 61023

Concealed inside the wooden cenotaph was a metal tin. Inside this tin was a record of the 1903 Norwegian Magnetic Pole expedition arriving on the Gjoa in August, 1903. The record was removed by the men and forwarded to the Norwegian government upon their return in 1904. This record of 'foreign' bodies being present in Canadian territory was too much of a risk to leave there: there could be no confusion about which bodies or objects were favoured and enrolled in Canadian Sovereignty performances. In the same way, Low's reference to the fact that 'the Gjoa expedition is aware of the police establishments' in Hudson's Bay, even in a context where it referred to the fact that the Norwegians had been made aware that they could retreat there as a point of safety, subtly draws attention to the way that Canadian jurisdiction had and was being disseminated to external actors.

Science and surveying in occupying atmospheres

As referred to above, the 1903 expedition was the first time a government expedition to the region was explicitly concerned with the collection of scientific data and the establishment of Canadian Sovereignty through a permanent police post. There had been four exploratory Dominion government expeditions to Hudson Bay in 1884-1897. The Dominion government in 1885 sent steamers out under the command of Commander Gordon; the specific expedition objectives that were outlined related to navigation. The objectives were clear: assessing the feasibility of a port and the possibility of a commercial shipping route through the Hudson's Strait and establishing temporary observation stations from which data on ice could be collected (Low: 1906:299). Low's report lists the scientific crew and their various responsibilities: Dr Borden was tasked with collecting specimens and data relating to ethnography, botany and zoology; Mr Halkett, a naturalist from the Department of Marine and Fisheries was employed to retrieve plant and fossils specimens; and Mr King oversaw the topographical work to conduct a geological survey, assisted by Mr Caldwell, who was a photographer (see *Figure 4.11, below*). Photographing the *Neptune* in situ

was a regular feature in the sixty-three photographs that Low included in his report. In particular, the image of the ship in its full regalia (see *Figure 4.12, below*) is significant because it serves as an intensely visual means through which Canada was able to demonstrate its authority within the region that could subsequently be disseminated to audiences further south and abroad.



Figure 4.11: 'Scientific crew, *Neptune*.' Top: Professor Halkett, C.F. King. Seated: G.F. Caldwell, Dr Borden, A.P. Low. Source: Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E, C-088434.



Figure 4.12: 'Neptune Dressed on Dominion Day 1st July, 1904.' Photo by J.D. Moodie' Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
Source: Library and Archives Canada, C-001764.

Police patrols to survey the Arctic

The police were also actively involved in assisting the Department of the Interior with surveying exercises and general support. The Fullerton Detachment in 1911, for example, had conducted the census in the area on behalf of the Department of the Interior (RNWMP report 1911:264). When a proposed railroad to Hudson Bay was approved by the Laurier's government in 1907, Comptroller White suggested to the Minister of the Interior, Frank Oliver, that the police could be of use in helping survey the proposed route: 'if you have any surveyors you wish to get into Fort Churchill, we might manage to send them by our vessel' (Comptroller correspondence 1907 vol. 330). The police patrols also aided by being responsible for monitoring and surveying the 'health and wellbeing' of Canadian bodies, both human and non-human, for Sovereignty performances; knowing your territory, and what was occupied within it, was an important way of asserting Sovereignty. The Inuit were often included in censuses and reports written for the Department

of Indian Affairs by the police alongside their day-to-day work enforcing the laws and carrying out the conservation of game, particularly muskoxen. On the 16th Feb, 1910, for example, a cargo of beaver pelts trapped out of season were seized and confiscated by Inspector Jennings's men on behalf of the Department of the Interior (Comptrollers Correspondence vol. 383).

Anxieties concerning foreigners in the Arctic

In 1919, the Canadian government was concerned about specific Indigenous bodies being actively present on Ellesmere Island. Greenlandic Inuit had repeatedly travelled across Smith Sound from their traditional camps in Thule to hunt musk-oxen on Ellesmere Island. As Greenland was a possession of Denmark, the Canadian Government requested that the Danish government prevent the Greenlandic Inuit from hunting on Ellesmere Island, believing that their activities represented a direct challenge to Canadian Sovereignty and their ability to govern in the area effectively. A government committee at the time recommended that Canada establish itself more effectively through the relocation of Canadian bodies and activities on the island and adjoining region:

‘To securely establish Canada’s title, occupation and administration are necessary. Therefore, next spring an expedition should be sent North to locate two or three permanent police posts on Ellesmere land. This probably should be followed by the transfer of some Canadian Eskimos to the island. Steps should also be taken to encourage the Hudson’s Bay Co. or other traders to extend their operations northward. It is also desirable that detailed exploration should be carried out on this and adjoining islands.’

(Harkin 1920)

Unsurprisingly, considering it through the lens of a post-colonialist critic, Lee-Anne Broadhead was justified in drawing attention to the underlying significance of the fact that 'neither government, Canadian nor Danish, saw it as problematic to move 'Eskimos around like pawns on a chessboard, or to draw boundaries serving to curtail drastically the traditional activities of people living in balance with their environment for millennia' (Broadhead 2010:924).

In 1922, a fishing dispute between Denmark and Norway, involving Danish claims to North-eastern Greenland, influenced the Canadian government to readdress how their Sovereignty over the Sverdrup Islands was displayed. Under the command of a now 70-year-old Bernier, the *Arctic* sailed North to patrol the Eastern Arctic. This was the first annual patrol to be conducted; this patrol continued for over forty years in 1922-1969. Two police posts were established at Craig Harbour, Ellesmere Island and a couple of Inuit families from the west coast of Greenland were hired to assist the police at this post. Ellesmere Island and a couple of Inuit families from the west coast of Greenland were hired to assist the police at this post (*see Figure 4.14, below*).



Figure 4.14: 'The first Inuit to come aboard the *Arctic* during an expedition commanded by J.P. Craig and Captain Joseph-Elzéar Bernier, 1922.' William Harold Grant. Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-209521.

Assessing the health of the Inuit

In 1903-1904, Dr Lorrin Elijah Borden was the first doctor commissioned by the Canadian government to conduct a physical and anthropological report on the 'Eskimo', whilst enrolled as a surgeon and botanist on the first Canadian government expedition to the Eastern Arctic aboard the *Neptune*. As aforementioned, this voyage was explicitly concerned with the collection of scientific data and the establishment of Canadian Sovereignty. On this voyage, Low took many photographs documenting the interactions the men

had with the Inuit, including many medical examinations administered by Dr Borden (see Figure 4.13, below).



Figure 4.13: 'An Eskimo, one case of psoriasis', A.P. Low. Source: Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E, C-088435.

During these Patrols, O.S. Finnie, the Director of Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch, Department of the Interior 1921-31, regularly appointed physicians to serve on-board. This process of assessing the health of the Inuit populations followed on from the precedent set by Dr Borden on the *Neptune* in 1903. They supplied Inuit communities with annual medical and dental services, sometimes sailing Inuit patients south for tuberculosis treatment, and performed medical surveys of the Inuit population.

However, during the depression that forced the government to curb its spending, the Bennett administration was forced to stop chartering the *Beothic*. Instead, they relied on the presence and capabilities of the Hudson Bay Company again, just as the 1903-1904 voyage *Neptune* had relied upon Inuit guides and the American whalers for suppliers and shelter (see *Figure 4.15, below*). Low's 1906 report he repeatedly alludes to the reliance upon the foreign whalers and Inuit interpreters in successfully carrying out the biopolitical surveys of the Inuit in the region. For example, Low references how the details of the 'natives' were taken by an 'Eskimo man', Ford. Ford spoke to the Inuit directly to glean information and discerned further details of the Inuit by interviewing the Scottish whaling captains. Subsequently, Low wrote that the Scottish Whalers 'gave a great deal of information concerning whales and whaling, as well as ice currents and other points relating to the Arctic' (Low 1906:59). In referring to Ford's contribution to their work, Low describes the services of an 'intelligent pilot' that relied upon to navigate them further up the inlet to where the Scottish whalers were anchored. Despite repeated Eastern Arctic voyages to the region over the next forty years, by the NWMP, who would be renamed the RCMP in 1920, these annual voyages would be deemed insufficient in assuaging the anxieties concerning the lack of Canadian bodies occupying certain, strategic parts of the Arctic region.



Figure 4.15: 'Igloos near *Neptune*, near Cape Fullerton 1903-04. Eskimo employed by the expedition lived in Igloos.' Source: Dr Lorris Elijah Borden Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, R1505-0-2-E.

Mitigating anxieties through the relocation programme

By 1953, concerned about Arctic Sovereignty in the face of the Cold War, Canadian officials embarked upon a strategic relocation project. This time, instead of hiring Greenlandic Inuit, who were used to and well adapted to living and hunting in this strategic Arctic territory (Jenness 1964:30) as they had done in the 1920s on Ellesmere Island at the police posts, Ottawa actively sought a means of settling Canadian Inuit residents in the unoccupied parts of the Eastern Arctic Archipelago. Clearly, Canadian officials had become aware of the notion that Indigenous communities could be, to borrow Klaus Dodds' apt description, 'positioned as useful static markers of effective occupation' (Dodds 2012:1001), employing these bodies as living 'flagpoles'. A federal

press release at the time draws attention to the geopolitical importance and strategy that served as the motive underpinning the relocation:

‘In addition to placing the Eskimos in new regions where game is more abundant and work more regular, there is the angle of occupation of the country...to forestall any such future claims, the Dominion is occupying the Arctic island to within nearly 700 miles of the North Pole.’

(Montagnes 1935:56)

Considering the emergent threat from the Cold War Soviet Union, and arguably the United States as well, Canada was prompted to be proactive in seeking to display overtly its Sovereignty and effective occupation of the High Arctic. The Canadian Government’s solution was simple; in the summer of 1953, they uprooted seven families from just outside of Inukjuak and an additional three families from Pond Inlet on Baffin Island, depositing them at two locations: Craig Harbour and Resolute Bay, Ellesmere Island. They promised them that the region had abundant game and hunting opportunities and offered a return ticket within three years’ time if the Inuit were unhappy: a promise that was all too readily reneged upon (see Soberman 1991:56). The Inuit were inadequately prepared for this harsh environment and the implementation of the project by Ottawa was lax; they did not provide permanent structures for housing the Inuit, leaving the families to endure winters in igloos and flimsy tents made of muskox hide (Soberman 1991).

The full impact of the policy did not truly come to light until hearings took place in the early 1990s as part of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Canada 1994). The House standing committee on aboriginal affairs asked the government in 1990 to apologise to the Inuit families who were relocated in 1953 as part of the government resettlement programme. The committee concluded that these Inuit were considerably negatively affected

by the relocation imposed by the government at the time. The government, in turn, commissioned two investigations, whose findings cleared the government of wrongdoing, instead arguing that the Inuit were relocated for humanitarian purposes and that they had volunteered for this relocation. Tom Siddon, the then Minister of Indian Affairs asserted that, 'the decisions by the federal government, in the early 1950s, appear to have been related solely to improving the harsh social and economic conditions facing the Inuit at Inukjuak at the time' (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1990:2). Siddon also asserted that 'it would be inappropriate for the government to apologise for having initiated and carried out the relocation' (*Vancouver Sun* 1992). Again, it is worth noting that the Inuit were not consulted in these reports and that, by failing to interview them, the Inuit voice was effectively silenced. An official apology on behalf of the government did not take place until the 18th August, 2010, by newly appointed Indian Minister John Duncan, Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. In his apology on behalf of Stephen Harper, Duncan acknowledged that the government had made mistakes, but still chose to draw attention to the geopolitical significance of what their suffering had enabled the State to accomplish:

'[The Canadian government] would like to pay tribute to the relocatees for their perseverance and courage. Despite the suffering and hardship, the relocatees and their descendants were successful in building vibrant communities in Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay. The Government of Canada recognises that these communities have contributed to a strong Canadian presence in the High Arctic.'

(Department of Aboriginal
Affairs and Northern
Development Canada 2010)

Annual Eastern Arctic patrols on the *C.D. Howe*, 1950-1969

The *C.D. Howe*, in service in 1950-1969, was an ocean-going, coastguard vessel commissioned by the Department of Transport, specially designed to withstand extreme ice conditions and turbulent weather on Eastern Arctic voyages (see Figure 4.16, below). Alongside a large cargo hold, capable of transporting 1000 tons of cargo, the ship was equipped with a well-provisioned hospital bay, a hydrographic charting office and a helicopter launch pad: the first in government service outside the Canadian Royal Navy (Collin and Maginley 2001). *Howe's* maiden voyage in the summer of 1950 was utilised by the Canadian government to administer and to perform, ceremoniously, its jurisdictional presence in the Eastern Arctic. Prior to *Howe's* maiden voyage, the government in 1932 had rented part of the Hudson Bay Company's ship *SS Ungava*, and subsequently rented the Hudson Bay Company ship *Nascopie* each year to conduct these Sovereignty-led patrols. Importantly, the commissioning of *Howe* replaced the need to 'hire' ships from the Hudson Bay Company for Eastern Arctic patrols. The government would now have a purpose-built ship; most importantly, this ship was indisputably Canadian and, as such, served as an overt symbol of Canadian authority in the region. As the Advisory Committee on Northern Development suggested in 1949, 'in the interests of Canadian Sovereignty, a token visit to Resolute bay should be included in the itinerary [of *C.D. Howe*] ...in view of the national importance of maintaining all evidences and acts of Canadian Sovereignty' (Privy Council Office 1949:1).



Figure 4.16: 'Department of Transport ship *C.D. Howe*, on Eastern Arctic patrol at Resolution Island.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 76, Item 59151-59152.

The crew and civil service staff aboard the *Howe* were tasked with three major roles: carrying supplies to Eastern Arctic remote Northern settlements; conducting extensive scientific, including hydrographic, research; and systematically documenting and administering the Eastern Arctic's Inuit's health programme through on-board medical examinations and the circulation of government published pamphlets on health and general wellbeing advice (see Figures 4.17, 4.18 and 4.19, below).



Figure 4.17: 'From the upper bridge of the *C.D. Howe*, Hydrographer, Steve Murphy, of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, "takes a fix" to determine the exact position of the ship in the Ungava Bay.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59662.



Figure 4.18: 'Hydrographer S.J. Murphy using a sextant on survey in Tuchailik Bay. In background the *CGS C.D. Howe*'. Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 76, Item 59172.



Figure 4.19: 'Members of the Eastern Arctic Patrol, Weldon Hannaford and Manny Littwin carry out magnetic work for the Dominion Observatory at Lake Harbour, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59663.

The ship effectively served as a floating laboratory; not merely for conservation, it functioned as an alternative centre of calculation through which the performance of collecting scientific data was carried out. The floating cabinet is actively performing to impart a degree of measured order onto the seemingly chaotic, mobile and fluid Arctic environment. Canada was not unique in enrolling ships as floating laboratories. The Norwegian Ship, *Maud*, was commissioned by Roald Amundsen to be used as a floating ice-station in the North Pole. Although the ship never actually reached the North Pole, it still collected valuable scientific data. A floating ice-station was also a way of utilising western technology to overcome the precarious Arctic environment for research capabilities. The ship, as a floating 'cabinet', becomes a point of collection and, concurrently, of display for scientific knowledge that is contingent on the mobility of both the ship as a physical container and the interpretive gaze of viewing it as a depository of knowledge.

Canadian government involvement in the social welfare of Inuit Arctic communities prior to the Second World War was lacking. In 1953, Prime Minister Louis St Laurent stated that 'in an almost continued state of absence of mind' has Canada administered the Northern territories (Canada, House of Commons, 1953:698). The Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs had a staff of only forty in 1945, yet, by January 1950, an organised programme of active intervention in Inuit lives by the Canadian administration had been put into place through the creation of the Department of Resources and Development. It was through this means, planned medical examinations and relocations that purported to be responding to the welfare concerns and medical problems of the Inuit residing in the Arctic, also '*coincidentally* [addressed] issues of Arctic Sovereignty' (Tester and Kulchyski 1994:56) (*see Figures 4.20 and 4.21, below*).

To conduct such extensive medical examinations, especially screening for tuberculosis amongst the Inuit populations, the medical team in 1950

consisted of two physicians, an x-ray technician, dentist, eye surgeon, nurse, a general medical assistant and subsequently, in 1957, a social worker who was added to the team (Grygier 1997; Selway 2016). By the 1960s, over twenty medical personnel were on-board these annual patrols. Interestingly, tuberculosis had been present for many decades amongst the Inuit in the North, but it was not until the 1950s when it was estimated that at least one-third of Inuit in the Eastern Arctic were infected with it. It was in this context that, at the same time as the Canadian government demonstrated a renewed interest in securing their claims to Sovereignty in the North, this disease addressed and treated in a more systematic way by the Department of Health and Welfare (see Selway 2016).



Figure 4.20: 'Members of the Eastern Arctic Patrol Medical Party with Captain C.A. Chouinard, aboard the *C.D. Howe*.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59594.



Figure 4.21: 'Eskimos board the *C.D. Howe* for a medical examination and eye check at Lake Harbour, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59658.

When the crew of the *Howe* reached a settlement, invariably, the local, white, male administrator, usually a RCMP officer or missionary, was expected to have assembled all of the Inuit ahead of the estimated arrival of the ship. The able-bodied Inuit were then required to unload the ship's cargo onto shore. As the patrol was limited by time constraints due to the limited navigation season in the Eastern Arctic, the ship could only spend a few hours docked in each settlement. Consequently, the medical examinations relied

upon a thoroughly brisk screening system. Each Inuit, excluding those occupied with unloading cargo from the ship, was required to be registered on a pink form with their unique identifying 'dog tag disc', often worn around the neck, and checked against the list provided to them by the government administration registrars. Having been introduced to all Inuit during the 1941 census, these registrations usefully allowed the administration to ensure that they held up-to-date files on how effectively the region was being occupied by Inuit bodies. The disc tags also allowed the non-Inuit administrators to allocate 'identities' to the Inuit whom frequently, at the time, did not possess Christian names and therefore proved an 'administrative headache' when trying to identify an individual.

Once registered, they were given a medical check-up, chest x-rays, eye tests, dental examinations (*see Figure 4.22, below*) and, if needed, were dispensed medication or promptly evacuated by being brought on-board and, eventually, transported to hospitals for treatment further south. Such were the time-constraints for the medical staff before the ship had to sail to the next settlement, doctors frequently had to diagnose patients as having TB from x-ray images still wet from the developing chemicals (Smith 2004). During the 1950s, over 1200 Inuit were evacuated to Mountain Sanatorium in Hamilton further south and, at one point, the Mountain Sanatorium became 'the world's largest Inuit community' (Smith 2004). Like the controversial forced relocations of the Inuit to Resolute in 1953, discussed in the previous chapter (see Grant 1991; Tester and Kulchyski 1994), little attention was initially paid to the social and practical consequences of separating families when a sick Inuit member of a family was evacuated. Not until the late 1950s, for example, with the placement of a social worker on-board, were provisions made for fostering children whose parents were both taken on-board.



Figure 4.22: 'Colateh, 2, an Eskimo girl of Lake Harbour, NWT area, is examined aboard the *C.D. Howe* by Dr S.H. Campbell of the medical survey party on patrol of the Eastern Arctic.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59373.

Often, Inuit families would flee when seeing the ship approaching or when they heard the ship's helicopter flying along the coast, signifying the ship's imminent arrival, for fear of being taken away from their families. Fred Lee, a medical assistant on-board the *C.D. Howe* in 1957, was aware that the ship was feared among the Inuit, observing that 'As *C.D. Howe* drew closer to a village, he would often see people hastily packing up their tents and fleeing' (Smith 2004). Whilst there was not a legal requirement for an Inuit diagnosed

with tuberculosis to accept evacuation and treatment in the south at Hamilton, the presence of armed RCMP police officers helping with the medical examinations alongside 'the pressure that was placed on individuals [meant that it] could not honestly be called asking for consent' (Bennett 2016). The anxiety of being taken away (*see Figure 4.23, below*), situated against a broader government programme of residential schools and forced relocations, has continued to haunt Inuit communities. Johnny William, a municipal manager for Inukjuak, stated that 'it remains a painful memory for many...it was a hardship, we didn't know what was going on or where the ship had gone' (Smith 2004). This pivotal period after the Second World War, that, on the surface, suggested an altruistic concern for the physical health of the Inuit, is more convincingly perceived as a 'systematic effort to assimilate Inuit into southern Canadian life' (Payne 2016). This assimilation went hand-in-hand with the government of Canada's nationalistic, paternal Sovereignty programs that sought to provide and administer effective jurisdiction; the only distinction was that these objectives were now to be achieved in the guise of medical care provision. Furthermore, many of today's Inuit blame a contemporary loss of Inuit cultural heritage, alongside the distressing suicide rates, sexual assaults and dire poverty amongst Inuit communities, as being rooted in these government policies put into effect during the 1940s (*see Tester and Kulchyski 1994:53; Alia 2006*).



Figure 4.23: 'In the Eskimo quarters aboard the *C.D. Howe* Eastern Arctic Patrol Vessel.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59596.

Bringing Inuit bodies on-board the *C.D. Howe* to be examined, rather than assessing their health on land within these remote Northern settlements, served two functions. Undoubtedly, it made practical sense to have all the medical equipment kept on board as the patrol was subject to immense time-constraints at each stopover. However, it also served another, multi-layered, ceremonial purpose. By bringing Canadian Inuit bodies on-board to be registered and identified against their I.D. discs, allowed the government administration to perform, ceremonially, its duties in the Arctic: that of knowing exactly what and who is in their territory. At the same time, it also served the purpose of being easily recognisable as an extension of the jurisdiction of the Canadian State. In this way, the ship is enrolled as an easily demarcated space within which the government civil service crew and RCMP

police officers could readily identify as 'us' in contrast to the 'Other' Arctic bodies outside. Thus, the ship functioned as a mobile administrative centre, a floating laboratory that provided the government with a means of effectively asserting their presence in the region through the performance of effective jurisdiction. The ship, as a classical maritime 'object', has frequently enabled forms of control and power across vast distances through their mobile capabilities. Ships have an intrinsic transience; they can pass by land to survey, pass over water as transport, pass through waterways and pass within harbours. In a geophysically precarious environment like the Eastern Arctic, where traditional methods of asserting a State's effective presence in the region was exceptionally challenging, the ship's on-board facilities meant government officials were not always required to negotiate the practical dangers associated with being sent out into precarious geophysical Arctic spaces. This is an important distinction; rather than constantly having to send the crew and staff 'out' into the problematic, 'remote' spaces, of the Eastern Arctic, where their authority and jurisdiction was sometimes hard to display, by bringing Inuit bodies onto the vessel, they could more easily overcome the disobedient agency of the environment. In this way, Inuit bodies became enrolled as sites of jurisdiction inscription on easily identifiable 'Canadian ground', ironically, despite the lack thereof.

Wilfred Doucette, the photographer on-board the *C.D. Howe*, was commissioned by the Canadian Film Board to document the Sovereignty RCMP patrols and scientific activities on board its second Eastern Arctic patrol in 1951, capturing just under 530 images that summer (see *Figures 4.24 and 4.25, below*). The National Film Board of Canada's Still Photography Division was a federal agency mandated to promote Canadian Nationalism through photographs, often deploying images of the North and Inuit as key markers of Canadian national identity (Payne 2006; 2013; 2016). As discussed in the previous chapter, Doucette was also the photographer commissioned by the Department of Transport in 1953 to document and record the *D'Iberville's*

first voyage and its role in relocating the Inuit to Ellesmere Island in Cape Hershel.



Figure 4.24: 'RCMP Post at Craig harbour, Ellesmere Island, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59588.

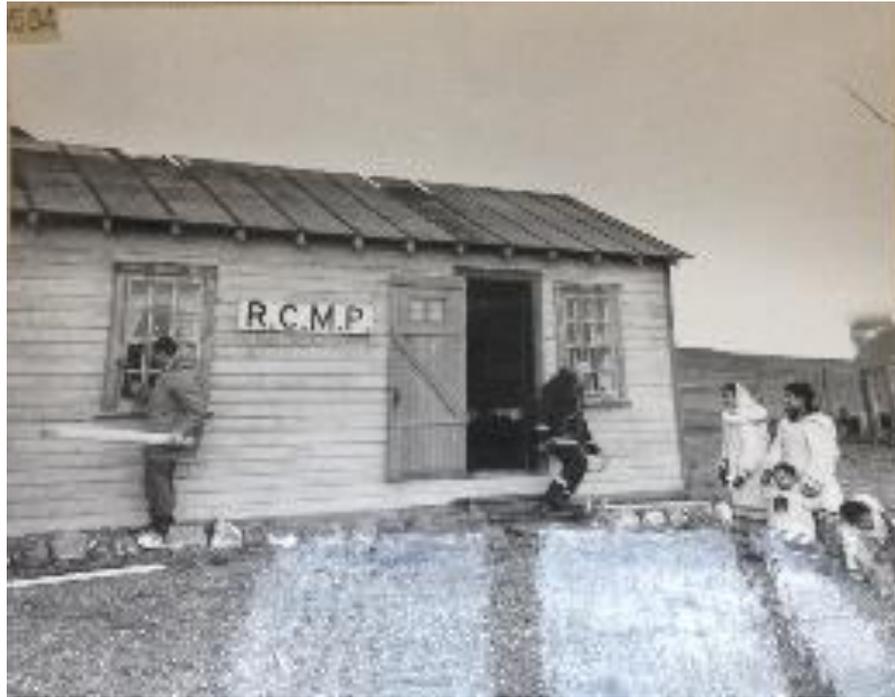


Figure 4.25: 'Reopening of the RCMP Post at Craig Harbour, Ellesmere Island, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59584.

Throughout the 1951 voyage, Doucette regularly photographed the RCMP posts and Inuit settlements in the Eastern Arctic. He placed a particular emphasis upon photographing the 'modern' technology that was being deployed within new western-style buildings being erected at these settlements. The accompanying pictures, taken by Doucette, depict the people and objects of these settlements as subjects of the State's gaze and subject to the State's authority over them (*see Figures 4.26-4.30, below*). The image of a 'thriving' settlement was another way the State used photographs as sites of inscription to survey, document and circulate evidence of Canadian effective occupation in the Arctic. The photographs played a significant role in providing tangible evidence of these Inuit settlements and RCMP posts that

could be, and subsequently would be, publicly disseminated, circulated and distributed back south (see Burant 1998; Geller 2004).



Figure 4.26: 'The settlement at Pond Inlet, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59646.



Figure 4.27: 'The settlement at Lake Harbour, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59634.

Doucette also extensively photographed and documented all of the scientific research and radio stations that the *C.D. Howe* visited along the voyage. The message of documenting a 'thriving Arctic settlement' could also be applied to the scientific research stations. At many of the stations he visited, Doucette would actively photograph the scientists 'in action'. These photographs highlight the importance the Canadian Film Board, as a reflection of the wider, geopolitical interests of the Northern Canadian Administration, placed upon showing an active example of the Canadian Arctic being occupied, administered and researched by Canadian scientists for national identity claims. Such scientific activities and research stations gain legitimacy by being reflected in the 'privileged' position of the camera

and because of the fact that the images taken were commissioned by and taken on behalf of the Canadian Film Board. The photographs taken on the *C.D. Howe* were so important in that they served the purpose of providing the public, Canadian audience with an insight into the banal and mundane Sovereignty exercises being performed by Canadian judicial bodies.



Figure 4.28: 'Department of Transport Radio and Metrological station buildings at Port Harrison, PQ.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59248.



Figure 4.29: 'Department of Transport Radio and Meteorological station at Hudson's Bay Company Post at Arctic Bay, NWT.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59615.



Figure 4.30: 'Department of Transport Radio Station at Churchill, Manitoba.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59602.

Doucette also photographed government officials from the Department of Resources and Development 'testing out' a second edition copy of *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimos* with the Inuit on-board the *C.D. Howe* (see Figure 4.31, below). He notes that Alex Stevenson, tasked with the publication of the first edition of the book, was attempting to get a first-hand 'reader reaction' to see if the images and symbols portrayed were 'clear' in disseminating the intended message of the government pamphlet. Stevenson, one of the field officers in the Department who could speak Inuktitut proficiently, was one of the initiators of the 1953 Relocation Program, as discussed in the previous chapter.



Figure 4.31: 'On Board *C.D. Howe*, Alex Stevenson, Department of Resources and Development and W. Lamour, Information Officer, show draft pages from the second *Book of Wisdom* to Eskimos.' Wilfred Doucette, 1951, National Film Board of Canada collection, *C.D. Howe*. Source: Library and Archives Canada, accession 1971-271 Box 77, Item 59670.

The twenty-eight-page reference pamphlet, *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimos* or *khaoyimayum titigangit inuinnangmun*, was initially published in 1947 by the Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs within the Department of Mines and Resources alongside the Department of National Health and Welfare (see Figure 4.32, below). The pamphlet was produced to instruct the propagation of certain practices affecting the health and general wellbeing of Inuit, especially Inuit women, who were viewed as part of a culture that did not know how to properly look after its own. As Stevenson observed, the

book 'was designed as an experiment in order to convey to Eskimos in a very simple language information on subjects which are of importance in their daily lives' (Tester and Kulchyski 1994:86). *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimos*, whilst further regulating the bodies and practices of the Canadian Inuit living in the Eastern Arctic, also perpetuated the myth that the 'Qallunat [non-Inuit] were a benevolent "saviour" of poor starving (and unknowledgeable) people' (Tester and Kulchyski 1994:76). The pamphlet, effectively a gestured display of textual authority, was widely distributed to Inuit in the Eastern Arctic and provides a contemporary academic critique with a remarkable example of the problematic, wider-colonial policies being 'tested out' on the Inuit by the Canadian government after the Second World War. The social experiment of the pamphlet was also an extension of an emergent, prescribed 'housewife kitchen culture' that was being created for Canadian women in the early 1950s and which conveys the gendered effects of Sovereignty exercises performed by the State. Not only does the pamphlet attempt to describe practices for looking after the family and cooking, the style of writing used in the text is indisputably childish and is composed of small, sharp sentences. At the same time, the language used in the pamphlet means that it adopts an extremely patronising tone, as the introduction below demonstrates, infantilising its intended Inuit audience:

'The first part of this book is about how to be healthy and happy. When we have good food, warm clothes, good kind friends and no sickness we are happy. When someone is sick in the family we cannot be happy. Everyone is sad. If we learn what causes sickness, then we can try to stop sickness. In this book you will read a lot about what makes us sick, how the sickness spreads from person to person and from camp to camp, and how to stop this. You will read about why babies have sickness and are not

strong. You will read about lung sickness and how to keep from it. All you read in this book is true. The second part contains advice about how to be prosperous, how the King is helping Eskimo children, how to make your rifles and boats last a long time, how to save the food animals from becoming scarce, and how to plan for times of scarcity.'

(Bureau of Northwest
Territories and Yukon
Affairs 1947:6)

The form of paternalism adopted in the language of the text allowed the author, the State, to situate themselves as the superior 'father-like' figure who had a duty to educate his 'child' and to ensure their welfare. John Amagalik, an Inuit interviewed about the book, shared his anger and frustration about being perceived to be infantile: 'I first remember seeing *The Book of Wisdom* in the 1960s. Those people must think we are all children. I was really upset by the type of language and by all the assumptions. I think a few people took it seriously, but I think that most people just ignored it' (McNicoll *et al* 1999:212).



Figure 4.32: 'Introduction in Inuktitut.' *The Book of Wisdom*. Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs 1947. Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *The Book of Wisdom* R5-388/1947-PDF

The second part of the pamphlet introduces the authority of the King and specifically refers to the importance the State placed on the 'dog-collar-like' identity discs, introduced earlier in 1941 alongside the first Inuit census, to survey and administer the Inuit bodies in the Arctic (Alia 1994; 2006) (see *Figure 4.33, below*):

'In this way Eskimo families will be prosperous; their children will be healthy, and everyone will be happy. Every Eskimo should have a disc bearing his identification number. Do not lose your disc. You will need it to obtain the King's help.'

(Bureau of Northwest
Territories and Yukon
Affairs 1947:20)

The phrase, 'the King's help', also implies that the Inuit should be grateful for the benevolent help from the State; thus, it became a means through which the Canadian government could legitimise their jurisdiction and involvement in the North through the performance of a paternal Sovereignty that projected itself as 'helping' the Inuit as a matter of obligation and duty. The second part of the pamphlet established the State's authority over the Inuit by regularly referencing the concept and consequences of 'the law'. The notion of 'law' would have been an abstract concept to many Inuit at the time; as such, it serves as another example of the State imposing western ideals on the Inuit to perform and display effective territory control.



Figure 4.33: 'Part two of the book, Family Allowances, (helping Eskimo children)' in Inuktitut. *The Book of Wisdom*. Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs 1947. Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *The Book of Wisdom* R5-388/1947-PDF

The Book of Wisdom pamphlet is a good example of the diverse ways the Canadian State had the power to produce, distribute and, to some extent, enforce certain Western knowledge claims and ideas, whilst concurrently diminishing Inuit Quaujimaqatunqangit (IQ) accumulated through centuries of successful Arctic living. As Peter McNicoll *et al* rightly asserts, this was an attempt by the Canadian administration to 'replace Inuit 'isuma' '[IQ] with 'booked' knowledge of a systematic colonising culture of Inuit assimilation' (McNicoll *et al* 1999:199). The pamphlet is written and performed within a

paternalist culture; the phrase 'all that you read in this book is true' assumes the objective, scientific 'truth' of its publication and authorship. Furthermore, by providing literature concerned with the assessment and administration of health for Inuit, it implies that the government felt that they would do better under the State's 'paternal supervision'. This husbandry narrative stems from religious-sponsored missions in the Canadian Arctic that were tasked with trying to 'improve' the welfare of the Inuit. The abstract noun 'wisdom' not only implies the State possessing authority to govern and supervise those of the intended audience, but it also functions as an unobvious allusion to the other 'book of wisdom' the Inuit would have repeatedly encountered, and been subjected to by early missionaries to the Arctic: the Bible. By implementing a social welfare programme for the Inuit, the settler-colonial State believed that their paternal duty to care for and protect 'their' Canadian citizens was being fulfilled. At the same time, by supporting the health and well-being of the Indigenous population, which were concurrently appropriated as Canadian, meant that Sovereignty could be further reinforced through the maintenance of an ordered, lively, inhabited and thriving space (see Ford 2010).

Concluding thoughts

The first objective of this chapter was to highlight how historical performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty performances in the twentieth century were rooted in reproducing the settler-colonial practices of possessive occupation that was used to colonise Southern Canada and other parts of the temperate New World. These performances, I contend, cannot be viewed in isolation or in abstract without first considering them within their socio-historical context. It is through trying to frame the Arctic as a continuation of the Canadian homeland that Canada tried to legitimise and normalise its everyday authoritative practices. So, rather than as scholarship has tended to perceive it, namely that the Arctic was continuously framed as an exceptional space, I maintain that successive Canadian governments

routinely *also* framed the Arctic as part of the banal, everyday. It is through establishing RCMP patrols and through the implementation of healthcare that these practices try to foster a connection with the rest of Canadian society. In reality, these practices were not without their own challenges and resistance. Furthermore, these historical performances, which were readily understood and represented traditional occupying practices, have directly influenced performances in the twentieth century and continue to shape such practices in the present day.

The second objective of this chapter was to contribute to scholarly and critical debates within political geography surrounding the assembling and disassembling of State spaces, questioning and challenging how the material properties of landscapes trigger certain types of territorialising practices. The critical theories surrounding the fluid, voluminous materiality of different geophysical spaces and bodies provided this chapter with a lens through which to consider the State assemblage and 'occupying atmosphere' of both land-based and water-based governance in the Canadian Arctic. Thus, despite Canada's attempt to occupy the Arctic by 'indigenising' southern settler-colonial bodies within the Arctic, the precarious agency of the environment prevented this. Whilst the Canadian Arctic could not be occupied by settlers, for practical reasons, Canada simultaneously incorporated the Inuit into their claims of authority and effective occupation. In this way, by re-framing the Inuit *as* Canadian, the State sought further to legitimise its ability to belong in the Arctic through what are now understood as controversial social welfare and healthcare programmes. It is the inherent contradiction in the Canadian government's approach, trying to 'indigenise' settler-colonial bodies whilst at the same time assimilating the Indigenous by making them 'Canadian', that continued to shape Indigenous-Crown relations in the Arctic to the present day. Instead, as the next chapter will illuminate further, the contemporary Canadian State has sought to unify Canada and mitigate their anxieties about not belonging in the Arctic through the creation of a *shared* discourse of stewardship.

Chapter 5

Reconciling Settler Stewardship: Performing Leadership in Scientific, Non-human and Inuit Stewardship

This chapter interrogates three different facets of 'stewardship' that are enrolled by the Canadian State to explore the alternative ways that Arctic Sovereignty is performed through diverse 'stewardship' discourses and practices. This will be achieved in a way that is mindful of the need to situate and contextualise the phrase and practices of 'stewardship' into the wider histories of problematic settler-colonial conservation and husbandry which shaped Canada and its interactions with the Inuit over the last few centuries. Using 'stewardship' as an analytical register, and framing stewardship as a set of administrative technologies, rather than merely an ideology or history, this chapter explores three case studies of alternative 'settler-stewardship' practices promoted by the most recent two successive Canadian governments to assert Sovereignty through effective occupation and jurisdictional governance in the Arctic. My contention is that these stewardship practices have been engineered to provide the State with a continued and, in some ways, banal practice of unbroken order and control of the geophysical environment of the Arctic: a practice rooted in the historical colonial project of civilising and taming the wild, albeit something not always successfully achieved (Adams and Mulligan 2003). Because the Arctic has been an exceptional and remote environment not traditionally 'settled' by outside explorers, these case studies reveal how Canada, as a 'post' settler-colonial State, uses 'stewardship'; by incorporating Indigenous voices and action into alternative methods of organising and 'civilising' bodies, animals, ecologies and spaces in the Arctic, it seeks to reconcile the existent, problematic connotations of settler policies of Indigenous dispossession, marginalisation, resettlement, health and social 'improvement'.

There has been a growing body of postcolonial, scholarship that displays an interest in 'unsettling' the history of settler-societies (Stasiulis and Yuval-

Davis 1995; Edmonds 2010; Cameron 2015) by challenging the established histories of settler Sovereignty that have often overlooked problematic Indigenous dispossessions. This chapter explores, through an analysis of the critical geopolitics of awkward 'settler-colonialism', whether ideas about nature, science and conservation could overcome and unsettle the legacy of settler-societies or whether they are still subject to a 'colonial present' (Gregory 2004, see also Razak 2002; Adams and Mulligan 2003). By acknowledging that the historical geographies of racialised dispossession in Canada ought not to be perceived as a single event, but rather an ongoing process (see Baldwin *et al* 2001; McKay 2008), this chapter employs 'stewardship' as the analytical register with which to probe at the contradictions of the settler-colonial State. By exploring alternative Canadian stewardship practices and reorienting who the 'settler' is, this chapter focuses on the alternative ways that bodies, animals, ecologies and spaces are classified, organised and civilised under the practice of 'settler-stewardship'.

Contemporary narratives of stewardship and Sovereignty

The Arctic is a constantly evolving ecosystem; a rapidly changing climate and an ever-increasing number of diverse human and non-human encounters in the region continually and radically alter the geophysical environment. Unsurprisingly, as a direct corollary, the claims of Arctic Sovereignty and national identity are relentlessly challenged and reimagined (Watt-Cloutier 2009; Powell 2009; Grant 2010; Hulan 2017). Climate change is, arguably, one of the most pressing international concerns in the twenty-first century and the Arctic is routinely enrolled as the perfect stage for climate activists, amongst a plethora of other diverse actors, to narrate calls for a more 'cosmopolitan ecopolitics' to address the issue globally (Urry 2011). By co-opting images of the 'vulnerable' polar bear (Simon 2007), for example, many non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as the World Wildlife Fund, construct symbolic representations of polar bears as a 'poster animal' to

frame the wider geopolitical narratives of climate change (Strode 2017). Climate change is also often framed through the lens of national interest which frequently situates the Arctic as an 'exceptional place', amidst a potentially global scramble for resources (Sale and Potapov 2010; Stoddart and Smith 2016; Dodds and Nuttall 2016).

At the same time that the Arctic is becoming increasingly enrolled into these different constructions, many 'southern' Canadians continue to view the North as a potential resource frontier or a pristine 'wilderness' that requires conservation, protection and careful environmental resource management (Christie 2011): a view which Adams and Mulligan attribute to the 'development' decades of the last quarter of the twentieth century. Nature, they argue, 'was either treated as the fuel for modernist economic growth, or as something precious needing absolute preservation' (Adams and Mulligan 2003:6). The latter narrative is more convincingly viewed as one which is bound up in a much longer historical practice of viewing Nature as something that needed to be managed through husbandry and conservation. However, these constructions of nature, which are bound up in the problematic historical legacies of colonialism, frequently excluded, dispossessed or obscured altogether the various Indigenous communities unequivocally present in the region (Said 1993). Although constructions of nature within Canada are situated in awkward colonial histories of 'taming the wild', narratives of husbandry and conservation are also narratives that have been adopted a feature within traditional Canadian Indigenous mythology as well as contemporary Inuit-led responses to global climate change (Wright 2014; Shadian 2014). For example, on the 15th April 2015, Canada's Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) held a conference promoting the perspective of the Inuit on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. In light of this, this chapter is also mindful to acknowledge the independent agency of Indigenous communities who have their own agendas and histories of framing nature, conservation and climate change.

Framing the Arctic environment as an 'exceptional' space needing protection is a narrative that is also routinely adopted by polar nations at different registers, extending from grassroots initiatives of the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) to those at the national level, including the Canadian government (Powell and Dodds 2014). For example, the Harper administration frequently 'demanded' that Canadians accept that it was their 'duty' to protect this environment and that this protection could be achieved by means of government-led 'environmental stewardship' initiatives in the region. On the 27th August, 2008, in Tuktoyaktuk, NWT, Harper, stated that 'Canada takes responsibility for environmental protection and enforcement in our Arctic waters. This magnificent and unspoiled region is one for which we will demonstrate stewardship on behalf of our country, and indeed, all of humanity' (Harper 2008). The language employed by Harper reflects the way that Canada constructs and then projects itself to be a 'steward of the Arctic' that possesses an implicit 'duty' on behalf of humanity to protect the region. Simultaneously, these performances are enrolled to materialise Sovereignty through 'laboured effective occupation and effective governance in the region'; such narratives were concurrently used to justify and, at the same time, seek to legitimise Canadian claims of its Arctic Sovereignty to other, global actors. Using 'stewardship' as a narrative to 'enforce' Sovereignty over Arctic waters is not a new practice; the 1970 *Canadian Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act*, during Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's tenure, sought expressly to assert jurisdiction and potentially constrain the movement of all International vessels approaching within 100 nautical miles of Canada's Arctic coast as well as through the North West Passage (NWP) on environmental grounds. This act was created as a reaction to the 1969 voyage of the *S.S. Manhattan*, a U.S. owned super-tanker whose mission was to test whether oil could be shipped safely from the North coast of Alaska to Texas, and thus symbolically carried one barrel of crude oil onboard at the time. Citing a concern over the potential risk of environmental disasters, such as oil spills, Trudeau used a narrative of Canada having a duty to enforce Arctic environmental protection, and this 1970 Act is an example of the same

type of practice that is still being employed today (Bilder 1970; Kirton and Munton 1970).

Against this backdrop, the Canadian government has repeatedly asserted that Arctic 'stewardship' and 'sustainable Northern development' are equally important and go 'hand in hand' with the successful performance of Sovereignty. Canada's claims, in this respect, are reflected in the 2010 *Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy: Exercising Sovereignty and Promoting Canada's Northern Strategy Abroad*, which attested that 'strong environmental protection, an essential component of sustainable development, starts at home and is another important way in which Canada exercises its Sovereignty in the North' (Government of Canada 2010). In this way, it is convincing to contend that, by assembling the notion of 'stewardship' to include 'sustainable development', the Canadian government seeks to convince its citizens of the strategic, cultural and economic value of the Arctic and, at the same time, justify the proportionally high government spending used to 'secure' and 'protect' it. Perhaps unsurprisingly, and as a direct result, there has been a renewed interest within Canadian academia concerning studies that explore the nation's environmental-protection-stewardship narrative and how its Sovereignty claims are implemented through a wider, effective Northern, security strategy that dates back to the 1970s (Beckford *et al* 2010; Griffiths *et al* 2011 Burke 2018).

Alongside a renewed interest in environmental protection and sustainable development, there has been a developing interest in Northern politics and new forms of governance, such as the National Indigenous Guardians Network, which frames the Arctic as a lively, active and vibrant homeland needing 'sustainable development' for its Indigenous communities (Coates and Powell 1989; Shadian 2014; Wright 2014). In the wake of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and in an attempt to reorient the problematic histories of settler-colonialism within Canada, the Canadian government has incorporated new, innovative political regimes of Indigenous

enfranchisement that seek to safeguard, include and acknowledge the rights of Indigenous Canadians. In this respect, current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's dissolution of the former Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) government agency in 2017, serves as a reflection of the State's increasing efforts to promote Indigenous-Crown collaborative relations in Northern governance. The agency has now changed its name to 'Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada' and it is mandated to incorporate and promote Indigenous-led work by the government of Canada in the North.

Whether through the Indigenous corporation of Inuvialuit, the appointment of Inuit Guardians in National Marine Conservation Areas, such as Tallurutiup Imanga, or through an acknowledgement of the strategic assistance of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) knowledge in the recovery of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, and utilising IQ in the newly built Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) design stage, the Canadian Federal State has simultaneously positioned itself as a 'steward' of increasing Indigenous governance and enfranchisement through varied actors and in nuanced ways. The Trudeau administration has overtly recognised the need to associate Indigenous development and enfranchisement as a means of justifying the promotion of Arctic Sovereignty; although the observation of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 2009, under Harper's administration in their Northern Strategy document, demonstrates that this change cannot be perceived as a consequence only of the policies of the current administration:

'Canada is a Northern nation. The North is a fundamental part of our heritage and our national identity, and it is vital to our future. The North is home to many Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples...Our government recognizes the tremendous opportunities, as well as the many challenges, that exist in the North today...We have a clear vision for the North and

are working to ensure the region achieves its rightful place within a strong and sovereign Canada. Canada's Northern Strategy focuses on four priority areas: exercising our Arctic Sovereignty; promoting social and economic development; protecting the North's environmental heritage; and improving and devolving Northern governance, so that Northerners have a greater say in their own destiny.'

(Minister of Indian Affairs
and Northern Development 2009)

Increasing Indigenous enfranchisement also serves as another means through which the government of Canada attempts to reconcile the problematic settler-colonial histories of the State which routinely dispossessed Indigenous populations as casualties of colonialism in the expansion of Canada as an imperial nation (Said 1978; 1993). Trudeau's statement on the release of the final report from the TRC, looking to the future, subtly acknowledges the need to redress its uncomfortable history:

'This is a time of real and positive change. We know what is needed is a total renewal of the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples. We have a plan to move towards a nation-to-nation relationship based on recognition, rights, respect, cooperation and partnership, and we are already making it happen.'

(Trudeau 2018)

Furthermore, by promoting Inuit enfranchisement within government-supported initiatives, and by acknowledging the awkward and uncomfortable

histories of settler-colonialism within Canada, the State simultaneously manages to placate and mitigate the threat of 'self-determination' by the Inuit: an immediate, serious and genuine threat to Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. It is also important, I maintain, to observe that there are a plethora of Indigenous-led stewardship Initiatives concerned with Indigenous-led conservation across Canada which 'empowers Indigenous governments, communities and Nations to honour and fulfil our cultural responsibility to the land' (ILI 2018). In branding itself as a 'Northern nation', Canada's Sovereignty policy links the formal inclusion of Inuit Arctic identity to wider national identity performances. By extension, this serves the dual purpose of legitimising alternative promotions of State Sovereignty in the Arctic. Finally, and at the same time, by 'branding' Canada as 'world-class leaders' in these diverse stewardship practices, the State simultaneously frames these interventions as positive, making them a source of pride for the nation itself and a practice that is infinitely easier to justify to a global audience.

A legacy of scientific stewardship in the Arctic

The first facet explored in this chapter is how the Canadian government frames the 'exceptional testing' space of the Arctic (Cosgrove and Della Dora 2009) as a space to perform 'world-leading', scientific research, concurrently framing themselves as 'scientific stewards' of the region. The first case study in this chapter is concerned with how Inuit (IQ) knowledge has been incorporated into the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS), framing the Inuit as guardians and 'stewards' who disseminate IQ knowledge to non-Indigenous Canadians, and to the rest of the world. This practice represents part of a wider, Indigenous-led programme of the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) that seeks to work with the federal government, alongside other federal initiatives, to implement a National Indigenous Guardian Network in Canada. By incorporating and 'championing' the benefits of Inuit IQ knowledge into programmes such as CHARS, the Canadian State seeks to

legitimise its presence in the Arctic, as an Inuit homeland, to Canadians and to other global actors.

Historically, the Arctic has been routinely framed as a frontier and 'sublime testing space' and has been widely explored in Arctic scientific literature, especially during the Cold War (see Farish 2006; Powell 2007; Dodds 2012, Lajus and Sorlin 2014). Research carried out at scientific stations, such as CHARS, is situated within a wider, historical narrative of European, empirical and colonial science that has been used for the possession of space through the increased control of nature (Bowen 1981; Doel *et al* 2014); colonial nations have historically asserted territorial possession through scientific enterprises (Jin 2009; Powell 2010). Claims of 'superior' scientific knowledge were routinely adopted by colonial nations when expanding their empires over the newly colonised Americas. These methods, which claimed authority through superior scientific knowledge as a form of territorial imperialism, framed peripheral colonial space as a 'laboratory' and testing ground of scientific activity (Levere 1993; Powell 2017). The systematic surveying, mapping and researching of Arctic space – effectively, the creation of 'Arctic Science' – has been used in territorialising Sovereignty practices by Canada over the last one hundred and fifty years (Powell 2008; Heid 2011 Doel *et al* 2014b). By positioning themselves as 'scientific stewards', the State also succeeds in distancing itself from colonial science and Sovereignty and, as a corollary, legitimises its presence in a region that is receiving continued and ever-increasing interest from outside global actors. Furthermore, by framing itself as a 'steward' of global Arctic science and by using CHARS as a place where, acting as a mediator, it can aid in international cooperation through scientific research, Canada positions itself as a 'steward' for the benefit of *all* mankind. These narratives, whilst still trying to legitimise their presence in the Arctic through effective occupation and governance, benefit from being a 'calming' diplomatic and internationally collaborative performance. Rather than sending military bodies, for example, into an 'exceptional' testing space – a move routinely employed during the Cold War, which could be seen as a

potentially threatening move to outside actors – the scientific body provides the State with an alternative body through which to display effective occupation and jurisdiction in the Arctic. Sending a scientific body is also a more politically sensitive and reconciling move, particularly – dramatically so – when considered in light of the forced Inuit resettlements of the 1950s. Finally, by acknowledging and incorporating Inuit IQ knowledge in these territorialising scientific activities and, by definition, increasing the enfranchisement of the Inuit, the State simultaneously ‘legitimises’ the presence of the pseudo-settler Canadian scientist as a means of harmonising the existent, problematic colonial settler-State histories.

Alternative ‘bodies’ enrolled in settler stewardship

The second facet, explored through two case studies, concerns how alternative, non-human bodies and elements are enrolled in stewardship practices and, at the same time, the nature of the Foucauldian bio-political strategies that are employed by the settler-colonial State over the regulation of life and land. Settler-colonial literature has often been limited as a consequence of its innately narrow focus: the colonised, ‘human’ subject. Consequently, such literature routinely fails to acknowledge the ‘other, colonised subjects’ or the ‘more-than-human’ movement in Indigenous studies and critical geopolitics: animals, earth, water, and air and non-human bodies. As a result, this chapter strives to be mindful of the fact that ‘stewardship’ narratives do not ‘continual[ly] return to the racialised human subject [,] undermin[ing] the work that Indigenous studies has done to emphasize the geopolitical, the land, and the circle of relations that do not begin and end with the human’ (La Paperson 2017). Whilst a significant proportion of academic research, which focuses on stewardship narratives, calls for the preservation of and the maintenance of the health of fish, musk-oxen, reindeer and other Arctic animals that are regularly co-opted into stewardship programmes in the Arctic (Soliman 2014; Skold 2015), little research explicitly acknowledges the material agency of these animals

(Rutherford 2013; Dodds 2016). By focusing on the polar bear, a symbolic animal often used by other Arctic actors, such as NGOs, including the World Wildlife fund in 2013, as a justification for stewardship policies and practices, the polar bear is effectively 'indigenised' as a pseudo-settler. Describing a polar bear as 'Canadian', as government officials such as Alan Kessel have done, provides the State with another useful marker of effective occupation; it represents an alternative 'settler' in the Arctic, one which has 'settled' in Canada, like the Inuit, 'since time immemorial': a phrase often used by the government to legitimise claims of effective occupation of the Arctic by diverse actors who are nonetheless absorbed and framed as 'Canadians'. At the same time, championing the independent 'health' of the 'Canadian' polar bear transforms Kessel into another kind of 'Arctic steward' who seeks to promote the independent agency of the polar bear within the Canadian Arctic. The advantageous by-product of this act is that it distances the government from being accused of possessing an awkward and uncomfortable 'saviour complex': a term rooted in colonial-settler discourse (Stode 2017).

National treasures and non-human stewardship

The second example of alternative, non-human bodies being co-opted into stewardship narratives, which have provided Canada with a legacy of repeated explorations into the 'unknown' Arctic, is that of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*: the two ships from the fateful expedition, by Sir John Franklin in 1845, which sought to find a passage through the Northwest Territory. Throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the ships and the myth of Franklin and his crew have continued to draw a profusion of explorers, writers, painters and Canadian government officials to the North. Alongside subsequent explorations, each of these elements has been repeatedly co-opted into contemporary claims of Arctic occupation and Sovereignty. Whilst there has been extensive focus in academic literature concerned with the Canadian Arctic, considering how these ships have been

utilised for the purposes of constructing a specific national identity and to facilitate Sovereignty claims (Craciun 2016; Potter 2016; Woodman 2015; Hulan 2017), little attention has been paid to the contention that Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is being performed by framing the ships as 'bodies' that require protection within a broader narrative of maritime stewardship. 'Maritime stewardship' often refers to the management and regulation of the water and ecological environment of life within it; yet, I assert, it is convincing to observe that an 'archaeological maritime' stewardship narrative has been deployed to protect a wider assemblage of human, non-human and more-than-human 'Canadian maritime heritage'. In the 1990s, the wrecks of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* became Canadian National Historic Sites before they were even located, and this 'maritime heritage' narrative has been championed by the Canadian State, especially since the recent discovery of the ships in 2014 and 2016 respectively. As climate change is almost impossible to manage or control – even more so as a single State alone – environmental stewardship and management of a geophysical environment such as the Arctic is intensely challenging. However, as a result of the discoveries, the archaeological stewardship of the ships provides the State with an infinitely more manageable, local, subterranean micro-environment to govern, order and classify; as such, it naturally becomes another legacy of colonial-settler policy. The ships also serve to provide the State by possessing a symbolic function: 'indigenising' a 'settler' in the Arctic. The protection of the two ships has been handed over by the British government to the government of Nunavut and they have become 'the first national historic sites in Nunavut cooperatively managed with the Inuit' (Parks Canada 2018). In this respect, Inuit 'stewardship' of the ships serves as an apt example of how the Inuit are being enrolled as 'guardians' in alternative stewardship practices within the Arctic. By inverting the roles of 'steward', 'settler' and 'native', the Inuit become enfranchised as 'stewards' of an 'outside-settler'; this particular paradigm is also advantageous as it further enables the government of Canada to reconcile and assuage the resonant guilt felt for the problematic histories of the settler-colonial State.

This case study also demonstrates how the incorporation of Inuit communities, as participants and active actors of stewardship, challenges the problematic, orientalist colonial practice of framing Indigenous peoples as passive bodies to be classified and ordered. As such, alternative stewardship practices which enrol the Inuit as active 'stewards' and 'guardians' of the Arctic seek to reconcile the history of the forced Inuit settlements, missionaries, residential schools and general healthcare management that 'Settler' Canadians imposed over the course of the last century. When considered in this context, the Canadian government's – relatively recent – acknowledgment of the benefits of incorporating Inuit IQ knowledge and their self-regulating role as an alternative paternal steward or 'guardian' in the Arctic, provides the government with an alternative and reconciling stewardship practice: defining who the 'steward' is and how they are portrayed in the Canadian Arctic whilst, at the same time, 'Indigenising' that same stewardship. By indigenising stewardship, the Canadian government strives to display a temporal history of Arctic 'stewardship' that spans millennia and legitimises stewardship done 'at home' (Government of Canada 2010). Furthermore, from the evidence, it is convincing to observe that these Inuit stewardship practices are more accurately viewed as being part of a much longer history of Inuit mythology of environmental husbandry; these practices are not solely the result of either being influenced by missionary religious Anglo-settler-stewardship histories since the nineteenth century or the more recent environmental concerns since the 1970s. Both practices are used simultaneously to assert claims of continued and calming effective occupation and environmental governance in the Canadian Arctic 'since time immemorial'. By acknowledging the strategic importance of promoting Indigenous enfranchisement, the State strives to mitigate any potential threats to its Arctic Sovereignty from 'within' that are posed by the prospect of Inuit-led self-determination and increasingly vociferous calls for independence and to break away from the State.

A historical perspective of settler-stewardship

The framing of nature as a site and ideological tool in the construction of Canada as a 'Northern' nation is a source of academic debate that has received widespread attention in the social sciences and environmental scholarship (see Willems-Braun 1997; Baldwin *et al* 2001; Osborn 2001a; Thorpe 2012). The material geographies of the Canadian Arctic further complicate the entanglements between nature and national interest. The Arctic's geophysical environment is slippery and unstable, and the snow, ice, cold and darkness all provided early explorers and government administrators with a 'hostile' and sublime 'frontier' environment that they attempted to overcome and 'settle' – not always successfully (Cosgrove and Della Dora 2009). These narratives of overcoming the Northern Arctic environment are 'deeply gendered and racialised', especially when framing the Arctic as a Northern wilderness: a practice that invites certain types of ceremonial performances of inclusion and exclusion – something that will be explored in greater detail over the course of this chapter (Mackey 2000:126).

Conservation and husbandry narratives, containing within them Christian, biblical language, took hold in the nineteenth-century colonial world with two principal understandings of nature. Whether nature was perceived to be an economic resource to be improved and exploited through husbandry of the land or as a pristine place in which to preserve unchanged wilderness, both ideas were an important construct in wider settler-colonial ideology as the authority to order 'local' things spatially. The 'legitimacy' of colonial settlement is predicated on the understanding that colonial societies had a duty and right to self-govern and order peripheral spaces, which also helped construct the identity of colonial 'settler' autonomy (Abele and Stasiulis 1989). Such an understanding, it has been widely argued, was also about defining settler 'Sovereignty' as the political and spatial ordering of Indigenous bodies, things and territorial units; in other words, Sovereignty and authority in settler-societies was legitimised and practiced through active and laboured jurisdiction (Ford 2010). Unlike most British colonial ventures,

settlers in Southern Canada did not govern only 'through Indigenous hierarchies in order to extract commodities, instead they settled and [aimed]... to establish societies as similar as possible to those that they had left behind' (Ford 2010:6). Ironically, the paradox of settler-Sovereignty and autonomy, a right to assert authority over frontier territorial control, repeatedly required an essential and systematic process of Indigenous dispossession. In Southern Canada, where surviving Indigenous populations resided in favourable pasturable lands belonging to the colonising British and French, the systematic displacement, removal and assimilation of the Indigenous communities went hand in hand with settler-State expansion (Edmonds 2010). The Arctic was not exempt from the practice of Indigenous dispossession by successive Canadian governments in the twentieth century (see Tester and Kulchyski 1994; Cameron 2015). Whether this dispossession was through the systematic and daily subordination of Inuit communities by Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) patrols, the legal trials of Indigenous violence against explorers and whalers referred to in the previous chapter, or through treaties that managed and regulated the hunting of traditional Inuit livestock, such as musk-oxen, in the Arctic, all of these practices framed the Canadian colonial State in the early twentieth century as a 'paternal-settler' steward who 'occupied' settler-State lands upon a controversial foundation of husbandry, progress, conservation and redemption (see Morrison 1985; Cameron 2015).

However, there is a significant paradox within Canada about settler-State practices. In the Arctic, partly due to its 'exceptional', remote and frequently extreme environment, there has traditionally been very limited 'permanent' settlement by white settlers (Cavell and Noakes 2010; Grant 2010). Those that did venture into the 'great white North' (Baldwin *et al* 2011) did so often under the guise of the Arctic being a mobile, temporary and, often, masculine testing space. The framing of the Arctic as a testing space is rooted in early British and European exploration narratives since at least the fifteenth century with the voyages of Cabot, Frobisher and others who attempted to

find a way through the Arctic as part of the wider political, economic and religious expansion of European States (Hatfield 2016). The Canadian settler-nation was faced with the challenge of establishing the robust perception that, despite ironically not settling there, they were both physically and symbolically present in a frontier region in their efforts to assert the legitimacy of any sovereign ownership claim – through the principles of effective occupation and effective jurisdictional governance (Cavell and Noakes 2010). A Canadian stamp issued in 1961, entitled ‘Northern Development’, depicts an images of a ‘modern earth-moving machine’ and a ‘pioneering’ surveyor that have been enrolled in the practice of environment husbandry and progress in ‘Canada’s last frontier in the North’ (Canada Post Office Department 1961). The official justification for the stamp, as stated in the news release at the time, is particularly revealing in this respect:

‘The development of Canada’s great Northland during the last fifty years has been amazing, but Canadians are not yet fully aware of the immense resources that await development there. In issuing this stamp, Canada acknowledges the work of the pioneers who entered this land of promise on foot, the bush pilots who penetrated further North and the hardy workers who are now bringing civilization to such far-away places as Alert on the Northern tip of Ellesmere Island, well above the Arctic Circle. The stamp is a tribute to the growing numbers of twentieth-century pioneers who are united in helping to open up the great treasure chest of the North, and to make habitation there compatible with standards in other parts of Canada.’

(Canada Post Office Department 1961)



Figure 5.1: 'Northern development stamp.'

Source: Canada Post Office Department
1961.

Depicting this gestured performance of occupation and governance through 'husbandry' onto a circulated stamp is highly significant. Canada has a long history of depicting its 'Sovereignty performances' onto stamps, whether through celebrating and commemorating past polar explorations, the construction of 'Canadian' objects such as RCMP manned Post Offices in the Eastern Arctic or research vessels in the NWP. Celebrating these 'achievements' upon circulating stamps is historically rooted in the British Empire's stamp art. The philatelic collection at the British Library, for example, has a diverse collection of postage material relating to the exploration and 'settlement' of the Polar Regions through the British Empire and Commonwealth. Attempting to overcome the material agency of the harsh, frigid yet fluid, and dynamic landscapes of the Arctic and to frame the space as a 'frontier testing ground' is a legacy narrative interwoven into many encounters by Canadian settlers, explorers, fur traders, missionaries, whalers, scientists, miners and the military. Conquering the last 'blank spaces' on the map in the name of environmental progress and under the guise of enacting

a duty to 'civilise the North' was a narrative that was commonly employed by these actors. Conquering the similarly metaphorical 'blank spaces' of scientific uncertainty and knowledge of the frontier region meant performances by Canadian colonial-settlers, 'penetrating' the Arctic landscape for scientific exploration and progress, were also central to the construction of a wider distinct type of Nationalism within Canada's social consciousness that is rooted in the legacy of settler-Canadians having a duty to 'develop' the North. This *terra nullis* testing space for settler-pioneers often excluded or undermined Indigenous communities and their knowledge despite its presence and relevance in the region.

Arctic stewardship since 'time immemorial'

Whilst issues concerning the social construction, representation and management of Arctic 'nature and wilderness' for Northern National-identity politics, security and territorial claims is significant and has underpinned intense scholarly debate about Arctic Sovereignty (see Burke 2018), there is a growing body of scholarship across disciplines which calls for an analysis that transcends simply focusing upon representations of the environment by State actors. Instead, analysis ought to include the agency of Indigenous peoples and acknowledge the more-than-human agency of the material environment alongside the diverse interplay between the different human and non-human actors that permeate it (see Berland and Slack 1994; Cruickshank 2005; Powell 2009; Rutherford 2013). These actors are enrolled in a diverse range of 'settler stewardship' narratives that transcend the protection or conservation of the environment.

Stephanie Rutherford, for example, draws upon the literature of Michael Foucault to argue for the merits of a bio-political analysis of 'cultures of nature' in Canada: a focus on animals, in this case wolves, as active actors. She observes that wolves have occupied different levels of interest and encounter at various times in Inuit history and, as such, wolves should be

viewed as a 'presence' with their own agency, rather than passive tools to be managed, manipulated and manoeuvred. One alternative example of this is the Inuit creation story of the wolf and the caribou. According to Inuit traditional oral mythology, the figure of the wolf has played an important and active part in Arctic environmental resource management since the 'creation' of caribou. In Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley's book, *Qanug Pinngurnirmata: Inuit stories of how things came to be*, she describes the Inuit story of the 'How the Caribou came to be':

'In the beginning there was a man and a woman, nothing else on the Earth walked or swam or flew. And so the woman dug a big hole in the ground and she started fishing in it. And she pulled out all of the animals. The last animal she pulled out was the caribou. The woman set the caribou free and ordered it to multiply. And soon the land was full of them. And the people lived well and they were happy. But the hunters only killed those caribou that were big and strong. And soon all that was left were the weak and the sick. And the people began to starve. And so the woman had to make magic again, and this time she called Amorak, the spirit of the wolf, to winnow out the weak and the sick, so that the herd would once again be strong. The people realized that the caribou and the wolf were one, for although the caribou feeds the wolf, it is the wolf that keeps the caribou strong'.

(Qitsualik-Tinsley 2008)

This narrative illustrates the historical importance that Inuit communities have traditionally placed on retelling narratives of successful husbandry and stewardship practices in resource management, amidst the reality of an ever increasingly unstable region, to maintain a healthy, thriving, diverse and, therefore, 'stable' Arctic bio-environment. This kind of discourse populates and characterises the Arctic as a lively and, most importantly, as an occupied and laboured space, occupied by Inuit and other non-human bodies since the beginning of time; crucially, this predates the settler-colonial State, despite the fact that the phase 'time immemorial' has routinely been espoused and reproduced by the Canadian government in the formulation of Arctic Sovereignty discourse. As such, despite predating the Canadian State, wolves and the Inuit Indigenous community, as two groups of active actors, are positioned as 'guardians' of the Arctic and are enrolled in performances and discourses of 'stewardship' to ensure environmental stability in the Arctic.

Danita Burke and other academics have asserted that, for the Canadian State, 'stewardship ideas are only a more recent addition to the predominant narratives about Canada's security in the Arctic. They have emerged as a very important part of how Canadians perceive and conceptualise threats to the Arctic' since the 1970s as a consequence of 'soft' security threats such as oil spills (Burke 2018: 145). The increasing use of stewardship as a vehicle through which to perform Sovereignty is reflected in the following statement from Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy document in 2010:

'Strong environmental protection, an essential component of sustainable development, starts at home and is another important way in which Canada exercises its Sovereignty in the North. Canada has long been at the forefront in protecting the Arctic environment. As far back as the 1970s, Canada enacted the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (AWPPA) to protect its marine environment, taking responsibility for

enacting and enforcing anti-pollution and shipping safety laws applicable to a larger area of Arctic waters. In August 2009, the application of the AWPPA was extended from 100 to 200 nautical miles. In addition, regulations requiring vessels to report when entering and operating within Canadian Arctic waters have been finalized and are in force from July 1, 2010. These measures and others such as plans to establish a national marine conservation area in Lancaster Sound send a clear message to the world. Canada takes responsibility for environmental protection and enforcement in our Arctic waters. We are demonstrating stewardship in this magnificent ecological region.'

(Government of Canada 2010)

Contrary to Burke's view that 'stewardship' regimes are used to perform security and, by extension, that 'stewardship' discourses have only been adopted by Canadian governments since the 1970s, I find it far more compelling to argue that diverse narratives of securing the Arctic through stewardship practices predate the settler-colonial State. These narratives of stewardship are visible in Indigenous mythology, ironically, since time immemorial. At the same time, the 'steward' is not limited to notions of only the Government as the actor responsible for mitigating or protecting the Canadian Arctic from environmental threats. By also acknowledging the more-than-human agency of alternative Arctic 'stewards' such as the wolf, Canada is provided with rich and diverse historical narratives of 'steward' and 'stewardship' and, in doing so, a much longer historical timeline of effective governance in the region. In this context, the public perception is shaped to suggest that Canada has a historical 'duty' and responsibility to 'manage' the

Canadian Arctic: a responsibility that spans from early Inuit creation mythology and, simultaneously, adopted by the early European colonial settlers to ceremonially possess and 'settle' the lands through the practices of conservation and husbandry. The federal government also provides another advantageous way for the modern State to curate a link between a time-immemorial Inuit, the non-human 'Canadian' presence in the Canadian Arctic and the 'duty' to care for 'their' Arctic environment by promoting contemporary, government-sponsored stewardship programmes and initiatives. As such, by employing a diverse range of Canadian actors who have occupied the region since the beginning of time, it serves the purpose of functioning as a nuanced means of framing 'continuous effective governance and occupation'.

Reorienting Canada as 'world-class leaders' in stewardship

The two most recent Canadian governments have routinely positioned Canada as 'global-leaders in stewardship'. Whether it was historically branding Canada as 'global leaders' of environmental stewardship policy and practice by enforcing the 1970 *Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act*, or as global leaders in scientific knowledge and research at the CHARS campus, the most recent Canadian governments have sought to incorporate the rhetoric of stewardship and leadership with the construction of Canadian national identity. The act of branding itself as a 'leader' whilst, at the same time, urging the nation to take pride in its capacity for superior leadership, ought to be situated in the wider histories of British 'naval pride' in the exploration of the Arctic and, in turn, the imperial formation of Canada as a State in the late nineteenth century. In the post-Napoleonic wars, the climate of austerity meant that original exploration was low on the British Admiralty's agenda: 'it was not interested in the unknown, precisely because it was unknown' (Fleming 1998:11). However, in 1816, John Barrow, second secretary to the admiralty, urged his superiors to recognise the 'honourable' role that the British Navy and her half-paid officers could perform in the advancement of

scientific enquiry and through the exploration of the 'blank spaces' on the map:

'To what purpose could a portion of our naval force be, at any one time, but more especially in time of profound peace, more honourably or more usefully employed than in the completing those details of geographical and hydrographical science of which the grand outlines have been boldly and broadly sketched by Cook, Vancouver and Flinders, and others of our countrymen?'

(Barrow, quoted in Fleming 1998:1)

Barrow's description and justification of exploration programmes as 'honourable' is similar to the contemporary rhetoric and role Canada adopts and projects globally to the world under the guise of its 'duty' to protect its Northern environment. Gaining the admiralty's support, between 1816 and 1845, Barrow handpicked officers to explore every blank space on the map that could, through subsequent rule and exploitation of potential resources, potentially benefit British commerce in the future. Despite this, Barrow demonstrated that he was also conscious that the benefits of exploration would transcend mere economics, observing that 'above all it would be a terrible blow to national pride if other countries should open up the globe over which Britain ruled supreme' (Fleming 1998:11). Linking the idea of national 'pride' to the exploration of the unknown and to the fear of being left behind by other countries was a strategic move. In the age of Romanticism, which emphasised the emotional and the glorification of the sublime within nature, Barrow believed that his naval adventures would garner great popular public support; in contemporary Canada, obtaining and retaining public support for expensive enterprises is similarly important. Whether it is through popular 'tweets', government adverts, or within national museum exhibitions, justifying expenditure and or governance over the Canadian Arctic, through national pride and an 'honourable' duty to

intervene, has been continuously promoted. Similarly, as though with Barrow's warning in mind, the act of framing Canada as a world-class leader generates a national pride and sense of superiority over other countries.

On the 3rd October, 2018, Jonathan Wilkinson, the Minister for Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, tweeted – by definition something intended for public consumption – a popular geopolitical multimedia slide (*see Figure 5.2, below*) on the same day that he announced that Canada had signed the 'Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean'. This agreement was officially announced in his speech and it was then reposted on the government of Canada website. In it, he expressed that Canada was taking a 'pivotal step and a collaborative and precautionary approach' in ocean conservation and management: 'this is a proud moment for our country. Canada, once again, has demonstrated that it can work with its international partners on sustainable ocean stewardship and to ensure the protection of the Arctic's fragile ecosystems' (Fisheries and Oceans Canada 2018). In this extract from his speech, he urges Canadians to feel 'proud' of the news that such an agreement had been signed; such national pride is inextricably linked to Canada positioning itself as an Arctic steward. At the same time, and in the same tweet, the multimedia slideshow ends with a picture of the Canadian Flag and a clear, didactic message: 'Canada is showing leadership in protecting the Arctic' (Wilkinson 2018). The assertion that Canada is a 'leader' that protects the Arctic through diverse stewardship practices is one that is repeatedly emphasised by government officials from a range of contexts; for example, it is emanating from leaders in environmental management, such as those involved in the regulation of fishing in the Arctic, as much as it is from leaders involved in the maintenance of world-class research stations. These are all diverse ways that the State co-opts stewardship practices into national identity formations and, as such, serve as a means of justifying and legitimising their involvement in the region. The objective, to regulate fully Arctic space and ensure political, economic and environmental stability – hinged on the ordered control of land, sea and

ice, bodies and wider ecologies of the Arctic, rooted in early settle-coloniser history – seeks to frame the Arctic as a place where effective governance and occupation is being continuously achieved in calming ways within the Canadian North.



Figure 5.2: ‘Canada is showing Leadership in protecting the Arctic.’ Source: Jonathan Wilkinson tweet, 3rd October, 2018.

A sublime setting: scientific leaders and the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)

The Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) project was first announced in 2007 by Michaëlle Jean, the then Governor General of Canada,

in the annual Speech from the Throne. Under the heading of ‘Strong Leadership, A better Canada’, Harper’s administration made a public commitment to construct a ‘world-class Arctic research station that [would] be on the cutting edge of Arctic issues, including environmental science and resource development. The station would be built by Canadians, in Canada’s Arctic, and would be there to serve Canadians and the World’ (Canada 2007). While she asserted that the research station project would make Canada world-class leaders in Arctic science and research, she also referenced the fact that it was also capable of providing Canada with a year-round presence in the region. Although it is understandable why one might argue that the rhetoric and narrative of ‘world-class leadership’ was merely political posturing by the Harper administration in 2007, the adoption of narratives promoting Sovereignty through Canadian scientific leadership is one that has been echoed by the Trudeau’s government. For example, the House of Commons Standing committee on Foreign Affairs and international Development (FAAE) visited CHARS on the 3rd October, 2018, as part of its current study on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty (*see Figure 5.3, below*). Its members were there to hear about the role that Canada can play in ‘advancing polar science and knowledge’ (House of Commons Committee 2018). Promoting their advancements in polar science is connected to the long histories of colonial science, pride, and claims of ‘superior’ scientific

knowledge for the possession of peripheral space within Canada, especially during Cold War projects in Canada's Arctic history (see Powell 2008).



Figure 5.3: 'FAAE members visiting CHARS research station.' Source: House of Commons Committee Tweet, 3rd October, 2018.

Patricia Seed believes that European, imperial nations sought to assert territorial administration by performing acts of possession in their colonial peripheral spaces through their claim to superior scientific knowledge of the new world. Historically, for example, she observes how the Portuguese asserted their authority by declaring that they were 'leaders' in exploration as they possessed superior technological capabilities in navigation. This knowledge was based upon a detailed understanding of mathematics and

astronomy. Similarly, the Dutch Empire also asserted itself as a 'leader' in disseminating scientific knowledge by surveying space and, in turn, by the production of detailed cartographic maps of the New World that could then be reproduced and circulated back home (Seed 1995). Both methods, which claimed authority over space through superior scientific knowledge as a form of territorial imperialism, framed 'frontier space' as a 'laboratory' and testing ground of often 'white, masculine' scientific activity.

The importance of performances of 'scientific knowledge' and, in turn, of Sovereignty are intensified when it concerns regions such as the Arctic: a region that is vast, inhospitable, remote and challenging to occupy due to how removed it is from the centre of political and commercial activity. By framing itself as possessing the ability to perform scientific knowledge in the Arctic, the Canadian State, on the one hand, constructs a universal, public pride in the desire to conduct research in this 'challenging' space.

Subsequently, on the other hand, it also demonstrates an ability to show and actively perform, in a highly visual way, the effective and laboured occupation of the Arctic by Canadian bodies through the detailed collection of scientific data. Arctic Nations, such as Canada, are faced with the challenge of establishing the robust perception that they are both physically and symbolically present in an exceptional frontier region as part of their effort to assert the legitimacy of any sovereign ownership claim made through the principles of effective occupation and effective governance. Attempting to overcome the material agency of the harsh, frigid yet fluid, and dynamic landscapes of the Arctic and to frame the space as a frontier testing ground for scientific advancement is a narrative rooted in many, wider historical encounters by Canadian explorers, fur traders, missionaries, whalers, scientists, miners and the military.

In a display of 'overcoming' this exceptional environment, the CHARS project itself becomes enrolled as a separate geopolitical actor by the State. It serves as a prime example of a project which possesses its own political agency to demonstrate affectively and legitimise a symbolic non-material 'presence'

and 'governance' in a region through the collection of scientific data. As such, it serves a purpose that transcends its role as a mere physical marker of occupation. The physical presence of the CHARS research station is, naturally, still a useful static marker of affective occupation nonetheless. Furthermore, through scientific research projects like the CHARS research station, the 'blank' spaces of scientific uncertainty and knowledge of the surrounding Canadian Arctic region mean performances by 'Canadian' scientists also aid in the physical surveying and process of 'filling in the blanks' on the map. Another example of a Canadian scientific project acting as a 'mobile marker' of effective occupation is the floating research station: the Canadian Coast Guard ship *CCGS Amundsen*. The floating research station provides the State with a useful means through which to, at least partially, overcome the sometimes-resisting agency of the precarious geo-physical Arctic environment. The opening paragraph on the icebreaker's website, which describes the station and its function, is useful to consider in how it is portrayed for public consumption:

'...a major catalyst in revitalising Canadian Arctic science by giving Canadian researchers and their international collaborators unprecedented access to the Arctic Ocean. The ship's facilities and sophisticated pool of equipment make it a versatile research platform for scientists in the natural, health and social sciences.'

(Amundsen Science 2018)

Through the apparently 'superior' facilities that the ship possesses, Canada gains 'unprecedented' access to a remote and challenging environment, and, as such, serves as another instance by which Canada justifies its claims to its 'superior' navigational abilities in the Arctic. Just as the colonial Portuguese sailors of the fifteenth century did, Canada claims territorial possession through its superior ability to navigate this region. Yet, there is a significant distinction and evolution to the existing practice that is drawn attention to in

the online description; it also emphasises the ship's ability to provide access to the region to 'other', external, international scientists in a positive way. For example, Dr Mona Nemer, Chief Science Advisor of Canada, tweeted on 31st August, 2018, that the *CCGS Amundsen* had 'accommodated over 1500 researchers and professionals from over 20 countries' (Nemer 2018) (see *Figure 5.4, below*). By framing Canada as a steward of Arctic science, and by emphasising how the *CCGS Amundsen* functions as a place where Canada can mediate, facilitate and aid in international scientific collaboration, State actors such as Dr Nemer reorient the science conducted in Canada: it becomes a benefit for all amidst increasing scientific interests and activities by global actors. The apparent territorialising performances of CHARS and *CCGS Amundsen*, whilst acting as 'active' markers of effective occupation, simultaneously situates these programmes as positive places where Canada can mediate over global scientific networking. These programmes, including Canada's involvement in the International Geophysical Year (see Powell 2007) and the fourth International Polar Year Project, positions and projects the impression that Canada is a place of immense potential within a wider, international scientific culture (Government of Canada 2007). The emphasis placed upon scientific projects, and their potential, encourages a form of geopolitical 'boosterism, where some things, some people and some spaces get amplified and branded as inviting and opportunistic' (Dodds and Nuttall 2016: 17). In this way, Canada reorients research projects, making them inviting places where they can still control and order certain productions of geographic knowledge whilst, concurrently, legitimising this governing role on the international stage by portraying it to be a benefit for *all*.



Figure 5.4: 'The *CCGS Amundsen* "floating" research facility performing scientific research in the Arctic.' Source: Dr Mona Nemer, Chief Science Advisor of Canada, tweeted on 31st August, 2018.

Framing Canada as a scientific leader

Positioning itself as a 'world leader' and stressing their pride in 'leading stewardship' in scientific Arctic research is central to the construction of a wider and distinct type of Nationalism within Canada and its social consciousness. The Polar Knowledge Canada website attests to this in its presentation of government agency:

‘...responsible for advancing Canada’s knowledge of the Arctic, strengthening Canadian leadership in polar science and technology, operat[ing] the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) campus and conduct[ing] world-class cutting-edge Arctic research out of this extraordinary facility.’

(Government of Canada 2018)

This bold statement from the Trudeau government asserts that the Canadian State possesses a ‘duty’, as ‘scientific stewards’, to operate and conduct research in the Arctic, not just for the benefit of Canadians, but for the mutual benefit of many global interests. At the same time, it echoes Harper’s assertion that Canada is an environmental ‘steward’ for all of mankind, highlighting that the stewardship rhetoric permeates multiple aspects of Arctic discourse. Furthermore, by positioning themselves as ‘world leaders’, this rhetoric also serves the dual purpose of constructing national pride in its scientific capabilities: a narrative which is rooted in the imperial British nation having pride in British ‘superior’ naval capabilities (Craciun 2017). It is worth noting that the phrase ‘extraordinary’, used to describe the Canadian facility, alludes to the exceptional nature of the project in the Arctic, and frames the project as a prime example of Canadian ‘leadership’ that overcomes a precarious and challenging environment.

Michelle Jean’s 2007 Speech from the Throne is a good example of how the Canadian State frames itself as a ‘leader’; it includes a metaphor that likens Canada to the North Star, a star that is ubiquitously known as that which is used to ‘guide’ people. Polaris, the Northern star, is often used as an ‘anchor’ point because it seems to remain static above the North Pole whilst the rest of the stars in the sky shift around it. The Inuit refer to this star as ‘Nuuttuittuq’, which translates as ‘never moves’. This is an interesting and significant metaphor to adopt; the imagery evoked by the metaphor implies that Canada can help navigate and lead in the Arctic, in a space that is often

devoid of obvious navigational landmarks, whilst, at the same time, implicitly conveying their ability to be a guide in Arctic science. The imagery evoked also prompts its intended audience to infer that Canada possesses scientific programmes that the world ought to treat as a static anchor point – even within an ever-changing, fluid and hostile Arctic environment. Ironically though, in the High Arctic, the usefulness of Polaris drastically diminishes, as the latitude of the observer searching for the star corresponds with the height of the star above the horizon; many Inuit North of 69° would struggle to even point out Nuuttuittuq, despite its usefulness for Inuit communities further south (MacDonald 1998). As Cambridge Bay is over 69° North (69°07'02"N), the location of the CHARS station, the visibility of Polaris is greatly reduced; nevertheless, despite the figurative incongruity, the mythology surrounding the Northern Star was still appropriated for the purposes of Michelle Jean's speech:

'Like the North Star, Canada has been a guide to other Nations...Canada has shone as an example of what a people joined in common purpose can achieve. Yet Canada's greatest strength lies in its energy and determination to move forward and build a better future...Our Government is committed to strong leadership to realize that future. A Canada proud of its leadership in the world.'

(Government of Canada 2007)

By characterising the CHARS research station and the *CCGS Amundsen* as places where Canada can 'lead' in international cooperation through scientific research, the government seeks to legitimise Canadian 'pseudo-settler' scientists' presence in the region. By positioning international cooperation through science as a tool to reorient the presence of 'outside'

settle-colonial scientific actors, the State can also address the problematic history of 'paternal', colonial science in the Arctic, especially concerning Inuit dispossession through healthcare surveying and classification which was carried out during the 1950s surveys aboard *CGS C.D. Howe*. Tackling the world's most pressing concerns, such as climate change, Canada, as a world leader in Arctic research utilizes world-class facilities to conduct Arctic science through international collaboration in scientific diplomacy.

Inuit knowledge, 'Qaujimaqatuqangit' (IQ) and scientific stewardship

Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR) has incorporated Inuit knowledge and capabilities into a number of scientific projects operating out of the CHARS Campus. One such project, *SmartICE*, utilises Inuit who were already travelling on the sea ice to retrieve data about its thickness and the local conditions: its unstable and unpredictable geophysical materiality. By using this knowledge, cross-referencing the information with satellite imagery and by monitoring its physical changes due to the increasing effects of climate change, the project's aim is to create 'travel maps' to ensure safer transport across the sea ice for multiple actors. Celebrating the dynamic role Indigenous knowledge can bring to government-led scientific projects has repeatedly been the focus of recent tweets by government actors. Amongst many other examples, this has included POLAR Knowledge describing the useful way a collaborative approach to 'new knowledge creation' and the Governor General of Canada, Julie Payette, describing the Inuit as 'researchers' who know the most about Canada's North (*see Figures 5.5 and 5.6, below*).

 **PolarKnowledgeCanada** 
Canada  @POLARCanada  Following 

We are pleased Minister McKenna could visit the CHARS campus to learn about how POLAR brings [#IndigenousKnowledge](#) and science together for the co-creation of new knowledge, as part of her trip through [#CambridgeBay!](#) [@cathmckenna](#) [@ParksCanada](#) [@UKinCanada](#)



Figure 5.5: 'Minister McKenna visiting CHARS Campus.'

Source: POLAR tweeted 10th September, 2018.



GGJuliePayette
@GGJuliePayette

Follow

Inuit and northerners know better than anyone the changes that the Arctic is undergoing. #GGArctic



6:35 pm - 31 Aug 2018 From Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut

Figure 5.6: 'Inuit and Northerners know better than anyone the changes that the Arctic is undergoing.' Source: Julie Payette, 29th Governor General of Canada, tweeted on the 31st August, 2018.

Such projects are supported to ensure that 'Scientists are encouraged to work with community leaders, Elders, hunters and other knowledgeable individuals to incorporate traditional knowledge into the design and conduct of the study. Community input into the research is important, as are sensitive and sound researcher-community relations' (George 2016a). The Kitikmeot Heritage Society, a Nunavut historical association, has collaborated with POLAR to produce a research leaflet, outlining to scientists working within and alongside CHARS the importance of Inuiinnait culture, seeking to ensure

that researchers align their goals with the wider interests of the local Inuit communities surrounding the station. All of these projects ensure that the State demonstrates that it is actively incorporating Inuit culture, knowledge and expertise into government-sponsored scientific research programmes and, thus tries to reorient the problematic colonial framing of 'testing' spaces of the Canadian 'Arctic laboratory'. The CHARS campus, therefore, becomes not only a laboratory for science, but an extension of Inuit communities, and a stage where Inuit-Crown relations can collaboratively work together. By doing so, the CHARS project attempts to distance the current Canadian government from the problematic, colonial and Cold War scientific projects of Canada's past.

However, the promotion and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems within such 'southern' practices is also highly gendered and frequently marginalises women. Much of the inclusion of Inuit knowledge on climate change is informed by traditionally male-dominated practices, such as hunting, fur trapping and reindeer husbandry. Indigenous women have also witnessed significant changes in terms of climate; for example, the impact of climate change has been encountered and experienced when they gather plant life, as well as in the animal skins that they work with to create banal items such as clothing. Yet, despite this, their intimate knowledge, observations and perspectives are frequently 'invisible' or simply excluded in Arctic research: male voices are privileged. Karla Jessen Williamson suggests that this 'unbalancing' of gender equality amongst the promotion and inclusion of Inuit knowledge is a 'by-product of the colonialism experienced by Inuit and other Indigenous peoples in the circumpolar world' (Williamson quoted in Quinn 2018). This paternalistic, patriarchal, male bias is inherent within many of the narratives of western men encountering the Arctic who framed the region as a male-preferential space to challenge and overcome. At the same time, perhaps unsurprisingly, given the patriarchal context, western men have also frequently deferred to Inuit men in their encounters and negotiations (Kirmayer *et al* 2012). Consequently, Arctic Nationalism is

bound up in certain displays of masculinity through laboured, scientific practices.

IQ principals also went into the design of the CHARS Campus buildings and interior furnishings; the CHARS buildings served as an architectural representation of Inuit culture, to ensure that collaborative practices went into all areas of the CHARS design, construction and operation. Whilst Canada has multiple research facilities in the North, Inuit partnership in its design has been promoted as a central feature of the narrative surrounding CHARS as a collaborate venture. The Inuit planning principle of open interconnected spaces was adopted into the design and layout of the central public spaces where Indigenous locals and scientists could interact with each other. This space was modelled, for example, on the Inuit circular shaped 'Qaggiq': a traditional communal igloo. The building's design takes on a literal, affective, material representation of Inuit traditional architecture and, concurrently, serves as a symbolic 'nod' to Inuit communities residing in the area of Cambridge Bay. The architectural firm, EVOQ, makes another direct reference to their implementation of Inuit methods in the design of the building: 'The exposed wooden structure used in the materials of the building's construction conveys the ingenuity of the many Inuit designed, stick built assemblies... and the copper-coloured cladding is a nod to the Copper Inuit, the host community' (EVOQ Architecture 2018). Large artwork pieces were also commissioned to decorate the interior of the main buildings; the Kitikmeot Heritage Society, for example, commissioned Inuit Elder needlework sewers to create a three-piece wall-hanging installation called a '*stitch in time*'. This artwork includes 'family portraits against backgrounds ranging from a snow house to the Cam Main DEW line site and the now-demolished Loran long-range navigation tower to CHARS itself' (George 2016b). Seamlessly incorporating and blending historically important markers of Canadian scientific research in Canada, historical markers of Canadian occupation and Inuit family portraits, functions as a means by which the State

can demonstrate its wider physical and symbolic ‘year-round’ presence in the region whilst, concurrently, bolstering its Sovereignty claims.

Inuit artwork was also incorporated into the physical materials of the building’s floors and glazing (Williamson 2018). Incorporating Inuit art volumetrically into all physical areas of the main buildings design literally immerses the visitor into Inuit culture and ‘community’; whether it is walking on Inuit-created art on the building’s floor or looking at the glass ceiling and the privacy glazing incorporating Inuit motifs, any visitor to the CHARS campus is affectively encouraged to immerse themselves into an alternative Inuit homeland in diverse ways. Incorporating Inuit-led artwork and Canadian material into a government building’s design is a policy adopted across many Canadian structures, including the Canadian High Commission in London.

Survival in the Arctic demands a detailed knowledge of landforms and ice conditions; as such, scientific observation in the Arctic goes hand in hand with effective navigation and survival in an uncompromising space (see Dodds and Depledge 2012). Because of its fluid, unstable, material geography, the Arctic can sometimes complicate Sovereignty performances that seek to underpin their claim by means of constant, effective occupation. Yet, despite this, the narrative that frames the Arctic as a laboratory and scientific testing space, alongside the active and lively laboured performances of Canadian scientific heroes, whether ‘western’ or Indigenous, incorporated into surveying, collecting and preserving specimens, is an alternative way Canada can claim effective occupation – through its Canadian scientists – and perform its Arctic Sovereignty. Crucially, it is important to acknowledge that these narratives of ‘overcoming’ the Arctic environment were highly gendered, racialised and, historically, frequently excluded the long history of Indigenous cultures and populations already present in the region. Instead, these narratives romanticised encounters with the sublime and helped to construct Canadian national pride through heroic renditions of bravery and survival by the often white, male body ‘conquering’ this newly colonised world which was ‘awaiting the civilized imprint of Europeans’ (Dodds and Nuttall 2016: viii, see

also Bloom 1993; Lambert 2009 and Craciun 2014). In an attempt to reconcile these narratives, the CHARS research station project and the *CCGS Amundsen* ‘floating research station’ position Canada as a world-class leader in Arctic science and research that benefits global interests in an attempt to provide alternative justifications for Canadian jurisdictional authority in the region to a global audience. By acknowledging and incorporating Inuit knowledge in these scientific programmes, the State, whilst increasing the enfranchisement of the Inuit, simultaneously reorients the presence of the Canadian ‘settler-scientists’ away from the problematic colonial settler-State past, to one of progressive collaboration alongside Indigenous partners.

‘Indigenising’ the polar bear and alternative settler-stewardship ‘icons’

Over the last twenty years, the polar bear has become the premier symbol and ‘poster-child’ of Arctic stewardship on the global stage. It is an animal which has often been co-opted into performances from NGOs using their ‘iconic’ image to frame the ‘polar bear’ as the quintessential epitome of a non-human ‘climate refugee’ (Englehard 2016; Strode 2017). In 2013, the polar bear came to the forefront of a range of Stewardship campaigns around the world. For example, Greenpeace processed a mechanical polar bear the size of a double-decker bus through central London to Shell HQ as part of its ‘Save the Arctic’ campaign (Greenpeace 2013), and the Coca Cola Corporations’ ‘Arctic Home Campaign’ (Coca Cola 2013) teamed up with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Government of Nunavut to raise money for the polar bear habitat – a location which has frequently featured in Coca Cola’s Christmas advertising campaigns (*see Figures 5.7 and 5.8, below*). In this manner, the polar bear has routinely been performed and recognised as an ‘iconic’ symbol to promote Arctic Stewardship (Danita 2018).



Figure 5.7: Giant polar bear leads Greenpeace's 'Save the Arctic' Protest.
Source: Greenpeace 2013.



Figure 5.8: Polar bears featured in the 2013 'Open Happiness' Coca Cola Christmas campaign. Source: Coca Cola, 2013.

Canada is 'home' to approximately two-thirds or 15,500 of the world's wild polar bears, and the symbol of the polar bear has been of great cultural significance within Canada for decades (Engelhard 2016). Repeatedly featuring on Canadian postage stamps, the polar bear has been routinely used as a symbol of national pride. In 2011, Nicola Eaton, a Conservative Senator appointed by the Harper administration in 2009, even went so far as to suggest that the polar bear ought to replace the image of the beaver as the national symbol of Canada: 'A country's symbols are not constant and can change over time as long as they reflect the ethos of the people and the spirit of the nation...The polar bear, with its strength, courage, resourcefulness and dignity is perfect for the part.' (Chase 2011). Under Parliament's National Symbol of Canada Act in 1975, the beaver was given official status as the emblem of Canada. The beaver's popularity and significance was partly due to the long history of trade in beaver pelts, used to make fashionable fur hats, which drove European expansion in North America in the 1600s and early 1700s and, subsequently, the economic development of Canada: 'The trade of beaver pelts proved so profitable that many Canadians felt compelled to pay tribute to the buck-toothed animal' (Government of Canada 2017a). Despite this recognition, the beaver came close to extinction by the middle of the nineteenth century:

'There were an estimated six million beavers in Canada before the start of the fur trade. During its peak, 100,000 pelts were being shipped to Europe each year; the Canadian beaver was in danger of being wiped out. Luckily, about that time, Europeans took a liking to silk hats and the demand for beaver pelts all but disappeared. Today, thanks to conservation and silk hats, the beaver – the largest rodent in Canada – is alive and well all over the country.'

(Government of Canada 2017a)

It is significant to note that the government of Canada acknowledges, in this extract, that the 'successful' conservation of the beaver was one of the reasons the animal was adopted as the national emblem in 1975. The need for the promotion of the conservation of the polar bear and the Arctic habitat was also used repeatedly in decisions to adopt the polar bear on Canadian Postage stamps. In 1953, according to the Canada Post Office Department, the 'National Wildlife Series' featured polar bears because 'wildlife that was once so abundant to our forefathers is being depleted at an alarming rate because of its lack of appreciation. It is the Department's hope that the wildlife series of postage stamp issues will emphasize to all Canadians the importance of securing and restoring the wildlife resources of Canada, not only for their considerable economic value but also because they are a constant source of pleasure to thousands in every walk of life' (Canada Post Office Department 1953). Polar bear conservation, stewardship and Arctic symbols were again mentioned in the 2009 Canadian Stamps, 'Preserve the Polar Regions' and 'Glaciers' series:

'Polar Regions and glaciers respond very quickly to climate change...Their loss directly impacts human populations and ecosystems. Creatures that inhabit the Arctic and Antarctic Polar Regions, the first to feel the dangerous effects of climate change, are featured on the stamps and souvenir sheet. By focusing on these animals, our goal was to highlight the dangers they will face if action is not taken to preserve their habitats.'

(Canada Post Corporation 2009).



Figure 5.9: Polar bear, 'National Wildlife' series.

Source: Canada Post Office Department, 1953.



Figure 5.10: Polar bear, 'Canadian Wildlife'

Series. Source: Canada Post Corporation, 1998.



Figure 5.11: Polar bear, 'Preserve the Polar Regions' and 'Glaciers' series.

Source: Canada Post Corporation, 2009.



Figure 5.12: Polar bears in the Canadian

North. Source: Canada Post Office

Department, 1972.

The press release for the 1972 'Polar bears in the Canadian North' postage stamp (see *Figure 5.12, above*), highlighted the link between conservation of the polar bears in Canada and the cultural and economic significance they played in Inuit communities: 'polar bears, a traditional source of food and clothing for the Eskimos, have in recent years been regarded by many as an endangered species' (Canada Post office Department 1972). Subsequently, on the 15th November, 1973, in establishing an international agreement on the Conservation of polar bears, Canada signed a multilateral treaty in Oslo alongside the four other Arctic coastal States: Denmark, Norway, United States of America and the USSR. Due to increased hunting of polar bears during the 1960s and 1970s, which led to polar bear populations declining, the treaty prohibited their unregulated poaching throughout the five State's territories. The treaty required the States to regulate and enforce the limitation hunting to either scientific research or use by Indigenous populations. The treaty recognised that the five coastal States had 'special responsibilities and special interests in relation to the protection of the fauna and flora of the Arctic... [also] recognising that [as] the polar bear is a significant resource of the Arctic Region which requires additional protection, [it] should be achieved through co-ordinated national measures taken by the States of the Arctic Region' and that research conducted by the States on polar bear numbers should be circulated and shared (Agreement on the Conservation of polar bears 1973). This narrative of the Canadian government having a duty and responsibility to monitor polar bear populations as 'Arctic environmental stewards' and for the benefit of Inuit communities, was echoed in 2015 by the then Deputy High Commissioner of Canada to the United Kingdom, Alan Kessel, in March 2015, at an Eccles Centre sponsored British Library public event on the future of the Arctic.



Figure 5.13: Discussions from the Eccles Centre Panel ‘Future of the Arctic’, 2015. Source: Rosanna White

As one of the panellists, he explored over the course of two hours the political and environmental challenges and simultaneously emerging opportunities that could arise from significant increases in Arctic activity as sea ice diminishes (*see Figure 5.13, above*). This public event gave Kessel a platform to articulate Canada’s assertions of stewardship and Sovereignty to a public audience in a geopolitically popular way. Kessel’s participation in the event, was in itself a performance, and provided him with an alternative stage to voice his government’s activities in the Arctic, a public stage akin to government-sponsored museum exhibits or civil servant Twitter accounts. During that panel discussion, he repeatedly asserted that, despite climate change resulting in sea ice diminishing elsewhere in the Arctic, polar bears in the Canadian Arctic were healthy and actively thriving thanks, in part, to the joint management and observation by the Inuit and the federal government of Canada:

‘In Canada we have actually seen a marked increase in populations of [Polar] bears and that’s due to the keen interest in part by monitoring survival rates of bears and watching what bears are doing in the Canadian Arctic...That of course is due to the fact that the ice within that area [Canadian Arctic] has not been disappearing or has been augmented in a way that is very different to what happened in Svalbard. So depending on where you are in the Arctic, the polar bear could be endangered, or the bear could be increasing in population.’

(Kessel 2015)

Significantly, by emphasising that they were thriving, at least in the Canadian Arctic, Kessel clearly positions the polar bears as having their own mobile agency. By positioning them as an essential, bio-political subject, Kessel emphasises how effective occupation in the Canadian Arctic by non-human actors can be achieved. However, whilst the polar bear is enrolled as a marker of long-standing and increasing effective occupation in the Canadian Arctic, the irony is that they are highly mobile creatures, capable of moving across vast distances and traversing through imagined borders, like the Baffin Bay polar bear population which moves between Canada and Greenland. As such, their ceremonial performances of ‘lively’ effective occupation could easily slip into ineffective occupation as they leave State lines or, worse still, become enrolled in another State’s occupational performances if they were to cross State boundaries. The lively and mobile nature of polar bears, therefore, precariously signifies effective occupation within the Canadian Arctic. Thus, polar bears, like the Inuit in many respects, become ‘imagined’ as ‘Indigenised’ and co-opted by the State as mobile markers and actors of effective ‘settled’ occupation.

Kessel also alludes to the material and precarious agency of the ice. Depending on where you are in the Arctic, ice flows and formations can help or hinder effective occupation practices. As Gabrielle Walker, another panellist on the Arctic future's debate suggested, 'the presence of ice can also sometimes be a great protector in the Arctic, indeed the agency of the ice can frustrate and limit development of the region'. Too much ice can hinder alternative occupying performances on the one hand, whilst, at the same time, disappearing ice can also have dire consequences for polar bears hunting in the region and, in-turn, for their potential to act as markers of effective occupation for the Canadian settler-State.

What is particularly significant to note in contemporary polar bear management is that there has been an increased acknowledgement by the Canadian government of Indigenous partners in co-ordinated initiatives; this forms part of a much wider programme of 'unsettling' historical colonial-settler narratives by acknowledging and utilising Inuit IQ knowledge and expertise in resource management, and environmental stewardship in the Arctic (Cameron 2015). The Polar Bear Administrative Committee in the Department of Environment (PBAC), to draw upon one particularly apt example, is comprised of a diverse group of representatives who oversee matters of coordinated polar bear management in Canada. This committee consists of representatives from the federal government, such as Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Parks Canada Agency, as well as co-management partners that share legal responsibility for the management of polar bears under the Land Claims Agreements, alongside organizations that represent the Canadian Indigenous peoples of the Arctic (Department of Environment 2018a). This committee is a good example of how older forms of wilderness management have changed to accommodate and acknowledge a wider array of community – as well as political – concerns, including Indigenous participation, in an era where sustainability discourses have gained traction amongst publics and governments. The Polar

Bear Technical Committee (PBTC), which supports PBAC by reviewing scientific research and 'experts from within Indigenous user groups... [providing] Indigenous Traditional Knowledge' (Department of Environment 2018b) highlights the government's commitment to include and refer to Indigenous stakeholders in these stewardship narratives. As such, it is highly persuasive to view the Canadian government's recognition of the strategic importance of including Indigenous actors in these 'stewardship' initiatives as a reflection of their efforts to legitimise their authority and their projected duty to protect the Arctic environment in an 'Indigenous homeland' for both the bears and the Inuit under the Land claims agreement.

Kessel, through his repeated use of the possessive pronoun 'their', in the phrase 'their bears', roots polar bears firmly within Inuit culture and, therefore, in another way, as an 'Indigenous' Canadian that belongs to the Inuit homeland:

'We have watched a steady increase in bears, and the reason we have to do that is because in Inuit culture, bears are extraordinarily iconic. There is also an authority within Nunavut to cull bears. And so, as the federal government, we were very keen to monitor the survivability of bears and we have noted a considerable increase in the number of bears within the Canadian Arctic...One thing we are worried about in the government of Canada is that you don't take [an] emotional attachment to the polar bear and apply it in a way that does not work together with the Indigenous people and their understanding of their environment. And we [government of Canada] look and talk to our Indigenous people who are keen to make sure

that the populations of their bears, because it is their bears, is sustainable.'

(Kessel 2015)

The assertion that the bears belong to the Inuit homeland also helps to forge the Canadian 'citizenship' of the polar bears, just like the Inuit, whilst also legitimising the presence of these non-human bodies in the Canadian Arctic. In this way, such posturing serves to add further credibility for the various government-led interventions over this 'traditional homeland' in the name of – or under the guise of – environmental stewardship. There are also parallels between the Inuit creation story and the possibility of the need and 'duty' of the government of Nunavut to monitor and in turn cull polar bears when required. As with the introduction of the wolf-spirit, Amarak, to manage Caribou populations in the aforementioned Inuit mythology story, Kessel mentions that polar bear numbers are thriving in part due to these successful monitoring and interventions of the bear populations by Inuit-led government forces. In this way, contemporary monitoring and intervening practices are linked to a distinct form of historical and traditional, Inuit, paternal stewardship. This approach allows the polar bear to be used as a symbol of a Canadian-Inuit-led custodial approach to environmental management for national-identity interests: the assertion that the Canadian State has a duty and role, a paternal sovereign responsibility to look after, administer, watch, and manage 'their' Northern environment ecology and resources. At the same time, the State utilises this paternal Arctic stewardship narrative as a lively and jurisdictional performance for the 'enactment of Sovereignty' (see Griffiths 2006). In his closing remarks on the panel, Kessel again emphasised the government's determination to include Inuit co-operation and resources within policy:

‘The key development in our Arctic Council Chairmanship has been the sustainable development of the people of the North. Canada is extremely positive and hopeful about “our” Arctic, our portion of the Arctic. We consider that the biggest achievement in our chairmanship has been successfully expanding the council’s focus on activities that matter to the people of the Arctic.’

(Kessel 2015)

There are different, concurrent modalities of effective occupation that are achieved through the discourses concerning polar bear management and people management through diverse stewardship practices. Firstly, Kessel repeatedly emphasises the importance of including Inuit knowledge and management practices in informing policies concerning polar bear management and environmental stewardship more generally within the Canadian Arctic. He links the fates of the Inuit and polar bears’ ecology together. Simultaneously, Kessel assimilates the ‘Indigenous’ polar bear into a distinctly southern narrative of healthcare management which resonates, somewhat jarringly – as discussed in detail in the previous chapter – within the wider narratives of the Inuit healthcare surveys in the 1950s.

The polar bears are also in some ways, contradictorily, enrolled as a colonising-settler who then becomes assimilated and ‘nativised’ as Canadian. Whilst settler-colonialism by European actors struggles to gain credibility in the Arctic, the ‘nativised’ settler polar bear is framed as a ‘credible’ marker of settler Sovereignty. The juxtaposed discourses used to frame the polar bears as Indigenous and separate, yet also ‘nativised’ as a settler, draws attention to the nuances surrounding the complex, fluid, contradictions underpinning Canadian rhetoric, further reinforcing how its Arctic Sovereignty claims are made up of an assemblage of discourses and practices.

Through calming measures, such as the preservation and curation of Canadian territorial and jurisdictional Inuit-led administration, effective occupation of the region by Inuit and non-human bodies and, crucially, Canadian 'native' actors, the narrative of continued and 'affective occupation' of a Canadian homeland clearly constructed. All of these narratives contribute to the creation of a larger example of 'occupying atmospheres' which Canadian governments use to assert their Arctic Sovereignty.

Reorienting national treasures: performing archaeological maritime stewardship

Rather than taking shape in a form that is based upon the narratives of its own Indigenous people, the Arctic has historically been a space that has been primarily portrayed to and celebrated by the world from an 'Outside' explorers' perspective, (McGhee 2005). To celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the confederation in 2017, Harper invited Canadians to learn about their Northern heritage through visual displays, adverts and interactive museum exhibitions in many major cities across Canada which commemorated historical explorations of the Canadian Arctic and framed them as integral to the wider narrative of historical Canadian 'Arctic heritage' (Canadian Heritage 2017). The emphasis placed upon celebrating historical Arctic explorations, often by 'Outsiders', would, at first glance, seem odd or even incongruous; yet, by asserting a Canadian national Identity that is linked to Arctic Sovereignty, the Canadian government actively seeks to link the idea of the historical, 'heroic' Arctic explorer with that of a proud Nation: a Nation which takes pride in and celebrates modern 'heroic' Canadian explorers of the Arctic, often identified as scientists and the military (McGoogan 2017). Harper has repeatedly emphasised that his Arctic Sovereignty is about possessing the technical capabilities to overcome the harsh geo-physical spaces of the Arctic, stating that 'we're up to the challenge of mounting significant technical and military operations in the harsh conditions of the

Canadian Arctic something all Canadians can be proud of' (Harper quoted in Geiger 2014). Celebrating polar explorers as 'heroes' is historically rooted in a distinctly British narrative of naval 'heroes' exploring the North in the period after the Napoleonic wars and is bound up in narratives of national pride by portraying explorers who have overcome extreme and challenging spaces. However, these narratives frequently ignore 'hidden histories' by dismissing Indigenous encounters that, ironically, frequently aided in these polar expeditions (Driver and Jones 2009). One defining legacy of exploration that is celebrated repeatedly in museum exhibitions – and was also the main feature of a 2017 political television commercial entitled 'The Great Canadian North', commissioned by the Harper administration to celebrate and commemorate the 150th anniversary of Confederation – is that of Sir John Franklin and his crew (Rodeo FX 2018). In a Question and Answer session with John Geiger, the CEO of the Canadian Royal Geographical Society, Harper stressed the national significance of European explorations into Canada's Arctic for Canadians and, in particular, the political and cultural significance of Franklin's exploration and subsequent searches to its Sovereignty claims and the formation of national identity narratives. Yet, in doing so, he ignored the celebrations of oral, Inuit histories of European exploration in the NWP:

'As I've said before, Sir John's exploration and discovery of parts of Canada's North are an important part of our history and have contributed to Canada becoming the wonderful country we enjoy today. The search for the fabled Northwest Passage is something that Canadians have celebrated in stories and songs for generations — it's even the subject of the Stan Rogers song that we consider our "unofficial national anthem" — because that story is the story of Canada. Just look at the list of explorers who tried even before Sir John: Cabot, Frobisher,

Davis, Cartier, Hudson, La Salle, Cook, Vancouver, MacKenzie. These are the giants of our history, and the story of the search for the Northwest Passage is the essentially the history of Canada's North. The Franklin expedition is part of that broader story — the most tragic, and most mysterious part, to be sure. For almost 200 years Canadians — not just Canadians, people around the world — have wondered what happened to the Franklin expedition.'

(Geiger 2014)

Franklin's search for a route through the NWP

Sir John Franklin, a British Naval Officer, left England in 1845 with one hundred and twenty-eight men on two ships destined for the NWP in the Arctic. He was commanded by John Barrow and the British Navy to seek a navigable route through the NWP, but the three-year trip ended in disaster (Cyriax 1939; Fleming 1998). In 1848, having been stuck in the ice for nineteen months, it was reported in the margins of a note in a cairn on King William Island left by Captain Crozier, now in command, that many men had died, including Franklin, and the remaining one hundred and eight men of the crew were planning to abandon the ships *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* and walk toward the mainland to Back River, hoping that it would help them to navigate south and to a fur-trading post. They never made it and disappeared. Ultimately, the one note left in a cairn at Victory Point and brought back to England by Francis Leopold McClintock in 1860 was the only physical documentary evidence left by an 'anglophone' record giving evidence of the men's dire situation (McClintock 1859). This one written account was also deemed more significant because it was written rather than circulated as an oral account of what happened to Franklin and his crew. Not

only was written material evidence more widely accepted in the British scientific communities back home, this physical material evidence has, subsequently, been repeatedly used an example of ‘proof’ that this area of the Canadian Arctic was ‘occupied in a symbolic way’ – even before the evidence of the crew’s remains on land, or the two shipwrecks on the sea bed were found. Between 1848 and 1859, more than twenty expeditions set out to find Franklin’s men or, at least, an explanation for their disappearance and many records and the material evidence of these subsequent expeditions can be found in National depositories in Canada and Britain, such as the British Library (Hatfield 2016; Potter 2016). The by-product of the search party explorations over the next one-hundred and sixty-five years was that it resulted in much of the Canadian Arctic coast being mapped and explored (Disturnell 1854) (see Figure 5.14, below).

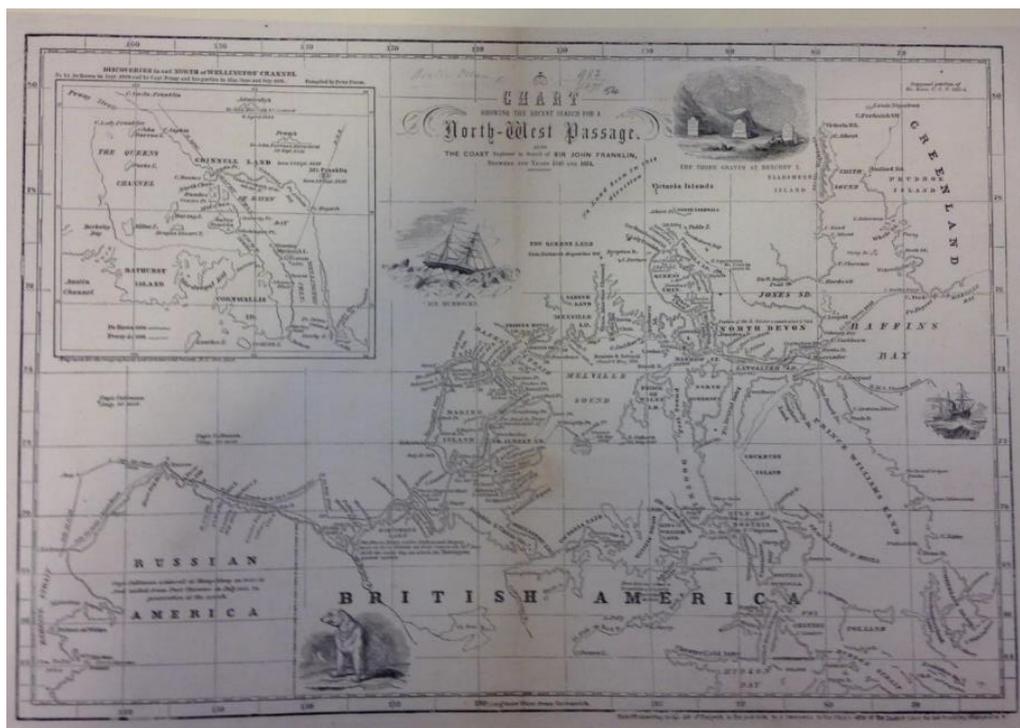


Figure 5.14: ‘Chart showing the recent search for a Northwest Passage and also the coast explored in search of Sir John Franklin between the years 1848 and 1854.’ Disturnell 1854. Source: British Library Maps.982 (54).

John Rae famously returned, following his fourth expedition in search of information about Franklin's crew in 1854, with artefacts from the men's overland hike and with oral accounts from Inuit testimony, including tales of cannibalism amongst the men (Rae 1854). Inuit, oral testimony, however, had routinely been discredited and dismissed as 'historians of Arctic exploration generally ignored Inuit oral traditions because of the inherent difficulties of translation and analysis' (Woodman 2015: xvi). The practice of dismissing Inuit testimony, framing it as unreliable, is reflected in Charles Dickens' efforts to dismiss and discredit Rae's account. He wrote in his periodical *Household Words* that because the word of the Inuit had 'been given at second-hand through an interpreter; and he was, in all probability imperfectly acquainted with the language he translated to the white man' that testimony that should be ignored (Dickens 1854:361). In an even more prejudiced, colonial account, Dickens famously stated that 'the word of a savage is not to be taken for it; firstly, because he is a liar; secondly because he is a boaster' (Dickens 1854:391). Whilst colonial narratives framed the Inuit as the antithesis of the British, their Empire's superiority and their national values of heroism and truthfulness, the evidence of cannibalism amongst Franklin's men was verified when Canadian forensic archaeological work on a site of buried remains was excavated in 1994 and established the 'truthfulness' of Inuit Oral testimony (Keenleyside 1995). Over the years, ongoing search for more evidence concerning Franklin's fateful last Arctic expedition continued to capture the public's imagination through museum exhibits, art, theatre, music and a myriad of textual representations (Craciun 2016; McCorristine 2018); yet, despite the public appetite, Inuit testimony was repeatedly dismissed and ignored (Woodman 2014).

Despite the ships being British prior to their discovery, both of Franklin's missing ships were designated as 'Canadian National Historic Sites' in 1992 by the Conservative-led majority government of Brian Mulroney in his last year of tenure (Parks Canada 2017), following an intensive period of Franklin searches led by the government agency of Parks Canada in the late 1980s

(Craciun 2012). Significantly, these ships became the only National Historic Sites within Canada that remained undiscovered. The speculative designation of the ships as National Historic Sites and of such important cultural value to Canada was a corollary of their direct, symbolic association with Franklin's last expedition. By classifying the ships as National Historic Sites, the government of Canada co-opted the ships into their own narrative, making them of great historical significance to Canada and, concurrently, strategically identified the ships as historical non-human 'static markers', albeit symbolic ones, of a 'Canadian' pseudo-settler occupation of the NWP. Sir John Franklin himself was designated as a 'Person of National Historical Significance' in 1945. The minutes from a meeting of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, in November 1992, stated that it was because of Franklin's popular associations with his explorations of the Canadian Arctic in the nineteenth century (Parks Canada 2006). As the North West Passage is a precarious ice-prone region for much of the year, traditional displays of effective occupation by human occupation which is performed in the territorialisation of Southern Canada is often hard to achieve because of the geo-physical reality of this icy space. As such, the ships and the subsequent search parties for the ships served as a convincing example of 'mobile' effective occupation by Canadian bodies in the NWP, used to bolster their claims of Arctic Sovereignty. Furthermore, in 1997, Canada signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Great Britain, agreeing that, if found, the wrecks, and the recovery their artefacts, would fall under the jurisdiction of the Canadian government. Britain relinquished governance through jurisdiction to Canada, except in the case that any recovered artefact was considered to be of 'outstanding cultural significance' to the Royal Navy (Beeby 2018). Linking Canada as a nation to British exploration, through the 'stewardship' and active laboured recovery of these 'British' ships, as well as displays of Canadian Sovereignty through effective jurisdiction and governance in the region, one which was acknowledged by other States, was an intensely shrewd and strategic move. In 2008, as 'stewards' of this 'historical and archaeological site of national significance', Parks Canada

began a detailed investigation into the possible location of the ships, including 'close consultation with Inuit, whose oral histories encompass Franklin and his ships' (Parks Canada 2018a).

Reconciling Canada as 'stewards' of Inuit testimony

From 2008 onwards, the search for the ships through the Parks Canada agency actively sought and included Inuit testimony and IQ knowledge, unsettling the historic practice of the official and popular media dismissing Inuit testimony as 'untruthful or unreliable'. In 2018, the Trudeau administration repeatedly referenced the role of Inuit knowledge in announcing the details of the planned multi-year investigation into the wrecks. The first sentence in the first paragraph emphasised the strategic importance the government of Canada placed on acknowledging and promoting Inuit historical testimony: 'Inuit shared stories and knowledge that helped the world better understand the Arctic and the fate of the Franklin ships and their crews' (Parks Canada 2018b). By reorienting the ships as culturally significant material 'bodies of evidence' of Inuit oral testimony, the Canadian State sought to reconcile the historical disenfranchisement of the Inuit within Canada whilst, at the same time, 'Indigenising' the 'pseudo-settler' ships as physical displays of this historical Inuit oral testimony. This is particularly important when, previously, the ownership of the ships and their protection and management was something to be negotiated. In 1992, even though the ships' physical locations had not yet been identified, by declaring them as National Historical Sites and framing them as 'non-human flag poles' of Inuit Oral history and testimony, Parks Canada positioned themselves as 'stewards' of historical Arctic heritage and, simultaneously, as 'stewards' of Inuit testimony. Furthermore, because of their testimony and being able to bear witness, historically, to their fate in the Arctic, the ships, constructed as possessing a 'pseudo' historical Inuit heritage, can be convincingly perceived as an alternative material display of the performance of Inuit occupation.

This acknowledgment by the government of Canada of the strategic importance of showcasing evidence of the Inuit being present in the Arctic affectively to bear witness and record some of the history of the fate of Franklin's crew, is deeply relevant and revealing. Minister McKenna, the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, announced in June 2018 that the government was investing in The Franklin Expedition Inuit Oral History Project; this project 'will increase awareness of the contributions of Inuit to the discovery of the wrecks of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, and further document Inuit interactions with Sir John Franklin and his crew' (Parks Canada 2018e). The project, framing the importance and active role of the Inuit in the histories of Franklin's expedition, represents another marker of their own active and laboured affective occupation, both historically and to the present day. Furthermore, the 'material shared by Inuit knowledge holders through this project will also contribute to content for future exhibits at the Nattillik Heritage Centre in Gjoa Haven', highlighting the visual and politically strategic importance the Canadian government places upon museum exhibitions – something that will be explored further in the next chapter.

Inuit knowledge and ownership of the wrecks

In 2013, the Government of Nunavut's land-based archaeological team was also involved in the search for evidence of Franklin's missing crew and relics. By consulting Inuit residents living in the area, the search for Franklin's ships increasingly utilised Inuit oral testimony. So, on the 1st September 2014, when Parks Canada archaeologist Ryan Harris finally witnessed an image of *HMS Erebus* appear on the sonar screen, the Canadian State had increasingly acknowledged and relied on Inuit knowledge and testimony, in cooperation with western, contemporary scientific practice, to locate the missing ships successfully. In 2018, cooperation was emphasised again in the Parks Canada press release which stated that 'profound knowledge of history and the natural world – or Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit – combined with western science

and the perseverance of a broad group of partners, led by Parks Canada and involving Inuit and the Government of Nunavut led to the discovery of the wreck[s]' (Parks Canada 2018b). This affectively positioned the State as champions of 'truthful and reliable' Inuit testimony, a strategic move that continues to mitigate the increasing threats to Canadian Arctic Sovereignty from Inuit self-determination. Celebrating the contemporary role of the Inuit officially as 'stewards' in this research and supporting in the search for the ships as a national venture can also be seen in the newly chosen names of the Parks Canada research vessels. The Parks Canada excavation support barge, named *Qiniqtiryuaq*, was utilised in 2017 and 2018 to provide logistical support for the work undertaken by Parks Canada divers on-board the *RV David Thompson*. Interestingly, and perhaps somewhat ironically, the *Qiniqtiryuaq* support barge is a 'secondary' vessel that is towed *behind* by the *RV David Thompson*, and houses three containers for a lab, storage and equipment space and a hyperbaric treatment chamber (Parks Canada 2018b). Whilst the inclusion of Inuit names is indeed progressive and part of a wider move employed by the Canadian government to incorporate Inuit place names officially back into the Arctic, the decision to give this *ad hoc* 'caddy' vessel an Inuit name ironically fails to 'unsettle' the hidden histories of Indigenous support in exploration narratives as much as the State would perhaps desire it to.

The shipwrecks also provide the State with another apt metaphor of 'Indigenising' a non-human 'settler' in the Arctic, functioning much like the aforementioned example of the polar bear. The British ships' protection and all subsequent 'yet to be discovered artefacts' were handed over by the British government to the government of Canada and Inuit Heritage Trust on the 26th August, 2018. In a ceremony deemed politically photo-worthy at the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa, Susan le Jeune d'Allegeershecque, the British High Commissioner to Canada, formally gifted the remains of *HMS Terror* and *HMS Erebus* to Canada (The Canadian Press 2018). Although international maritime law means the ships' ownership would remain with

the originating country, Britain, all subsequent artefacts would become Canadian, minus all the sixty-five relics already recovered from the wreck which would remain British. As the ship's artefacts were jointly managed with Inuit Heritage Trust, an organisation dedicated to promoting and preserving Inuit culture, the ships became strategically assimilated into Inuit culture and history, effectively 'Indigenising' them. Subsequently, the ships became 'the first national historic sites in Nunavut cooperatively managed with the Inuit' (Parks Canada 2018b). As such, Inuit 'stewardship' concerned with the management of the ship's protection serves to provide another example of Inuit governance and enfranchisement being bound up in exploration narratives of stewardship and archaeological maritime history.

However, the negotiations of the shipwrecks' management under the 1997 Memorandum with Britain was not without internal, political embarrassment, resulting in the awkward and repeated exclusion of the Inuit. Under the 1999 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the Inuit were 'awarded' or 'returned', depending on varied political framings, the ownership of all archaeological sites and artefacts inside Nunavut, where both shipwrecks are located. However, in 2016, Parks Canada launched talks with British representatives over the fate of the artefacts without any Inuit participation – a politically embarrassing move. Subsequently, in September 2016, 'under political pressure, the [Parks Canada] agency announced it had agreed to a joint-ownership arrangement with the Inuit, who were to be consulted during subsequent negotiations with Britain' (Beeby 2018). Furthermore, in June 2017 it was reported that the premier of Nunavut, Peter Taptuna, had directly complained to Trudeau in September 2016, a few weeks after the discovery of the second ship *HMS Terror*, about the repeated, 'unfortunate' removal of artefacts from Nunavut without their permission or consultation (Thorpe 2017). This removal of artefacts for a London Exhibition in 2017 at the National Maritime Museum, entitled 'Death in the Ice: The Shocking Story of Franklin's Final Expedition' meant that Canadian Parks Canada scientists working with the British museum curators had excluded the Inuit from formal

participation in the process. Significantly, this British exhibition was jointly curated with the Canadian Museum of History, who spent roughly 1.2 million Canadian dollars on funding this travelling exhibition, so the removal of artefacts to a London museum was also sanctioned by the Canadian Museum, who could be thought of as another type of 'Arctic Steward' or as 'knowledge guardians of the archives'. The 'Death in the Ice' exhibition would subsequently move to the Museum of History in Ottawa the following year in March 2018, where, interestingly, the name would also change to 'Death in the Ice: The Mystery of the Franklin Expedition', a slightly more romantic name change from the 'Shocking Fate of Franklin', used in the earlier NMM Exhibition literature. I contend that this semantic shift reflects the different audiences that the museum in Canada sought to target – a significant issue which will be analysed further in the following chapter. At the opening of the exhibition in London, an Inuit Heritage Trust board member lobbied for funding for a Nunavut Museum and Visitor Centre to perform and display the 'Franklin artefacts' rather than the Franklin artefacts being repeatedly removed from the Arctic and being displayed in southern, Canadian museums. It is worth noting that no Canadian Indigenous Government representatives were present the following year at the National Maritime Museum's opening of their new permanent Polar Gallery, which again featured the Franklin expedition and its subsequent exploration by Parks Canada archaeologists. As such, Inuit authority and government remains palpably excluded from narratives and public exhibitions dealing with Franklin's fate.

However, spokespersons for the Greenwich Maritime Museum were quick to stress that this exhibition, like the earlier 2014 British Library exhibition 'Lines in the Ice' (British Library 2014; Hatfield 2014), was keen to emphasise alternative histories of polar exploration through displays 'featur[ing] Inuit oral histories relating to European exploration of the Northwest Passage' (Thorpe 2017). On the 26th September, 2018, after the annual exploration dives by Parks Canada and with the support of the Inuit Heritage Trust and

the Government of Nunavut, nine artefacts retrieved from *HMS Erebus* were publicly announced as being jointly owned by Canada and the Inuit (Hugall 2018; Newswire 2018). This public announcement included the artefacts being displayed to Inuit communities first at Community events in Gjoa Haven and Cambridge Bay (see *Figure 5.15, below*).



Figure 5.15: ‘Charles Dagneau, a member of the Parks Canada Underwater Archaeology Team, showcases artefacts to the Mayor and Elders in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.’ Copyright Parks Canada. Source: Hugall 2018.

William Beveridge, a representative of Inuit Heritage Trust stated that, ‘The Inuit Heritage Trust is very pleased to see the first Franklin-related artefacts jointly owned by Inuit and the Government of Canada shared with Northern communities. We are looking forward to our on-going collaboration with Parks Canada to conserve and present artefacts from *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* and to share Inuit perspectives on the Franklin story’ (Newswire 2018). By emphasising the joint ownership of the artefacts and, more importantly, by strategically displaying the artefacts to Inuit residents first, before they

were transferred down south to the Parks Canada laboratories for analysis, the Canadian Government and Parks Canada agency sought to avoid a repeat of the embarrassing and awkward exclusions of the Inuit in the preceding years (see Figure 5.16, below). By displaying the recovered artefacts to Inuit communities, it also ‘settles’ these relics as being objects displayed for audiences ‘at home’, in this case Nunavut, and reorients exactly who the shipwrecks, and their material, cultural ‘national treasures’ are displayed to and for what strategic political and cultural purpose. It also reorients the political ‘gaze’ of viewing an exotic ‘Other’ object in a ‘cabinet of curiosity’ discourse, positioning the Inuit as possessing an alternative, privileged view of Arctic relics. This is a subversion of Inuit material culture, which had traditionally been problematically displayed as examples of ‘exotic objects’ from the North to many museums and travelling exhibitions around the world for centuries. The reorienting of Arctic material culture and displays in diverse museum exhibitions is explored more thoroughly in the next chapter.



Figure 5.16: ‘Parks Canada unveils first Franklin relics owned by Inuit.’ Source: Nunatsiaq News, 2018.

Inuit 'guardians' of the wrecks

Following the discovery of the wrecks in 2014 and 2016 respectively and following the controversy of excluding Inuit in the Parks Canada-led discussions of the artefact's ownership with Britain, Parks Canada prioritised collaborating with Inuit on how best to conserve the wrecks (*see Figure 5.17, below*). It simultaneously invested in new programs and initiatives allowing the 'Gjoa Haven community to benefit economically from its proximity to the Franklin vessels' (AMB 2018). Historically, the Inuit have benefited from their proximity to the wrecks and the economic possibility of the shipwreck's artefacts. Louie Kamookak, a Gjoa Haven resident and member of the Franklin Interim Advisory Committee, explained how Gjoa Haven ancestors repeatedly travelled to the ships and 'salvaged material, such as a metal sword [which] they broke up to use as snow knives' (Kyle 2017). This narrative of 'economic sustainable development' in Northern development is part of a larger government practice of developing and securing the North for Northern 'prosperity', as outlined in the 2009 Arctic Northern Strategy. The Franklin Interim Advisory Committee, (FIAC) constitutes a large number and wide range of Inuit representatives. Inuit community members and representatives from Inuit Heritage Trust, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Government of Nunavut, the Nattilik Heritage Society, the tourism industry, and the communities of Gjoa Haven and Cambridge Bay are all actors who sit on the committee and advise Parks Canada on the best way to incorporate Inuit knowledge and Inuit land-based skills into the research programmes. Travelling to the remote location of the Guardian base camps is dependent on 'local knowledge of weather conditions and access routes. Much of Canada's Arctic waters have yet to be surveyed with modern technology. Living on the land requires knowledge of water sources, hunting grounds and appropriate shelter and equipment needs' (A&B 2018). The FIAC has been established to manage the wrecks until an Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement can be finalised between Parks Canada and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association. One such initiative was for Parks Canada to employ seventeen

local Inuit residents as ‘Guardians’ of this ‘National Treasure’ (Kyle 2017). Kamookak suggested that, whilst the idea of incorporating Inuit ‘Guardians’ was to help manage and support the protection and exploration of the wrecks, it also served the purpose of fulfilling the Canadian government’s own agenda: acknowledging the benefit of Inuit experience and knowledge (Kyle 2017). As such, the Guardian programme not only attempts to realise the repeatedly asserted aim of government-supported Northern development, but it also serves a strategic purpose in reorienting the government as supporters of Inuit knowledge who acknowledge the benefit of increased use in IQ Knowledge and agency by the State.



Figure 5.17: ‘Project team members gather information from Gjoa Haven residents at the Nattilik Heritage Centre.’

Source: Parks Canada, 2018a.

By appointing the Inuit as guardians of the relics, rather than despatching military personnel to secure the sites, is also of strategic and symbolic importance. Whilst it has often been proclaimed that Arctic Sovereignty is favourably achieved through visual and laboured displays of military personal such as the Annual Sovereignty patrols, Canadian Rangers and preparedness

exercises like 'Operation Nanook' (see Dodds 2012; Dodds and Depledge 2012), enrolling local Inuit in the security and protection of the wrecks 'settles' the wrecks' security 'at home'. It also provides a more calming, affective performance of Arctic security by the State: a normalising performance that frames the initiative as merely an everyday 'job' for economic prosperity and development of Inuit communities. Leonard Kogvik, a newly appointed guardian in 2017 who also serves as an Arctic Ranger stated, 'for our community it's good, it's more opportunity for people who have no jobs' (A&B 2018). In a way, this approach seeks to reorient the contemporary histories of the shipwrecks away from 'exceptional and sublime narratives' of past encounters. It also means that a greater sense of 'security' is established through the banal performance of everyday 'guardian' Inuit jobs at home, rather than through the potentially fraught and politically destabilising performance of militarising the Arctic on the global stage. By giving the Inuit military nautical training, it enables a non-threatening body to undertake the same practice that a military one would do (see *Figure 5.18, below*). Whilst alternative Sovereignty performances have been analysed in academic literature and debate to include 'scientific activities' (see Powell 2007; Dodds 2012), the banal performance of an 'everyday' Inuit job as an alternative display of Sovereignty is a significant distinction. Situating the Guardian programme into the everyday lives of the local Inuit communities also allows the Inuit Guardians to perform and rely on their traditional harvesting skills, including hunting Arctic fauna, knowledge and skills that have been passed down throughout generations. The Guardian programme, therefore, also encourages a parallel to be drawn to phases of 'effective occupation of the Inuit since time immemorial', particularly in that the Guardian programme allows the Inuit to perform literally their Arctic heritage. Hunting by the Inuit also practically supplements provisions at the base camps, which not only allows the archaeologists to survive on these summer explorations in more comfortable means, it also allows them to participate in Inuit-led activities, subverting the idea of the Inuit being

allowed to participate in the ‘western’ sciences through their support of the archaeologists.



Figure 5.18: ‘Guardians receiving nautical training in Gjoa Haven, look over charts with instructor Don Tremblett.’ Copyright Parks Canada / Barbara Okpik. Source: A&B 2018.

The Inuit ‘guardians’ also physically populate areas, occupying base-camp tents ‘settled’ on the ice-laden islands, a brief zodiac journey away through the, hopefully, ice-free water to the shipwrecks (*see Figures 5.19 and 5.20, below*). Their privileged and superior knowledge of the presence and seasonal disappearance of the ice and local environment also is of vital importance to the protection of the archaeologists and other scientists working there. The guardians’ role is diverse, as ‘along with keeping an eye out for polar bears while archaeologists are at work, the guardians scan the horizon for unauthorized ships and the ground for artefacts. They call in any activity by satellite phone’ (Kyke 2017). Thus, not only are the guardians ‘the

eyes and ears' of the State in the Arctic, looking out for 'other' outside threats, such as 'unauthorised ships', they can also report these threats through increased use of superior technologies such as satellite phones. This again situates a temporal agency to visualising and in turn securing 'diverse Arctic threats' in the North. Whilst they still become co-opted into political displays as 'human flagpoles' of effective occupation in the remote Arctic, it is achieved in a much less politically or morally problematic manner. Whilst many programs in the Arctic have been 'run from the south...A lot of times, the Inuit [were] just watching as people come up and do their thing' (Kyle 2017), this time the awkward history of forced Inuit resettlement to non-populated areas of the Arctic is rewritten to frame the Inuit as independent and enfranchised. Within this new narrative, the Inuit become relied-upon actors of effective occupation and, in turn, of Arctic Sovereignty in the North.



Figure 5.19: 'The camp on Saunitalik Island, near the wreck of *HMS Erebus*.' Copyright Parks Canada. Source: Kyle 2017.



Figure 5.20: 'Four Inuit guardians set up a base camp on Saunitalik Island.'

Copyright CBC News. Source: Kyle 2017.

The meaning of the term 'guardian' is also of strategic, political importance. 'Guardians' are traditionally defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, as 'a person who protects or defends something'. It is also used as a term to describe someone having the legal right and responsibility to take care of someone who cannot take care of themselves. Protecting and simultaneously defending the wrecks as a 'material body' that is unable to 'defend' or take care of itself and needs protection, positions the Inuit in privileged terms. At the same time, the connotations of 'guardianship' imparts the Inuit with a legal and moral responsibility in Arctic governance and management of archaeologically artefacts. Furthermore, under the 1999 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, which created a formal, legal responsibility, can be used to justify

Canadian claims as 'stewards' in the Arctic through varied and nuanced ways. Based on the model enacted by Australia, as another settler-colonial State, the Indigenous Guardians program 'supports Indigenous land management and oversight in their territories based on a cultural responsibility for the land' in many areas of Canada, not just the Arctic (Canada 2017b). The Guardian programme also practically provides Inuit Elders with the paid opportunity to share knowledge between the Inuit; wherever possible 'the program will pair young Guardians with older mentors to facilitate the transfer of Inuit Qauijimajatuqangit (Inuit Knowledge) in a practical setting' (A&B 2018). Therefore, these programmes serve as an acknowledgment and active effort to reconcile the problematic histories of settler-colonial that frequently excluded Indigenous participation in planning conservation programmes and initiatives.

Stewards of a 'fragile' micro-environment

The Arctic has routinely been described as a 'fragile' environment in need of protection, as alluded to at the very outset of this chapter. Yet, framing the shipwrecks as a 'micro-environment' in need of protection is a particularly intriguing facet of the narrative. Whilst environmental stewardship and management has been a practice that is exceptionally challenging to achieve within the Arctic geophysical environment, the archaeological stewardship and the marine biology of the ships provides the State with a more manageable, and local micro-environment and marine ecology in which they can 'successfully' govern, order and classify bodies. Each of these bio-political practices is rooted in settler-colonial histories of occupation. When a ship sinks, it can often transformed into a thriving artificial reef. Parks Canada archaeologists identified that *HMS Erebus* had thirty-two different species and that the wreck had become 'home to a diversity of organisms from the region, including algae, sponges, and molluscs' (Parks Canada 2018e). At the same time, it is compelling to observe that the wreck has become 'Indigenised' by Canadian marine ecology which settles and literally

transforms the wreck into a thriving 'active homeland' of Indigenous occupation by alternative non-human bodies. Underwater archaeologists visiting the wrecks have been tasked with documenting the active and thriving marine life on the wrecks through the process of photographing and collecting samples of organisms on and around *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*; this is a process rooted in the practices of colonial explorations which visited exotic, 'Other' places and collected biological and material culture to analyse and bring 'back home' – in this case, voluminously raising to the surface. Governing, ordering and classifying this micro-environment, together with the increased enfranchisement of Inuit, provides another, undoubtedly easier, means through which Canada can reconcile its problematic legacy of colonial-settler policies. Due to climate change, the material agency of the elements and the vast size of the Arctic and NWP, other effective displays of Arctic governance and security, in all its nuanced ways, is almost impossible. Finally, and with the same reconciliatory result, framing the Inuit as 'guardians' of the shipwrecks means inverting the roles of who is the steward, settler and 'Native', in displays of stewardship and Sovereignty; the Inuit become enfranchised as 'stewards' of an 'outside-settler' in the performance of the shipwrecks in the NWP.

Nature, ice and non-human disobedient agency

In 2008, the Parks Canada Underwater Archaeological team (UAT), as part of a wider partnership made up of a diverse group of government, private and NGO Arctic actors, began another multi-year search mission to find the wrecks aboard the Canadian Coast Guard Ship, the *CCGS Sir Wilfrid Laurier*. The geo-physical reality of an ice-prone NWP, however, meant that the physical search for the ships was limited to a few short weeks in the summer, when the water was often, albeit not always, free from ice enough to conduct surveys. The precarious nature of climate change and the implications for conducting fieldwork in this extreme region meant, in 2009, the ice levels were too high for any research to be carried out. On their website, Parks

Canada described the ice as being ‘uncooperative’; the adjective implicitly personifies the independent, disobedient agency of the ice and reveals the intense frustration it can cause (Parks Canada 2018a). The 2011 expedition search was, again, at the mercy of the agency of the ice. The search area chosen at that point, Victoria Strait and Alexandra Strait, was mainly decided upon because these two areas were free from ice that summer. Even in 2014 when the Royal Canadian Navy became another new collaborative partner in the searches, their deployed ship, *HMCS Kingston*, was prevented from joining in the search due to the presence of too much ice blocking their route to the rendezvous point. Thus, whilst the ice is frequently used as a marker and vital component of Inuit homeland and occupation activities, it can simultaneously frustrate and hamper maritime archaeological search parties bound up in alternative performative displays of effective and ‘active, laboured’ occupation of the NWP.

The presence of ice in the NWP has routinely been framed in these archaeological searches as a sublime force that needs to be overcome. Framing the ice as a disobedient and exceptional force to overcome is rooted in Canadian settler-colonial narratives and histories. Early contributions to historical environmental scholarship within Canada readily identified the complex relationship between nature, ecology, resources and securing early national interests (see Innes 1930; Creighton 1937). The St Lawrence river, for example, which is often viewed as an integral gateway into North America, was routinely described as a hostile environment resisting human permeation (Osborn 2001b) that, in turn, predisposed early colonial settlers in Canada to possess a ‘garrison siege-like mentality’ and push back against this uncompromising hostile environment (Frye 1971:225). Nature, in this case the St Lawrence, is framed as an active actor that needed to be resisted and ‘overcome’ narrates and characterises ‘Nature’ as a lively, non-human, geopolitical agent with its own complex histories and sometimes disobedient agency. The framing of the Arctic as a sublime and often hostile space was a narrative also adopted by early polar explorations by British and later

Canadian explorers and continues to be used to the present day, as reflected in the language adopted by the Parks Canada Divers and Canadian Royal Navy Divers. This type of narrative was rooted in celebrating, the frequently 'male', success in a 'testing' environment and is historically anchored in the celebratory narratives of the British Royal Navy after the victory of the Napoleonic wars.

A navigable route through the Northwest Passage (NWP), in many respects, has also been an environment repeatedly co-opted into narratives of overcoming and conquering in British Empire aspirations, colonial Canadian-settler identities and, in turn, as this chapter asserts, contemporary 'scientific stewardship' practices. The awkward, precarious and mobile presence of ice in the NWP, means a more persuasive performance has also framed it as an icy, 'homeland' of Indigenous populations, who have lived and hunted on the ice for millennia. Framing the ice as a material body, vital to Inuit culture and survival, positions claims of effective occupation and in turn Canadian Arctic Sovereignty in a more positive light by challenging and subverting the existent colonial narratives of the Arctic and the ice as a merely something to resist and overcome.

Unlike the shipping industry, and historical searches for a route through the NWP, which approaches sea ice and ice-prone straits as a disobedient obstacle to overcome, the Inuit have relied on the presence of ice in narrow waterways of the Arctic Archipelago as a material surface that vitally connects communities and ecologies and non-human elements of ice and sea. Manasie Maniapik, an Inuit resident from Pangnirtung, Nunavut describes the ice in the Inuit Siku Atlas as 'very, very important to Inuit, because it's our 'qaujiti,' which means we were born to it and we've always lived in it...If the sea ice doesn't form anymore, although we still get snow, our life would drastically change' (Inuit Siku Atlas 2004). The seasonal presence and disappearance of ice also means that Inuit guardians are able to set up base camp on nearby islands. When the ice retreats and opens up ice free waterways amongst the island archipelagos, the Inuit can travel quickly

over the water on zodiacs and be in close proximity to the wrecks to support the Parks Canada divers working on it, temporally reducing the time it takes to reach the wrecks each day. Inuit guardians are now exploring the local islands near both wrecks to find more suitable base-camps that could, at some point in the near future, host tourists and further increase the economic prosperity of Northerners in the region (Kyle 2017). In this way, the spatial proximity to the wrecks relies on the 'co-operative' nature of the ice to retreat at certain points for the benefit of the Inuit. Whilst the presence of ice was a key factor contributing to the failure of Franklin's expedition, the presence of ice also meant Inuit populations were affectively present to bear witness and record some of the history of the fate of Franklin's crew, as well as contemporarily aid in supporting modern explorations by the Parks Canada divers. Again, it is worth acknowledging the innate irony that the agency and presence of ice simultaneously hampered and bolstered Canadian historical and contemporary claims of effective occupation in the Arctic.

In 2015, a year after *HMS Erebus* had been discovered, the disobedient agency of the ice and weather of the Arctic again frustrated archaeological dives on the wreck. The planned ten-day ice-dive operation by the Parks Canada Underwater archaeological team alongside the Royal Canadian Navy divers had to be cut in half due to bad weather. Laborious holes had to be cut through the two-metre-thick ice to haul artefacts from the shipwreck to the surface (see *Figure 5.21, below*). Thus, laboured and active displays of effective occupation in the Arctic by Canadian Military and scientists were hampered by the ice's unpredictable agency and mobility.



Figure 5.21: 'One of the *HMS Erebus's* cannons, recovered through a hole cut out of nearly two metres of Arctic sea ice, is hoisted up by the combined Parks Canada and Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic team.'

Source: Jonathan Moore; Parks Canada.

Once found in 2014, the ship *HMS Erebus* was remarkably well preserved and 'settled upright on the seafloor, at a depth of about eleven metres...in a shallow bay' (McKie 2014). The ships have repeatedly been described in Parks Canada news releases as 'vessels settled on the NWP Floor' – semantics which are symbolically and strategically significant. The verb 'settled', on one hand, has a temporal meaning, implying that the ships are 'here to stay' and have found a permanent 'home' in the Canadian waters of the NWP (Parks Canada 2018e). The connotations of the verb also help to provide an alternative narrative of a pseudo-settler body that fits into to the wider

colonial histories of Canadian settler-colonial practices. Finally, the dual semantics also serves to convey that the ships are well persevered and 'settled' in both their physical and symbolic location.

A Parks Canada diver described the ship 'so well preserved of course that it sort of look[s] like a storybook shipwreck' (Davison 2015). *HMS Terror*, discovered in 2016, was located in a much deeper bay: approximately 24m from the sea's surface. The remarkable preservation of the ships was partly due do to the particularly cold water of the NWP delaying the material disintegrating process of the ship and artefacts and acted as an *ad hoc* 'cold storage' container of museum-worthy heritage. Furthermore, the relative absence of past mobile ice flows where the ships sank ensured that the ships did not become severely damaged as the sea ice expanded and contracted over time as they settled into their new geophysical environments. However, the relatively shallow water where *HMS Erebus* is located also means that the wreck is more susceptible to storm swells; *HMS Terror's* deeper location means it is settled in a more protected area away from elements and is therefore in pristine condition with windows still intact and all interior spaces enclosed' (Rabson 2018). In this respect, not only does the precarious agency of the elements in some ways determine and simultaneously frustrate the diving projects, the voluminous spaces where the ships have 'settled' further complicate these archaeological stewardship practices.

In 2017, despite *HMS Erebus's* initial preservation, exceptionally poor weather that changed the tide currents meant that part of the upper deck of *HMS Erebus* fell away, exposing deck beams and detaching from the main hull (Rabson 2018). Consequently, the safety of the divers on the wrecks is further challenged, as the precarious position of the hull increases the risk of the divers becoming trapped in the wreck. In this way, the divers have to also overcome and frame the wrecks as a precarious 'testing space' in which their skill and safety is challenged: a narrative that is rooted and sits firmly within historical settler-colonial practices. Parks Canada divers are also described as becoming 'anxious' about their ability to carry out their role 'successfully' as

divers; this is significant as their 'anxiety' transcends the physical and practical elements of the operation and, instead, serves as a reflection of fears about being able to perform in their role as 'archaeological stewards'. *HMS Erebus* has not only been made a priority then due to its increasing precarious, settled, location, but it is also the ship which was captained by Sir John Franklin, and therefore arguably, is a more captivating container of potential national treasures, often 'described as a 'treasure trove' (Rabson 2018). It is in this manner that narratives of 'successful' explorers overcoming the harsh environment simultaneously transform into narratives of 'anxiousness' to preserve the wreck and, moreover, to recover relics 'against the tide'. In the same way that the material agency of the ice and the precarious nature of the climate compelled Franklin's crew to abandon the ship originally, it continues to affect contemporary scientific efforts – which now also face the obstacle of the 'voluminous' location of the wrecks – and influence decisions with regards to subsequent searches, how remains are preserved and what artefacts are recovered.

Voluminous searches, scientific knowledge and stewardship

In 2012, two major partnerships were formed in the collaborative search for the missing ships and, through the Arctic Research Foundation and the Canadian Space Agency's involvement, a much greater space of the Arctic could be explored and surveyed in the annual search. Helicopters were used to transport archaeologists to key islands where Inuit testimony, collected by Parks Canada agencies, suggested the possible location of relics from Franklin's crew. Through innovative surveying technologies such as the practice of bathymetry and an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle being deployed to side-scan using sonar, four hundred and nineteen kilometres squared of the seabed was surveyed. Both practices ensured more of the Arctic was surveyed and mapped in different plains (*see Figure 5.22, below*). Strategically, it also helped to stretch voluminously Canadian knowledge about its Arctic environment. The data collected from these scans also

provided the State with knowledge that would help in mitigating possible future shipping disasters through poor knowledge of the seabed in navigating the NWP safely (Parks Canada 2018a). Whilst the 2012 search did not find the ships, by collecting this seabed data as a simultaneous justification for 'Arctic shipping safety', the State again positioned themselves as 'stewards' of maritime safety for *all*. As the Parks Canada website states, the 'missions weren't just about finding the lost ships. Charting the Arctic seafloor [was] invaluable for navigation now and into the future. Scientists also collected data useful for other researchers, especially for those tracking climate change' (Parks Canada 2018a). This framing of the State as a 'steward' of science helped to assemble a diverse Canadian Arctic identity rooted in settler-stewardship histories, as having a 'duty' to improve and progress the North, and also providing the State with a justification for its own citizens and abroad for the continued financial expenses being incurred in the search for these ships. Once *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* were located in 2014 in 2016 respectively, both ships were repeatedly explored by Parks Canada UAT divers whose missions to dive upon the wreck visually provided the State with markers of active, laboured effective occupation of the NWP through the collection of 'scientific knowledge' (*see Figure 5.23, below*). The dives by the Parks Canada UAT meant that Canadian bodies were 'actively' occupying and using the NWP region, providing the State with another voluminous, alternative display of Sovereignty through the performative occupation of space.



Figure 5.22: 'Filippo Ronca and Parks Canada UAT Diver, Ryan Harris lowering a sound velocity probe into water to scan for *HMS Terror* in 2016.' Copyright Parks Canada. Source: Parks Canada, 2016.



Figure 5.23: 'A Parks Canada UAT Diver surveying *HMS Erebus* in 2016.' Copyright Parks Canada.

Source: Parks Canada, 2016.

Stewards of maritime science

Whilst these searches framed the State as 'archaeological maritime stewards' of Canadian Inuit culture and exploration history, I contend that they simultaneously framed the State as superior 'stewards of science'. In the first year, the UAT in partnership with the Canadian Hydraulic Service, (CHS) through the use of 'cutting edge technology' surveyed a 65km squared area in the search for *HMS Erebus* (Parks Canada 2018a). By 2014, one-thousand six-hundred and one square kilo metres and had been successfully sonar-surveyed and mapped. In 2018, the Minister for Climate Change and Science and the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Catherine McKenna, again described Canada as 'stewards', leading the way in their use of world-class science. She stated in the press release for the planned programme of multi-year investigations of the wrecks that '*HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* were discovered thanks to Inuit knowledge, western science, and the commitment

of a number of partners. Now, Parks Canada's world-renowned Underwater Archaeology Team has begun to reveal the secrets of the Franklin Expedition lost for 170 years' (Parks Canada 2018b).

However, whilst positioning itself as world-leading and active participants in their role as stewards of polar science, Canada was ironically hampered in its 2009 search as a 'shortage of available research ships made deployment impossible. The Canadian Coast Guard, an able and supportive member of the search effort, had [already] committed ships to a number of research projects during the 2009 International Polar Year' (Parks Canada 2018a).

Thus, programmes of Arctic scientific stewardship can also possess their own disobedient agency, frustrating and hampering alterative displays of 'stewardship' and, by extension, Canadian Sovereignty.

By emphasising the historical and diverse 'connections' that Canadians possess to the ships, concurrently as 'stewards' of exploration history, 'stewards' of Inuit Oral history and 'stewards' of contemporary archaeological science, I maintain that Canadian national identity as 'stewards' is 'performed' strategically. These performances connect the effective occupation of the NWP, a connection that extends further back than the confederation, to the government of Canada and anchors the search for the discovery of Franklin's crew with Arctic Sovereignty and national identity. The search for Franklin's crew relied upon an Inuit presence in the NWP and subsequent Oral testimony narratives. In doing so, it helped to legitimise a claim of Sovereignty over the NWP as historical, internal waters that were continuously used and occupied by Inuit bodies, as well as *de facto* Canadian non-human settler shipwrecks. As the NWP is a precarious ice-prone region for much of the year, traditional displays of effective occupation by human occupation is often hard to achieve because of the geophysical reality of this icy space. The State is, therefore, required to co-opt diverse and alternative performances of effective occupation by non-human bodies and effective governance by Inuit communities in nuanced ways, which is portrayed through alterative 'affective stewardship' technologies. These technologies

also project into the public and global consciousness that Canada possesses a duty to protect the region through their ability to conduct ‘world-leading scientific research’ and, as such, are used to legitimise diverse visual and bodily displays of Arctic Sovereignty to a global audience.

Concluding summary

The previous two empirical chapters of this thesis have principally explored the relational connections between historical and contemporary possessive ‘settling’ Sovereignty projects within the voluminous territory of the Canadian Arctic by successive Canadian administrations throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Bridge 2013). I have asserted that contemporary occupying and administering technologies enrolled by Canadian governments to secure the volumes of the Arctic are rooted in European imperial projects of performative ceremonial possession (Seed 1995). These imperial projects alternated between framing colonised spaces as either a new ‘homeland’, whereby ‘indigenising’ settlers normalised colonial territory as an extension of empire, or by ‘exoticising’ a distant wilderness as one that needs to be conquered, surveyed and tamed and where any residing newly colonised subjects were framed as distinctly essential but separate to the imperial colonisers (Ford 2010). Despite the vibrant material capability of the precarious geophysical environment of the Arctic to frustrate and hamper imperial projects (Elden 2013b; Dodds and Nuttall 2016), which were routinely performed in the colonising geographies of the settlement of Southern Canada, the methods of colonial territorialisation, as an ideology to possess territory, still persisted in the historical colonisation of the Arctic – albeit, they were forced to be implemented in varied and imaginative ways. Furthermore, constructions of Arctic Sovereignty continue to have to wrestle with these different imaginings of territory in distributing power through settling and occupying the ‘North at different volumes’ to the present day (Adey 2010; Steinberg and Peters 2015; Squire 2016). I contend that these narratives and practices persisted because

their visual and performative materiality could be easily recognised and consumed by public audiences, even in their creative nuanced ways, because narratives of possession operate ‘ideologically, discursively and materially’ (Moreton-Robinson 2005:21).

Furthermore, I have also demonstrated how these contemporary performances in the North are impacted by and situated in the inescapable problematic past settler-colonial practices of colonial exploration and ‘masculinist thematics, in the history of the geographical sciences’ (Powell 2010:76) and, despite the attempts to reconcile Canada from its colonial past by acknowledging Indigenous rights with the increasing empowerment of its Indigenous populations, government anxieties over ‘not belonging’ in the Arctic still persist and draw attention to the wider perturbations which affect Arctic imaginings (Dodds and Nuttall 2016). As Harper so memorably stressed early on in his tenure in 2007, the Arctic needed to be used or it would risk being ‘lost’.

By situating these performances within the wider, problematic genealogy of Canadian settler-colonial history and, in particular, how constructions of Arctic Sovereignty historically problematised Inuit-Crown relations (Powell 2009), I have argued that contemporary possessive occupying performances in the Arctic towards the end of the Harper government’s tenure and in particular through the current Trudeau government’s New Arctic Policy Framework (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada 2016) have been creatively ‘adapted’ in certain ways to move away from the material ‘use it or lose it’ philosophy of Arctic development, which had been repeatedly caused perturbations for many of the previous administrations since Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Instead, a recognition of the past historical traumas which the Inuit experienced through loss and dispossession, has led the current administration to adopt a new philosophy, rebranding Canada as a ‘world-leading steward’ of a managed Arctic ecosystem. Furthermore, I contend that these narratives of stewardship encompass much more than the environment, and have been expanded to include economic development,

culture, heritage, and archaeology stewardship applied in securing the Canadian Arctic at different volumes.

By working with Indigenous communities in the Arctic, in the creation and running of the CHARs campus, or by acknowledging the benefits of IQ knowledge in stewardship narratives, they have positioned the Canadian government as 'stewards' of Indigenous enfranchisement as well, rather than awkwardly relocating Inuit to 'settle' in remote Arctic Islands as human flagpoles in the 1950s. As has already been observed, collaborating with Inuit and incorporating IQ knowledge and culture into traditional, visually performative displays of 'occupying' and surveillance of the North through government-enrolled materials and bodies, human and non-human, such as the Guardian and Watchman programmes, is a politically tactful approach. Rather than through the potentially fraught and politically destabilising performance of overtly militarising the Arctic on the global stage, Canada as an 'observant State' has enrolled new bodies into the visual gazing practice. These adapting performances, whilst still 'flagging' Arctic Sovereignty simultaneously are enrolled in an attempt to reconcile these problematic settler-colonial histories of Indigenous dispossession and abuse (Zaslow 1988; Abele and Stasiulis 1989; Wynn 2007; Baldwin *et al* 2011). These affectively laboured performances attempt to present and 'reassure' multiple audiences within Canada, North and south and elsewhere, that the Canadian Arctic is 'protected', 'occupied', and a 'lively' lived place (Dodds 2010a) which continues to be effectively administered by successive Canadian government-enrolled actors who are framed as 'stewards and guardians' of various Arctic inscriptions, such as the scientists at the CHARs campus or the Inuit guardians of wrecks *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*. Equally, as 'stewards' of 'responsible' Northern economic development and 'stewards' facilitating collaborative discussions of Indigenous rights, the Canadian State repeatedly frames that Arctic as 'a rich, warm world full of life, people and culture' (Watt-Cloutier 2009b; see also Nuttall 2006).

Whilst narratives of framing the Arctic as a space of stewardship are also rooted in colonial ideology of nature and conservation (Adams 2003), it can simultaneously be traced and connected with Canadian Indigenous knowledge and attitudes towards various systems of conservation, stewardship and husbandry (Pearce *et al* 2015; Appiah-Opoku 2007; Watt-Cloutier 2009). I also contend that, using a discourse of stewardship allows for the possibility of a singular, unifying narrative of identity within Canada as it can be constructed through the co-opting of a multiplicity of actors, whilst at the same time, serving to reconcile its problematic, colonial past. I also maintain that there is another layer of strategic importance in promoting Indigenous enfranchisement. By promoting Indigenous enfranchisement, the State aims to mitigate any potential threats to its Arctic Sovereignty from 'within' that are posed by the prospect of Inuit-led self-determination and calls to break away from the State in Independence.

By understanding that Sovereignty and territory are never at an end state, instead recognising that it is something that needs to be constantly worked on, these material objects of settlement and administering practices are required to be performed repeatedly as a form of ongoing 'Sovereignty labour' (Dodds: 2012). Even if these practices practically cannot always be successfully achieved (Sharp *et al* 2000:5), where these performances of Arctic stewardship' are 'seen' by public audiences outside of the Arctic is crucial and is the empirical basis for the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Displaying the Canadian Arctic Nation

Introduction: performing prosaic Sovereignty

Performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty are an ever-evolving assemblage of discourses, actors, objects and practices assembled together to create a continuous, dynamic and affective 'occupying atmosphere of Sovereignty'. Sovereignty and territory are never at an 'end state'; instead, such occupying atmospheres need to be laboured over constantly. Occupying and administering practices, therefore, need to be repeatedly performed as a form of ongoing 'Sovereignty labour' (Dodds 2012). These assembled performances are inherently influenced by historical ones and they also effect and are affected by each other. Performances enrolled by the State are capable of contradicting each other and the bodies, human and non-human, enrolled in these performances, at various sites such as the geophysical environment of the Arctic, possess their own lively agency. Thus, whilst they can facilitate in creating an affective occupying atmosphere, they also have the capacity and power to frustrate and challenge (Sharp *et al* 2000:5).

The sites within which 'Sovereignty labour' is performed are also practised through the prosaic dissemination of visual and performative 'banal' material outside of the Arctic, such as that which appears on postage stamps and in museum exhibitions (Wheeler and Young 1999; Houltz 2010). As Joanne Sharp suggests, these everyday materials are worthy of analysis as 'it is essential to consider the mundane, everyday, often subconscious rituals that instil and reinforce political identity' (Sharp 2000:xvi). Stamps are official, State material; their communicative power resides in their institutional status to represent the State through their everyday, mundane circulation (Raento 2006; Child 2008; Brunn 2011). As these visual materials have the ability to travel and become readily disseminated to wider audiences in quotidian life, the very materiality and agency of these materials also function to construct

performances of Arctic Sovereignty through the very geopolitical power they are meant to be communicating (Painter 2006; Penrose 2011). By exploring the different spaces and materials capable of performing the Canadian Arctic, I seek to broaden the existing literature on the diverse sites and practices where national imaginings are disseminated and affectively encountered by public audiences (Child 2008; Sylvester 2009; Lennox 2012; Benwell 2014; Waterton and Dittmer 2014; Leane *et al* 2016; Pinkerton and Benwell 2018) and to analyse the 'occupying atmospheres of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty' and, in so doing, to respond to calls within the sphere of critical geopolitics to think with 'volume' and 'capacities' to generate re-imaginings within geopolitics (Elden 2013a; Peters and Turner 2018).

Concurrently, I analyse the representations which are geopolitically communicated within everyday materials through elite-chosen imagery and objects, situating this research within the context of other academic literature concerned with the visual cultures of 'banal and blatant' Arctic Sovereignty and Nationalism (see Benwell 2014; Dittmer and Larsen 2011). Like other identity-political iconographies, such as passports, currency and street place-naming, stamps and museums, each possesses the ability to enrol public audiences in the creation of banal Nationalism and an imagined community (Anderson 1991; Greenberg 2015; Brunn 2011; Houltz 2013). Michael Billig's view of banal Nationalism, which was constructed through the banal reproduction of 'complex beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices', that creates a visual culture representing government policy and constructed national identity, is one that becomes so normalised and mundane as to be wholly un-assailable (Billig 1995:7). The very fact that such significant materials are encountered in mundane, banal situations serves to reveal how quotidian life is continuously permeated by the relationship between State effects and public society. Visual material, such as postage stamps for example, can helpfully be thought of as 'silent messengers of the State' (Wood-Donnelly 2018:112; Raento and Brunn 2005; Child 2008). Their inherently visual components enable the State to project constructions of

itself, constructions of Nationalism and to 'flag' possessive Arctic Sovereignty performances to audiences through quickly recognisable means (see Shields 1991; Coates *et al* 2008). It is in the everyday, mundane interactions with these materials that their prosaic agency is encountered, which, in turn, normalises the ideas they purportedly represent.

By analysing the prosaic dissemination of these performances outside of the Arctic, it is clear that, despite many southern Canadians being hugely unlikely ever to venture to the Arctic, the Canadian Arctic is physically and symbolically drawn closer. At the same time, State governance is also made credible within the social consciousness of citizens through the dissemination of popular, banal, visual material purportedly representing 'Canadian Arcticness'. Furthermore, whilst the agency of the Arctic environment can practically frustrate occupying performances, thus preventing them from being 'witnessed' and thus potentially legitimised, the *representation* of these performances outside of the Arctic, I contend, is used by the State to legitimise their claims to effective occupation and governance, even if they cannot always be 'successfully' performed within the Arctic. In this way, I assert that banal, government-sponsored prosaic material which represents the Arctic is used to 'flag' lively, historical and contemporary occupying practices, creating an 'essence' of authority by effectively widening the symbolic 'occupying atmospheres' of Canadian Arctic.

Chapter structure

The remainder of this final empirical chapter will focus on four diverse case studies that will facilitate a more nuanced analysis of the dynamic ways that Canadian Arctic 'occupations', and by extension laboured-Sovereignty performances, are presented and disseminated to contemporary audiences in quotidian life by the government. Initially, I provide an overview of the way that Canada repeatedly describes and projects itself as a 'Northern Nation'; I contend, as will be evidenced in my analysis of disseminated government

material – which is used, visually, to represent the Arctic as a symbol of the State – that successive Canadian Governments have often incorporated Arctic activities into their representation of national identity. I contend that Harper’s administration strove to incorporate Franklin’s expedition within a broader ‘rebranding’ of the Canadian nation, especially in the context of the lead up of the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation. The expedition itself and the process of its discovery symbolically represented qualities Harper sought to align with the State: robust perseverance, scientific leadership and heroic adventure. It is these qualities that are then reflected and represented in and disseminated by museums and postage stamps. Whether through the commemoration of past, ‘heroic’ explorers or through the portrayal of Inuit art and crafts as ‘celebrated’ symbols of the nation, successive Canadian governments have continually sought to establish a direct link to the North and to legitimise their Northern agendas through a declaration and maintenance of a Northern national identity. The first case study interrogates the circulation and dissemination of Inuit symbols and artwork as symbolic messengers of the State. In the second case study, I explore how the search and eventual discovery of Franklin’s ships has endured as a narrative to be ‘celebrated’ through the visual and performative ritualisation of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* on postage stamps; this is a narrative that has recently evolved and, as a result, has sought to include a celebration of the Inuit as ‘Canadian polar heroes’ as well. The third case study interrogates the Department of Canadian Heritage, who produced two promotional, visual materials which celebrated the discovery of Franklin and disseminated them into everyday life through an advert and an interactive YouTube game in the lead up to the 150th anniversary of the Confederation. The final case study is concerned with how the search and discovery of Franklin’s ships has been represented within museum exhibitions around Canada. Through visual and interactive museum exhibitions, contemporary ‘polar heroes’ have been connected with and identified as standing alongside the celebrated ‘polar heroes’ of the past, characterising them all as symbols and embodiments of national pride. The representation of polar heroes in

museums as symbols of Nationalism is certainly not unique to Canada and can be evidenced in other States with Polar interests (Wheeler and Young 1999; Houltz 2013; Aarekol 2014; Dodds 2017). Yet, what makes these museum exhibitions in Canada so particularly interesting is the overt, contemporary shift to the now routine inclusion of visual and textual material that depicts Indigenous collaboration in the search for the ships alongside the efforts of Parks Canada. I contend that, whilst their celebrated inclusion is part of a larger reformed policy of Indigenous enfranchisement and reconciliation, their inclusion in contemporary representations of the Franklin searches generates a politically advantageous by-product, providing audiences with a captivating narrative that functions to establish Canada's Northern heritage and to 'unite' Canadians by generating a singular, unifying interest in the search for Franklin.

Representing the 'Northern Nation'

Described by Lee-Anne Broadhead as an ingrained conditioning of the Canadian public designed to 'foster a common patriotic Canadian identity' (Broadhead 2010:922), many 'southern' Canadians have been encouraged to feel a great attachment to the North. In a similar vein, Shelagh Grant asserts that 'since the time of the Confederation, many Canadians have looked upon their North as a symbol of their identity and destiny' (Grant 1989:15). What is significant is that this constructed, national identity is not static; it is constantly evolving, influenced by a range of actors. Government constructions of Canada as a 'Northern Arctic Nation', is primarily for the benefit of the 'outside, southern Canadian spectator'; as Ingrid Medby attests, the symbolism of the North does not really matter as much to those who actually live there, they are Northern by virtue (Medby 2017). Thus, the North as a symbol of the Canadian Nation is intended for southern audiences as a means of justifying government interests and expenditures in the North, rather than as a uniting representation for those communities who actually reside in the North. Narratives of Canadians 'belonging' in the Arctic in light

of a shared, long-standing Arctic culture have routinely incorporated Indigenous symbolism, framing the North as a symbolic and 'peopled' space (see Rosenthal 2004, Vorano 2016). Inuit art and symbolism have, therefore, been repeatedly used to 'brand' the Canadian State as a 'Northern Nation'. In this way, Inuit art, as cultural diplomacy, is also used as means of 'branding' a constructed national image, connecting it to cultural Sovereignty (Mark 2010). In turn, such cultural diplomacy 'sells' the 'Northern Nation' narrative to the rest of the world through museum exhibitions and other travelling heritage (see Wallis 1994). Uniting Canadians under one figurative umbrella, despite past controversies, conveys the impression that all Canadians share a culture that is rooted in the Arctic North. But, to extend the metaphor, in the same way that an umbrella can turn inside out and fail to perform its intended function, because it is a vibrant material object (Bennett 2011), objects and bodies enrolled in visually portraying this 'shared' cultural narrative can resist and challenge these constructed national identity formations.

The history of European Arctic exploration has also routinely been framed as a vital part of Canada's national culture and heritage (Grace 2001; Hulan 2002; Abele *et al* 2009; Arnold 2011; Griffiths *et al* 2011; Pigott 2011; Medby 2018). In this respect, Robert McGhee observes that the Arctic is a 'territory known to the world from explorers' narratives rather than from the writings, drawings and films of its own [Indigenous] people. To most southerners [Canadians] the Arctic remains what is was to their counterpart's centuries ago: the ultimate other world' (McGhee 2005:19). The *Statement of Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy*, for example, branded historical explorations and their legacy when stating that they were 'embedded in Canadian history and culture and in the Canadian soul' (Government of Canada 2010). Yet, it is important to draw attention to the fact that Harper is part of a long succession of Prime Ministers who have linked Canada's identity as a Northern Nation with the mystery of Franklin (see Hulan 2002; Grace 2001; Chase 2014; McCorristine 2018). By emphasising the historical 'connection'

that all Canadians apparently possess to the Canadian North, a connection that extends further back than the Confederation, the Harper administration framed the legacy of Arctic exploration – particularly the 165-year search for Sir John Franklin’s ships – as one that is inherently linked to contemporary Canadian national identity and that should be, according to Harper, celebrated by the nation as a whole. The celebration of past historical explorers was also further encouraged through reframing the actors enrolled in the search for Franklin as ‘modern Canadian polar explorers’, whom deserve to be equally celebrated and commemorated, for example through the Polar Medal which was awarded to every person who was involved in the successful Victoria Strait expedition that located *HMS Erebus* in 2014. The speech Harper gave at the Royal Ontario Museum on the 4th March, 2015, to celebrate and award the Erebus Medals, linked the historical and contemporary explorations of ‘Canadian frontiers’ using world-leading technology to national identity (RCGS 2015):

‘We are here today to celebrate a great Canadian discovery, a discovery for world history of the final resting place of *HMS Erebus*. I want to salute all of the colleagues [and] companions of the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition. By uncovering this piece of Canadian, British, global history, you made history yourself. Many people have tried, you guys actually did it... Sir John Franklin was actually an incredible individual, a great spirit striving to the very ends for new knowledge and new frontiers, much like the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition....The fact that it was ultimately located using a combination of cutting edge Canadian developed technology and aged-old Inuit oral history is also another great metaphor for our country. To unlock the

secrets of *Erebus* we will begin dives under the ice this spring....We should also understand that our search for Franklin's ships, it is about more than just solving an age old Canadian, British, World History....We are also mapping vast areas of undersea territory in the North that have never before been documented, expanding the possibilities for navigation, maritime safety and security. We are studying the land and seas to learn more about our North, its challenges and possibilities and indeed all the while we are demonstrating our absolute Sovereignty over this piece of iconic territory. These modern-day Franklin expeditions are part our government's broader Northern strategy, they are also part of our country's broader Northern narrative and Northern identity. We are answering the age-old call of the great Canadian North, keeping the faith with the explorers and the adventurers who have gone before us and breaking trails for generations of Canadians to come...I honour the vital and exciting work you are doing, and I wish you good luck and clear waters for the season ahead.'

(Harper 2015)

By trying to establish a 'credible' link between contemporary national identity and Arctic exploration in the search for Franklin knowledge in the past, present and future, which importantly included Inuit knowledge and participation, Harper emphasised that these explorations were of vital national importance and heritage to *all* Canadians. I contend that, by framing the searches as one facet of a shared Arctic heritage, belonging to both

'southern' Canadians and the Inuit, Harper sought to reassure and manage the ever-present and underlying anxieties the Canadian post-settler State has of 'not belonging' in the Arctic. He sought to reframe the Franklin searches as a metaphor for a united and 'successful' nation in the North. This successful nation was also highlighted through their technological abilities to survey the seabed and 'assert their absolute Sovereignty over this piece of iconic territory' (Harper 2015). Naturally, as well as strategically, he does not specifically explain why, how or in what way this territory is iconic or of historic value, though observers are naturally driven to infer – perhaps somewhat cynically – that is primarily concerns future resource potential and international security concerns. In the same respect, Harper also avoided referencing the repeated exclusion and erasure of Inuit testimony and participation, which was a legacy of many of the subsequent searches for information on Franklin – a lacuna in his rhetoric which it is difficult to miss and is palpably absent.

The nagging anxiety of 'not truly belonging' is concurrently managed through the re-branding of Canadians as stewards of Arctic heritage who, as stewards, possess a duty to protect valuable relics for 'the generations of Canadians to come' (Harper 2015). This approach is a strategic one for two important reasons. Firstly, as the ships' cultural heritage has been branded and labelled as a 'National Historic Site', a site that is by definition of vital cultural importance to Canada, the ongoing protection of these ships could serve as a future means of justifying Canada's control and regulation of the North West Passage. This passage, which Canada frames as internal waters, despite it being in perpetual dispute internationally, has continued to be a source of 'anxiety' and reflects its pre-occupation with defending its perceived Sovereignty – something that many Arctic and legal scholars have been compelled to comment upon (see Byers 2006; Elliot-Meisel 2009; Steinberg 2014; Norlin 2017). It is with this context in mind, that it is important to note that Harper referred to *HMS Erebus* as having been discovered in its 'final resting place' (Harper 2015). As of the point of writing, there are no existent

plans to remove either ship from its current location; their symbolic 'settlement' on the NWP seabed is a useful, *de facto* example of occupation, and thus is something which needs protecting. Furthermore, in the same speech, Harper also branded the ships as being of 'global value and importance' (Harper 2015). Internationally, the possibility of their designation as World Heritage Sites could further prove decisive in Canada's long-term determination to regulate the NWP under the guise of their stewardship, allowing them to represent their governance of it as an international benefit for *all* (see Craciun 2012). This is a narrative that echoes those previously used by Canadian governments as a means of justifying the regulation of the NWP to mitigate against potential international threats, such as piracy and terrorism (see Byers and Lalonde 2009).

A second strategic framing of Canada as stewards of the wrecks has been to champion Inuit testimony in the ship's location and recovery. As I have discussed at length in Chapter 5, the Trudeau administration have increasingly sought to facilitate a collaborative partnership with the Inuit. Having a successful Inuit government, which could function in collaboration with the Canadian government, would further legitimise and strengthen Canadian claims to the Arctic and helps to assuage internal government anxieties concerning calls for full Inuit independence (see Roussel and Payette 2011; Arnold 2012). An Inuit government that could work in conjunction with the federal government and strengthen Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is a narrative that Mary Simon, president of Canada's national Inuit organisation, *Tapirit Kanatami*, repeatedly stressed on her 2009 cross-country tour (Simon 2009). This partnership sought to incorporate Indigenous knowledge, skills and oral testimony into contemporary practices and narratives of Arctic stewardship. This was also applied to the discourse used in the successful searches to find Franklin's ships. Thus, in seeking to legitimise further the problematic presence of the settler-colonial State, subsequent, ongoing protection and exploration has consistently been

attributed in the Trudeau administration to the collaborative efforts of Indigenous knowledge and Canada's 'world-leading' scientific technologies.

Inuit art depicting the 'Northern Nation'

Inuit material culture has frequently been enrolled by Canadian governments as a means of conveying to southern Canadians, and to the rest of the world, the constructed notion that Canada is a 'Northern Nation'. Inuit art was routinely mobilised by Canadian governments during the inter-war years; one purpose of this was to establish alternative representations of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty (Geller 2004). The National Archives of Canada contain numerous reports from the 1930s concerning the promotion of Inuit 'arts and crafts', both for the economic support of the Inuit and for the promotion and protection of a distinct type of Northern national identity that is bound up in displays of a lively and 'productive' Northern Nation. This coincided with the use of photography and film to disseminate a positive and effective Northern government administration. A memo on the 4th June to Richard Sterling Finnie, the government-employed photographer and filmmaker, noted the potential benefits of mobilising Inuit art in order to make Canada's Northern position 'better known and more fully understood' (McCurry 1930).

Similarly, in March 1953, a representative of Prime Minister Louis St Laurent suggested that 'if we can get these [arts and crafts] in visible places, and to important people, we will be able to show the world, especially the United States and Russia, that we are indeed a true Northern Power (quoted in Graburn 2007:150). The 'visible places' that he alluded to were art galleries, museum exhibitions and, most importantly, places where they could be seen as well as purchased by tourists as 'banal souvenirs' that would enable geopolitical communication to be recirculated within everyday, banal, homely sites (see Peters 2011). Like a postage stamp, Inuit arts and crafts were equally capable of becoming tiny, travelling messengers of the State, highlighting the inherently political nature of the State promoting the

circulation of these Inuit artistic ventures (Vorano 2012). Their material, volumetric nature would symbolically and affectively represent a thriving and lively 'Canadian North' to multiple audiences. Using art to represent 'Arctic Canadians' meant cultivating a cultural Arctic nationhood, which was articulated through the creation of a narrative that emphasised that they *were* Arctic peoples, instead of a narrative that conveyed a sense of Canadian *ownership* over the Arctic, providing greater credibility to Sovereignty claims. However, to avoid misrepresenting the extent to which the Canadian government leaned upon and utilised Inuit art, it is worth noting that Canadian government support for artistic cultural activity often 'took the form of indirect assistance rather than direct commission' (Tippett 1990:79).

Inuit art and material culture, like banknotes and postage stamps, have routinely been used as 'social agents of the State' to symbolise and act as a visual representation of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty in 'official diplomatic ceremonies' (Frewer 2002; 2008). In this way, Inuit artwork is being enrolled symbolically as part of 'soft power' strategies within cultural diplomacy into performative, ceremonial and State-making practices of possession. Patrick Lennox observes that 'the Canadian government first became involved in utilising Inuit art as a tool of cultural diplomacy' during the Cold War (Lennox 2012; Huggins-Blafe 1987). In Canada's case, Inuit soapstone carvings of bears and whales, as well as model Inuksuit, in particular, are one of the regular gifts to be presented to a contemporary State dignitary by the head of the State. The contemporary presentation of 'Inuit Art to important people', as explicitly reflected of the earlier agenda of the 1950s St Laurent government, is an intensely significant act. I contend that, symbolically, the acceptance of a soapstone carving or Inukshuk sculpture by a foreign dignitary amounts to a tacit acceptance of the existence of a distinct, lively Arctic nation and, by extension, of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty: the object becomes, *de facto*, a 'tiny messenger of the State'.

Canada House

Another example of using Canadian art in cultural diplomacy has been at the recently redecorated Canadian High Commission in London, where two-hundred and ninety-eight works by Canadian artists from coast-to-coast, not just urban metropolises, feature throughout the building and can be seen by the public for free on guided tours. I visited the High Commission in 2016, six months after the twenty-million-dollar refurbishment and heard first-hand the emphasis placed upon the possibilities of artwork to foster and represent a national-identity culture which could then be branded to public audiences around the world. Each boardroom, for example, is named after one of the provinces or territories within Canada, and all the artwork, including the carpets, flooring and even the furniture was commissioned to reflect different aspects of Canadian geography and culture. All of the wood used in the refurbishment, for instance, is from Canada, and specifically, where possible, from each provenance and territory. Red oak from Ontario is used extensively in the Ontario boardroom, for example, and when asked why, the tour guide explained this was used to reflect the fact that Canada is the world's largest timber exporter. As one of Canada's most significant natural resources this is something that Canadians take pride in as having 'world-class' manufacturing expertise. In this way, a diplomatic space had used artwork to tell a visual story of Canada. High Commissioner Gordon Campbell was reported as having stated, 'we want to show Canada, not tell Canada', emphasising how he, and by extension the Canadian administration, recognises the power of visual material to engage an audience affectively and to convey an argument or meaning in quickly understandable ways (Himelfarb 2015).

In representing the 'Arctic', the building has a gallery specifically for the purpose of permanently representing the Chancery's collection of Inuit sculpture. In the main atrium the public are greeted immediately with an impressive staircase carpet which weaves up the centre of the building (*see figure 6.1 below*); when asked what the carpet was meant to represent, the

tour guide explained that the interlocking 'slats' of blue and white were designed to symbolise the snow and ice of Canada's Arctic, emphasising that ice is also an integral part of Canadian experiences and identity. He went on to assert that all of the artwork and materials used in the refurbishment were 'intended to highlight the fabric and feel of the country' (Canada House Collection 2015). Thus, such artwork possesses an affective ability, not only to represent Canada, but, in effect, to transform Canada House into 'Canada' for public audiences, highlighting the dual function of artwork as a form of cultural diplomacy. Canada House is also the Canadian High Commission in London, and so it is politically transformed into an extension of Canada itself and functions in a similar way to an embassy in Commonwealth terms, further reinforcing the strategic importance of cultural diplomacy in these spaces.

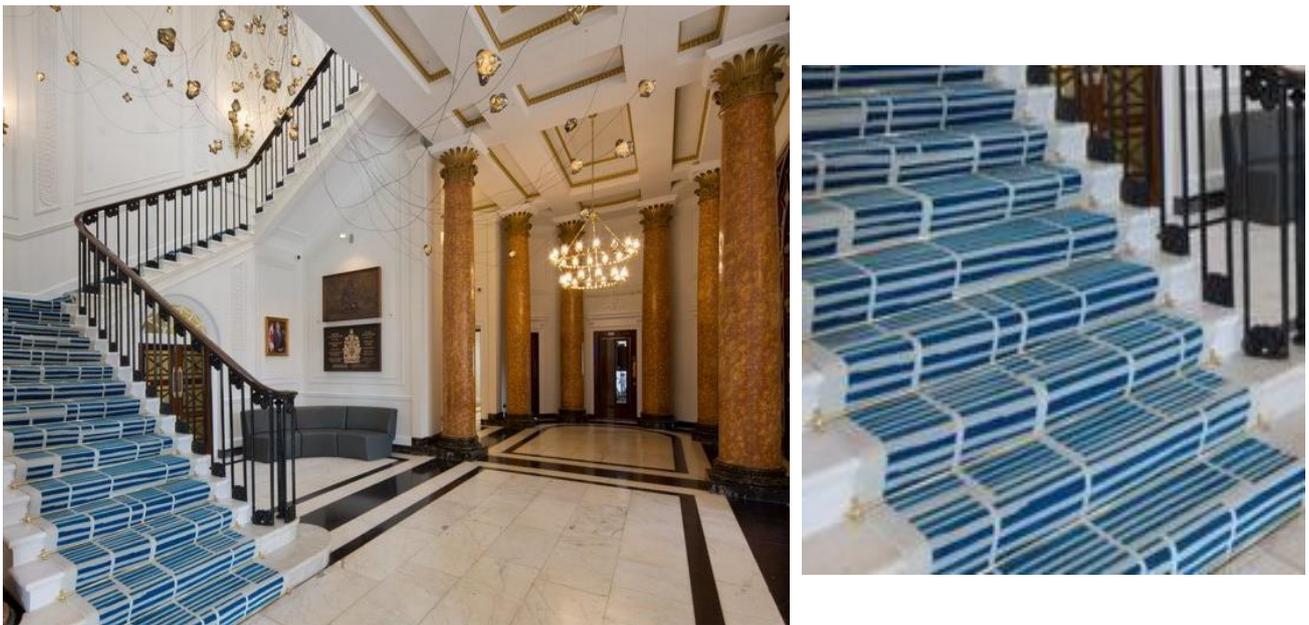


Figure 6.1: 'Staircase within Canada House (alongside magnified detail of carpet), Canadian High Commission, London.' Source: Canada House Collection 2015.

Another example of the Arctic being displayed to the public at Canada House is within the Nunavut room. This room features a pair of aquatints, a print representing a watercolour, by a famous Inuk printmaker from Nunavut, Germaine Arnaktauyok. Arnaktauyok had been employed by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in the late 1960s to illustrate books and educational material for the Department of Education and, in this respect, was a regular collaborator with the Canadian government, producing government-sponsored artwork for general public audiences (see Hessel 202). She had also been commissioned by the Canadian government in 1999 to design another 'tiny messenger of the State': she designed the artwork that was to appear on all of the two-dollar coins released in 1999 for general circulation by Royal Canadian Mint. This coin commemorated the inception of the province of Nunavut and replaced the previous image on the two-dollar coin of a polar bear with an Inuit drum dancer, his drum bearing an outline map of Nunavut (Royal Canadian Mint 1999). This new artwork, whilst commemorative, served as a tacit reminder to Canadians that the Arctic was a populated place by Inuit, not just of popular imagery routinely associated with the Arctic of a pristine wilderness home to the polar bears. Thus, in this way, her art served to 'people' the Arctic, framing it as a homeland to the Canadian Public upon the banal and everyday circulation of the coins within Canada. Arnaktauyok's aquatints at Canada House are entitled 'At the Height of his Power / The Shaman's Apprentice' and in them, drawing upon her past experiences and ancestral culture, she illustrates Inuit myths and traditional ways of life.

Another cultural 'artefact', as it is referred to by the Canada House collection website, displayed within the room is an intricate, specially commissioned carpet designed by the Uqqurmuit Centre for Arts and Crafts in Pangnirtung, Nunavut. The carpet features six Inuit exchanging oral history at a meeting within an igloo, subtly reflecting the contemporary function of this boardroom in which the carpet is located and symbolically serving to facilitate discussions between those who use the room. Promoting work from

the Uqqurmuit Centre, is particularly interesting. The weaving studio on Panagnitung, which later became the Uqqurmuit Centre for Arts and Crafts, was originally a product of the government's 'attempt to ameliorate the negative effects of relocations and to create an economic base [using] arts and crafts initiatives across the Arctic' (Cross 2003:310). By consciously choosing to use Inuit art, particularly that which is, effectively and by extension, a product of a forced relocation settlement, the government attempts to harmonise and soften the unsettling narrative of colonialism that invariably underpins Indigenous-Crown relations. In this respect, drawing upon Pauline Wakeham's work on the Arctic Exile Monument Project and her observations concerning the role and symbolic political agency of art in facilitating reconciliation between the Canadian government and Inuit, it is convincing to view the government's use of art from the Uqqurmuit Centre for Arts and Crafts in the same light (see Wakeham 2010). Yet, unlike the sculptures that were part of the Arctic Exile Monument Project, which viscerally and painfully reminded Inuit communities of the government's resettlement programmes of the 1950s, the various pieces of artwork in the Canadian High Commission that originate from the work of various Indigenous artists more successfully brand the Canadian government's efforts to redress its colonial injustices. This is the case for two reasons; firstly, the intended audiences of the artwork are southern Canadians or internationals, rather than the Inuit who do not necessarily need or want reminders of an unpleasant past, and secondly, like postage stamps, such artwork functions not as a spectacle, but, through its banal engagement with audiences, subtly reminds audiences that the same mistakes cannot be made again. At the same time, contrary to Patrick Lennox and Norman Vorano's assertion that this practice only arose during the Cold War, I maintain that this contemporary culture of putting Inuit symbolism on display is part of a much longer historical practice of enrolling Inuit art for geopolitical ends. Moreover, I contend that other aspects of performing Canadian Arctic Sovereignty are rooted in established, historical performances of displaying an assemblage of objects at different sites.

As referred to in the previous chapter, Inuit art and symbolism have also been incorporated into the architectural design features of the newly built Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS). As it was with the Canada House restoration project, numerous Inuit artists have been commissioned to provide artwork and installations both inside and outside the building. The architectural firm, EVOQ, who were commissioned to design the building, for example, incorporated Inuit artwork into the very fabric of the building's walls and flooring (EVOQ 2018b) (*see Figure 6.2, below*). The artwork being displayed in CHARS is another example of the Canadian government, through the Polar Knowledge Canada agency, utilising Northern art and symbolism as tools of cultural diplomacy (*see Figure 6.3 and 6.4, below*). In the same way that Canada House's artwork is situated to be viewed by political elites and for the purposes of international diplomacy, it is also for the consumption of the general public; as CHARS is an international hub for Arctic research that also functions as a community base with varied tourist opportunities, there are multiple intended audiences for the art in situ. Proactively choosing to display such an abundance of Inuit artwork in a scientific station serves to highlight the importance that the Canadian government place upon 'peopling' the Arctic; it is concurrently framed as a scientific laboratory and an active and lively homeland: a cultural centre representing not just Northern Canada, but functioning as a symbol of Canadian Arctic national identity. Whilst CHARS is a project that is designed make an international statement on Canada's role in 'world-leading' scientific study and collaborative research in the Arctic, by incorporating Inuit artwork it also becomes a representation of Inuit culture that seeks to ensure its full integration into the community.



Figure 6.2: 'Inuit art feature on the internal walls and flooring within CHARS.' Source: EVOQ 2018.



Figure 6.3: 'The "Elder and Polar Bear" carving is by Koomuatuk (Kuzy) Curley of Cape Dorset, Nunavut. In the Canadian High Arctic Research Station in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.' Source: McColl 2018.



Figure 6.4: 'Tim Pitsiulak from Cape Dorset, Nunavut, designed the whale seen here and schools of fish that decorate other areas of the research facility.' Source: McColl 2018.

One only has to look at the symbolism adopted at the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010 to recognise that Canada has, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, frequently reached for distinctly Northern symbols, as representations of national identity, which are to be celebrated, disseminated and viewed by audiences around the globe. Figure 6.5, below, depicts the official logo of the games; it was based upon the statue of an Inuit '*Inukshuk*' sculpture, created by Alvin Kanak in 1986 for the Northwest Territories Pavilion at the World's Fair in Vancouver, which now resides in a tourist-friendly recreational spot in Stanley Park on Vancouver's peninsula. *Inuksuit* are stone sculptures which have been used for over four thousand years in Northern Canada by the Inuit to aid in communicating information between Inuit communities. Within the often-barren landscapes of the Arctic, devoid of trees, mountains or other defining features, Inuit communities

would often construct stone structures to convey vital information about safe navigation. The different types of *Inuksuit* constructed each conveyed a distinct message; for example, some were designed to signpost the correct route and to guide the traveller to a specific place on the horizon or for the purposes of good hunting, whilst others were constructed to warn of danger ahead. Consequently, *Inukshuk* have become culturally significant to Inuit Northern culture.



Figure 6.5: 'Vancouver 2010, Olympic Winter Games emblem.' Source: Canada Post 2009.

The emblem of the 2010 Winter Olympics was also used on one of the two new permanent domestic circulation stamps issued by Canada Post in 2009 (see Figure 6.6, below). The fact that the *Inukshuk* was chosen for a

permanent, domestic circulation stamp draws attention to the importance placed upon 'easily recognisable' Inuit artwork by the Canadian State in their effort to connect the Inuit to Canadian national-identity. As the official press release stated, 'Olympic emblems capture the values and essence of the Games and represent the people, geography and spirit of their home country' (Canada Post 2009). They even feature on the political flags of Nunavut and Nunatsiavut (see Figure 6.7, below) and have become commercially popular across Canada as well as internationally. Through the sale of *Inukshuk* sculptures, particularly to tourists, in major cities across Canada, the *Inukshuk* has become a symbol that has been appropriated in adverts and logos and is used to sell everything from confectionary to ice-cold beer.



Figure 6.6: 'Vancouver 2010, Olympic Winter Games emblem.' Source: Canada Post Corporation 2009b.



Figure 6.7: 'The flag of Nunavut. It features the colours white, blue and gold, which symbolise the riches of the land, sea and sky. Red is a reference to Canada. The *inuksuk* and the *Niqirtsituk* star are also found on the coat of arms.'

Source: Government of Canada 2017a.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the logo received an intense degree of criticism from local First Nations of the Pacific Northwest, where the winter games were being held. This criticism stemmed from the fact that *Inukshuk* are not reflective of traditional cultural structures created by the First Nation populations historically associated with the Vancouver region. Questions arose as to why the adoption of a distinctly Northern Arctic cultural image took precedence over art created by other Indigenous communities of Canada. Edward John, Grand Chief of the First Nations Summit in British Columbia, argued that 'with no disrespect to the Inuit, certainly the Northwest coast has produced some world class art forms and artists who are First Nations. You would have thought there would have been some effort to reflect this and there isn't' (Fabbi 2006). Although the use of the Inukshuk

logo was supported by Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami president Mary Simon, other prominent Inuit politicians took exception to its use (CBC News 2010). Joe Allen, Evgotailak Minister of Nunavut, for example, was critical of the fact that whilst recreational facilities in Nunavut were struggling to stay open as a result of a lack of financial federal support, the *Inukshuk* was being adopted as a symbol of a happy and thriving Northern State. He believed that, due to the inequality within Canada, particularly the inequality between Northern and southern investment in social welfare and communities, this was simply not reflective of reality. Another criticism came from Peter Irniq, a former Nunavut commissioner, who argued that the Olympic emblem should not be even called an *Inukshuk* in the first place, whilst its appropriation ought to have been in consultancy with the Elders of Nunavut before the Olympic Committee made the decision. Irniq reflected on the symbolic performance of *Inuksuit*, saying '*Inukshuk* is like survival. *Inukshuks*' important significance is survival. What we think about *Inukshuk* is what we think about the Canadian flag, it is that important' (CBC News 2005). So, the use of Inuit symbolism is not without its own challenges and frustrations, and, despite the convincing arguments that reinforce the varied benefits of 'showing the Inuit flag', such symbolic representations are fraught with underlying and ongoing tensions.

Whilst the image of the *Inukshuk* was ultimately decided upon by an independent committee, VANOC, who were organising the Olympics, the Harper administration received further criticism for mixing political agendas with sport. A news article drew particular attention to an internal government briefing memo, marked as 'secret' and acquired under the access-to-information request, which revealed that the Harper government was consciously politicising the games, a move which was made even more controversial in light of the widespread criticism that China had received from its overt use of the Beijing Olympics in 2008 as part of a broader branding strategy for the State. The memo stated that 'the Minister has recently

confirmed with VANOC in writing that the Department of Canadian Heritage intends to invest \$20-million toward the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games in order to ensure that the event adequately reflects the priorities of the Government and helps to achieve its domestic and international branding goals' (Matas 2009). It is not too dramatic a leap to infer that these priorities would have been ideologically aligned with Harper's Northern Strategy; thus, as a projection of Canada as a 'brand' to the world, it serves as another prime example of performative Canadian Arctic Sovereignty.

'Stamping' and 'flagging' Franklin's ships

When States employ the performative and visual capacity for government-sponsored visual material to represent imaginations of the nation, through mundane mediums such as postage stamps, banknotes and the symbolic iconography used on passports, they affirm how visual symbolism informs an important part in constructing the nation-State, its identity and legitimising policy agendas through banal 'State effects' (Painter 2006; Brunn 2011; Penrose 2011). The means through which historical and contemporary Sovereignty performances are celebrated and disseminated to public audiences as representations of national identity reveals the variety of ways in which "'the North" is imagined as a space of national pride [and] belonging' (Steinberg 2010:81). Whilst there is extensive recent scholarship that has analysed 'official' government policy statements concerning how Canadian national identity is linked to the North (Burke 2018; Medby 2018), literature which analyses government-sponsored, visual and performative material that is enrolled as a *representation* of Canadian national identity to audiences in everyday scenarios is limited and worthy of further enquiry. Corine Wood-Donnelly, for example, has used a quantitative analysis of the production of postage stamps specifically depicting iconography representing the Arctic. Whilst her methodological interrogation of Canadian postage stamps is used to frame discussions of Canadian Arctic government policy

towards the region, she predominately focuses on the inclusion or exclusion of Inuit representation on postage stamps since the Cold War (Wood-Donnelly 2018). The lacuna in her source analysis, which I go on to address in this chapter, is interrogating the representation of ‘polar heroes’ and associated objects and activities that have been depicted on many Canadian postage stamps.

Deepak Chopra, Canada Post President and CEO, stated that ‘Canadian stamps have a long history of celebrating our great explorers’ (Canada Post 2015). This perennial return to representations of past Arctic explorers draws attention to the varied ways that Canada continues to grasp at historical exploration to represent, symbolically, contemporary Canadian culture and national identity. In 1977, for example, the Canadian Post Office Department released a stamp to celebrate the ‘heroic’ Arctic explorer, Joseph-Elzéar Bernier (*see Figure 6.8, below*). In the accompanying press release it states ‘Mankind will always need the inspiration of heroes from the past. The Post Office remembers one such man of renown, Captain Joseph-Elzéar Bernier, by issuing a stamp in his honour’ (Canadian Post Office Department 1977).



Figure 6.8: ‘Joseph-Elzéar Bernier, 1852-1934.’ Source: Canadian Post Office Department 1977.

The stamp depicts the *CGS Arctic* stuck in the ice on one of Bernier's numerous government-sponsored expeditions to the Arctic in the first part of the twentieth century. In using such imagery, the Post Office Department reveals the strategic importance placed upon such historical expeditions, not just for visibly and performatively establishing Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, but in maintaining them within the national and social consciousness. The press release goes on to observe that 'Bernier cultivated his growing fascination with the Arctic and stimulated national awareness of the area. As commander of several expeditions aboard the *CGS Arctic*, he claimed islands and established police posts, thereby strengthening Canadian Sovereignty in the wild North'. The description elevates and lauds the heroic 'adventure' of this government-sponsored explorer in the 'wild North' and serves as a prime example of the way in which narratives of overcoming the harsh Arctic environment were routinely used to cultivate a sense of national pride and belonging. Furthermore, the image of the *CGS Arctic* being stuck in the ice, further emphasises the 'challenges' that these explorers had to face in the name of establishing Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, drawing further attention to their capacity for endurance and their determination to overcome obstacles (Driver and Hones 2009). Yet, at the same time, there is a palpable omission within the imagery and narrative depicted; neither the press release nor the image makes any reference to the role of Inuit guides, the 'hidden heroes' of this and so many other expeditions.

In 1989, Canada Post also released four stamps which depicted 'realisers' of Canadian Northern exploration as part of the wider '*Exploration of Canada*' series (Canada Post 1989). The stamp's press release begins by describing how 'even today, the Canadian North can appear remote and forbidding. The last four explorers in the Exploration stamp series traversed lands and waters where few now dare to venture...Maps of the voyages of exploration are highlighted and some of the salient features of the expeditions are shown to give a feeling for the harshness of the conditions endured by the explorers' (Canada Post 1989). This hauntingly ghostly commemoration of the tragic

explorers' expeditions, so distinctly portrayed on the map, features relics, skeletal remains and illustrations of objects of scientific technology. Each of the four stamps features an expedition which had endured extreme suffering, been extremely challenging and faced the prospect of failure. Despite this, these expeditions have been framed as successful; the expeditions aided in materially expanding Canadian knowledge about its Northern environment through surveys and encounters. The first stamp represents the Geological Survey of Canadian geologist, JB Tyrrell, whose expedition in 1893 to explore the 'Barren Lands' of Chesterton Inlet and Hudson Bay almost ended in disaster. The accompanying writing on the stamp states that 'Tyrrell has another find' and depicts a compass, a metal pickaxe, a canoe and glaciers. The press release for the stamps states that, although Tyrrell and the other members of the expedition 'barely survived, [they] brought back important scientific information about glaciation in North America' (Canada Post 1989a), drawing specific attention to the significance of this expedition in the development of Canadian knowledge about its territory and resources in the North (*see Figure 6.9, below*). Whilst the intended, domestic and Canadian audience are invited to commemorate the 'success' of this significant polar hero, it is again salient to observe that there is no representation of Indigenous Canadians anywhere on the stamp. As such, it serves as an exemplar of the historical trend amongst British imperial material, and by extension on Canadian government-sponsored visual material, to link national identity and pride to a celebration of white males overcoming challenging and testing spaces (see Collis 2009).



Figure 6.9: 'Tyrrell has another Find.'

Source: Canada Post 1989a.



Figure 6.10: 'Matonabee Travelling North.'

Source: Canada Post 1989c.



Figure 6.11: 'Samuel Hearne, 1745-1792, Copper Mine River, 1771.' Source: Canada Post Office Department 1971.



Figure 6.12: 'Stefansson on Polar Ice.' Source: Canada Post 1989b.

The following two stamps in the 1987 series also depict significant historical expeditions. The stamp in Figure 6.10 (*see above*) commemorates the Dene interpreter Matonabbee, who led the successful Samuel Hearne expedition of 1771 to the Coppermine River. In doing so, having already failed on two previous attempts, Hearne became the first European to succeed in this venture. Thanks to Matonabbee's aid, Hearne also became the first European to travel overland to Canada's Arctic coastline. Whilst Samuel Hearne's life and expedition had previously been commemorated on a stamp, which featured a map of Hearne's and Matonabbee's route and was issued in 1971 (*see Figure 6.11, above*), it did not mention or represent Matonabbee's vital involvement anywhere on the stamp. This is aptly reflective of the socio-historical context that sought actively to exclude from the narrative the significance and role of Inuit and Indigenous skill and expertise to the success of the expedition. However, unlike the 1971 stamp, the 1989 stamp visually represented Indigenous bodies; this shift in iconography, depicting and celebrating Matonabbee, stands in contrast to the previously 'hidden histories' of Indigenous involvement (Driver and Jones 2009; Driver 2013). Yet, the stamp does not easily distinguish between Matonabbee and Hearne, and the audience is left to imagine who the other bodies in the background of the stamp are meant to depict. The imagery is focused upon the experience of a journey, specifically, the fact that a journey is being undertaken in 'the long march North'; this is significant because, rather than developing or characterising the individuals, the emphasis is placed upon the lively act taking place within the region, the journey itself. The associated press release describes Matonabbee as the perfect guide because of his 'strong personal qualities, added to his knowledge of the English language and of the land' (Canada Post 1989b). The connotations of the description of his 'strong qualities', particularly those of the adjective 'strong', which suggests an impressive, physical prowess, reflects the gendered, geopolitical dimensions of Arctic exploration; thus it still overtly echoes and parallels the discourses of celebrating, as a nation, 'strong white, male' explorers' bodies and their ability to overcome the harsh Arctic environment.

The third stamp in the series (*see Figure 6.12, above*), 'Stefansson on Polar Ice', depicts Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who theorised, in his controversial book 'Friendly Arctic', that the successful occupation and settlement in the Arctic could be achieved by adopting 'native' principles and practices, making the Arctic a hospitable place to settle into the daily way of life (Stefansson 1922). In the accompanying press release, Stefansson is described as an anthropologist who 'not only studied the native peoples, but also charted unknown lands. His Arctic explorations between 1906 and 1918 led the development [of the] last undiscovered land in Canada, [the last] unknown islands in the Arctic Archipelago' (Canada Post 1989c). The accompanying press release is particularly interesting, most notably in its inaccuracy; as the Arctic Archipelago was already being explored by Canadian government-led expeditions aboard the *CGS Neptune* in 1903-1904, it reflects a conscious decision on the part of the administration to attribute the exploration to an individual who had already garnered a degree of celebrity for his exploits in this respect. The advantageous by-product and consequence of this is that it enabled the celebration of such exploration within popular Canadian culture to be embodied in and associated with one specific individual. On this stamp, the audience is shown 'western scientific' surveying objects which symbolically praise and draw attention to the benefits of 'Arctic field experiment[ion] on ice' (Powell 2007). Unlike the other two stamps in the series, where figures are ambiguous or absent, Stefansson is clearly visible and in the foreground of the image. We can see a pair of binoculars around his neck and a surveying tripod is set up next to him, facing outwards towards the Arctic coastline where a large sailing ship is visible in the background. The sailing ship appears to be stuck and encompassed by ice and, as such, symbolically represents the precarious nature of ice, which has the capacity to frustrate and hamper transport and surveying performances within the Arctic. This portrayal of this precarious nature of fieldwork on the ice is given a further dimension with the representation of a polar bear at the top of the image. It is ambiguous what the polar bear is meant to signify; conceivably, it concurrently represents potential danger, a thriving Arctic ecosystem, and as

a symbol of Inuit hunting that represented a means of overcoming – as Stefansson himself believed – the challenges of the Arctic environment. Stefansson is also looking intently, even longingly, towards the ship; the imagery evoked conveys his frustration at his ship being hampered as it has prevented him from continuing to survey the NWP, islands and Canada's Arctic waterways within the Archipelago. A dog-sled team is also depicted on the stamp alongside the ship; these represented the two primary methods of transport within the Arctic. In this respect, the stamp serves to represent how Stefansson overcame the obstacles of transportation and mobility within the Arctic, by utilising dog-sleds. Thus, it is significant in serving to demonstrate how Harper's 'use it or lose it rhetoric', which stressed the importance of having both the technical ability to survey the Arctic and the technical ability to be mobile in the Arctic, is wholly rooted in narrative that pre-dates his administration: it is a continuation of much longer historical tradition of emphasising Sovereignty by projecting an ability to function effectively within a given region.

The fourth and final stamp in the series, 'Finding Franklin's Relics' (*see Figure 6.13, below*), also portrays 'scientific surveying objects' (Canada Post 1989d). This stamp depicts a navel spy glass and, in the bottom left corner, a map of the Canadian Arctic featuring the Northwest Passage. As in the previous three stamps in the series, there is scientific imagery that contributes to the impression that Canada wanted to project of itself as world-leaders in scientific research within the region. Furthermore, in addition to a Union Jack, an overland party of men can be seen hauling supplies on a small boat over the ice. It is the relics of these crew members which captivated audiences are also prominently featured on the stamp, such as lead tins, cutlery and pieces of clothing. On the surface, whilst it is understandable why one might argue that these relics, particularly the banal such as cutlery, could serve the purpose of domesticating and emphasising how the Arctic is lively and peopled – as we know that Franklin's men died – it is far more convincing to view these relics as possessing a spectral, haunting presence that

subsequently generated a – somewhat macabre – public fascination in the region (see McCorristine 2012; 2018). Intrigue in that which was spectral or haunting was certainly reflected in other aspects of popular culture at the time, such as Edwin Henry Landseer’s 1864 artwork, ‘Man Proposes, God Disposes’ (see Figure 6.14, below), which depicted the imagined Arctic scene and its relics after the expedition’s disappearance. In the middle of the image, two ships, presumably *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, are illustrated as being stuck in the ice and tilted, as it was on Stefansson’s stamp, again reinforcing how mobility was frequently hampered by the ice and extreme conditions. Yet, what is particularly striking about the image is the complete absence or representation of the Inuit. Whilst the imagery depicted in the stamp is fundamentally based upon the extensive oral histories of Inuit who had encountered Franklin’s crew, they are palpably absent and their testimony is silenced. The accompanying press release also neglected to refer to any role played by the Inuit; yet, interestingly, it did go so far as to speculate that Franklin’s crew ‘all perished [due to] lead poisoning caused by tinned food [which] weakened the crews, and ultimately led to their premature death’ (Canada 1989d). This warped and inaccurate account, which excluded any mention of the reports of cannibalism told to Dr John Rae by the Inuit, reveals just how emphatically Inuit testimony was suppressed and ignored within Canada and globally at the time. Whilst Franklin and other explorations have continued to be represented on contemporary Canadian stamps and other government-sponsored visual culture, the dramatic re-representation of the same narratives, that now suddenly include and celebrate Inuit knowledge and testimony, underpins the remainder of this chapter.



Figure 6.13: 'Finding Franklin's Relics.'
Source: Canada Post 1989d.



Figure 6.14: 'Man Proposes, God Disposes.' Painting by Edwin Landseer, 1864. Source: Royal Holloway, University of London, 2018.

All four of the stamps in the series reference, whether visually or through their accompanying press releases, the technical importance of science and navigation in the Canadian Arctic. By choosing to represent objects enrolled in scientific and surveying activities, the stamps, as a representation of State, highlight the significance of Arctic science in national identity constructions. These stamps, in the 'Exploration of Canada' series, were primarily celebrating the 'successful' achievements of mainly white, male bodies overcoming the 'harshness of the conditions endured by the explorers' (Canada Post 1989d). Where Indigenous bodies were included, it was only to facilitate the protagonist, the white, heroic explorer. Whilst the stamp featuring Franklin is commemorating one of the famous failures in scientific capability, it is still used as an important example of Canadian culture and national identity. The memorialising of Franklin and his failures, in popular culture, has been twisted into a form of heroic tragedy that has been celebrated since the Victorian period (see Craciun 2016; McCorristine 2018). This heroic failure has continued to be celebrated as well as then leant upon as the driving force underpinning subsequent exploration. Thus, this stamp is significant because, whilst seeming, on the surface to be celebrating a failure, it is actually merely a continuation of the Canadian nation's enrolment of science in the construction of national identity. The most recent commemorative stamps, however, represent a significant shift and departure from those that have gone before; depicting Franklin, they have not only continued to celebrate scientific technologies, but have now also championed Inuit knowledge and oral testimony in light of the discovery of *HMS Erebus*, thus reframing the heroic failure and turning it in a collaborative success.

Contemporary representations

One of the most recent stamp series to be commissioned by Canada Post, which features the historical exploration of Canada by Franklin is the 'Sir John Franklin Expedition' series, was released on the 6th August, 2015. The three

stamps in the series were commissioned to commemorate a year since *HMS Erebus's* discovery by the Victoria Strait Expedition and coincided with the second summer of diving fieldwork that Parks Canada archaeologists would be involved in as exploration of *HMS Erebus* continued. Unlike the previous stamp analysed, particularly given its allusion to the imagery of the United Kingdom's flag, and unlike the first three in the series which were relatively subtle, these contemporary stamps are rich in overt Canadian nationalistic symbolism. John Phillips, Director of Stamp services at Canada Post, stated that by choosing to depict the Franklin expedition, 'we celebrate the ambition of Sir John and his crew and the tenacity of those who refused to allow their story to be lost in the depths of time'; presumably the pun was intended to remind the audience of the voluminous significance to Canadian history and of course the voluminous depths of the ships location in the NWP (Canada Post 2015d). In a special ceremony held at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on the 22nd July, 2015, the accompanying press release encouraged the viewer to 'piece together the famous history of an ill-fated Arctic voyage, and the Canadian discovery that located it more than a century and a half later'. The public were encouraged to infer a connection – an inference which it is difficult to avoid drawing naturally – between the three stamps by symbolically, even physically, following the order of the three stamps and what they represent. This use of stamps is a prime example of how the search for Franklin, and the subsequent find by Parks Canada, in collaboration with Inuit, is disseminated and framed to public audiences in collaborative representations. Each stamp reflects one of the three celebrated polar heroes: Franklin's men, the Parks Canada agency, and the Inuit. I contend that by including three different images, but uniting them within the same commissioned stamp series, Canada Post reaffirms and strengthens the chosen and preferred narrative of the Canadian government that celebrates the collaborative effort by modern, Canadian polar heroes that simultaneously draws connections between historical and contemporary 'performances of lively explorations' within the Arctic.

The accompanying press release states that ‘these stamps honour Franklin and his bold men but also celebrate the discovery of a shipwreck that had eluded previous and perilous searches: the long-lost *Erebus* in 2014 by Parks Canada and its partners’ (Canada post 2015a). The use of the verb ‘honour’ is particularly revealing; its connotations imply that the polar explorer is heroic and deserves the intended audience’s respect whilst their achievements ought to be celebrated. However, I maintain that this statement transcends the historical figures themselves and, as such, it is not just Franklin, but the Parks Canada staff and associated partners, including the Inuit, whom it implies ought to be equally ‘honoured’ and celebrated by the Canadian nation. Interestingly, at the press release, the Minister of Justice, The Honourable Peter MacKay, spoke and further emphasised the cultural and significant ties that Canadians are meant to feel towards the stamps and their associated, affective representations of national interests and culture:

‘The mystery of Franklin’s expedition has long captured the imaginations of Canadians. It’s a story of leadership, brave exploration, our history, our culture and our iconic North, all wrapped together. These stamps reflect Canadians’ pride in technology, while embracing the traditional stories and knowledge that helped make the discovery of *Erebus* possible and highlight a cherished moment in the history of our nation.’

(Canada Post 2015a)

The first two stamps in the ‘Sir John Franklin Expedition’ series are the two permanent, domestic circulation stamps: the first features *HMS Erebus* listing and stuck in the ice, with *HMS Terror* in the background; the second depicts a

map featuring the location of *HMS Erebus* near King William Island. I maintain that the use of these images for domestic audiences was of strategic value. The stamps are printed on a white background with very little colour on the images (see Figures 6.15 and 6.16, below). This, subtly, alludes to and reflects the ice-covered landscapes of the Arctic, simultaneously creating an atmosphere of sublime intrigue in an 'exceptional environment'. Stamp designer Roy White explained that 'we wanted to capture the despair of being trapped in the ice in such an unforgiving landscape, so the ship and the map both appear as if they are carved from ice' with the voluminous use of high relief embossing (Canada Post 2015a). By including *HMS Terror* in the background, domestic audiences are also subtly prompted to infer and reflect upon the fact that the search for a strategic ship to Canadian culture and identity is an ongoing one. Both of these stamps are presented side by side on a souvenir sheet which, in the background, places these stamps on a blue and white map of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. I maintain that this souvenir sheet is significant as it functions as a means of 'grounding' the stamp of *HMS Erebus*, literally 'flagging' its location within the Arctic and revealing the political significance placed upon the ship's precise location. In this respect, it functions in a similar way to the giant floor maps of the Arctic which have recently been circulated amongst schools and museums to 'ground' Canadians within the Arctic (see Canadian Museum of Nature 2014). This stamp subtly reminds audiences that the ship is *within* the Canadian Arctic, reaffirming the nation's desired identity narrative or re-directing *HMS Erebus* away from narratives that do not strategically benefit Canadian Arctic Sovereignty claims.



Figure 6.15: 'The *HMS Erebus* Encased in Ice.' Source: Canada Post 2015a.



Figure 6.16: '*HMS Erebus* Arctic Resting Place.' Source: Canada Post 2015b.

The second domestic stamp in the series features a map of the Arctic region that Franklin explored. The map is written in Inuktitut to mark the places Franklin visited and concurrently highlights that the Inuit were occupying and effectively ‘surveying’ this region’ through their knowledge of the area long before Franklin and his crew arrived. Thus, the stamp acknowledges in itself, whilst also prompting the audience to acknowledge, the presence of Inuit since ‘time memorial’ in the region. Crucially, an advantageous by-product of this apparent humility is that it domesticises a region that was initially perceived to be ‘sublime’ whilst, at the same time, establishes a direct Canadian link to the Arctic, via its Inuit population, from ‘time immemorial’. The stamp also pays ‘tribute to the stories of Inuit eyewitnesses, passed down through oral accounts that helped pinpoint the eventual discovery’ of the ship (Canada Post 2015b). In this way, the stamp’s imagery reminds the audience that Canada continues to pay tribute to the continuation of Franklin’s story through the recognition and celebration of Inuit stories and culture (Canada Post 2015b).



Figure 6.17: ‘The Shipwrecked Hull of *HMS Erebus*.’ Source: Canada Post 2015c.

The international-rate stamp, on the other hand, is portrayed quite differently (see *Figure 6.17, above*). It combines a high-tech, modern sonar image of the wreck of *Erebus* beneath the water, courtesy of the Canadian Hydrographic Service of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, with a nineteenth-century line drawn illustration, by Matthew Betts, of the ship's main deck plan. This deck plan was officially used to identify the ship and was borrowed from the archives of the National Maritime Museum, London, and highlights that the identification and discovery of the ship was significant to many Arctic stakeholders around the world. A special, phosphorescent-blue ink on the stamp also enhances this captivating sonar image which serves to 'bring the stamp to life' as it moves and reflects light off its surface. By portraying two 'scientific images', this stamp is part of a long and ongoing historical practice of featuring and celebrating scientific achievement and visual technologies within the Canadian North – as demonstrated and discussed in detail earlier in the chapter. Yet, I contend that it serves a dual purpose; the stamp also draws the audience's attention to the ways in which Canada 'brands' itself and its contemporary scientific performances within the Arctic. By celebrating its 'world-leading' surveying technology to the rest of the world, I maintain that the image is used to articulate Canada's supposed 'world-leading' status as a 'steward' of Arctic science. As with the nineteenth-century *HMS Erebus*, which was perceived to carry on board equipment of the highest standard of scientific technology of the time, the high-tech capability of using remote sonar to discover the ship is represented and two are connected through the merging of the two images.

The two accompanying souvenir sheets further illustrate scientific technologies by featuring one of the Canadian Coast Guard ships used in the Victoria Strait search in 2014 (see *Figures 6.18 and 6.19, below*). On the first souvenir sheet, a cartoon illustration of the ship sending sonar waves down to the seabed is represented and multiple sonar images of *HMS Erebus* are depicted. As an effective display of lively 'Sovereignty labour', 'this cartoon visually portrays the very performative and active role of conducting scientific

activity through the NWP. The black and white image of a diver next to the ship further illustrates the lively 'surveying' practices of the Parks Canada Underwater Archaeology team, which serves as another example of an affectual representation of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. The accompanying souvenir sheet also features an underwater photo provided by Parks Canada, depicting the discovery of Erebus's bell, which was repeatedly used – for example, in the form of a physical model that was being used to show visitors at a pop-up Parks Canada event in Vancouver, alluded to later in the chapter and depicted in Figure 6.21 – as one of the first Arctic relics to be brought up to the surface from the ship. This photo is accompanied by a diver's outstretched arm 'shining' a torch into the depths of the ship, symbolically and literally making visible the previous 'hidden mysteries and intrigue of the ship'. Combined with a metallic ink, this photo lends a sheen to the bell and visually captivates the audience with a rich depth of colour.

The second souvenir sheet (*see Figure 6.19, below*) has an intriguing, voluminous dimension. On the water's surface, a coastguard ship, with a visible, fluttering Canadian flag, floats above a 3D recreated sonar image of *HMS Erebus* on the seabed. The imagery evoked here is reminiscent of the Russian media co-opted flag-planting exercise in 2007 which caused so much media commentary within Canada at the time and led to Harper's infamous 'use it or lose it' catchphrase. The ship in this image functions as a literal flagpole and, in some ways, territorially seeks to 'ground' or even, to use another more apt metaphor, 'anchor' ownership of the ship below. Finally, the sense of depth evoked by the image is deeply symbolic, serving to represent Canadian Sovereignty volumetrically and, by extension, implying that Canada claims Sovereignty over, through and below the NWP. At the same time, an image of 'The Shipwrecked Hull of *HMS Erebus*' stamp is printed onto a map of the Canadian Arctic region. This is significant because, by placing an image of the ship where it was found, it emphasises the importance placed upon its geographical location and, by extension, reveals how it is being co-opted into Canada's Sovereignty claims in the region. Inuit

testimony and knowledge are also included on this stamp. In the same vein, whilst the press release stated that the diagonal text across the stamp, written in English, French and Inuktitut, was to pay ‘tribute to the stories of Inuit eyewitnesses, [which] passed down through oral accounts helped pinpoint the historic discovery’ (Canada Post 2015d), the emphatic repetition of the assertion that ‘researchers found *HMS Erebus* in Nunavut’ only serves to further intensify the importance placed upon its geographical location, both within Canada and globally.

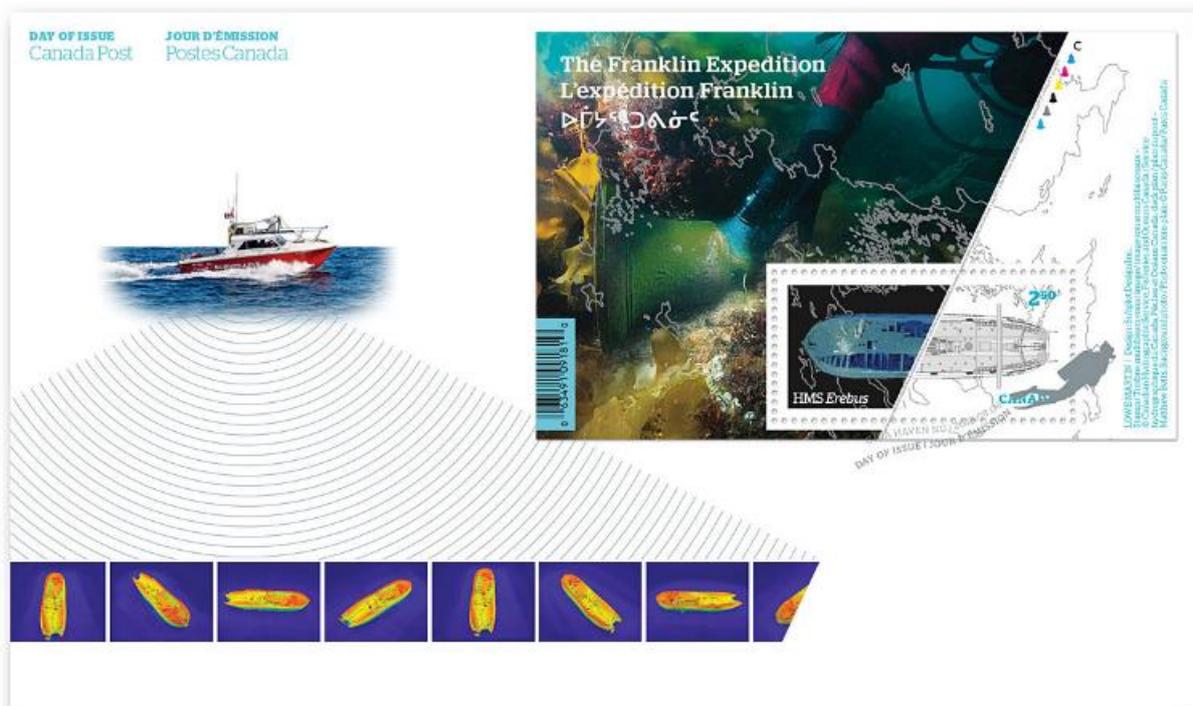


Figure 6.18: ‘Souvenir Sheet.’ Source: Canada Post 2015d.



Figure 6.19: 'Booklet of 6 stamps.'

Source: Canada Post 2015d.

The continued incorporation of historical exploration imagery into postage stamps serves as a key example of the varied means through which Canadian Arctic activities are re-presented and branded to public audiences for their consumption. There has been an ongoing fascination with Franklin, which manifests itself in the use of imagery relating to Franklin in Canadian government-sponsored visual material. I contend that such contemporary imagery is part of a longer assemblage of historical material celebrating 'polar heroes and science' that inherently and directly impacts upon and shapes the direction of contemporary representations. Whilst previous imagery of 'exploration' of the Arctic represented on postage stamps has tended to exclude Inuit representation, the most recently released stamps in 2015, by Canada Post, illuminate the evolving practice within Canada to champion and creatively adapt these discourses to fit within a narrative that incorporates Inuit knowledge and testimony. Crucially, the celebration of 'new polar heroes', in this way, is linked to the celebration of historical exploration to create a continuous occupying atmosphere of celebrating Canadian Arctic achievements to public audiences.

Legacy commemorations during '#Canada 150'

In 2014, the search for and eventual discovery of Franklin's ship, *HMS Erebus*, was framed as an event that ought to be celebrated and commemorated across Canada by Harper. In a special statement within *The Globe and Mail*, for example, Harper stated that Canada 'rightly celebrated this historic discovery with pride' (Harper 2014). Yet, the Harper government was not the first administration to link the ongoing search for Franklin's missing ships with visual and performative contemporary celebrations and commemorations. In the 1920s, government-sponsored 'educational' films for example were released about the annual Eastern Arctic Patrols under the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau's *Seeing Canada* series. These films

portrayed the patrols as subjects of the State's and public's gaze and, through their visible dissemination, was used as an 'objective' example of effective occupation that stood, unchallenged, as an 'ocular truth'. These films also made connections to the work these were modern patrols were undertaking by portraying them as heroes, akin to those of historical expeditions, who were expanding Canadian knowledge about its icy, Northern frontier (see Geller 2004). Similarly, in August 1967, during the centenary celebrations of the Confederation, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's government initiated 'Project Franklin' in an effort to locate the ships and find material relics and artefacts which could be displayed and commemorated with museum metropolises that year. Whilst this project was originally initiated by a private citizen and Franklin enthusiast, William McKenzie, the Canadian Armed Forces were brought on board to lead an expedition of fifty-two military personnel made up of three different branches of the military (Wonders 1968). This operation usefully served the function of demonstrating to the Canadian public that the Canadian Military were able to operate effectively at different voluminous levels within the Arctic. Scuba divers from the newly formed 1st Field Squadron, alongside helicopters, aerial photographers and analysts, were enrolled alongside military bodies on the ground in surveying this territory. These exercises usefully demonstrated Canada's military capabilities in the North whilst, simultaneously, linking these exercises to the historical 'legacy' of exploration in the Canadian Arctic to find Franklin's missing ships. These exercises were part of a historical practice of 'testing military bodies and capabilities in the Arctic such as on the Muskox Patrols and during the Cold War (see Schledermann 2003; MacDonald 2006; Wiseman 2015). The Harper administration were also aware of the strategic benefit of visibly flagging and promoting military capabilities in the North through annual exercises such as Operation Nanook as a visible performance of his 'use it or lose it' rhetoric – behaviour which has been considered in detail within Klaus Dodds' work in particular (see Dodds 2012). So, when Harper announced the discovery of the wreck *HMS Erebus* in 2014, he was quick to emphasise that these searches were another example of military and

scientific capabilities in the Arctic and that it was something that ought to be celebrated by the nation as a whole. An extract from an interview Harper gave in 2014 emphasises how he believed that the laborious acts of ‘surveying’, ‘mapping’ and ‘exploring’ the final frontier of Canada – namely, the Arctic seabed, which represented a previously unknown geographical terrain where there was also a void in scientific knowledge – was a visible example of Canada performing its Sovereignty in light of his ‘use it or lose it’ discourse:

‘The ultimate fate of the Franklin expedition is one of Canada’s great mysteries... Sir John’s exploration and discovery of parts of Canada’s North are an important part of our history and have contributed to Canada becoming the wonderful country we enjoy today... Just look at the list of explorers who tried even before Sir John: Cabot, Frobisher, Davis, Cartier, Hudson, La Salle, Cook, Vancouver, MacKenzie. These are the giants of our history, and the story of the search for the Northwest Passage is essentially the history of Canada’s North...The search for the fabled Northwest Passage is something that Canadians have celebrated in stories and songs for generations — it’s even the subject of the Stan Rogers song that we consider our “unofficial national anthem” — because that story is the story of Canada....A great deal of what we know about our North comes from observations made by other explorers trying to solve the

Franklin mystery, going back almost two centuries. Our searchers are the inheritors of that legacy...Since 2008, there have been six major Parks Canada-led searches for the lost Franklin ships, painstakingly covering many hundreds of square kilometres of the Arctic seabed... I've been rooting for them — these modern-day explorers...the act of searching has done much to benefit not just Northerners, but all Canadians....For example, the search for the wreck has required us to map extensive sections of the seabed, and conduct intensive research on sea ice and the Arctic waters. All of the knowledge and data we've gained will help us to better understand the geography of the North... It just goes to demonstrate one more time that we're up to the challenge of mounting significant technical and military operations in the harsh conditions of the Canadian Arctic — something all Canadians can be proud of, and I would add, at a time when international interest in the Arctic region is growing, finding this Franklin ship bolsters Canada's claim to Arctic Sovereignty — clearly something that directly benefits all Canadians'

(Harper quoted in Geiger 2014)

By drawing parallels between the celebrated 'giants of history', the 'polar heroes' who tried to find the Northwest Passage, from Frobisher to Franklin

and those that followed him in subsequent searches, to contemporary 'inheritors of that legacy', the 'modern-day explorers', Parks Canada and its partners, Harper's administration sought to encourage the Canadian nation to celebrate and take pride in polar heroes past, present and future as symbols of national culture. Such performances of 'Sovereignty-labour' were emphasised in order to reassure Canadians that their territory was being secured by means of a form of frontier vigilantism (Dodds and Hemmings 2009).

The Canadian State's attempt to foster a shared 'Arctic culture' that is representative of a broader national identity was exemplified by the Harper administration's policy of publicly inviting Canadians to learn about their 'Northern heritage' as part of the 'celebrations' leading up to the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017. Through government-sponsored visual material, postage stamps and bank notes, alongside government-sponsored political adverts, interactive museum exhibitions in many major cities across Canada and online social media, audiences were shown visual commemorations of historical explorations of the Canadian Arctic which were framed as an integral part of Canadian Arctic Heritage (Canadian Heritage 2017).

Linking commemorations of historical, colonial 'polar heroes', most notably that of the searches for the missing 'polar hero' Franklin and his crew, to contemporary constructions of national identity seems problematic, on first glance, in two key respects. Firstly, the Franklin expedition went missing in 1845, 22 years before Confederation, making its connection to the 2017 anniversary appear somewhat tenuous at best. Yet, it is equally apparent that connecting narratives from a catalyst of polar exploration with the disappearance of Franklin's crew in the nineteenth century to contemporary notions of Canadian 'exploration' is an important strategic narrative. By drawing parallels to the current activities of the Parks Canada Divers as a 'modern frontier explorers', exploring the voluminous Canadian Arctic territory and NWP, the Canadian State roots these activities in a long and

continued claim of continuous Canadian activity of exploring and surveying the region – even if this connection encompasses British explorations and other search parties. Secondly, and yet again, what is notable from these early statements and interviews was the visible marginalisation or outright exclusion of Inuit knowledge, involvement and collaboration in the successful discovery of the ship. This marginalisation is evidenced in the two ‘celebratory’ pieces of visual media that were commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage in the lead to the 150th anniversary of Confederation to celebrate the discovery of *HMS Erebus* in 2014. This targeted marketing campaign, including ‘The Great Canadian North’ (Road to 2017) advertising campaign, used a mix of digital and social media to showcase visually appealing and interactive video content.

The ‘Great Canadian North’

The ‘Great Canadian North’ promotional campaign was released in 2015 to celebrate Franklin as part of the wider 150th celebrations of the Confederation, strategically coinciding with the run-up to the federal elections. The one-minute advert was circulated to audiences throughout Canada by means of a range of visual technologies as communication tools: cinemas, online, government agencies, social media accounts and in promotional adverts on television commercials. By implementing such a ‘marketing’ strategy, Canadian Heritage was able to increase engagement with users and better achieve its objectives through this diverse assemblage of mixed media. This meant that the advert had the potential to be consumed by a wide-ranging audience, geographically as well as demographically (Canadian Heritage 2016). The advert itself recreated, through CGI, the ships *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, as well as all the technologies that were used in the subsequent searches, as examples of mobility and travel in the Arctic. The technologies depicted included a research centre, the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker *The Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, airplanes, satellites and sonar equipment amongst others. Whilst there is a brief narrative which is superseded over the

video, the emphasis placed upon displaying the searches and different means of mobility through highly visual technologies, aimed at public consumption, is part of a long history of the Arctic being displayed as a visual spectacle (Potter 2007). As Russell Potter has observed, it was through ‘technologies of vision that the Arctic was most keenly and energetically sought’ by the public during the nineteenth century (Potter 2007:4).

The video begins with a ‘God’s-eye-view’ aerial shot over moving ice floes, but without any other visible life. In the background, the advert’s soundtrack is comprised of an example Inuk throat singing. Symbolically, this serves as the first ‘clue’ to the audience that the Arctic might not quite be so empty after all. The scene then changes to two Inuit men in traditional furs and sealskin clothing gazing upwards towards the sky and outwards searching the horizon from their location in the Arctic. It then cuts to another two Inuit carrying Kayaks as the first of many visual displays of travel and mobility (*see Figure 6.19, below*) which is not specifically referenced in the voice over text:

‘170 years ago, the inhabitants of the Arctic encountered explorers from another world, embarked on a quest to find the Northwest Passage. Sir John Franklin’s expedition was lost, but his disappearance launched an era of exploration unparalleled in Arctic History. Franklin’s legacy is one of perseverance, discovery and innovation that lives on today and has helped to keep our True North strong, proud and free. As we prepare to mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation, join us in celebrating Canada’s North and our great legacy of discovery’

(Canadian Heritage 2015a)

By the advert stating that ‘170 years ago, the inhabitants of the Arctic encountered explorers from another world embarked on a quest to find the Northwest Passage’, the text already excludes and marginalises Indigenous history. In this respect, the observation implies that the ‘inhabitants’ only function as part of this narrative for the purpose of contextualising ‘explorers’ experiences of searching for the NWP. At the same time, it also fails to recognise the previous few centuries of European and Indigenous encounters in the Arctic, such as the expeditions of the Elizabethan explorer Martin Frobisher. The soundtrack then switches from Inuk throat singing to ‘western’ orchestral strings whilst the imagery changing to two nineteenth-century vessels, presumably representing *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* traversing through ice floes: the second example of travel within the Arctic in the advert. The scene unfolds, depicting a crew member ringing a bell and the captain looking uncertainly out on the horizon through his telescope. The ringing of the bell is a significant inclusion as the bell on *HMS Erebus* was the first artefact to be brought back to the surface by Parks Canada divers, and through many pop-up displays organised by Parks Canada, the bell was recreated through models which then could be handled by visitors throughout Canada (see Figure 6.20, below).



Figure 6.20: ‘Two Inuit carrying Kayaks.’

Source: Canadian Heritage 2015a.



Figure 6.21: 'Parks Canada Pop up Display, showing model *HMS Erebus* bell outside Vancouver Maritime Museum.' Source: Rosanna White, taken August 2015.

By having this bell actively rung, I contend that the advert brings the materiality of the bell to life for the audience – in the same way that the physical recreation of the bell for Parks Canada pop-up displays does. By bringing the bell to life, a symbolic artefact used to represent and organise the time of day aboard ships, almost like a beating heart, *HMS Erebus*, even as a shipwreck, is represented through the symbolism of a body. As I have asserted in the previous chapter, this is particularly significant as a body can usefully become an ‘indigenised’ settler-colonial Canadian body within the NWP, consequently resulting in the de facto widening of the volume of Canada’s ‘occupying atmosphere’.

The following scene in the advert shifts to a CGI recreation of a sepia-coloured map of the Arctic, from a God’s-eye-view, being physically inscribed with written information and drawings, such as Baffin. It swiftly switches to another God’s-eye-view which depicts multiple nineteenth-century ships sailing in a noticeably less ice-ridden waterway. As the voice-over states, despite John Franklin’s expedition being lost, ‘his disappearance launched an era of exploration unparalleled in Arctic history’. The subsequent soundtrack further elevates this apparently ‘remarkable’ history of exploration, affectively signalling to the audience, through the use of rich, accompanying woodwind instrumentals, that these explorations were ‘hopeful and beneficial’.

The next scene depicts another white European explorer, but instead of wearing navel uniform, he is clad in sealskin furs. This man, who possibly was meant to represent the explorer Dr John Rae, is seen asking an Inuit boy for information, who gestures out to something on the horizon (see Figure 6.22, below). This gesturing parallels the finger-pointing optics Harper regularly employed when announcing the government’s Arctic activities throughout his tenure (see Dodds 2010a; 2010b). This performative gesture was used again, for example, when he announced *HMS Erebus*’s location year earlier (see Figure 6.23, below).



Figure 6.22: 'White European explorer conferring with Inuit.'

Source: Canadian Heritage 2015a.



Figure 6.23: 'Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Ryan Harris, Parks Canada archaeologist announce *HMS Erebus* discovery.' Source: Sean Kilpatrick in *The Globe and Mail* 2015.

The scene depicted in Figure 6.22, above, also depicts an *Inukshuk* and an Inuit girl in the background. The *Inukshuk*, as aforementioned, was a communicating technology the Inuit utilised to help with navigation and conveying important information about the surrounding geographical area. In a way, paralleling the sepia-coloured map in the advert, the *Inukshuk* is an example of Inuit cartography which physically inscribes the land with structures. Considered in this respect, the *Inukshuk* also serve as a useful, static marker of occupation for potential Sovereignty claims. Whilst this is the second inclusion of Inuit in the advert, it is still problematic; it is understandable how one might infer that the Indigenous character is only comes into view for the audience as he serves the function of facilitating the performance of exploration by the white man. Even more problematically, particularly when considered from a Feminist critical perspective, as the only woman featured in the advert, the 'silent' inclusion of the Inuit girl, who is wholly passive, within the narrative, highlights the uneven and gendered narratives of European-led exploration that continue to shape contemporary narratives and performances of Arctic Sovereignty (see Bloom 1993).

The final part of the voice-over repeats the narratives of exploration and Arctic Sovereignty which Harper frequently referenced as one of the legitimising reasons for the high government expenditure in the search for Franklin. The voice-over reminds audiences that, through the 'legacy of exploration', these contemporary performances help, visibly, to 'flag' Canadian technological capabilities in the North, and that this is something that should be celebrated as 'proud Canadians'. It states that 'Franklin's legacy is one of perseverance, discovery and innovation that lives on today and has helped to keep our True North strong, proud and free. As we prepare to mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation, join us in celebrating Canada's North and our great legacy of discovery'. As this is stated, the advert depicts a succession of technologies that are used to survey, monitor and collect knowledge about the Arctic through an overtly visible 'frontier vigilantism'. A bush plane is replaced by successive images of a snowmobile, a

research station, a satellite, a helicopter and a Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker, the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, and, finally, two underwater divers casting a visible light onto *HMS Erebus's* bell to 'illuminate', both literally and symbolically, their most recent knowledge discovery (see Figure 6.24, below).



Figure 6.24: 'Two Parks Canada divers shining a light on the bell of *HMS Erebus*.' Source: Canadian Heritage 2015a.

The emphasis on visibility, technologies of knowledge collection and mobility in the Arctic throughout the advert highlights the State's diverse enrolment of bodies, both human and non-human, into performances of Arctic Sovereignty. The bodies being displayed, and their inherent mobility, not only serves to populate the Arctic as a lively and occupied space, but visibly flags, through their different activities, a Canadian presence and jurisdiction in the region. The viewers are overtly reminded of their 'flagging' materiality as 'Canadian bodies' as each of the technologies literally depict a Canadian flag either fluttering on a flag pole, attached to an object, or through overtly painted red and white designs – as it is with 'Canada' clearly emblazoned

upon the side of the plane, helicopter, satellite and arms of the divers. These different technologies also remind the viewer that the Arctic is being constantly surveyed through varied voluminous sites, including the stratosphere satellite, the sonar equipment aboard the *CGS Sir Wilfrid Laurier* and the subterranean reconnaissance of the Parks Canada divers. It is in this way that Canada seeks to generate an overt 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty-labour. The advert is a form of visual culture that can be easily disseminated to audiences through a range of digital technologies. Despite having a voice-over narrative, all of the key information Canadian Heritage is trying to convey is achieved through its visual representations. The emphasis on the visual also highlights how certain objects and bodies are brought into view, then removed or excluded altogether. As Renee Hulan has observed, this advert as a 'retelling of the Franklin disaster captured nothing of the continuity of Inuit culture in the Arctic...[and] casts Inuit [only] as inhabitants of pre-contact history' (Hulan 2017:6). The technological capabilities and perseverance of white men are the symbolic narratives the audience are meant to celebrated and be proud of in the run up to the 150th celebrations. This advert was also released in the run-up to the federal election and served as a useful tool of propaganda: the banal, yet concurrently spectacular, ways the Harper administrations Arctic policies and strategies could permeate into quotidian life, through their dissemination in cinemas, social media channels and on television commercials. This digitisation of policy propaganda is also part of a legacy of the highly edited news reels of bravery and heroics and spectacles of the military which were frequently disseminated and consumed by the public during the Second World War.

An interactive journey into the Arctic

During the nineteenth century, 'official' images of Arctic exploration available to the public were limited unless they were being used for navigational purposes, such as through sketching coastlines or through official commemorations and monuments of naval heroes (Hatfield 2016). However,

there was great public demand for visual imaginations of the Arctic. Consequently, within illustrated newspapers, artwork and within popular exhibitions, the Arctic was frequently displayed through panoramas and dioramas. These illustrated news articles and panoramas were relatively accessible to 'middle-class' Victorian society and were not reserved for consumption of the 'elite', upper class. Panoramas required audiences to accept their 'claims' to truthfulness and, through their immersive experience, created an atmosphere through which an audience was affectively transported to the scene that was being depicted. These displays were intended to be spectacular and sometimes added to this atmosphere through the use of immersive sound recordings and lights as special effects to affectively transport the participant on an exotic journey. In a similar way to the immersive nature of the nineteenth-century panorama, the choose-your-own YouTube game, commissioned by the Department of Heritage in 2015, also sought to immerse the 'player' within an Arctic spectacle and experience (Canadian Heritage 2015b).

The YouTube game, entitled 'Journey into the Arctic', was commissioned to celebrate the recent discovery of Franklin's ship *HMS Erebus* in the lead up to the 150th anniversary celebrations. The game was free to play, as it was uploaded onto the popular digital video platform, YouTube. Uploading the game to an easily accessible platform, which required minimal 'hardware' to play, ensured that the potential dissemination of '*Journey into the Arctic*' could reach as many prospective audiences across Canada, and indeed the world, as possible, requiring only access to the internet. The need to have access to the internet is also significant as the infrastructure within remote Inuit communities was often not as developed; as such, the game, in effect, was in itself performing the marginalisation and exclusion of some of its most Northern communities. The Trudeau government, for example, has tried to address these polarising infrastructures within Canada when it was recently announced on the 22nd of August, 2018, that high-speed fibre optic internet was going to be made available to residents of Nunavik thanks to

collaborative federal-provisional investment. This programme, referred to as 'Connect to Innovate', resulted in a \$125.2 million investment by the Governments of Canada, Quebec and the Kativik Regional Government. Through a subterranean, subsea 'backbone', a new fibre-optic infrastructure would ensure that Nunavik residents would share the same access to telecommunications as other Canadian metropolises by 2020. In the accompanying new release, the Trudeau administration stated that 'internet access is more than just a convenience: citizens, communities, businesses and institutions need it to find information, offer services and create opportunities. That's why the Government of Canada is helping all of Nunavik's 14 Inuit communities and 28 institutions get online with new or improved high-speed Internet access' (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada 2018). Thus, the complexity and entanglements of infrastructure and access throughout Canada further contribute to the assemblage of the geopolitical game and its intended audiences.

In 'Journey into the Arctic', as with the nineteenth-century panoramas, role-play enables a player to 'perform' the character of a British naval Commander of an Arctic expedition. The opening line of the game is an emphatic imperative: 'take command of an Arctic expedition and become the hero of your own adventure'. This overtly 'heroic' rhetoric encourages – effectively commands through the imperative – the player to imagine themselves as nineteenth-century British explorer and thus immerse themselves in the performances of imperial exploration. According to a statement released by Canadian Heritage, the game was created in consultation with Historians as they wanted to confer a greater degree of legitimacy to the material content and so that viewers could 'experience their very own Arctic adventure, learn about the hardship of exploring the North to give a sense to Canadians of the challenges an explorer had to face when trying to find the Northwest Passage and increase their awareness and knowledge of the history and heritage of Canada's North' (Young 2015). The 'challenges' of an explorer also represent those encountered by 'modern polar explorers' involved in the Victoria

Straight expeditions who had, since 2008, being tasked to locate the ships, not unlike the nineteenth task to find the NWP within the game. This game compresses the temporal space between authentic world events, allowing the player to participate symbolically, through their play, in a real-world event. As Rachel Hughes argues, we must understand games as 'cultural forms that measure out the interactive nature of contemporary geopolitics' (Hughes 2007a:990). Thus, the game functions a useful lens through which to interrogate further the framing of Franklin and the 'quest to find his ships' in the 150th anniversary celebrations.

Digital games have the ability to refigure the affective experience of history through the means of an anticipatory impulse (Hughes 2007a). This provides the player a way of 'inhabiting history' whilst playing a game (Crogen 2003). The interactive nature of the Department of Heritage's choose-your-own game allows the player to embody the heroic nineteenth-century explorer, also allowing the player to assimilate affectively the performance of contemporary Canadian explorers who have, as I have determined, been repeatedly framed as modern 'heroes'. The game roughly guides the player through the history of the 'discovery' of the Northwest Passage through a series of simple either-or questions. The game unfolds by the player watching a short video and then being presented with a 'choice'. For example, the opening video depicts a busy harbour in England in first part of the nineteenth century, the voice-over states, 'you have been chosen to lead a mission to find the fabled Northwest Passage. You can sail the North Atlantic and head for the Arctic or take the known route around South America and approach from the Pacific'. As the Commander, you can choose between both routes but, in reality, only the Arctic passage via the Atlantic is the 'right choice' as the other ends in your ship being sunk at Cape Horn, and this pattern is repeated throughout the stages of the game.

By characterising how any player as being 'chosen' to lead a mission, the genre of the game is structured around the well-established model of a heroic quest. This genre and the game are, of course, developed within the

context of equally well-established cultural discourses with which the player can readily identify. Genre, according to John Frow, is integral to understandings of social situations. The construction of genre, he asserts, 'are at once shaped by a type of situation and in turn shape the rhetorical actions that are performed in response to it' (Frow 2006:14). In this way, we can understand how and why national identity, geopolitics and genre are bound up in popular culture. For example, Susan Jeffords' analysis of Hollywood movies during the presidency of Ronald Reagan explored how masculinity and US national identity simultaneously shaped, and were shaped by, popular culture and Hollywood, which depicted 'heroic, white male bodies' as protagonists (Jeffords 1994 see also Kellner and Ryan 1987). The genre of the Canadian Heritage game, as a form of anticipatory viewing and affective immersion, shares similarities between the popular 'recuperative politics' of quests with the fictional colonial adventurer Indiana Jones (Arostein 1995). The genre of the 'heroic professional western warrior with a mission', akin to that of James Bond, is also paralleled within the game (see Dalby 2008; Dodds and Funnell 2018). Through the interactive and immerse technology of the game, it does not merely represent the search for the NWP and Franklin in a two dimensional abstract representation, instead through this affective performance in 'real-time' sequences, the player sometime affectively 'feels' the NWP mission (Carter and McCormack 2006; Power 2007). As the game is meant to be symbolically performing the fabled quest for the Northwest Passage by Franklin, it aligns the heroic popular fiction of these Hollywood characters with that of Franklin and, thus, extends the commercial popularity of not just the game, but the popularity of the nineteenth-century ships and the subsequent searches embarked upon by government agencies. Moreover, by being invited to partake in this imagined nineteenth-century quest, the game's geopolitical power and potential popularity stems from the 'quest [which] comes with this simple yet powerful mechanism: the "hailing" of a subject' (Hughes 2007b:131).

'Journey into the Arctic' also depicts different material and geophysical 'threats' which the player has to overcome by making the correct decision. As the Cape Horn had, in its affective power to sink ships, so does the representation of ice within the game as you move through the quest. In the third video and question series of the game, the voice-over reminds you that 'the ice is difficult to sail through and soon may trap your ship. You can keep exploring or seek shelter for the winter'. This choice presents the player with an intriguing decision to make and one that is based upon 'unknown anticipatory impulses' (Anderson 2010). The 'correct choice' in this occasion is not to bed down for winter, but to sail on, and, upon choosing this option, the scenery changes and the icy, stormy and frigid imagery is replaced with calm waters and a sunny horizon and a clear view. The game moves on and the player is told they have finally reached Greenland. The options this time are to stop for supplies or keep going 'to avoid delays'. This question again alludes to the complexity surrounding the 'hero-quest' genre of the game. The previous correct question required the player to persevere with the adventure and aligned the game with the advert and rhetoric the Harper administration placed on perseverance, strength and fortitude of the historical and modern explorer. However, in this case by 'continuing the journey' the player soon finds their ship stuck in the ice, (*see Figure 6.25, below*). The voice-over reproachfully tells the player that 'you have died because you underestimated the power of ice', thus informing the player of the precarious nature of Arctic exploration and the 'sublime qualities' of ice

to frustrate and hamper expeditions within the NWP, not unlike that of the Parks Canada searches.



Figure 6.25: 'The ship stranded in the ice.' Source: Canadian Heritage 2015b.

By choosing the 'correct' answer to stop for supplies at Greenland, the player is subtly reminded of the 'awkward reliance' on other bodies for exploration and survival in the Arctic, similarly to the presence of foreign whalers in the Arctic and the early establishments of RCMP Posts – as discussed in detail in Chapter 4. This reliance on Northern technology, resources and knowledge is encountered again when the player is met by local Inuit after becoming trapped in the ice again. The game serves to demonstrate that it is an inevitability that ice will hamper exploration, though not to the point of death in this instance. The choice is given to welcome the Inuit or ask them to leave; by welcoming them, you and your crew are 'saved from developing scurvy, through trading with the Inuit for fresh meat. Without this the second option, the crew's fate ends in death again (see *Figures 6.26 and 6.27, below*). The voice-over prompts the player by asking 'maybe the Inuit could have helped?'

and you are given the option to ‘restart’ trade and carry on the journey by borrowing dog sleighs, which you are also told are far better for travel overland on the ice. This problematic re-telling of Indigenous-imperial relations, during the Franklin searches, glosses over the repeated denial and rejection of Inuit testimony of the ships location for decades thereafter. By ‘re-peopling’ Indigenous bodies into the nineteenth-century explorer’s discourse, Canadian Heritage attempt to re-write a more favourable account which simultaneously recasts Inuit as ‘saviours’ of the explorers, yet their role, like the advert is still only included to contextualise explorer activity in the North.



Figure 6.26: ‘The crew trading with the Inuit for fresh supplies.’ Source: Canadian Heritage 2015b.



Figure 6.27: 'The crew dying of scurvy.' Source: Canadian Heritage 2015b.

The last part of the game depicts the player's avatar and the crew charting the land explored, having used the dog sleighs, and the crew bring back some newly sketched maps of the local geography. The game triumphantly ends with the narrator congratulating you on successfully completing your mission (see Figure 6.28, below), stating that 'you have contributed to a great legacy of discovery and helped to define one of our most valuable treasures: The Great Canadian North'. This 'successful recasting' of the mission also rewrites Franklin's history to exclude any mention of hypothermia, pneumonia, tuberculosis, lead poisoning and cannibalism which was the fateful reality of Franklin's crew. As such, the game is designed to cast the search for the Northwest Passage as a heroic quest to discover and define 'one of Canada's most valuable treasures' and, in doing so, distances the mission from the spectral haunting that has shaped much of the discourse, literature and visual culture concerning Franklin (Cameron 2008; Craciun 2016; McCorristine 2018). In effect, the player is guided through to the heroic completion of the mission: all other decisions are merely characterised as mistakes or errors, in effect, incorrect histories which can be easily rectified and forgotten. Yet, it

remains somewhat ironic that the mission does not actually end in true success: the NWP remains an elusive mystery. Like the genre of the quest, it is the journey or experience, rather than the final destination, which is of real significance. As such, I contend that one of the greatest geopolitical powers of the game is its capacity to convey to the player that it is the very lively and performative activity of ‘surveying and surveillance’ which is deemed to a success within the NWP – a narrative perspective which is wholly aligned with Harper’s ‘use it or lose it’ frontier vigilantism. Furthermore, the game, whilst including an Indigenous presence, is still problematic and effectively romanticises the history and relationships between the Inuit and European explorers as one of pleasant ‘co-operation’. This co-operation, I maintain, also unequivocally reflects the change in rhetoric from Harper’s early government – which did shift towards inclusion before the election resulted in a change of government – to Trudeau’s, which now actively and vociferously seeks – according to its rhetoric – to work in collaboration with the Inuit.

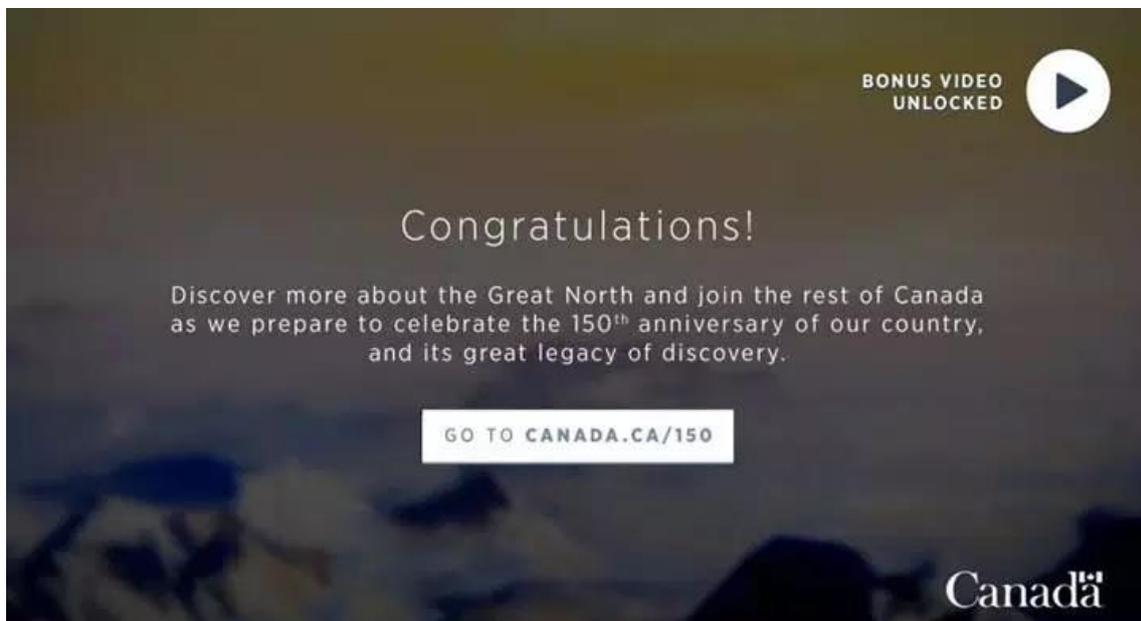


Figure 6.28: ‘The final frame of the game.’ Source: Canadian Heritage 2015b.

Thus, by recognising the non-representational quality of images within the game, and their affective capabilities, I maintain that the game possesses an ability not only to rewrite history, but to perform affectively an extension of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. At the same time, the game ought to be considered and analysed as part of the assemblage of performances that widen the 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty. Consequently, the game should not be viewed as an ideologically-driven attempt to mirror or represent the world and the Arctic; instead, the game ought to be analysed as a practice that participates in the world as an assemblage of networks and performances of Arctic imaginings (Carter and McCormack 2006; Hughes 2007b).

Celebrating the Arctic and Franklin in museums

The Arctic was also championed in museum exhibitions around Canada's metropolises as a national symbol for the 150th celebrations. Celebrating Canada's 150th within a museum space highlights the diverse sites, such as public libraries and other 'public spaces', available to the State to record and represent its polar heritage and, simultaneously, a construction of its national heritage. The Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN) in Ottawa, for example, stated that to mark 'Canada 150' the museum would spend a full year, from June 2017, focusing on Canada's Arctic. The pinnacle of these celebrations would involve the opening of a new permanent gallery, representing the museum's legacy project, which would 'present Canadians with a contemporary window on Canada's North' as well as providing a permanent stage for Arctic-themed events and programmes for the public throughout the year (CMN 2017a). The CMN is Canada's national museum of natural history and natural sciences and, for over a century, it has accumulated, archived and documented the Arctic through the collection of specimens and artefacts. CMN has often justified their 'credible authority' to provide 'windows' or insights onto the Arctic, through their Centre for Arctic Knowledge and Exploration and in light of 'evidence-based exhibitions which

display some of the 14 million specimens it has in its collection' (CMN 2016). This colonial legacy of specimen collection and scientific research mirrors many of the national museums within Britain and other European metropolises, which tried simultaneously to present museum exhibits as 'ocular truths' that merited this status as a result of the scientific rigour underpinning the collection and classification of objects and specimens (Wallis 1994).

The 750 metre-squared gallery was an opportunity for the museum and its partners to offer 'Canadians the opportunity to discover a beautiful, mysterious and little-understood area of our country' (CMN 2017A). This contemporary window onto the North, is performed through the display of highly visualised material for the public to emphasise not only the 'importance of the Arctic' to southern Canadians, but simultaneously 'fetishising' the imagination of the Arctic as a 'mysterious place' awaiting the curious gaze of an audience. Such representations – which, in themselves, were frequently designed to instil a sense of awe and wonder – of the Arctic as a sublime space, for the purposes of public engagement and consumption, echo the nineteenth-century panoramas and dioramas of Victorian popular culture.

However, the museum was keen to stress that, despite framing the Arctic as a mysterious, sublime space, the gallery would include representation and consultation from Northern communities. Meg Beckel, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Nature, perhaps unsurprisingly, sought to justify and explain the position of the new gallery:

'Our goal with the gallery is to transform people's understanding of the Arctic and to create a space that will expose Canadians and visitors from abroad to this important part of our country. We have drawn on the museum's historic leadership in Arctic knowledge and exploration, as well as

consultations with Northern Indigenous groups and individuals, to reflect the deep connections between the Arctic's natural environment and the activities of humans.'

(CMN 2016)

Moreover, it was made clear that the 'deep connections' between the environment and mankind would also be reflected through an adaptive exhibition space and 'contact zone' within the new gallery, named *Northern Voices*. Through the use of ever-changing temporary exhibits, the inclusion of 'Northern voices' was part of a commitment by the museum and its partners to represent and give a voice to the historical and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples and Northern communities to the environment of the Arctic. This inclusion of 'alternative and diverse voices' within a museum is an example of the progressive nature of twenty-first-century museum practice, which seeks to 'decolonise museums' (Aarekol 2014; Ferrara 2015). In an effort to shift away from the unsettling colonial legacy of museums, CMN determined that certain exhibits would only be curated by Inuit or Northern-based organisations, providing the museum with the necessary 'credibility' to represent and portray the Arctic, diverse Indigenous knowledge and experiences. The inaugural exhibition, entitled *Inuinnauyugut: We are Inuinnaït*, for example, was curated by the Kitikmeot Heritage Society of Nunavut, who provided some of the fifty specimens of historical and contemporary items on display. This temporary exhibition explored the culture of the *Inuinnaït* (Copper Inuit) by interrogating the centennial anniversary of *Inuinnaït* contact with Europeans, subverting the settler-colonial celebrations of Confederation by presenting the *Inuinnaït* experience of encountering Europeans, rather than portraying them as passive accomplices to European-led narratives of exploration.

The consideration, reflection and emphasis placed upon the agency and role of an Indigenous curator, draws attention to the power and authority that a museum wields as an institution and its capacity to include or exclude actors.

In this respect, according to Claire Wintle, museums can be perceived as social agents who are involved in mediating wider political change, and whilst decolonisation has been used to describe progressive practice within the museum sector, it is in reality 'a more tentative, contradictory and conservative phenomenon' (Wintle 2016: 1492). At the same time, a cynical, but compelling, view of Inuit participation in the 150th legacy project is that it is the consequence of the distance sought to achieve from the wider controversy surrounding the settler-colonial commemorations of Confederation. Indigenous communities vociferously asserted that 'Canada 150' represented a celebration, not of nationhood, but of colonization. Consequently, there were significant protests across the country at the time, both in digital telecommunications, such as the #Resist150 and #UnsettleCanada150, and within public spaces (Gray 2017). Thus, whilst, on the surface, the inclusion of Inuit voices in a permanent gallery serves to frame – and rightly so – the museum in a more positive, progressive light, it concurrently serves the advantageous function of 'flagging' the occupation of the Arctic to public audiences in highly visualise and immersive ways.

This new gallery is the product of a collaborative entanglement between public agencies and private sponsors. The funding for the new gallery included a \$1.5million signature title sponsorship from Canada Goose Inc., 'the world-leading maker of Arctic luxury apparel', for the right to name it the 'Canada Goose Arctic Gallery' for ten years (CMN 2016). Canada Goose values their garments highly; the accompanying press release stated that their garments were 'informed by the rugged demands of the Arctic [representing] relentless innovation...from the Antarctic research facilities and the Canadian High Arctic, to the streets of New York...people are proud to wear Canada Goose products' (CMN 2016). Echoing the discourse of the Canadian administration and CMN itself, who describe themselves as 'world leaders in Arctic research and exploration', Canada Goose has aligned and branded itself as a 'world-leading supplier' of technology to the 'modern polar hero'. Thus, Canada Goose's desire to sponsor the gallery is reminiscent of Shell in

2014, who sought to reframe the company's image and its Arctic interests to the public in a more favourable light. Like Shell, Canada Goose has also faced controversy surrounding its companies practices, particularly as a result of their contentious decision to retain real furs within the trims of the garments. As they have done with their sponsorship of the gallery, Canada Goose has sought to frame its collaborations with Inuit seamstresses, concerning parker-making practices, to serve as a positive example of the company's 'Arctic commitments' – since 2010 they have sent pallets of sewing material and waste to Nunavut for Inuit communities to make into garments (Rogers 2013). Thus, such an example only serves to demonstrate how private companies, museums and even government administrations can subtly, though effectively, reframe themselves with relative ease, shaping the perspective of various audiences.

The public-private partnership of this gallery constitutes a wide and varied collaboration between different actors: the National Film Board of Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Ocean Wise, the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Oceans North Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nunavut Sivuniksavut, Polar Knowledge Canada, ArcticNet, Lindblad Expeditions, BuildFilms, the Canadian Museum of History, the McCord Museum, Students on Ice, Carleton University and Dalhousie University. This assemblage of partners engaging in the Arctic echoes the other public-private partnerships between the Government of Canada, its agencies and the 1967 search for Franklin to mark the centenary of Confederation and the most recent collaborations between Shell and the RCGS in 2014 in the Victoria Strait expedition. As Adriana Craciun has attested, these partnerships are part of a longer entanglement of Arctic exploration with commercial interests 'which began with the much longer tradition of early modern chartered companies that first developed British Arctic exploration' such as Company Cathay with the Elizabethan Martin Frobisher (Craciun 2017:5).

The Canada Goose Gallery itself serves to re-create Canada through a range of immersive experiences symbolically, to enable southern Canadians to experience the Arctic. It starts by transporting the visitor to a highly immersive and interactive impressionist storytelling experience called *Beyond Ice*. The CMN collaborated with the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) to project images of the biodiversity of the Arctic onto real slabs of ice which the visitor can walk between and touch (see Figure 6.29, below). Blocks of ice have often been used to represent Polar Nationalism and, through a new form of place-branding, are used affectively to exemplify a territory's fragile precarity or natural beauty. For example, in 1992, Chile removed ice from its own Chilean Antarctic Territory to be put on display as a physical and symbolic representation of the Chilean Nation at the Universal Exposition being held in Spain (see Korowin 2010). This kind of material and cultural diplomacy functioned by enrolling the ice block as an active and affective type of Sovereignty labour of Chilean territory and national identity. Elements, like other non-human objects, such as a ship-wreck have often been used as an assemblage of Sovereignty-labour for different audiences (see Salter 2015).



Figure 6.29: 'Children touching ice within the "Beyond Ice" installation.'

Source: CMN 2017b.

This multimedia installation created a sensory experience of the Arctic region for the visitor through sounds, lights, sights and touch – in effect, bringing the region to ‘life’. This immersive experience for the public is similar to the sensory experience of the nineteenth-century panorama. This allows the public to ‘play’ within the ice and, thus, serves to domesticate the region through its banal, everyday effects. The Arctic is further ‘domesticated’ by animations created by Inuit artists being projected onto the ice, alongside films of polar bears and other emotively charged symbols of Arctic communities and wildlife. By being able to touch and physically interact with these digital technologies, sounds and senses, the Arctic is drawn closer and affectively encountered by public audiences who will probably never physically visit the Arctic. The Arctic is, therefore, displayed through both the banal and the blatant spectacle, paradoxically domesticating the region whilst at the same time portraying it as the sublime, mysterious ‘Other’ that is put on display and encountered by the public (Benwell 2014).

The remainder of the Canada Goose Gallery retains an emphasis upon the interactive, through the use of interactive games and activities, videos and infographics, in exploring and portraying the interconnecting narratives of the Arctic. The assemblage of collected specimens, artefacts, commissioned artwork, and narratives seek to represent the diversity of the Canadian Arctic. For example, a 3D circumpolar map ‘anchors the geography zone’ and provides a voluminous, visual object for the visitor to not just gaze upon, but to interact with. Spectral specimens of bowhead whale skulls and stuffed polar bears, muskox, caribou and birds are presented alongside an aquaria containing Arctic cod, thus vividly ‘animating’ the Arctic’s fauna. In an effort to decolonise the traditionally colonial gaze upon specimens, Inuit and Dene names for the animals are included alongside their Latin, and English ones. Throughout the exhibition, videos referred to as ‘people capsules’ convey first-person experiences of those who live or work in the Arctic, subtly ‘flagging’ the lively occupation of the Canadian Arctic to public audiences. There are also numerous Indigenous artefacts incorporated into the

exhibition to remind the audience that the Canadian Arctic has not only become occupied by living and working bodies in the modern day, but has been a lively region which has been lived in for millennia, further emphasising to the audience how the Arctic Region is part of the cultural heritage of *all* Canadians.

As the British Library's *Line in the Ice Exhibition* did in 2014, the CMN collaborated with a number of agencies and institutions in determining the objects that were put on display within the gallery. For example, the government of Nunavut loaned a traditional kayak made of sealskin, whilst the Vancouver Aquarium loaned the live, Arctic cod that were on display. These collaborations only serve to reinforce how the museum is an assemblage in itself and functions as a space of networked exchange, where objects, ideas and narratives are constantly evolving, reimagined and repurposed in different, imaginative ways (Driver and Ashmore 2010).

Franklin made visible

The gallery also incorporated 'exploration relics' from the first Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-1916. The notebooks and technical equipment from this expedition represent the museum's long-standing history of collecting, curating and harvesting relics of Arctic exploration and the 'discovery' of species which the CMN proudly promote as 'one of the world's finest collections of Arctic natural-history specimens' (CMN 2017a). Scientific relics have repeatedly become objects of national importance to polar nations and is not something unique to Canada (Roberts 2011). Promoting and displaying these relics in a museum exhibition intended for a public audiences, highlights the power that such objects possess to convey complex geopolitical meaning quickly and in easily recognisable ways; this interconnected relationship between 'the corporeal and the material is essential to expressions of Polar Nationalism' (Dodds 2017:20). The exhibition also included some of the two hundred Franklin relics which were recovered

alongside bone fragments on King William Island in 1992. The CMN manages the specimens on behalf of the government of Nunavut and frequently displayed these specimens to audiences in various exhibitions prior to the location of *HMS Erebus* or *HMS Terror* (see *Figure 6.30, below*). However, these exhibits were subsequently updated in 2014, for example, to include the famous sonar image taken on 9th September, 2014, of *HMS Erebus*. This sonar image was circulated extensively in digital and print media, as well as through various social media channels. By displaying the sonar image, alongside these historically scientific relics, the exhibition highlighted the modern ‘technologies’ of exploration and the affective Sovereignty labour involved in finding the shipwreck. Thus, in doing so, I maintain that the exhibition was again connecting historical and contemporary activity in the Arctic in order to provide a clearer narrative of long-standing Arctic heritage and culture.



Figure 6.30: 'Canadian Museum of Nature exhibits, "Franklin's Lost Expedition".' Source: Rosanna White, taken August 2015.

The exhibit also displayed a map which included the location of the relics discovered on King William Island and the subsequent location of *HMS Erebus* in order to reorient the viewer (see Figure 6.31, below). Not only did this draw attention to the relative geographical proximity of the relics on display, and the ship itself, to underpin the ‘credibility and authenticity’ of them as genuine Franklin relics, it also features the location of the Museum of Nature further south on the map and, by extension, where the viewer is standing when gazing at these relics. In a way, their map seeks to compress the spatial divide, drawing the North closer and simultaneously highlighting the connection of these relics and shipwreck to southern Canadians.

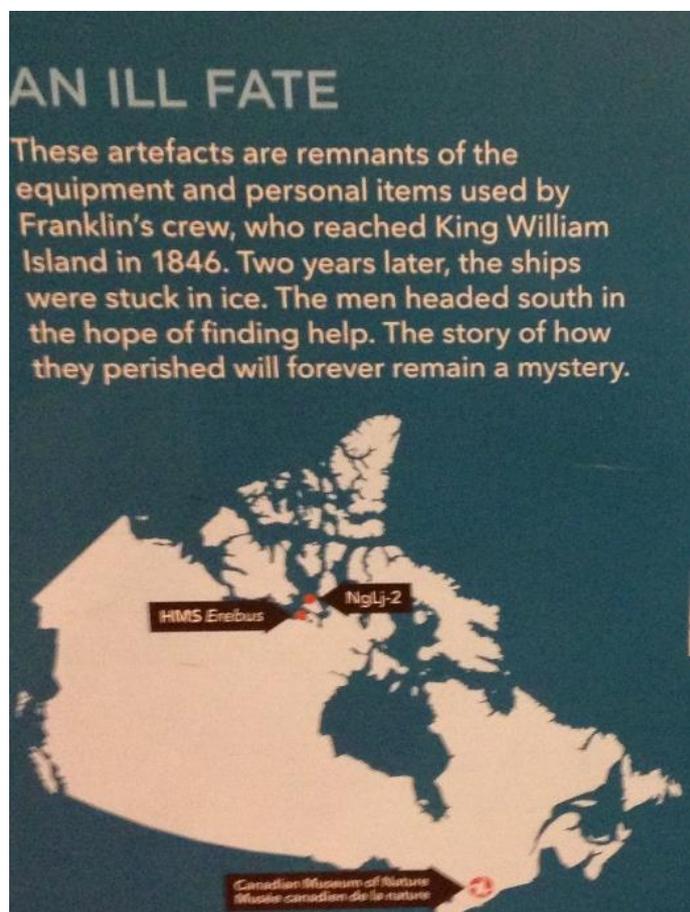


Figure 6.31: 'Map depicting proximity of remnants found in 1992 and location of *HMS Erebus* Shipwreck'.

Source: Rosanna White, taken August 2015.

Travelling Exhibitions

The CMN is not the only museum in Canada to have collaborated in exhibitions with government agencies featuring the search and discovery of Franklin relics. For example, Parks Canada has collaborated with ten museums across Canada in the 'Franklin Museum Network (Parks Canada 2018f). Each of these museum pop-ups features a display with a digital interactive screen. One side of the pop-up displays a historical side with information about Franklin's 1845 expedition, including the vast oral history from various Inuit concerning the expedition, whilst the other side features contemporary information about the discoveries of *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*. The contemporary side is updated every six months. As well as highlighting the 'official' capacity of the pop-up display to function as a 'mobile messenger of Parks Canada', the capability of the pop-up display to be updated further reinforces the 'credibility' of the travelling exhibit as it provides audiences with the most up to date accounts of the contemporary investigations being carried out by Parks Canada. The small travelling size of the pop-up acts in a similar way to a social media tweet in that it can disseminate a 'bite-sized' amount of information to audiences who can consume the 'relevant' highlights, which are of course carefully curated by Parks Canada in the first place. Thus, pop-ups serve as another useful example of the diverse networked sites of exchange within a museum.

In contrast to the pop-up displays at such museums, the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa (CMH) collaborated with the British National Maritime Museum (NMM) and Parks Canada to create an extensive exhibition entitled *Death in the Ice: The Mystery of the Franklin Expedition* (CMH 2018). This exhibition travelled to Ottawa for an eight-month stint at the NMM, demonstrating how the networked sites of exchange function both nationally and internationally, allowing Franklin relics to be curated and disseminated to external, international audiences. As the NMM held in its collection the original blueprints of both shipwrecks, which were used to identify formally the ship, and the fact that both the ship and Franklin were of British origin,

'Franklin Fever' was also generated within Britain and consumed by audiences from within London and beyond. As discussed in Chapter 5, this exhibit initially caused controversy for displaying Franklin artefacts without direct permission from the government of Nunavut. Subsequently, the museum made a concerted effort to reinforce publicly that the exhibition was now in collaboration with the Nunavut government and the Inuit Heritage Trust (CMH 2018). Unlike the pop-up exhibitions, this large exhibition was created to provide an extensive account of Franklin's expedition history. What was noticeable, throughout the exhibition, was an equally concerted emphasis placed upon the importance of Indigenous, oral history in finding the ship's location. Echoing the earlier British Library's *Lines in the Ice* exhibit, this exhibition reinforced from the outset that, despite popular conceptions, the Arctic was not an empty space waiting to be discovered, penetrated or overcome by European explorers, but instead was a vibrant and thriving homeland to Inuit communities since 'time immemorial'.

The Canada Science and Technology Museum (CSTM) was another museum to create a pop-up exhibition with support from government agencies of Natural Resources Canada, and Parks Canada. However, this exhibition, entitled *Echoes in the Ice: Finding Franklin's Ship*, is a travelling exhibit which can be displayed in regional museums across Canada in light of its easily transportable and collapsible material, unlike the 'static' exhibits of CMN and CMH. Such mobility enabled the exhibition to be encountered by a wide range of audiences and, as curators typically present themes which are culturally, politically or historically significant, such exhibitions further emphasise the unrelenting popularity of Franklin imaginings within popular Canadian culture. This exhibition included, amongst other things, banners to eight object showcases, ranging from 'original' artefacts recovered from one of the archaeological sites containing Franklin relics and 'authentic' food and maritime exploration relics from the same Victorian period, even though they were not directly linked to Franklin. Even though some of the items displayed are not from the Franklin ships, through the banners and other material relics

which are accompanied by audio-visual televisual communications and artwork, the assemblage of these objects within the exhibition generates an 'essence' of Franklin's expedition. This essence constructs credible authenticity for the replicas as 'the genuineness of artefacts and events' is fluid (Reisinger and Steiner 2006:65) and partly because they are placed alongside 'real' Franklin artefacts. This simultaneously requires the audience to 'role-play' in the various objects, repurposing them as representational artefacts from real and imagined exploration debris. In this way, audiences can directly facilitate performances of Sovereignty by playing an active role in enacting them, rather than merely being passive witnesses to the visual performances of actors such as the Canadian government.

This exhibition, like the CMN, also displays contemporary scientific equipment and technologies used in the present-day investigations by Parks Canada staff and other government partners. The discoveries of the wrecks of the Franklin Expedition ships in the Canadian North are described throughout the small exhibition as a significant archaeological and historical achievement for Canada (CSTM 2018). Alex Benay, president of CSTM, described the mobile exhibit as a vital tool to 'help Canadians learn more about the compelling story, and to help them live history as it unfolds through this exhibition' (Pebbles 2017). This evolving expedition is regularly updated with text and images from the continuing exploration of the wrecks by Parks Canada archaeologists. In this way, the re-living of contemporary archaeological explorations is a narrative within the 'genre' of an on-going detective investigation.

Conclusion

When States employ the performative and visual capacity for government-sponsored visual material to represent imaginations of the nation, through mundane mediums such as postage stamps, banknotes and the symbolic iconography used on passports, they affirm how visual symbolism informs an

important part in constructing the nation-State, its identity and legitimising policy agendas through banal 'State effects' (Painter 2006; Brunn 2011; Penrose 2011). Thus, such visual displays contribute not only to an 'imagining' of the Arctic as a 'Canadian' possession, but to the dissemination of Canadian Sovereignty efforts in the North to wider audiences. Furthermore, the lively, bodily performances of effective occupation efforts that are enrolled by the State, which are ceremonially celebrated and promoted on banknotes, postage stamps and within museums and pop-up exhibitions, aid in visually highlighting claims of effective Arctic Sovereignty. These popular and highly visual commemorations, which connected visuals of nineteenth and twentieth-century polar exploration with images of modern-day Canadian explorations, aided in concentrating attention upon the ongoing and lively performances of contemporary, effective occupation by Canada. The celebration of polar heroes, through 're-enactment' rituals and in popularly disseminated, government-sponsored, postage stamps and museum exhibitions, demonstrates how historical explorations of the Arctic remain culturally and politically significant to contemporary assemblages of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. These visual and interactive displays of Canadian occupation and administration to public audiences in everyday scenarios expand the sites and practices through which Canadian Arctic Sovereignty is performed and, as such, reveal another type of 'occupying atmosphere'. The focus on the visual and performative aligns with Harper's own practices, and highly performative media shows, which reflected a 'rather traditional view of Sovereignty as something that had to be performed in a distinctly visual manner' (Dodds 2011:373).

Chapter 7

Conclusions

‘Since 2008, there have been six major Parks Canada-led searches for the lost Franklin ships, painstakingly covering many hundreds of square kilometres of the Arctic seabed... I’ve been rooting for them — these modern-day explorers...the act of searching has done much to benefit not just Northerners, but all Canadians....For example, the search for the wreck has required us to map extensive sections of the seabed, and conduct intensive research on sea ice and the Arctic waters. All of the knowledge and data we’ve gained will help us to better understand the geography of the North... It just goes to demonstrate one more time that we’re up to the challenge of mounting significant technical and military operations in the harsh conditions of the Canadian Arctic — something all Canadians can be proud of and I would add, at a time when international interest in the Arctic region is growing, finding this Franklin ship bolsters Canada’s claim to Arctic Sovereignty — clearly something that directly benefits all Canadians.’

(Harper quoted in Geiger 2014)

When the news broke in September, 2014, that *HMS Erebus*, one of only two undiscovered National Historic Sites of Canada, had finally been located by Parks Canada archaeologists as part of a multi-faceted partnership that

included government, private and non-profit groups, a nineteenth-century British colonial mystery was once again used publicly to captivate twenty-first-century visions of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. As many Arctic geopolitical scholars and media commentators have observed, Harper, a self-proclaimed champion of the Arctic and Franklin, has used the search for Franklin's missing ships as a highly visual and performative material and symbolic example of his administration's Arctic Strategy (Craciun 2012; 2017; McCorristine 2012, 2018; Long 2014; McDairmid 2014). His was a policy which sought to visibly assert Canada's Sovereignty through an emotively charged and anxious rhetorical dichotomy: 'use it or lose it' (Lajeunesse 2008; Broadhead 2010; Dodds 2010a; 2011; 2012). The recent surveying efforts since 2008, in searching for the ships, have mapped huge swathes of Arctic seabed and significantly broadened scientific knowledge about the region. For Harper, as the epigraph to this chapter so aptly reveals, these ongoing searches were strategic instances of Canadians active performing effective occupation and governance in the North.

However, historical geographers concerned with the Arctic have noted that Harper was not unique in linking the missing shipwrecks, historical exploration and scientific activity in the North West Passage to contemporary Arctic Sovereignty claims; successive Canadian governments since the beginning of the twentieth century have periodically continued to sponsor expeditions to the NWP, seeking to wrest the North into southern imaginations (Hulan 2002; Cavell 2007; Hubert 2011; Davis-Fisch 2012; Craciun 2016; Potter 2016). This continuing fascination with a British expedition, and its geopolitical symbolism, has raised important questions concerning imperial legacies, settler-colonial identities and Indigenous-Crown relationships.

Since 2008, under Harper's administration, the renewed search for the ships through the scientific surveys of the Arctic's 'final subterranean frontiers' has been romanticised and publicly 'branded' to audiences, invigorating contemporary discussions regarding visual culture, popular geopolitics and

public and cultural diplomacy. Through a range of government-sponsored visual material, such as museum exhibitions, public events, commemorative postage stamps, digital games, and social media posts, public audiences have encountered considerable geopolitical symbolism regarding the search for Franklin and Arctic exploration generally. This visual material has been used to disseminate contemporary performances of Sovereignty, as well as to 'celebrate the Canadian Arctic hero' past, present and future. As Paulina Raento has highlighted, even postage stamps have been appropriated in the construction of 'imperial rule, territorial claims and sources of national pride' as their visual nature possesses limitless communicative power and, as such, the critical analysis of popular State-sponsored visual culture is incontrovertibly worthy of enquiry (Raento 206:602). Framed polar heroes, such as Bernier and Franklin, have been celebrated throughout successive governments as a symbolic representation of Canadian national identity, heritage and culture, including, amongst many examples, the 1967 'Project Franklin' to commemorate the centenary of confederation and on numerous postage stamps. I contend that the 'celebrated', modern Canadian polar hero, as a symbol of an imagined community, has recently been reoriented to include Inuit actors as well as contemporary scientific endeavour, and this is reflected within the museum exhibitions and the most recent postage stamps that have been designed and disseminated since the discovery of *HMS Erebus*. This visual material and its visual symbolism invoke a sense of how Arctic exploration and scientific activities have remained of central interest and importance within Canada, visually enacting and representing performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty. Such prosaic representations are particularly significant as their banal power resides in their ability to communicate visually as 'tiny messengers of the State' alongside their material power to serve performances of State authority and Sovereignty in their own right. As this thesis has demonstrated, these disseminated performances effectively widen the assemblage of sites, actors and practices which have been enrolled by the State to construct an 'occupying atmosphere' of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty.

The separate performances of Sovereignty, also discussed in this thesis, have demonstrated that objects and bodies within the Arctic, both human and non-human, have been creatively enrolled in the performance of Arctic Sovereignty claims by successive Canadian governments during the past 150 years as part of a continuous and ever-evolving assemblage – as explored in Chapter 4 in particular. Objects and bodies have been assembled in these performances in a myriad of ways: they have been used to mark and symbolise territory, such as through cairns and flag poles and ‘DEW Lines’; they have been incorporated into lively, banal and everyday performances of State jurisdiction and governance; and they have been used as symbolic markers of continuous and effective occupation. Crucially, each of these visual performances has been and is currently being employed to construct an assemblage of visual and performative practices that, by extension, generates an overarching ‘occupying atmosphere’. I maintain that such performances are innately rooted in the colonial practices of exploration and occupation in the North and that, as a consequence of this legacy, they are constantly evolving and subject to adaptation as the State seeks to atone for, repress and heal the rifts caused by its troubling colonial history. Canada’s historical legacy of imperial exploration, settler-colonialism, and dispossession, by virtue of its nature and enduring resonance within the social consciousness, simply cannot be excluded from contemporary Sovereignty analysis.

Sovereignty performances have also been incorporated into contemporary narratives of ‘stewardship’ that have sought to reorient and ‘unite’ the State. These narratives of stewardship have been constructed in order to include a diverse range of actors and sites in scientific, environmental, cultural, historical, economic and political contexts. Some of these stewardship narratives, as Chapter 5 in particular demonstrated, have been used as a means of legitimising Sovereignty claims, and re-frame a sense of ‘belonging’ in the North, whilst others, concurrently, attempt to reconcile, harmonise or suppress the inescapable fact and lasting resonance of Canada’s settler-

colonial history. Thus, perhaps unsurprisingly and, despite successive governments' determined efforts, the anxieties concerning Canada's 'right' to occupy the Canadian Arctic remain irrepressible and continue to haunt and affect its contemporary Sovereignty performances, which remain wholly unsettled.

I have also demonstrated that the various objects and bodies within the Arctic possess their own, inherent agency and that their 'vibrant materialism' can as easily challenge, frustrate and sometime fail to perform in accordance with their intended purpose (Bennett 2010). In this way, the material agency of such objects can also generate new and challenging narratives of anxiety. As such, performances of effective occupation can just as easily slip into ineffective occupation, demonstrating and reinforcing the complexities surrounding the nature of asserting and maintaining an Arctic Sovereignty claim. The geophysical Arctic environment and component elements within the region, which possess their own vibrant materialism, are equally capable of challenging such Sovereignty performances. Patrols and scientific surveys are frequently hampered by changeable and precarious weather, whilst anxieties concerning the 'wrong' bodies performing in the Canadian Arctic or the possibility that enrolled objects are removed or move according to their own agency represent an 'abiding fear' for Canadian governments. Whether it has been as a result of the presence of foreign whalers and Greenlandic Inuit at the beginning of the twentieth century, or more contemporary concerns, such as the increasing effects of climate change or in the political actions of external actors – including the famous and highly creative instance of Russia planting a flag on the Arctic seabed in 2007 – or the independent agency of bodies capable of wandering out of Canadian territory whilst still enrolled as 'symbols' of Canadian jurisdiction, successive governments have concurrently been required to maintain anxiety-management narratives in an attempt to combat the relentlessly precarious conditions. As such, I contend that contemporary Canadian Sovereignty performances ought to be understood as an assemblage of ever-evolving, diverse objects, bodies and

practices, intended to repeatedly and continually display a visually 'occupying atmosphere' of the Canadian North.

Such contemporary settling projects form part of a much wider historical narrative of affective Sovereignty-anxiety management by a succession of government Ministers, who sought to reassure its population that the rapidly evolving geography of Canada's Arctic, despite outside interest and increasing possibilities for encounters, was secured and that the government was committed to protecting its Arctic possessions in all of their framed imaginations. To cite but a few examples, Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier was concerned about the impact of foreign whalers and traders in the early 1900s, John Diefenbaker was concerned about the threat posed by the Cold War in the 1950s, whilst Pierre Trudeau was concerned about the impact that increasing economic activity could have upon the Arctic in the 1970s; the concerns of each demonstrate that Harper and, most recently, Trudeau, are only the most recent in a long line of Canadian Prime Ministers concerned with visibility and the symbolic need to 'flag' Canadian performances of Arctic Sovereignty beyond its own borders. However, I contend that the two major anxieties Canada currently has over its Arctic Sovereignty are not to do with the potential risks of outside actors, but rather stem from internal threats. These are the inherent anxieties of legitimising a sense of 'belonging' in the North and the ever-growing anxieties concerning Inuit empowerment through increasingly devolved government and, ultimately, independence. It is these anxieties, I maintain, which have predisposed the contemporary governments of Trudeau and Harper to champion and re-brand Canada as 'stewards of the Arctic'. Whether this is as stewards of 'world-leading' scientific research, stewards of 'cultural heritage', stewards of 'responsible Northern development' or stewards of the 'environment', such narratives attempt to 'legitimise' continuing performances of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty.

As I have evidenced throughout this thesis, such Sovereignty performances constitute an assemblage of affective, material interactions by different

actors, both human and non-human, at different sites and at different voluminous scales (Steinberg 2010; Dodds 2012). As the precarious Arctic environment can frustrate and hamper 'traditional' performances of effective occupation and governance, by utilising an assemblage of performances, Canada attempts to construct an 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty. Whilst these varied performances construct Arctic space as Canadian, such practices in a range of different, framed registers have also historically contributed to the construction of Canadian Nationalism and its affective identity formation: how it brands itself as a 'Northern Nation' (Grace 2001). These performances are then affectively disseminated within quotidian, public life through a range of visible and sometimes interactive government-sponsored visual media – specifically interrogated in Chapter 6. Thus, the affective power of geopolitics and material entanglements ought not to be excluded from the ongoing analysis of research into Arctic Sovereignty performances and government-sponsored visual culture.

By conceptualising Canadian Arctic Sovereignty as an ever-evolving assemblage of performances, this thesis has combined the analysis of popular media and visual practices of occupation and government. Situating these diverse, contemporary performances within the context of the historical legacies of settler-colonialism, whilst acknowledging the material vibrancy of actors, objects and the environment encountered and bound up in these practices, facilitates a more nuanced understanding of the affective relationships between geopolitical bodies and material elements within the Arctic. As evidenced in the range of case studies, methodologies and sources presented in the thesis, performances of Arctic Sovereignty are diverse and are inherently connected to broader geopolitical imaginations. These performances are complex; thus, I contend that critical geopolitical scholarship concerned with the Arctic benefits from increased attention being paid to the dissemination and consumption of government-sponsored, visual media and visual performances of Sovereignty to a range of audiences, both internal and external, to achieve a more nuanced understanding of how

performances of Sovereignty are acted out in certain geopolitical contexts. An essential part of this thesis research, therefore, has been its collaborative, methodological framework, which has allowed for ethnographic museum research, historical archival sources and contemporary digital media to be included and analysed alongside one another.

Yet, the ongoing development of digital technologies and the increasing development of Arctic community infrastructure decidedly offers another option for further and future research in this area, specifically a more focused consideration of the different audiences who encounter and consume these performances. Moreover, there is undoubtedly scope to expand such an approach through further research, specifically into exhibitions that are geographically located *within* the Arctic, such as the Franklin Centre in Nunavut which has recently received funding ('Parks Canada announces...', CBC News 2016), and how audience reactions can directly shape and influence newly constructed material. Similarly, in 2016, the Vancouver Maritime Museum, for example, exhibited a pop-up exhibition concerned with the expedition 1940-42 of the RCMP *St Roch*, the first ship to successfully complete travel through the NWP from West to East. This exhibition also travelled to the local communities of Cambridge Bay and Pond Inlet in Nunavut. The exhibition was another example of a public-private partnership with One Ocean's Expedition; not only does this demonstrate the entanglements between government, private and commercial activities who sponsor public exhibitions concerning Arctic exploration. The exhibition and staff of the Vancouver Maritime Museum physically took the original RCMP voyage route, re-enacting the voyage, in taking the exhibition to Nunavut. In this way, the potential for imaginative, alternative, creative and varied performances and means of dissemination – particularly in the way that exhibitions can be circulated to people – of Arctic exploration undoubtedly merits further research, specifically what the impact of this will be upon contemporary manifestations of performances of Arctic Sovereignty and, by extension, the way that it widens the 'occupying atmosphere' of Sovereignty.

Overall, this thesis has illustrated that the performance of Canadian Arctic Sovereignty remains a dynamic and evolving assemblage of practices, and that, within critical geopolitics, contemporary performances of Sovereignty, within a precarious environment like the Arctic, ought not to be analysed without contextualising and rooting them within the broader history of Arctic exploration, settler-colonialism and Arctic visual representation.

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