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Designing history. Museums, pictures and colonialism in Greenland. Photographic analysis of the “Hallway Collection” in Qaqortoq Museum

Pia Bailleul

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Pia Bailleul
PhD Anthropology
Paris Nanterre University
LESC (UMR 7186)
Museum of Quai Branly
Qaqortoq Museum

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Designing history.
Museums, pictures and colonialism in Greenland

Photographic analysis of the “Hallway Collection” in Qaqortoq Museum

Fieldwork report, March – April 2018
Museum of Qaqortoq



 **Université
Paris Nanterre**



*MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY
JACQUES CHIRAC


UNIVERSITÉ
PARIS LUMIÈRES

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1. Introduction

This study took place during a six months fieldwork conducted in Qaqortoq Municipality in 2018 focusing on the industrial development of South Greenland. I was directed to Qaqortoq's Museum by my host, who advised me to take a look into the archived pictures in order to understand the “reality” of the changes faced by the mid-century's generation¹. Following the advice, I particularly put my interest on clothing, infrastructures and landscapes as a way to look into social and economical transformations.

The photographic analysis was conducted in Qaqortoq's local museum. In South Greenland, these places are listed as “ancient monuments”, according to the 1983's law protecting old buildings. They are either ancient trading and factory stations, or of nationalistic importance. For example, Qassiarsuk's museum is located in the first greenlandic home constructed in the place, Narsarsuaq's one inside the USs' installations of the Second World War. Qaqortoq's museum belongs to the first category, as I will present later. So, by being designated infrastructures of historical meaning, local museums incarnate fragment of the past being currently enhanced. They also display national elements of history and culture, and present local backgrounds with some autonomy. Then, local museums embody a national chosen history, as well as telling a narrative on locality. Some objects, among which the pictures I studied, are situated on the merge of those two dimensions. This situation will make us reflect upon those images as Greenlandic hegemonic storyline, and instruments of local discursive autonomy.

At that time, Vivian Andersen was the curator of the museum. She directed me to a collection hung in the hallway leading to the front desk. I will say a few words later about the location, but it can be stressed out right now that it is not a showy place. People hardly stop there, and when they do it is while looking for the entrance money in there purse. So, I wondered why historical pictures were shadowed this way. Vivian explained that she had no idea about neither the author nor the exact period of time when the pictures were taken. She had taken over the museum few years ago and found this collection in the closet. She thought it could interest people to browse the past landscape of the region, that's why she put the pictures here. Also, she thought important to display the time when “*Qallunaat*” governed the country.

Used in all Arctic with little dialectal variations, this well known word name foreigners in *kalaallisut* (West Greenlandic) and more widely the “*Whites*”. During the colonial process, it came to specifically designate Danes as ethnic differentiation, coming from the colonial administration as much as from Greenlanders themselves. During the decolonial movement launched around the 1960s', this word took a nationalist and political standpoint claiming a greenlandic identity and self-sufficiency against danish imperialism. It became a pejorative way to call Danes, being nowadays slowly replaced by the word “*Dansk*”, acknowledging its historical weight.

In Vivian's eyes, those photographs seem deeply linked to history of colonialism and racism. This aspect is very important, because it imposes a present political meaning on the pictures

¹ My host wants here to remain anonymous.

indicating they carry more than a mere historical or artistic memory. The composition of the shots show not only industrial and cultural changes, but also the nature of the relationship between the unknown photographer(s) and the subjects of the shots, and between themselves. That is, a relation of domination. My analysis aims to dissect those connections and understand their origins by relying on the material hints of the pictures and literature. That is the first aim of this study of the “Hallway collection”. The second one is to reflect on museums as places of historiographical standardization and historical construction. We will wonder how to consider this collection in regard to that perspective.

The collection is composed of twenty-two black and white pictures. No information board frames the exhibition, that is located in a hallway. Shots are unsigned and undated. They appear to have been taken between 1920 and 1940 from the aspect of the general setting. They show everyday life – celebrations, games, teaching – as well as urban and environmental landscapes. This variation of scales enable a global view on societal transformations of this time, entangling cultural and economical policies.

The paper begins by the history of museums in Greenland pointing out its important link to decolonization struggle, and the specificity of local museums as places of national history and identity. Secondly, methodology is presented. Thirdly, the analysis focuses on colonial materiality. The conclusion then questions the content of the picture with the way in which they are exposed in the museum. What historical meanings do they convey?

Before going further, I want to address thankful words to all the museum's staff and Vivian Andersen, who is now deceased. They opened the doors of the museum and permit me to come as much I needed. Vivian Andersen shared her great ambition of transforming Qaqortoq's museum into a community living place talking for and talking to Greenlanders. I hope that this work that we designed together contributes to this project.

2. *Katersugaasiviit*, the museums of Greenland

*Katersugaasivik*² is a *kalaallisut* word meaning “museum”. Grammatically speaking, it is composed of the stem “*katersu-*” which means “to gather something or someone together”. We can find it in “*katersortarfik*”, the communal house where people hold meetings and public celebrations. Moreover, the final affix “*vik*” is usually used as synonymous of “*fik*” to designate a place or a space where the action takes place. Then, a museum is primarily a site where people and objects gather according to the *kalaallisut* translation. It also resonates with Vivan's point of view about it.

In danish, “*museum*” and “*museet*” (“the museum” in english) are the equivalent translations used in all greenlandic museums. It can too be found on the DAKA dictionary³. It refers to the latin word “*museum*” that is widely employed. From the International Council of Museums, which Denmark is a member, a museum is “a permanent non-profit institution opened to the public and at the service of society and its development. It acquires, preserves, studies, exhibits and transmits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purpose of studies, education and delight.” (ICOM website)

2 Singular form of “*katersugaasivik*”.

3 <https://iserasuaat.gl/daka/>

Even if they address the same place, the two definitions are not quite the same. Without further investigation, I would simply argue here that Greenlandic museums seem to reflect those two non-exclusive definitions. They are a combinaison of the western museum culture, brought by the Danes during colonisation, and a greenlandic appropriation⁴.

2.1. General history of museums and protection of ancien monuments

History of museums in Greenland begins during colonisation. In 1913, members of the South Regional Council express the wish to see a greenlandic museum administration, and a policy addressing greenlandic history to the public. For them, preserving and presenting past greenlandic artefacts is linked to the proudness as a people and goes along political emancipation. Anyway, Greenland being under colonial authority, all material evidences of the past are sent to the National Museum of Denmark. The diplomatic transition to “North County of Denmark” in 1953 leads to the adoption of danish museum laws, which takes the surveying and registration of ancient buildings' responsibility. Artefacts are then legally taken from Greenland and exposed in Copenhagen, and no protection policy of historic monuments is set up (Grønnow and Lund Jensen 2008:181).

In 1966, the Museum of Greenland opens, but without any responsibility. It cannot welcome all the greenlandic remains because the legislation still puts on Copenhagen's head the care for them, and Nuuk's facilities are not big enough to shelter the collections. It's only thanks to the Home Rule's administration that in 1980 and 1983 laws permit the repatriation of artefacts to Greenland and the settlement of a greenlandic museum policy (Andreasen 1986:239). I want to point out two aspects of that history. The first one is that museum development in Greenland is closely tied to the danish colonisation, as the opening of the Museum of Greenland exemplifies. The second dimension touches upon history and culture as a political tool of decolonisation. The acquiring of that control constitutes a step toward autonomy and self-affirmation.

Around 1985, the Nation Museum and Archives, *Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu*, is created taking over all cultural and historic legislation (*Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu* website). Plus, all monuments and buildings prior to 1900AD fall under national protection (Makaš and Stubbs 2011:185). They are organized in chronological categories like “Paleo-Inuit” “Thule Culture” and “Norses”. Since then, 2007's act “On protection of cultural monuments” and 2010's “On conservation and other cultural heritage protection of cultural monuments” modify historical places' framework (*Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu* website). Adding to the 1900AD monuments *de facto* protected, “historical areas” and “historic buildings” can now be subject of conservation. These categories refer to spaces and architectures of valuable cultural significance that the Museum or individuals think worthy of national protection. Museums are settled in those constructions (Vésteinsson 2016:104-106).

As an example, Nuuk's National Museum and Archives sits on the old buildings of the Moravian Mission (from 1747), facilities reserved for the Royal Greenlandic Trade and its craftsmen (1850), and some recent housing dating from the 1930s'. The whole area is located in Nuuttoqqaq's neighborhood, the colonial harbour of the first days of colonisation. The exhibition presents the history of the greenlandic territory covering back 4,500 years of occupation. Remains from all periods are displayed, and the colonial site and houses constitute themselves a whole part of the

4 I point out that I found no trace of museal (or so) institution dating before colonisation.

collections, insofar as they are protected heritage. They act as shelter as well as object of exhibit. This museographic pattern is followed by all Southern local museums.

Since 1981, Nuuk's museum is the headmaster of the national museum administration, under which almost every town's museum is subjected. Along the years, laws reinforced its authority and it now leads fieldworks research as well as Unesco application papers. The communal re-organisation of 2009 put municipalities economically in charge of the regional museum, bringing individualisation in their policies. Thus, local museums are now under a duty to follow the National Museum's rules and policies, while responding to regional expectations. In South Greenland, this dualism is particularly notable.

2.2. Southern local historical museums

All southern local museums I have visited and where I have studied display the same pattern⁵. There is a general Inuit archeological history, and a contemporaneous section with hunting tools, housing objects and clothes. A room is devoted to Norse occupation, especially for the inscription on Unesco's Heritage List. Finally, one can find a local part where the city presents itself by its own history or cultural characteristics. Each museum plays a different narrative of the place relying on chosen distinctive features. For example, Narsarsuaq's one implements its US-military history, in Narsaq a whole room is dedicated to minerals exhibition, referring to the famous geological mountains surrounding the city. We are to reflect upon Qaqortoq's museum with that question: which stories are enhanced in Qaqortoq's museum in 2018?

The museum currently lies in the ancient colonial manor built in 1801-1803 that served as KGH's offices. Its black wooden structure is almost abandoned in the middle of the 20th Century, only used to welcome travelers like aviators Charles and Anne Lindbergh, and the ethnologist Knud Rasmussen. In 1972, Danish researchers living in South Greenland set up an historical place in a public building and finance it. In 1987, the municipality permits the implementation of the museum in its location (Qaqortup Katersugaasivia Facebook)⁶. Since then, many town's historic buildings are invested by the museum and used as thematic rooms.

The manor displays Inuit's permanent exhibition, showing archaeological remains as well as current artistic objects. A room is dedicated to Aka Høegh, national artist known for the famous *tupilak* figures born in South Greenland, and two rooms are preferably reserved for Greenlandic artists and collections. Hallways are dedicated to pictures and drawings. A winter-house replica is installed in the garden, showing life around the 1920s'. The first level explains Qaqortoq's famous shipwreck of the Hans Hedtoft vessel. It carried people, goods and South Greenlandic important documents. This event was a huge moment in Qaqortoq's life, that many inhabitants still recall by family memories. It is presented with newspapers and paintings. The second level exhibits the blue and red rooms, where travelers used to sleep when they stayed overnight. In this place, pictures are the only pieces conveying information about the foundation of Qaqortoq and colonial times. They

5 Qaqortoq (April 2018), Nanortalik (June 2018), Qassiarsuk (June 2018), Narsarsuaq (July 2018), Narsaq (September 2019).

6 Also according to informants.

are not often supported by explanations, and visitors don't usually stop in front of them because of their location.

A second building, the old smith' house, partly welcomes a Norse exhibition featuring local remains and all the Unesco documentation. Historically, Qaqortoq does not possess many archaeological sites, but currently acts as the main regional visitor center. The second part of the place gathers a lot of patchy objects: huge wooden table, typewriter, guitar, pieces of journals, etc. When approached individually, they seem dissonant. But when addressed together, they show the picture of the changing society of the 1950s', for someone's aware of Greenlandic history. These objects were introduced during the beginning of the 20th Century and radically changed Greenlanders' lives. The last location is the abandoned radio site that can be found on the top of the city. This place shows a technical history, but I was never able to visit it. Anyhow, the whole museum complex is made of global historical moments or aspects, never really displaying continuity, but instead putting side by side moments: Norse occupation, Inuit way of living and culture, Hans Hedtoft's shipping. In that context, I see the pictures inside the museum being quite different: they tell about movement and dynamics, but without explanations.

2.3. Pictures in Qaqortoq's museum

The museum possesses a lot of printed pictures⁷. Most of them are stored in a closet, the others hanged in the hallway. When explaining Vivian Andersen about my fieldwork's aim (focusing on industrialization of South Greenland) she directed me toward the Hallway pictures. According to her, they would give me answers about this process in Qaqortoq.

This collection is hooked between the artistic and the Inuit rooms on ground level. It is composed of twenty-two same-shape black and white shots, accompanied by few other productions. Among them, colored paintings and contemporaneous pictures represent the city. Vivian explained that even if there were no original known records of the shots, she thought it belonged to the same collection. No panel give any information to the visitor or contextualize the shots. A deeper investigation alongside the Arctic Institute in Copenhagen may give more information, but for now we focus on the pictures as objects of museum and try to reflect upon what they carry as such.

From the shapes of the mountains and the fjord, all pictures take place in Qaqortoq. Kids and adults wear *annoraaq*, and women's fabrics permit to locate the action at the beginning of the 20th Century. They were partly made of sealskin and imported textiles. I also crossed the pictures with private shots and discussions with inhabitants, asserting the temporal window 1920-1940. But, if one is ignorant of those material indications, it cannot situate neither understand the collection. Then, what historical and museographic purpose does it fulfill? How to understand the exhibition and what meanings does it pass on? The picture analysis will give answers, that I will firstly frame by methodological considerations.

7 Only some still have their photographic negative on site. Most of them are either located in the Arctic Institute in Copenhagen, or drawn with the Hans Hedtoft.

3. Methodology

Greenlandic industrialization and urbanization are largely studied. One can find many books and academic papers about the political and social transformations entailed by colonization between 1800 and 1950. Adding to this literature I will develop and in order to deepen my grasp of this process, I listened to my South Greenlandic informants and came to see the sensible testimonies of that time.

Pictures, movies, drawings, paintings, songs, poems, and many other productions are ways to dive into a place. In comparison to administrative or demographic data, those documents are sometimes viewed as subjective materials and lowly used. In contrast, I would point out that all productions are subjective, because they are all situated in particular contexts of production. For example, one cannot use KGH's records without acknowledging the racist and classist ideology infusing their policies (see Forchhammer 2001). That aspect is a bias of production. For that reason, social researchers use various objects as data, and they take into consideration their context of production. As for pictures, I would say that their power resides in the focus they place on a specific moment. They freeze time and space to reveal a situation, hence their adoption in social sciences (Collier and Collier 1986:91). In anthropology, Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson were the first ones in their 1942's study *Balinese Character* to use photographs as a method. After them, taking and studying historical or personal shots became one of the many tools of social sciences (*Ibid*:12).

Here, I use photographs as records of a time giving us peculiar and valuable information on the subject. I draw my methodology from the famous John Collier's book *Visual anthropology, Photography as a research method* and the “qualitative content analysis” to respond to my problematic. As to know, firstly in which ways the “Hallway Collection” displays a narrative on colonialism and what is it composed of. Secondly, to understand what is operating nowadays through those shots. So, I address the shots for their contents and for what they currently carry in the museographic context.

3.1. Context of production and where to look

According to Vivian Andersen, we have no information about the person who took the shots and when it was. They are not registered and the museum has no trace of them. But, the material analysis of the content gives us the 1920-1940 period of time. As to the author, the social hierarchy of the time leads to the hypothesis that it was either a Danish member of the colonial administration or Church, either a high ranked Greenlander. Indeed, the beginning of the 20th Century sees the conversion of the social capital into the fishing industry⁸. Educated Greenlanders (also known as “the elit” closed to the Danes since two generations) reach the administrative-politic and religious jobs, while non-urban and uneducated people assume unqualified and law positions (Rasmussen 1986). This distribution reinforces and fixes social stratification into the economy, and finally into society. Thus, the only wealthy people that could have afforded to possess a camera would likely have been Danes or elit Greenlanders.

8 According to the definition of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, that sees social capital as “The set of current or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a lasting network of more or less institutionalized relationships of interconnection and recognition” from Bourdieu P. “ Le capital social. Notes provisoires ”, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no 31, 1980:2-3.

The context of production permits to define the bias and ideas around shots. It also gives the social and economical location of the author, often determining in the way people act on pictures (Collier 1986:pxx). Here, I suppose a hierarchical relationship between the photographer and the subjects, for the already mentioned reasons. Without more knowledge, I leave out attitudes and emotions to direct my attention on the material composition of the pictures. For that reason, I voluntarily exclude any interpretative comment on the subjects of the pictures. I don't dispose of enough element to be able to apprehend character's behaviors from a behavioral side, and I would risk to fall into a completely subjective analysis. Nonetheless, I don't adopt quantitative perspective toward them either, because it would not be comprehensive. The lack of knowledge about the context of production would make listings and rankings hazardous. In order to avoid this pitfall, I use a qualitative content and mapping method.

3.2. Qualitative content and mapping analysis

According to John and Malcolm Collier, mapping consists of extracting a general picture of a shot, giving information about the material composition. This way, one can investigate industrious and geographic matters, technological as well as social relationships ones (Collier and Collier 1986:37,65,77). This method may be employed in quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Here, we use it in the last one, incorporated to a qualitative content analysis, in the way it is described in the manual *Photography as a social research method* (Langman and Pick 2018). In Sten Langmann and David Pick's words,

“Qualitative content analysis does not count or measure anything in the data; instead, it systematically elicits meaning of qualitative data by assigning and breaking down parts of the material into codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2014; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Qualitative content analysis is based on naturalistic inquiries that involve rigorous coding to identify themes and patterns in data sets (Cho & Lee, 2014) to generate theory, to explore their meaning and perhaps most importantly, to experience participants in their world (Zaidman-Zait, 2014). The purpose of qualitative content analysis is to examine ‘who says what, to whom, and with what effect’ (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 400).” (Langman and Pick 2018:105)⁹

Bond to the limits that we explained – unknown context of production and general data about the collection – coding cannot be fully accomplished. Then, I put my focus on recurrent items that I listed as following. Objects: barrel, hunting and fishing instrument. Clothes: *kamik*¹⁰, headscarf, skirt, fabric. Infrastructures: type of housing, location, density. Then, I investigated what meant those categories on an historical perspective. To what do they refer to? To whom are they significant?

Crossing those categories with documentation permits to touch upon the historical meaning of that materiality, and the current dimension of the piece. It is seen and it carries a narrative based on materiality and social relations. The eye of the camera fixes the memory of interaction, extracting it

9 Cited works: Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288; Schreier, M. (2014). Qualitative content analysis. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The sage handbook of qualitative data analysis* (pp. 170–183). London: Sage Publications; Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, 15(3), 398–405; Cho, J. Y., & Lee, E.-H. (2014). Reducing confusion about grounded theory and qualitative content analysis: Similarities and differences. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(32), 1; Zaidman-Zait, A. (2014). Content analysis. In A. Michalos (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of quality of life and well-being research*. Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media.

10 Part of the Greenlandic national costume, that was a daily shoe at that time.

from the initial interaction. The material analysis of that relation permits to understand who is talking, how, *etc* and what it implies in regard to Greenlandic history. As John Collier explains

“Recording what people look like, what they wear, and the condition of their clothes is a descriptive opportunity offering rich clues to identifications comparable to those provided by exteriors and interiors of homes. Records of clothing can be rated as satisfactorily as can the conditions of roofs and yards. Ethnographically, clothing provides evidence for the comparison of ethnic groups and social organizations, defines roles of the rich and the poor, and differentiates the rural dweller from the city dweller. A saturated statistical view of garments can reveal sociocultural characteristics as much as can the property of the home.” (Collier and Collier 1986:82)

Then, qualitative material analysis permits to deepen the knowledge of the economic and social time. In Greenlandic case, this cannot happen without talking about colonialism process, and current colonial mechanisms and effects. This perspective on the pictures is developed through the analysis, and not as a byproduct. It is constitutive of the understanding, as Vivian simply claimed by using “*Qallunaat*”. Those pictures are historically and ideologically located, that's also why the analysis will be presented by themes.

3.3. Nomenclature

I organized the pictures according to their location, and attributed a number to each shot. “P” refers to “Picture”, and goes as following.

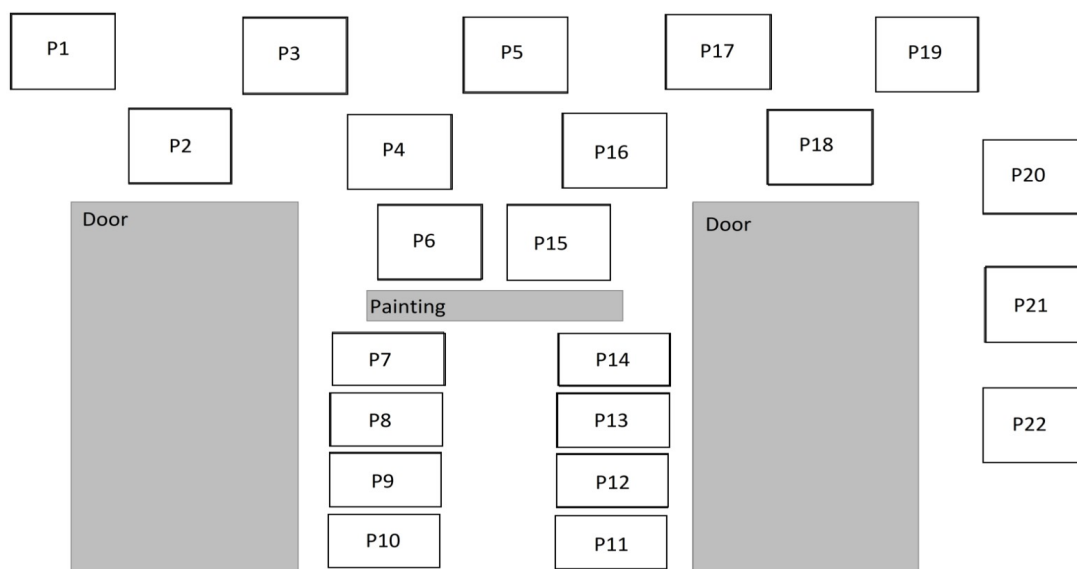


Figure 1: “Hallway Collection”, Qaqortoq Spring 2018.
©Pia Bailleul

4. “Hallway Collection”

In order to respond to the dual problematic of this paper, I classified the shots in two categories. The first one “Cultural Hegemony” refers to the famous Ditte Bentzon Goldschmidt's article “Danmark: Moder eller koloniherre?” in which she addresses the administrative transformations of 1857 (Councils of Guardians) as a way to implement danish customs and social paradigms (Goldschmidt 1987). In her understanding, they act as colonial tool implementing danish hegemony. In the same way, this part shows schooling, nursing, *festelavn* and Christmas parties as colonial policies of cultural domination leading to social transformations. The second group “Industry and urbanization” exhibits pictures of the global landscape of that time, characterized by the intensification of fishing and importation of goods.

4.1. Cultural hegemony: schools, Church and games

According to historian Ditte Bentzon Goldschmidt, cultural hegemony consists of a long-time process of transformation. By implementing various institutions, as school, health or politics, it introduces new ideas, resulting in a new paradigm of society. In a colonial context, it acts at the symbolic and material levels (*Ibid*). Pictures I have gathered here can be analyzed from this analytical tool, showing a moment of appropriation of strong institutions. Those being schools, Christmas and European events and games.

From kids' faces and the look of the desks, shots P7 and P10 seem to have been taken the same school day. They show about eighteen children, all sitting behind desks and studying. Furniture appear to be of old age, used and spotted. Most of them are smiling to the camera. Boys and girls are about 6 to 8 and are not mixed. Almost all boys wear *annoraaq* with sealskin or fabric pants, except for one wearing gilet and sweater. Girls are dressed with designed imported textiles, and we can guess that only one wears *kamik* on P7. Fashion is then a composition between KGH's goods and local garments. Teachers are visible on P7 and P20. On the first one, the light and permanent hair indicates the woman is certainly a Dane. She wears a long skirt or dress with colored designs. On P20, a white man wearing felt trousers and wool-like turtleneck jumper plays piano. From how schools were ran at this time, I suppose that it is a priest giving class or intervening for catechism teaching, or simply a teacher. Finally, P13 concludes with a lot of information. All the staff and pupils are gathered in front of the school. There are five adults (maybe teachers) and about 100-150 kids, ranked from children to teenagers. All girls wear coats of Scandinavian fashion, skirts and black shoes, except for one having *kamik*. All boys are dressed with *annoraaq*, only two having striped woolen sweaters. Boys' hairs are short and bowl haircuted, girls' are braided. Those pictures, more than displaying the schooling system at the time, show the gender attribution and differentiation process going on along the teaching structure. They learn ways of sitting, of raising hands, of asking, etc. Schools not only teach children courses like botanic, mathematics and danish, but also transmit ways of behaving. By becoming Danish-like pupils, Greenlandic kids apprehend a form of being.

Pictures P9, P21 and P22 all take place during the same Christmas event. P22 captures the whole action and setting of the celebration. On the forefront, an old lady sits on a chair. She is the only one wearing the National costume but we cannot know if it is for the occasion or because it is

her usual dress. Nowadays, it is the dedicated outfit for celebrations. On her side, people are standing and wear danish clothes. A little Greenlandic girl wears a pair of ballerina and a Scandinavian blond haired boy a Norwegian sweater¹¹. Behind them, adults and kids are gathered around a fire, decorated with an electric tinsel, little candles, small Danish flags and other ornaments. At the foot, a present has been dropped. This picture displays a lot of symbols, that are completed by P9. Here, we see six 3 to 8 years old children pose in front of the Christmas tree. They are dressed up with danish clothes. Girls wear dresses with designs of tiles, hearts, cherries and grapes. Boys wear *annoraaq*, and some have danish pants. That means, shorts with high stockings, or overalls. In their hands, a boy carries a little tractor and a girl holds a blond haired doll. All those symbols (Danish flag, cherries, grapes, blond haired doll, tractor) act as icons conveying an exogenous culture. They implement an imaginary based on another place's semiotic, substituting the Greenlandic one. The effect is reinforced by the materiality of objects, like ballerina or the Christmas tree, and by the gathering of community. Danes and Greenlanders unite in the same cultural world coming from Denmark. Those elements are particularly striking on P21, where a Danish lady gives an harmonica to a child. The little kid wears an *annoraaq* and common pants, the woman a white shirt with a headscarf. I won't try to put intentionalities on the actors, just point out the social hierarchy of domination enlightened by the pictures. Taking care of the Greenlandic kids, Danes recruit them in their cultural materiality (gifts, plays, decorations). The Christmas party, not only displaying Danish customs and ways of being, operates as a cultural model. Being in a colonial context of domination, it is displayed as hegemonic and mandatory.

This mechanism is also shown on P8. At first sight, I thought it was a gathering made as a celebration to Charles and Anne Lindbergs stay in August 1933. It was also the idea of Vivan. Nevertheless, after discussion with 2022 members of the staff museum, another analysis came into light. P8 seems to be the testimony of a *fastelavn*, a popular Danish event where kids wear costumes, play games and eat candies and cakes. Indeed, P8 shows a public event of about 150 people. They are surrounded by houses, drying kayaks devices and electric wires. On the forefront, one can see a high pitched lantern where baloon shaped objects are hooked. Men, women and kids seem captivated by what is happening. All men wear *annoraaq* on top, and some of the trousers are made of sealskins, some other of imported fabric. Women are dressed with skirts and designed coats. A lot of them curl or groom their hair with a headscarf like the fashion at the time, as we can guess from the other pictures. Hair and dresses seem to be sophisticated. All fabrics are imported and certainly manufactured at home. Almost all little girls wear the same dark jacket, and some women keep veils on their forefront and eyes. At the center of the crowd, other women wear different garments and styles. It is not possible to precisely distinguish clothes, but their hair are not the same. They are not curled and groomed, only hanging loose or braided. This lead Vivan and me to the hypothesis of Charles and Anne Lindberg's presence, reinforced by nine white people who stand among the crowd. From the style of the jacket and the beret that recall the American air force, I think some of the men and women do not belong to the Danish colonial administration. Two of them could be Charles and Anne Lindbergh, and P6 may display the companion S.S. Jelling¹². From the suits that appear under the coats and a baby's dress, I would say that the rest of the Whites are

11 Norwegian woolen sweater is a distinctive style of design.

12 See for information about their trip and stay in Qaqortoq: https://web.archive.org/web/20080105074408/http://www.nasm.si.edu/research/aero/aircraft/lockheed_sirius.htm, <https://pioneerofflight.si.edu/content/lindberghs-1933-survey-flight>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFzsoUSMqc0>, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tingmissartok>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peQkdv7golQ>

Danes. By comparison with archives pictures, we can consider that they belong to the KGH administration.

Nevertheless, the crowd setting and the presence of a wooden barrel in the middle lead museum members to think of a *fastelavn* event. This is another example of the cultural hegemony Danish administration implied in Greenland, and nowadays this event is very popular in the country.

The establishment of Danish culture comes through various tools. As P12 and P14 show it, popular games are implemented and act as such. P12 represents six children playing at the swing. The device is obviously imported (a lot of plastic can be noticed) and maybe installed during the urbanization process. It took place around 1920s' and demanded leisure for the rapidly growing fishing working class. We will come back on this topic in the next part. P14 shows a direct dimension of colonial materiality and ideology. The shot is taken after snowfalls and if there is a field, it cannot be seen. About twenty players and a ball are gathered between two wooden goals, leading me to think they are playing football. On the left of the playground, the danish flag is installed, creating an association between game and danishness. This link attaches Danish participation as something daily, usual, and pleasant. At the same time, its materialy strenghtens its presence by introducing Danish leisure into the Greenlandic social world. The mixing resulting from the Danish-Greenlandic unequal composition is perceivable in the landscape, as we are now going to study.

4.2. Industry and urbanization: a composite landscape

The first picture of the hallway (P1) depicts on the forefront drying kayaks and salmons, a fishing vessel and two fishermen. Behind, one can see a rowboat, warehouses and silos. It gives a view on the industrial life of Qaqortoq, made of hunting (kayak) and fishing (vessel). This dual economy characterizes the first part of the 20th Century (Viemose 1977; Sørensen 2009). P11 puts light on this situation by a gathering around a dead seal surrounded by different kinds of fishing tools. Those boys are dressed with Greenlandic clothes (*kamiit* and drawers made of sealskin and *annoraat*). Behind them, three girls also wear Greenlandic fabrics leading to the question of whether it was still a usual way of dressing at that time, or if it was a special moment. All around, the facility and instruments show the dual use of the place. Kayaks, harpoons, seal-buoy and rowboats indicates hunting activity, and the big size of the warehouse shows the use of a trawler. Also, the barrel on the left reveals the importation and exportation of goods. Everywhere, timber planks and paddles are strewn across the place. Finally, one of the kid seems to carry a knife, maybe ready to cut the seal on the ground. Hence, the description of the two pictures show the slow establishment of fishing, while the continuation of hunting as a community occupation. Plus, at that time hunters mainly gave away there production to the KGH, explaining why the action takes place at the fishing shed.

The reconfiguration of hunting as a remunerated job and appearance of fishing as a daily paid occupation conducts to the growth of towns. Ancient colonial locations become city centers sheltering high-ranked families of the KGH and State's administration, as the ones we see on P19. Colored wooden buildings with white fences and chimneys are typical of this architecture, neighboring cob-and-stones homes. Streets are generally made of gravels and dirt, but Qaqortoq's

heart is made of pavements that are still in place. Electric poles indicate that those homes are supplied. Furthermore, on P2 we can distinguish barrels, referring to the import-export economy. Numerous people occupy the road. A woman carries her shopping. She wears a long skirt with a blazer and a headscarf. This kind of dressing seems to have been the fashion at the time because it is to be found on several pictures. Factory photographs exposed in Narsaq's museum show similar garments, leading to the hypothesis that the woman works at the factory plant. Two groups of people are dressed up with factory-workers outfits. That means, overalls made of strong fabric with a long coat. Those men are employed by the KGH in the fishing industry, and all those people are soon to become the Greenlandic working-class.

Nevertheless, industrious modifications do not immediately meet infrastructural arrangements. Until the 1940s', towns like Qaqortoq are composed of many different kinds of housing, reflecting the wealth in kroner and prestige of its owners. Greenlandic working-class families often live in homes made of turf, mud, stones and timber planks outside the city, as shown on P4. Used sheets serve as rooftop with chimney pipe, replaced every year. The door is made of wood and windows provided by the colonial administration. Those homes are located along the fjord. The scattered tools and drying clothes are evidences of the daily life of these families. The perspective of P16 replaces this houses inside the space of Qaqortoq, like a suburban neighborhood. Views on the city of P3, P5 and P18 show the rapid growth generated by the reconfiguration of the industry. Stately mansions, small wooden working-class houses and stone cabin cohabit in the same space, slowly defining urban borders.

P15 captures the fishing industry in the harbor. Huge vessels and small motorboats are stationed in the water, while people and machines work around on the ground. Launch pads, some still in place nowadays, are laid along the coast. Few meters away, big colonial constructions (wood) shelter the trade and KGH's administration. The surroundings are occupied by houses, that P17 permits to put in perspective. Indeed, the prime colonial installations took roots around harbors to be close to the labor. The slow dissemination in the mountains and the countryside is a symbol of wealth development, when Greenlanders took an active part in the trade replacing some of the Danes. Then, urbanization on P15 and P17 informs us of that state. If the lake neighborhood is being built, the upside mountain is still quite untouched. Only few homes occupy the land, in comparison to nowadays. This part is now the most prized of Qaqortoq and shelters the richest families. Homes were mostly constructed around the 1960s' for the educated workers, usually close to colonial and religious administrations, who were attributed the best job possibilities. Thus, the 1930s' urban landscape talks about the economical composition of the city, directly resulting from colonial implications.

5. Conclusion: telling a common colonial history from a local perspective?

“Hallway” pictures are hung in a very frequented part of the museum, where people paradoxically hardly stop to notice them. To conclude this paper, we could say that this location firstly appears like a metaphor of the content of the shots, in the way that they would display so obvious elements that one would not notice them any more. That would be, objects of history in a museum, and colonialism in Greenlandic history. Secondly, this location and the whole devise, as

presented by Vivian, tells about a way to perform museums. The “Hallway Collection” embodies a critical view on history and the way it is usually displayed.

To begin, let’s say that pictures go further than only exposing colonial times. From the qualitative content analysis, shots explain detailed mechanisms of domination and societal transformations. Teaching scenes talk about the implementation of gender relations based on new criteria imposed by danish school system. They also testify about body coercion behind desks, in front of a danish adult. This place put Greenlandic kids in position of subordination, learning not only grammar and mathematics, but also a social organization in which Danes are dominant. These social positions appear to be the first step toward the reproduction and maintaining of social status. This perspective is reinforced by Christmas pictures, showing almost only children with danish adults. All the gifts and objects operate as symbolic agents actually transforming cultural landmarks. This process worked so well, that Christmas customs are now registered as “Immaterial culture” by the National Museum of Greenland (*Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu* website). Games fall under the same mechanism. They are not to be considered as mere replicas of Danishness in Greenland, but as ideological vehicles, as the flag indicates us. All these institutions root new rules, symbols and, finally, standards into Greenlandic society, building Danish hegemony. Beyond a political relation of imperialism, these shots show that colonization was implemented through those institutions.

If schools, games and celebrations can be generalized to all Greenland, pictures on urbanization say more about locality. They obviously take place in Qaqortoq and delineate the discourse. Pictures show the slow building of the contemporaneous face of the city, along its industrial changes from hunting to fishing. They tell about an urban and working local identity. Moreover, they convey the social stratification inscribed in urban composition, from its geography to its materiality (wood for the KGH, turf and cob for working-class Greenlanders). Then, the local tale on the city seems to be one of economy, work and colonialism. The hypothesis on the Lindberghs' presence reinforces the feeling of uniqueness by telling a very local event gathering inhabitants. Referring to their stay inside the building, that is well-known in Qaqortoq, these shots strengthen the feeling of locality and leads us to reflect upon this implicit meaning. What does this reading on colonialism from Qaqortoq’s perspective say on the way in which museum are usually driven?

Historically, administration of culture and history in Greenland is managed by danish authorities until the Home Rule (1979). The claim for its nationalization is demanded as soon as 1913 by the Greenlandic elite, without any positive answer from Copenhagen. In regard to that, management of culture becomes a political matter linked to Greenlandic empowerment. At the same time, museums are implemented by Danish and Greenlandic scholars (Nuuk in 1966, Qaqortoq in 1972) under Danish cultural laws. Therefore, this specific system of culture funds the Greenlandic museum space. Among diverse aspects of functioning, I underline the classification of all historical periods as equal moments. The composition of Qaqortoq's museum is one example of that paradigm of history: the replica of the 1920s' house in the garden, the Inuit culture's room, the travelers' room put all side by side. The categorization of historical and ancient buildings is also a representation of that policy. On the contrary, the “Hallway Collection” presents history as a process that is not categorized but that is deeply linked to present and past days of Qaqortoq. Pictures of the landscape print over current days, showing by themselves the political and economical processes of colonization. A political power lies in the details images convey. More than a text or a category that would address colonialism by events and dates, pictures show the dynamics that resulted from

Danish activities in Greenland. They display how it lead to the creation of a new society, contemporary Greenland, with its own way of living. Moreover, the absence of explanation leave room for different kinds of questions: would the city exist without colonization? What would the place be like? And, as Vivian put it, “*Do we want to imagine that?*”. Then, the “Hallway Collection” challenges the traditional museum pattern by its own design, but also the way in which colonialism is usually depicted. In that sense, it designs another story on colonialism and history.

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