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The Politics of Arctic Sovereignty

Oil, ice, and Inuit governance

Jessica M. Shadian



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The Politics of Arctic Sovereignty

Interest in Arctic politics is on the rise. While recent accounts of the topic place much emphasis on climate change or a new geopolitics of the region, the history of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and Arctic politics reaches back much further in time.

Drawing out the complex relationship between domestic, Arctic, international and transnational Inuit politics, this book is the first in-depth account of the political history of the ICC. It recognises the politics of Inuit and the Arctic as long-standing and intricate elements of international relations. Beginning with European exploration of the region and concluding with recent debates over ownership of the Arctic, the book unfolds the history of a polity that has overcome colonization and attempted assimilation to emerge as a political actor which has influenced both Arctic and global governance.

This book will be of strong interest to students and scholars of Arctic politics, indigenous affairs, IR theory and environmental politics.

Jessica M. Shadian is an Associated Researcher with the Anthropology Research Team at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland.

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For my boys: Elie, Adrien, and Noah

Preface

When I first began my research on the politics of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) in 2002, many friends, family, and even colleagues were amused by the prospect that the Arctic, much less its indigenous peoples, could have a politics at all. Today, Arctic politics is mainstream news. Interviews, documentaries, and movies about the political, environmental and social characteristics of the Arctic including the traditional lifestyles of Inuit who live in the region are quite common. While much of this attention relates to an ice-free Arctic and the consequences of its accompanying resource developments, the political history of the Arctic's indigenous peoples is not equally known. Many people assume that in recent years a new race for the Arctic's resources has begun, and this race is also something new for the indigenous peoples who live there. Moreover, many believe that they only have something to lose from the extraction and development of these resources.

What began as my interest in Inuit ideas of sovereignty has expanded considerably over the years. It has also led me to the understanding that the political history of the Arctic's indigenous peoples and particularly the history of the ICC have, in fact, always been closely tied to the discovery and development of the Arctic's resources. Although the ICC was created in 1977 to address and help regulate the prospects of offshore oil and gas development where Inuit live, its political narrative about a pan-Arctic Inuit people goes back much further. The political history of the Arctic's Inuit (as a people) has helped to define, has adapted to, and eventually has helped to change the course of Westphalian politics. It is this political history that the book explores.

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This research project has had several lives, beginning first as my PhD dissertation. Through the course of its evolution I have accumulated a long list of people to whom I wish to thank. From its early years, I want to thank my dissertation committee (Dan Green, Matt Hoffmann, Bill Meyer, Patrick Jackson, and Gerard Duhaime). In particular, I am very indebted to Dan Green, my advisor. Not many professors are as dedicated to their students (even after they graduate) as Dan has been over the years. No one has read as many versions of my dissertation, accompanying journal articles (particularly the many draft versions of my *EJIR* article about sovereignty and the ICC), as well as early versions of this book as he has. I also want to thank the following people and institutions: the Canadian Embassy, the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS), and ICC Canada. Thanks to grants from the Canadian Embassy and ACSUS, I was able to retrieve ICC archives in Ottawa. Being propped up next to the copy machine for eight hours a day I had the fortunate opportunity to meet most of the staff. I thank them for their hospitality. I am also grateful for my time as a visiting researcher at CIERA (Centre interuniversitaire d'études et de recherche autochtones), Laval Université in Quebec, Canada. I give many thanks to Monica Tennberg, who helped me obtain a grant from the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) and with that my first opportunity to work and live in the Arctic. Through our collaboration, I had my first official peer-reviewed journal article on the ICC published in *Polar Record*. I would also like to thank the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, Finland, for taking me in both then and now as a visiting researcher.

I also want to thank Anna Kertulla for her tireless energy and support with my successful dissertation grant application to the NSF. With this award I was able to conduct interviews with ICC members and become a visiting researcher at the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), Cambridge University. It was in the SPRI library that I found so many great archives of *Inuit Today*, second-hand sources, as well as a number of lifetime colleagues. I particularly want to thank Michael Bravo, who granted me my stay there. I am also indebted to him for his mentorship, invitation to his postgraduate seminar group, willingness to take me in as a postdoctoral student (although we did not get the funding), as well as inspiring a newly found and lasting interest for me about the politics of Arctic

science, particularly the politics of indigenous science. Our many conversations made lasting impacts on my views concerning the historical role of the Arctic in the world. I also want to thank Peter Evans, whom I also met during my days at SPRI. Beginning as my daily go-to person on the ins and outs of all things Inuit, Peter remained an ongoing source of information throughout the duration of this book. He has also become a lifelong colleague and a great friend.

I would also like to thank a number of ICC members for their interviews and interest in my research, including Puju (Carl Chr. Olsen), Patricia Cochran, and Aqqaluk Lynge. I would also like to thank Finn Lynge and Innuteq Olsen for their interviews and invaluable insights about Greenland's history, as well as present-day politics. I also want to thank Jeanne Pagnen, a founder of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) working group of the Arctic Council, for her historical insights on the transformation of the AEPS into the Arctic Council, Mark Nuttall for his valuable comments on an earlier version of this manuscript, as well as the anonymous readers for their time, energy and reflective insights. Reviewing a manuscript is a timely process, yet an invaluable one. The successful transformation of this manuscript through all of its iterations is due to the thoughts and comments of these reviewers.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge my indebtedness to my husband, Elie. Over the years he has not only attended Arctic social science conferences and moved to Arctic Norway with me, but he has also been an endless ear to my *many* discussions about Arctic politics. Moreover, I thank him for his tireless support through the duration of this book. The act of completing a book through two pregnancies, moving to a new continent, the birth of two children, endless weeks of sleep deprivation, and typing with one hand while breastfeeding has been challenging to say the least. He was always there to remind me that I love my work and to keep writing. I cannot adequately summarize my gratitude to him, except to say that this book would not have come to fruition without him and so, Elie, I dedicate this book to you. Tchin tchin Affelou.

Delaware, Cambridge, Kirkenes, Bodø, Paris, and finally Toronto, June 2013

Jessica M. Shadian, PhD

Acronyms

ACIA	Arctic Climate Impact Assessment
AEPS	Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy
AFN	Alaska Federation of Natives
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
ANWR	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
ASNA	Arctic Slope Native Association
ASRC	Alaska Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
ASRC-COPE	Alaska Arctic Slope Regional Corporation-Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement Agreement
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
COPE	Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement
DEW Line	Distant Early Warning
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
GEUS	joint Danish/Greenlandic Geological Survey
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council (changed from Inuit Circumpolar Conference in 2006)
ICCEC	ICC Environmental Commission
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPO	Indigenous Peoples Organizations
IRCS	Inuit Regional Conservation Strategy
ITC	Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (originally called the Eskimo Brotherhood)
IQ	Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit
ITK	Inuit Tapirisat of Kanatami
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement
NPR	National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska
OAS	Organization of American States
OCS	Outer Continental Shelf
OCSLA	Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act

RAIPON	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
TFN	Tungavik Federation of Nunavut
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WWF	World Wildlife Fund