



THE MANY FACES OF *INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT (IQ)*: A FRAME ANALYSIS

Mirjam Held, IDPhD Program, Dalhousie University, Halifax NS, Canada, m.held@dal.ca

INTRODUCTION

Please reflect on what IQ means to you and leave a post-it note here with your thoughts:

BACKGROUND

- Often translated as “Inuit traditional knowledge”, IQ is more than that, encompassing “all aspects of traditional Inuit culture including values, world-view, language, social organization, knowledge, life skills and expectations”.¹
- In resource management, IQ is regularly reduced to factual ecological knowledge complementing/corroborating scientific knowledge.²

RESULTS

Four different frames emerged regarding Inuit Elders’ and hunters’ perspectives of IQ and its role in fisheries management.

METHODOLOGY

- Goal: to uncover how Inuit Elders and hunters understand IQ and thus its (potential) use in fisheries management in Nunavut
→ These understandings or interpretive schemes are representations of the world that rest on frames, defined as “underlying structures of belief, perception, and appreciation”.³
- Data: 30 semi-structured interviews with Inuit Elders and hunters from Nauyasat, Iqaluit, Pond Inlet and Iglulik, NU
- Analysis: Interviews transcribed, coded and analyzed with ATLAS.ti
- Frames reconstructed through coding

Bygone knowledge

- Intergenerational knowledge
- Some still known and applicable today, but mostly lost
- Used to include belief system

→ Cannot be used in fisheries management anymore

Environmental knowledge

- Taught by example
- Practical skills to hunt successfully and survive out on the land
(e.g. knowledge about weather, animal migrations, igloo building)
- Hunting guidelines
(e.g. only take what you need, do not waste)

→ Generational divide: Elders still know, younger Inuit do not

Foundationless foundation

- IQ as Inuit worldview
- Foundation of Inuit society
- Spiritual and cosmological aspects lost due to Christianization and colonialism
- Knowledge of shamans lost

→ Today’s IQ is a rudiment of the traditional IQ

Universal guiding principle

- Intergenerational
- Part of being human
- About respect

→ IQ can provide space for intercultural dialogue

REFERENCES

- ¹ Nunavut Social Development Council (2008), as cited in Lévesque, F. (2014). Revisiting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 38, 115-136. doi: 10.7202/1028856ar
- ² Reo, N. J. (2011). The importance of belief systems in traditional ecological knowledge initiatives. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 2(4).
- ³ Schön, D. A. & Rein, M. (1994). *Frame reflection*. New York: BasicBooks.
- ⁴ Tester, F. J. & Irniq, P. (2008). Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. *Arctic*, 61, 48-61. doi: 10.14430/arctic101

CONCLUSIONS

- Overlapping frames; many participants framed IQ in 2 or more ways
- No mention of IQ as a political tool within Government of Nunavut
- (Traditionally) oral history – can lost knowledge be recovered?
- Using IQ in wildlife management is both appropriation & resistance³
- Inuit human/non-human relations challenge Western views and should be reflected in wildlife management approaches
- Better understanding of IQ needed to effectively incorporate it in governance and policy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- This research could not have been done without the wonderful support of the interviewees, translators and research assistants who kindly gave of their time and expertise. Thank you!
- Financial support was provided by the NSERC CREATE Transatlantic Ocean System Science and Technology (TOSST) Grant and a SSHRC Partnership Grant (Fish-WIKS).
- Travel grants from Fish-WIKS, TOSST, Dalhousie Student Union and Dalhousie Graduate Students Association are also greatly appreciated.